

Interrogating Sustainable Development Goal 1 and poverty in South East Nigeria: Is there any Development to be Sustained?

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Abstract

This study examined Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 and its effect on poverty alleviation in the South East of Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined (i) how SDG1 influences income generation in South East Nigeria, (ii) determined the extent to which SDG 1 influenced social protection in South East Nigeria. Two hypotheses guided the study. Analysis of data collected was done using SPSS. The study adopted descriptive research design. The population of the study was 21,955,400. Taro Yamane's formula was used to determine the sample size of 625. The data was analysed through the use of descriptive and inferential analysis, one sample t-test as used to test the hypotheses. Findings of the study showed that SDG1 had a positive significant influence on income generation, social protection, sustainable livelihood, access to education, and establishment of micro enterprises in South East Nigeria. The study recommended that for SDG1 to further make impact in the South East Nigeria, governments of the five states that make up the zone, should identify the marginalized communities and prioritize the implementation of SDG policies in those communities.

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1. Introduction

The relevance of Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG 1) on poverty reduction cannot be overstated, as it serves as the foundation for achieving sustainable development globally. SDG 1, which aims to "end poverty in all its forms everywhere," underscores the urgency of addressing poverty as a fundamental human rights issue and a barrier to achieving broader development objectives (United Nations, 2015). Poverty perpetuates cycles of deprivation, inequality, and social exclusion, hindering individuals and communities from realizing their full potential. According to the World Bank, more than 700 million people worldwide still live in extreme poverty, struggling to meet their basic needs for food, shelter, and healthcare (World Bank, 2021). SDG 1 provides a comprehensive framework for mobilizing resources, fostering partnerships, and implementing targeted interventions to alleviate poverty and promote shared prosperity. By addressing the root causes of poverty, such as inadequate access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, SDG 1 seeks to create pathways for sustainable development and inclusive growth. Furthermore, the relevance of SDG 1 extends beyond its intrinsic goal of poverty reduction to intersect with other sustainable development goals, such as SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), and SDG 4 (Quality Education). Achieving progress towards SDG 1 is essential for advancing the broader agenda of sustainable development and leaving no one behind in the journey towards a more equitable and prosperous world.

Poverty reduction is one of the major challenges in the world, which is the premise of sustainable development. Thus, sustainable development and poverty reduction are inseparable (Liu *et al.*, 2015). Internationally, ending poverty within the globe is outlined by the UN in the agenda 2030 as the first goal among the seventeen SDGs (Campagnolo & Davide, 2019). This particularly stressed the global concern on the threat of this menace of poverty against humanity. The reduction of poverty in Africa is low compared with the Asian countries, which remains a serious setback in achieving its development agenda regardless of the way and manner it's conceptualized. Therefore, the African Union Agenda is an effort that strengthened the major concern given to poverty in the MDGs and SDGs (Omomowo, 2018). Nevertheless, despite the SDGs target year of 2030 which is quickly approaching, in 2018, Nigeria has overtaken India to become the country with the highest number of people living in extreme poverty (Akpan&Isihak, 2020). Hence, unless the country invests concerted efforts in converting poverty, achieving the SDGs in 2030 will be very difficult.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG 1) aims to eradicate poverty in all its forms, including extreme poverty, by 2030. In Nigeria, Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG 1) holds paramount importance in addressing the pervasive issue of poverty. With a significant portion of the population living below the poverty line, SDG 1 serves as a crucial framework for guiding targeted interventions and fostering inclusive development. Poverty not only deprives individuals of basic necessities but also undermines economic growth, social cohesion, and overall well-being. By prioritizing poverty alleviation efforts, Nigeria can unlock human potential, stimulate economic productivity, and reduce inequalities. SDG 1 provides a roadmap for implementing sustainable solutions that empower marginalized communities, improve access to education and healthcare, and create pathways to economic prosperity. Achieving SDG 1 in Nigeria is essential not only for fulfilling the rights and

dignity of every citizen but also for building a more resilient and equitable society for future generations. However, Nigeria faces significant challenges in achieving this goal, with a large portion of its population still living in poverty. The problem of poverty in Nigeria is complex and multifaceted, influenced by various socio-economic, political, and environmental factors.

One of the primary challenges is income inequality, with a disproportionate distribution of wealth exacerbating poverty levels across different regions and demographic groups (Ogwumike&Adeloye, 2020). High unemployment rates, particularly among youth and women, further contribute to economic vulnerability and hinder progress towards poverty reduction (World Bank, 2019). Additionally, inadequate access to basic services such as education, healthcare, clean water, and sanitation perpetuates poverty cycles, particularly in rural areas (Ukoha&Egwuonwu, 2020). Poor infrastructure, including roads, electricity, and telecommunications, constrains economic opportunities and hampers efforts to improve living standards (Ogwumike&Adeloye, 2020).

Moreover, recurrent conflicts, insecurity, and environmental degradation pose significant obstacles to poverty reduction efforts in Nigeria (World Bank, 2021). These challenges exacerbate vulnerabilities, displace communities, and disrupt livelihoods, particularly in conflict-affected regions such as the Northeast and the Niger Delta. In South East, Nigeria, Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG 1) on poverty alleviation faces multifaceted challenges. Despite income generation initiatives and micro-enterprise support, many individuals still lack access to sustainable livelihoods, adequate social protection, and quality education. Structural barriers hinder economic empowerment, particularly in rural areas. Limited access to social safety nets exacerbates vulnerabilities, perpetuating cycles of poverty. Insufficient investment in education further restricts opportunities for socio-economic advancement. It is based on this statement that study examined the Sustainable Development Goal 1 and poverty alleviation in South East, Nigeria.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

- i. Examine how Sustainable Development Goal 1 influences income generation in South East, Nigeria.
- ii. Determine the extent to which Sustainable Development Goal 1 influenced social protection in South East, Nigeria

1.4 Research Questions

- i. How has Sustainable Development Goal 1 influenced income generation in South East, Nigeria?
- ii. To what extent has Sustainable Development Goal 1 influenced social protection in South East, Nigeria?

1.5 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study.

