



Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria: An Appraisal of The National Poverty Eradication Programme Policy Implementation In Rivers State, 2010 – 2020

1. UCHECHI, Emejuru

2. Dr. EGOBUEZE, Anthony Dr. DAVIES, Emmanuel Opuene

Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Rivers State University, Nkpolu – Oroworukwo, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

ABSTRACT:

The study investigated poverty alleviation in Nigeria with focus on an appraisal of the National Poverty Eradication Programme policy implementation in Rivers State, between 2010 to 2020. The recent poverty index report from the National Bureau of Statistics shows that about 82.9 million Nigerians live in extreme poverty. This figure represents 40.1 per cent of the nation's total population estimated at about 200 million. This has implication on the socioeconomic and political development of the Country. Due to the increasing rate of poverty in Nigeria, the Federal Government established the National Poverty Eradication Programme predicated on if not eradicating, but ameliorating poverty in the Country. To properly diagonalize the problematique, This study was descriptive and adopted qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. The inferential tool (Chi-square) was used to test the hypothesis. triangulation method of data. The finding revealed there were no significant impacts of the National Poverty Eradication Programme and the Poverty Reduction in Rivers State between 2010 to 2020. Consequently, the study recommended among others that the Nigerian governments at the National, State and Local government levels should have a strong political will and commitment to fight poverty. This can be achieved by providing the needed institutional strategy for checking influence of elites and bureaucratic officials in the implementation of laudable government programmes on poverty alleviation. This is necessary because sometimes the benefits to be derived from these programmes are either hijacked or truncated by the elite class.

Key Words: Alleviation, appraisal, eradication, policy, poverty, programme

Received 06 Dec., 2022; Revised 18 Dec., 2022; Accepted 20 Dec., 2022 © The author(s) 2022.

Published with open access at www.questjournals.org

I. INTRODUCTION

Policy making is a vital process of governance, and creates the room for the guarantee of order in a State. Ejieze, Osai and Egobueze (2020) opined that “policy formulation and implementation are key pillars of governance. They not only create the opportunity for the State to forecast and plan, but also provide the right directions for protecting lives and properties, which is a cardinal function of the government” (p.1). Over the years in Nigeria, excellent policies have been formulated, but the problem is that only an insignificant part of these numerous policies are implemented. This agrees with the thoughts of UkahandMaduagwuna (2017) as they opined that over the years in Nigeria, there have been robust and excellent policies formulated, however, the challenge is the ability to implement the policies holistically. However, there is no visible and significant development to show for this. Dialoke, Ukah and Maduagwuna (2017) opined that that over the years in Nigeria, there have been robust and excellent policies formulated, however, the challenge is the ability to implement the policies holistically. Thus, Atelhe and Akande (2018) contended that the implementation of public policies has been impeded in different ways in Nigeria since 1960. This suggests that mere formulation of policies should not be the major issue in Nigeria but rather their effective implementation as it is only effectively implemented policies that can bring about national development. Nigeria is besieged by many problems. These problems could be in the areas of politics, commerce, education, agriculture, communication, housing, transportation, health and other contemporary issues such as terrorism, unemployment, kidnapping, and

governments formulate policies to help eradicate these problems. Achebe (1983) believes that the problem with Nigeria is the problem of leadership. It is clear that the kind of leader that is needed in Nigeria is the type that will have the will to implement her numerous policies because political will should be the key factor to government policy formulation strategies. A leader is someone to look up to, who will guide, help, listen and teach you and who will be there in difficult and good times while not being scared of learning from anyone as well (Paton, 2020).

Policy implementation has been described as one major problem confronting Nigeria and developing countries. According to Cochran (2015) policy comprises political decisions for implementing programs to achieve societal goals. The implementation problem in developing countries is the problem of a widening gap between policy intentions and outcomes. Implementation gap manifests in the widening of the distance between stated policy goals and the realization of such planned goals. The implementation gap from policy formulation in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized as successive governments make policies that are not realizable throughout their tenure.

