

The Paradox of Deprivation in Affluence: Examining The Techniques of Profiling Nigerian Poverty (1999-2017)

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Abstract: Nigeria is a paradox of a rich country inhabited by majority poor who lives under an extreme scorch of poverty owing to some factors such as mismanagement of resources, corruption, poor policies, misplacement of priorities and poor micro and macroeconomics setting. This study is an examination of the nature and pattern of poverty in Nigeria within the period 1999-2017 specifically in consideration with the rich natural and human resources that the country is endowed with. The methodology adopted for this research is the use of empiricism. Secondary data was relied on in the research including books, journals, reports from national and international organisations, statistics from national and international institutions and internet sources. The data obtained were analysed and discussed using tables, maps, charts, percentage analysis and other statistical tools where necessary. The data obtained were supported with the existing literature in the field and the adopted theory to explain the findings. The major findings of the research include the fact that Nigeria has the potential of providing decent means of living for its subjects through making of sound policies but, the policymakers deliberately ignored this leverage. Majority of Nigerians are poor because they are intentionally pushed into it through negligence and distorted fake policies that are never meant to improve their lives. The research discovered that with a good leadership and a sincere approach, commitment and desire for development, Nigeria can be a country with a prosperous population that can live a decent life in future.

Introduction

Poverty is a global phenomenon which is a major policy concern at both domestic and international level. It is a form of deprivation that creates inequality which requires an address urgently because it is possible to do so with sincerity of purpose (Sachs, 2005:7). The increasing level of poverty and inequality particularly in the developing world compelled for researches by scholars and international agencies on how to resolve the menace (Ferreira & Ravallion, 2008). There is an increasing concern that economic growth is not leading to declining poverty and inequality in most developing countries and the gap between the rich and poor countries is widening (Filho, 2010). As a result of scorching nature of poverty, the world leaders met in September 2000 in the United Nations summit and designed an agenda for halving the incidence of world poverty at least by 2015 through a comprehensive multidimensional approaches including improving the literacy level, reducing infant and maternal mortality rate, universal basic quality education, environmental safety, gender equality, tackling HIV/AIDS and other deadly diseases and improving household incomes (Besley & Burgess, 2003). Global poverty has of course reduced in the last two centuries and this has given hope that in the near future poverty can be tackled but the alarming issue is the uneven rate of the fall spread across the countries where Sub-Saharan Africa, China and India are still wallowing in abject poverty level inspite of the global improvement (Hillebrand, 2008).

The most affected region in the world by poverty incidence is Sub-Saharan Africa. The pervasive and chronic nature of poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa created a wider vacuum for infrastructure and human development projects (Estache & Wodon, 2014). Growth and economic recovery has been witnessed in Sub-Saharan Africa but the issue is the nature in which these growths and economic progress failed to translate into welfare of the inhabitants of these countries (Arnt, McKay & Tarp, 2016). Nigeria is one of the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa which is paradoxically poor despite being rich with abundant natural mineral resources endowment and human resource availability in addition to robust geographical landscape suitable for agricultural and industrial activities. Nigeria is rich being the tenth largest oil producing country and with possession of diverse rich mineral resources in addition to human resources with a population that is also sixth in the world currently estimated at 200 million, majority of Nigerians amounting to 70% lives in poverty spending less than USD 2 per day because of many failed policies and lack of political will to initiate genuine policies that will extricate many individual

households from poverty into a better and prosperous life (National Bureau of Statistics 2017 and Human Development Report 2017, UNDP).

This study is an examination of the parody of Nigeria as a rich country being one of the poorest in the world and being inhabited with majority poor amidst the diverse wealth and natural resources endowments that the country is blessed with. The study uses a technique and strategy of profiling the Nigerian poverty over a specific chosen period of a time. The period chosen for this work is important for many reasons. The scope of the research is chosen in consideration with the period of re-emergence of democratic rule from 1999 to 2017 being the era in which it is expected that democratic rule will usher in good governance, accountability and transparency that will improve the lives of many Nigerians. It was also considered a period of oil boom where between 2003 to 2014 the price of crude oil in the global market reached its highest peak ever in the history of the world being sold up to USD 110 averagely. Ironically, it was also the period in which the Human Poverty Index and Human Development Index of Nigeria deteriorated and became worst from 0.613 in the 1990s to 0.416 by the year 2016 (UNDP, 2017).

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

The methodology adopted for this research is the use of empiricism. Empiricism is the use of scientific method in gathering data for a scientific research and analysis with an evidence that can prove its validity and reliability against testing and other tools of analysis (Lune & Berg, 2013). Empiricism is not only about data collection or analysis but also a philosophy of being objective in presenting a scientific arguments and research findings in such a way that it is subjected for a rigorous scrutiny against the existing and future evidence. It is the use of scientific method such as experiment, observation and statistical techniques or tools (Bogden & Biklen, 2007).

This work adopted both primary and secondary sources of data collection. The primary sources include the documented government sources such as reports from the National Bureau of Statistics and World Bank reports in addition to Human Development Report by United Nations Development Agency. The Secondary data include books, journals, statistics from national and international institutions and internet sources. The data obtained were analysed and discussed using tables, maps, charts, percentage analysis and other statistical tools where necessary. The data obtained was supported with the existing literature in the field and the adopted theory to explain the findings.

Theoretical Framework

The work adopted the theory of “Distorted Policies” postulated by Claude Ake (1996) in his work “Democracy and Development in Africa”. Ake (1996) presumed that development is an agenda that was never even started in Africa by its leaders right from the inception. He argued that, Africa in general has the potential for development and extricating itself from the malaise of poverty, underdevelopment, backwardness, illiteracy, disease and other indicators of instability but the leaders on assuming power after political independence digressed policies from pursuing development agenda to wild goose chase of elephant projects that are not sincerely targetted for national development and which do not target the African populace in their approach and nature.