- i. Sustainable Development Goal 1 has no significant influence on income generation in South East, Nigeria.
- ii. Sustainable Development Goal 1 does not have a significant influence on social protection in South East, Nigeria

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Sustainable Development Goal

Sustainable development is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The concept of needs goes beyond simply material need and includes values, relationship and participation. It can be achieved through eradicating poverty and hunger, guarantying a healthy life, universal access to basic services such as water, sanitation, sustainable energy support, the generation of development through inclusive education and decent work. Members of a community must share in the cost and benefits of development. That is, all community members must participate in development.

Sustainable development means better ways of doing things without compromising the health status of the people. Therefore, sustainable development includes – economic growth, environmental stewardship and social inclusion. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a collection of 17 global goals designed to be a blue print to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. The Sustainable Development Goals, set in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and intended to be achieved by the year 2030, are part of a United Nations Resolution called “The 2030 Agenda”. The 17 goals are broad and interdependent. Each of the Sustainable Development Goals has a list of targets which are measured with indicators. The year by which the target is meant to be achieved varies between the year 2020 or 2030 (Bleut, 2015).

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 interconnected objectives adopted by the United Nations in 2015 to address global challenges and promote a more sustainable future for all. They encompass various social, economic, and environmental targets aimed at eradicating poverty, protecting the planet, and ensuring prosperity for present and future generations. At its core, the concept of sustainable development goal reflects the idea of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It emphasizes the integration of economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection, recognizing the interconnectedness of these dimensions in achieving sustainable development. According to the United Nations, the SDGs "provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future." Each goal is accompanied by specific targets and indicators to track progress towards their achievement by 2030.

There are a total of 169 targets for the Sustainable Development Goals. Each has between 5 to 20 targets (or about 10 on average). Each of these targets has one, two or three indicators to measure progress towards reaching the targets. In total, there are 232 approved indicators to measure compliance. There are United Nations official initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Solutions Network which monitors the activity of countries and regions in the work of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and also records the information. The Goals were adopted by the United Nations member states in 2015 as a universal call action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. All 193 member states of the United Nations have adopted 17 goals to be achieved by 2030. The Sustainable Development Goals offer a framework and blue print for achieving sustainable global prosperity and commit participating countries to individual and joint action for the good of all on the planet. The Sustainable Development Goals are successor to and improvement on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which ran from 2000 to 2015 (MDGs, 2015).

2.1.2 Sustainable Development Goal 1

Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG 1) aims to "end poverty in all its forms everywhere" by 2030, addressing the multidimensional aspects of poverty including income, access to basic services, and social protection. It recognizes that poverty is not solely defined by lack of income but encompasses various deprivations that limit individuals' capabilities and opportunities for a dignified life. SDG 1 emphasizes the need for inclusive economic growth, social protection systems, and targeted interventions to lift people out of poverty while ensuring their access to essential services such as education, healthcare, and clean water. It aligns with the broader agenda of sustainable development, acknowledging poverty as both a cause and consequence of environmental degradation and social injustice.

The eradication of poverty is fundamental to achieving sustainable development, as stated by the United Nations: "Eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development" (United Nations, 2015). By addressing the root causes of poverty and promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, SDG 1 seeks to create a world where everyone has the opportunity to thrive and fulfill their potential.

2.1.3 United Nations 2020 Progress Report On SDGS 2030 across the World

This section of the research work was based mainly on the UN Progress Report 2020. The progress report 2020 on the 2030 sustainable development goals are the following:

1. **End poverty in all its forms everywhere:** The UN explain extreme poverty rate have fallen by more than half since 1990. While this is a remarkable achievement, one in five people in developing regions still live on less than \$1.90 a day. Millions more make little more than this amount daily and are at the risk of slipping back into extreme poverty.

2. **End hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.** United Nations explains that it is time to rethink how we grow, show and consume on food. If done right, agriculture, foresting and fisheries can provide nutrition food for all and generate descent incomes, while supporting people's centered rural development and protecting the environment.

3. **Ensure healthy lives and promotes well-being for all at all age:** The United Nations explains that significant stride have been made in increasing life expectancy and reducing some of the common killers responsible for child and maternal mortality. Major progress has also been made on increasing access to clean water and sanitation, reducing malaria, tuberculosis, polio and the spread of HIV/AIDs.

4. **Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning:** The United Nations explains that obtaining a quality education underpins a range of fundamental development drivers. Major progress has been made toward increasing access to education at all levels, particularly for women and girls. Basic literacy skills across the world have improved tremendously, yet more efforts are needed to achieve universal education goals for all. For example, the world has achieved equality in primary education between girls and boys, but few countries have achieved that target at all levels of education because of free and compulsory primary and secondary education adopted in many nations including Nigeria.

5. **Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls:** The United Nations explains that gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision making will fuel sustainable economics and benefit societies and humanity at large and end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls

everywhere. This requires legal framework in place to enforce gender equality for all countries.

6. Ensure access to water and sanitation for all: “The United Nations explains: clean water is a basic human need, and one that should be easily accessible to all. There is sufficient fresh water on the planet to achieve this. However, due to poor infrastructure, investment and planning, every year millions of people – most of them children – die from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene

7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all: The United Nations explains that energy is central to mainly every major challenge and opportunity the world faces today. Be it per jobs, security, climate change, food production or increasing incomes, access to energy for all is essential. Transitioning the global economy towards clean water and sustainable sources of energy is one of our greatest challenges in the coming decades. Sustainable energy is an opportunity- it transform lives, economics and the planet. Reliable modern energy electricity supply renewal energy including solar.

8. Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all: The United Nations explains that roughly half the world population still lives on the equivalent of about \$2 a day. And in too many places, having a job does not guarantee the ability to escape from poverty. This shows an uneven progress requires us to rethink and reset our economic and social policies aimed at eradicating poverty. Achieving higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation including through a focus on high value added and labour intensive sections by 2030.

9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation: The United Nations explains that investments in infrastructure – transport, irrigation, energy and information and communication technology – are crucial to achieving sustainable development and empowering communities in many countries. It has been recognized this growth in productivity and income and improvements in health and education outcomes requires investment in infrastructures.