It is very clear from records that Nigeria over the years has initiated well-articulated developmental, economic and social policies, intended to launch the nation on the path of meaningful development. Public policy making and implementation is a very critical area that both government and non-governmental organizations are at divergent opinions in the process of making and implementing such programmes and activities. Worried by the continued rise in poverty level, successively governments in Nigeria have not relented in formulating one policy or the other in order to tame this social malaise. But, the poverty level has continued to rise. The sorry state of poverty in Nigeria has led the World Bank (1996) to describe Nigeria as a paradox. This is because Nigeria is a country of immense wealth endowed with human and material resources, yet her citizens continue to wallow in abject poverty. To this end, government and people in authority almost always strive to ensure that adequate structural programs are enshrined to see that poverty if not eradicated, is reduced to the barest minimum. National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) with Seven-point agenda by various governments in the country in order to curb the menace of poverty. Therefore, given this background analysis, the study critically examines the factors militating against achieving effective public policy making and implementation in Nigeria, and how this can translate into a remarkable reduction in Nigeria's poverty profile through policy formulation and implementation.

II. AIM AND OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The study aimed at investigating public policy making and implementation in Nigeria, with focus on the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in Rivers State from 2010 to 2020. The objective therefore was to examine the impacts of the implementation of the National Poverty Reduction Programme in Rivers State between 2010 to 2020.

RESEARCH QUESTION

1. What were the impacts of the National Poverty Eradication Programme and the Poverty reduction in Rivers State between 2010 to 2020?

HYPOTHESIS

1. There was no significant impact of the National Poverty Eradication Programme and Poverty reduction in Rivers State between 2010 to 2020.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Evaluative Theory

This theory was propounded by Suchman in 1967. According to the theory, the Process is represented in a cyclical form with the end of one process constituting the beginning of another. Suchman (1967) aims at assessing the successful attainment of a valued objective. Evaluation process starts with value formation. Value is any aspect of a situation, event or object that is invested with a preferential interest of being good or bad, desirable or the like. The second stage of the process is goal setting. Here Suchman, (1967):

Opines that the objectives to be achieved are formulated based on the value formation. The third step in the process is measuring goal attainment. That is identifying criteria for measuring goal attainment. The next step in the process is the identification of some goal- attainment activities. This involves the Planning of programmes that would be geared towards goal- attainment. The forth is putting the goal activities into operation, in other words implementing the Planned Programme. Suchman calls the final stage of the evaluation process, the programme evaluation. At this stage, the degree to which the operating programme has achieved the pre-determined objectives is evaluated. On the basis of the assessment, a judgment is made as to whether the goal-directed activity (program) is worth-while. Based on this, a new value could be formulated, or the old one

re-designed, reassessed or re-affirmed. Thus, the evaluation process is a continuous one, the end of a process leads to the beginning of another one. (p.28).

In the light of the above, Evaluation research is conducted in terms of varying levels of objectives and different categories of effects. The categories represent various criteria of success or failure according to which the programme may be evaluated. They may be applied to any level of objective. Though it does not give key answers, it can be valuable. At least it indicates that something is being done in an attempt to meet or solve a problem and it as well defines the type of measure to be used in judging activity. Suchman proposed five categories of criteria according to which the success or failure of a programme may be evaluated. They include, effect, performance, adequacy of performance, efficiency, and process. These criteria were further discussed below:

1. **Effort:** Evaluation in this category has the criterion to assess the quality and quantity of activities that takes place. This represents an assessment of inputs or energy regardless of outputs. It is intended to answer the questions "what did you do?" and "how did you do it." Yardstick for measurement in this category are based either on the capacity for efforts itself. Effort evaluation assumes that the specific activities are a valid means of reaching higher goals. Although effort evaluation does not give key answers, it can be valuable. At least, it indicates that something is being done in an attempt to meet or solve a problem. This is necessary, if not sufficient condition for accomplishment.

2. **Performance:** Performance of effect criterion measures the result of effort rather than the effort itself. This requires a clear statement of objectives to be achieved. It is aimed at answering questions like, "how much is accomplished. Did any change occur? Was the change the intended one?" To him, the ultimate justification of a program must rest on the proof of its effectiveness in alleviating the problem being addressed. This as well depends on its validity and reliability. He further recognized some key validity assumptions involved in most evaluation of performance. The fact that a large number of people are reported as receiving services does not ensure that all of these services were given properly were truly complete. Thus, the problem of reliability is also extremely important in performance rating or standard and must be taken into consideration.