Africa is blessed with all the natural resources that can be utilised for national development programmes with crude oil, gold, diamond, zinc, uranium, iron, agricultural products, oceans, rivers, dams, population and a friendly weather. This should be accompanied with hard work, dedication, good governance and sincerity of purpose for proper development agenda. However, all these resources were squandered and misutilised by the African leaders after they secured power from the colonialists. Instead of identifying projects and policies that will target the poor such as quality education, improved healthcare services delivery, addressing diseases and other social problems, the African leaders initiated policies and projects that are not meant for genuine development. An example of such is Nigeria which is the richest and populous country in Africa which earned billions of petrodollars accruing from oil boom in the 1970s and 1980s but the money was wasted in sponsoring elephant projects and less relevant developmental programmes, including sponsoring FESTAC sport activities in 1977 hosting of Commonwealth games and other projects that do not have any impact on the common man (Ake, 1996:67).

The situation of African failure is compounded by what Ake termed “False Paradigm Model” which he described as fake development policies imposed on African countries by the Western financial agencies on the pretense of initiating development agenda which later proved to worsen the condition of African countries that adopted them. A good example of such fake development policies is Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) imposed on countries like Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and other African countries in which after few years of implementation, their economies worsen and the crisis of debt, underdevelopment and dependency escalated. Indigenous development agenda were blocked from being

pursued. External policies were imposed which included devaluation, desubsidisation and trade liberalisation which in disguise benefit the developed economies to the detriment of the indigenous African economy. African leaders were misdirected to inject their countries' wealth into policies and projects that were not beneficial to the poor (Ake, 1996).

The combination of the above issues impede African countries (Nigeria inclusive) from using their abundant natural resources to initiate domestic policies that will eradicate poverty in their countries even with their potentials and richness to do so. The leaders found it easier to manipulate and control the subjects through the creation of sound and eloquent policies that look genuine but were either misplacement of priority or were not meant to be implemented (Ake, 1996).

The above theory propounded by Ake (1996) is a plausible explanation of the paradox of Nigerian poverty profile because if the amount of revenue that Nigeria collected from 1999 to 2017 is considered, there is no any other explanation for the massive, pervasive, chronic and abject penury that most of Nigerian masses are suffering from except misplacement of priority and false projects that are not meant to trickle down to the masses for their individual development. Thus, this theory is applicable within the perspective of this work since the target here is to identify why and how the Nigerian population in its majority is poor while the country is growing economically and revenue is increasing. It is alarming and paradoxical which calls a deeper investigation and the need to resolve the mystery in the near future if the country is to avoid sitting on a ready explosive time-bomb that already manifested its desire to explode fully considering the rate of crime, kidnapping, ethno-religious clashes, farmers-herders clashes, political thuggery and violence across the nation from the restive and hopeless youth section of the population which is the majority segment of the population component in the country.

Literature Review

In this section, attempt was made in reviewing critically the relevant literature existing on the subject matter of study which provides a platform for identifying the knowledge gap and contribution to knowledge building on the previous works and the current ones. Based on the above philosophy, the literature was reviewed on thematic form consisting of the nature and dimension of poverty and measurement and indicators of poverty.

Nature and Dimension of Poverty

Poverty has historic efforts towards framing its meaning and conceptualisation within an acceptable realm of intellectual discourse in consideration with the practical reality of societies since ancient times in history. One of such attempts was made by Smith (1776) in which he identified poverty as “the incapability to buy the basic needs of life that is demanded by nature for mankind to survive”. This can be interpreted not only as the basics of life but whatever a particular society considers as a decent means of existence for an individual. Smith (1776) set the foundation for the measurement of poverty in his own societal terms. Marx (1857) did not provide any measurement of poverty except an effort in providing the meaning itself where he asserts that our needs and satisfaction stem from the enjoyment of what is relatively valuable in our respective societies and lack of possessing or accessing these valued needs leads to deprivation and a life of dissatisfaction. This is what is interpreted as Marx’s definition or description of the term poverty. Rowntree (1901) perceived that earning of what cannot be adequate to obtain the basic means for the maintenance of our physical, mental life needs tantamount to poverty. The above were the early scholastic endeavours in presenting an academic meaning of poverty. Modern scholars later came up with their own divergent views as espoused below in the subsequent paragraphs.

Sen (1983) criticizes the above views and especially the views of Smith (1776) that what a society considered as the standard yardstick for a decent living may vary from time to time and from one individual to another. Instead, Sen (1983) suggested that there should be some set of capabilities that every human being should exercise for him to be considered not as poor or not in poverty line. These capabilities vary from one society to another and from one time to another. The social, economic and political environment should provide equality and easy accessibility to individuals in the society. Freedom, liberty, justice, human right, education and economic opportunities are indicators of development and absence of these elements will result in deprivation which in return will make one poor and lead to poverty in the society. Townsend (1979) sees poverty as the inadequate possession of resources to undertake and execute societal activities that are considered relatively necessary for a satisfied life.

There are contemporary institutional attempts to define the concept of poverty separate from the above ideas. The United Nations defined poverty in the Copenhagen Declaration in 1995 as shortage of earnings and disposable material possession to

guarantee a sustainable livelihoods, existence of hunger and starvation, poor healthcare accessibility, lack of access to quality education and basic means of live, high maternal and infant mortality, lack of shelter, stagnated environments and societal discrimination and exclusion in addition to inequality. The World Bank (2004) defined poverty as the inability to consumption or income level to meet a certain minimum set standard necessary for meeting the basic requirements of life. The World Bank adopted a universal framework for estimating and measuring poverty globally across all the societies and individuals which culminated in the global aggregate comparison. The set limit is \$1.25 for absolute poverty measurement per day or \$2 for relative measurement. The European Commission (2004) presented that people are said to be living in poverty if their earnings fall below what can push them to secure a considerably an acceptable standard of living in a particular society that they live.

The African Union (AU) defined poverty as the condition of deprivation and inaccessibility to basic means of sustaining livelihood by individuals which is affecting more than half of the continent's population particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa (AU, 2013). The Nigerian government came up with its own standard or yardstick for defining and measuring poverty in which the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) suggested that poverty is the condition of deprivation, inequality, poor economic condition, difficulties in survival courtesy of hunger, disease, malnutrition, poor education and poor healthcare services delivery, infant mortality and maternal mortality rate and joblessness. The country adopted the United Nations minimum set standard for absolute poverty of \$1.25 and \$2 per day for absolute and relative poverty (NBS, 2012).

