

# Education as a means of alleviating poverty and sustainable national development in Nigeria

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## Abstract

The real problem facing humanity today in Africa in terms of achieving sustainable development is poverty and how to motivate people to be better educated in order to change underlying behaviors and activities that are problematic. Poverty stands as the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. To eradicate it, coordinated efforts must be undertaken to build on the achievements realized so far and to prevent current and future challenges from jeopardizing further progress. Human beings are very resentful to change and this paper tried to encourage people to channel their energy towards contributing more to help alleviate poverty by acquiring relevant education and skills in order to promote developmental efforts that do not pollute good ideas and wasting scarce resources to destroy lives and edifices built over the years. The main focus of this paper is to stir the government and education leaders to improve public education for all people and citizens having equal opportunity to education irrespective of social class or color. The idea of using education to fight poverty for a sustainable development has a special role in vindicating how various processes in education, which lie at the heart of promoting change in human behavior can be used on a global level to help turn things around for development. This study is a qualitative research. An opened ended Interview and observation methods were used together with literature on ground to sample how to get more poor people educated by giving them better quality education that can eradicate poverty and bring sustainable national development. The recommendation given is that there is need for government to encourage the poor and to create opportunity that will enable the poor to be educated for sustainability.

**Keywords:** Poverty, Alleviation, Education, Sustainability development etc.

## Introduction

Developing countries are facing dilemmas such as un-sustainability and poverty (especially rural poverty). Poor people are often seen as compelled to exploit their surrounding for short-term survival and are assumed to be the ones most exposed to natural resources degradation. Poverty stands as the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. Poverty has become a subject of national concern in the last four decades. The prevalence of mass poverty in

Nigeria, which claims to be the giant of Africa, reflects the poor management and performance of the national economy. Poverty affects over-crowded settlements in major urban centers in Nigeria. Similarly, the rural areas are also hit by the absence of basic social infrastructures such as electricity, water supply and good roads. It is obvious that in Nigeria, the incidence of poverty has remained high and to eradicate it, coordinated efforts must be undertaken to build on the achievements realized so far and to prevent current and future challenges from jeopardizing further progress. There are still over 800

million people living on less than \$1.90 a day, the international poverty line, and 10% of the world's workers and their families are poor, a sign that access to a job is not enough to escape poverty (Thom-otuya & Inko-tariah 2016). At the same time, inequality has been rising and can hinder progress in the fight against poverty. Social policy alone cannot eradicate poverty, and neither can policies focusing only on the income aspect of poverty.

Sustainable national development is the organizing principle for meeting human development goals, whereby the current generations have a moral obligation to provide essential needs for sustainable living conditions to their future generations that is their own children and their grandchildren and this can only be achieved through sound education. According to Ajaakaiye and Olomola (1999), Poverty Alleviation is the only process which seeks to reduce the level of poverty in a community or state and education has a major role in poverty alleviation.

Education is an accepted veritable instrument for eradication of poverty and national development. Education produces different kinds of manpower such as: engineers, teachers, lawyers, medical doctors, architects, soldiers, scientist, etc needed for national development. There is no society that can develop beyond its educational system because it is the product of education that transforms the society. The quality of education will therefore determine the quality of manpower and their products; it will reduce the rate of poverty and unemployment, since graduates and technicians can become self-employed after graduation. It will equally impact on the moral rectitude of the society and quality of lives. This is because education is aimed at changing the character of the learner and impacting positively on his behavior. Poor quality of education is characterized by misplacement of values and educational goals (Thom-otuya & Inko-tariah 2016).

Since poverty is a common problem that cannot be easily wiped out, but can be alleviated through a concerted effort by the stakeholders, the main focus of this paper is to stir the government, education leaders and individuals to work toward poverty alleviation by improving public education for all people and citizens having equal opportunity to education irrespective of social class or color. The paper identified who are the poor and challenges they are facing and how education could be a means of alleviating this problem.

