



# Pakistan Journal of Qur'ānic Studies

ISSN Print: 2958-9177, ISSN Online: 2958-9185

Vol: 2, Issue: 2, July – December 2023, Page no. 118-132

HEC: [https://hjs.hec.gov.pk/index.php?r=site%2Fresult&id=1089226#journal\\_result](https://hjs.hec.gov.pk/index.php?r=site%2Fresult&id=1089226#journal_result)

Journal homepage: <https://journals.iub.edu.pk/index.php/pjqs>

Issue: <https://journals.iub.edu.pk/index.php/pjqs/issue/view/163>

Link: <https://journals.iub.edu.pk/index.php/pjqs/article/view/2205>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52461/pjqs.v2i2.2205>

Publisher: Department of Qur'ānic Studies, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan



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**Received on:** 10 October, 2023

**Accepted on:** 20 December, 2023

**Published on:** 31 December, 2023

**Citation:** Yahya, Shaykh Ahmad. 2023. "The Economic Functions of Government Expounded in *Al- 'Iqtisādu' l- 'Islāmī* of at-Turkī: A Lesson for Policy-Makers in Nigeria". *Pakistan Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* 2 (2): 118-32. <https://doi.org/10.52461/pjqs.v2i2.2205>.

**Publisher:** The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan.



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## The Economic Functions of Government Expounded in *Al-'Iqtisādu'l-'Islāmī* of at-Turkī: A Lesson for Policy-Makers in Nigeria

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### **Abstract**

*Al-Iqtisādu'l-'Islāmī: 'Ususun wamabādi'u wa 'ahdāf* is one of the classical works written to unveil the Islamic mechanism to regulate fiscal relations on the basis of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. This paper, therefore, aims at studying one of the chapters of the work that focuses on the economic functions of Islamic government with a view to unfold the tools needed to turn around the economy of Nigeria and accentuate the necessity of formulating robust economic policies that are friendly to the down trodden masses as emphasised in the work. At-Turki, in this work, strived to proffer solution to the economic problems of the world including Nigeria by highlighting the roles anticipated from the progressive government aspiring to attain stable prices, full employment and economic growth. Through phenomenological method, the work observed that the Nigerian government aligned with some Islamic economic policies despite the fact that it is a multi-religious nation but the bane experienced in the economy is not unconnected to its failure to key into the functions totally. The work recommends utilisation of the propositions of At-Turki since they are divinely guided and submitted that legalisation of the commodities that are diametrically opposed to the divine Book recede economic growth.

**Keywords:** *Al-'Iqtisādu'l-'Islāmī*, government, policy-makers, economic growth

## Introduction

It is not disputable that Islam is a comprehensive religion that covers every aspect of life. The religion, which regulates minute aspects such as modes of dressing, greeting and eating, could not have kept mum on the fundamental issues that border on the affairs of state especially economic aspect. The inseparability of religion as an indispensable tool needed for the effectiveness and efficiency of a state while discharging its functions is stressed by Al-Ghazālī when he held “The state and religion are inseparable pillars of orderly society. Religion is the foundation and the ruler representing the state is the promulgator and protector; if either pillar is weak the society will crumble”.<sup>1</sup> To prove the inseparability, Muslim thinkers like Al-Māwardī, Ibn Khaldūn, Al-Ilorī and many others invested in the writings on the ordinances of government while others like Dr. Muḥammad ‘Abdullāh Al-<sup>c</sup>Arabī the author of *Al-Iqtisādu'l-'Islāmīwa'l-Iqtisādu'l-Mu<sup>c</sup>asir*, Dr Muḥammad Shawqī Al-Fanjarī, the author of *Al-Madkhalilā'l-Iqtisādi'l-Islāmī* contribute to the Islamic principles of economy. At-Turkī, a contemporary jurist, is one of the few Muslim scholars who left indelible marks in the field of Islamic economy. In his work titled *Al-Iqtisādu'l-'Islāmī*, a compendium of economic principles of Islam, At-Turkī devoted a chapter to delve into the economic functions of Islamic government with a view to proffer solution to the economic problems of the world and stimulate the economy by highlighting the roles anticipated from the government to discharge in order to record breakthrough in her responsibilities. This paper, therefore, explored the work to glean the functions since it is generally believed among Muslims that the Qur’ān and *Sunnah* are divine so that lessons educed from them can be transmitted to the public office holders in Nigeria for rumination and utilisation. It is however compelling to have a glimpse at the concept of government, general roles of government and meaning of good governance before having an exploratory look at the work.

