

Effects of Political Leadership on Reduction of Poverty and Inequality in Enugu State Nigeria, 2007 -2019

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the effects of political leadership on reduction of poverty and inequality in Enugu State, Nigeria between 2007 and 2019. Two specific objectives and corresponding hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The study utilized social Contract theory as the framework of analysis. The study utilized primary and secondary source of data. The primary data was obtained through interview and observation methods while secondary data was obtained through text books, News paper, Journals, government official documents and internet materials. Nine Local Government Areas were used for the study and they were chosen through purposive/ judgmental sampling techniques. The data for the study was presented using simple table, percentage, mean and Chart. Hypotheses were tested using Chi-square contingency test. The findings for the study revealed as follows: that the activities of Enugu State government are the major cause of poverty in the state, that the project strategies employed by Enugu state government have contributed significantly in mitigating poverty and inequalities in the state, that the measures adopted by the political leadership of the state have contributed very little in reducing poverty and inequalities in Enugu state, that there are significant measures adopted by the political leadership of Enugu state in poverty and inequality reduction. Based on the background, hypotheses and findings, it was recommended thus: Enugu state government should provide the basic needs and good policies that will guarantee good living condition, that there should be adequate funding, There is need for proper re-orientation in way of managing the resources of the state, There should be no interference from the government in the choice of project for the communities, anti-corruption agencies must not only be made to function independently of government apparatus but must have the capacity to institute an executive sanctions, that there is need to appraise and understand the social , political, economic, and cultural contexts of communities before the institution of intervention projects in the communities.

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KEYWORDS: Political Leadership, Poverty, Inequality, Education, and Healthcare

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is in many ways a promising nation, with a rich cultural heritage and abundant human and material resources. However, Nigeria is ranked 158 out of 177 on the Human Development Index (HDI, 2008). This implies that majority of the country's 140 million citizens live below poverty line and have

limited or no access to basic amenities such as education, good drinking water, affordable health care facilities, security and access to sustainable sources of livelihood (2006 census).

It is paradoxical that in spite of abundant human and natural resources endowment of the country, poverty

still remains one of the greatest challenges facing the state. It remains an adversary that no one could afford to ignore or underrate (Balogun, 2004). It is imperative that poverty and inequality are to be tackled more proactively and innovatively if there is political leadership with good governance in the state.

Achebe (1983) believes that the problem with Nigeria is leadership. It is an effective leadership, with vision and commitment that would transform the resources to achieve meaningful development and reduce poverty and inequality in the state, mostly in Enugu state.

The history of the development of great nations suggests that versatile leaders played a vital role in the transformation of their societies through good governance, which is characterized by reduction of Poverty, unemployment, security challenges, inequalities etc. Thus, the quality of citizens' life and the overall development of a nation is a reflection of governance in the nation.

In United States of America (USA) for example, Abraham Lincoln stands out because of the courageous leadership role he displayed during the 1861-1865 American Civil War (Norton). This led to the preservation of the Union, vindication of democracy and abolition of slavery. These great feats were achieved by determination in pursuit of a more perfect and equal Union (Ibid, P.17). Lincoln eventually left a legacy being upheld in the USA till date as a good model of democracy and enduring governance.

Effective Political Leadership is very crucial for the attainment of just and egalitarian society. They have become the crux of contemporary government and administration. Little wonder, Botha (2015) observes that in addition to leadership, governance has become a significant area of research. He rightly explains that one of the key outcomes of good governance is that it opens up the political space, process and enables the formulation and implementation of more transparent and responsive public policies.

The political Leadership in Nigeria, particularly in Enugu state between 2007 and 2018 leaves sour taste in the mouth and are characterized with abject poverty, inequality, corruption, poor infrastructures, massive unemployment as well as misery in the mists of abundance of human and material resources.

Effective governance is the efforts and activities of the leadership to enhance the welfare of the people of Enugu state. The effect of the problems and challenges of poverty, unemployment, Bribery/Corruption, illiteracy and inequality militated against all the efforts of the government of Enugu

State between 2007 and 2018, which was aimed at promoting the welfare of the people of State.

Statement of the Problem

Since the return of democratic rule in Nigeria, Enugu State has been experiencing persistent crisis associated with political leadership. However, it is obvious that the abundant resources entrusted to the political leaders are not prudently managed. The financial resource that is meant to be used to create job opportunities for the unemployed youths, pay salaries to workers etc are being diverted for private use. As a result of this, majority of the young graduates are unemployed, and this has resulted in high rate of crimes such as kidnapping, burglary, banditry etc in the state.