### **Poverty level in Nigeria**

One of the major problems facing Africa today that is yet to be eradicated is poverty, which is slowing the achievement of sustainable development. Poverty stands as the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. To eradicate it, coordinated efforts must be undertaken to build on the achievements realized so far and to prevent current and future challenges from jeopardizing further progress. Human beings are very

resentful to change and this paper is meant to identify the poor and how education can be the means of alleviating poverty in our country Nigeria. People finds it difficult to channel their energy towards contributing more to help alleviate poverty by acquiring relevant education and skills in order to promote developmental efforts that do not pollute good ideas and wasting scarce resources to destroy lives and edifices built over the years.

In a survey conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics of Nigeria, it is estimated that the total poverty headcount increases from 68.0 percent in 2010 to 84.5 percent in the year 2014, also from a year 2010 to 2014 the percentage of poor increased from 46.0 to 52.5 percent making the poor category among the population to rise (National Bureau of Statistics, 2015). Global Poverty Ranking Index, ranks Nigeria among the countries with a high number of poor, with the Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.423 that positioned the country number 142 out of 169 countries with a GDP per capita of \$2,156 US dollars and life expectancy at birth of 48.4 years in 2006. The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) in the same year is 0.368 in Nigeria. The United Nation Human poverty index rate Nigeria among the 33 poorest nation in the World in 2014 (UNDP, 2015). In the year 2009 the perception index of households living below the poverty line had increased to 92.5 percent. The report also highlighted that among the six geopolitical zones in the country the north-west and the North-East had the highest poverty incidence in the country with 77.7 percent and 76.3 percent of poverty rate respectively. The South-West geopolitical zone has the lowest rate of 59.1 percent in 2010. Among the 36 states of the country, Sokoto State had the highest incidence of poverty, with about 86.4 percent and Niger State had the lowest number of poverty with 43.6 percent of the poverty rate (NBS, 2014).

### **Trends in Poverty Level in Nigeria from (1996 – 2019)**

Table 1 below shows the trends in poverty level in Nigeria from 1996 – 2019.

**Table 1:** Trends in poverty level in Nigeria (1996 – 2019)

S/N	Year	Poverty level (%)	Total Population in Poverty	Total Population
1	1996	65.6	67.1	102.3
2	2004	54.4	68.7	126.3
3	2010	69.0	112.7	163.0
4	2011	71.5	124.1	168.0
5	2012	72.0	128.3	168.0
6	2019	40.1	82.2	180.0

**Source:** National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria (2019)

In Nigeria, the trouble experienced by the poor people is hunger, illiteracy, unemployment, malnutrition, ignorance, diseases and lack of access to credit and finances, a poor road network, low life expectancy and overall human destitution (Babatunde, 2014).

The main focus of this paper is how the government, education leaders and good citizens can improve public education for all people and ordinary citizen can be encouraged and have equal opportunity to education irrespective of social class or color. The idea of using education to fight poverty for a sustainable development has a special role in vindicating how various processes in education, which lie at the heart of promoting change in human behavior can be used on a global level to help turn things around for development.

Quality education is very expedient for national development in Nigeria because all nations of the world owe their level of development to the standard of their educational system. Education is the veritable instrument for generating all genre and levels of manpower in any nation (Obasi, 2010). It has a special role and responsibility in contributing to the challenges of poverty alleviation and sustainability. In this study, education is considered as the key to achieving sustainable development.

## Methodology

This paper is aimed at examining poverty and how quality education can alleviate poverty and enhance national development in Nigeria. It identified and examined how people are suffering and why quality education should be offered for sustainable national development. This study is a qualitative research. An opened ended Interview and observation methods were used together with existing literature such as data collected from National Bureau of Statistics, National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Central Bank of Nigeria, Library Archive, Journals and Nigerian Newspapers as well as data collected from various international research organizations such as Global Poverty Ranking Index (GPRI), Human Development Index (HDI), The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

## Conceptual Clarification

### What is Poverty?

Poverty is when Individuals, families and groups in the population lack the resources to obtain the type of diet, participate in the activities and lacks the living conditions and amenities which are customary or at least widely encouraged and approved, in the societies in which they belong. It is when someone experiences a fundamental deprivation in well-being. We look at the living conditions of people to get an idea of their situation. According to UNICEF, 2010 children die each day due to poverty and they die quietly in some of the poorest villages on earth, far removed from the scrutiny and the conscience of the world. Being meek and weak in life makes these dying multitudes even more invisible in death (www.globalissues.org Poverty Facts and Stats).