### Concept of Government: An Overview

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the term government signifies the group of people who control and make decisions for a country, or a state<sup>2</sup>. The term is also defined in the dictionary to refer to the process or manner of controlling a nation or a sovereign state.<sup>3</sup> In the same vein, Webster also refers to the government as a particular system used for controlling country, or a state<sup>4</sup>. It is lucid from the three definitions provided in the dictionary that government

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted by A.A. Bala, “Leadership Qualities in Islam: A Lesson for Contemporary Muslims in Governance and Public Administration”, *NATAIS Journal*, vol. 100 (2007), p.43.

<sup>2</sup> Retrieved from [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/government](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/government) on 1-10- 2023

<sup>3</sup> Retrieved from [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/government](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/government) on 1-10-2023

<sup>4</sup> Retrieved from [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/government](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/government) on 1-10-2023

encapsulates the people in charge of administration of people, the process employed and the system utilised for the activity.

However, governance is a word that is often used interchangeably with government but the two words are derived variedly. Yet the two words often denote the exercise of authority over a territory or system, in an institution, a state or an organisation. In terms of oldness, the word governance was used in French (governance) in fourteenth century to refer to royal officers rather than to the process of governing or steering.<sup>5</sup> According to United Nations and Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific, governance means the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented.<sup>6</sup>

Explaining the difference between the government and governance, Rosenau and Czempiel held:

Governance is not synonymous with government. Both refer to purposive behavior, to goal-oriented activities, to systems of rule; but government suggests activities that are backed by formal authority, by police powers to insure the implementation of duly constituted policies, whereas governance refers to activities backed by shared goals that may or may not derive from legal and formally prescribed responsibilities and that do not necessarily rely on police powers to overcome defiance and attain compliance. Governance, in other words, is a more encompassing phenomenon than government. It embraces governmental institutions, but it also subsumes informal, non-governmental mechanisms whereby those persons and organizations within its purview move ahead, satisfy their needs, and their wants.<sup>7</sup>

From the above clarifications made by the two scholars, it can be inferred that the government relies on sovereignty to rule while governance is about management and orchestration.

In addition, governance is viewed by United Nations Development Programme as the exercise of economic, political, and administrative authority to manage affairs of a country at all levels. It includes mechanisms, processes, and institutions, through which citizens and groups enunciate their interests, discharge their legal

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<sup>5</sup> Polya Kantsamunskā, "The Concept of Governance and Public Governance Theories", p.134. Retrieved from [www.unwe.bg/uploads/alternatives/polya-1-br2\\_2016\\_en.pdf](http://www.unwe.bg/uploads/alternatives/polya-1-br2_2016_en.pdf) on 20/9/2023

<sup>6</sup> United Nations and Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific, "What is Good Governance?" p. 1. Retrieved from [www.unescap.org/pdd](http://www.unescap.org/pdd) on 25-9-2023

<sup>7</sup> James N. Rosenau and Ernst-Otto Czempiel, *Governance without Government: Order and Change in World Politics*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), p.4. Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/core> on 2/10/2023

rights, meet their obligations, and mediate their differences.<sup>8</sup> According to the definition, governance has three basic functions: economic, political and administrative. Economic functions include decision-making processes that affect fiscal or monetary activities of a country and its relationships with other related aspects.. It however has clear-cut implications for equity, poverty and quality of life. Political functions include the process of decision-making to formulate policy. The basic administrative function is about the system of policy implementation.<sup>9</sup>

To cap the distinctions between the two terminologies, governance is a system of rule that works efficiently if it is embraced by the majority especially the most powerful of those that the rule affects while government functions even if there is vehement opposition to her policies. The two are therefore needed in this domain so that viable and vibrant economy will be witnessed and bequeathed to the incoming generations. In other words, good government is expected to manage economic and social resources, maintain impartial and transparent management of public affairs, and ensure welfare, solidarity, justice and cooperation.<sup>10</sup> Government is also one of the key actors in governance while other different from government including NGOS, multi-national cooperation, political parties, and peasant farmers are grouped together as civil society.<sup>11</sup>

In the proposition of Al-Ilori, good government is an independent government that adds value to the living standard of the individuals in the community and protects them against all odds and evils. He held that an average member of a community is prone to commit crime but a good government enforces law and order to halt it. He opined that good government may be difficult to achieve if a vast number of the residents of a particular community upon which the government is built are bad. This implies that the heads of the government are the products of the community and their actions reflect the dispositions of their members.<sup>12</sup> It is, therefore, imperative to unveil the roles so that the yardstick needed to identify good governance can be disclosed.

