Global Journal of Applied, Management and Social Sciences (GOJAMSS); Vol.26, June 2023; P.116 – 125 (ISSN: 2276 – 9013)

THE INFLUENCE OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMS ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EVIDENCE FROM NIGERIA.

NWANKWO CHINOMSO SUNDAY
Department of Economics
Abia State College of Education (Technical)
Arochukwu

Abstract

This work observes the influence of poverty alleviation programs on economic development evidence from Nigeria. Poverty alleviation is a serious matter that requires serious attention. Despite various poverty alleviation programs implemented by various past and present governments in Nigeria ,it seems that this menace is still living with us. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to find out the origin of poverty alleviation programmes in Nigeria, the approaches and strategies that Nigerian government has applied to reduce poverty, the appraisal or outcomes of poverty alleviation programmes and the constraints of the programmes in Nigeria. This study covers the period between 1980– 2015.Analyzing time series data obtained from secondary sources. The essence of the study is to investigate the significant influence of various poverty alleviation programmes set up by various governments to reduce poverty level in Nigeria. The researcher employed the Ordinary Least Square Technique to measure the incidence of poverty. The analysis was facilitated with the use of E-views analytical package. Findings reveal the existence of overall significant influence of poverty alleviation programmes on economic development of Nigeria.

Introduction

Poverty is the scarcity or lack of certain amount of material possessions or money. In real sense, poverty is said to mean a state of deprivation interns of both economic and social indicators which includes income, education, health care, portable drinking water, access to food, social status, self esteem and self actualization Okoh (1998). According to Ogumike (1991: 105), poverty is said to exist when income or disposable resources are inadequate to support a minimum standard of decent living.

In literature, poverty has being defined from two perspectives; the narrow economic perspective and the expansive cultural perspective. . The economic perspective defined poverty in terms of the external circumstances that influence a person's behaviour, especially with respect to economic discussions and transactions like the purchase of consumer goods, the acquisition of skills and the provision of productive services.

In Nigeria, the level of poverty between 1960s to late 1970s was very low in the sense that people below poverty line were relatively few. During this period, Nigeria enjoyed steady economic growth and relative stability. The economy and per capita income grew steadily as the agricultural, industrial and even public sector absorbed most of the labour force. The poverty incidence started rising in the late1970s and early 1980s when the economy experienced difficulties as a result of oil shock, deteriorating terms of trade, debt overhang and macroeconomic instability. In the mid 1980s, the poverty rate in Nigeria started rising. For instance about 43% of the Nigeria's population was living below poverty line between 1985 and 1986. It rose to 53% and 61% in 1996 and 1997respectively. The United Nations Development Program, Human Development Index (HDI) ranked Nigeria 154 out of 187 countries surveyed in 2012, 153 out of 186 countries surveyed in 2013, and 152 out of 187 countries surveyed in 2014, thus ranking Nigeria among the forty (40) poorest nations in the world (CBN Bullion 2003).

These rankings contradicts the enormous revenue generated by the Nigerian government from crude oil price surge during this period, and further contradicts the bogus statistics often paraded by government and its agencies on the economy’s growth trajectory. The HDI report on Nigeria for the period under review seem to collaborate the Mo Ibrahim Index for African Governance which ranked Nigeria 41th position out of 52 African countries surveyed in 2013. The Mo Ibrahim index is rated according to performance across four categories of governance: Safety and Rule of law, Participation and Human Rights, Sustainable Economic Opportunity, and Human Development. Participation and Human Rights measures the protection of human rights, civil and political participation, and gender issues. Nigeria ranking in this category have continued to drop over the years and remained at 33rdout of 52 African countries surveyed in 2013.The justification for this study emanates from the fact that in spites of these poverty alleviation programmes instituted by various administration, Nigeria still ranks 54th in Human Poverty Index (HPI), and among the 20 poorest countries in the world with 70% of the population living below the poverty line as of 2003 (World Development Report; 2005).

