

## **GOOD GOVERNANCE, POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMME AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA.**

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### **Abstract**

Poverty is a globally phenomenon but the intensity and weighty vary from one society and another. Despite Nigeria's great endowment it has a wide spread of poverty. This work examines good governance, poverty alleviation and human development in Nigeria. The study, which is anchored on Good governance Theory, employs secondary source of data with documentary analysis. The research revealed that the poverty alleviation programmes' policy objectives were not achieved because of poor governance, corruption and neglect of the target group (the poor) based on these findings, we recommended that government should exercise the attribute of good governance which is transparency and accountability also the agencies created for war against corruption should stand up to their responsibility, Again, policy implementation should carry along the target group (the poor), finally the masses should make right choice of leaders for good governance since it's the catalyst to poverty alleviation and human development in Nigeria

**Keywords:** Good Governance, corruption, poverty alleviation and Human Development

### **INTRODUCTION**

Poverty in Nigeria has grown to become the beast that destroys the best. Just as a cancerous canker worm, it has eaten and has continued to eat deeper and deeper into the fabrics of the citizens of this country. The issues concerning good governance and poverty alleviation in Nigeria has remained an empirical issue in the nations development literature for the past few decades (Oke and Oluwale 2015). Poverty is a global issue. It is estimated that almost half the world — over 3 billion people — live on less than \$2.50 a day (Shah, 2013). The GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of the 41 Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (567 million people) is less than the wealth of the world's 7 richest people combined. Nearly a billion people entered the 21st century unable to read a book or sign their names (Oke and Oluwale 2015). Less than

one per cent of what the world spent every year on weapons was needed to put every child into school by the year 2000 and yet it didn't happen.

According to Oke and Oluwale (2015), 1 billion children live in poverty (1 in 2 children in the world). 640 million live without adequate shelter, 400 million have no access to safe water, and 270 million have no access to health services. 10.6 million died in 2003 before they reached the age of 5 (or roughly 29,000 children per day).

Sub – Saharan Africa(SSA) is afflicted by many forms of poverty. The poverty situation in Sub Saharan African countries is precarious given the percentage of people living below \$ 1 a day. The use of socio-economic indicators like per capita income, life expectancy at birth (years), access to health care services, access to safe water, access to education and access to sanitation facilities also depicts the extent of poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa (Adeyemi, Ijaiya, and Raheem, 2009). HDI scores in most countries of SSA have stagnated or declined since 1990, leaving the region as the poorest in the world. Indeed, 28 of the 31 low human development countries are in SSA (UNDP, 2006: 265).

In Nigeria, an estimated 126 million out of the country's 168.8million (as estimated in 2012) people live on less than N220.00 or USD1.25 per day. The enormous wealth in the country has not impacted positively on the well-being of the citizens (Oke and Oluwale 2015). Despite the average GDP per capita, for a developing African nation, much of the Nigeria's population suffers from extreme poverty. Nigeria ranked 151 out of 177 countries in the United Nations Development Index in 2004. Nigeria was ranked 158th on the United Nations' Human Poverty Index and over 50% of the population are living below \$1 per day. In 2010, Nigeria ranked 159th out of 177 countries in Human Development Index (Odularu, 2008:3; Ogunkua 2011). The disparity between GDP per capita and the number of people living below \$1 per day illustrates the enormous income gap in the country. Available data from the Harmonized Nigeria Living Standard Survey (HNLSS) 2015/2016, which remains the follow-up to the Nigeria Living Standard Survey (NLSS) 2009/2010, conducted by the NBS(National Bureau of Statistics) reveals that efforts to alleviate poverty was not satisfactory. For instance, relative poverty and absolute poverty rates increased to 69.0% and 60.9% in 2016 respectively from 54.4% and 54.7% in 2016 (2017 Annual Performance Report:38). According to the National Bureau of Statistics, 112.519 million Nigerians live in relative poverty conditions while other poverty measurement standard, absolute measure, which puts the country's poverty rate at 99.284 million or 60.9 per cent (Onuba, 2017).