3. **Adequacy of Performance:** This criterion of success refers to the degree to which effective performance is adequate to the total amount of need. For example, a poverty reduction programme specifically designed for a group of rural poor might be thoroughly inadequate as a public measure. Adequacy is therefore a relative measure depending on how high an objective is set. In continuation Suchman (1967), argues that the criterion of adequacy needs to be compared by a realistic awareness of what is possible at any given state of knowledge and available resources. There is a tendency in service programme to think in terms of total effectiveness. Much or less ambitious ultimate goals must be set in general for judging adequacy.

4. **Efficiency:** A positive answer to the question, "does it work?" is "is there any better way to attain the same results?" Often gives rise to a follow-up question, "is there any better way to attain the same results?" Efficiency is concerned with the evaluation of alternative paths or methods in terms of costs in money, time, personnel and public convenience. In a sense, it represents a ratio between effort and performance- output divided by inputs. As defined in glossary of administration terms in public health, efficiency is the capacity of an individual, organization, facility, operation, or activity to produce results in proportion to the efforts expended.

5. **Process:** According to Suchman (1967), in the course of evaluating the success or failure of a programme, a great deal can be learned about and why a programme works or does not work. An analysis of process can have both administrative and scientific significance, particularly where the evaluation indicates that a programme is not working as expected. Locating the cause of the failure may result in modifying the programme so that it will work, instead of its being discarded as a complete failure. The analysis of the process may be made according to four main dimensions dealing with; the attributes of a programme itself, the population exposed to the programme, the situational context within which the programme takes place and the different kinds of effects produced by the programme. Furthermore, these analyses could be viewed in terms of the following specification of each of the dimension:

1: Specification of the attributes of the programme that makes it more or less successful: This type of evaluation attempts to diagnose specific causes of success or failure within the programme itself. It requires a breakdown of the component parts of the programme and the identification of those aspects which contribute to or detract from the overall effects of the programme.

2: Specification of the recipient of the programme who are more or less affected: It raises the question of, which people are most affected by the programme? Who makes the best target population for a programme? Is it the individual, group or the public? Is it an end in itself or as influenced by others?

3: Specification of the conditions under which the programme is more or less successful: This could be in terms of area, timing, auspicious and so on.

4: Specification of the effects produced by the programme: The question is what aspect of the final results should be used as criteria of judgement? For example, effect could be broken down in the following ways;

- a. Unitary or multiple effects
- b. Unintentional or side effect
- c. Duration of effect
- d. Types of effect, (cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral).

Answers to these questions provide the background against which the accomplishment of a project may be evaluated. Such man however, opined that the number and extent to which these specifications are included in an assessment study depends on the statement of objectives, the research resources available and administrative support.

Public policy making and implementation is the action side of the government. It provides the operational area of function in carrying out public policy declared by competent authority. Mbieli (2006) explains that, in the execution of public policy, the combination of human, material, machine and money are highly necessary. He argues further that the agencies involved in the implementation exercise are classified into two broad categories namely: the government and the non-governmental agencies. These agencies are responsible for providing the required goods and services and developing the people. Mahamadu A. (2008), contends that policy implementation is critical to the success of any policy since it constitutes the epicenter of the policy process. It involves the identification of policy plans, programme, projects and activities; a clear definition of the distinct roles of implementation organizations or agencies; details of strategies and necessary linkages and coordinating mechanisms; as well as resources (human, financial, material, technology, information acquisition and utilization). Efficient and effective policy implementation would require inputs of sound managerial and administrative capabilities in terms of proper activity scheduling, resource mobilization and rationalization, network analysis, budgeting, supervision, problem-solving, decision making and cost/benefit analysis. Hence, poverty has persisted and has become a clog to socio-economic development in Nigeria. The International Food Policy Research Institute (2010) in discussing poverty levels in Nigeria from 1980 to 2004 notes that based on available data, it is estimated that approximately 69 million (or 54.4%) Nigerians lived in poverty in 2004, an increase of more than 24% since 1980. The report further explains that Nigeria's national poverty profile shows that the incidence of poverty has generally been on the rise since 1980, with two significant dips during 1985–1992 and 1996–2004. The national poverty incidence was 65.6% in 1996 and declined to 54.4% in 2004. The predominance of rural over urban poverty has been consistent during 1996–2004. In 1996, about 70% of rural households were poor, as compared with 58% of the urban households. In 2004, the incidence of urban poverty declined more rapidly than rural poverty, with 64% of rural households being poor (a 6% decrease), while urban poverty decreased by 15% – 43%. The same study indicated that poverty incidence, debt and severity were higher in all three northern regions. In a similar report, the National Bureau of Statistics (2012), cited in Ajulor (2013:239), observed that the 17 million people who were reported poor in 1980 had risen to 112 million in 2010. There was an increase in poverty level to 69.0%, with 73.2% rural poverty compared with an urban poverty level of 61.8% in 2010. Today the story is not much different, as greater numbers of Nigerians are classified as poor. The United Nations Development Programme estimated the proportion of Nigerians living in absolute poverty as at 2015 to be 62.6% of its population, while the Human Development Index was put at 0.514 and ranked 152 out of 188 countries (National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (2016). This necessitated the formation of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) to curb the effect of poverty on Nigerians.