Poverty is economic, social and political deprivation (Myrdal (1974) and it is perceived as a social explosion which is calmed during the period of economic prosperity but manifested forcefully during the era of inflationary trend, unemployment and declining social services. Absence of opportunity for all in a society is the trend that exhibits the poverty of some section because it deprives them of their capability and productivity which in return leads to low income and low standard of living (Mahbub ul Haq 1999:2). Poverty is a vicious circle of a chain of activities which trapped the poor persons and poor nations within the circle of poverty continuously because of low income, low savings, low demands, low investment and income (Nurkse, 1967:4).

Poverty is a condition where the aggregate individual or family income is below his or their poverty threshold. Poverty threshold is an indicator developed in the

1960s to determine the average diet of an individual or a family which varies according to needs and environment (Weber, Jensen, Miller, Mosley & Fisher, 2005). Poverty is mostly defined by formal sector measures which sometimes excluded family household personal activities because in this case poverty is conceived in terms of monetary and wealth indicators excluding other measures such as environmental degradation emanating from poverty of families (Gray & Moseley, 2005). Poverty has been defined as absolute, relative or subjective. Absolute poverty is the case of an income below the measured \$1 per day which makes survival difficult and a decent means of living practically impossible. Relative poverty is measured or perceived in terms of the percentage of those who are considered as living below the accepted standard norm of decent living in a given society. Subjective poverty is immeasurable and is a feeling of belonging to the poor in a society even where the living conditions of such a person is not adjudged poor by that society where he belongs (Haralambos & Heald, 2005).

Poverty has been expanded in its meaning to have gone beyond monetary issues and is all encompassing such as political participation and social exclusion (Davis & Martinez, 2014). Present analysis conceive poverty as a multifaceted phenomenon going beyond income perception (Feeny & McGillivray, 2016). The Millennium Development Goals set to reduce the number of those who are living in poverty at least by half by the year 2015. However, as the year 2015 has already passed, this possibility has been doubted. The global economic and food crises questioned the efforts of achieving MDGs target. The number of those living in poverty earmarked by the MDG as \$1.25 a day had fallen from 1.8 billion in 1990 to 1.4 billion in 2005. The level of progress differs across regions with Sub-Saharan Africa being the least (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 2010). The actual target of the MDG is halving the proportion of those in absolute poverty (\$1 per day) by 2015 (Dhongde & Minoiu, 2010). Sachs (2005) asserted that the aim of MDG is plausible and can be finish within the stipulated time since all the indicators towards that are on ground. In his view, it is possible to end poverty by the year 2015 globally not only halving the proportion of those in it. However, Cimadamore, Dean & Siquiera (2005) identified the increasing role and responsibility of the state in poverty eradication more than international agencies like the MDG approach. Thus, the poverty trend still maintains that there are over 1 billion poor across the globe which is a discouraging number. Poverty is so pervasive across the globe that neither capitalism nor socialism can solve its scorch except a social business which is a

moderate form of capitalism. If such an intermediary position is taken, a world without poverty is possible (Yunus, 2007).

Democracy is the best way out of poverty that is bedeviling the world according to Sen (1999). Denying of entitlement and deprivation leads to famine and famine is the root cause of poverty in this perspective (Sen, 1990). Famine and other harmful social degradation were recorded less in democratic states than in authoritarian regimes because of handy arbitrary erroneous policies of the authoritarian regimes Sen (1999). Poverty is absence of development and incapability because development is a capability and poor exist because of limited capability. Development of capability is the best way of tackling the global poverty in this perspective Sen (1990). In another view, Sen (1999) views poverty as lack of freedom and freedom is what will lead to poverty eradication and development in the long run. Similarly, Sen (1987) identifies food freedom as a means of getting rid of poverty because to him: "Food for freedom and freedom for food". A poor is enslaved because he is deprived of the freedom for food and food for freedom. Sen (2000) presupposes that identity and violence sometimes is leading to poverty and poverty leads to identity crisis and violence because of the suspicion of domination and deprivation by certain groups in a society. In addition, social exclusion and deprivation of capability is the major explanation of poverty in many societies because depriving an individual of his capability creates the chasm for ensuing social exclusion (Sen, 2000). Sen (2004) concludes his freedom series by identifying that poverty is absence of freedom and once the poor are free, they will have freedom for progress because life progress is enshrouded in freedom. The same view of progress as a measure of eliminating has been hold by George (1977) earlier.

A comprehensive approach to poverty perception emerged recently which in addition to other multi-indicators of poverty that were incorporated in understanding what poverty is and who is a poor, added that human right indicates absence of poverty and lack of human right indicates the presence of poverty as observed by Kanbur (2010), Marks & Mahal (2010), Eide & Eide (2010), Osmani (2010) and Chen (2010). Income inequality and relative poverty increased from 1980s as a result of globalisation which created a further division between the developed and developing economies (Lee, 2014). Poverty is the deprivation of a well-being of an individual and this well-being is all encompassing involving multidimensional aspects of measurement of living standard such as income, consumption, education, health and other indicators (Haughton & Kandker, 2009).

The world is not getting the poverty issue right as a considerable number of individuals amounting a billion are living in an unacceptable condition of life characterised by disease, illiteracy, slums, high infant mortality rate, high maternal mortality rate, low life expectancy and low income which simply translate into absolute poverty (Stark, 2009). As critically observed by Landes (2009), the richness and poverty of world countries cannot be examined or explain by geography or availability of wealth or resources but rather the wealth of knowledge, good leadership, hard work and social equality. A significant study here support Landes (2009) assertion whereby increasing trade at global level, economic growth failed to translate into equality and poverty reduction in many developing countries (Paulino, 2012).

Poverty: Mirroring the Global Scale

The global poverty indicators and indices are alarming and should call for an utmost concern from the global key players. The United Nations Development Programme (2018) reported some disturbing statistics and figures that cannot be ignored. According to UNDP (2018), 736 million people representing 8.6% of the global population live in extreme poverty below \$1.90 per day. More than half of the world's extreme poor, 413 million people live in Sub-Saharan Africa. Interestingly, East Asia and the Pacific and Europe and Central Asia have less than 3% of their populations living in extreme poverty, already qualifying them for the 2030 target of global poverty eradication. About 1.3 billion people in 104 developing countries which equals to 24% of the total global population live in multidimensional poverty. Globally, 660 million children are facing multidimensional poverty and Sub-Saharan Africa leads in this aspect with 49% as the highest rate of children living in extreme poverty.

