

2018 ISLAMICITY INDICES – NIGERIA

SUMMARY

Although Nigeria’s performance in Islamicity indices in 2018 is not among the best, it has however made some improvements in both ranking and scores. Despite the social and economic challenges bedeviling the country, it has made considerable improvement especially on Economic Islamicity (EI) and Legal and Governance Islamicity (LGI). The improvement in the latter placed Nigeria among the top ten country. Nigeria is replete with several economic and security challenges which continue to weigh down on the economic progress. Security threats such as armed robbery, kidnapping, Boko Haram insurgency, Niger Delta militancy, corruption and weak legal system, continue to be a drag on its development. These have contributed to its low rankings in three out of the five following indices; Overall Islamicity (OI), Human and Political Rights Islamicity (HPRI) and International Relations Islamicity (IRI).

As a way of improving these aforementioned problems, a more socially inclusive government strategy needs to be followed. The teachings of Islam both in the Quran and Sunnah need to be followed especially in the areas of governance. The institutional structure need to be overhauled so as to build a society where peace and harmony prevails.

SCORES AND RANKS: COMPARISON TO OTHER AVERAGES

Nigeria’s Islamicity index in 2018 was among the worst performers in Muslim countries considering the median rankings of the three groupings it belongs (All countries, OIC countries and West African Countries), as shown in Table 1. Nigeria fared worse than all in the categories. Its rankings fell even lower than that of the median rankings of West African countries (Lower than all and OIC countries).

Table 1: Median Rankings

Ranks For 2018	OI	EI	LGI	HPRI	IRI
All countries	76	77	77	77	77
OIC Countries	119	113	116	112	119
West African Countries	127	117	121	126	57
Nigeria	133	116	138	134	82

Figure 2 shows the median scores comparisons for all countries, OIC countries and Nigeria. It could be seen that the scores for Nigeria fell lower than that of global and OIC countries in areas of overall Islamicity (OI), legal and governance Islamicity (LGI) and Human and political rights (HPRI). Nigeria’s scores, however, came very close to OIC countries. Similarly in international relation index (IRI), its scores almost caught up with the global median scores (4.87 for Nigeria versus 5.03 for the world).

Figure 2: Median Scores

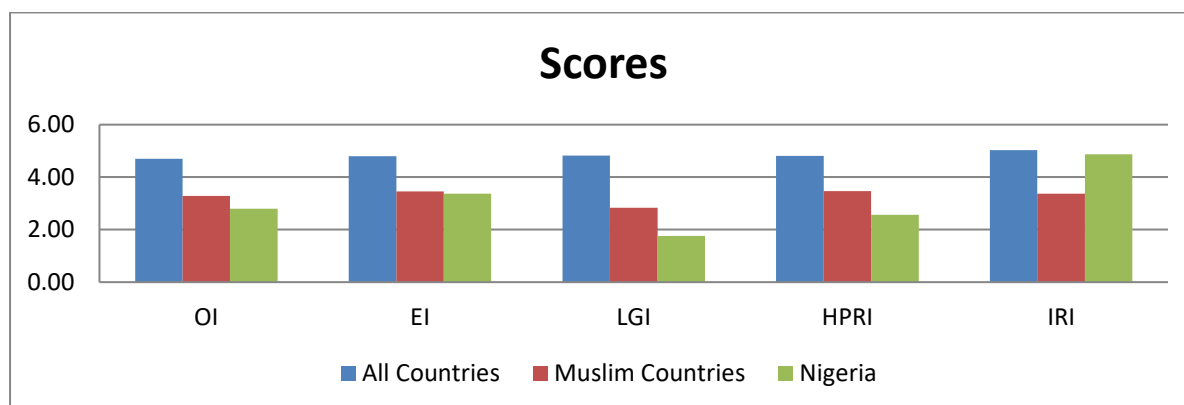


Table 3 shows the scores and percentage of median change for 2018 relative to 2017. The performance of Nigeria in relation to other countries in the group is not impressive. Its scores only improved in EI and LGI having increased by 9.56% and 8.8%, respectively. The lowest performance was realized in OI, HPRI and IRI. This is not surprising as the country still suffers from economic challenges such as unemployment, slow and inefficient legal system, poor institutional structure and multitude of insecurity challenges ranging from kidnappings to clashes between farmers/herders. All the aforementioned issues together contributed to the poor performance in OI, HPRI and IRI.