IV. AN APPRAISAL OF NATIONAL POVERTY ERADICATION PROGRAMME, (NAPEP) AND POVERTY ERADICATION IN RIVERS STATE

National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) is an agency for poverty reduction in Nigeria. The programme was established in 2001 to address the challenges of poverty. NAPEP's mandate is to mobilize resources from all the tiers of the government and throughout the economy. For economic empowerment, resources generated are to support economic activities at the grassroots thereby promoting the wellbeing of the people and ensuring sustainability. It is also to enable the poor contribute their quota to the economic development process. In 1999, the federal government observed that poverty was on the increase in Nigeria despite the large number of ongoing efforts and programmes to fight poverty. Although past regimes in Nigeria have attempted to tackle poverty through the creation of institutions and agencies such as Nigeria Agricultural Cooperative Banks (NACB), People's Bank, Family Economic Advancement Programmes (FEAP), Universal

Basic Education (UBE), Family Support Programme (FSP), etc. However, the impact of these programmes on alleviating poverty has been contentious as the desired results of these programmes are not achieved. With the return of democracy in 1999 the federal government embarked on poverty reduction programme specifically, the government put up the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in the year 2000 which took off in 2001. Functions of National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme: (1) To coordinate all poverty eradication efforts in the federation. (2) To monitor all poverty eradication activities of the federal government. (3) To maintain a comprehensive and detailed data bank on all activities aimed at carrying out an assessment of all efforts meant to eradicate poverty in Nigeria and suggest the necessary reviews and policies required to enhance effectiveness. (4) To directly intervene in key sectors of critical needs periodically by implementing sealed key priority projects. National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme maintains four (4) departments as follows: a. Administration and Supplies b. Monitoring and Evaluation c. Research and Programme Development d. Finance and Accounts.

The National Poverty Eradication Programme, (NAPEP), came into existence in 2001 and was designed to centrally coordinate all anti-poverty efforts from the local government through the state to the national levels. The failure of various other efforts by the Federal Government to significantly reduce the poverty index in Nigeria, even as was envisaged by the Millennium Development Goals targets, prompted the coming on board of National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme. National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme was to involve all stakeholders in poverty eradication in Nigeria namely the federal, state and local governments, civil society organizations, research institutions, the organized private sector, women groups, and concerned individuals. The National Poverty Eradication Programme Council (NAPEC) is the apex body for the formulation of policies on poverty reduction in the country while NAPEP does the actual policy implementation. Nweke, E. (2006), argues that as a federal government sponsored project, National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme was to be subsequently launched in various states of the federation. As a result, Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES) that aimed at capacity enhancement through provision of job training opportunities to graduates and school leavers was implemented nationally, among other numerous programmes of the National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme, established in 2001. It recorded various degrees of achievements in training the unemployed generally. As earlier stated, the rationale behind the conception and eventual establishment of the National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme stemmed from the failure of the successive colonial and post-colonial poverty alleviation programmes to achieve the set targets. The National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme was, therefore, established in 2001 by the Obasanjo civilian administration, as a corrective alternative poverty alleviation programme which was aimed essentially at enhancing the living conditions of the Nigerian populace, including especially the poor and unemployed. Furthermore, National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme was equally aimed at addressing the aspects of absolute poverty in the country and to eradicate them. Essentially, the mandate is to monitor and coordinate all poverty eradication efforts. In order to ensure effective poverty eradication, the government arranged National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme into four schemes. These are;

