



## POLICY INTEGRATION AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR POVERTY ERADICATION IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA.

**Todowede, Babatunde Joel**

**Bursary Department, Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos, Nigeria**

### **Abstract**

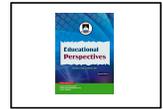
An overview of capacity building and policy integration pertaining to the eradication of poverty in Lagos State, Nigeria, is provided in this paper. The introduction of the paper provides background information on poverty in Lagos State and highlights a number of significant issues, such as economic inequality and access to basic utilities. The subsequent part of the paper provides a summary of government policy initiatives aimed at reducing poverty in Lagos State, including the creation of the Poverty Eradication Fund. The paper then presents an analysis of capacity development initiatives for poverty eradication in Lagos State, including the introduction of the Social Change and Capacity Building Program. Finally, the paper suggests a number of recommendations for improving policy integration and capacity development for poverty eradication in Lagos State. The paper concludes by highlighting the importance of strengthening government policy integration and capacity development for poverty eradication in the state.

### **Keywords:**

Capacity development, Policy, Policy integration, Poverty, Poverty eradication fund.

**Word count:** 149

**Corresponding Author Email:**  
todowedebabatunde@gmail.com



## Introduction

The research on how to successfully formulate and implement integrated policies has placed a greater emphasis on capacity development than previously on the components of policy designs and particular qualities that governmental institutions and processes should engage in. This is because there is now a normative call for better cross-sectoral measure coherence, improved consistency of policy instruments, and increased cooperation between governmental institutions and processes (Ikelegbe, 1996). The need for stronger cross-sectoral measure coherence, more consistent policy tools, and improved collaboration amongst all parties involved in policy formulation and implementation led to the concept of policy integration. Given its importance, it is appropriate that the first Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), which seeks to abolish all forms of poverty by 2030, has this as its target. Poverty is a diverse and complicated phenomenon that serves as one of the key barriers to growth (Ogwumike, 2002).

Ijaiya (2015) opines that poverty is a condition in which people lack access to basic necessities and the resources to raise their standard of living. Around 80% of the population also resides in rural areas with limited access to social services and infrastructure (Onoja, 2007).

The elimination of poverty among the population has come under increased focus everywhere, particularly in modern Sub-Saharan African nations (Onwe, 2015). These problems have started to recur, which has had an impact on the socioeconomic progress of people on all continents. Experts in the field of human development are making several efforts to understand the types and characteristics of poverty among the global populous, irrespective of color, creed, race, and culture (Umar, Mohamed, & Ratnaria, 2016). In order to determine the geographical, cultural, and economic factors that contributed to the expansion of poverty, it is necessary to develop accurate and comprehensive data collection indicators (Ugumanim, Felix, & Maurine, 2014). Recent efforts in Nigeria to eradicate poverty have included, but are not limited to, the development of agencies that are tasked by law with implementing initiatives and programs that reduce poverty throughout the country. In order to minimize the detrimental effects of poverty in Nigeria, the civilian Obasanjo government created the Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) in 2000. In the end, the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) took over from PAP, which had been phased out since 2001 (Ajulor, 20018).

A number of different strategies are used by NAPEP to eradicate poverty, including the Capacity Acquisition Programme (CAP), which places a focus on developing self-reliance and acquiring skills (Ojo, 2014). The National Social Safety Nets (NSSN), which also consists of organizations like N-Power and the National Directorate for Employment (NDE), make up this (Taiwo, 2016). It is imperative to emphasize the monitoring and evaluation of these wonderful initiatives as well as efficient routine data collection on the demographics of the poor, their geographic distribution, and their unique characteristics in order to define the state-specific approach to eradicating poverty. This will help to ensure that the results and effects of the projects and programs are routinely assessed for better and more targeted participation (Sulaiman, Migiri, & Akuko, 2014).