### **Roles and Functions of Government**

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<sup>8</sup> United Nations Development Program, *Governance & Sustainable Human Development*, Discussion Paper 2, (New York: Management Development and Governance Division, Bureau of Policy and Programme Support, 1997). Quoted in Module 1, *The Concept and Theories of Governance*, Introduction, Study notes for Decision Making, p.7

<sup>9</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.iog.ca> on 5-9-2023

<sup>10</sup> Polya Kantsamunska, "The Concept of Governance and Public Governance Theories",...p.140

<sup>11</sup> What is Good Governance? p.2. Retrieved from [www.unescap.org/pdd](http://www.unescap.org/pdd) on 25-9-2023

<sup>12</sup> R.I. Adebayo, "Good Governance in the Works of Shaykh Adam Al-Ilori: A Lesson for Democratic Dispensation in Nigeria" in *Shaykh Abdullah Al-Ilory in the Tableau of Immortality*, ed. Razaq D. Abubakre (Riyadh: The Nigerian Centre for Arabic Research, 2012) p. 17

For every society to enjoy peaceful and prosperous conditions; there must be a government that is saddled with the responsibility of maintaining law and order as pointed out in the beginning of this research about the conception of government and governance.

However, the basic functions of government include: defense and security functions; regulation of social life; maintenance of unity in society; provision of infrastructures, political, economic and social functions; international relations.<sup>13</sup>

It is important to state that the government plays fundamental role in the economic development process. Market rules and operating procedures are set and enforced by the government. This role is played by the government through provision of public goods that are collective and through efforts to counter market imperfections such as externalities or poor information. For example, the government provides public infrastructure that services economic activities. It also provides public services to both business and households.<sup>14</sup> The roles of government are, however, summarised by Sikiru as follows:

- (i) Interpersonal and intergroup relationship. This is necessary to maintain order and stability,
- (ii) Mobilisation of all the human and material resources within and even outside its territories for the promotion of the welfare of the citizens.
- (iii) Distribution of resources fairly to its members.
- (iv) Regulation of the activities and relationships of people.<sup>15</sup>

It is, however, clear that the government that embodies all the roles spelt out above can be described as a good government. This will therefore lead us to voyage through the concept of good governance before highlighting the economic functions of government.

### **Good Governance**

Having reiterated that the dominant dynamic perspective about governance in the literature describes it as a process of steering and coordination, special attention needed to be paid to good governance, which as a concept is still evolving. The roots of good governance cannot be easily traced and that is why various authors use it in different contexts. The concept, however, appeared first in the documents of United Nations' development activities and World Bank (WB) in 1992 as well as in the documents of International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1996<sup>16</sup>

Like government, governance can be good or bad. Bad government and bad governance have similar characteristics that include corruption, whimsical and

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<sup>13</sup> Sikiru 'Lanre Nurudeen, "Organisation of Government", POL 124, (National Open University of Nigeria Press, 2019), p.2

<sup>14</sup> Sikiru 'Lanre Nurudeen, "Organisation of Government", POL 124, p.2

<sup>15</sup> Sikiru 'Lanre Nurudeen, "Organisation of Government", POL 124, p.6.

<sup>16</sup> Polya Kantsamunsk, "The Concept of Governance and Public Governance Theories",...p.139

expedient decision-making, short-sightedness and disregard for the concern of the populace as well as their decisions.<sup>17</sup> The objective of good governance inferred from the definition of Sir Adrian Cadbury is: “..... holding the balance between economic and social goals and between individual and communal goals. In addition, the framework of governance is to encourage the efficient use of resources as well as to demand accountability for the stewardship of those resources. The aim is to strive towards aligning the interests of individuals, the organisation and society”<sup>18</sup>

However, one of the prominent requirements of good governance is good government, i.e. an effective public service and effective public service institutions, which are very productive, transparent and responsive. The reason is that good governance is about achieving desired results in the right way.<sup>19</sup> More so, good governance requires the processes and institutions that produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of the resources at their disposal. It also requires prudent management of the resources for the sustainable human development. This spirit should be developed by Nigerian political leaders to harness the resources endowed by God to better lots of Nigerian populace.<sup>20</sup>

According to United Nations Economic and Social Commission, good governance has eight major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective, efficient, equitable, and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is reduced to bearable minimum, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the down trodden masses in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society.<sup>21</sup> However, the most essential characteristic that is not mentioned by UN is the performance of its roles for the sake of God. This is very essential because Islamic government is aware of the fact that any act performed by human beings without its commitment for the sake of God will be in vain.