- a. Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES). This deals with capacity acquisition, mandatory attachment, productivity improvement, credit delivery, technology development and enterprise promotion.
- b. Rural Infrastructure Scheme (RDS). This has to do with the provision of portable and irrigation water, transport (rural and urban), rural energy and power supply.
- c. Social Welfare Services Scheme (SOWESS). The SOWESS deals with intervention in special education, primary health care services, establishment and maintenance of recreational centres, public awareness facilities, youth and students' hostels, development, environmental protection facilities, food security, provision of agricultural inputs, provision of micro-and macro-credit delivery, rural telecommunication facilities, provision of mass transit and maintenance culture.
- d. National Resources Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDCS). This deals with the harnessing of agriculture, water, solid mineral resources, conservation of land and space particularly for the convenient and effective utilization by small scale operators and the immediate community.

All these policies were applied in Rivers State yet the State still relics with abject poverty, even amidst affluence occasioned by the petro-dollar economy. The State is blessed with abundance of resources, especially petroleum which could be classified as the 'black gold'. Indeed, most inhabitants of Rivers State live on less than \$1. This has led to a lot of criminality in the State like kidnapping for ransom, oil pipeline vandalism, artisanal refinery to name but a few. From the above therefore, it must be stated that one of the greatest problems facing Rivers State in particular and the Nigeria state is how to combat the highly elusive poverty problem. This appears more critical as all prescriptions so far have only either scratched the surface or paid lip service to it. This trend has continued despite the fact that Nigeria has one of the world's highest economic growth rates, averaging 7.4% over the last decade, a well-developed economy and plenty of natural resources. There have been government attempts at poverty alleviation and reduction of which the Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) and its successor, the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), are the most recent

ones. The rationale behind the conception and eventual establishment of the National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme stemmed from the failure of the successive colonial and post-colonial poverty alleviation programmes to achieve the targets.

The Obasanjo civilian administration, saw National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme as a corrective and alternative poverty alleviation programme, which was aimed essentially at enhancing the living conditions of the Nigeria populace, especially the poor and unemployed. Iwuoha and Obi, (2012). Contend that the stakeholders recognize that certain fundamental reasons were responsible for the inadequacy of anti-poverty measures over the years, which include inadequate involvement of stakeholders, poor management and implementation arrangements among others. The mandate of National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme is to monitor and coordinate all poverty eradication efforts in order to harmonize and ensure better delivery, maximum impact, and effective utilization of available resources. In order to ensure effective poverty eradication, the government arranged NAPEP into four schemes, namely Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme (RDS), Social Welfare Service Scheme (SOWESS), and National Resources Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDCS). With the take-off grant of N6 billion approved for it in 2001, National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme established structures at all levels of nationwide. A recent study (2011) revealed that National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme has trained 100,000 unemployed youths under its capacity acquisition programmes and 5,000 others received training as tailors and fashion designers. Again 50,000 unemployed graduates have also benefited from NAPEP's mandatory attachment programme, MAP.

Oyemomi, (2003) contends that despite the various efforts of government from independence to date, poverty has been on the increase. Nigeria's proportion of the poor has doubled over the last two decades, during which time the country received \$3,000billion in oil and gas revenue. Tersoo (2013), in his study of National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme and wealth creation in Benue state, opines that it is indeed a paradox of poor people in rich country, in other words "poverty in the midst of plenty". He went on to say that statistical data available indicate that by 1960 the poverty level in Nigeria covered about 15% of the population and by 1980 it rose to 28%. In 1985, the poverty level was 46% and it dropped to 43% by 1992. By 1996, the Federal Office of Statistics estimated poverty level in Nigeria at about 66%. Capacity building activity is often meant to train beneficiaries in the various skills and trades. Upon completion beneficiaries will be assisted with start-up capital in form of loans or credits to start micro-businesses of their own. Tersoo's work revealed that just 6.7% of the respondents have actually benefitted from the micro-credit strategy of National Poverty Eradication (NAPEP) Programme, which therefore suggests that a weakness exists in this strategy as beneficiaries are not properly empowered to start entrepreneurial activities that will create income streams and wealth.