Again, it is noted that the level of welfare service of the state government to the masses is not adequate to cater for them. In other words, majority of the people of Enugu State lack access to basic health care, quality education, potable water, electricity, good road network, and other basic facilities needed for national development (Dike, 2009). These structural defects constituted poor living condition, mass unemployment, mal-nutrition and even high rate of death etc that tear and erode efforts of political leadership in Enugu state, thereby frustrating and diminishing the process and outcome of good governance (Nwabueze, 2014).

More so, human rights are tampered with by both government and unknown government. The police and other security agencies had killed hundred of innocent ones in the course of fighting against the bandits. The unknown government has also killed people in their number at different villages in Enugu state, and this ugly condition has made the victims to run away from their villages, there by becoming homeless.

Transparency and accountability on the part of the political leadership are critical issues that are begging for attention. This is because despite the numerous programmes and projects the government of Enugu state were said to have been executed with a large sum of money in order to better the living conditions of the people, there is yet a growing amount of poverty, inequality and unemployment in Enugu environs. The question is? Did the political leadership actually build the projects or provide programmes meant to empower the masses and liberate them from the shackles of poverty?

However, Nigeria, Enugu State inclusive produces about 2.6 million barrels of crude oil on the average in a daily basis, yet poverty, squalor, hunger, diseases and institutional deterioration have been the order of

the day (Ezechukwu, 2009). The question is, why is it that in spite of all the rich human and natural resources of our nation, hunger, abject poverty, mass unemployment, inequalities, inadequate infrastructural facilities, malnutrition, diseases and general deterioration in the public institutions have not been eradicated from the public life of the people of Enugu State?

According to Egwuatu (2012) there is little sense in maintaining growth while allowing the bulk of the population in the state remain impoverished, diseased-ridden, jobless, handicapped excluded from the development process. The effect of the problems and challenges to the development in Enugu state of Nigeria is a severe hindrance against all the efforts of political leadership to enhance the welfare of the people of Enugu State. Given the above scenario, the study has these following objectives to achieve:

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to investigate the appropriate roles played by the Political leadership in reducing poverty and inequality in Enugu State (2007 – 2018). The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out how the activities of the political leadership of Enugu state causes poverty and inequality in the state
2. To ascertain the extent to which the project intervention strategies employed by the political leadership of Enugu state contributed in reducing the problems of poverty and inequality in Enugu state.

Research Hypotheses

The study is guided by the following hypotheses:

1. Ho The activities of the political leadership of Enugu state has not contributed significantly in causing poverty and inequality in the state.

Hi The activities of the political leaders has contributed significantly in causing poverty and inequality in the state.

2. Ho The projects intervention strategies employed by the political leadership of Enugu state have not contributed significantly in reducing the problems of poverty and inequality in the State.

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Conceptual Framework

Leadership

Leadership is defined according to Donelly (2014) as an attempt at influencing the activities of followers

through the communication process and towards the attainment of some goal or goals. Thus it is the ability of influencing the behavior of others, or exerts influence within working group in order to achieve group task or organizational objective. The followers (subordinates) perceive the leadership as having certain attributes or characteristics that endeared him/her to control or exert influence over them. Therefore, leadership, by concept, is a non-coercive capacity (i.e. is not the use of instrument of delegated power or authority), and followers (subordinate) willing consent to be influenced or directed by the leadership. Leadership is hence conferred from below (by the electorates/subordinates) and not from above (by elites/super ordinates) for constructive engagement towards cooperative, constructive engagement towards cooperative, collaborative effort and mutual benefits. This study defines leadership within the confines of politico-bureaucratic officialdom (i.e. all political office holders and public bureaucrats. Political Leadership is the elected political office holders, who are mandated by constitution to control the resources of the State. For example, the position of a local government Chairman, State Governors, elected president of a country, the commissioners and ministers, fall within the ambit of political leadership.

Leadership is that process in which one person sets the purpose or direction for one or more other persons and gets them to move along together with him or her and with each other in that direction with competence and full commitment (Jaques, 2013).