The above statistics indicate that Africa should be the focus and target of action in policymaking against poverty especially Sub-Saharan Africa. Some shocking indicators turned out Africa as the poorest continent with prevalence of poverty. For instance, more than a quarter of the hungry in the world live on the African continent and one fifth of the people living in Africa is considered as malnourished. More than 30% of the African children suffer from hunger and starvation leading to growth disorders and diseases of varying magnitude. Sub-Saharan Africa is the global region with the highest infant mortality rate with 11 out of every 100 dying before clocking the age of five. Three of the four countries with the highest infant mortality rate globally are in Africa which include Nigeria, Ethiopia and Kenya. In

Sub-Saharan Africa, 59 million between the age of 5-17 remain out of school. 25 million Africans are infected with the HIV virus including approximately 2.9 million children (UNDP, 2018). Factors that are attributed to the high dominance of poverty in Africa than any other region in the globe consist of explosion in population growth, war and conflict, climatic condition, illness, primitive agriculture and unjust trade structures according to UNDP in 2018.

Measurement and Indicators of Poverty

Tools for Measuring Poverty

The multidimensional poverty index (MPI) has been published annually since 2010 by the United Nations Development Report under the Human Development Report. The publication is based on the researches conducted by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI). The MPI has been propounded by Alkire and Santos (2010) which identified three dimensions to poverty indicators which are: health, education and living standard (Dotter & Klasen, 2014). The MPI has been the most accepted means of measurement contemporarily although there were attempts at establishing various measurements of poverty indicators before that of Alkire and Santos (2010). They are examined briefly below.

The Headcount Index (HI) is widely used in measuring poverty in many countries. The HI measures the proportion of those in poverty the society represented as P_0 where it is formally presented in an equation as follows:

$$P_0 = \frac{Nr}{N}$$

Where Nr is the number of the poor and N is the total population or sample that is taken to determine those in poverty or those who are poor. This method is easy to comprehend and faster in construction. However, its major weakness is the fact that it does not take the intensity of the poverty into consideration. It does not indicate the extent of the poverty of the poor and it also has the weakness of calculating household instead of individuals which can be erroneous (Haughton & Kandker, 2009: 64).

Another indicator for poverty measurement is the poverty gap index (PGI). This approach summed up the extent to which individuals averagely fall below the poverty line which allows for expressing it as the poverty line. The poverty gap (G_i) is the poverty line (Z) less actual income (y_i) for poor individuals, the gap is considered to be zero for everyone else. The index function is presented below:

$$G1=(Z-y1)x(y1<=z)$$

The major problem with this index it sometimes misrepresents the actual poverty incidence because if such measure is applied at country level, one country might look less poor than the one which is actually poorest if those in poverty line are considered using this method (Haughton & Kandker, 2009:67).

Another means of measuring poverty is the one developed by Amartya Sen in 1976 which attempts to merge the impacts of the number of poor, the extent of their poverty and the level of poverty distribution within groups. The index is presented below.

$$P_s = P_0(1 - G_p) \frac{\mu}{z}$$

where P_0 is the headcount index, μ is the mean income (or expenditure) of the poor, and G_p is the Gini coefficient of inequality among the poor. The Gini coefficient ranges from 0 (perfect equality) to 1 (perfect inequality). The Sen index can also be written as the average of the headcount and poverty gap measures, weighted by the Gini coefficient of the poor, giving

$$P_s = P_0 G_p + P_1(1 - G_p).$$

Sen's index has been widely in use and has the advantage of simplicity by using income measurement indicators in determining the actual poor in the society. But the index lacks the easiest tools of measuring and has been almost used within the academic circle not in practical terms (Haughton & Kandker, 2009:74).

Having toured the various indicators used for poverty measurement by the scholars in the area, this study concludes that the Multidimensional Poverty Index is the most feasible and simpler in approach and application. It is adopted and used for further discussion in this work because the data that were sourced for this work were also built using the same matrix for poverty measurement such as the World Bank and UNDP and National Bureau of Statistics in Nigeria which give emphasis on healthcare services indicators, educational quality and overall standard of living.

Technique of Profiling Poverty

In profiling poverty level of a particular country, individuals or groups, there are different techniques that are provided by experts from the academics and institutional perspective. These perspective or technique of profiling poverty globally has a different approaches and methodologies including the measurement of poverty to

determine first who is poor, identifying an agreed poverty line, poverty index, level of inequality, determinants of poverty, international poverty comparison and reduction strategies.

Measurement of poverty: Why?

Poverty is measured for several reasons. One of these reasons is to keep the poor on the agenda of the policymakers. Another purpose is to target for domestic and international intervention for addressing the issue. Another reason is to monitor and evaluate the projects and policy interventions to ensure effectiveness and efficiency and there is also the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of the institutions for intervention in poverty eradication (Haughton & Khandker, 2009:5).

In measuring poverty, some indicators are taken into consideration and these indicators differ from one society to another based on the wealth and economic prosperity of the country or group under study. The first step in measuring poverty is to find a clear-cut definition of an indicator of well-being such as income or consumption per capita. Usually, information on societal welfare is usually obtained through data survey. The World Bank-initiated Living Standards Measurement Surveys (LSMS) is mostly used (Grosh & Glewwe, 2000) because it consists of wide varieties of multidimensional questions with strict quality control. Income identified in terms of consumption per capita is used in developed countries but it is seriously understated in developing countries which made it handicapped (Haughton & Khandker, 2009:9).

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) came up with a scale ($=1+0.7 \times (N_A-1) + 0.5 \times N_C$) which became popular but controversial and dissatisfactory. This approach used consumption per adult equivalent based on the formula that is formulated by the organisation. Other renown methods of measuring welfare indicators include calorie consumption per person per day, food consumption as a proportion of total expenditure and nutritional status as measured by growth or stunting tendency (Haughton & Khandker, 2009:9).