### Types of Poverty

- **Absolute Poverty**

Each time one sees images on TV or on the internet with hungry people with no food, running water, often in tattered clothing and no shoes, living in mud houses in run-down communities (slums), one will begin to have a sense of what poverty looks like. This lowest condition is called Absolute poverty. It is the extreme kind of poverty involving the chronic lack of basic food, clean water, health and housing. People in absolute poverty tend to struggle to live and experience a lot of child deaths from preventable diseases like malaria, cholera and water-contamination related diseases. This type is usually long term in nature, and often handed to them by generations before them. This kind of poverty is usually not common in the developed world (Eschooltoday, 2017).

- **Relative Poverty**

Sometimes, a person can look at an individual, family or community in comparison to the living standards of the broader community, and classify them as poor, if he finds that their needs are way

below that of everyone else in the community. In this case, one does the classification, and it is very relative in nature and is called 'Relative Poverty.' This kind is usually in relation to other members and families in the society. For example, a family can be considered poor if it cannot afford vacations, or cannot buy presents for children at Christmas, or cannot send its young to the university. Even though they have access to government support for food, water, medicine and free housing, they are considered poor because the rest of the community have access to superior services and amenities (Eschooltoday, 2017).

- **Subjective poverty**

People and families are allowed to make their own judgments into their living conditions, in relation to the general living standards of the communities in which they live. You can see a family who owns a bicycle considering them as being among the well-to-do in the community. In another scenario, they can consider themselves at being among the poorest in the community, if they compare themselves to other members of the community (Eschooltoday, 2017).

- **Situational Poverty (Transitory)**

This is a situation where People or families can be poor because of some adversities like earthquakes, floods or a serious illness. Sometimes, people can help themselves out of this situation quickly if they are given a bit of assistance, as the cause of their situations was just one unfortunate event (Eschooltoday, 2017).

- **Generational or Chronic Poverty**

This is a more complicated type whereby poverty is handed over to individuals and families from generations before them. In this type, there is usually no escape from it, as people are trapped in its causes and have no access to tools that will help them get out of it (Eschooltoday, 2017).

### **Where are the Poor?**

Sub Saharan Africa, South Asia and Latin America have been known to have large areas of chronic poverty. In the last decade, joint efforts by governments, authorized organizations and charity groups have improved the situation for many, but there is still a lot of poverty in these areas.

### **Sub-Saharan Africa**

This region is the poorest in the world. In West and Central Africa, one in every 6 people is severely poor. It is estimated that between 28% and 38% of the absolute poor population in sub-Saharan Africa, is estimated to be chronically poor, totaling between 90 and 120 million people (Thom-otuya & Inko-tariah 2016). Here are some more facts on the region:

- i. Of the 22 countries in the region, 310million people live in its 12 worst countries.
- ii. 150 million live on less than 1USD a day.
- iii. Countries in Sub-Sahara Africa, include Angola, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Somalia, Sudan and Zambia (Eschooltoday, 2017).

### **Latin America**

In many parts of this region, particularly Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador and Colombia, there has been impressive improvement in economic growth. Haiti and Bolivia are exceptions, as many of them are still in extreme poverty. Inequality levels are extreme and among the worst places in the world. It is estimated that between 30% and 40% of the extreme poor population in Latin America and the Caribbean is chronically poor: between 16 and 22 million people (The Chronic Poverty Report 2004-2005, Chapt. 3)

### **South Asia**

Particularly Southern and Western India, Bangladesh has been among the world's chronically poor, although the headcount ratio has declined significantly. This region has extremely high populations with estimated 135 to190 million people, including 110 to 160 million Indians, 9 to 13 million Bangladeshis, 10 to 15 million Pakistanis, perhaps 5 million Afghans, and 2 to 3 million Nepalese. Rural areas account for three in every four people living on less than US\$1 a day and a similar share of the world population suffering from malnutrition. However, urbanization is not synonymous with human progress. Urban slum growth is outpacing urban growth by a wide margin (Human Development Report 2017, 25).