In order to evaluate the state's strategy and responses for reducing poverty as well as the distribution, density, and other socioeconomic factors that contribute to the existence of poverty at the community and household levels, the Lagos State Government periodically conducts the Poverty Headcount Survey in the Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget (MEPB) through the Lagos Bureau of Statistics (LBS, 2020). The indicators of poverty contained therein were



created using data on household spending and related sources. An opportunity to gather thorough data and information on demographic traits, education, health, infrastructure, income and expenditure, economic activity, housing conditions, access to social amenities, asset ownership, violence, crime, and safety, as well as other issues relating to the welfare of the populace, is always presented by a household- or community-based survey. It is also intended to offer a set of indicators to policymakers, planners, program managers, and researchers for monitoring and evaluating the welfare and poverty status of residents along the Local Government Line in an effort to re-energize the state's intervention strategy to eradicate poverty throughout the state (LBS, 2020).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Poverty persists in Lagos State and throughout Nigeria, despite the extensive programs implemented to alleviate it. It is important to say that many of these programs do not receive the correct execution due to the country's poor policy-making process, according to Ajulor (2015). Policy formulation is an essential process, and if anything is missed at this point, there is a risk that the policies won't be put into action. In Nigeria, government policies are usually not carried out because the programs lack funds. Think about the Ministry of Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation (WAPA), which was established expressly to fight poverty in the nation (Dede & Ayo, 2012). The previous President Olusegun Obasanjo's administration established WAPA in 1999 with the intention of enhancing economic empowerment and elevating living standards through self-sustainability programs. It is hardly surprising that the WAPA portfolio includes both women's problems and poverty alleviation. For instance, a substantial body of data shows that Nigerian women have bigger economic disadvantages than their male counterparts (Kpelai, 2013). Dede & Ayo (2012, maintained that this gingered direct policy on poverty interventions by the Lagos State government (LASG) under WAPA's canopy interface programs with women, youth, and children beneficiaries. It is against the background of this sector that little or no financial provision has been made for implementation after policy formulation (Dede & Ayo, 2012).

The previous administration of Buhari took office on May 29th, 2015, and immediately set out to eradicate extreme poverty in the nation by hiring 500,000 young graduates (Kehinde, 2017). At the time when policies were being developed, the appropriate goal of reducing poverty was set, but both human and financial resources were not taken into account. Transparency is a crucial problem that should be taken into consideration when formulating policies for programs aimed at reducing poverty. Dele & Ayo (2012, averred that the government makes policies on poverty alleviation that are not visible to the generality of the people; these have caused many policy alleviation programs under the WAPA portfolio to be abandoned. Another problem was that areas of focus where poverty is clearly visible were not visited, and thorough data analysis was not taken into account to know the population of the poor and rich in Lagos. According to Ajulor (2013, many of the poor people were not carried along when making the policy to know the measure of poverty within them. Again, the lack of performance benchmarks before the policy on eradicating poverty may have made it easier to keep the program's objective in perspective.

Lagos's extreme poverty was to be reduced through policy, but performance criteria setting was not considered (Fapohunda, 2012). For instance, if a program to reduce poverty is created, it must have a vision that, by a certain year, the rate of poverty will have dramatically decreased,



and it must take steps to accomplish the stated goal. Worryingly, the majority of the policies being processed have not taken these factors into account, which has cast doubt on measures addressing poverty. Changes in administration were not foreseen when poverty reduction policies were being developed. A provision allowing the program to continue after the present administration ends ought to be included. This is one of the reasons why many laws and regulations that are essential to the daily lives of the poor have been abandoned (NBS, 2016). Furthermore, the long-term effects of currency devaluation on the nation were not considered. Many of these projects have been terminated since the budget allotted for alleviation initiatives can no longer be sustained due to the current recession in Nigeria (NBS, 2017).