Having identified some indicators for measuring welfare, it is pertinent to identify also the steps in measuring poverty based on the above indices. Ravallion (1998) came up with three steps to be taken in measuring poverty. The steps are three as presented below:

- Defining an acceptable indicator of welfare;
- Establishing a minimum acceptable standard of the above identified indicator to determine the poor from the non-poor known as poverty line and

- Gathering of a succinct data aggregately from the distribution of welfare indicator relative to the poverty line.

All measurements of poverty rely on household surveys and the household surveys take into cognisance some key survey issues including the sample frame, the unit of observation, the number of observations over time and the principal living standard indicator collected. Choosing an indicator of welfare is another issue with measuring poverty in a particular society. The welfarist approach (Sen, 1979), used the household utility which is usually computed by household income or household consumption expenditure. The non-welfarist approach focus on whether household have attained certain minimal levels of either nutrition or health.

Poverty Line: What is it and How is it Determined?

One of the easy ways that is being accepted for identifying who is a poor is by figuring out those who live below poverty line. In this regard, poverty line is an important element, equation and standard of measurement that is valuable in the comprehensive study of poverty. The establishment of a poverty is the complex task in the real measurement of poverty. There are basically three approaches to determine a poverty line. For Ravallion (1998), the poverty line for household is the minimum income or consumption that is demanded to attain at least the minimum utility level given the level of price and the characteristics of the population of the household which is computed as

$$Z_i = e(p, x, u_i)$$

Another way is to construct per capita poverty line for all and then adjust per capita income or expenditure for differences in prices and household composition. Another way is the use of socioeconomic survey for different constitute regions or zones in the area of study based on the prices prevailing in these various areas. A house can be identified as within poverty line by comparing its income and expenditure per capita with the identified appropriate poverty line. This approach has been adopted by for measuring poverty line in Cambodia by Prescott & Pradhan, (1997). It has been reflected to study poverty line in Thailand too by Kakwani (2000).

The cost of basic needs approach is the most commonly used. It estimates the cost of securing enough food for sufficient nutrition measured usually as 2100 calories per person per day plus the cost of other necessary needs such as clothing and shelter. Food energy intake is used as another approach especially where there is no information on price. Income or expenditure per capita is weight against food taken

in calories per person per day to measure the income or expenditure level of through which the studied household acquire food. The last approach or method is the subjective poverty line in which people are asked or interviewed on what is needed by them to as a minimum income level to make both ends meet in terms of acquiring their basic needs. It has been discovered (Chen & Ravallion, 2008) that rich countries normally have a higher poverty line than poor countries due to relative income and consumption measurements based on social and economic standards. As countries are becoming economically better off, they revise the poverty line upward because of the increased standard of living. Related to the above is the absolute poverty line which is a fixed agreed status adjusted only for inflation (Haughton & Khandker, 2009:39). For the international standard, \$1.25 is identified as the absolute poverty line while \$2 is regarded as the relative poverty line.

The Poverty Profile Measurement

A poverty profile establishes the major statistics on poverty and it analyses the differing pattern of it to see how poverty varies from one region or group or country to another. Some of the issues that are being profiled include individuals, household and community characteristics, geographical region and countries. A good presentation of poverty profile can help immensely in assessing how economic change can affect aggregate poverty rate. The poverty profile usually uses techniques such as tables and graphs where some indicators are recognised such as level of education, income, healthcare, food and other elements. Provided the data is available, the poverty profile should address some critical questions such as how poverty has emerged over a period of a time, economic growth, change in income and government policies (World Bank Poverty Reduction Handbook, 1992).

Major facts on poverty are set and then the pattern of poverty distribution is studied to see its variance by geography, by region, urban or rural areas, occupational and other indicators of varying techniques such as community and household characteristics. Thus, a poverty profile is a comprehensive comparison of poverty to indicate how poverty varies among sub-groups of society. Regional poverty comparison is important because it enable for the design of developmental programmes across the regions based on the areas of needy.

A poverty profile that answers the above vital questions is important but the availability of data is the most important issue at hand in this regard. Not in every

community, household or region that data is up to date and properly provided on poverty. Vital data such as education, healthcare and other essential services are necessary components of poverty profile. The relevance of additional variables depends on the country's data reserve and availability (Haughton & Khandker, 2009:126). Two methods are used in presenting a poverty profile of a country, region, community, household and individuals. The first method is splitting the sample of study by some characteristics such as region of residence, age of household head and poverty rate for each component. The second method is to divide the sample by poverty status such as poor versus non-poor, expenditure per capita and income per capita before summarising the incidences of characteristics like educational qualification, access to healthy potable drinking water, access to healthcare services, clothing and shelter for each group under study (Deaton, 2001).

Poverty profile has been automated by the World Bank in an effort to make the computation easier for the researchers or data gatherers. The package is programmed as an "ado file" and may be installed in the computer by first opening a stata and then typing in the command line (net install adept, replace from <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INT/POVRES/Resources>). The computer must have an installed Microsoft words and Microsoft excel to operate the data using the above link. It will enable the user to choose some selected indicators of the measurement of welfare and poverty line for sampling and analysis. The programme can generate a series of tables and graphs in less than an hour for the user (Haughton & Khandker, 2009:126).

Discussion and Findings

The data gathered in this work is presented here and discussed for interpretations and findings taking into consideration the framework of analysis adopted and the existing literature in the area of study.

Discussions: Nigerian Poverty Profile: 1999-2017

In appraising poverty incidence in Nigeria when it comes to alleviation strategy, it was found that poverty is unevenly distributed in the county. The distribution pattern of poverty in Nigeria shows that by 2002, national poverty incidence had increased to 48.5% from 34.1% recorded in 1999. Further analysis from geo-political zones of the country shows distribution as follows:

Table 1: National Poverty Incidence in Nigeria 2004

<i>Zone</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
North–East	55.9%
North–West	55.0%
North–Central	49.8%
South–West	48.4%
South–South	39.8%
South–East	38.8%

Source: National Bureau of Statistics 2004

The available data indicate that the rate of poverty in Nigeria rose from 28% in 1980 to about 70% in 2003, the nations per capita income reduced from \$698 in 1980 to \$290 in 2003 and the nations ranking in Human Development Index (HDI) was 158 in 2003 dropping from 129 in 1990 out of 177 countries (UNDP, 2005). However, from 1996 to 2004, poverty level dropped in Nigeria from 65.6% in 1996 to 54.4% in 2004 at the national level. This is significant because within this period, there were active poverty alleviation programmes.