V. METHODOLOGY

This study is descriptive and adopted qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection.

The inferential tool (Chi-square) was used to test the hypothesis. The purpose of using Chi-square test was to compare observed results with expected results. In other words, the test was to determine the interdependence of two or more variables or the relationship between the variables studied. The study therefore, examined if there is a relationship between poverty in Rivers State and the failure of National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in Nigeria in the period under review.

Eight Local Governments Areas of Rivers State were randomly selected from the three senatorial zones in the state. They are: Obio/Akpor, Ikwerre, Okrika, Ahoada East, Abua/Oduah, Gokana, Khana and Etche as shown below:

Table 1: The population of the selected Eight (8) Local Government Areas of Rivers State

S/N	Name of LGA	Population
1	Obio/Akpor	649,600
2	Ikwerre	265,400
3	Okrika	312,300
4	Ahoada East	233,700
5	Abua/Oduah	396,800
6	Gokana	328,500
7	Khana	411,500
8	Etche	351,200

Source: National Population Commission of Nigeria (Web)
National Bureau of Statistics (Web)

The population of study will be frame as Six Million, which is the projected population of Rivers State. To obtain the sample size of the population, the study employed the Taro Yamane formula as a sampling technique. Taro Yamane formula employed here used 5% level of precision which gives 400 sample heads.

The main instrument used for data collection was structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was split into two sections. Section A was designed to elicit vital demographic information from the respondents. Section B focuses on specific and related issues of National Poverty Alleviation Programme (NAPEP).

VI. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, DISCUSSIONS AND FINDINGS

What are the impact of the National Poverty Eradication Programme and the poverty reduction in Rivers State between 2010 to 2020.

Table 2: Women, Youth and Farmers benefitted from the financial services of NAPEP between 2010 to 2020 in Rivers State.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage of Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Frequency
Strongly Disagree	70	24	24	24
Disagree	124	43	43	67
Agree	56	19	19	86
Strongly Agree	40	14	14	100
Total	290	100	100	

Source: Field survey 2021

From the field survey above, 96 respondents representing 33% of the 290 respondents agreed that women, youths and farmers benefitted from the financial services of NAPEP in Rivers State between 2010 to 2020, while 194 respondents disagreed, representing 67% of the respondents. This table shows that greater percentage 67% did not benefit from the NAPEP financial services in Rivers State. It implies that the NAPEP financial services in Rivers State were not noticed among the classes of people mentioned above.

Table 3: The introduction of NAPEP in Rivers State between 2010 to 2020 boosted the economy in areas of agriculture, employment, financial services, mass transportation, healthcare and water.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage of Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Frequency
Strongly Disagree	72	25	25	25
Disagree	140	48	48	73
Agree	52	18	18	91
Strongly Agree	26	9	9	100
Total	290	100	100	

Source: Field survey 2021

The above table shows that 212 respondents representing 73% disagreed that introduction of NAPEP in Rivers State boosted the economy of the state, while 78 respondents, representing 27% of the responses agreed that introduction of NAPEP boosted the economy of the state within the period under review. There is no agreement that NAPEP boosted the economy of River State in areas of Agriculture, Financial Services, Mass Transportation, Health and Water. The result of the data generated on the table agreed with the argument.

Table 4: The call for youths to go back to agriculture by Rivers State Government is a way of employment creation, using NAPEP Scheme of Wealth Creation and Employment between 2010 to 2020.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage of Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Frequency
Strongly Disagree	76	26	26	26
Disagree	130	45	45	71
Agree	54	19	19	90
Strongly Agree	30	10	10	100
Total	290	100	100	

Source: Field survey 2021

From the table above, 206 respondents disagreed that the call for youths to go back to agriculture by Rivers State government was a way of employment creation, using NAPEP scheme of wealth creation and employment. This number represents 71%, while 84 agreed that it was true, representing 29% of the total responses gathered. The call to go back to agriculture had been in existence before NAPEP programme in Rivers State.

