

## **CHAPTER ONE: Introduction**

### **1.1 Background to the study**

The world today enjoys unprecedented progress in development. People are living much longer and better lives, fewer mothers die at childbirth, fewer infants die from preventable diseases, and in the past 50 years poverty has fallen. (UNDP, 2008). Yet, in spite of these laudable achievements, it is acknowledged that the global advances have been uneven, as the global south, that is, the third world countries also known as the underdeveloped countries live in poverty, while the global north, that is, the first world countries also known as developed countries have overcome poverty to a larger extent.

Poverty in Africa is an unfortunate condition that exists throughout Africa. It is a widespread condition that has affected Nigeria and the African continent at large, resulting to Africa being the poorest continent. Poverty is derived from many existing problems and continue to cause devastating effects. Poverty as a problem affecting Nigeria and the African continent is an inherent scourge that has seriously affected Nigeria and the African continent overtime. As a result of the high rate of poverty in Africa, African nations regularly fall to the bottom of any list measuring economic activity, such as per capita income or per capita GDP, despite a wealth of natural resources. African continent is one region that poverty still looms large, such that, the bottom 25 spots of the United Nations (UN) quality of life index are regularly filled by African nations. In 2006, 34 of the 50 nations on the UN list of least developed countries are in Africa. In many nations, the per capita income is often less than \$200 U.S. per year, with the vast majority of the population living on much less (UNDP 2010). Nigeria is Africa's most populous and diverse nation with an estimated population of over 160 million; over 200 ethnic groups, 500 indigenous languages and two major religions (Christianity and Islam). Nigeria is the largest country in Africa and one-sixth of the black

population in the world (UN 2010). It is one of the poorest countries in the world with approximately 90 million people living in absolute poverty (UNDP, 2008). Nigeria, the “Giant of Africa” is a country abundantly blessed with natural and human resources, but in the first four decades of its independence, the potentials remained largely untapped and even mismanaged (Joseph 2008), It is the 8th largest deposit of natural gas in the world (Soludo, 2006). There are also abundant solid mineral deposits that remained largely untapped. Currently, barely 40% of its arable land is under cultivation. Startling as it may be, about two-thirds of Nigerian people are poor (UNDP 2010). Although revenues from crude oil have been increasing over the past decades, Nigerians have been falling deeper into poverty. In 1980 an estimated 27% of Nigerians lived in poverty. By 1999, about 70% of the population had income of less than \$1 a day and the figure has risen since then (NEEDS, 2005). Poverty levels vary across the country, with the highest proportion of poor people in the Northwest and the lowest in the Southeast. A classical example to underscore the scope of misfortune is to compare Nigeria with Indonesia and Malaysia. Prior to the time Nigeria and Indonesia had the first oil boom Soludo (2006) contends that both countries were comparable in almost all spheres. In 1973 both experienced oil boom and thereafter, took different policy choices. The outcomes of the differences in policy regimes are such that today, while manufactures as percentage of total exports is about 40% in Indonesia, it is less than 1% in Nigeria where we were in 1970s (Soludo 2006). It would be recalled that even Malaysia that has overtaken Nigeria got her first palm seedlings from Nigeria in the early 1960s, when oil palm produce was a major export of Nigeria. In the 1990s, it was said that Malaysia’s export of palm oil produce earned it more than Nigeria earned from oil exports (Soludo, 2006).

In as much as the country boasts of high natural resources such as oil, coal, tin, cocoa and so much more in the agricultural sector, it still has a huge setback in curbing the high rate of poverty amongst other problems. Poverty has been quite endemic and has continued to

draw attract from the world community, It is due to issue of poverty amongst other problems affecting the third world countries/under-developed countries that the international community came up with Millennium Development Goals in the year 2000. At the dawn of the new millennium, the largest-ever gathering of Heads of state and government adopted the United Nations (UN) Millennium Declaration, known as the Millennium Development Goals at the Millennium summit which committed both rich and poor nations to the values and principles of the UN and the pursuit of several key objectives which include amongst others; poverty eradication. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) includes;

- 1) To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
- 2) To achieve universal primary education.
- 3) To promote gender equality and empower women.
- 4) To reduce child mortality.
- 5) To improve maternal health.
- 6) To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.
- 7) To ensure environmental sustainability.
- 8) To develop a global partnership for development.

These goals emerged from that Summit and were hailed as the blueprint designed to galvanize unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world's poorest and was directed towards meeting the needs of the developing countries. A target date of 2015 was set for the attainment of these goals for the developing world (UN 2000)

This research therefore examines the issue of poverty in Nigeria and the stage of realisation of Millennium Development Goal of eradicating poverty by 2015, the target date.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

Nigeria is a heavily populated country whose percentage of those living in poverty almost equals the entire population of the next most populous African country – Ethiopia (Joseph, 2008). Nigeria though rich in natural resources, is currently ranked among the 13 poorest countries in the world (UN 2010). With per capital income falling significantly to about \$300 (below the Sub-Sahara average of \$450) approximately more than 90 million of Nigeria’s 160 million people are living in absolute poverty, that is, on less than one dollar a day (World bank, 2009). The Northern part of the country accounts for the highest percentage of people living in poverty with about 36%, the West with about 24%, the South with about 19% and the East with about 21% (UNDP 2011). It is important to tackle poverty in Nigeria as the scourge leads to several problems affecting the country such as, corruption, high crime rate, high death rate, illiteracy. (Joseph 2008) is of the view that poverty does not only affect the people that are going through it , but affects everyone and the country at large and poverty causes hunger which can lead to whole lots of vices. The effects of poverty are enormous on a nation, as well as the people. Given the challenges posed by poverty and the dimensions of poverty in Nigeria’s development, the study seeks to examine the level of progress Nigeria has made in poverty eradication from the time of the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals in the year 2000 to the present time 2015.

## **1.3 Objectives of Study**

- To ascertain the extent of Nigeria’s poverty eradication from the time of the Millennium Summit, to the target period of 2015.
- To identify the barriers and challenges to attaining the Millenium development goal of eradicating poverty.

- To identify what must be done to effectively address the challenges and ensure sustainable progress towards attaining Millennium Development Goal one.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

- To what extent has Nigeria gone in eradicating poverty from the time of the Millennium Summit (2000) to the target period of 2015
- What are the barriers and challenges to eradicating poverty in Nigeria?
- What must be done to address the challenges and ensure sustainable progress towards attaining Millennium Development Goal one?