Good governance also establishes a strong future for an organization by continuously steering towards a vision and making sure that day-to-day

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<sup>17</sup> Ledivina V. Carino, *The Concept of Governance, from Government to Governance, Reflections on the 1999 World Conference on Governance, 2000*. Quoted in Module 1, *The Concept and Theories of Governance*, p.35, retrieved from [www.ombudsman.gov.ph](http://www.ombudsman.gov.ph) on 6/9/2023.

<sup>18</sup> Lynda Bourne, “The Six Functions of Governance”, *PM World Journal*, vol. III, Issue XI, (2014), p.1 retrieved from [www.pmworldjournal.net](http://www.pmworldjournal.net) on 7/9/2023

<sup>19</sup> Module 1, *The Concept and Theories of Governance*, p.35, retrieved from [www.ombudsman.gov.ph](http://www.ombudsman.gov.ph) on 6/9/2023

<sup>20</sup> R.I. Adebayo, “Good Governance in the Works of Shaykh Adam Al-Ilori: A Lesson for Democratic Dispensation in Nigeria”...p.24.

<sup>21</sup> United Nations and Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific , *What is Good Governance?* p.2, retrieved from [www.unescap.org/pdd](http://www.unescap.org/pdd) on 6/9/2023.



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management is always lined up with the organization's goals. Poor governance can put organizations at risk of commercial failure, financial and legal problems for directors/trustees or allow an organization to lose sight of its purpose and its responsibilities to its owners and people who benefit from its success.<sup>22</sup> Thus, there is need for good government and good governance to attain prosperity and economic boon in Nigeria. This will therefore lead us to explore the economic functions of government highlighted in *Al-'Iqtisād* of At-Turkī, the key player in governance, so that the narrative of economic bane can be changed. This is essential because the crux of the matter in administration and governance is the Qur'anic command of enjoining good and forbidding evil. This was responsible for the Muslims' genuine commitment to the welfare of others and being responsive to their needs. *Iman* (faith), *taqwa* (consciousness of Allah), *'adl* (justice) and *hubb* (love) are the watchwords of the Prophet and his companions in their administration<sup>23</sup>

### **The Economic Functions of Islamic Government Expounded in *Al-'Iqtisād* of At-Turkī**

According to Council for Economic Education, the six major functions of governments in market economies include provision of the legal and social framework (like creation of law), maintenance of competition (regulation of natural monopolies), provision of public goods and services (provision of goods and services that markets are not willing or unable to produce), redistribution of income (like imposition of higher tax on the rich and empowerment of the vulnerable group in the society), correction for externalities, and stabilization of the economy.<sup>24</sup> This shows that the intervention of government in the economy is inevitable because there are roles and responsibilities that cannot be assumed by private sector. The government intervenes to map out policies that can trigger the economy as it is also duty bound to correct anomalies identified in the market. Therefore, it is unavoidable for government to use fiscal and monetary power to promote economic growth and development.

In *Al-'Iqtisādu 'l-'Islāmī*, At-Turkī also identified and analysed key functions that every government that aims at revamping economy must observe in order to record boon and breakthrough in her bid. The important issues raised by him include:

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<sup>22</sup> Quoted in Module 1, "The Concept and Theories of Governance", p.14, retrieved from [www.ombudsman.gov.ph](http://www.ombudsman.gov.ph) on 6/9/2023.