Despite the massive revenue from oil, 69 percent of over 100 million Nigerians were living within the poverty bracket. Nigeria had been unable to translate the huge natural resources at her disposal to the improvement of her citizens' living standard. According to the former World Bank Vice President and a former Minister for Education, Ezekwesili (cited in *The Punch*, 2013), "Nigeria has therefore tragically failed to translate her rich resource endowment to improvement in the standard of living of her citizens hence we today have 69 percent of over 100 million of our citizens in the poverty bracket". The rising level of poverty in the country has been attributed to poor governance. Evidence of terribly poor governance in Nigeria is palpable. It manifested in the corrupt, inept political leadership and weak civil institutions to dilapidated infrastructure, insecurity and mass poverty in the midst of opulence. Our successive governments have similarly acknowledged our predicament and sometimes penned "home-grown" programmes that cost enormous time and money to produce. The critical difference between Nigeria and other developing countries however has been the unmitigated failure here to adopt good governance practices: faithfully implement plans and build strong institutions that can drive and sustain rapid development. Ezekwesili (2013) submitted that Nigeria is the best known example of the African paradox of a land so rich in natural resources, but where the majority of the people are poor. She located the source of the mass poverty in poor governance, she recalled how corruption and economic mismanagement have condemned 69 percent of the populace to poverty, while the Asian economies have galloped ahead .

Good governance has become a key issue in the discourse on poverty. Governance provides the institutional, legal and political framework not only for the design of poverty reduction policies but also for the enhancement of the capacity of the poor to deal positively with and improve their material conditions. Good governance ensures the participation of the poor in decisions that affects them and empowers them to get their views on the policy agenda (Adejumobi, 20016). In its "Poverty Report", for the year 2000, the UNDP has noted the importance of governance as "the missing link" in the fight against poverty. Governments may write good plans for poverty reduction, raise revenue to implement such plans and even identify targets and yet fail to deliver anything tangible in terms of poverty-reduction. The "missing link" here is responsive and accountable institutions between anti-poverty efforts and poverty reduction. To get poverty reduction fully on the agenda of public policy, good

governance is needed to enhance the capacity of the government to deliver and to be accountable for the resources at its disposal (Nyong'o, 2001:8).

It is within the above context that this paper seeks to examine good governance as a fundamental factor to poverty alleviation and human development in Nigeria.

## **Conceptual Clarification**

### **Good Governance**

Governance has been variously defined as “the exercise of authority or control to manage a country’s affairs and resources” (Schneider, 1999). A synthesis of current definitions provided by donor organizations such as the World Bank, the OECD Development Assistance Committee, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), international development agencies and multilateral donors yield a more complex concept of governance. According to USAID (2002), “Good governance” has been described as the striving for rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, participation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability, and strategic vision in the exercise of political, economic, and administrative authority.

In the words of UNESCO (2009), "good governance is an indeterminate term used in development literature to describe how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources in order to guarantee the realization of human rights."

Doombos (2003), noted that while it is striking how quickly governance became a buzzword in the 1990s, there has hardly been a consensus as to its core meaning, and less and less of a common idea as to how it could be applied more concretely. The concept of good governance emerges as a model to compare ineffective economies or political bodies.

By the mid-1990s, international donor (notably UNDP and OECD) conceptions of good governance had expanded to include the notions of transparency, accountability and participation. For example, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Participatory Development and Good Governance set up in 1993 by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD stated as its first key conclusion thus, "democratization and good governance is central to the achievement of the development goals for the 21st century." Given current conceptions, however, we ask, what can be said to be the key defining properties of the concept of good governance? At least three features can be identified, namely;

First, good governance is predicated upon mutually supportive and cooperative relationship between government, civil society and the private sector. The nature of relationships' among these three groups of actors, and the need to strengthen viable mechanisms to facilitate interactions, assume critical importance.