Poverty

Poverty is a relative concept and difficult to pin down to a single definition. Attempts have been made here to present some of the definitions and views expressed by scholars and development agencies on the concept of poverty. Nwachukwu and Onwubiko (2008) categorized poverty into two: absolute and relative poverty. Absolute poverty refers to a situation where an individual lacks resources necessary to sustain himself or herself. Such an individual lacks the basic human needs of food, shelter, and clothing. This definition of poverty in terms of subsistence is predominantly used by scholars to analyze poverty in Africa and in developing countries in general. On the other hand, relative poverty refers to a situation where an individual lacks the necessary resources when compared with other members of the society such that it limits or prevents him from partaking in the normal or desirable activities of life that exists in such a society. The World Bank (2001) described poverty in terms of its manifestations which can be linked to the lack of income and assets to attain basic necessities of

life. These are food, shelter, clothing, and acceptable levels of health and education such as rudeness, humiliation, shame, inhuman treatment and exploitation in the hands of the people in authority; absence of rule of law, lack of protection against violence etc. Poverty does not affect only the individual, but classes of people, whole societies and nations as well. In Nigeria, the sub-group among the poor includes the unemployed, those with low level of education and female - headed households (NBS, 2009). Adefolalu (1992) argued that poverty is caused by what maybe called “exogenous forces” or forces outside an individual’s control such as over population, high standard of living, high cost of living, inadequate education, unemployment and environmental degradation; and also caused by “endogenous forces” or forces that operate within the victims as exemplified by individual responsibility and welfare dependency, and are thus self-created. Generally, poverty is a condition of lack, social deprivation and virtually what everybody rejects. We had earlier noted that the poverty level in Nigeria is high which is connected to the security challenges in the country.

Inequality

Inequality is different from poverty but related to it. Inequality concerns variations in living standards across a whole population. By contrast poverty focuses only on those whose standard of living falls below an appropriate threshold level (such as a poverty line), (Andrew, 2002). This threshold may be set in absolute terms (based on an externally determined norm, such as calorie requirements) or in relative terms (for example a fraction of the overall average standard of living). Intuitively relative poverty is more closely related to inequality in that what it means to be poor reflects prevailing living conditions in the whole population. But the degrees of inequality will have implications for both conceptions of poverty.

Just as living standards and poverty are multidimensional in nature, the same must also apply to variations in wellbeing between people (or groups of people) – that is inequality.

Poverty Reduction

Poverty describes a wide range of circumstances associated with needs, hardship, and lack of resources. It is a relative term depicting deprivations, which result from improper or unbalance distribution of resources (Okeke, 2001). The deprivation could be of essential goods and services or lack of wealth.

Poverty reduction means making poverty more bearable. It serves as a pain reliever. However, poverty reduction means making poverty less

prevalent (Ike, 2010). It means removal of the causes of the pain. Many successive governments had pursued policies and programmes of poverty alleviation at the utter neglect of poverty reduction. This is giving a man fish in order to survive. Policy initiators viewed poverty simply as deprivation of essential goods and services. The idea of government, here is to improve the living condition of the (the poor)

From the foregoing, to it becomes imperative that to reduce poverty, there should be effective political leadership that will provide the essential goods and services to the needy.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts the social contract theory as its framework of analysis. The theory was propounded by Thomas Hobbes and later expounded by John Lock and Rousseau. The concept of social contract was largely employed by the defenders of popular liberty, in middle- ages and become more prominent as from 16th and 17th centuries. The reason for clamoring for social contract agreement by the proponents was to resist the claim of rulers to absolute dominion over their subjects. The central tenet of Social Contract theory is that the state came into existence as a result of an agreement entered into by men and women who had no formal governmental organization originally but were subjected to what Hobbes called crisis ridden state of nature. This situation of lawlessness and insecurity compelled the citizens to part with their natural rights and liberties and obeyed the laws prescribed by the government, in order to establish stable social orders.

Jean Jacques’ Rousseau’s version of social contract is a fusion of the moral assumptions and social attitudes of Hobbes but with conclusion of John Locke (Appadorai, 2014). According to Rousseau, man is essentially good and the state of nature is a period of idyllic happiness, man being free and equal. However with the emergence of the concept of private property ownership and growth of population, quarrel and tension arose and man was compelled to give up his natural freedom. But this issue remains that man’s problem was how to find a form of association that enhances the protection of his life and property (Agu, 2015). According to Appadorai (2014) the problem of insecurity was addressed through a social contract and the creation of civil society.

This theory is based on some key tenets that include the following:

1. That government sovereignty is embedded in the general will of all.
2. Popular sovereignty/popular mandate

3. Rule of law
4. The good of all

The tenets of Social Contract Theory

For operational purposes, the social contract theory adopted in this study corresponds to social contract as enunciated by Jean Jacques Rousseau (Hoffman & Graham 2006.18) the following are key tenets.