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study's primary goal is to evaluate the impact of Lagos State's policy integration, capacity building, and poverty eradication programs with reference to NAPEP and WAPA. The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To determine the major relationship between capacity development, integration of policy, and the eradication of poverty in Lagos State.
2. To evaluate if economic disparities in capacity development and policy integration have an impact on programs to eradicate poverty with reference to NAPEP and WAPA
3. Prior to developing a program to fight poverty, evaluating the degree to which a lack of access to basic amenities was expected with reference to NAPEP and WAPA

### **Poverty in Lagos State**

Because poverty is diverse and multidimensional, researchers have viewed it in a variety of ways. Therefore, this paper will evaluate a few of the definitions. Salifu (2010) defined poverty as the inability to provide fundamental needs for a respectable standard of living; people are typically categorized as being poor when they lack the resources to provide for their fundamental needs. It is quite challenging to break out of the poverty cycle. It went on to suggest that the fact that impoverished families have a high tendency to stay poor bolstered their case. They have a low income, a high risk of illness, restricted access to improved education and healthcare, and low levels of information and education. Salisu (2010, maintained that the cruel legacy of poverty is passed on from parents to children and from generations to generations.

To understand the severity of poverty in the research area, the poverty rate in Lagos State was assessed. 9% of Lagos residents are illiterate, and 2% of preschool, primary, and secondary school-aged children are not enrolled in school, according to the Lagos Bureau of Statistics (LBS, 2016). However, the unemployment rate in Lagos is 15%, while it is 16%, 14%, and 15% in the senatorial districts of Lagos West, Lagos Central, and Lagos East, respectively. The report also indicates that, given the same senatorial distribution, 8%, 11%, and 9% of household heads are unable to provide necessities to the members of their families in terms of food, clothing, and shelter, respectively. 10% of Lagos people live in incomplete or partially constructed buildings; 77% of city residents are renters; and 50% of Lagos residents still utilize non-conventional forms of power, including candles, kerosene lamps, palm oil lamps, Fitolas, and local lamps. Additionally, 4% of residents use nonstandard toilets (pail buckets, flush gutters, excavate the earth and bury, mobile bush/field toilets, and toilets on water), and 8% defecate outside. Similar



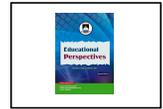
to this, 15% of Lagosians rely on non-traditional water sources like rainwater, uncovered dug wells, private tankers, modest truck vendors, lagoons, springs, local rivers, creeks, dams, lakes, stream canals, ponds, and irrigation channels. While this is going on, 21% of Lagosians are still using illegal methods to get rid of their trash, like burying it or burning it, using truck pushers, or local dumping grounds. Before moving on to the subject area, this research first assessed the extent of multidimensional poverty in Lagos State (LBS, 2020).

### **CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF POVERTY**

The oldest and most resilient virus that causes a fatal illness in poor or third-world nations is poverty. Its mortality rate is unmatched by any sickness dating back to the dawn of humanity. Even more deadly than EBOLA, it is worse than HIV/AIDS and malaria, which are also regarded as the two most lethal diseases (Agbaje, 2014). Progress toward this goal has been dismal despite the renewed commitment to poverty reduction as the primary goal of international development discourse and programs during the past 15 years and more (NBS, 2016). This is especially clear in how far the world is from achieving the majority of the Sustainable Development Goals, both internationally and in most regions and nations. Africa is the world's poorest continent despite having the largest natural resources, including people and commodities (Heywood, 2007). Poverty has been a prominent topic of concern on both a national and international level, especially among emerging countries.

The causes of poverty are numerous and complex, including the inability of the poor to influence social processes, public policy, choices, and resource allocations, low capacities due to a lack of education, vocational skills, and entrepreneurial abilities, poor health and a poor quality of life, the disadvantageous position of women in society, exposure to risks due to a lack of financial, social, or physical security, low levels of consumption through law enforcement of laws against consumer fraud, habits and conventions based on superstition and myths that encourage antisocial behavior, poor economic growth, a low-production sector, inappropriate government policies, a lack of visionary leaders, ineffective leadership, incompetent leadership, a lack of accountability, a lack of transparency, and debt crises are all examples of practices designed to maximize benefits within the global system (Eminue, 2005).