Poverty alleviation is one of the most difficult challenges facing any country in developing world, where on the average, majority of the population is considered poor. Evidences in Nigeria shows that the number of those in poverty has continued to increase. For example the number of those in poverty increased from 27% in 1980 to 46% in 1985 and to 67% in 1996, by 1999 it increased to more than 70% (Baghebo, 2001). Although the Nigeria economic report released in July 2014 by the World Bank put poverty rate at 33.1% for a country withmassive wealth and a huge population to support commerce. The report seems inconsistent with reality. Income inequality worsened from 0.43 to 0.49 between 2004 and 2009. The report also shows that, the dept and severity of poverty is more in the rural than in the urban. Poverty alleviation programmes in Nigeria are means through which the government aims to revamp and reconstruct the economy. The high incidence of poverty in the country has made poverty alleviation strategies important policy option over the years with varying results. Poverty alleviation strategies ranging from Operation Feed the Nation of 1978, the Green revolution of 1982, the Directorate of Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructures (DFRRI), the National Directorate for Employment (NDE), Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP), up to the National Poverty Eradication Programme, (NAPEP) were all attempts made by various governments in the country to curb the menace of poverty.

It has been known in Nigeria that every government embarks on one form of poverty alleviation programme or the other. However, what have remained unanswered are the extents to which these programmes have impacted on the poor or how far these programmes have successfully reduced the rate of poverty in Nigeria. The widespread nature of poverty worldwide has been generating great concern for policy makers and development analysts since the last few decades. In Nigeria, the trend of poverty incidence has increased in a very high rate. In Nigeria 54 percent of people lived relatively below poverty line of 2/3 of per capita households' expenditure, while 22% lived below the extreme relative poverty line of 1/3 of per capita household expenditure in the year 2004 NBS (National Bureau of Statistics). Some of the factors responsible for this lie in the nature of socio-political and economic structures, which alienate and exclude the poor from decisions affecting their welfare. Programmes are set up from the top with huge overheads, which favour contractors, consultants and the cronies of those in power. The politicization of policies aimed at poverty alleviation and the interplay of corrupt practices has often led to the displacement of goals and objectives of programmes designed to alleviate the incidence of poverty.

Research Question

1. To what extent does poverty alleviation programmes influence the level of economic development in Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

H_0: There is no significant influence of poverty alleviation programmes on economic development.

H_1: There is significant influence of poverty alleviation programmes oneconomic development.

Poverty connotes many things, that is, lack of material well-being, insecurity, low self confidence, psychological distress, unpredictability, lack of freedom of choice and action and inability to believe in one self (Narayan 2000:18). Poverty can either be absolute or relative or both (Sanyal, 1991:39 and Schubet 1994:17). Poverty is said to be absolute when people fall below the level of income that is necessary for bare

subsistence, while relative poverty relates to the living standards that prevail elsewhere in the community in which they live. Poverty measurements attempt to identify those who are poor.
The most frequently used measurements are; the head count poverty index given by the percentage of the population that live in the household with a per capita, consumption below the poverty line, poverty gap index which reflect show far the average poor persons income diverges from the poverty line, and, the squared poverty gap which shows the means of the squared proportion rate.Squared poverty gap reflects the severity of poverty (Grootaert and Braithwaite 1998:194).The UNDP has recently advocated the use of Human Department Index (HDI) and Capacity Poverty Measure (CPM). Human Development index entails the combination of three elements in the measure of poverty. These include life expectancy at birth (Longevity); educational attainment; and improvement in standard of living, proxy by per capita income. Whereas, capacity poverty measure focuses on the percentage of the people who lack basic or minimally essential human abilities needed to jump one from income poverty to a sustainable human development.
There are factors that cause poverty. These factors include structural causes such as limited resources, location disadvantage, lack of skills and other factors that are inherent in the social and political set-up (Yahie 1993). Other factors are transitional factors that are mainly dueto structural adjustment reforms and changes in domestic economic policies that may result in price changes, unemployment and so on. In addition, transition poverty can be caused by environmental degradation, natural calamities such as drought, flood and man-made disasters such as wars.