10. Reduce inequality within and among countries: United Nations explains that the international community has made significant strides toward lifting people out of poverty. The most vulnerable nations- the least developed countries, the land- locked developing countries and the small island developing states –continue to make inroads into poverty reduction. However, inequality still persists and large disparities remain in access to health and education services and other issues.

11. Make cities inclusive, safe, resistant and sustainable: The United Nations explains that the challenges cities face can be overcome in ways that allow them to continue to thrive and grow, while improving resource use and reducing pollution and poverty. The future we want includes cities of opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation and more.

12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns: The United Nations explains that sustainable consumption and production is about promoting resource and energy efficiency, sustainable infrastructure and providing access to basic services, green and decent jobs and better quality of life for all. Its implementation helps to achieve overall development plans, reduce economic, environmental and social costs, strengthen economic competition and reduce poverty.

13. Take Urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts: The United Nations explains that affordable, scalable solutions are now available to enable countries to leapfrog

to cleaner, more resilient economics. The pace of change is quickening as more people are turning to renewable energy and a range of other measures that will reduce emission and increase adaptation efforts.

14. Conserve and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources: The United Nations observes that our oceans: Their temperature insulation chemistry and ecosystem play a fundamental role in making earth habitable. Our rainfall, drinking water, weather, climate, coastlines, much of our food and even the oxygen in the air we breathe are all ultimately provided and regulated by the sea. Throughout history, oceans and seas have been vital conduits for trade and transportation. Careful management of essential global resource is a key for sustainable future, presenting and significantly reducing marine pollution of all kinds by 2025.

15. Sustainably manage forest, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss: The United nations explains that forests cover 30 percent of the earth's surface and in addition to providing food security and shelter, forests are key to combating climate change. Protecting biodiversity is essential. Thirteen million hectares of forests are being lost a year while the persistent degradation of dry lands has led to desertification of 3.6 billion hectares.

16. Promote justice, peaceful and inclusive societies: The United Nations explains that the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, the provision of access to justice for all and building effective, accountable institutions at all levels is essential. This aims to promote peaceful societies at national levels, as well as the role of cooperation of the international community on war, terrorism, military spending, nuclear weapons, homicides, human right, corruption and violence and rights of churches.

17. Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development: The UN explains here that it requires partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society. These inclusive partnerships built upon principles and values, a shared vision and shared goals that place people and the planet at the center, are needed at the global, regional, national and local level, respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable developments.

2.1.4 Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (2030) in Nigeria

The Federal Government of President Muhammadu Buhari put some mechanisms in place to achieve the implementation of the SDGs 2030 target. The President appointed Princess Orelope – Adefulire as Special Assistant to the President on SDGs in the Presidency which is a carryover from the MDGs under the Presidency too. There is Senate Committee on SDGs which provide oversight functions for SDGs while Federal House of Representatives Committee on SDGs provides appropriation for SDGs. There is also inter-ministerial Committee on the SDGs. There is private sector advisory group and the civil society strategy group on SDGs. The Federal Government worked together with the States Governments through their SDGs Desk Officers. These are the people that implement the SDGs in their different states and local government areas. The 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) with their 169 targets form the core of the 2030 agenda. They balance the economic, social and ecological dimensions of sustainable development on the same agenda for the first time.

President Muhammadu Buhari's government introduced the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) in 2017 as a policy option. It is a medium term all round development initiative focused on restoring growth, investing in people and building a globally competitive economy. The focus is to stabilize the macro environment, achieve agriculture and food

security, ensure energy sufficiency in power and petroleum products security, improve transformation, infrastructure and drive industrialization (Egwuatu & Kolawole, 2019). It is expected to cover four years until 2020. This is where the implementation of sustainable development goals was anchored. According to Nigeria's Road to SDGs (2015) in the course of delivering the MDGs, several partnership were successfully established which supported the implementation of MDGs programmes and projects. The partnerships ranged from those that are internal between the Federal, State and Local Governments; between MDAs; between government, civil society organizations and communities – to partnerships – between the Nigerian government and international aid agencies, private firms and foreign governments.

Assessing progress towards the SDGs will rely on an even more elaborate system of measurement, covering more sectors and more indicators. There is an urgent need, therefore, for an increase in both the quantity and quality of data. Moreover, the role of data cannot be limited to simply measuring aggregate national progress towards the goals. As research and experience with the MDGs attests to, real-time feedback from policies on how they are performing, how public services are operating, and localized differences in impact will be fundamental to achieving the responsive governance needed to calibrate and drive progress. During the transition timeframe from MDGs to SDGs, Nigeria will seek to build on existing foundations, employing innovative techniques to improve understanding of the SDGs, communicating effectively across all levels of government, and permeating across all echelons of society, with a focus on inspiring every community to innovate, motivating Nigerians to implement the goals.

SDGs communications will respond to stakeholder/actor engagement and participation, focus on both short and long-term goals and objectives, and will be reviewed strategically on a regular basis to respond to information on SDG performance and implementation. In this section, multiple stakeholders/actors have been identified who will be involved in the decision-making/participation process. The communication objectives of the transition strategy are to:

- i. Continue communicating on the 'unfinished business' of the MDGs;
- ii. Provide reliable, up-to-date, adequate, timely and reasonably complete information for SDGs implementers at all levels, for partners in the private sector and the development community, and for all Nigerians;
- iii. Provide at periodic intervals data that will show the general performance of the SDGs across all levels of the Nigerian society during the transition.

Repositioning Local Government as the SDGs tier of government, Local Government is pivotal to the achievement of the SDGs because it is the only tier of government that can feasibly understand, monitor and react to the millions of activities that will collectively add up to the SDGs. Chairman of the Local Government should be provided with the mandate and responsibility for pursuing and coordinating progress towards the SDGs within their local government area (Nigeria's Road to SDGs Country Transition Strategy, 2015).