1. Government sovereignty is embedded in the will of all: consensus collective interest, basic rules and fundamental principles agrees to by the parties to the social contract to guide their co-existence within the polity
2. Popular sovereignty/popular mandate. Provided that parties to the social contract shall deposit their individual powers to govern self into a single collective pool of power, that belong to them all, and is to be exercised on behalf of all. However, since only a very few number will occupy positions of authority, they are to be freely elected by all which confers on them the mandate of the people (popular mandate) to exercise popular sovereignty on behalf of all.
3. The rule of law. This means that all parties to the social contract (individuals, groups and governments) are subject to the laws of the land, everybody is equal before the law.
4. The good of All: This means that the ultimate objective of social contract is to pursue and enhance the collective good/welfare of all members of the pact or all parties to the social contract. The relevance of the theory to the study is based on the fact that government and the

citizens are in contract. While the citizens are expected to be law abiding, pay their taxes among others, the government is expected to fulfill its own part of the contract by providing programmes to reduce poverty and inequality.

Methodology

Case study survey research design was adopted for the study. The area of the study was Enugu State. Enugu state is one of the south-eastern states in Nigeria, and also one of the thirty-six states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The population of the study was 3,267,837 being the population of Enugu State according to the 2006 census figure. Purposive sampling technique was adopted to draw a sample of 180 respondents from the population of the study. Primary and secondary sources of data collection were used for the study. Primary data was derived through a structured questionnaire, and this was supported with material from secondary sources such as journals, textbooks, internet among others. To analyze the data the responses to questions on the interview were presented and analyzed with the use of frequency tables showing the response in their corresponding percentages.

The study also adopted the principle laid down in Kutosyiannis, (2003) and upheld by Iyeli (2003) that if 60% of respondents are affirmative on a question, accept the hypothesis, but when there is 40% or less responses reject it, this means that the null hypothesis prevails.

Research question (1) How do the activities of the political leadership in Enugu state cause poverty and inequalities in the state?

Table 1

Category of respondents	Frequency	Percentage
inadequate provision of essential goods and services	90	50%
Late payment of salaries and other entitlement to staff	22	12.2%
Misappropriation of public funds	68	38%
Total	180	100%
Mean	45	
STD	32.53	

Source: Field survey 2019

This table shows that 90 respondents, representing 50%, asserted that inadequate provision of essential goods and services by the government are the major causes of poverty and inequalities in the state, while 22 respondents representing 12.2% are of the opinion that late payment of salaries and other entitlement are the major cause. 68 respondents representing 38% were of the opinion that misappropriation of public funds remained the major cause of the poverty in the state. Based on this, it is inferred that inadequate provision of essential services are the major cause of poverty and inequalities in the state.

To what extent have the activities of the political leaders in Enugu state resulted in poverty?**Table 2**

Category of respondents	Frequency	Percentage
To a large extent	108	60%
Moderate	56	31%
To a low extent	16	9%
Total	180	100%
Mean	47	
STD	33.26	

Source: Field survey 2019

This response to question in table 3 above showed that 108 (60%) members of those interviewed answered that the activities of the political leaders cause poverty to a very large extent in Enugu. While 56 (31%) responded that they are moderate, 16 respondents representing 9% are of the opinion that the activities of the political leaders results into poverty and inequality to a low extent.

How will you assess the performance of the political leadership of Enugu state in the act of reducing poverty and inequalities in the state?**Table 3 Assessment of poverty in Enugu State**

Category of responses	Frequency	Percentage
High	44	73 %
Average	14	23%
Low	2	4%
None	-	-
Total	60	100%
Mean	20	
STD	21.63	

Source: field survey, 2019

The responses to interview above showed that 44 (73%) of those interviewed responded that poverty affect to high extent the good governance in Enugu State. 14 representing (23%) of respondents said that it is on average. Based on this assessment, it was deducted that poverty remains the challenges to the political leadership in Enugu State between 2007 and 2019.