### **Who are the poor in Nigeria?**

Who are the poorest in our country in terms of their gender, where they live, what they do for a living, how old they are? The country absolute poor people often live in rural areas, and often earn an income in agricultures. Rural households are more likely to be poorer than urban households and here are some facts finding:

- **Poor children not in school**

According to UNICEF (2018), primary education is officially free and compulsory, about 10.5 million of

the country's children aged 5-14 years are not in school. Only 61 percent of 6-11 year-olds regularly attend primary school and only 35.6 percent of children aged 36-59 months receive early childhood education. Poverty is one of the factors in the pattern of educational marginalization in the north-east and north-west of the country affecting females more with net attendance rates of 47.7 percent, meaning that more than half of the girls are not in school. The education deprivation in northern Nigeria is driven by various factors, including economic barriers and socio-cultural norms and practices that discourage attendance in formal education, especially for girls (<https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/education>). In north-eastern and north-western states, 29 percent and 35 percent of Muslim children, respectively, receive Qur'anic education, which does not include basic skills such as literacy and numeracy. The government considers children attending such schools to be officially out-of-school. In north-eastern Nigeria, 2.8 million children are in need of education-in-emergencies support in three conflict-affected States (Borno, Yobe, Adamawa), (<https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/education>).

- **Poor or destitute**

People in this group tend to be the elderly, especially widows with no assets and the "Almajiri boys" who live on street to beg in order to survive. They also include the disabled, who are usually not empowered to come into public but live on daily begging. They fall in the category of the absolute and chronically Poor. They are also dependents because of adverse health condition of some condition that does not allow them to help themselves

- **Dependents**

Poor households have more members, living together in single rooms or small houses, a greater share of dependents (non-working age), less education, less land, and less access to running water and electricity. Poor households have significantly fewer years of education this is because whether one looks at the household-level average or at the years of schooling of household heads and gets discourage not to be involved in school.

- **Economically poor**

People who belong to this group move in and out of poverty usually vulnerable to spells of personal shocks such as illness, family deaths, or job losses. General shocks such as floods, fires,

droughts, conflicts or earthquakes can also cause this kind of poverty. People in this group tend to be in their working life, but largely live in rural areas, working on small subsistence farms. About 60% of Nigerians who are poor tend to be in this group. They usually lack assets and access to services that can enhance their economic development. Households with many children or dependents also tend to be poor.

## **Impact of poverty in the Society**

Poverty brings about a myriad of complications. The effects usually depend on the kind of poverty in question.

### **1. Hunger, Poor Health and Deaths**

Absolute poverty results in extreme hunger, starvation and malnutrition. According to the report of National Voluntary Review (2020), general health of Nigerian citizens, particularly the poor, is deteriorating. Among the most debilitating is the very high maternal mortality rate (512 per 100 000 in 2018), as it contributes to household poverty by reducing household income or creating child-headed households. There has also been a slight increase in the under-five mortality rates with deaths per 1000 rising from 128 in 2017 to 132 in 2018 (NBS, 2020). The country's performance against these indicators provides a lens into the weakness of the healthcare system. People (and children) become vulnerable to preventable diseases such as cholera, dysentery and tuberculosis, with no access to health services and medications leading to high death rate. Relative poverty on the other hand, forces people to engage in behaviors that expose them to diseases such as HIV Aids. While they may not starve to death, they may be living on unhealthy foods, which ultimately weaken their immunity and expose them to diseases. Infectious diseases continue to blight the lives of the poor across the world. An estimated 40 million people are living with HIV/AIDS, with 3 million deaths in 2014. Every year there are 350–500 million cases of malaria, with 1 million fatalities: Africa accounts for 90 percent of malarial deaths and African children account for over 80 percent of malaria victims worldwide (Human Development Report (HDR), 2017).