More light is shed on the challenge of poverty in Nigeria when we consider the various dimensions of poverty. First is the geographical dimension. The urban poor rose from 17.2% in 1980 to 58.2% in 1996, but declined to 43.2% in 2004. From 1980 to 25.2% in 1996 and declined to 15.7% in 2004. The corresponding figures in the rural areas were 6.5%, 31.6% and 27.1%. Also, whereas the decline in core poor was 38% in the urban areas. It was only 14% in the rural areas, which is lower than national average of the 25%. Furthermore, the rural areas accounted for 65% of national poverty incidence (Human Development Report Nigeria 2002 – 2007).

By geographical zone, poverty has been consistently above the national average in the three northern zones, with the North-East zone recording the highest poverty incidence. Also, while the core poor declined in most of the zones between 1996 and 2004, it increased in the North central zone from 28.0% in 1996 to 29.8% in 2004. By implication, it appears that being resident in the rural areas and in the northern geo-political zones increase the likelihood of being poor. This is shown below.

The CBN and NBS socio-economic survey of 2006 and the NBS CWIP of 2006 further confirm the poverty situation in the country across regions and states. It was evident from the study that a substantial proportion of Nigerians still live on

Table 2: Geographical Distribution of Poverty in Nigeria based on Core and Total Poor 1980-2004

<i>Place</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1985</i>	<i>1992</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>2004</i>
National	Total poor	28.1	46.3	42.7	65.6	54.4
	Core poor	6.2	12.1	13.9	29.3	22.0
Urban	Total poor	17.2	37.8	37.5	58.2	43.2
	Core poor	3.0	7.5	10.7	25.2	15.7
Rural	Total poor	28.3	51.4	66.0	69.3	63.3
	Core poor	6.5	14.8	15.8	31.6	27.1
South-South	Total poor	13.2	45.7	40.8	58.2	35.2
	Core poor	3.3	9.3	13.0	23.4	17.0
South East	Total poor	12.9	30.4	41.0	53.5	26.7
	Core poor	2.4	9.0	15.7	18.2	7.8
South West	Total poor	13.4	38.6	43.1	60.9	43.0
	Core poor	2.1	9.0	15.7	27.5	18.9
North Central	Total poor	32.2	50.8	46.0	64.7	67.0
	Core poor	5.7	16.4	14.8	28.0	29.8
North East	Total poor	35.6	54.9	54.0	70.1	71.2
	Core poor	11.8	16.4	18.5	34.4	27.9
North West	Total poor	37.7	53.1	36.5	77.2	71.2
	Core poor	8.3	14.2	9.0	37.3	26.8
Total Population in Poverty (Million)		17.7	34.7	39.2	87.1	68.7

Source: NBS 2007

less than N 20,000 a year. There is a clear evidence of high dispersion in per capita incomes across the 36 states of the federation as at 2007. High performers included the FCT (10,208), Bayelsa (\$, 5,388), Rivers (\$5,210), Akwa Ibom (\$3,813), Lagos (\$2,554) and Delta (\$ 147) while the low performing states were Taraba (\$141), Kogi (\$147), Anambra (\$163), Gombe (\$166), Osun (\$183) and Plateau (\$194). Other states fell between the two groups. The oil producing states continue to dominate the high performing states, while 18 states recorded lower per capita income than the global standard of less than \$1.25 per day.

Statistics on poverty in Nigeria revealed that Nigeria's Human Development Index in 1999 was only 0.416 with nearly 70% of its population of about 110 million living below the poverty line (spending less than a dollar per day), as against 15% at independence in 1960. National average indicates that life expectancy at birth stands

at 51 years; nearly 40% of the children below the age of 5 years suffer malnutrition, over 50% of the population lacks access to safe drinking water, and only 40% of the population is literate with only about 35% of the population living in urban areas (Dandago, 2008:38-39).

Rural dwellers are among the hardest hit by these entire statistics, with about 70% of their population having no access to portable water, health care facilities or electricity, amongst other vital facilities necessary for decent living. The statistics disclosed that by 2003, the number of poor people in Nigeria has doubled over the last two decades, during which the country received over \$300 billion in oil and gas revenues.

Here, it is not the increasing rate of poverty from 1999 and declining standard of living that is alarming, the most annoying thing is the increasing oil revenue and economic growth which failed to commensurate with the standard of living of an average Nigerian. Nigeria within sixteen years from 1999 to 2016 earned a huge oil revenue amounting to N77.348 (\$215, 027, 440, 000 billion) trillion (Central Bank of Nigeria, 2017) just from the petroleum industry but the Nigerian government has been unable to utilise the funds to improve the lives of its citizens or use the money to develop the economy. This has been one of the explanations why the poverty level increased in the country from 1999 to 2017 in contrary to the increasing revenue. The National Bureau of Statistics (2017) revealed that Nigeria earned approximately between 1999 to 2017 equivalent to \$800 billion in oil revenue along.

Similarly, Nigeria's budget rose from 1999 to 2017 steadily in a reasonable increase for instance, in 1999, Nigeria budgeted \$13.6 billion, \$14.7 billion in 2006, \$18.7 billion in 2007, \$21.1 billion in 2008, \$2.8 billion in 2009, \$29.3 billion in 2010, \$31.8 billion in 2011 and \$31.9 billion in 2016. This increase in national budget does not translate into poverty reduction policies. In the period between 1999 to 2017, there were series of policies and programmes to alleviate poverty but the policies did not impact positively on the common man in Nigeria. In the year 2000, a poverty alleviation programme was introduced called Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) but at early as 2001, the Federal Government declared the policy as a failure and introduced another one the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in 2001 targetted at eradicating poverty by the year 2010. The policy failed in its approach and implementation making poverty incidence in Nigeria to increase incidentally in the year 2010, 2011 up to 2017 from 24.6% in 1999 to 54.3% in 2001, 63.4% in 2004, 68.9% in 2007, 70% in 2010%, 70% in 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2017 respectively.

Other economic development policies failed to take into account the integration of masses-oriented policies for poverty reduction such the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) initiated in 2003, Seven Point Agenda in 2007 and other related economic development policies.