<sup>23</sup> R.I Adebayo Islam, "Democracy and Good Governance: A Glimpse of the Islamic Political Thought", *ORITA Ibadan Journal of Religious Studies* XLII/2 (2010), p.9

<sup>24</sup> National Council on Economic Education, "What are the Economic Functions of Government?", retrieved from [http:// www.teaching\\_civics.org/lesson/economic-functions-of-government/](http://www.teaching_civics.org/lesson/economic-functions-of-government/) on 5-9-2023



### Policy Formulation and Effective Planning

Policy formulation, which is defined as the process by which governments and other organisations develop policies that guide decision-making and action, formed a thrust of discussion of At-Turkī. In his attempt to underscore the effectiveness of efficient policy formulation in addressing social and economic challenges of the nation as well as its potency in promoting economic growth, At-Turkī submitted that the role of government in laying down distinctive policy for its economy is an important matter that requires strenuous efforts and concentration.<sup>25</sup> He viewed that it is one of the requisites of Islamic law that Qur'ān encouraged in Q8:60 where Allah declares:

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهَبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ  
وَأَخْرَيْنَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمْ

And prepare against them what force you can and horses tied at the frontier, to frighten thereby the enemy of Allah and your enemy and others besides them, whom you do not know

Commenting on the verse, At-Turkī held that preparation in strength-wise, mentioned in the verse, envelopes preparation in all aspects of life because strength of the community cannot be determined based on the number of troops it has but in terms of ammunition, economy and the ease of livelihood.<sup>26</sup> He argued further that protection of the nation resources and its judicious utilization is one of the righteous acts advocated by Qur'ān 3:104

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ  
الْمُفْلِحُونَ

There should be a party among you who invite to good and enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong, and these it is that shall be successful

While drawing attention of the world to the exigency of moderate spending, At-Turkī stressed that the adequate planning protects the treasures of the present and the incoming generations.<sup>27</sup> At-Turki, who considered the resources as a trust that will be accounted for before Allah, held that human beings are enjoined to work assiduously in this life hoping to live forever and the work requires planning. However, At-Turkī drew inspiration from the following hadith:

<sup>25</sup> 'Abdullāh bn 'Abdul Muḥsin At-Turkī, *Al-Iqtisādu'l-'Islāmī: 'Ususun wamabādi'u wa 'ahdāf*, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition (Riyadh: Al-Juraysi, 2009), pp.97-101.

<sup>26</sup> 'Abdullāhbn 'Abdul Muḥsin At-Turkī, *Al-Iqtisādu'l-'Islāmī: 'Ususunwamabādi'uwa 'ahdāf*, p.97.

<sup>27</sup> It is important to state that whenever At-Turki is quoted subsequently, his view expressed can be found within page 97 and 101 of *Al-Iqtisādu'l-'Islāmī*. If otherwise, appropriate reference will be made.

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Sa'udbn 'Abī Waqqāṣ (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet (SAW) came to pay me visit while I was in Makkah and he detested to die there. He said: May Allah be pleased with Ibn 'Afrā'. I told him: I bequeathed all my wealth for charity and the Prophet rejected it. I said: I bequeathed half of it and he also rejected it. I said: I bequeathed one-third of it. He accepted one-third of it and considered it enormous. The Prophet remarked: It is better to live your heirs as rich than to live them as destitute depending on people to survive.<sup>28</sup>

The above advice of the Prophet stresses the importance of protecting the future of children and this can be actualized by making good plan and effective policy that is capable of transforming the economy.

To avoid misconstrue of his message on the need for adequate planning, At-Turkī made distinction between planning and prediction. He defined prediction as the opinion of an individual that depends on anticipation and conjecture while planning is a formulated opinion that depends on figures and statistics. According to him, prediction of the unseen is celebrated by the retrogressive communities and it results to poverty, ignorance, punishment and wretchedness. However, planning is made by progressive people for its generation and the future generations. It entails highlighting the goals and identifying the means of achieving them within the time frame. According to him, planning provides direction to the individuals on the kind of economic activity required from him and its economic benefit. It also limits his position, method of production, distribution, and the likes.<sup>29</sup>

### **Permissible Areas of Intervention by Government in Driving Economy**

According to At-Turkī, it is mandatory on the government to proscribe the sale of the commodities forbidden by Allah in order to drive economy. Highlighting the issue, At-Turkī made reference to alcohols, hard drugs, sculptures, books and magazines as well as films that can mar religious values. Corroborating the view, Ibn Taymiyyah explained that it is within the jurisdiction of *muhtasib* to proscribe reprehensible contracts declared by Allah and His Messenger including *ribā* contracts, gambling, deceptive business like the sale of foetus in the wombs, sale by touching (*mulāmasah*), sale by throwing (*munābazah*), delay usury (*ribānāsī'ah*), excess usury (*ribā faḍl*) and increment of the cost of commodity through deception.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥu'l-Bukhārī*, vol.4, (Lebanon: Dār Tawqī'n-Najāh, 1422), p.2742

<sup>29</sup> Al-Markazu'l- 'Alamī li' abḥāthi'l-Iqtisādi'l-Islāmī, *Al-Iqtisādu'l-Islāmī: BuḥuthunMukhtārah*, (Saudi: King Abdul Aziz University, 1400AH) p.111.