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

- The study is important because it will add to the existing knowledge of individuals, non-governmental organisations and academics on the issue of poverty in Nigeria and the stage of achievement of the Millennium Development Goal one in 2015.
- The study will be useful to the policy makers because attempts will be made to proffer workable solutions that will help the government in the fight towards poverty reduction in Nigeria.

#### **1.6 Scope**

Nigeria's progress in eradicating poverty in the country from the year 2000 (the time of the Millennium Development Summit) to 2015 (The target date for achieving the Millennium Development Goals)

#### **1.7 Limitation**

Poverty is an issue that most people write on, thus there exist data from many unconfirmed sources as regards to it and these materials often seem to be contradicting.

However in order to surmount this problem, this study would try to compare the data set by the United Nations (UN), the UNDP, the World bank and Nigeria Bureau of Statistics.

## **1.8 Operational definition of term**

### ***Poverty***

This study adopts the definition of poverty as the state in which one lacks a certain amount of material possessions or money and the deprivation of basic human needs such as food, water, shelter, clothing, health care and education.

## **1.9 Organization of study**

This research work is divided into five chapters. The first chapter, which is the introduction, looks at the background to the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, research questions, significance of the study, organization of chapters as well as scope of the study. The second chapter analyses theoretical and conceptual frameworks and a review of relevant literature focusing on the issue of poverty in Nigeria. The third chapter looks at the methodology, research design, area of study, methods of data collection and data analysis techniques. Chapter four deals with the presentation and analysis of data collected, interpretation and discussion of findings, The fifth chapter is the summary, conclusion and recommendation.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter examines the conceptual framework, review of empirical studies and theories on poverty.

#### **2.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

##### ***Poverty***

Poverty may be difficult to define. This is because many people see it in different perspectives. This connotes the fact that what may be termed poor may not be seen as poor by the other people. Conventional definitions in attempt to come to terms with these issues consistently conceive poverty as an economic issue. This is measured either as a minimum flow of real income per capita, or as a bundle of basic needs which may be qualified. Social Scientists on the other hand recognize the need for broadening the definition of poverty. .

The Copenhagen Declaration of 1995 seems to shed more light on what really constitutes poverty. According to the declaration, poverty has various manifestations, including lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihood; hunger and malnutrition, ill health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services, increase morbidity and mortality from illness, homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments, social discriminations and exclusion. It is also characterized by a lack of participation in decision and in civil, social and cultural life (Edoh 2003).

According to Adejo (2006) the deprived are usually the poor. These are people of insufficient income, inadequate food intake, lack basic healthcare, lack shelter and safe

drinking water, poor environmental cleanliness, lack access to basic education and skills, ignorant of fundamental human rights, and access to information. These however constituted the challenge and focus of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Kankwenda (2003) defines poverty as a multidimensional phenomena influenced by a wide range of factors, these include poor people lack of access to income earning and productive activities and to essential social services

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD (2001) on the other hand describes poverty as an unacceptable human deprivation in terms of economic opportunity, education, health and nutrition, the lack of empowerment and security. The International Fund for Agricultural development, IFAD (2001) basically defined poverty from an economic perspective as compared to OECD and Adejo (2006). They defined poverty as a situation of households with persons having the lowest incomes per person, usually one half to two thirds of GDP per person.

According to World Bank (2008) poverty is the pronounced deprivation in wellbeing and comprises many dimensions. It includes low incomes and the inability to acquire basic goods and services necessary for survival with dignity. Poverty also encompasses low levels of health and education, poor access to clean water and sanitation, inadequate physical security, lack of voice and insufficient capacity and opportunity to better one's life.

The United Nations (UN) on the other hand defines poverty as the inability of getting choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in the society. It means not having enough to feed and clothe a family, not having a school or clinic to go to, not having the land on which to grow one's food or a job to earn one's living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities. It means susceptibility to violence and



it often implies living in marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation.

With all these diverse concepts, the definition of poverty as adopted in this study is basically the state in which one lacks a certain amount of material possessions or money and the deprivation of basic human needs such as food, water, shelter, clothing, health care and education.

### **2.2.1 POVERTY IN NIGERIA, AND GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO ERADICATE POVERTY.**

Nigeria as a developing country is seriously challenged by poverty. Out of every 10 Nigerians 7 live on less than \$1 a day and the picture is getting bad by the day (Amobi, 2008). According to Chukwuemeka, (2008) poverty has various negative effects on today life, life expectancy is a mere 54 years. Infant mortality is 77 per 1,000 and maternal mortality stands at 704 per 100,000 live births, which is about the highest in the world (Amobi, 2008). Only about half the population of Nigeria had access to safe drinking water (40% in rural areas, 60% in urban areas), Unemployment and underemployment rate is put at 15% of the labour force (Amobi, 2008). Given these facts and figures, it is frightening that Nigeria with such a dismal outlook as presented above, may not qualify immensely to embrace the imperatives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which one of its main thrust and number one objective is poverty eradication (Amobi, 2008). Efforts made by the successive regimes and administrations in Nigeria to stamp out poverty failed due to poor implementation and incompatibility of policy goals. The rate of poverty in Nigeria made different governments to adopt certain measures. For instance Eze (2007) contends that the government of Olusegun Obasanjo adopted the policy of poverty eradication and promotion of socio-economic

development and at the same time pursued a policy of retrenchment of thousands of workers from the federal bureaucracy including the armed forces.

The centrality of poverty has made successive Nigerian governments to initiate sustainable development programmes aimed at alleviating or minimizing the deadly scourge of the poverty phenomenon. According to Odion (2009) programmes such as Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) which was launched in the 1970s and Green Revolution initiated in 1980 existed in the past to address the problems of poverty. Other efforts made by successive governments include the establishment of the Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DEFFRI), National Directorate of employment (NDE), Better Life Programme, (BLP), the Peoples' Bank of Nigeria (PBN), Family Support programme (FSP), Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) and National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDs). DFRRRI was established in 1986 to construct feeder roads, provide rural water supply and rural electrification for the rural areas.