Table 4 Number and distribution of projects according to local Government areas and communities

S/N	Local govts	Benefiting communities	No of completed Projects	Educational facilities	Water	Electricity	Health	Transport	socio/economic
1.	Awgu	10	11	6	1	0	2	2	0
2.	Ezeagu	12	14	4	1	4	2	3	0
3.	Igbo-Eze North	12	13	1	4	7	1	0	0
4.	Isi-Uzo	10	08	2	0	0	1	5	0
5.	Nkanu East	10	07	3	0	3	1	0	0
6.	Nkanu West	16	16	3	5	3	2	3	0
7.	Nsukka	11	11	3	2	0	2	3	1
8.	Oji River	10	12	1	3	4	1	2	1
9.	Uzo-Uwani	10	10	1	1	3	2	3	0
	TOTAL	101	102	24	17	24	14	21	02

Source: Enugu State Development Projects, Summary of Micro-Projects, 2019

Table 5 revealed that many communities in each of local Government Areas selected for this study benefited from Enugu State intervention projects. Some of the communities have some projects completed or not completed. These projects include the followings:

1. Education Projects. (2) Water Supply projects (3) Health projects (4) Transportation Projects (5) Rural Electrification Projects.

Do you think that the projects intervention in your community improved the welfare of your people?

Table 5 Projects intervention in your community improved the welfare of your people.

Category of responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	10	16.67%
No	50	83.33%
Total	60	100%
Mean	30	
STD	28.28	

Source: Field survey, 2019.

The responses to the above interview question showed that among the 60 people interviewed as captured in table 6, 50 respondents representing 83.33% of those interviewed said no, that some of projects were not completed, or abandoned and even completed ones were not sited where they would enhance or improve the welfare of the people of the community. Those interviewed argued that most of the water boreholes, culverts, roads, bridges etc were poorly executed which made them not functional to improve the living standard of the people. While 10 respondents, representing 16.67% of those interviewed said yes that the projects intervention improved the welfare of the people of the communities. The greater percentages of those interviewed in table 4.24 stated that the projects intervention in Enugu state did not improve the welfare of the people living in that community.

How would you rate the intervention strategies employed by Enugu state government to mitigate the problem and challenges of poverty and inequality facing the state?

Table 6: Rate of intervention strategies to mitigate the challenges in Enugu State

Category of responses	Frequency	Percentage
Fair	19	24%
Very poor	61	76%
Total	70	100%
Mean	35	
STD	29.70	

Source: Field survey, 2019

Summary of Findings on Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3

One of the major findings in hypothesis one, is that the activities of the political leaders in the act of governance are the major causes of poverty and inequality in the state. Again, the study revealed that most of the leaders are selfish and mostly think on how to enrich them first before thinking of the welfare of the masses. This creates serious gap and poor living condition among the people in Enugu state as shown in table 2.

Other challenges include: (1) Kidnapping (2) High cost of living (3) inflation (4) Lack of adequate business financing (5) Poor infrastructure (6) pervasive poverty (7) inequality (8) poor service delivery (9) ineffective anti-corruption mechanisms (Due process, ICPC, EFCC could not stop the devil) (10) General corruption in all spheres of public life due to materialistic value/poverty and (1) heightened insecurity.

Another finding in this hypothesis is the assessment of the poverty and inequality in Enugu state. The result of the assessment showed that poverty and inequality, in spite of all the government efforts to enhance the welfare of the people of Enugu state remained serious challenges to the government in Enugu state. Another finding revealed that

government often employed many intervention strategies to eliminate poverty and inequality in Enugu state, yet poverty and inequality remained threats to all the efforts of Enugu state government to better the welfare of the people of Enugu state.

In many cases, the findings in hypothesis 2 revealed that components needed for the full operation of some projects were lacking a lot in the intervention programmes. For instance, some health centres were built without the necessary facilities, equipment and personnel to provide service, lacked of the functional capacity to enhance the living condition of people in the community.

In the same vein, some communities with borehole projects complain that the installed generators did not have the capacity to power the borehole. In the final analysis, some of these projects did not meet the desired performance level in the absence of essential project components like teachers, equipment, laboratories, books, furniture, etc which need to be co-opted into intervention planning.

The major findings on hypothesis 2 as regards the extent to which the projects intervention contributed in mitigating the challenges of poverty and inequality in Enugu state. In content and practice, the projects

intervention adopted by the political leadership of Enugu State between 2007 and 2018 did not contribute significantly in eradicating the challenges of poverty and inequality in Enugu state.