Ironically, the period above which recorded an increase in revenue also recorded the higher incidence of poverty index in Nigeria as revealed below.

Table 3: National Poverty Level 1980 - 2017

<i>Year</i>	<i>Poverty level %</i>
1980	27.2%
1985	46.3%
1992	42.7%
1996	65.6%
2004	54.4%
2007	70.6%
2010	70%
2012	70%
2013	63.4%
2014	61.2%
2015	62.6%
2016	70.6%
2017	71.6%

Source: National Bureau of statistics 2017.

Poverty is usually measured as either absolute or relative poverty (the latter being actually an Index of income inequality). Absolute poverty refers to a set

Table 4: World Bank data show that the percentage of the population living in households with consumption or income per person on 1990-2004

<i>Region</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2004</i>
East Asia and Pacific	15.40%	12.33%	9.07%
Europe and Central Asia	3.60%	1.28%	0.95%
Latin America and the Caribbean	9.62%	9.08%	8.64%
Middle East and North Africa	2.08%	1.69%	1.47%
South Asia	35.04%	33.44%	30.84%
Sub-Saharan Africa	46.07%	42.63%	41.09%

Source: World Bank, 2010

standard, which is consistent over time and between countries. The World Bank sees extreme poverty as living on less than US \$1.25 per day, and moderate poverty as less than \$ 2 a day. It estimates that in 2001, 1.1 billion people lived on less than \$2 a day. Six million children die of hunger every year, 17,000 every day. World Bank data show that the percentage of the population living in households with consumption or income per person below the poverty line regionally is as below.

The above poverty indicators show how worst poverty manifested in Sub-Saharan Africa as the most affected region in the world where Nigeria belongs. This continues unabated as shown by the figures below:

Table 5: Human Development Index in Nigeria 2007

GDP Per Capital (PPP US \$)	1.969
Life Expectancy Index	0.378
Education Index	0.657
GDP Index	0.497
GDP Per Capital (PPP US \$) Rank minus	-17
HDI rank	

Source: UNDP 2007

Table 6: Human Poverty Index in Nigeria 2007

Human Poverty Index in Nigeria 2007

Human Poverty Index (HPI-1) rank	114
Human Poverty Index (HPI-1) Value%	36.2
Probability at birth of not surviving to age 40 (% of Cohort)	37.4
Adult illiteracy rate (% age 15 and above)	28
Population not Using an improved water sources %	53
Children Underweight for age (% under age 5)	29
Population living below \$1.25 a day (%)	64.4
Population living below \$2 a day (%)	83.9
Population living below the national poverty line (%)	34.1
HPI-1 rank minus income poverty rank	-11

Source: UNDP 2009.

The above international poverty index shows that Nigeria is one of the poorest countries in the world with very low standard of living. Indeed, Nigeria ranked number 158 in terms of Human Development Report in 2009. Below is selected

comparison of Human Development status of the four categories of UNDP analysis. If one analyse the above poverty trend in 1999, the incidence increases from 1999 to date. This is in consideration with series of poverty alleviation programmes where billions of naira was spent.

There is other key correlation of poverty eradication in Nigeria according to Human Development Report 1998. There is an educational dimension to poverty in Nigeria: the higher the educational attainment, the lower the incidence of poverty. Poverty is concentrated among persons with no education and those with only primary education. The likelihood of being poor is highest when the head of household has no formal schooling. It is observed that households where the head had no formal schooling accounted for 48% of overall poverty incidence in 2004, while households where the head had secondary education accounted for 30%. Comparatively, low quality education leads to crime as observed in Pakistan (Ahmed, Abdullah & Akhtar, 2019).

Figure 2: Showing the Nigerian poverty profile in 2016 across the 36 states and FCT Abuja



Source: Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics

The value of Human Development Index does not improve from 1999 to 2017 as presented in the table below.

Table 7: Nigerian Human Development Index 1999 to 2017

<i>Date</i>	<i>Value</i>
1999	0.49
2000	0.48
2001	0.49
2002	0.47
2003	0.48
2004	0.46
2005	0.47
2006	0.48
2007	0.48
2008	0.49
2009	0.49
2010	0.50
2011	0.51
2012	0.51
2013	0.52
2014	0.53
2015	0.53
2016	0.52
2017	0.50

Source: Human Development Report 2017

The Nigeria’s poverty profile across the six geo-political zones continue to indicate an imbalance with the Northwest being the most sharply affected of the zones as indicated below.

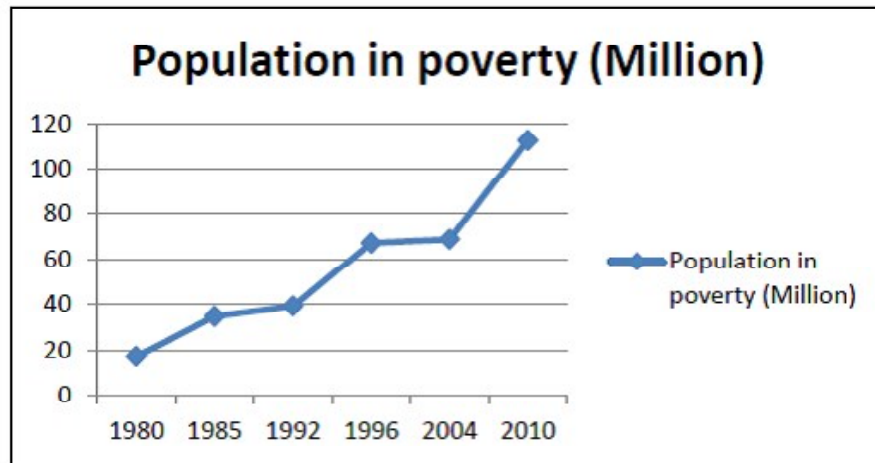
Table 8: Nigeria’s Poverty Profile Distributed Across the Six Geo-Political Zones in 2017

<i>Zone</i>	<i>Food Poor</i>	<i>Absolute Poor</i>	<i>Relative Poor</i>	<i>Dollar Per Day</i>
North Central	36.6	59.5	67.5	59.7
North East	51.5	69.0	76.3	69.1
North West	51.8	70.0	77.7	70.4
South East	41.0	58.7	67.0	59.2
South South	36.5	55.9	63.8	56.1
South West	25.4	49.8	59.1	50.1

Source: National Bureau of Statistics 2017

The number of the Nigerian population in poverty from 1980 to 2010 skyrocketed despite the increasing revenue multiply within the said period as shown below.