The high rate of inflation (rise in living costs), widening income inequality, lack of access to economic opportunities, economic vulnerability (based on fluctuations in crude oil prices), and neglect of agriculture are additional issues (Ekpe, 2011). Other issues include rapid population growth, unemployment, a high dependency ratio, a lack of basic infrastructure, a lack of social services, and corruption (illegal capital flight and money laundering). In addition, there are concerns with migration, the environment, and low economic production, particularly at the household level. All of these causes of poverty eventually have an impact on individuals, local communities, states, and the federal government (Egonmwan, 1991). Violence and crime, hunger and starvation, low life expectancy, malnutrition in children, high child mortality, high maternal deaths, children not in school, prostitution, human trafficking, orphanage children, street children, stunted growth in children, underweight children, and wasted children are just a few of the effects of poverty. Other factors include early childhood stunting deaths, the spread of contagious diseases, unemployment, terrorism, and the effects of hunger, exhaustion, irritability, headaches, ear infections, flu, and cold on poor children, which can interfere with learning.



Disability affects poor children throughout their lives, in large part because poverty negatively impacts cognitive function. Additionally, stress over money significantly depletes mental resources, making them less effective at handling challenging issues. In general, personal hardship, laziness, and bad decision-making at the individual, organizational, and community levels can be blamed for the aforementioned causes and effects of poverty. In spite of strong external pressure, the government may follow policies that actually hinder successful development; the impoverished are frequently helpless (Easton, 1965). The upshot is that while the majority of people struggle globally, a few get wealthy. Poverty is also a result of a lack of transparency in government and policy reversals (Dye, 2008).

### **Major issues in Poverty Alleviation in Lagos State**

The literature review presented in this section began with an exploration of the causes of social exclusion in Nigeria. The causes of social exclusion in Nigeria have been identified as economic inequality, access to basic amenities, corruption, unequal resource distribution, gender inequality, a lack of education for the poor, disparities in economic opportunities between rural and urban communities, and unemployment (Aluko, 1975). This submission was supported by academic sources that address social exclusion in Lagos State and throughout Nigeria. Also, definitions of poverty and multidimensional poverty were reviewed in the literature, with an attempt made to examine the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) regarding its dimensions and indicators; multidimensional poverty in Nigeria was also reviewed. The literature also examined Lagos State's multifaceted poverty. This became significant because, despite being the most economically developed state in Nigeria and producing the highest amount of internal revenue, the state has a high rate of illiteracy. The discussion in this section showed that, among other problems, Lagos State is plagued with out-of-school children, unfinished structures, unusual bathroom facilities, and contaminated water supplies.

Economic policy's primary goal should be to eliminate poverty, which calls for anti-poverty initiatives that are specifically targeted at the poor. In Nigeria, the three main goals of development policy have been social fairness, price stability, and economic growth and development (Aminu & Onimisi, 2014). National development plans (NDPs) were to be implemented in order to achieve these objectives. By raising the average person's actual income, spreading wealth fairly, and reducing unemployment and underemployment rates, these NDPs aimed to combat poverty (Boboye & Ojo, 2012).

The government created programs under the direction of the ministry of women and poverty in order to lessen or abolish poverty in Nigeria as the rate of poverty increased (Dahida & Maidoki, 2013). Programs to empower women and the unemployed have been created, and they include things like skill-building initiatives, initiatives for women's development, initiatives for children's development, and so on (Chandler & Plano, 1988).

### **Lagos State Government Policy Initiatives on Poverty Eradication**

To help Lagosians fight poverty, the government made interventions in a few different sectors (Arogundade, Adebisi, & Ogunro, 2011). The aim is to raise living standards for everyone in the 57 LG/LCDAs. This includes the following:



### *KIDNAPPING FOR RANSOM*

As part of the effort to free Lagos from criminality, given the spate of kidnappings, the State Government passed into the Law prohibiting any act of kidnapping. The Act imposed life imprisonment on kidnappings for ransom. However, it condemns those responsible for kidnappings in which the victim dies and calls for the death penalty as the harshest penalty. The law's passage was intended as a strong warning to kidnappers. The state government is also putting in place appropriate measures, particularly in schools and other vulnerable targets, to prevent kidnapping and other security breaches.