The research findings revealed that disagreements, squabbles, political power play, and conflict between project officials, CPMC members and community members resulted in non-cooperation that led to the total or near failure of intervention efforts. Such internal conflicts and power play sometimes affect project location in ways that have resulted in alienation and marginalizing some parts of host communities from fully appropriating the benefits of the project. It is, therefore, important to identify and utilize genuine community representatives and administrative structure in order to ensure that intervention projects are located and managed in ways that are most beneficial to the entire community and not hijacked by a privileged few. In some other instances, a culture of illiteracy or indifference to intervention activities such as public health services among community members as reported in some of the communities studied need to be counteracted through enlightenment campaigns and mass mobilization. Otherwise their passivity may annul the benefits of such projects to the community.

Another major finding is that the intervention strategies employed by the Enugu state government to mitigate the challenges were rated very poor. Moreover another finding was that most youths members who received training in Enugu state did not get empowerment materially or otherwise. There was evidence that Enugu State government sometimes empower the youths by sharing implements like raw materials, petty materials like sewing machine or cash etc to address these challenges.. The facts remained that these implements shared to the youths were not commensurate with the number of people that received training.

Again, it was also found out in hypothesis two that Enugu state government did not have sufficient youth development centres. Equally they did not have adequate youth development centres where graduates should undergo some training to make them have ground to get job that make them to cater for their living. This is because government does not have the capacity to employ everybody.

As a result, others who may not be employed by government, government should help them to develop their skill which can help youths to be self employed to generate income and sustain themselves. Another major findings bordering on hypothesis 2 was the implication and consequences government's neglecting youths development in Enugu state, was

that the government will lack adequate manpower to replace the existing ones, it can lead to youth idleness which can result in youths indulging in all sort of vices. If government does not want to face this kind of problems and challenges in future, the government of Enugu state should endeavor to help youths to develop and become productive persons in Enugu state. Another finding on hypothesis (2) was the things that could be done to eradicate poverty and inequality in Enugu state. They include the following:

1. Adequate funding and supervision of youth development project in Enugu state.
- (2) create youth development and acquisition centres in every community in Enugu state.
- (3) Create friendly environment for youths to understand that tomorrow will be better and that they are the future leaders.
- (4) Government should develop youth's skills, award scholarship and fund them.

The findings in this hypothesis 2 revealed that a number of projects may not be sustained long after government intervention projects has ended due to management problems and other challenges that pose serious threats to the survival of such projects. The modalities for managing and maintaining some of the projects have sometimes been elusive and left to the discretion of unorganized community members. Projects sustainability need, therefore, be paramount in intervention initiatives if they will achieve the anticipated result on the community over a prolonged period of time.

The major findings on hypothesis 3 as regards the measures employed to eradicate challenges of poverty and inequality in Enugu state are recommendations identified in this study. Among other ways forward include the following: (1) sustainable economic empowerment opportunity, skill acquisition programme. (2) Mass participation and respect of human rights (3) Safety and rule of law. All these were the things which Enugu state government should do to wage war against poverty. Another finding in hypothesis 3 was what government could do in education sector for improving the quality of learning environment in Enugu state. The following were the findings for improving the quality of learning environment in Enugu state: (1) provision of sufficient modern facilities to enhance training in the school. (2) Increase budgetary allocation to education sector, raise and release training fund in time (3) provision of facilities for sanitation of the environment. (4) Building more modern schools to reduce distance to school and (5) motivation of teachers to enhance greater teaching productivity in Enugu state.

In addition to findings on hypothesis 3 was the measures to improve access to quality portable water in Enugu state which include the following: (1) provision of modern facilities to reduce water related diseases. (3) Mobility for water resources workers to reach rural areas in Enugu state (4) provision of more boreholes and revitalize old ones in rural areas.

Another finding on hypothesis 3 was the measures for combating the challenges of unemployment and inequalities in Enugu state. These measures include the following: (1) provision of agricultural development centres in all the local government areas in Enugu state (2) Giving soft loan, seedlings and fertilizer to genuine farmers. (3) Training and retraining agricultural workers and farmers. (4) Provision of modern storage facilities to avoid waste in agricultural sector.

The concluding finding on hypothesis 3 was the ways of improving the quality health care in Enugu state. The ways forward include the following: (1) Organizing more training to involve all the units in the health sector (2) provision of educational facilities at all levels in line with the health sector development plan. (3) Sharing the available health workers to ensure adequate staff at all levels in line with health sector development plan. (4) Provision of mobility for health workers to reach rural areas and rural dwellers.

Measures for improving Enugu state government project intervention performance

The measures adopted to improve the level of government project performance in Enugu state are as follow: 1 enhanced community cooperation and participation 2 improve projects funding 3 engaging more dedicated project personnel 4 enhance conducive community needs 5 and ensuring project relevance to felt community needs.