The NDE was also established in 1986 to provide training, finance, and guidance for unemployed youths. BLP on the other hand came into being in 1987 to provide empowerment self-help and rural development programmes, skills acquisition and healthcare for the rural women. The PBN was established in 1989 to encourage savings and credit facilities for the underprivileged in urban and rural areas while Community Banks were established in 1990 to operate banking facilities for rural residents and micro enterprises in urban areas. The FSP came on board in 1994 to provide healthcare delivery, child welfare, youth development, etc. FEAP and their state variants (SEAP) were initiated to provide credit facilities to support the establishment of cottage industries in rural areas. The poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) was an interim measure put in place in 2000 to address the problems of rising unemployment in the society and to increase the productiveness of the economy. It was designed to coordinate and monitor poverty alleviation effort and ensure that Nigerians were provided

with steady sources of income, high purchasing power, quality education, water, healthcare and housing; stable and affordable power supply, among others.

In 2004, the Federal Government of Nigeria set up the NEEDs Strategy with a view to fighting the poverty scourge which it described as the most difficult challenge facing Nigeria and its people and the greatest obstacle to the pursuit of socio-economic growth. Over the years attempts were made at alleviating poverty as reflected in the expression of commitment by successive governments, increase in the number of programmes and increasing commitment of resources in the process, however, very minimal success has been recorded or achieved. This, according to Muo (2007) is largely due to lack of coordination and commitment, lack of continuity, improper appreciation of the roots and magnitude of the problem, poor funding of the programmes, policy inconsistency, deficient infrastructural facilities and corruption. On the other hand, the Central Bank of Nigeria (2003) in its own view based on empirical investigation attributed the failure of poverty alleviation programmes to deterioration in fiscal discipline, corruption, political instability and inconsistent policies. To crown it all, NEEDs (2004) pointed out several factors that had hindered the effort of government at reducing the level of poverty. These included poor coordination; the absence of a comprehensive policy framework, excessive political interference; ineffective targeting of the poor leading to leakage of benefits to unintended beneficiaries; the unwidely scope of programme which caused resources to be thinly spread across too many projects design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The evidence suggests that the reforms and policies have not recorded the spectacular results expected. Thus, poverty alleviation remains a mirage in Nigeria.

## 2.2.2

### CAUSES OF POVERTY IN NIGERIA

In any case, poverty in Nigeria like in all developing economies are not without causes. Obadan (1977) enumerated the causes of poverty in Nigeria to include inadequate access to employment opportunities, inadequate physical needs, such as land and capital, and minimal access by the poor to credit even on a small scale; inadequate access to means of supporting rural development in poor regions; inadequate access to market when the poor can sell goods and services; low endowment of human capital, destruction of natural resources leading to environmental degradation and reduced productivity; inadequate access to assistance for those living at the margin and those victimized by transitory poverty and lack of participation, that is, the failure to draw the poor into the design of development programme.

There is no one cause or determinant of poverty. On the contrary, combination of several complex factors contributes to poverty. They include low or negative economic growth, inappropriate macroeconomic policies, deficiencies in the labour market resulting in limited job growth, low productivity and low wages in the informal sector, and a lag in human resource development. Other factors which have contributed to a decline in living standards and are structural causes or determinants of poverty include increase in crime and violence, environmental degradation, retrenchment of workers, a fall in the real value of safety nets, and changes in family structures (Ajakaiye and Adeyeye, 1999; Ogwumike, 2002 and NPC,2004).

Ajakaiye and Adeyeye (1999) and Ogwumike (2002) explained certain key causes of poverty in Nigeria. These are examined below:

Macroeconomic shocks and policy failure: This has been a major cause of poverty in several countries of the world. As many economies in the world faced macroeconomic disequilibrium, mostly in the balance of payments due to expansive aggregate demand policies, terms-of-trade shocks, and natural disasters, it become necessary to undertake major

policy reforms. In the process such economies became vulnerable to poverty. Macro-economic shocks and policy failure account for poverty largely because they constrain the poor from using their greatest asset “labour”.

III-Health/Diseases: Good health is basic to human welfare and a fundamental objective of social and economic development. Poor health shackles human capital, reduces returns to learning, impedes entrepreneurial activities and holds back growth and economic development. Diseases cause poverty and vice versa. In most countries of the World major diseases causing poverty are Malaria, HIV/AIDS and other infections/diseases. In Nigeria for instance, AIDS prevalence is about 5.4% with an infected adult population of 2.6 million (This will constrain availability and participation of this segment of the population in the labour market to earn income and funds gets channelled to this course)

Debt burden: In several developing countries of the world, debt burden is assuming increasing importance as a cause of poverty. In such countries servicing of the debt has encroached on the volume of resources needed for socio-economic development. The productive sector such as agriculture, manufacturing etc are equally constrained leading to low productivity, low capacity utilization, under employment and low purchasing power thereby subjecting the masses of the people to abject poverty. In Nigeria, at the end of December 2000 external debt stood at US\$28.5 (about 80% of GDP), though, a debt pardon deal was brokered between Nigeria and her creditors (Paris Club) during the Obasanjo’s regime, by 2011 debt portfolio was projected to represent 12% of GDP. Amount required to service this debt annually is enough to hamper government expenditure for the provision of social and physical infrastructure for the poor.

Governance: The persistence and pervasiveness of poverty in several countries has been linked to the lack of popular participation in governance and decision -making as well

as weak institutional base. This has led among other things to poor accountability, transparency in resource allocation, weak programme implementation and monitoring. Ultimately, development programmes are rendered ineffective poverty reduction initiatives are therefore ineffective and resources wasted.

**Environmental Degradation:** Environmental degradation is a cause of accentuated poverty. At the same time, poverty itself can be a cause of environmental degradation. This reverse causality stems from the fact that for poor people in poor countries such as Nigeria, a number of environmental resources are complementary in production and consumption to other goods and services while a number of environmental resources supplement income most especially in time of acute economic stress (Falconer and Arnold, 1989). This can be a source of cumulative causations, where poverty, high fertility rates and environmental degradation feed upon one another. Also, scarcity of fuel woods forces women to make what is available burn slowly. WHO (1984), reckons that under slow burning conditions wood fuels are capable of producing pollution concentrates higher than fossil fuels and subject the households to more smoke pollutants. The incessant cutting down of trees for firewood and charcoal have hindered prospect for increased yield and hasten the prospect of the creeping desert while profligate use of the country's resources by industries and industrial pollution from improper waste disposal has further exacerbated the plight of the poor.