Table 5: As a woman, youth or farmer, your economic wellbeing was improved by the introduction of NAPEP between 2010 to 2020 in Rivers State.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage of Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Frequency
Strongly Disagree	64	22	22	22
Disagree	144	50	50	72
Agree	50	17	17	89
Strongly Agree	32	11	11	100
Total	290	100	100	

Source: Field survey 2021

From the table above, 208 respondents disagreed that their wellbeing improved by the introduction of NAPEP between 2010 to 2020 in Rivers State. This number represents 72% of the total responses, while 82 respondents agreed that their wellbeing was improved by the introduction of NAPEP programme, representing 28% of all the responses. Again, majority of respondents did not benefit from the NAPEP programme in Rivers State

Table 6: Which of the NAPEP programmes was available in Rivers State within 2010 to 2020.

Programmes	Frequency of Availability	Percentage of Availability	Frequency of Non Availability	Percentage of Non Availability	Valid Percentage
Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES)	95	33	195	67	(33+67)100
Capacity Acquisition Programme (CAP)	105	36	185	64	(36+64)100
Community Enlightenment & Sensitization Scheme (COMESS)	68	23	222	77	(23+77)100
Social Welfare Service Scheme (SWSC)	68	29	105	71	(29+71)100
Rural Infrastructural Development Scheme (RIDS)	69	24	221	76	(24+76)100
Mandatory Attachment Programme (MAP)	71	24	219	76	(24+76)100
Farmers Empowerment Programme (FEP)	76	26	214	74	(26+74)100
General Micro Credit (GMC)	86	30	204	70	(30+70)100
Keke NAPEP	148	51	142	49	(51+49)100
Village Economic Development Programme (VEDP)	68	23	222	77	(23+77)100

Source: Field survey 2021

The table showed the number of NAPEP programmes that were available in Rivers State between 2010 to 2020 and the responses. On this table, 290 respondents showed their levels of awareness to each programme of NAPEP in the State. From the table, Youths Empowerment Scheme (Yes) by NAPEP revealed that 95 out of 290 respondents indicated knowledge of the programme, showing 33% while 195 indicated that they were not aware of the programme, representing 67%. This indicates that many of the youths of the State were not aware of the availability of the scheme between 2010 to 2020.

For the Capacity Acquisition programme (CAP), 105 of the respondents representing 36% answered yes that they are aware of the programmes while 185 of the respondents representing 64% said they are not aware of the existence.

From the table, Community Enlightenment and Sensitization Scheme (COMESS), Social Welfare Scheme (SWSC), Rural infrastructure Development Scheme (RIDS), Mandatory Attachment Programme (MAP), Farmers Empowerment Programme (FEP) and Village Economic Development Programme (VEDP) had poor knowledge of awareness among the Youths, Women and Unemployed people of Rivers State.

From the table also, KEKE NAPEP, General Micro Credit (GMC) had over 50% of the respondents agreeing they were aware of the programme, it means most of the NAPEP programmes in Rivers State were not known to the people that were supposed to benefit from them. The programmes known to the people are General Micro Credit (GMC) which has 160 respondents agreeing it was available, representing 55% as against 45% saying it was not available. From the analysis, the major programmes of NAPEP available is KEKE NAPEP with 158 respondents agreeing to its availability representing 51%. General Micro Credit is also known in Rivers State, 30% of the respondents said they are aware of the availability in the State. The summary is that the beneficiaries of NAPEP programmes or activities in Rivers State were very few as shown on table 24 above.

Test of Hypothesis

H₀: There are no impacts of the National Poverty Eradication Programme and the Poverty Reduction in Rivers State between 2010 to 2020.

H₁: There are impacts of the National Poverty Eradication Programme and the Poverty Reduction in Rivers State between 2010 to 2020.

The researcher also generated table I for the Expected Values (E)

Using the Chi-Square formula:

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

Assumed level of significant, $\alpha = 5\%$ or 0.05

Table Chi-Square $X^2_{df=9} = 16.92$

Calculated $X^2 = 6.56$

1a. The Rule, Accept Null Hypothesis (H₀) if Calculated Chi-Square is less than Table Chi-Square $X^2 < X^2_{df=9}$

b. Reject otherwise

Therefore, the researcher accepted the H₀ because there were no impacts of the National Poverty Eradication Programme and the Poverty Reduction in Rivers State between 2010 to 2020.