<sup>30</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah, *Al-Ḥisbah*, (Riyadh: Al-Mu'assasah As-Sa'īdiyyah, n.d.) p.32.

Furthering his position on the permissible areas of intervention for government in driving economy, At-Turkī advocated proscription of cheating in all its forms whether in foods, measurements, weights or currencies, and so on. He quoted Ibn Taymiyyah, saying: “If the leader sees nothing wrong in the punishment of the fraudster by using his wealth for charity or destroying it, it is compulsory on him to prevent the damage caused by the act from affecting people either by getting rid of it or buying adulterated commodity in order to avoid cheating people”.<sup>31</sup> Proscription of lack of diligence in the work or absenteeism is also one of the important areas that must be taken into cognizance by the head. Justifying his position on the legality and necessity of government in waging war against laziness on the part of the employees, At-Turkī quoted Ibn Taymiyyah saying: “The Prophet (SAW) used to seek accountability from the employees and he used to hold them answerable on the product and the cost”.<sup>32</sup> He further said: “If men are in need of farm products, textile or structure, it is the duty of the head to coerce the people employed for such to make it available at a price that is commensurable with it without giving them opportunity to hike the price or allow people to cheat on them. Also, if the troops equipped for *jihād* are in need of agricultural products, he will oblige them to make it available because troops are bound not to cheat the farmer as the farmer is also bound to ensure prosperity of the troops”.<sup>33</sup>

Control of wages and prices if people inflate or deflate it: This implies that the leader is bound to coerce the manufacturers to make provision for the needs of people on farming, weaving and construction and he is to fix the wage that is commensurable with it without allowing the user to short-change the manufacturer and vice-versa. This is considered as part of price control that is compulsory. Also, if people are in need of war tools like weapon, construction of bridge for war, etc, it should be produced at a price that is commensurable with it without allowing the users to cheat on the manufacturers and not allowing the manufacturers to resort to inflation as a result of the dire need of the products. This is called a production control. As for the price control, it is compulsory on the manufacturers of the weapon to sell it at a cost price if people are in need of weapon for *jihād* and they have no right to delay the production until the enemy invades them.<sup>34</sup>

He, however, censured the production companies that make dirty money at the expense of the consumers without any commensurability between their work and

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<sup>31</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmū'l-Fatāwā Shaykh*, vol.28, (Saudi: King Fahd, 1995 ) p.116.

<sup>32</sup> Polya Kantsamunskā, “The Concept of Governance and Public Governance Theories”,...p.139

<sup>33</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah, *Al-Ḥisbah*,...p.47.

<sup>34</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah, *Al-Ḥisbatufi'l-'Islām*,...p.55.

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profit except their connection with foreign producer and taking advantage of the consumer's unawareness of the cost of production of the commodity.

Abolition of the middlemen and agents or restriction of their number so that the profits will not be higher than the cost of production without any justification: Abolition of middlemen is established by the Prophet (SAW) when he forbade the sale of city-dweller on behalf of the Bedouin and when he interdicted meeting with caravans in order to counsel him on the sale of commodity. Cancellation of this reduces the price of the commodity because middleman will not receive agent fee.<sup>35</sup>

Also considered as an important issue that requires attention of the government is proscription of the sale of commodity that can cause damage to the public health ranging from foods and drinks to poisonous materials. Mentioning the basic functions of *muhtasib* in *Ma'ālimu'l-Qurbah*, Ibnul Ukhuwwah says: "He is to compel people to avoid mixing fresh food with stale...Because doing so hurts the consumers and he is to compel them to pluck out the dried cones and purslanes. He enjoins them to ensure that they are ripe and clean from dust".<sup>36</sup>

Proscription of frivolity with public interests and public treasures is also emphasised by At-Turki. Some of the instances cited include prohibition of causing assault on the streets, roads and public facilities like garden and various services.

Proscription of working in the forbidden domain like engaging in prostitution, immorality, gambling, making of statues, alcohols, sale of healthy teeth and organ of the body, proscription of teaching magic or immorality and many others.