Second, good governance is defined as possession of all, or some combination of, the following elements: participation, transparency of decision-making, accountability, the rule of law and predictability. Democratic practices, civil liberties, and access to information are sometimes added to the list. Donor assistance to strengthen governance in developing countries has focused on empowerment and capacity- building with the objective of enhancing the preceding elements.

Third, good governance is normative in conception. The values that provide the underpinning for governance are the values postulated by international donor institutions. This last point deserves consideration. Doornbos (2003) states forthrightly that, "if donor conceptualized standards of good governance were more fully elaborated and insisted upon, it would almost certainly imply an insistence that Western- derived standards of conduct be adopted in non-Western politico- cultural contexts. It is observed that not only do efforts to promote good governance often have the opposite effect, but what in one respect (e.g. economic growth) is good governance, is clearly bad governance in other respects, such as labour conditions, democratic content of government, and civil liberties.

Conceptual confusion the methodological problem of how to develop meaningful cross-national indicators on which there is agreement. In the absence of a clear and generally acceptable definition of the concept of good governance, this paper accepts the definition provided by the world Bank in 1992 which states that, " it is the means by which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development.

### **Poverty**

Poverty, like most concepts is not easily amenable to a straightforward definition. It has been defined by various authors in different ways. To Marshal (1998:516), poverty is defined as "a state in which resources, usually material but sometimes cultural are lacking and could be delineated into two broad categories of "absolute and relative" terms. Absolute poverty refers to "a state in which an individual lacks the resources necessary for subsistence" while the relative definition refers to the individual 's or groups' lack of resources when compared with that of other members of the society" (Agbiokoro, 2010).

Poverty can also be defined as a condition in which an individual or group of individual or community are unable to meet their basic material needs such as foods, potable water, clothing, shelter, basic health care, education, lack of participation in the prevailing social standard of living, dignity and having limited chance of advancing their welfare just to the limit of their capabilities.

Maxwell (1992) asks a number of agitating questions bordering on the current terminology of poverty. Is poverty simply about the level of income obtained by households or individuals? Is it about lack of access to social services? Or is it more correctly understood as the inability to participate in society economically, socially, culturally and politically? According to Maxwell, the posers above reflect the complexity of measurement which mirrors the complexity of definition, and the complexity increases where participatory methods are used and people define their own indicators of poverty.

However, beyond the complexities, the posers represent the different dimensions of poverty from income and consumption poverty to vulnerability, deprivation, powerlessness and isolation.

The complexities above notwithstanding, different ideas have been expressed on the concept of poverty. The concept has been defined in absolute sense. The World Bank (2000) defines absolute poverty as a condition of life degraded by diseases, deprivation and squalor.<sup>1</sup> Again, in relative sense, poverty implies relative deprivation (see Bradshaw, 2006). However, Rocha (1998) notes that the persistence of chronic deprivation of basic needs nowadays makes absolute poverty the obvious priority in terms of definition, measurement and political action from the international point of view.

Gore (2002) explains the concept of 'all-pervasive' poverty. According to him, poverty is all-pervasive where the majority of the population lives at or below income levels sufficient to meet their basic needs, and the available resources even where equally distributed, are barely sufficient to meet the basic needs of the population. Gore reiterates further that pervasive poverty leads to environmental degradation, as people have to eat into the environmental capital stock to survive. When this happens, the productivity of key assets on which livelihood depends is greatly undermined.

### **Governance and Poverty Alleviation**

Countries that failed to realize their poverty alleviation goals have invariably suffered yawning deficit of good governance. This is the most single deadly obstacle to sustainable poverty

reduction and all round development (Diamond, 2004). The question of leadership or the absence of committed leaders capable of initiating programmes for socio- political and economic development is the fundamental problem facing Nigeria today. According to Dike (1999), there are many complaints about waste and inefficiency in performing public services in Nigeria. For Nigeria's sorry socio-economic situation to improve, the nation needs honest and God-fearing men to be in charge of her affairs. For development to take place in any society there must be serious transformation in the quality of governance. For every poorly governed country, corruption must be present throughout the system of government. Public infrastructure decay or are never built because the resources at the state's disposal are diverted to private ends.