Table 3: Scores and Percentage change for 2018 relative to 2017

Median Scores	OI	EI	LGI	HPRI	IRI
All Countries, 2018	4.70	4.80	4.82	4.81	5.03
OIC Countries, 2018	3.28	3.45	2.84	3.47	3.37
Nigeria, 2018	2.79	3.37	1.76	2.56	4.87
All Countries, 2017	4.63	4.72	4.70	4.80	4.95
OIC, 2017	3.13	3.80	2.79	3.11	3.65
Nigeria, 2017	2.85	3.07	1.62	2.73	6.22
Percentage change in median score relative to 2017 for All Countries	1.60	1.54	2.47	0.40	1.66
Percentage change in median score relative to 2017 for All OIC Countries	4.79	-9.08	1.89	11.70	-7.81
Percentage change in median score relative to 2017 for Nigeria	-1.92	9.56	8.78	-6.16	-21.68

Table 4 shows the comparison in ranking between 2018 and 2017. Only EI improved by 7 spots with OI, LGI, HRI and IRI having a drop in performance. The worst performance is seen in international relations with the most decline (42%). However, when scores are considered, it made slight improvement in EI and LGI, an indication of gradual systemic progresses in the country's political and economic structure.

Table 4: Ranks and Scores

Changes	OI	EI	LGI	HPRI	IRI
Ranks (in spots)	-2	7	-1	-3	-42
Scores (in %)	-1.92	9.56	8.78	-6.16	-21.68

TOP IMPROVEMENTS AND DECLINES IN SCORES AND RANKING - NIGERIA

Nigeria's overall score is not encouraging, even though it fared better than some other OIC countries, with an overall decline of 1.9% compared to a decline of 15.2% and 7.6% for Egypt and Burundi respectively. Its declined performance in relation to OIC countries is the least with only Iraq having equal scores. It however dropped in ranking by 2 points, a moderate

drop when compared with other some OIC countries like Tunisia and Lebanon with 11.0% and 6.0% respectively.

In the case of EI, it made impressive improvement in both scores and ranking, with a median score increase of 9.6% faring relatively well with other OIC countries. With regards to the ranking, it was ranked 7th.

In LGI, it has made significant improvement which catapulted it in the top 10 in scores. It only ranks fifth behind Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Mauritania, and Ukraine with an increase of 8.8%. However, its ranking dropped slightly by 1 percent.

Nigeria’s performance in IRI is among the worst among Muslim countries with decline in scores and rank by 22% and 42 places respectively. When compared with other Muslim countries, its performance was better than the worst performing Muslim country like Libya, with a significant drop in score by 81% and ranking by 105 places.

COMPARISON WITH OTHER REGION AND OVERALL OIC COUNTRIES

Nigeria’s overall Islamicity ranking in 2018 is encouraging as its performance has surpassed that of other countries in other regions. For example, in regions like Asia, South Asia, and Central Asia and Central Africa, it’s ranking in OI, EI and HRI was the best among the countries listed (Table 5). Similarly, its ranking in IRI has improved remarkably and ranked highest among the listed countries. However, its LGI ranking lagged behind Mauritania and Pakistan. There is a modest improvement in its overall 2018 ranking over that of 2017.

Table 5: Regional Ranking

Region	Country	OI Rank	EI Rank	LGI Rank	HRI Rank	IRI Rank
Africa	Nigeria	133	116	138	134	82
Asia	Afghanistan	148	137	141	148	129
Africa	Chad	150	142	148	152	119
Africa	Guinea	139	130	130	141	57
Africa	Mauritania	142	133	131	149	130
Asia	Pakistan	137	107	137	146	134
Africa	Sudan	151	149	151	151	135
Middle East	Syria	144	117	145	139	151

Middle East	Yemen	152	153	150	153	149
-------------	-------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

GENERAL OUTLOOK IN THE CHANGE IN INDICES

Although Nigeria is plagued with myriad of problems, it made slight improvement in the ranks and scores of Islamicity indices in 2018. Attaining even higher performance is possible if the government would intensify its efforts towards implementing structural reforms which aid the growth process and increase efficiency. As fighting corruption is one of the top agenda of the present administration, eradicating or reducing it to the bare minimum will help to gain investors' confidence and correct the wrong perception about Nigeria in the international community. The inefficient legal system and the lack of rule of law must be overhauled. Proffering solution to the on-going social unrest which hindered development is key to achieving peaceful co-existence.

ECONOMIC ISLAMICITY INDEX (EI)

Nigeria's economy is recovering from one of the worst economic recessions ever, which was caused by the recent global oil price shocks. The country being heavily reliant on oil proceeds for its budgetary allocations has experienced reduction in crude oil revenue due to the above reasons. This crisis was unseen since the last one which occurred in 1991. The recovery was supported by several policies put in place by policy makers such as tight monetary policy, unifying exchange rates, a more conducive business environment and increased access to international market. The aforementioned development has aided the improvement in EI in both score and ranking.