**Crime and Violence:** A steady increase in crime and violence has degraded the quality of life to a varying extent in many counties of the world. Although individuals of all socioeconomic groups are affected, the urban poor are particularly vulnerable to these social problems. There are instances of shootings, gang killings. etc Crime and Violence have serious economic costs. For instance, an increasing proportion of public resources, which are already limited, is required to strengthen police enforcement, support the growing prison

population, finance the demands place on the judicial system, and provide health care for persons injured by violence.

Chimobi (2010) also spelt out certain factors that causes poverty in Nigeria, they are examined below;

**Unemployment:** Unemployment is a major factor contributing to poverty in Nigeria. There is a strong correlation between unemployment and poverty. When people are unemployed, their source of livelihood depletes over time. The cost of living becomes high and the standard of living goes down. There are many people in Nigeria who lack the opportunity of being employed. The formal unemployment rate in Nigeria as estimated by the World Bank in 2007 was 4.9 percent and Nigeria ranked 61st across the worlds countries (CIA Factbook). As reported by Teshome (2008), the then newly released African Development Indicators report of the World Bank showed that “education, once seen as the surest, undisputed gateway to employment, no longer looks so certain.” This is very true in the case of Nigeria. The fact that you are an educated Nigerian is no guarantee that you will be employed. Furthermore, according to the World Bank report, unemployment in Africa is higher among those who have attained a higher education of some kind, and also those in wealthy households because they depend solely on the wealth of their families and do not consider employment a priority. Many graduates in Nigeria wander the streets without anything reasonable to do for a living. The government is capable but unwilling to provide jobs for them. Employment in Nigeria is usually not based on merit but depends on how connected you are with people that have power. This leaves many highly qualified people in poverty as seemingly no one cares to know what they are capable of achieving. These people are missing out on the income they would have gotten if they were employed. The number of quality jobs in the economy is low and many government resources are misallocated. Unemployment-induced poverty tends to increase the crime rate and violence in the country.

Most unemployed youths resort to crimes such as armed robbery, kidnapping for ransom, internet fraud and other forms of fraudulent activities. The reservation wage they get from these activities is typically barely enough to take care of their basic necessities.

Corruption: This has become a common act in Nigeria and it has destabilized the political system drastically. Government funds are being misappropriated on a daily basis by the leaders, who only put the interest of their family and friends at heart while ignoring the masses. The corruption has eaten so deeply into the government and economy that everyone seems to be blinded by it. Corruption has almost become an accepted way of life in Nigeria. In Nigeria, the government's income is generated mostly from natural resource revenues. This income, instead of being used for developmental purposes, is then circulated among the political office holders and their families, leaving the rest of the people to wallow in poverty. Political leaders practically ignore the affairs and wellbeing of their people who elected them into office. They mismanage and embezzle funds. There are several issues involved with bad governance in Nigeria, use of wrong policies, adaptation to wrong policies and implementation of those wrong policies. In any case, it is clear that Nigeria's corruption has increased poverty

Non-Diversification of the Economy – Oil Over-Dependency: While Nigeria's poverty has been identified to be caused by many factors, Nigeria's non- diversification of the economy can be seen as a major factor. Before 1970, the Nigerian economy was driven by the agricultural sector. The oil sector which only constituted 1 percent of the country's export revenue in 1958 rose to 97 percent by 1984 and has since then not gone below 90 percent. In 2008, the oil and gas sector constituted about 97.5 percent of their export revenues, 81 percent of government revenues and about 17 percent of GDP.<sup>7</sup> In Nigeria, those in power have practically ignored other sources of income, and today, Nigeria depends heavily on exporting oil. This dependency on natural resources is often referred to as "Dutch disease", whereby



natural resources make a country less competitive. Excluding the few working in the oil sector, the majority of the people have been impoverished as their products have become irrelevant. The agricultural sector, which was their major means of income before the discovery of oil, is considered almost useless. Beyond the Dutch disease, Nigeria's abundance of a natural resource has led to what is known as a resource curse, which is reflected in the "Niger Delta Crisis (reflecting the region of the country where most of the oil is coming from). The people in this region are fighting for resource control as they claim the government is not fulfilling their promise of giving them the large part of the oil revenues. The wealth from natural resources in Nigeria is supposed to be working with the derivation policy, but this policy is not functional in any way, as the oil-producing states are still impoverished and this policy is supposed to work in a way such that these states with these natural resources should be able to get a large part of the country's revenue as they contribute a lot to the national wealth. According to Collier (2007), resource wealth sometimes contributes to a conflict trap and the surplus from natural resource exports reduces growth. He goes on to discuss the case of Nigeria in the 1970s, when other exports of the country like agriculture became non-profitable due to increased oil revenues. He explains how the Dutch disease can damage the growth process by closing out on the exports in other promising sectors of the economy. The first half of the 1980s gave rise to a huge oil boom in Nigeria and also led to excessive government borrowing and investment on wasteful projects that made the corruption in the country more apparent. As the world price of oil crashed in 1986, Nigeria's oil revenues reduced drastically and Nigeria's external debt increased drastically. The introduction of the structural.

**Laziness:** Laziness is a common disease which is virtually suffered by many Nigerians today, especially those from wealthy households. Everyone wants to be comfortable but they are not ready to work towards it. This often leads to greed where people will do whatever they

can to keep the family wealth for themselves. In most families, everyone depends on the bread winner, who works so much to keep the family going and when he dies the family is likely to become poor because of mismanagement of funds. In most Nigerian families, the death of the bread winner means the death of the whole family fortunes; because everyone was depending on him/her to provide everything.

**Poor Education System:** Education can play a major role in reducing poverty. According to the World Bank, education is central to development. It promotes economic growth, national productivity and innovation, and values of democracy and social cohesion. In Nigeria, the population with no education account for most of the poor. The education system in Nigeria can be regarded as a failure compared to other countries in the world. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights 8 states that “everyone has the right to an education.” This right to education has been denied to many Nigerians, of which many of them can be considered invisible to the society now. This deprivation of education applies more to females than males, because they are considered the inferior sex. Hence educating them is seen as unnecessary as they are expected to marry as early as possible.