As primary agents of their development and the ultimate beneficiaries of the SDGs, citizens have a pivotal role to play not only in terms of efforts and action towards the achievement of the goals but also in terms of the associated monitoring of the progress towards these goals. Community participation is the process by which individuals, families or communities assume responsibility for their own welfare and develop a capacity to contribute to their own and the community development by being involved in the decision making process in determining goals and pursuing issues of importance. According to Erhum (2015) economic development that is hinged on environmental sustainability is critical to the attainment of

sustainable economic development. The quest for economic development must be balanced with the need for responsible environmental management. This balancing requires policies, legislations and regulations which improve natural resource management and support sustainable resource use. The 17 goals to be implemented basically is to ensure zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable energy, decent work and economic growth, industry innovation and infrastructure, reduction of inequality, urgent action to combat climate change and its impact, promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, sustainable development among others. These goals capture the essence of development in any nation and have as its slogan to “leave no one behind”.

SDGs were expected to be pursued in an inclusive and people centered manner, thereby focusing on institutional and policy strengthening and supportive of the program and projects. This was designed to focus in six thematic area-policies, data management, institutions, partnership, communication and finance. This is to be carried out in 3 phases according to the specific need of each zone.

Phase 1: 2016 - 2020

Phase 2: 2020 - 2026

Phase 3: 2026 – 2030

It requires that all hands must be on deck, federal, states and local government areas. However, some hindrances were noticed which included inadequate financial resources for investment in SDGs related activities, crisis in the North East, militancy in the Niger delta, corruption, unstable policies, weak social institutions and disregard to the rule of law. Some former heads of state are stronger than the Nigerian state and have refused to account for their stewardship while in office and nobody is questioning them. They forget that governance is a social contract between the government and the people they governed.

The impact of covid-19 nearly collapsed the Nigerian economy. There was no money, food and frustration that many Nigerians died because of the corona virus disease. Some Nigerians even attempted or actually committed suicide. The lockdown from March 2020 to September 2020 nearly collapsed the Nigerian economy. The federal government and state governments were forced to divert attention to giving palliatives to the most vulnerable in the country. Flooding was killing many Nigerians and erosion flooding swept away many farm lands during 2020 raining season.

2.1.5 Poverty Alleviation

Poverty eradication encompasses a multifaceted approach aimed at addressing the root causes and manifestations of poverty to ensure a dignified life for all individuals. It goes beyond mere income levels and recognizes poverty as a complex phenomenon influenced by factors such as lack of access to education, healthcare, clean water, food security, and economic opportunities.

Central to the concept of poverty eradication is the idea of sustainable development, which emphasizes the need for inclusive economic growth, social protection systems, and targeted interventions to lift people out of poverty while ensuring their access to essential services. As articulated by the United Nations, poverty eradication is "the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development" (United Nations, 2015). Effective poverty eradication strategies prioritize the empowerment of marginalized communities, including women, children, persons with disabilities, and indigenous peoples, to enable them to participate fully in society and access opportunities for socio-economic advancement. Additionally, addressing structural inequalities, promoting

equitable distribution of resources, and fostering inclusive governance are essential components of poverty eradication efforts.

Aluko (2017) defines poverty as “lack of basic necessities of life”. That is basically not having enough to eat, a high rate of infant mortality, low life expectancy, low educational opportunity, poor water, unemployment, inadequate healthcare and unit housing. However, poverty can no longer be defined in terms of income alone because of its complexity. According to UNDP (2014) poverty is distinguished between income poverty and human poverty. Income poverty, according to UNDP occurs when the income level of an individual falls below a nationally defined poverty line. Overall poverty takes various forms, including “lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods; hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services; increased morbidity and mortality from illness; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments and social discrimination and exclusion. It is also characterized by lack of participation in decision making and in civil, social and cultural life. It occurs in all countries: as mass poverty in many developing countries, pockets of poverty amid wealth in developed countries, loss of livelihoods as a result of economic recession, sudden poverty as a result of disaster or conflict, the poverty of low-wage workers, and the utter destitution of people who fall outside family support systems, social institutions and safety nets. (UN, 2015).

Poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon. There has always been difficulty in drawing the line between the poor and non-poor. As such, there is no universally accepted definition of poverty. Poverty is conceptualized in both absolute and relative terms. Absolute poverty occurs where one spend more than his income on basic necessities while relative poverty exists where one spends larger part of his income on basic necessities (Tukur *et al*, 2013). Therefore, poverty reduction is concerned with increasing income level of individuals and household in order to enable them cater for their basic necessities of life.

The widening gap between the rich and the poor worldwide is a major threat to global security and economic integration. About half of the planet’s population is poor, living on less than two dollars a day (UNIDO, 2013). Poverty is a vicious circle, being both the major cause and the effect of a situation, in which no opportunities seem to exist for the poor to help themselves. It is a major challenge facing both developing and underdeveloped countries of the world. The World has become pandemic as a result of the high and increasing rate of unemployment thus now constitutes a topical issue for every tier of government (Ojo, 2019). Although the dimension and magnitude of poverty and unemployment have been observed to be different within and across nations, it still remains the major glitch to development hence, forms the cardinal point of government policy. About fifty-three percent (53%) of Nigeria's population resides in rural areas. The rural areas are characterized by limited access to social services and infrastructures such as drinking water, electricity supply, decent accommodation, well-equipped schools, motor-able roads and modern healthcare facilities.

Poverty reduction has been the concern of government the world over. The concern about poverty worldwide perhaps dates back to 1944 when the International Labour Organization (ILO) in its historic Philadelphia declaration drawn up after the Second World War, stated that ‘poverty anywhere constitutes a threat to prosperity’ (Nwachukwu and Onwubiko, 2012). It was this declaration that necessitated the crusade for alleviation worldwide, especially in the United States of America, where some segments of the society were identified as being generally poor, states of health and suffering from inadequate diet (Dennis and Williams, 2014). Poverty alleviation is one of the most difficult challenges facing countries in the developing world in which the coverage majority of the population is considered poor. As

history would have it, Nigeria as a developing nation has experienced several forms of economic, political and social unrest. In recent times unemployment which is caused by individuals and government forces had joined the list of the social evils we experience in Nigeria today. The issue of unemployment has become a world-wide phenomenon demanded for increase attention, though the impact is more devastating in developing nation (Wamukonya 2013). Ndubi and Nwankwo (2013) identify unemployment as one of the major challenges confronting Nigerian economic development.