### **Illegal Areas of Intervention by Government in Driving Economy**

According to At-Turki, there are some areas where government cannot intervene in order to boost economy of the nation. The identified areas are as follows:

Legalization of what is forbidden by Allah and His Prophet (SAW). For instance, approval of the activities of the banks that deal with usury, establishment of the factories and shops dealing with alcohols, production of idols, legitimization of adultery, annulment of the inheritance shared on the basis of Islamic law, giving license to the conventional insurance companies, etc. Forbiddance of what is legalized by Allah. The instances include forbidding people from acquiring lawful commodities without any good reason. It has been stated earlier that Islamic law is made by Allah and His Prophet and that there is no legislation after the death of the Prophet (SAW). People are obliged to act in accordance with the dictates of

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<sup>35</sup> Su'ād Ibrāhīm, *Mabādi'un-Nizāmi'l-Iqtisādī*, (1406AH),p.172. Quoted in *Al-Iqtisādu'l-Islāmī: 'Ususunwamabādi'uwa 'ahdāf* of At-Turkī, p.101

<sup>36</sup> Ibnul Ukhuwwah, *Ma'ālimu'l-Qurbah Fi 'Aḥkāmi'l-Hisbah*, p.160. Quoted in 'Abdullāh bn 'Abdul Muḥsin At-Turkī, *Al-Iqtisādu'l-Islāmī: 'Ususunwamabādi'uwa 'ahdāf*, p.99

Allah. Allah says: Q4:65. Causing havoc to the generality of people because of the interests of some individuals or causing damage to the individuals because of the interest of others. Also, giving preference to the interest of people at the expense of the individual for lust or causing havoc to that individual.

From the above functions elaborated by At-Turki, it is crystal clear that both fiscal and monetary functions of government were succinctly discussed.

### **The Derivable Lessons from the Functions for Policymakers in Nigeria**

One of the derivable lessons from the discourse of At-Turkī on the economic functions of government is the necessity of the formulation of formidable economic policy that will direct activities of the government to attain stable prices, full employment and economic growth. There is no doubt that the exigency of policy is taken cognizance by the policymakers in Nigeria in order to achieve a strong and stable economy. However, there is no proper planning as stressed by At-Turkī in Nigeria. For instance, there is no adequate data about the population of the country but the information that is often released since 2006 was based on assumption. How can the country that cannot give a detailed demographic and statistics produce workable policy for the country? How can the country that cannot dish out the actual population and housing deficit plan adequately deliver and achieve sustainable development goals? Thus, the stable prices, full employment and economic growth considered as basic goals of economic policy are nothing to write home about. The prices for goods and services especially foods increase sharply, the value of Naira has reduced drastically and the prices for critical goods like oil have created inflationary prices throughout the economy. Although it is not possible to attain absolute full employment but Nigeria's rate of unemployment is very high despite the report that Nigeria's unemployment rate plunged to 5.3% in 2022 from 33.3% recorded in 2020, based on the new Nigeria Labour Force Survey (NLFS).<sup>37</sup>

Another important message emphasised by At-Turkī while explaining the significance of proper planning is protection of the treasures for the incoming generations. Contrary to this, Nigerian government relies heavily on the sale of oil that has been predicted that it will dry up very soon since the crude oil drilling is like mining and whatever that is being mined would be exhausted one day. Yet, Nigerian government failed to heed to the call of Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (former Finance Minister) to save during the boom of oil into the Excess Crude

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<sup>37</sup> Jonathan Lain and Utz Pape, "Nigeria's Dichotomy: Low Unemployment, High Poverty Rates", *World Bank Blogs*, retrieved from [www.blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/nigerias-dichotomy-low-unemployment-high-poverty-rates-on-20/10/2023](http://www.blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/nigerias-dichotomy-low-unemployment-high-poverty-rates-on-20/10/2023)

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Account.<sup>38</sup> Consequently, the government emptied the account to deny the future generations from benefiting from the fortunes.

Proscription of the sale of the commodities that are detrimental to the health like alcohol is also one of the lessons deduced from the discourse. This is very crucial to drive economic growth, because the energy expended in producing alcohol that is associated with adverse effects like heart disease, such as high blood pressure, digestive problems, cancer of the breast, mouth, weakening of the immune system, among others can be converted to produce commodities that are beneficial to the health. Although Federal Government of Nigeria has increased excise duties on alcoholic beverages and the reason is that they are not matters of absolute necessities for consumers.<sup>39</sup> However, proscription of its production and diversion of energy to other sectors will contribute to the economic growth.