In Rodney’s book; *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (1972), he was of the view that underdevelopment which basically cannot be separated from poverty results from unequal interaction between two societies. The more this unequal relationship lasts, the more the backwardness of the less privileged ones. Rodney (1972) catalogued the disadvantages that go with the unequal relationship with the advanced countries, which includes poverty and stagnation, greed etc, aims he traced the present predicament of Africa to the time it came into contact with the advanced countries.

### 2.2.3

## EFFECTS OF POVERTY IN NIGERIA

According to Hannah Cleveland (2014) the effects of poverty can be felt at every level of society, from the individual living in poverty to the political leader attempting to provide solutions. Whether it is health conditions or increased crime rates, poverty reaches just about every aspect of life. According to Hannah Cleveland (2014) the effects of poverty include:

**Malnutrition:** The most common effect of poverty is malnutrition. This is especially seen in children of poor families. People living in poverty rarely have access to highly nutritious foods. Even if they have access to these foods, it is unlikely that they are able to purchase them. The healthiest foods are usually the most expensive; therefore, a family on a very small budget is much more likely to purchase food that is less nutritious, simply because that is all they can afford. Sometimes people in poverty are malnourished simply because they do not eat enough of anything. For most people in Nigeria, quality food is a luxury. Poor nutrition causes 45 percent of deaths in children under the age of 5. Malnutrition can also lead to many other health issues as well.

**Health:** One of the most severe effects of poverty is the health effects that are almost always present. This includes things from diseases to life expectancy to medicine. Diseases are very common in people living in poverty because they lack the resources to maintain a healthy living environment. They are almost always lacking in nutritious foods, which decreases their bodies' ability to fight off diseases. Sanitation conditions are usually very low, increasing the chance of contracting a disease. Sometimes these diseases can be minor, but other times they can be life-threatening. In general, people living in poverty cannot afford appropriate medicines to treat these illnesses. Life expectancy and child mortality are greatly affected by poverty. Statistics show that life expectancy in poor nations such as Nigeria is up to 30 years below that of wealthy nations, child mortality is shockingly high in Nigeria.

Education: Education is largely affected by poverty. Many people living in poverty are unable to attend school from a very early age. Families may not be able to afford the necessary clothing or school supplies. Others may not have a way for their children to get to school. Whatever the reason, there is a clear correlation between families living in poverty and their lack of education. Without the ability to attend school, many people go through life illiterate. The literacy rates in countries with high poverty levels indicate that these two are linked. Low literacy rates can affect society in various ways including the labour force and politics. A bad cycle is created; poverty prevents people from gaining a good education, and not obtaining an education prevents people from escaping poverty.

Economy: Among the effects of poverty includes its impact on the economy of the country. Mainly, the number of people living in poverty influences employment rates heavily. Without an education, people are unlikely to find a paying job. Unemployment hinders a country from developing into a strong economic system. A high unemployment rate in Nigeria has impeded the countries progress in all ramifications. The labour force suffers when a large part of the citizens cannot contribute to economic development.

Society: Poverty also has social effects. Many people living in poverty are homeless, which puts them on the streets. There also seems to be a connection between poverty and crime. When people are unemployed and homeless, social unrest may take over and lead to increases in crime. When people have nothing and no money to buy necessities, they may be forced to turn to theft in order to survive. Homelessness and high crime rates impact of a country's people and can create many problems within a society. It is clear that poverty has far-reaching effects on all people. By improving global poverty, economies could prosper, health could improve and countries can develop into strong global presences. All countries will benefit when decreasing global poverty becomes a priority in the world.

Children antisocial behaviour: One of the effects of poverty on children's development is to lead them to build an antisocial behavior that acts as a psychological protection against their hostile environment. Discrimination and social exclusion often push them to more aggressiveness and less self-control and nuance in reaction to stressful events. Having often been taken advantage of in their early childhood, they rarely come to a constructive way to deal with conflicts. As they grow up, these behaviours are more and more entrenched in their personalities and often considered unrecoverable. This highlights the importance of taking action as early as possible to improve children's living conditions. Policymakers should understand that not just income but a child's social environment at large (parenting, school violence, housing, but also sanitation, uncontaminated food and water) play a big role in creating new effects of poverty.

According to the Research for social and economic development (2011), the effects of poverty are most often interrelated so that one problem hardly ever occurs alone. Poverty is a major cause of social tensions and threatens to divide a nation because of the issue of inequalities, in particular income inequality. This happens when wealth in a country is poorly distributed among its citizens. In other words, when a tiny minority has all the money. The feature of a rich or developed country for example is the presence of a middle class, but recently we've seen even Western countries gradually losing their middle class, hence the increasing number of riots and clashes. In a society, poverty is a very dangerous factor that can destabilize an entire country.

According to Francis (2001), the impact of poverty on Nigeria is devastating. Due to the inability of the people to harness the resources that will improve their living conditions, it has helped to dismantle their hopes of life. Therefore the economic activities of these people continuously face diminishing returns. This impact is seriously felt in the agricultural sector as well as other sectors of the economy. Since farmers lack the appropriate technology,

updated skills, modern technology, capacity building, innovative techniques, tools, lack capital to invest in this sector (to improve the soils and multiply the yields), because of this poor state, the sector has seriously been affected. Because of the poverty situation in Nigeria, the country has been plunged into a feat of successive political problems that has resulted to coup d'etats, dictatorship, military rule and many leaders clinging so long on to power. This is because they believe that nectar is found only on the crown or around the crown". It is because of this reason today that we find a lot of massive emigration of Nigerians to Europe, America and other parts of the world to seek for greener pastures. They use all unorthodox means to make sure that they leave their homeland for good to a land where they are subjected to all forms of slavery. Yet the exodus continues despite all attempts to curb it. This only helps to reduce the economic manpower of the continent, which ought to be nurtured. Due to this fact, poverty-related problems like malnutrition, diseases, HIV/AIDS, juvenile delinquency, disillusionment, unemployment, social insecurity, fraud, acute corruption, embezzlement, trauma have been the order of the day. It has resulted to the availability of very few and poor medical facilities, personnel and infrastructure. Acute poverty in Nigeria has resulted in high rate of illiteracy. This is because, there are no educational infrastructure, few and in experienced personnel. This has affected mostly the elementary and post secondary levels.