Findings

Based on the analysis data carried out by the researchers, it was discovered that:

1. Inadequate provision of essential goods and services by the political leadership is the major cause of poverty and inequalities in the state
2. The project intervention strategies employed by Enugu state government have contributed to a low extent in mitigating poverty and inequality in the state
3. Poverty and corruption are the major challenges that militated against the efforts of Enugu state government in the course of reducing poverty level in the state.

Discussion of Findings

In the table 2, it was revealed that the activities of Enugu state government are the major causes of

poverty in the state. Based on the data generated, it was crystal clear that the people of the state are not provided with adequate essential goods and services by the government to cater for their living; even payment of monthly salaries is not regular.

Table 3 revealed that the extent at which the activities of the political leaders result in poverty and inequality are large. This is based on the incessant complaint from the workers, that government owns them three to four months arrears. Though it was gathered from the respondents as shown in table 4 that the actions taken by government to mitigate the problems of poverty and inequality are high but their activities have not reached to some places at the grassroots levels.

The observation of the researcher and interview reports discussed the consolidated performance of the five projects in the communities of all the nine selected local Government Areas that benefited from the intervention projects provided by Enugu State as strategies for tackling those challenges. The performance of water projects on the various process (NO 1-5) assessment indicated that the project 1 increased access to portable water. 2. Reduced expenditures on water. 3. Reduction in water related diseases. 4. Neater appearance of people and 5. Reduction of distance to source of portable water respectively was not significant for the welfare of the people of the communities.

In other words, the average performance of the water projects in all the anticipated areas failed and was not significant. This was substantially accounted for by the very many problems associated with the water project that included failure to locate a good body of water after drilling boreholes, lack of electricity, or generating plant to power the pumps, insufficient funds to lay enough pipes to circulate the water to many parts of the communities, the unending need to keep servicing the water borehole regularly in the face of limited community resources, etc. However, a good number of the communities still benefited from the project but the associated constraints made the overall performance of the water project unable to attain the level of anticipated performance in all numbers 1-5 indicated above as well as comparatively lower than other projects.

In the area of transportation, the performance level of the project on all the various number 1-5 was above the mean score: (1), enhanced free movements of goods and services, (2) Reduced post-harvest losses of agricultural products, (3) increased access to homes, farms and markets, (4) Reduction in time taken to travel and (5) Opening up of more communities respectively.

This performance record was obviously enhanced by the fact that even where the roads were properly constructed, it still provided significant access to community members and positively improved their livelihood. Consequently, despite some project failures in some communities, the overall assessment of its performance in all the anticipated members was significant.

In the sector of rural electrification, project performance was significant in 1 increase in income generation opportunities. (2) Improvement of social life respectively project performance in other three numbers of 3 Emergency of small-scale enterprises, 4 Reduction in rural-urban migration 5, increased sense of security in communities at night.

This performance record may be related to the fact that rural electrification projects depends absolutely on power supply from sources outside the communities. Even where the infrastructural facilities have been put in place locally by Enugu State government, the epileptic power supply and low voltage from the national grid usually annul the attainment of the intended project effects.

Again, much as periodic power supply may still register improvement in the income generating opportunities and improved social life of the community, such unstable power supply can hardly encourage the emergence of small industries, restrain rural-urban migration or increase sense of security in communities at night. This accounted for the variation in their significance rating. In summary, the overall performance of the rural electrification project was marginal.

For the health sector, the related health facilities had significant performance in all anticipated numbers of 1-4. (1) increased access to primary health care, (2). Reduction of average time spent to reach a health centre, (3). Reduced distance to health facilities and (4), increased immunization of children in the communities respectively.

It was noted during the research that much as the health project required furnished and well equipped centres, the availability of a nurse or doctor and basic drugs, even in a badly completed or uncompleted building, provides sick community members with valuable healthcare services that may easily pass for good project performance.

Finally, the performance of the educational facilities was also significantly on all the numbers of (1) Increased access to conducive learning environment (2) Increased school enrolment, (3) Reduced distance to school (4) Increased sanitation and quality of environment respectively. The study noted that

educational facilities provided by government were substantially self driven with the result that input often generated the highest unit of output when compared with other infrastructural facilities.

In the final analysis, the overall assignment indicates a successful intervention. Comparatively, much as all the project interventions recorded some level of significance in the performance that they recorded the highest overall performance from the data gathered was the educational facilities, followed by transportation, health, rural electrification, and water. However, poverty and inequality remained unabated.