The main factors that cause poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa include: inadequate access to employment opportunities, inadequate physical assets, such as land and capital and minimal access to credit by the poor (See Obadan 1997:121, World Bank 1996). Other causes include inadequate access to markets where the poor can sell their goods and services; low endowment of human capital; inadequate access to assistance for those living at the margin, and those victimized by transitory poverty and lack of participation, that is to draw the poor into design of development programmes that affect their lives.
Urbanization is also identified as one of the causes of poverty. Poverty in most urban cities can be linked to the inner urban decay caused by prevalence of poor urban public facilities as most infrastructure assets have been allowed to run down through lack of maintenance and investment.
Maduagwu (2000), in the study "Alleviating poverty in Nigeria" were of the view that both foreign and domestic investment will enhance economic growth and development, but other essentials are required to achieve the goal of economic growth and development such as rule of law, and provision of infrastructure. The study stressed that rule of law is essential because “it ensures life and personal security, it also provides a stable framework of rights and obligations which can help to reduce political risks to investors and to cut down transportation costs”. According to the study, business does not thrive in an environment of unchecked abuses of political power, unchecked violence by security personnel, and unchecked corruption (official and non-official corruption)". Corroborating 1997, World Development Report which concluded that no market can exist without effective property rights, and that effective property rights depends on fulfilling the following three conditions; protection from theft, violence and other acts of perditions; protection from arbitrary government actions- ranging from unpredictable, adhoc regulations and taxes to outright corruption that disrupt business activities and a reasonable fair and predictable judiciary.

Bakare (2010), examines the determinants of the urban unemployment in Nigeria. The variables includes level of unemployment and demand for labour, supply of labour, population, inflation, capacity utilization, gross capital formation and nominal wage rate. Using time series secondary data and parsimonious error correction mechanism, the study found that the rising nominal wages and the accelerated growth of population which affected the supply side through a high and rapid increase in labour force relative to the absorptive capacity of the economy appear to be the main determinant of high unemployment in Nigeria.
Ebuomwan (1997), in the study “Poverty Alleviation through Agricultural projects: A Review of world Bank Assisted Agricultural Development Projects in Nigeria" suggested that poverty alleviation goes beyond short term relief and the satisfaction of basic human needs, but also the development strategies of increasing the long-term productive potential and therefore the incomes of the poor. According to the study, it is necessary

to integrate macroeconomic policies, sector planning and sound project interventions. The study suggests that in an agrarian economy like Nigeria, one of the best means available to government for alleviating poverty is agricultural projects, the study emphasized that despite the fact Nigeria has launched various schemes, programmes and projects in order to increase output and well-being of the masses, most of them did not stand the test of time due to poor planning. Okunmadewa (1998) in the study "Domestic and international response to poverty alleviation in Nigeria" was of the view that in Nigeria, international agencies such as European Union, Department for international Development (DFID), Food Foundation and the United Nations (UN) group are very active in poverty alleviation activities. The UNDP, UNICEF, UNFDA, ILO, WHO, and the role of NGOs in poverty alleviation in Nigeria has been observed to be a veritable and effective channels to ensure programme implementation effectiveness, particularly in poverty alleviationprojects in view of on-the-ground presence and first-hand knowledge of the needs and interest of the poor.

THE POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMME (PAP)

Poverty alleviation programme was introduced in Nigeria in the year 2000 to address the problems of rising unemployment and crime rates especially among the youth. The primary objectives of Poverty Alleviation Programme are as follows:

(a) Reduce the problem of unemployment and hence raise effective demand in the economy.
(b) Increase the productiveness of the economy.
(c) Drastically reduce the embarrassing crime wave in the society.

The targets/components of Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) as identified by Obadan (2001) include the followings; provide jobs for the unemployed, create a credit delivery system from which farmers will have access to credit facilities, increase the adult literacy rate from 51% to 70% by 2003, Shoot up health care delivery system from its present 40% to 70% by year 2003, increase the immunization of children from 40% to 100%. Raise rural water supply from 30% to 60% and same for rural electrification, embark on training and attainment of at least 60% of tertiary institutions' graduates and development of simple processes and small scale industries.