### **2.3**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Just as there is no universally acceptable definition of poverty, so it is with theories of poverty. Attempts have been made to discuss theories of poverty from various dimensions. Theory of poverty falls basically into four identified perspectives according to Barbara Stark

(2010). They are: **the conservative, the liberal reformists, the radical structure/marxists and the social Exclusion.**

The conservative theories are further divided into: individualistic and culture of poverty.

### ***The conservative theories***

Individualistic Theory: This theory is viewed from the angle of the individual's inability to be productive so as to get out of poverty. As argued by O'Donnell (1997), writers of 19 century and early 20 century in both Britain and United States attributed poverty to individual weakness. This theory is founded on self help and survival in which those who work hard to succeed while the weak fail to succeed giving rise to the non-poor and the poor respectively. The individual attribute theory is of the view that the poor are the architects of their misfortune. Programmes established in Nigeria in line with this theory are: Poverty alleviation programme (PAP) and the on-going national poverty reduction programme (NAPEP). This is because these two programmes have been characterized by payment of stipends (incase of PAP) and granting of loans to individuals under NAPEP.

The Culture of Poverty: The culture of poverty also known as vicious of poverty was developed in late 1950s, by Oscar Lewis from a field study among the urban poor in Mexico and Puerto Rico (Islam, Haralambos and Heald, 1980). It is known as culture of poverty theory because it concerns people whose environment and belief exhibit different culture and or a sub-culture from the rest of the society.

### ***The Liberal reformist***

Situational Theory of Poverty: The situational theory was popularized by the University of Michigan's institute for social research. It was discovered in their outcome that there is little evidences that individual attitude and behaviour pattern affect individual economic

progress. This theory which was also in response to the culture of poverty theory views poverty as a reaction to situational constraints rather than an issue of culture. That poverty results from imposed constraints such as low income, unemployment and illness (O'Donnell 1997; Haralambos and Heald 1980). Haralambos and Heald further argued that the poor share the same culture with that of the society with the difference being their inability to translate opportunities into realities due to imposed constraints.

***Structural/Marxian Theory of Poverty:*** The radical structural/ Marxist perspective argued that capitalism produces poverty due to its exploitative syndrome. It is hinged on the fact that capitalism brings about fundamental social problems including severe by inequality which leads to poverty. Since wealth is concentrated in the hands of a minority who are bent on pursuing profits through exploitation of labour, redistribution of resources is more within the classes than between classes. Those stricken by poverty are often subjugated by bourgeoisie so as to glean profits and capital via exploitation.

***Social Exclusion Theory:*** The social exclusion theory is predicated on poverty resulting from people who tend to be excluded from effective participation in a society's activities due to segregation. The social exclusion theory which was officially adopted in a world summit which in a Copenhagen in 1995 holds that certain people within the society become more vulnerable to poverty because of discrimination. This approach which has been described as 'peoples centered' as against 'goods centered' is characterized by three paradigms namely: solidarity, specialization and monopoly (Islam and Anyanwu 1997).



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 PREAMBLE**

As a result of the complex nature of this research work, it is important to lay down the source/sources of information and the methodologies used in this study. This will justify the outcome of the result obtained from the study. Research methodology is of huge importance to any research work being conducted, this being that research methodology enables the researcher to discuss their sources of data, how they are collected, analysed and organized. Research, according to several concepts, is a systemized way in which data is collected, organized, analysed and presented. This chapter covers areas such as research design, area of study, methods of data collection, data analysis techniques, validity and reliability of instruments.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

A research design is a systematic plan to study a scientific problem. It can also be a detailed outline of how an investigation will take place. A research design comprises of an outline of what the investigator will do from writing the hypothesis and their operational implication to the final analysis of data. This study will adopt the descriptive analytical method of research; a descriptive research design does not fit into the definition of qualitative and qualitative research methodologies, but instead it can utilize elements of both, often within the same study. Hence, the descriptive design will be used in this study to portray poverty in Nigeria and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal one (eradication of poverty) by 2015

### **3.3 AREA OF STUDY**

The area of study pinpoints the geographical location affected by the study. This may be indicated specifically by the names of the affected area, state, organisation or region. The area of study for this research work is Nigeria.

### **3.4 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION/DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE**

The method of data collection used for this study is secondary sources. Secondary sources will involve the use of sources such as; the internet, newspapers, books, journals, annual reports. The use of this method will allow this study to make reference to scholarly works relating to this project topic so as to get comprehensive and expert opinions and views on the main focus of the project topic.

### **3.5 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES**

The results obtained from this study will be analysed by using descriptive method. It will try to analyse the facts/information obtained in line with theoretical frameworks used.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4.1 ERADICATING POVERTY IN NIGERIA UNDER THE MDG FRAMEWORK: TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE COUNTRY GONE?

Eradicating poverty is the main thrust of the Millennium Development Goals. Indeed, the Millennium Development Goals is all about people because they are the agents and ultimate beneficiaries of development. But data on the MDGs implementation so far reveal that Nigeria fell short in meeting the objectives on issues such as poverty reduction, child and maternal mortality, environmental sustainability and ability to integrate with the global economy. As it were, the Nigerian economy keeps deteriorating and the social condition of the people worsens, while the remedies for curtailing the menace have come rather slowly. Little progress has been made to articulate, attain and sustain an annual average growth rate of GDP of 7 per cent required for the MDGs, improve domestic savings and the quality of public resource management, increase capital inflows through the attraction of foreign investments and development assistance and enhance the performance of the country in global trade.

Recent economic growth, particularly in agriculture, has markedly reduced the proportion of underweight children, from 35.7 per cent in 1990 to 23.1 per cent in 2008. However, growth has not generated enough jobs and its effect on poverty is not yet clear (the most recent data is from 2004). The available data and the current policy environment suggest that the target will be difficult to meet. Growth needs to be more equitable and broad-based. Developing agriculture and creating jobs will require the public sector to create an enabling environment for business, including building critical infrastructure, making regulatory services transparent and providing sustainable access (UNDP 2010).

The prospects of achieving the MDGs by 2015 appear bleak, but happily the awareness is growing among Nigerians that ability to get moving is the hallmark of progress.