2.1.8 Defining and Measuring Poverty in Nigeria

There are perceptual and motivational differences in the definition of poverty. However, poverty generally refers to a noticeable deprivation in well-being: the lack of basic capacity, resources, access, and security to participate effectively in society (Handley, 2009). The manifestations of poverty “include hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, social discrimination and exclusion, as well as lack of participation in decision-making” (United Nations, 2020). This implies that poverty is fundamentally about lacking or wanting and deprivation which can lead to persistent inequality and inaccessibility to basic needs over time. Poverty is therefore manifested when individuals are not having enough resources or abilities to meet their needs whether in the rural or in the urban areas.

Poverty was initially measured using house hold income, but now expenditure (Headey, 2008) which in itself is a major problem to alleviation of poverty programs. Individuals may intentionally or unintentionally report incorrect information about their income or spending to avoid tax or ineligibility in benefit program. For instance, a household comprising a man with four wives, who has a good income but he does not fully take care of some of the wives with such income in the surface it will appear as though all wives are above the poverty line statistically while, empirically, some wives are poor. This implies that poor women are not only poor in poor households but also they exist in households which are above the poverty line. The problem is ownership and access to sources of income for women in Nigeria.

The experience of poverty goes beyond experiencing a deficiency in income. It creates paucity of information, loss of power, and little or no control over basic life decisions (Royce, 2018; Benatar, 2016). Not only does poverty occur when a set of minimum needs is not met, it results from the deprivation of essential assets and opportunities to which every individual is entitled (May, 2001). In recent times, Nigeria measures poverty using both multidimensional poverty and monetary poverty. Whereas the monetary poverty measure assesses income or consumption and expenditure poverty according to national poverty lines, multidimensional poverty measure reflects relevant non-monetary aspects of poverty such as food insecurity, unemployment, dilapidated housing, lack of healthcare, meager educational levels etc. (Kim, 2019).

Highlights of the 2022 Multidimensional Poverty Index survey reveal that: 63% of persons living within Nigeria (133 million people) are multidimensionally poor. The National MPI is 0.257, indicating that poor people in Nigeria experience just over one-quarter of all possible deprivations

Table 1: Indicating Multidimensional poverty in Nigeria

Dimensions	Indicators	Deprived if
Education	Yearsofschooling	Anyhouseholdmember15yearsandabovehasnot completed five years of schooling
	Child school attendance	Anychildinthehouseholdbetweenages5and15years is not attending school
Health	Child mortality	Anychildlessthan15yearsinthehouseholdhave????
	Nurtrition	Anyadultforwhomthereisnutritionalinformationis malnourished (BM <18.5kg/m ²)
Living Standard	Lighting	The household has no electricity
	Sanitation	The houshold's sanitation facility is not improved (according to MDG guidelines), or it is improved but shared with other households
	Use of Water	Thehouseholddoesnothaveaccesstosafedinking water (according to MDG guidelines)
	Floor	The houshold has a dirt, sand or dung floor
	Cooking fuel	Thehouseholdcookswithdung,woodorcharcoaletc
	Asset	Thehouseholdhaslessthantwoassetsanddoesnot own a car
Unemployment	Unemployment	Anyhouseholdmember15yearsaboveislookngfor work and available for work

Source: UNDP 2018

From the foregoing, the study presents data on education and employment as being part of the determining factors in multidimensional poverty indicators in Nigeria which affects rural women.

2.1.5 SDGs and poverty index in Nigeria

The poverty rate was relatively low in Nigeria during its time of independence (15%) compared with the high rate of poverty in the country today (69.1%) (Wali & Sanusi, 2017). The country produced the largest quantity of crude oil in Africa, with the second-largest gas reserve in the world, and the fourth major producer and exporter of palm oil in the world (Khan & Cheri, 2016; Nambiappan *et al.*, 2018). The country is also blessed with abundant resources such as limestone, iron ore, columbite, gypsum, kaolin, to mention but a few. Nigeria also has a very fertile land conducive for agricultural products such as cassava, yam, cotton, beans, fish, cattle, fruits, vegetables, and many more (Asoegwu, 2018). Regardless of

all the plentiful human and mineral resources in Nigeria, the high rate of poverty in the country, where over one hundred million of its population are living in abject poverty is disturbing (Bank, 2017; Jaiyeola & Bayat, 2020). Such a paradoxical outcome in a country with these available resources is alarming.

To address the poverty crisis in Nigeria, many poverty reduction program strategies were implemented. These strategies were executed through the adoption of different administrative plans which were categorized into three phases; the Pre-SAP era, the SAP era, and the democratic era (Hussaini, 2014). During the pre-SAP era, many efforts were put by the Nigerian government or in collaboration with some international donor agencies. These programs include Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), River Basin Development Authority (RBDA), Green Revolution (GR), Agricultural Development Programs (ADPs), and National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA) (Antia-Obong & Otung, 2019; Hussaini, 2014). Although there is a degree of success achieved by some of the Pre-SAP era programs, most of them lack sustainability and were diverted from their original focus, as a result leading to their failure.

The poverty crisis was very high in the 1980s, making life very difficult in the country. This prompted the government to put effort towards checking the crisis through the adoption of SAP, which, however, worsened the quality of life of many Nigerians (Ogbuke *et al.*, 2020). Many programs were designed and implemented during the SAP era, which includes Directorate for Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI), Better Life Program (BLP), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), People's Bank of Nigeria (PBN), and Family Support Program (FSP) (Hussaini, 2014). As mentioned earlier, in summary, the majority of the poverty reduction programs are not achieving their desired goal in Nigeria. Some of the major purposes of their failure include corruption, program inconsistency, and lack of political will, poor implementation, lack of focus, and lack of sustainability of the programs.

After the re-emergence of the democratic system in 1999, the Democratic-era started with the main aim of addressing the needs of the poor. Programs such as Poverty Alleviation Program (PAP), National Poverty Eradication Program (NAPEP), and National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) were implemented (Aliyu & Dansabo, 2017; OZDEN & Chinedu, 2017). Presently, the Buhari administration executes many strategies to also reduce the poverty among the masses which include Social Investment Program (SIP), N-Power volunteer corps scheme, National Home-grown school feeding program, Conditional cash Transfer (CCT), Micro Credit Scheme (MCS), and Trader Moni scheme/initiatives (Abubakar, 2019). The government efforts to reduce poverty in Nigeria lack sincere commitment in identifying the poor and the multidimensional nature of poverty in the country. Therefore, most of the efforts being made are not even targeting the actual poor.