Several measures were put forward in order to achieve the above objectives and they include among others; increase in the salary of public workers, rationalization of organizations and methods within the system, particularly that of the existing poverty alleviation institutions, encouraging and rewarding all deserving Nigerians for industry and enterprise, substantial reduction of avenues for easy and illegitimate acquisition of wealth and the launching of the Universal Basic Education Programme.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION APPROACHES

There are many approaches to poverty alleviation, some of them are:

Economic Growth Approach:Given the low labour absorptive capacity of the industrial sector, broad based economic growth should be encouraged. This should focus on capital formation as it relates to capital stock, and human capital. Human capital formation has to do with education, health, nutrition and housing needs for labour. This is obvious from the fact that investment in these facets of human capital improves the quality of labour and thus its productivity. Thus to ensure growth that takes care of poverty, the share of human capital as a source growth in output has to be accorded the rightful place.

Basic Needs Approach: these calls for the provision of basic needs such as food, shelter, water, sanitation, health care, basic education, transportation etc. unless there is proper targeting, this approach may not directly impact on the poor because of their inherent disadvantage in terms of political power and the ability to influence the choice and location of government programmes and projects.

Rural Development Approach: This approach sees the rural sector as a unique sector in terms of poverty alleviation. This is because majority of the poor in developing countries lives in the area. In addition, the level of paid employment in this area is very low, this means that traditional measures of alleviating poverty may not easily work in the rural sector without radical changes in the assets ownership structure, credit structure, etc. emphasis in this approach to development has focused on the integrated rural development modeling. This approach recognizes a multidimensional and therefore requires a multipronged approach.

The approach aims at the provision of basic necessities of life such as food, shelter, safe drinking water, education, healthcare, employment and income generating opportunities to the rural dwellers in general and the poor in particular.
Target Approach: This approach favours directing poverty alleviation programmes at specific groups within the country. It includes such programmes as Social Safety Nets, Micro Credits, and School Meal programme.

Poverty Alleviation Strategies In Nigeria
In Nigeria, the poverty alleviation measures implemented so far have focused more on growth, basic needs and rural development approaches. They can be looked at from two perspectives; that is those before the implementation of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and those during the Structural Adjustment Programme.

Before Structural Adjustment Programme
Before Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in Nigeria, poverty alleviation was never the direct focus of development planning and management. Government only showed concern for poverty alleviation indirectly. For example, the objectives of the first National Development Plan in Nigeria included the development of opportunities in health, employment and education as well as improvement of access to these opportunities. These objectives, if achieved, could no doubt lead to poverty alleviation. Similarly, the Fourth National Development Plan, which appeared to be more precise in the specification of objectives that are associated with poverty alleviation, emphasized increase in real income of the average citizen as well as reduction of income inequality, among other things Ogwumike (1991) During this era's national development plans, many of the programmes which were put in place in Nigeria by the government had positive effects on poverty reduction although the target populations for some of the programmes were not specified explicitly as poor people or communities. Some of such programmes are, the River Basin Development Authorities (RBDA), the Agricultural Development Programmes (ADP), the Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme (ACGS), the Rural Electrification Scheme (RES), and the Rural Banking Programmes (RBP), most of these were designed to take care of such objectives as employment generation, enhancing agricultural output and income, and stemming the tide of rural urban migration, which no doubt affected poverty reduction. Despite some significant degree of success made by some of these programmes, most of them could not be sustained. In fact, with time, many of them failed as a result of diversion from the original focus.

For instance, the Rural Banking and the Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme at many stages failed to deliver the desired credit for agricultural and rural transportation because a lot of savings were mobilized in the rural areas only to be diverted to urban areas in form of credit/investments.
Other notable poverty reduction related programmes that were put in place in Nigeria before the advent of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) include Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) set up in 1977, Free and Compulsory Primary Education (FCPE) set up in 1977, Green Revolution established in 1980, and Low Cost Housing Scheme. Both OFN and Green Revolution were set up to boost agricultural production and improve the general performance of the agricultural sector among other things. These programmes made some laudable impacts; they enhanced the quality of life of many Nigerians. But the programmes could not be sustained due to lack of political will and commitment, policy instability and insufficient involvement of the beneficiaries in these programmes.