With people centred economic policies, best practices in political engineering and good governance, Nigeria can substantially increase its savings so as to considerably invest in the Millennium Development Goals and ultimately improve the social conditions of its peoples. Creating a propitious external environment is a major challenge for the Millennium Development Goals. Along this line, the industrialized nations must choose between a global market driven only by calculations of profit and one, which offers prosperity to all nations through the instrumentality of global economic solidarity. Nigerian exports need to enjoy comparative advantage in Western markets as foreign investments are encouraged to make inroads into the country. Therefore, better focused developmental assistance is needed in Nigeria; otherwise the achievement of the MDGs even after 2015 would be a mirage.

#### **4.2 BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES TO ERADICATING POVERTY IN NIGERIA UNDER THE MDGs FRAMEWORK.**

*Corrupt practises of leaders:* A problem that impedes the actualization of poverty related programmes in Nigeria argues Chukwuemeka (2008) is the nefarious practices of the policy formulators. The policy makers in Nigeria tend to formulate policies and programmes with some inbuilt flexibilities to allow them loopholes to make inordinate gains. For instance most poverty related programmes do not get to the people at the grassroots where most of the poor people reside. The comprador bourgeoisie hijack some of such programmes. Essentially most of the comprador bourgeoisie are agents of the ruling elites. The power sector is not productive and thus the enabling environment is not guaranteed for micro businesses to thrive. The 17,000 MHW currently generated by Power Holding of Nigeria is grossly inadequate as against a minimum of 50,000 MHW. Government regulatory policies are oftentimes not favourable to small scale business holders. Such regulatory policies include: local government tariffs, business premises tariffs, environmental agency tariffs, etc and the nefarious activities of hoodlums who hide under the cloak of the above mentioned agencies to intimidate and

extort money from innocent micro business owners. Again its actualization in Nigeria is still challenged by poor leadership, insincerity in governance, policy inconsistency, lack of adequate data base, high levels of corruption, etc. Some growth indices are often paraded by the Nigerian government, but, there is mismatch or disconnect between it and existing realities as the country still exhibit large symptoms of underdevelopment as reflected in the socio-economic lives of Nigerians. The rapid urbanization, put at over 5 percent per annum, exerts severe pressure on ailing infrastructure. Nigeria is further ranked as one of the twenty five poorest nations in the world (Bello 2007). This further intensifies youth unemployment.

*Class gap:* Many countries of the world especially in Africa, including Nigeria continue to formulate and implement policies and programmes that further widen the gap instead of closing the gap between rich and poor nations on the one hand and rich and poor citizens of individual countries on the other. Part of the problem is that the dominant knowledge in the world promoted by the dominant classes naturally lead to widening of the gap. Consequently, despite the apparent robust economic growth rates achieved in the Nigerian economy since the signing of the Millennium Declaration, the impact on reducing poverty and hunger in the country remains dismal. A key challenge is how to formulate and implement concrete, practical and workable policies at the three levels of governance in the country to successfully address the dysfunctional growth-employment-poverty reduction nexus in the country and close the widening poverty gap. The citizens (usually the poor) are often or most times not involved in the planning, execution, utilization and assessment of programmes, social amenities or facilities designed to improve their welfare.

*Inequality of people:* The poor for whom the programmes are implemented do not participate in the conceptualization, implementation and evaluation of the programmes. The poor are not involved in poverty eradication programmes. Meanwhile, they claim that poverty is very high in their communities. Experiences all over the world show that inequality is the

greatest obstacle to development which can only be tackled through state intervention. According to the human development report 2005, “Human development gaps within countries are as stark as the gaps between countries. These gaps reflect unequal opportunity-people held back because of their gender, group identity, wealth or location. Such inequalities are unjust. They are also economically wasteful and socially destabilizing.

As noted earlier, poverty results from failure to observe and implement human rights ingrained in economic, political and social systems. Therefore, discretionary ad hoc handouts and market led growth with the hope of trickle-down effect cannot alleviate or eradicate poverty.

#### **4.3 WHAT MUST BE DONE TO ADDRESS THE BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES OF ERADICATING POVERTY IN NIGERIA UNDER THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK.**

*Tackling corruption in Nigeria:* The establishment of the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) as well as the Code of Conduct Bureau and its Tribunal is a laudable start on the war against corruption. Unfortunately, though some successes have been registered by these bodies, the general impression is that these bodies have gone after the tail of the monster of corruption rather than its head. It is not helpful that some politicians meanwhile allege that these bodies are being used by the Presidency as instruments of blackmail or vendetta against political opponents. There is therefore a need to expand the activities and range of instruments available to these bodies. Indeed, an effective war on corruption has to be fought on, at least, the three axes of (a) Prevention, (b) Detection, and (c) Sanctions and Restitutions. While to date some efforts have been made in terms of the prevention (e.g. the Due Process mechanism) and sanctions of corruption offenders, present

efforts being made to detect corruption are at best half-hearted. It is no wonder that when some time ago the Nigerian media accused a former military head of state of embezzlement of public funds, Mr. President was to retort that he would take immediate action if he is provided with actual evidence of wrong doing of this particular predecessor. Yet the President himself announced that he has received the names of some naughty public officials who have been reported to him by Nigeria's western creditors as having siphoned and are still siphoning some huge resources abroad. Clearly Nigeria needs robust corruption detection and bursting agency as up and doing, and as zealous as the Nigerian Police Force sometimes demonstrates at road check points, and the SSS always exhibits in matters of the President's personal security. Prevention of corruption If corruption is to be given a short shrift in Nigeria, then the social, business and bureaucratic environments must be corruption- hostile rather than friendly. This means that there must be well funded comprehensive public education and enlightenment programs on the nature of corruption as well as the negative effects of corruption in the Nigerian polity. This is a job that the National Orientation Agency (NOA) as well as the Federal and State Ministries of Information must undertake. This could take the form of well tested public enlightenment techniques such as the use of hand bills, public posters, print media adverts and Radio and TV jingles. At the same time, the citizenry must be made aware of the stiff penalties that await those to be engaged in corrupt practices. To this end, certain legal instruments must be put in place to enable unfettered corruption detection, arraignment and conviction to be facilitated.