The necessity of controlling price commodities by the authority is also seen as a booster of economic growth. This is very essential in this clime and the failure of the Federal Government of Nigeria in keying into this actively has exposed the citizens to the hike in food items, building materials like cement and etc. The government cannot formulate policy in this regard especially on the prices of foods because it produces little things. This however can be well understood if one ruminates over the announcement made by President Ahmed Tinubu that the grains that will be supplied to the market by his administration will crash the food prices in Nigeria.<sup>40</sup> Yet, the food price skyrocketed and the downtrodden masses find it difficult to take three square meals daily because the grains in the storage are minute.

Giving preference to the public interest in the distribution of resources also constitutes part of the lessons deduced from the discussion. It is important to emphasise that the money expended to maintain politicians in Nigeria is very enormous. There is no equity in the distribution of public treasures. The civil and public servants are impoverished while the public resources are expended to enrich politicians. This is evident in the recent approval of 70 billion naira to enhance the conditions of new lawmakers that are infinitesimal while N500 billion was approved as palliatives to cushion the effects of removal of fuel

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<sup>38</sup> Fredrick Nwabufu, "Okonjo-Iweala: I said governors, not Jonathan, lacked the political will to save", *The Cable*, retrieved from [www.thecable.ng/okonjo-iweala-govs-not-gej-lacked-will-save-amp](http://www.thecable.ng/okonjo-iweala-govs-not-gej-lacked-will-save-amp) on 7/09/2023

<sup>39</sup> Bunmi Bailey, "Alcoholic Beverage Firms seen Squeezed as FG doubles Taxes", *Business Day*, retrieved from [www.businessday-economy/article/alcoholic-beverage-firms-seen-squeezed-as-fg-doubles-taxes](http://www.businessday-economy/article/alcoholic-beverage-firms-seen-squeezed-as-fg-doubles-taxes) on May 2, 2023

<sup>40</sup> Modupe Gbadeyanka, "Tinubu Rolls out Initiatives to Crash Rising Prices of Foods", *Business Post*, retrieved from [www.businesspost.ng/economy/tinub-rolls-out-initiaives-to-crash-rising-prices-of-food/](http://www.businesspost.ng/economy/tinub-rolls-out-initiaives-to-crash-rising-prices-of-food/) on 14/11/2023.

subsidy for over 200 million Nigerians.<sup>41</sup> Nigerian workers especially academic and non-academic staff of Universities find it difficult to get attention of the Federal Government to have their wage increased while RMAFC award over 100 percent increment to the executive, judiciary and legislative salaries unevenly.

The exigency of staying off from making law that is not divinely guided is also essential in promoting economic growth. Introduction of economic principles that are antithetic to the divine scripture will only lead the promoters to perversion. The principles that encourage usury, production of intoxicants, etc under the disguise of freedom are lagging the country back because the energy utilised to embark on all unscrupulous acts can be expended on other beneficial transactions.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has highlighted the economic functions of Islamic government enunciate in *Al-'Iqtisādu'l-'Islāmī* of At-Turkī with a view to infer lessons from the system for policy-makers in Nigeria. To achieve this, it expounded the concepts of government and governance and outlined the functions of government from the lens of conventional system. The paper stressed that the cardinal goal of good governance is to strive towards efficient use of resources to produce the results that meet the needs of society and revealed that any governance that is devoid of the eight features of good governance identified by United Nations Economic and Social Commission cannot be described as such. To justify this, the paper argued that the execution of economic functions of Islamic government discussed by At-Turki is inevitable in the promotion of standard of living and protection of masses against the odds and evils that he good governance aimed at achieving. It submitted that there is need for formulation of robust policy that guarantees economic growth and echoed that legalisation of the commodities that are diametrically opposed to the divine Book can only recede performance of economy.

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<sup>41</sup> Bakare Majeed, “Supplementary Budget: National Assembly gets N70 billion to Support New Members”, *Premium Times*, retrieved from [www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/609640-supplementary-budget-national-assembly-gets-n70-billion-to-support-new-members.html](http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/609640-supplementary-budget-national-assembly-gets-n70-billion-to-support-new-members.html) on 13/7/2023.