The leaders that came to power in Nigeria after independence came without any ideology of their own. The colonial masters too did not leave them with any. They came to power without any agenda for development for the people. They were only handed political independence without economic independence. This political independence, they saw as a do or die affair. For one to control the economy, one must have political power. This power, they use arbitrarily for their own selfish ends to the detriment of the people they are supposed to be serving. There is absence of political will, the people are not empowered and there is complete breakdown of trust between the leaders and the people. The leaders have completely abandoned the people.

It is not easy to eradicate poverty in any society no matter the amount of resources available in that country but as Marshal (1998) observes, "there is no moral justification for extreme poverty to exist side by side with great wealth". It is the opinion of many people that the problem with Nigeria is in the area of policy instability, policy implementation and corruption. All these can be solved through good purposive leadership exercised through good governance which Nigeria is in dare need for all round development to take place.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework is on good governance theory as enunciated by Ekundayo (2017). The most relevant of the governance theories to the Nigerian governance situation is the good governance theory. Its tenets can be used as searchlight for good governance and its principles can be adopted as indices for assessment of governance in Nigeria. The good governance theory is associated with governing methods and structures in developing countries and it is particularly relevant to governance in Nigeria because Nigeria is a developing country. Good governance theory develops from a set of principles or policies first introduced by the World Bank in relating with and in assisting developing or third world countries. The World Bank usually requires good governance practice, among others, as a condition from the developing countries. Good governance is about how the public sector in third world countries can be developed. It has been realized that a modern form of government is not just only about efficiency, that governing is also about accountability between the state and its citizens (Bjork and Johansson, 2001) Good governance is about how people are treated not merely as customers or consumers (as in the new public management approach) but as citizens, who have the right to hold their governments to account for the actions they take or fail to take. The demand for efficiency in the public sector should not be allowed to lead to bad service. When there is bad service, citizens have the right to protest and hold politicians accountable.

Good governance theory, therefore, is a governance theory that sets some basic principles according to which a Good governance theory, therefore, is a governance theory that sets some basic principles according to which a good government, whatever its form, must be run. Such principles include accountability, control, responsiveness, transparency, public participation, economy, efficiency etc. In sum, the theory of good governance is created to reflect all the principles enunciated above and many more (Minogue, Polidano and Hulme, 1998).

In view of the foregoing and in line with the World Bank principles and policy interventions in third world countries, good governance involves an efficient public service, an independent judicial system and legal framework to enforce contracts and responsible administration of



public funds. Other requirements for good governance include an independent public auditor responsible to a representative legislature, respect for the law and human rights at all levels of government and a pluralistic institutional structure. Apart from the above, good governance is predicated on three segments of the society which have direct effect on governance as highlighted. The type of political regime, the process by which authority is exercised in the management of the economic and social resources with a view to development, and the capacity of governments to formulate policies and have them effectively implemented (WorldBank, 1992:3)

The theory is apt to this work since the successful implementation of any policy , especially poverty alleviation program demands high level of accountability, openness, responsiveness, people’s participation , economy, transparency efficiency to achieve Human development and to lift the people from poverty .

## **Methodology**

The research adopts secondary sources of data and documentary analysis.

## **Discussion**

### **Poverty alleviation and Governance Failure in Nigeria**

#### **Corruption:**

Corruption is not peculiar to Nigeria, however, the cancerous menace has eaten enormously into the nation's fabrics to such an extent that pockets of corrupt practices have pervaded and watered down to even the smallest of structures at the grassroot level. Corruption has defied all possible or acclaimed attempts to dissolve and has become widespread and corrosive in the country. Colonialism and authoritarianism aggravated corruption, escalating it to cancerous proportions in Africa for many historical, political, economic and social reasons (Mangu, 2012). The activities of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission and Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (EFCC) have been reduced to charades and for getting back at opponents of the administration. The countless reforms and lack of genuity and integrity of Nigeria leaders have left Nigeria corrupt as ever (Lawal and Owolabi, 2012:10).