### **2. Social and Political**

Relative poverty may cause people to indulge in social vices such as drugs, prostitution and petty crimes as a means to meet their immediate needs. In many developing countries, especially in Nigeria some political leaders and rebel leaders take advantage and recruit young people, (especially

those in relative poverty) to fight for their interests, in return for food and basic needs. These young folks feel vulnerable if they do not comply, as they have no other way out of their situation.

### 3. Economic

People in absolute poverty simply cannot afford food, water and shelter. They are not healthy enough to undertake any economic activity. They cannot send their young to school and the youth cannot get any skills. This results in economic breakdown of the community, which directly affects the larger region where they are. Further to that, those in relative poverty, who have a bit of training or education, are forced to move out (migrate) in search of better lives in the cities. This deprives the rural areas of the man-power and makes their situation worse. As they migrate into the cities, they end up in slums, increase populations and put pressure on amenities in the cities. For the 1.9 billion children from the developing world, there are:

- A. 640 million without adequate shelter (1 in 3)
- B. 400 million with no access to safe water (1 in 5)
- C. 270 million with no access to health services (1 in 7) (State of the World's Children, 2015, UNICEF).

#### **Challenges of Education programs as a means of poverty alleviation and sustainable development**

Current research and observations indicate that poverty and unsustainability are linked. The only feasible way out of this current crisis is to educate how to integrate resources and use it for development. The developing countries like Nigeria have been criticized for their inability to reduce poverty and contribute to sustainable development. There is a need for improving of educational sector to improve environment and people to alleviate poverty and receive to sustainable development. Poverty cannot be completely eradicated, as it largely caused by human factors. Over the past years there have been a lot of Poverty Alleviation Programs designed to break the cycle of poverty in many households and communities in the world. The result is remarkable, but there is still a lot to be done. Poverty alleviation involves the strategic use of tools such as education, economic development, health and income redistribution to improve the livelihoods of the world's poorest by governments and internationally approved organizations. They also aim at removing social and legal barriers to income growth among the poor. Quality education empowers people to take advantage of opportunities around them. It helps children get knowledge, information and life skills they need to realize their

potential. Training teachers, building schools, providing education materials and breaking down that prevent children from accessing education are important features of poverty alleviation programs.

However, education sector in the country cannot be properly felt as long as there are certain challenges facing it. One of the challenges is lack of proper funding on the part of the government is seen as one of the challenges education alleviate poverty in Nigeria. The typical example is the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP). The coordinators at the state and local government levels have turned the exercise into their own personal property and they do and undo at the stage of servicing the people. The unavailability of reliable population data as a benchmark for proper planning makes it very difficult for proper implementation of education as poverty alleviation programs. The government requires a number of people in absolute poverty from each and every local government in order to carefully plan a program aimed at alleviating the poverty of the masses. The population census of 2006 which serve as the latest in Nigeria is too old to help the government plan effectively for the need to educate poor children (Aminu, Abdulkadir, Jamilu & Mohammed, 2018).

Another challenge is the political instability, ethnic and religious crises, militancy, restiveness and lack of confidence in sustainable democracy which pose threat to education to alleviate and improved quality of life in Nigeria for a sustainable development. Failure of transparency and accountability on the levels of governance did not boost the international image of the country in attracting investors into the country. Every investor always wants to invest in a peaceful and reliable environment free from crises and corruption. Therefore, the departure of investors from the country due to insurgencies and crisis added to the discouragement of providing sound education that can reduce poverty level among the teeming population.

Poor infrastructural development hinders economic expansion and in turn provision of sound education for public to alleviate poverty. The level of infrastructure development in Nigeria falls below average. For instance, there are under-supply of electricity, a poor road network, a poor drinking water, unhygienic environment, low purchasing power, unemployment, illiteracy, hunger and disease. When all these prevail in the country, poverty will continue to escalate instead of decreasing. Inadequacy of schools and school facilities and basic physical plants of schools has made level of children drop out high in the country (Aminu, Abdulkadir, Jamilu & Mohammed, 2018).