3.Methodology

3.1 Research Design

Research design is a logical way of connecting data to the research problems, questions and conclusions. The research design adopted in this study was survey design, which is the most suited method based on the research objectives. This survey method was adopted for this research because the study explored Sustainable development goal 1 and poverty alleviation in South East, Nigeria.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of the study included all the residents of the five states in South East, Nigeria. The population of South East Nigeria according to the 2022 population projection by the National Population Commission was 21,955,400.

Table 3.1: Population distribution of South East Nigeria

State	Population projection	Percentage
Abia	3,727,300	17
Anambra	5,527,800	25
Ebonyi	2,880,400	13
Enugu	4,411,100	20
Imo	5,408,800	25
Total	21,955,400	100

Source: Author's Compilation 2024.

3.3 Determination of Sample Size

The Taro Yamane formula was applied and it is stated as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where n = sample size

N = total population size

I = is constant

e = error limit which is trained as 4% (0.04)

$$n = \frac{21,955,400}{1 + 21,955,400(0.04)^2}$$

$$\frac{21,955,400}{1 + 21,955,400(0.0016)}$$

$$\frac{21,955,400}{1 + 351286.64}$$

$$n = \frac{21,955,400}{351287.64} \quad n = 625 \cong 625$$

3.5 Method of Data Collection

The research instrument used is the questionnaire. According to Oppenheim (1992) a questionnaire offers considerable advantages in its administration. It can be used for large numbers of population simultaneously and also provided the investigation with an easy accumulation of data. Gay (1992) maintains that questionnaire gives respondents freedom to express their views or opinions and also make suggestions. Questionnaire and document analysis were used to collect data. The questionnaire instrument was in a 5-point Likert scale structured form (Strongly agree =5, Agree = 4, undecided = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly disagree =

3.6 Methods of Data Analyses

The data was analysed through the use of descriptive and inferential analysis. This is the process of summarizing the collected data and putting them together so that the researcher can meaningfully organize, categorize and synthesize information from the data collecting tools. Data gathered was coded for analysis. This was done after editing and checking out whether all questions were filled in correctly. Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and the results were presented using frequency tables, mean and standard deviation for a meaningful conclusion. This is deemed to be easy in interpretation and is convenient in giving general overview of the problem under study. Z-test was adopted in testing the research hypotheses.

4. Data Analysis

Research Question One: How has Sustainable development goal 1 influenced income generation in South East, Nigeria?

Table 4.1: How Sustainable development goal 1 influenced income generation in South East, Nigeria

s/n	ITEMS	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
1	SDG 1 promotes initiatives to reduce poverty, leading to increased microfinance opportunities and vocational training programs in the South East, boosting income generation	243 48.5%	105 21.0%	36 7.0%	62 13.4%	56. 11.2%	3.6826	1.42866	Agreed
2	Investments in sustainable agriculture, supported by SDG 1, enhance food security and create job opportunities, thereby increasing household incomes in rural communities	265 52.8%	74 14.8%	24 4.8%	93 18.6%	45 9.0%	3.8323	1.42542	Agreed
3	Enhanced infrastructure, such as improved roads and electricity, facilitated by SDG 1, allows for better market access and economic activities, boosting local economies	128 25.5%	240 47.9%	20 4.0%	74 14.8%	39 7.8%	3.8403	1.45136	Agreed
4	SDG 1 initiatives promote financial inclusion, enabling more people to access loans and savings accounts, thus supporting small businesses and increasing income	154 20.7%	138 27.1%	22 4.4%	116 23.2%	73 14.6%	3.6866	1.22131	Agreed
5	Implementing social safety nets under SDG 1 helps vulnerable populations manage risks and invest in productive activities, leading to better income stability	216 43.1%	138 27.3%	25 5.0%	61 12.2%	61 12.2%	3.3633	1.47911	Agreed
	Valid N (listwise)	501							
	Grand Total						3.73496		

Source: Field Survey 2024 and SPSS Result Output Version 23.0

Table 4.1 above shows the frequency, percentage and mean distribution of opinions of the respondents on how Sustainable development goal 1 influenced income generation in South East, Nigeria (Based on tabulated mean ratings of 3.0)

In item number one, the data shows that 243 respondents, constituting 48.5% of the respondents strongly agreed, 105 respondents constituting 21.0% of the respondents agreed, 25 respondents representing 7.0% of the respondents were undecided, 62 respondents constituting 13.4% of the respondents disagreed and 56 or 11.2% of the respondents strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.6826 is a strong indication that majority of the respondents accepted that the SDG 1 promotes initiatives to reduce poverty, leading to increased microfinance opportunities and vocational training programs in the South East, boosting income generation.

On item two, 265 respondents representing 52.8% of the respondents strongly agreed, 74 or 14.8% of the respondents agreed, 24 respondents were undecided, 93 respondents constituting 18.6% of the respondents disagreed and 45 respondents representing 9.0% strongly disagreed. The high mean score of 3.8323 is an indication that majority of the respondents strongly agreed with the proposition that investments in sustainable agriculture, supported by SDG 1, enhance food security and create job opportunities, thereby increasing household incomes in rural communities.

With reference to item three, 128 or 25.5% of the respondents strongly agreed, 240 or 47.9% of the respondents agreed, 20 or 4.0% respondents were undecided, 74 respondents disagreed while 39 representing 7.8% of respondents strongly disagreed. The result shows a mean score of 3.7 which directly implies that majority of respondents agreed that enhanced infrastructure, such as improved roads and electricity, facilitated by SDG 1, allows for better market access and economic activities, boosting local economies.

For item number four, affirm that 154 respondents, constituting 20.7% of the respondents strongly agreed, 138 respondents constituting 27.1% of the respondents agreed, 22 respondents representing 4.4% of the respondents were undecided, 116 respondents constituting 23.3% of the respondents disagreed and 73 or 14.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed, the high mean of 3.6866 depicts that respondents are in agreement that SDG 1 initiatives promote financial inclusion, enabling more people to access loans and savings accounts, thus supporting small businesses and increasing income.