**Lack of Foresight:** The leadership of Nigeria lacks the ability to predict issues or outcomes. They thus are transformed to reactionary leaders who react only when a problem arises rather than foresee it coming and forestalling the occurrence. So they wait for a disaster to occur or an already depleting infrastructure to completely collapse before finding a remedy. The former United States ambassador to Nigeria, Walter Carrington, while delivering the 29th convocation lecture of University of Ilorin identified corruption, lack of good leadership and foresight as responsible for most of the economic problems confronting the country. He noted that persistent poverty retarded the growth of the country and blamed successive country leaders for lack of foresight and corruption as responsible for the decline growth of the giant of Africa (Mokuolu and Abubakre, 2013).

**False Hopes:** Local leaders in Nigeria capitalize on the illiteracy and incapacitation of the locals and indoctrinate them with falsehood, claiming they have their religious and ethnic interest at heart when in reality they are the true enemies of their own people. It has become a normal act of in governance to make shadowed promises without a will to perform. So year in-year out and as campaign seasons draw near, white elephant promises are made by those who claim to understand the needs of the people but hardly with an intention to fulfil them. This was also captured by Ene, Abam, Williams &Dunnamah (2013) who identified Africa and Nigeria's political position as backward, stemming from unfulfilled promises, greed and the likes.

**Lack of ideas, creativity and innovation:** These are clearly evident in the attitude and charisma of Nigeria's leaders. In the growing insecurity of the nation and in the proper utilisation of Nigeria's natural, capital and human resources, the leaders lack direction. This was captured by Nnonyelu (2013:100) who described the situation as "the predilection of the Nigerian elite in the face of poverty of ideas" and was reiterated as a "failed, insensitive or clueless political leadership which is fighting hard to appease their constituents with crumbs from the national cake while stealing large chunks for self-preservation and perpetuation". (Imhionopi and Ugochukwu 2013:85).

**Poorly Baked Policies, Poor planning and continuity:** Frequent policy somersaults give

Credence to the assertion that the Nigerian government lack what it takes to birth outstanding policies that will sail through to completion and goal attainment. With the frequent churning out of policies shrouded with inconsistency, faulty in their conception and 'directionless' in their context, it brings to wonder the elements that constitute the nation's governing body. "Good governance includes the capacity to formulate and implement sound policies, and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions" (Arowolo and Aluko, 2012); but what Nigeria's experience is such that policies are not allowed to work when they are against perceived interests and when they are allowed to run, do not stand the test of time because of lack of direction.

**Irresponsibility:** Governance in Nigeria is grossly irresponsible, are not answerable to the electorates and not accountable to the masses. The privatization drive by the government that has privatised almost every key industry and service providing agency bring to mind the question, 'what then is the responsibility of the government to the people? If all basic amenity providing institutions of government are under private control, certainly the cost would rise and the quality reduce because the government possesses financial weight to run these organisations, supervisory responsibilities and in the process laws and regulations have been breached without censure. Where this state of affairs has become prevalent, the public service has lent itself to abuse by dishonest politicians "In his search for the cause of the Nigerian problem, Chinua Achebe, lamented in his book 'The trouble with Nigeria' that the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. According to him, 'there is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land, climate or water or air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to their responsibility, to the challenge of personal examples which are the hallmarks of true leadership'" (Chigbu, 2007).

**Lack of rule of law:** There is a dearth in the supremacy of the law. This lends its bearing from the fact that the judiciary which is a arm that upholds the rule of law is held by the jugular by political actors. Nwekeaku (2014) averred that Nigeria's constitution provides for the fundamental rights of the citizens and roles for every level of government, thus it is not the lack of good laws that troubles Nigeria but the lack of good governance that seeks to twist these laws to its own curves. Highlighting this further, Lawal and Owolabi (2012) opined that the rule of law is undermined by the lack of independence of the judiciary in Nigeria. This is

evident in the direct influence Nigeria's political leaders have over the judiciary (in appointments, promotions, threats and gifts), their adjudications and the weakness of the judicial machinery to enforce the law and judicial decisions.