***Reduction in class gap:*** Scholars are in agreement that when citizens participate in the planning, execution, utilization and assessment of programmes, social amenities or facilities designed to improve their welfare, success of those efforts are assured. As Onibokun and Faniran have argued "participation gives the people the pride of ownership of the facilities completed in the process of community development. When, for example, people refer to

social services within the community as our school, hospital, or market, they are implicitly expressing enthusiasm and confidence in their community, with a strong feeling of belonging to it. The very idea of a community doing something for itself through the participatory effort of its people depicts development at its best...” The principle of citizen participation extols collective effort for community development as the catalyst by which human efforts can pursue the interchanges of energies and satisfactions for the growth of communities and the development of the wider society. The principle is itself embedded in the psychology of man, i.e. understanding and accepting as the best those actions which he has helped to originate. For example, where a citizen has a part in an action, he agrees with it, and it has meaning for him. If a citizen can feel that he is part of a group in an action, this tends to ease out a major developmental challenge, through the development of the potential of the individual, as a member of a social group, a worker, a learner or a thinker, in an environment which enables him to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and the freely chosen values to live by. It is this development that enables citizens to create a more wholesome social and material environment on which their succeeding generations can base and build.

Measures to eradicate poverty must be located at the local, national and international levels because even though poverty and hunger manifests themselves at the local and national levels, the driving force is international. According to Jeffery Sachs, Africa is constantly berated for its poor politics and bad economic ideas, though most of the mischief has come from outside. In the 1960s, the fad was ‘development planning’. In the 1970s, this gave way to ‘basic needs’. In the 1980s, ‘basic needs’ was supplanted by ‘structural adjustment’... the focus in the 1990s has shifted to ‘good governance’ ...donors now berate African governments for their ‘lack of ownership’ of a reform dictated by the IMF and World Bank. Therefore, programming for the eradication of poverty and hunger must simultaneously take place at the local, national and international levels.



***Inequality of people:*** There is need for the government to focus on dealing with the challenge of inequality and promote the intervention of the state including social protection measures to be able to make significant progress in reducing poverty and hunger in the country. Overcoming structural forces that create and perpetuate extreme inequality is one of the most efficient. For instance Malawi, one of the poorest countries in the world was able to halt famine and became a net exporter of grains within three years by massive state intervention including increased budgetary allocation to agriculture, fertilizer subsidy, irrigation schemes and grain reserves routes for overcoming extreme poverty, enhancing welfare of society and accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. In recent memory, a combination of pressure from below and enlightened leadership from above has produced some remarkable exercises in redistribution.

As noted above, Nigeria is off track in terms of achieving the MDGs and the year 2015 marks the end of the timeline for their achievement. However, the challenges of poverty and development remain daunting. The process of the post 2015 development agenda has started at the international level. It is therefore necessary to begin to think beyond 2015.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter contains the summary, recommendation and conclusion of the research study. The issue of poverty in Nigeria and the millennium development goal target one (eradication of poverty) by 2015 have been examined and data has been collected from secondary sources in relationship to the work.

### **5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The main arguments advanced in this paper can now be summarized with concluding remarks. The frail pace of Nigeria's development has resulted from a confluence of negative factors, and that marks a setback to the achievement of the MDGs and hence poverty reduction in the country. Despite adjustment reforms, the Nigerian economy still exhibits weaknesses that point to defects in the approach to and expose the flaws in the reform policies. It is, therefore, imperative that Nigeria has gone a long way in achieving the Millennium Development Goal one (eradication of poverty) by 2015. The prospects of achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 appear bleak, but happily the awareness is growing among Nigerians that ability to get moving is the hallmark of progress.

The achievement of the Millennium Development Goal one is faced by various barriers and challenges. These challenges range from domestic and international forms, basically the barriers and challenges to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goal one as the study portrays could be; corruption amongst leaders (both on the domestic and international level), class gap between the rich and the poor and inequality of people. These barriers have indeed impeded the attainment of the Millennium Development Goal one.

The study further went to address the barriers and challenges, suggesting the possible methods of curbing these challenges in order to attain the goal. It suggested measures based on the barriers and challenges in the study findings. Suggesting that all poverty eradication programmes must be transparent in order to reach out to people in all parts of the country and to also curb corruption amongst leaders, the severe punishment on dubious leaders was also put in place. The state is also encouraged to focus on dealing with the challenge of inequality and promote the intervention of the state including social protection measures to be able to make significant progress in reducing poverty and hunger in the country.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION**

Poverty is one of the major issues that receives global attention today. In Nigeria poverty appears to be the greatest degrader of the Nigeria economy with serious economic and social consequences. Although several regimes had initiated several policy responses in the past to address the poverty scourge in Nigeria. These policies and efforts failed to yield the desired results of alleviating poverty because they were only declarative without concerted effort and lacked the required political will among several other reasons. Though the MDGs provide a platform for addressing the poverty issue once again, the situation from the Nigerian perspective indicates that there are still glaring constraints and challenges such as corruption, infrastructural inadequacies and others. Energy for instance that is required by industries which should be used to drive the economy is still unreliable, undependable, epileptic and in some cases non-existent, the inability of the government to address effectively the power sector problems certainly have negative consequential effect on the economy and on poverty reduction. In view of all these challenges and with the current level of poverty in Nigeria, there is no gain in saying that poverty eradication, with the Millennium Development target of this year 2015, remains a distant dream.

## 5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important to restate that the way forward towards poverty eradication in Nigeria includes:

- The government should pursue pragmatic policies like granting of soft loans to small business holders, formulate open apprenticeship programme that would be free for rural dwellers.
- The power sector should be restructured to minimize the erratic nature of power supply.
- The downsizing and retrenchment policies of government is antithetical to poverty reduction strategy. The Government should not pursue the policy of downsizing or retrenchment of public servants and at the same time pursues the policy of poverty eradication.
- There should be effective birth control policy, which should be legislated.
- Government should formulate policies and programmes to encourage small-scale entrepreneurs sail smooth in their private investment. Such encouragement should include: tax holiday, interest free loan, low tariff, and efforts should be intensified through the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) to stamp out corruption in Nigeria to make for effective implementation of poverty related programmes.
- Rapid progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of hunger and poverty reduction would also require coherence in international as well as domestic policies.

In summary, rights based approach to programming for the eradication of poverty and hunger should include strategies for special protection of the poor and marginalized; participation of the poor; mitigating the negative sides of the market;

regulating transnational corporations; provision of a clean, healthy and decent environment; promotion of the right to development; performance by the state of its role especially in regulation and provision of social services and joint action by different actors in all kinds of political, economic and legal means.

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