Research question was also analyzed using responses derived from table 2 - 6. Again, the responses confirmed that National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in Rivers State had no impact on poverty reduction in the State. Most of National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) schemes were not available in Rivers State and the few that were available were not accessible by the target beneficiaries.

The hypotheses tested agreed with the responses from the questionnaire distributed, using Chi-Square statistical tool. The chapter therefore concluded that National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) policy in Rivers State between 2010 to 2020 was a failure.

VII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this study, it is evident that policies being formulated in this country do not address the needs and aspirations of the masses. Policies need to be properly formulated and must as well be properly monitored so as to avoid failures". This is because the failure of public policies, to a large extent, is a failure of government and governance. It is therefore pertinent to suggest that until public policies are implemented to achieve the desired goals for which it was formulated, the general aspiration for Nigeria to join the league of developed nations in 2020 will be unattainable. This calls for a change of attitude on the part of policy makers, implementers and the general public. The study therefore, concludes that to re-address the poverty situation in the Rivers State, there is need to involve the poor masses in policy making formulation and execution and to see them as partners in development rather than nuisance.

The study recommends the following:

1. The Nigerian governments at the national, state and local government levels should have a strong political will and commitment. This is by providing the needed institutional strategy for checking influence of elites and bureaucratic officials in the implementation of laudable government programmes on poverty alleviation. This is necessary because sometimes the benefits to be derived from these programmes are either hijacked or truncated by the elite class.
2. There is need to strengthen the capacity of NAPEP through improved budgetary allocations. Other stakeholders, Federal, State, Local and institutions concerned with poverty reduction should increase concern so that other objectives/projects identified by the agency can be addressed.
3. Government should make laws that will prescribe punitive measures and show willingness and readiness to punish those specialized in the act of sabotaging governments' efforts at addressing the problems of poverty in the country this will serve as a deterrent to intending saboteurs.
4. There is further need to sustain poverty reduction strategies, especially in the provision of employment. Other skills acquisition opportunities should be provided to engage the trainees on jobs. Funds should also be made available to enable trainees set up small and medium scale businesses.

References

- [1]. Achebe, C. (1983). *The Trouble with Nigeria*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishing Company.
- [2]. Atelhe, G. A., & Akande, B.A. (2018). The challenges of implementing public policies in Nigeria: Strategies for effective development in the educational sector. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 23(6),1-5.
- [3]. Cochran C. I. (2015). *Public Policy Perspectives and Choices*, Third Edition, USA Lynne Rienner Publishers 1800 30th Street.
- [4]. Dialoke, I., Ukah, F.O., & Maduagwuna, I.V. (2017). Policy formulation and implementation gap in Nigeria: The bane of underdevelopment. *International Journal of Capacity Building in Education and Management*, 6(3),2.
- [5]. Ejiezie, C.G., Osai, J., & Egobueze, A. (2020). Policy formulation and implementation in Nigeria: A study of the amnesty

- programme in the Niger Delta, 2009 -2019. IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (IOSR-JHSS), 25(3) 01-09.
- [6]. Ijje, B. A. (2018, October). Policy development and implementation in Nigeria federal system. International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, 170-191.
- [7]. Mahamadu A. (2008). An assessment of National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) on Women in Zaria Local Government (1999 - 2007). An Unpublished M.Sc Thesis, Postgraduate School, A. B. U. Zaria.
- [8]. National Bureau of Statistics, (2012). Human poverty profile in Nigeria, Abuja Federal Government Publication.
- [9]. Nweke, E. (2006). Public Policy Analysis: A Strategic Approach. Enugu: John Jacobs Publishers.
- [10]. Oyemomi, E. O. (2003). Poverty Eradication of the Federal Government: Roles of States, Local Governments and NGOs. A paper presented at National Workshop on International Currency Reform and Economic Management for Sustaining Profitability Under 2003 Monetary Policy for Sustainable Development Abuja, Merit House.
- [11]. Patton, J., L. (2020). The many definitions of leadership. Retrieved
- [12]. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kevinkruse/2013/04/09/what-is-leadership>
- [13]. Suchman, E. A. (1967). Evaluative Research. New York: Russell Sage Foundation