**Lack of Competence and ill preparation:** Governance and leadership in Nigeria has been seen as an ambition in order to cut some 'national cake' and not for the sake of good leadership and governance as it were. Little wonder that the emerging leaders lack direction at the assumption of office and are known to be incompetent in resolving issues and driving development. Most of them saw the status as a prize to win and cared less about the details of the job to perform and suddenly found themselves face-to-face with responsibilities they were unprepared and ill equipped to handle. Consequently, leadership incompetence and bad governance-are not far-fetched causes of poverty among the mass of Nigerians which is also evident in the government's inability to wisely and discreetly employ the country's petroleum resources (Omoyibo, 2013). This contradicts the tenets of good governance which is capture by to Adeosun (2012:3) as "competent management of a country's resources or affairs in a manner that is open, transparent, accountable, equitable and responsive to the yearning and aspirations of the people". The truth is that our leaders have, in large measure, failed us. Not only have they failed to promote economic development to improve the living conditions of the people in general but they have also done everything to undermine all laid down rules and regulations that guide socio-economic and political development (Ihonvbere, 2009); while also speaking publicly authoritatively and boldly about subjects they really know nothing about (Idada and Uhunmwuagh, 2012).

**Lack of Accountability, Transparency and Due Process:** This is closely linked to corruption. Governance at national, state and local levels are neither accountable nor transparent, while due process is boycotted. The various public sectors are shrouded in weak structures and poverty while lots of money are allotted to them in the budget. This is an offshoot of a non-transparent governance by those in authority (Julius-Adeoye, 2011).

### **Link between Good Governance and Poverty**

There is great concern for good governance in the international community as a result of stagnant economic development, under-development and persistent poverty in most countries

in transition and developing world. The general thinking now is that, governance is a pre-condition to achieving sustainable human development and that it must be the people along with their government that have to rise to the challenge of reform (Akpa, 2004). Nigeria has all the resource endowments to overcome poverty, but it is ironically being ravaged by chronic and devastating poverty due to bad governance.

It is reported that over 70 percent of Nigerians are living below poverty line, life expectancy at birth is 51 years, over 40 percent of the population lacks access to potable drinking water and only about 40 percent of the population are literate (El Rufai, 2001). According to Diamond (2004:222), "the deepest root cause of poverty is not lack of resources or international isolation. Rather, it is a lack of good governance - the instability or unwillingness to apply public resources effectively to generate public goods". Public goods include physical structures such as roads, bridges, ports, sanitation, potable water, electricity, public transport, telecommunication; social, economic and political infrastructure - schools, clinics, markets, courts, vaccination programmes, improved agricultural techniques, a neutral and capable state of bureaucracy. All of the above are products of good governance.

As mentioned earlier, good governance consist of the following: capacity of the state to function in the service of the public goods, transparency, accountability, rule of law, mechanism of participation and dialogue to enable the public provide input to the policy In the words of Okonjo - Iweala, Soludo (2007), the failure to effectively combat the problem of poverty is largely as a result of infrastructural decay, endemic corruption, poor governance and lack of accountability.

With the idea of good governance, which connotes the idea of managing a country's resources to maximize the welfare of the people, at the back of our mind, it is the idea of this paper to ascertain the level or extent the incidence of poverty has been dealt with in the country in the wake of democratic government that has been operating in the country for some time now.