The incidence of corruption has taken a frightening dimension to the extent that Nigeria is now internationally regarded as one of the most corrupt country in the world. Nigeria is ranked 136, which she has scored 28 on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean), on the 2016 Corruption Perception Index (CPI) (Transparency International, 2016). This situation increases the number of both rural and urban poor, since very little effort is done to improve their life and education sector can do little to improve public education.

## Education as a means of poverty alleviation and sustainable development

Education for poverty alleviation and sustainable development is lifelong process that leads to an informed and involved citizenry having the creative and problem-solving skills, scientific and social literacy, and commitment to engage in responsible individual and co-operative actions. Quality education enables people to develop the knowledge, values, and skills to participate in decisions about the ways things should be done, individually and collectively, locally and globally, that will improve the quality of life. Quality education is a holistic approach for school's management and the curriculum and it requires reflection on what to teach, and how to teach in order to clarify and extend the ability of students to think for themselves, encourage students to reflect and debate issues to enable them to form their own opinions and to foster learning that emerges from discovery and is relevant to the learner's life experiences. The provision of skills and training the youth will also enable them to work in their communities. This kind of informal education provides skills to help with farm work or other economic activity, which helps them, earn money to make a living and take care of their families.

Now more than ever we need people who think creatively and who understand systems, connections, patterns, and events root causes. It is educators responsibility to ensure that the interconnection between the environment, economy and social structures become an integral part of formal education, starting with the pre-primary and continuing through primary and secondary school and through training at the tertiary institution and at the professional level. It must be emphasized here that for a nation to have the ability to develop and achieve sustainable target, education must come to play. This has been the propelling force behind the clamor for the Universal Primary Education (UPE) declared by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1976 and the recently Universal Basic Education (UBE), an innovation of UPE declared in 1999. The essence of basic education is to increase basic literacy and numeracy level of the citizen, as they are indeed fundamental tools needed for development and its sustainability. Sound basic education is also fundamental to the strengthening of higher levels of education of scientific and technological literacy and thus to self-reliant, sustainable development (Nnabuo & Asodike 2009).

Speaking through the Universal Declaration of Human Right more than 50 years ago, nations of the world had asserted that everyone has a right to education. Albeit, the current provision of education in Nigeria remains seriously deficient. Incessant strikes by the Academic Staff Union of the Nigerian Universities as a result of poor condition of service have also worsened the situation. Therefore, there is need for a more decisive and better action to be taken if education and schooling are to be made relevant to

improve qualitatively and be available to all. The Higher institutions of learning stand as the most important tool that education can use to achieve sustainable development. It is expected that it should facilitate economic, social, and political upward mobility (Nnabuo & Asodike 2009). Okorosaye-Orubite (2005) summaries the functions of the basic school that supposed to build children for the ground for higher education:

1. The school provides training in basic skills as reading, writing and counting (arithmetic)
2. It attempts to provide the young ones with social and civil competencies to make them useful adults in the society.
3. The school teaches the young one scientific method with sharpened intellect, they are curious and enabled to satisfy their curiosity.
4. The school also plays a conservative role. This conservative role refer to preservation of the community's socio-cultural practices
5. The school is also an agent for cultural change. Progressive education accepts that nothing is static. The school must be aware of this and anticipate change, since these changes might occur, it would be better if the schools were prepared for them when the changes then occur; the school serves as institution for fostering and disseminating the ideas.
6. The school also provides children the opportunity for participation in healthy games and exercise. It also affords them the opportunity to develop virtue and discourages all evil tendencies.

### Implication of the Study

Currently, in Nigeria the issue of sustainable development is being addressed through curriculum innovations and curriculum offerings. School curriculum has been diversified to include courses that are predisposing to development issues (Osuji, 2004). This development includes international relations, civic education, and promotion of government economic programs and environmental issues of protection, preservation, and management. Some innovative curricula have been developed and infused or integrated into existing school subject curricula for general implementation, such innovative curricula include: Environmental Education, Population Education, Family Life/HIV-AIDS Education, Women (in Development) Education, Capital Market Studies etc. (Nnabuo & Asodike 2009). These issues did not properly address education as a major tool to poverty alleviation because there is need for education to address the problem of hunger and poverty and bring out the solution.