Since Nigeria's recovery from the recession in early 2018, economic growth has picked up, though it remains slow with 2.38% GDP growth in the last quarter of the year. This economic performance is not at the level it ought to be. This owes to factors such as structural and policy challenges which stifles growth, persistent infrastructural deficit, epileptic power supply, poor healthcare and educational services, governance and institutional weaknesses, banking sector vulnerabilities and unrelenting foreign exchange (FX) restrictions that impeded its ability to attract long-term foreign and domestic investment.

Recently, domestic production has increased, which helped boost output. This upward trend in growth is driven by improvement in manufacturing and service sector, agricultural sector, which currently employs 45 percent of the country's workforce and contributes 25 percent to GDP. The growth achieved in agricultural sector could have even been better but due to persistent floods and farmer/herdsmen clashes, this has made some farmers to abandon farming.

The government is also aggressively pursuing other pro-growth economic policies that will enhance productivity such as increasing financial inclusion, providing soft loan to farmers at zero or single digit interest rates, increasing the ease of business registrations, taming inflation and creating a level playing field for businesses to flourish. Similarly, the tax remittance was improved and a lot of loopholes and leakages that existed were blocked. This has boosted significantly revenue collected.

LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE ISLAMICITY (LGI)

Nigeria saw a minor improvement in its score. It was joined at the top of the score improvement by Mauritania, Pakistan, Kyrgyz Republic and Egypt. This improvement is partly due to the country's efforts in fighting corruption which helped changed Nigeria's international perception. The corruption perception index report showed Nigeria has made slight improvement in 2018. In the same year, Nigeria was ranked 144 least corrupt countries out of 175 nations, a slight improvement from the previous year. The country has also made progress in accountability, government effectiveness, reduction in red tape and bottlenecks, reduction in profligate expenditure and blockage of leakages.

HUMAN AND POLITICAL RIGHT ISLAMICITY (HPRI)

Political and human rights in Nigeria are not respected. This is especially true when looking at the lack of provision of quality education and health care and the incessant outage of electricity and basic necessities of life. These are the major reasons for the existence of the two most notorious terrorist organizations—Boko Haram and Niger Delta militants and the most recent kidnapping incidences, which continue to wreak havoc in the country. Their activities have caused many deaths and displaced millions of Nigerians resulting in cost to the

country and businesses that run into the billions of Naira. This menace is exacerbated by the lack of government's will in prosecuting offenders that normally goes unpunished.

These challenges are reflected in the HPRI scores which fell by 6.2%, contrary to a report by Freedom House on Nigeria which shows no change in status from the previous year's rating. A score of 50 (out of 100) in 2017 and 2018¹ implies no progress has been made in this regards.

Other sectors such as health and education continue to suffer myriad of problems. The Northern part of the country is home to millions of poor and malnourished children. Western education is still not affordable by many rural dwellers, leading to a lot of social vices among school aged children. More than 50% of girl's population in North-east and north-west are not attending schools.² The education sector receives one of the lowest budget allocations of a mere 7.04 per cent of the total budget and even much lower than the UNESCO benchmark of 26%.³

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS INDEX (IRI)

Militarization and globalization are the two essential metrics used to measure this index. Nigeria's performance in this index is the worst compared to all the rest of the Islamicity indicators. Its score fell by 22% and rank by 42. Over the last seven years, insurgency and increased militarization of restive regions and the displacements of humans that accompanied such events have caused huge spending in financing the military activities and settlements of the displaced persons. Despite this huge expenditure, situation in the country is still worsening. This is supported by the recent report by the Global Peace Index, which ranked Nigeria 148 among 163 independent states, maintaining its previous year's position. This makes Nigeria among the least peaceful countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and Muslim countries.

CONCLUSION

This report highlights the improvements and declines in performance made by Nigeria in Islamicity rankings and scores. Although some slight improvements were realized in the areas

¹<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world-2018-table-country-scores>

²<https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/education>.

³<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/251927-fact-check-unesco-ever-recommend-26-per-cent-budgetary-allocation-education.html>.

of the economy and legal and governance Islamicity. However, there is a decline in the Overall, Human and Political Rights and International Relations Islamicity, which suffer the most.

This suggests that, a lot needs to be done by the government especially in areas of security and governance. Most of the on-going security challenges faced by the country are the result of high degree of inequality of opportunity among the citizens. As Islam preaches justice and fairness in all walks of life, the government should create more and equal opportunities for its citizens to share the economic prosperity. This will go a long way to create a lasting peace, trust, harmony and hence, improved economic efficiency and productivity.

Fighting corruption is of paramount importance and requiring tremendous effort with the need to equip agencies with the modern apparatus necessary for effective solving of crimes. The current anti-corruption laws need to be repealed with more effective legislation to adequately address the prevailing problems in Nigeria.