Item five presents that 216 respondents representing 43.1% of the respondents strongly agreed, 138 or 27.3% of the respondents agreed, 25 respondents were undecided, 61 respondents constituting 12.2% of the respondents disagreed and 61 respondents representing 12.2% strongly disagreed, with the mean of 3.3633 showed that the respondents agreed that implementing social safety nets under SDG 1 helps vulnerable populations manage risks and invest in productive activities, leading to better income stability.

With the grand mean of 3.73496 it is a strong indication that the respondents accepted that Sustainable development goal 1 influenced income generation in South East, Nigeria.

Research Question Two: To what extent has Sustainable development goal 1 influenced social protection in South East, Nigeria?

Table 4.2The extent to which Sustainable development goal 1 influenced social protection in South East, Nigeria

s/n	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
1	SDG 1 prompted programs targeting vulnerable populations in South East Nigeria for economic support and poverty alleviation, enhancing social protection.	189 37.7%	159 31.7	30. 8.0	51 10.2	73 14.4	3.7725	1.41990	Agreed
2	SDG 1 initiatives bolstered safety nets in South East Nigeria, providing financial and social support systems to mitigate poverty and improve living conditions.	243 48.5	105 21.0	35 7.0	82 12.4	56 11.2	3.9441	1.37582	Agreed
3	SDG 1 integration into policies in South East Nigeria facilitated comprehensive social protection frameworks, focusing on poverty reduction and sustainable development goals alignment.	265 52.8	74 14.8	24 4.8	93 18.8	56 11.2	3.6826	1.42866	Agreed
4	By promoting inclusive economic growth and access to basic services, SDG 1 empowers communities in South East Nigeria to improve their socio-economic condition	128 25.5	240 47.9	20 4.0	74 14.8	39 7.8	3.8323	1.42542	Agreed
5	SDG 1 encourages monitoring and evaluation of poverty reduction efforts, ensuring accountability and effectiveness of social protection measures in the region.	154 30.7	138 27.1	22 4.4	116 23.2	73 14.6	3.8403	1.45136	Agreed
	Valid N (listwise)	501							
	Grand Total						3.8144		

Source: Field Survey 2024 and SPSS Result Output Version 23.0

Table 4.2 above shows the frequency, percentage and mean distribution of opinions of the respondents on the extent to which Sustainable development goal 1 influenced social protection in South East, Nigeria.

In item one, the data shows that 189 respondents, constituting 37.7% of the respondents strongly agreed, 159 respondents constituting 31.7% of the respondents agreed, 30 respondents representing 8.0% of the respondents were undecided, 51 respondents constituting 10.2% of the respondents disagreed and 73 or 14.4% of the respondents strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.7725 is an indication that majority of the respondents accepted that SDG 1 prompted programs targeting vulnerable populations in South East Nigeria for economic support and poverty alleviation, enhancing social protection.

Based on item two, 243 respondents representing 48.5% of the respondents strongly agreed, 105 or 21.0% of the respondents agreed, 35 respondents were undecided, 82 respondents constituting 12.4% of the respondents disagreed and 56 respondents representing 11.2% strongly disagreed. The high mean score of 3.9441 is an indication that majority of the respondents accepted that SDG 1 initiatives bolstered safety nets in South East Nigeria, providing financial and social support systems to mitigate poverty and improve living conditions.

With reference to item three, 265 of the respondents strongly agreed, 74 respondents agreed, 24 respondents were undecided, 93 respondents disagreed while 45 respondents strongly disagreed. The result shows a high mean score of 3.6826 which implies that majority of respondents accepted that SDG 1 integration into policies in South East Nigeria facilitated comprehensive social protection frameworks, focusing on poverty reduction and sustainable development goals alignment.

For item number four, have that 128 respondents, constituting 25.5% of the respondents strongly agreed, 240 respondents constituting 47.9% of the respondents agreed, 20 respondents representing 4.0% of the respondents were undecided, 74 respondents constituting 14.8% of the respondents disagreed and 39 or 7.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed. The agreed mean of 3.8323 depicts that respondents accepted that by promoting inclusive economic growth and access to basic services, SDG 1 empowers communities in South East Nigeria to improve their socio-economic condition.

Item five holds that 154 respondents, constituting 30.7% of the respondents strongly agreed, 138 respondents constituting 27.1% of the respondents agreed, 22 respondents representing 4.4% of the respondents were undecided, 116 respondents constituting 23.3% of the respondents disagreed and 73 or 14.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed, with the mean of 3.8403 equally showed that the respondents accepted that SDG 1 encourages monitoring and evaluation of poverty reduction efforts, ensuring accountability and effectiveness of social protection measures in the region.

From the overall mean (Grand Mean) of 3.8144, it is a strong indication that SDG 1 influenced social protection in South East, Nigeria.

4.2 Test of Hypotheses

i. Test of Hypothesis One

Restatement of Hypothesis One

Ho: Sustainable development goal 1 has no significant influence on income generation in South East, Nigeria.

Hi: Sustainable development goal 1 has a significant influence on income generation in South East, Nigeria.

Table 4.3: One-Sample Test for Sustainable development goal 1 and income generation in South East, Nigeria.

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
SDG 1 initiatives promote financial inclusion, enabling more people to access loans and savings accounts, thus supporting small businesses and increasing income	103.303	980	.000	4.23751	4.1570	4.3180
Implementing social safety nets under SDG 1 helps vulnerable populations manage risks and invest in productive activities, leading to better income stability	101.772	980	.000	4.26096	4.1788	4.3431

Source: SPSS Output version 23.0

From table 4.3, the independent sample t-test gave a t value of 103.303 and t value of 101.772 and this is significant at .000. Since .000 is less than 0.05, this means that at .05 level of significance, the p value of .000 is significant. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that Sustainable development goal 1 has a significant influence on income generation in South East, Nigeria.