The lives of the poor people in Nigeria can be improved when Poverty alleviation programs like education are continued with sincerity and good management in order to achieve a sustainable development. To alleviate the

poverty in Nigeria, there is the need to promote the education sector which in turn, can diverse agricultural potentials of the country, such that food crops and cash crops (for export) can be adequately produced extensively by the poor if well educated. This requires deliberate and focused attention from both the government and the private sectors of the economy.

At the same time, there is a need to upgrade and improve mass literacy awareness as part of the poverty alleviation program, especially for the aged, destitute and the disabled as these categories of citizens are more vulnerable to poverty. In addition to that, more emphasis should be on the provision of basic socioeconomic infrastructures such as public schools, health services, portable drinking water, accessible roads which are also part of the poverty alleviation efforts to fight against poverty and improve the living standard of the generality of the people of both rural and urban settlements. These include education, health services, portable drinking water, accessible roads etc.

This work advocates for education to be prioritized and targets children who are least likely to receive an education. The expected outcome of the research is that all children access and complete quality education, within a safe learning environment, gaining the skills and knowledge for lifelong learning. This work will be achieved by creating an enabling environment for education, improving the quality of education, increasing demand for education, and humanitarian assistance.

## Conclusion

As a matter of policy, poverty eradication objectives must be included in the design of public policy in a cross-cutting manner. Therefore, Nigeria will need to adopt integrated policy frameworks involving a wider range of stakeholders, embracing innovative approaches and partnerships. This will also reinforce inclusiveness and transparency while fostering greater efficiency in policymaking and extending help in terms of accepting the poor by respect for human rights, meeting basic human needs and more equitable distribution of wealth, are clear priorities for the eradication of poverty.

However, I conclude in line with Hunt (2006) that quality education is even more central to the success of our economy and our democracy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century than it was in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and we dare not rest on our laurels. We should welcome a global society and economy in which nations and states and communities compete to develop human talent, primarily by educating more people and educating them better. It is certain that education cannot unilaterally solve the problems of educational opportunity and attainment, unilateral action is not the only possibility. Colleges and universities administrators, faculty, and trustees can do something much more practical to bring about economic and social change by increasingly turning their attention to equity, college access for low-income, student learning, and the "college dropout problem." The

country and the states need explicit, informed, and sustained leadership from within and outside the academy on each of these issues. There is need to hear more voices and more advocacy for those Nigerians who presently are not served or are poorly served by higher education.

## Suggestion

For Nigeria to achieve this standard of sustainable development, there should be public investment in education, children of the poor should be encouraged to go back to school and let them have access to free education, the rate of dropout must be reduced and eliminated, and both state and federal government, should invest more on financial aid to improve higher education opportunity and teaching quality. This is because the fundamental educational challenge is to get more poor children better educated and responsible to eradicate poverty and improve the standard of the nation. In order to achieve this, the following suggestions are necessary:

1. The education system at federal and state levels has the strengthened capacities to deliver quality basic education therefore, more public investment in education is needed, but we must also have better accountability for results and more attention to cost effectiveness and to constraining increases in higher education costs and prices.
2. Higher institutions of learning must work with schools to improve preparation, but they must also accept more responsibility themselves for the "college dropout problem."
3. The federal government and the states should invest their financial aid where they will make the most difference in improving higher education opportunity.
4. There is need to empower teachers to create opportunity that will enable all learners to be educated for sustainability. In-service training and other opportunities for professional growth must respond to real need faced by teachers everyday as they try to achieve the objectives for which they are recruited and function for which the school is noted.
5. Non-Governmental Organizations should ring up programs that Parents and communities can improve knowledge and commitment to contribute to enrolling children at the right age in quality learning in safe and protective school environments so that children in humanitarian situations would have timely and sustained access to quality education services.

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