Looking back over the years, experience shows that where government initiates and implements development programs without substantial input (financial and otherwise) by the community, the responsibility of the community to sustain such projects is often not guaranteed, sustainable community development needs to start with beneficiary communities mustering their collective will to initiate projects that answer to their common challenges, such development projects activated by communities and supported by government and other donor agencies put the responsibility and burden on the community to sustain them long enough to enhance positively on their livelihood. Present experiences suggest that many communities look outwards (to government and other agencies) for their development, but until they begin to look inwards (community initiatives) as a starting point, community development will remain a mirage.

Apart from community initiative and commitment, the active involvement of state and local government authorities in providing enabling environment through administrative, political, financial, social and material empowerment for the pursuit of locally desirable projects is absolutely necessary. It is also important to establish structures for identifying, planning, implementing and maintaining local development initiatives. In addition, permanent structure at the local government level need to be established for engaging with communities and responding to their priority needs at the shortest possible time. Strengthening local government capacity to appreciate and respond to community needs for public goods and services will build trust in government and create increase of civic participation in community members.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study is based on the background to the study, our formulated hypothesis and findings of this study. As a result of the above scenario the study showed that the political leadership

of Enugu state displayed certain actions which resulted in poverty and inequality in the state. Again, the study indicated that though Enugu state government has many projects intervention strategies to reduce the problems of poverty and inequalities, facing Enugu state but non of the project intervention was able to see light of the day. To address the challenges and ensure good, transparent and accountable leadership, the core effort of any responsive and responsible leadership is to reform the social, political and economic order and, indeed, mobilize the population to support and enhance good governance. The long period of concentration of power in the hands of few, which gradually result in the collapse of the rule of laws, have alienated mass participation in governance and their capacity for oversight function and, this is the bases for good governance. Again, anti-corruption agencies instituted have been ineffective to curbing the menace of corruption in Nigeria.

Consequently, while majority of people of Enugu state monthly salaries hardly last a week, as the inflationary trends raises the prices of food, transportation, healthcare, ever increasing school fees, rent and rates and others, the elites in states lead opulent lifestyles. Most people in Enugu state survive on perpetual debts. Enugu state public service, from the findings of the study was facing some serious challenges in the development of human and material resources, which adversely affected the quality of service delivery in Enugu State.

Therefore, if our future leaders wish to be and remain relevant, the welfare of the people must be the focus. Hence, the question of growth and economic development must be linked to the changes in the objective condition of the people of Enugu state, and not by an impressive array of mere figures or other economic indicators.

The solution to the problems and challenges of poverty and inequality facing the political leadership can be addressed by government responding to the requirement as recommended in this study. Through positive use of measures and intervention strategies identified in the course of this study. Having painstakingly collected and articulated relevant data through interviews and observation of the researcher, official documents and direct observation of the various projects mounted by Enugu state government in the various communities in Enugu state as they related to all the issues raised above and presented in the result of the data analysis,. Sufficient evidence support the conclusions reached in the study that (1) Enugu state government are the major cause of poverty and inequality in the State. (2) Enugu State

government intervention project performance was adjudged to be significant in specific and intended sectors and generally had positive effects on the beneficiary communities. Identifiable measures were found to have exerted significant influence on the outcomes of those projects to solve the problems of poverty in Enugu State. (3) That Enugu state government development intervention efforts can be improved through the use of measures identified in the course of the study.

Recommendations

Based on our background, earlier formulated hypothesis and findings in this study, the following recommendations are packaged as a means of eradicating the problems and challenges facing the leadership in Enugu State. The recommendations include the following:

1. The agricultural sector should be revitalized to provide employment opportunities like it did in the sixties and seventies.
2. The fight against corruption should be intensified as this would reduce mismanagement and misappropriation of resources that would have been used for effective poverty and unemployment reduction.
3. There is need to have a population policy which will limit population growth to a level that is compatible with the expansion and employment generation capacity of the economy.
4. Emphasis should be laid on skill acquisition in the educational system so as to produce graduate that are providers of employment or labour than seekers of employment. Each local government should establish skill acquisition centers such that when an apprentice completes the skill acquisition he should be assisted to establish a business on his own.
5. An enabling environment should be created for private sector investment to thrive as this will go a long way in reducing unemployment instead of leaving the unemployed at the mercy of the public sector which does not provide enough employment opportunities.

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