When the right man is on the throne the people rejoice for righteousness exalts a nation but when the wrong man is on the throne the masses perish of poverty and dehumanization. The effect of governance manifest in all facets of Nigeria including masses of poor and decayed infrastructure (Ene, 2013) bedeviled healthcare system with high mortality rate; urban degradation, increase in slums and poor living conditions; high cost of living; widening of the

social strata gap between the rich and the poor; loss of will by public workers to carry out their duties with efficiency or passion as it is seen as a waste of time; right rate of unemployment and growing restiveness of the youths; growing insecurity, terrorism and ethno-religious clashes; break down of law and order, lawlessness and ineptitude; assassinations; man-know-man syndrome which erodes meritocracy and promotes mediocrity in the public sphere and administration; crisis in poverty reduction; pockets of corruption at all levels in the society; waste of manpower, mineral and capital resources; loss of confidence, faith and trust in the government; loss of interest in political participation; economic instability occasioned by frequent strike actions thereby stalling economic activities (Arowolo and Aluko, 2012). These challenges of bad governance are enunciated Ihonvbere (2009) to manifest in poverty, unemployment, insecurity, lack of water, lack of adequate housing, crime, corruption, rural underdevelopment, low industrialization, technological backwardness, nepotism, ethnic distrust, religious violence, deteriorating infrastructure, illiteracy, poor pay for workers, lack of social security, unreliable power supply, poor public transportation system, malnutrition, high maternal and child mortality, inadequate health services, political instability and rascality (Abati 2007 in Idada and Uhumwuangh, 2012; Julius-Adeoye, 2011). There also exists growing pockets of anger that may eventually explode into major rebellions and revolutions that would threaten the very existence of the nation. Madukovich (2014) posits that "this disillusionment may not be unconnected to the frustration many Nigerians feel over the insensitivity of those in power to their plight. Democracy rather than bring smiles to the faces of Nigerians have done the direct opposite to the majority of her peoples.

## **Conclusion**

This study has shown the various manifestations of poverty in Nigeria and the reasons for persistence poverty despite the introduction of poverty reduction programmes by successive governments. It analyzed how good governance has become a central issue when addressing poverty reduction, through the most popular connections that link both governance and poverty.

The research emphasized the place of institutional effectiveness, political participation, transparency and accountability which are germane to good governance. Zero tolerance for

corruption and stopping illegitimate repatriation of capital will be necessary for effectiveness. Leaders should be selfless and sincere in their approach to poverty eradication. There should be close monitoring of every poverty reduction programme put in place by government to ensure its transparent implementation. The factors that contributed to poverty such as lack of education, unemployment, health problems and bad policies must all be tackled if any progress would be made.

### **Recommendations**

Poverty in Nigeria is multi-faceted and deeply rooted an effective poverty eradication strategy in Nigeria must reflect its multi- dimensional nature, social, cultural and political dimensions. Consequently, achieving the sustainable development through poverty reduction would acquire the decisive commitment of all stakeholders involved- individual's, communities, government, non-governmental organisations and relevant international agencies.

First, the federal, state and local governments must ensure commitment in the areas of fund allocation for provision of social services that are beneficial to the poor, fostering efficient macro-economic and sectoral policies and the provision of an enabling environment to facilitate private sector economic framework. Also, the government should recognize and encourage non-governmental organisation (NGOs) to be actively involved in wide variety of activities to help provide development opportunities for grassroots communities considering the disproportionately high incidence of endemic poverty in the rural communities. Such encouragement of the NGOs should be closely accompanied by governments increased investment in human capital, a requirement necessary to equip the poor with education/training in order to enable them share in such grassroots opportunities.

Another strategy is for the government to realistically undertake a comprehensive study on the causes of poor implementation of development policies and strategies and development policies and strategies and develop a plan of action to address the critical and persistent problem. There is also the need to develop long term strategic plans that will address

unemployment, taking into consideration the educational curriculum and the needs to the labour market as well as strengthening the human and financial capacity of poverty alleviation institutions in the country.

Finally, the masses should be vigilant and wise to make a right choice of leadership while voting, for good governance is the catalyst to poverty alleviation and human development in Nigeria. The masses should be involved by the government in the issues of development since “it is he who wears the shoes that knows where it pinches” (Mass mobilization and involvement)



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