### *EMPLOYMENT TRUST FUND*

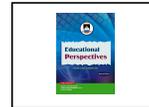
The Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) Law was passed in 2016 with the goal of encouraging residents of Lagos State to produce wealth and jobs and lowering unemployment. The fund is an aid for encouraging the inventive and creative spirits of all Lagos people and lowering unemployment rates throughout the state. In order to accomplish its objectives, the fund collaborates with partners and makes use of their expertise and resources. LSETF focuses on fostering entrepreneurship by enhancing financial access, building micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs') institutional capacity, and developing policies that would enhance the business climate in Lagos State. The Lagos State government recently launched a N25 billion fund to finance investments in MSMEs in Lagos. The money from the fund is supposed to go toward training locals so they may become entrepreneurs and end poverty (LBS, 2020).

### *E-GOVERNANCE: THE LAGOS CITIZENS GATE*

Lagos State, under the Lagos Citizens Gate initiative, has put up a service based technology platform for easy management of her interactions with the citizenry. The platform is an integrated web and mobile platform that allows citizens to provide feedback to the government about using various governmental services. The citizenry has the opportunity to get faster responses on these services and to interact in real time with government representatives through the web and the mobile application. The state supports the African Largest Digital Literacy Initiative and the Twenty-Second Century Digital Library Project for Lagos (LBS, 2020).

### *JOB CREATION THROUGH RAPID TRANSPORTATION*

One of the world's megacities is Lagos State. Geographically, the metropolitan region of Lagos is expanding quickly, especially towards the neighboring state of Ogun. Commuter trips are therefore growing both in length and number, and movement from point A to point B can be very arduous and costly too. The growth has given room for inadequacies. The transportation inadequacies further impoverish the poor in urban Lagos, as expenditure on transportation is about 20% of the household budget. The need for unconventional thinking in this circumstance has prompted the state administration to consider transportation-friendly legislation. Numerous studies were carried out in the 1990s to determine suitable solutions once it became clear that the state's transportation sector needed to be improved. These initiatives, such as those being undertaken by Lagos Asset Management Limited (LAGBUS) and the Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (LAMATA), are building a network of practical, affordable, and effective transportation. Such provision alleviates poverty through the provision of job opportunities.



## Capacity Initiatives for Poverty Eradication in Lagos State

The Nigerian government has at various times established poverty alleviation programs (PAPS) to reduce poverty in the country (Fapohunda, 2012). The various PAPS had different structures and outlooks but maintained the central objective of reducing poverty and making life meaningful for the masses (Ashaver, 2013). Good governance and good management of resources remain the best ways to tackle both the problems of the environment and poverty. With the conviction that empowerment in skill acquisition would reduce the problem of unemployment and eradicate poverty.

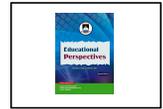
The establishment of the Center for Rural Development (CERUD) with the mission to enhance the quality of life in rural areas, the Lagos State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (LASEEDS), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for monitoring and evaluating the various poverty eradication programs are all results of the state government's desire and commitment to combat the regrettable high incidence of poverty (Fapohunda, 2012). Creating job opportunities for self-development and independence, encouraging entrepreneurial skills in young men and women, and preparing potential recipients of vocational education to become future employers of labor are the goals of the establishment of Skill Acquisition Centers in every region of the state. By providing the tools needed for men, women, children, and adults to work in agriculture, the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce has significantly contributed to the eradication or alleviation of poverty.

Being the foundation of the family, women have a big influence on not just the household income but also the education of the kids, reducing infant death due to poor hygiene, unhealthy behaviors, or a lack of food or water. The Ministry of Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation's (WAPA) empowerment initiative has proven to be popular with young people and widows who want to start modern companies like those manufacturing goods in the nation (Fapohunda, 2012). Hairdressing and barbering, computer appreciation and programming, fashion design, catering and hotel management, textile and hat design, photography, adult literacy, and counseling are just a few of the courses on empowerment. In order to broaden the curriculum, six new courses were added. Along with the already existing ones, new abilities have been added, including welding, aluminum fabrication, tile interlocking, stone laying, vulcanizing, wheel balance, printing and lithography screen transfer, refrigeration, and air conditioning installation and repairs (Fapohunda, 2012).