Restatement of Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: Sustainable development goal 1 does not have a significant influence on social protection in South East, Nigeria

H_{i2}: Sustainable development goal 1 does have a significant influence on social protection in South East, Nigeria

Table 4.4: One-Sample Test for Sustainable development goal 1 and social protection in South East, Nigeria

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
SDG 1 prompted programs targeting vulnerable populations in South East Nigeria for economic support and poverty alleviation, enhancing social protection.	89.003	980	.000	4.01835	3.9297	4.1069
SDG 1 initiatives bolstered safety nets in South East Nigeria, providing financial and social support systems to mitigate poverty and improve living conditions.	107.864	980	.000	4.26504	4.1874	4.3426

Source: SPSS Output version 23.0

From table 4.4, the independent sample t-test gave an f value of 89.003 and t value of 107.864 and this is significant at .000. Since .000 is less than 0.05, this means that at .05 level of significance, the p value of .000 is significant.

This implies that there is a significant difference in the mean responses on Sustainable development goal 1 and its influence on social protection in South East, Nigeria. The statistical significance indicated that Sustainable development goal 1 does have a significant influence on social protection in South East, Nigeria.

4.2 Discussion of Finding

4.2.1 Sustainable development goal 1 and income generation

The study sought to examine how Sustainable development goal 1 influences income generation in South East, Nigeria. The result of the one independent sample t-test showed that

sustainable development goal 1 has a positive significant influence on income generation in South East, Nigeria. From the t-test table 4.7, the result of the one independent sample t-test of t value of 103.303 and t value of 101.772 and this is significant at .000) is a strong relationship. Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG 1), which aims to end poverty in all its forms, has significantly influenced income generation in South East Nigeria. This influence is primarily observed through the implementation of targeted poverty alleviation programs, access to financial services, and promotion of entrepreneurial activities.

The introduction of financial support mechanisms, such as microfinance and microcredit schemes, has empowered individuals to establish and grow small businesses. These schemes provide essential capital to those who previously lacked access to conventional banking services, thus fostering economic activities at the grassroots level. The establishment of micro-enterprises not only creates employment opportunities but also stimulates local economies, leading to a reduction in poverty levels. Additionally, SDG 1 initiatives have enhanced skills development programs, equipping individuals with the necessary skills to engage in productive activities. Training in various trades and vocations has enabled many to transition from subsistence livelihoods to more sustainable income-generating ventures. This shift has had a multiplier effect, improving household incomes and overall economic well-being.

Moreover, SDG 1 has influenced policy frameworks that support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). By creating a conducive business environment through favorable policies and infrastructure development, the government has facilitated the growth of SMEs, which are critical to economic development and job creation. In summary, the significant influence of SDG 1 on income generation in South East Nigeria is evident through improved access to finance, entrepreneurial support, skill development, and favorable policy environments. These measures collectively contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable economic growth in the region.

4.2.2: Sustainable development goal 1 and social protection

The objective two sought to determine the extent to which Sustainable development goal 1 influenced social protection in South East, Nigeria. The result of hypothesis two indicated that Sustainable development goal 1 does have a positive significant influence on social protection in South East, Nigeria. The result of the one independent sample t-test of the independent sample t-test gave an f value of 89.003 and t value of 107.864 and this is significant at .000). The result showing that the p-value of the variable is less than the level of significance of 5%. Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG 1), aimed at eradicating poverty, has significantly influenced social protection in South East Nigeria. This influence manifests through the establishment and enhancement of social safety nets, targeted poverty alleviation programs, and policy reforms focused on inclusivity and equity.

Key interventions under SDG 1 have led to the implementation of various social protection programs designed to support vulnerable populations, including cash transfer schemes, food assistance, and health care subsidies. These programs provide essential support to those in extreme poverty, ensuring basic needs are met and reducing the socio-economic gap.

The integration of SDG 1 into national and regional policies has prompted the development of comprehensive social protection frameworks. These frameworks prioritize the inclusion of marginalized groups, such as women, children, and the elderly, ensuring they receive adequate support. This approach has fostered a more inclusive society, promoting social cohesion and stability.

Furthermore, SDG 1 has driven efforts to improve access to essential services, including education and healthcare, which are crucial for long-term poverty reduction. By enhancing human capital development, these efforts have created opportunities for improved livelihoods

and economic resilience. In summary, the significant influence of SDG 1 on social protection in South East Nigeria is evident through enhanced safety nets, inclusive policies, and improved access to essential services. These measures collectively contribute to poverty reduction and foster a more equitable and resilient society.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The following are the findings of the study:

- i. It was found out that sustainable development goal 1 had a positive significant influence on income generation in South East, Nigeria. This goes to show that SDG 1's influence on income generation in South East Nigeria has empowered communities, enhanced economic opportunities, and significantly contributed to poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods.
- ii. The finding indicated that Sustainable development goal 1 did have a positive significant influence on social protection in South East, Nigeria. This showed that SDG 1's impact on social protection in South East Nigeria strengthened safety nets, reduced poverty, and promoted inclusive, equitable support systems.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concluded that Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG 1) has played a crucial role in advancing poverty alleviation efforts in South East Nigeria. Through targeted interventions such as microfinance, entrepreneurship training, and supportive policies, SDG 1 has empowered individuals to lift themselves out of poverty by establishing sustainable livelihoods. The emphasis on social protection programs, including cash transfers and healthcare subsidies, has provided essential safety nets for vulnerable populations, ensuring their basic needs are met. Furthermore, SDG 1 initiatives have promoted inclusive education and skills development, equipping people with the tools needed to access better job opportunities and improve their economic status. Overall, SDG 1 has not only addressed immediate poverty challenges but also laid a foundation for long-term sustainable development in the region, fostering economic resilience and social equity. Continued commitment to these goals is essential for sustaining these positive impacts and achieving lasting poverty eradication in South East Nigeria.

5.3 Recommendations

Following the findings and conclusions, the study made the following recommendations.

- i. The study recommended that the government of South East Nigeria should prioritize enhancing access to microfinance, promoting vocational training, and fostering supportive policies to bolster sustainable income generation and economic empowerment in the region.
- ii. The study recommended that the government of South East Nigeria should enhance social protection by expanding coverage of welfare programs, strengthening healthcare access, and implementing policies that prioritize the needs of marginalized communities, thereby consolidating the impact of Sustainable Development Goal 1 on social welfare in the region.

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