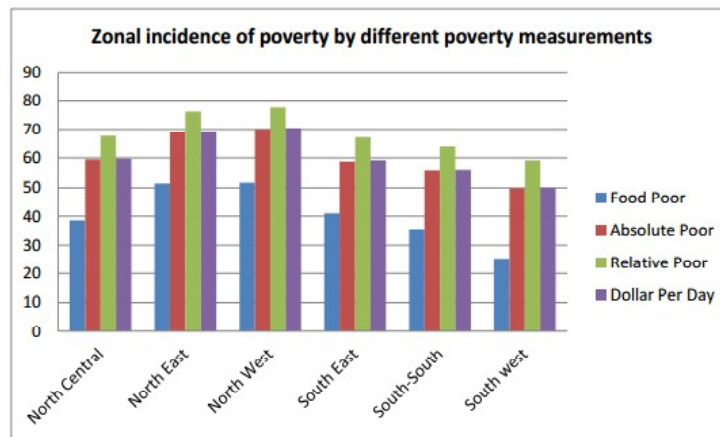
Figure 3: Showing the Increasing Level of Poverty in Nigeria from 1980 to 2010



Source: National Bureau of Statistics 2017

The zonal poverty measurement of Nigeria is indicated in the chart below with the North West being the most affected region followed by the North East. The average rate is 70 and above for the overall country as at 2017.

Figure 4: Zonal Poverty Measurement in Nigeria 2017



Source: National Bureau of Statistics 2017

All the above analyses so far point towards one major theme; that Nigeria is a rich country inhabited by the poor with an increasing revenue over the period of 18 years of this study and economic growth but a massive decline in living standard and a high-profile poverty. It is a declaration of a paradox and an irony of a rich man living in a poor compound unable to utilise or misappropriate his resources living his family in deprivation and devastation. This must be address in the near future to avoid social explosion, economic devastation and political instability.

Findings

The research discovered three major issues. The first issue is that Nigeria has been recording economic growth and an improved revenue generation within the period of study (1999-2017) where the country accrued an amount worth \$800 billion in the period more than what was obtained from 1960 to 1999 since political independence. But, the economic growth and increasing oil revenue did not translate into an improved standard of living for the average man in the country accruing from misappropriation of public resources, poor policies and inappropriate micro and macroeconomics settings in the country.

The second issue is the Nigerian poverty profile increased rapidly towards an intolerable level during the period of study even with the improved revenue and poverty alleviation policies within the period of study. Many Nigerians were pushed into the absolute poverty line while the relative poor were further pulled into the scorch of poverty. This scenario did not commensurate with the global practice and norm of translating economic growth into an increase income and improved standard of living.

The third issue is the notion as postulated by Ake (1996) in his theory of “Distorted Polices” and “False Paradigm” that the issue of poverty is a manageable affair that can be tackle by policymakers in Nigeria even without relying on World Bank and MDGs and other aids from global agencies. It is a deliberate phenomenon created by Nigerian rulers to impoverish the masses for a continued political gain and manipulation of the elite. The development agenda as observed by Ake (1996) and the policy of poverty alleviation in Nigeria has never been started in the inception. The PAP, NAPEP, NEEDS, Seven Point Agenda were all a decorated nomenclature initiated by different successive administrations from 1999 to date to deceive the gullible masses and for the elite to perpetuate themselves onto power for their personal gain. Nigeria has the potential and the leverage for poverty eradication but the

unintended elite ruling class and the policymakers decided to embark on false policies sometimes indigenous and in other times externally oriented which further escalate and aggravate the poverty situation of the Nigerian population. Finally, chronic poverty in Nigeria is causing heinous crimes including the proliferation of armed group conflicts like Boko Haram insurgency in Northeastern Nigeria (Sambo, Sule, Deribe & Ahmed, 2020).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that poverty is a pervasive phenomenon which has permeated a larger section of the Nigerian population for many decades. The study realised that the Nigerian poverty profile from 1999 to 2017 is absolute in its term and it has a multidimensional nature from across the states and six geo-political zones and FCT Abuja. Some regions and sections are poorer in all ramifications. The study also concludes that Nigeria secured a considerable amount of revenue which is reasonable to extricate the population of the poor in Nigeria from poverty level to an improved standard of living with good policies but the economic growth and an improved revenue failed to translate meaningfully into poverty reduction programmes. The study concludes that false policies and distorted programmes emanated by Nigerian policymakers tantamount to the present situation of high poverty profile in Nigeria during the period of study. The study concludes that the poverty profile in Nigeria is alarming and has reached an intolerable level that must be tackled and for this phenomenon to be tackled, the following are recommended:

1. A sound macroeconomic policy that should be all encompassing and integrated in nature should be designed indigenously which should focus in empowering the poor to lift them up out of poverty line;
2. Some country case studies need to be examine and considered for adoption and application particularly countries that shared the same historical and cultural antecedents with Nigeria. Such cases include Malaysian model of gender empowerment, infrastructure development and qualitative education and healthcare services affordable for all in the state and the Brazilian Bolsa Familia or Conditional Cash Transfer which succeeded in minimizing poverty in Brazil by 28% within 10 years through empowering the poor household and encouraging them to enroll their children in elementary schools and immunisation programmes;

3. A comprehensive model should be adopted which will minimise the gap of inequality between the poor and the rich through fair and equitable distribution of national resources, curbing of bureaucratic and political corruption, industrialisation, small scale loans, improved land tenure system and affordable infrastructure.

Practical Implication

The study is an alarm and a sound bell for Nigerian policymakers to practically re-examine their perception and attitudes towards the poverty profile of Nigeria and develop the political will to address it sincerely and appropriately. The statistics provided in this work speak volume of the dangers of social, economic and political explosion that await the Nigerian state sooner than expected if the phenomenon of the scorch of abject penury is not tackled right away. The recommendations provided has direct impacts and practical implications for the policymakers to adopt and resolve the crisis of Nigerian poverty profile.

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