During Structural Adjustment Programme
Nigerian government started making policies to combat with poverty in the country during the era of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The severe economic crisis in Nigeria in the early 1980s worsened the quality of life of most Nigerians. The government made a determined effort to check the crisis through the adoption of Structural Adjustment Programme. However, the implementation of Structural Adjustment Programme further worsened the living conditions of many Nigerians especially the poor who were the most vulnerable group. This made the government to design and implement many poverty alleviation programmes

between 1986 and 1993. Also, under the Guided Deregulation that spanned the period 1993 to 1998, more poverty alleviation programmes were put in place by government. Oladeji and Abiola (1998) identified them as: The Directorate for Foods Roads and Rural Infrastructures (DFFRI), the National Directorate for Employment (NDE), Better Life Programme (BLP), and People's Bank of Nigeria (PBN), Community Banks (CB), Family Support Programme (FSP) and the Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP).

Appraisal/Assessment Of Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) In Nigerian Economy

Looking carefully at the objectives of Poverty Alleviation Programmes, one will understand that it was designed to touch almost all aspect of poverty ranging from absolute to regional poverty. It was however more specific in curbing unemployment hence raising the income of individuals so that their spending would increase and hence their needs be satisfied. However like in most programmes, Poverty Alleviation Programmes was hindered by poor implementation and being short term in nature it lacked continuity. The aim of the programme was defeated as credits given to finance micro enterprises were not utilized by the beneficiaries in such enterprises meaning that the target for employment generation was missed.

Poverty Alleviation Programmes (PAP) was also perceived as initiative of the ruling party's programme and therefore was not given much attention, and in some cases, resisted by chief executives of states controlled by the opposition parties. For example, Obadan (2001) observed that in the year 2000, "there were reports that the Alliance for Democracy (AD) governors of south west zone of the country were apprehensive that the People's Democratic Party (PDP) at the center might have conceived of the Poverty Alleviation Programmesfor strategic political gains. Indeed there were allegations of AD governors working against the Poverty Alleviation Programmesin order to frustrate the PDP Federal Government. Despite the problems encountered in the course of implementation of Poverty Alleviation Programmes, it has succeeded in providing 82,000 jobs to different kinds of people in Nigeria through the use of various strategies, such as:

- National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP)

National Poverty Eradication Programme was introduced in 2001. It was aimed at the provision of "strategies for the eradication of absolutepoverty in Nigeria" (FRN, 2001) It was complemented by the National Poverty Eradication Council (NAPEC) which was to coordinate the poverty reduction related activities of all the relevant ministries, parastatals and agencies.

- Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES)

Youth Empowerment Scheme deals with capacity acquisition, mandatory attachment, productivity improvement, credit delivery, technology and development and enterprise promotion.

- Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme (RIDS)

Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme deal with the provision of potable and irrigation water, transport (rural and urban), rural energy and power support.

- Social Welfare Service Scheme (SOWESS)

Social Welfare Service Scheme deals with special education, primary healthcare services, establishment and maintenance of recreational centers, public awareness facilities, youth and students hostels development, environmental protection facilities, food security provisions, micro and macro credits delivery, rural telecommunications facilities, provision of mass transit, and maintenance culture.

- Natural Resource Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDCS)

Natural Resource Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDCS) this deals with harnessing of agricultural, water, solid mineral resources, conservation of land and space particularly for convenient and effective utilization by small scale operators and the immediate communities.

Constraints Of Poverty Alleviation Programmes In Nigeria

The following are some of the reasons that contribute to the failure of government's poverty eradication programmes in Nigeria (NAPEP; 2001)

1. Poor policy formulation and coordination.
2. Policy discontinuity and lack of sustainability.

3. Absence of policy framework, institutional framework and delivery machinery.
4. Absence of target setting for ministries, agencies and progammes.
5. Absence of coordination, complementation and monitoring.
6. Absence of effective collaboration and complementation among the three tiers of government.
7. Duplication of functions among institutions and agencies.
8. Unhealthy rivalries among institutions and agencies.
9. Lack of involvement of the traditional institutions and community groups in projects selection and implementation.
10. Lack of involvement or consultation with the poor in poverty policy formulation and implementation.