## Recommendations

The growing problems of poverty demand urgent action and audacity. In light of this, the state government must reassess its policies with a view to maintaining its current level of excellence. These efforts and policies must consider the following:

1. complete involvement of young people in determining how to best channel their efforts toward beneficial objectives.
2. the creation of policies to care for the elderly and the less fortunate members of society.
3. lowering the cost of getting medical treatment.
4. consistently providing appropriate infrastructure for housing, transportation, and power.
5. programs for reducing poverty at the community level (CPRP) require improvement.
6. access to credit options with reasonable interest rates.
7. additional support for PSP (private sector participation).
8. further remodeling and building at elementary and secondary schools.



9. by instituting free lunches at all levels, elementary school absenteeism may be decreased.
10. one of the health projects with the highest return on investment is hand washing promotion, which can either directly or indirectly lower the number of deaths from pneumonia, diarrhea, and even COVID-19
11. children get dewormed to lower anemia and malnutrition.
12. ensure that every citizen has access to a living income that allows them to meet their desired level of basic necessities.
13. microloans with low interest rates are made available to farmers.
14. enhancing agricultural research and reviving agricultural education.
15. implementing initiatives for cassava, rice, cattle, and tree crop production.
16. increased food availability and production

### Conclusion

In light of this, the government of Nigeria must put its full effort into eradicating poverty, and it must concentrate on pressing issues rather than on things that have no bearing on the lives of its citizens. Through recommendations in articles, conferences, and reforms, many academics in this field have worked tirelessly to find solutions to the problems that keep coming up (Hussaini, 2014). Many of these authors and academics contend that while developing countries have produced good policy formulations, the issue is with how those policies are put into practice. Failure to implement policies doesn't just start with policy implementation; it also starts at the initiation stage, where performance standard setting needs to be anticipated (Ajulor, 2013; Dialoke, 2017). The study's knowledge gap, however, was primarily caused by the fact that in Nigeria, policy issues started at the beginning of the policy process, when the problem first emerged, and continued through the review stages. The causes of the poverty alleviation programs' success in Nigeria and the problems with the policy-making process that have prevented them from succeeding. However, this paper examines the effect of policy integration and capacity development on poverty eradication in Lagos State, Nigeria. This study seeks to fill in the gaps by examining how it affects initiatives to reduce poverty as well as the efficiency of policy integration and capacity building.

Basically, there is a need to take the necessary steps to reduce the population in our world. Natural resources don't increase according to the population, which is increasing at a high speed. Poverty in Nigeria is multi-faceted, multi-dimensional, and multi-disciplinary. When we consider the families in poor countries like Nigeria, a family has at least four children. However, due to poverty, those children's parents are unable to provide them with enough education, nutritious food, or access to appropriate health care. As a result, their health conditions deteriorate considerably, thus affecting the optimal development of their brains, brains and poor educational pursuits.

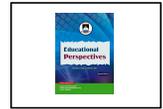
The significance of the corporate sector's involvement in initiatives to combat poverty cannot be overstated. Concerted efforts should be made to collect data on the people aged 15–64 years (the labor force) in the state with a view to identifying the current gaps and involving all the stakeholders in addressing the gaps and ensuring that employment opportunities are tailored to the needs of the populace. Four (4) major areas of focus will be:

- Education and skill acquisition based on 21st century demand and future needs



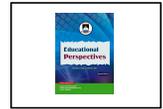
- Health care and wellbeing enhancement programs to promote active involvement of the teeming youth in socio-economic areas of endeavour
- Active engagement of youth in all production sectors: agriculture, industries (formal and informal), as well as the services sector.
- Attitudinal change towards corruption and corruption-induced approaches and strategies at community, private, and public organization levels.

The associated value chain of the four (4) recommendations above be comprehensively discussed, documented, and supported by appropriate legal backing with a special role for both the public and private sectors.

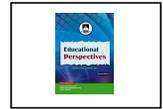


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