Theoretical Framework

In the literature, three theories abound on the effectiveness of public infrastructure on poverty alleviation. The first theory argued that investment in education and health is more relevant to the goal of poverty alleviation than physical infrastructure (Jahan and McCleery, 2005; Ogun, 2010). The second theory upholds that investment in both physical and social infrastructures reduce poverty (Jalilian and Wesis, 2004). The last theory maintains that investment in infrastructure in general has no effect in poverty (Jerome and Ariyo, 2004).

As earlier analyzed, infrastructure is important for ensuring that growth and development is consistent with poverty alleviation. Access to at least minimal infrastructure services is one of the essential criteria for defining welfare. The poor can be identified as those who are unable to consume a basic quantity of clean water and who are subject to unsanitary surroundings with extremely limited mobility or communications beyond their immediate settlement. As a result they have more health problems and fewer employment opportunities. Access to clean water and sanitation has the most obvious and direct consumption benefits of reduction in mortality rate and morbidity. It also increases the productive capacity of the poor and can affect men and women in different ways.

RESULT OF THE REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF THE MODEL

With the aid of Econometric view (E-view), Ordinary Least Square Technique was usedto estimate the model and the results below were obtained
Dependent variable: Poverty Index
Method: Ordinary Least squares
Sample: 1980 - 2012
Included observation: 33

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
IMR	-2.131622	0.689583	-3.091177	0.005
LER	-7.793336	2.803934	-2.779429	0.0104
LIT	0.166946	0.360121	0.463583	0.6471
INF	0.013153	0.078866	0.463583	0.8689
PCI	0.119564	0.151571	-0.788837	0.4379

UR	0.029253	0.719719	0.040645	0.9679
C	660.14	148.125	4.456642	0.0002
R-squared	0.767323	Mean dependent var		53.4
Adjusted R-squared	0.767323	S.D dependent var		12.40527
S.E. of regression	6.690176	Akaike info criterion		6.834837
Sum squared resid	1074.203	Schwarz criterion		7.15864
Log likelihood	-98.93997	F-statistic		13.19124
Durbin-Watson stat	0.969539	Prob(F-statistic)		0.000001

SOURCE:Author's Computation (E- views)

The model is now being expressed as:

PI = 660.14 + 0.029253 UR – 0.119564 PCI + 0.013153 INF + 0.166946 LIT – 7.793336 LER - 2.131622 IMR + μ

Interpretation Of Result

Based on the result obtained from the regression analysis, Poverty alleviationprogrammes have a significant influence on economic development in Nigeria. The high coefficient of multiple determinant (R^2= 0.767323)indicates that 76.7% of the systemic variations in the dependent variable (Poverty incidence) during the period under study is explained by unemployment rate, per capita income, inflation rate, literacy rate, life expectancy index and infant mortality rate during this period. The relevance of this is the need to emphasize that high employment rate in Nigeriawill reduce the rate of poverty in the economy of Nigeria.

In summary, since all the econometric test applied in this study show statistically significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables from the model, this means that there is a significant influence between poverty alleviation programmes and economic development in Nigeria.Thus, we reject the null hypothesis (Ho) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H1).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The issue of poverty alleviation should be taken with all sense of seriousness it deserves and not ordinary paying lip-service to it.

In view of the analysis and findings drawn from this studythe following recommendations are put forward:

(i) The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) should be well funded and managed to ensure that adequate data relating to poverty incidence are readily available and gathered from time to time to aid uniform and consistent decisions, progress reports and speculations.

(ii) Government policies on poverty alleviation should follow a multi-sectoral approach where all the stakeholders are given specific roles to play.

(iii) Capacity building and ethical orientation training has to be given to all those likely to participate in any form of poverty alleviation programme.

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