Effect of Poverty on Political Participation in Dutse, Nigeria

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Abstract

he menace of poverty has devastating effect on democratic consolidation, as it result to electoral violence and, underdevelopment; this study aims to evaluate the effect of poverty on political participation in Nigeria with particular reference to Dutse local government area in Jigawa state, Survey research method was adopted and the data used in this study was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary source was through the use of questionnaire; while the secondary source was through the reading of relevant literature on the subject. The population of the study was Dutse local government area in Jigawa state; randomly, a total number of 100 samples were taken from the population, out of the 100 sampled respondents that were selected 78 were returned and used for analysis. The data collected were analyzed, using table and simple percentage for the data analysis; the findings of the study revealed that unemployment, corruption, poor environment, lack of capital, lack of health care services among others are the main causes of poverty and poverty served as mechanism for political thuggery, hijacking of ballot box among the other forms of political violence. The limitations the study encountered were inadequate time and financial constraints; more so, the study had problem in retrieving the questionnaire specifically for the primary data. The study recommends that the issue of poverty should be paid adequate attention by government at all levels in order to increase political participation and also reduce electoral violence in the local government and the country at large.

Keywords: Poverty, Effect, Politics, Political Participation, Dutse Local government

Introduction

Poverty is the most serious global problem which adversely affects sustainable development in developing countries; the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Rio De Janeiro 1992 defined poverty as the major factor militating against development be it social, economic or political, therefore, called for its eradication (Dandago, 2008), poverty in Nigeria is a menace that has continued to defy solutions irrespective of various reforms and efforts made by government in the past and present to find lasting solution to its continued spread (Ahmed, 2015). While the country is endowed with abundant resources, vast land and other endowment that are necessary for any functional society, the issue of Poverty has posed a big problem to Nigeria; she has been an example of the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty resource because she has been ranked as one of the poorest countries of the world in which the average income of its citizens is less than 1\$ per day (Bello, 2016). The country's economy has steadily deteriorated leading to a steep decline in the living standard of the generality of the

people and there exist an exceptionally large gap between the rich and the poor (Ajane, 2016).

In Nigeria political participation had not been transformed into a higher degree of full citizenship for adults to be able develop their fullest potentials to participate meaningfully in the democratic process due to the existence of inexplicable poverty among the citizenry and the political implication of all these is political powerlessness and invisibility (Malumfashi, 2008). The effects of poverty on political participation in Dutse local government cannot be over emphasized because poverty product of underlined challenges bedeviling the area, there is a crucial need to strengthen and address the menace of poverty in the local government as a means of bringing rapid development to the people at the grass root level so as to improve the lives of the people and facilitate people's ability to take part in political participation and to unveil the challenges encountered in the implementation of effective poverty reduction policies in the local government, the findings of this study would

assist the policymakers at both federal, state levels as well as other stakeholders in the local government in solving practical problems related to effect of poverty on political participation by the people. The study attempts to evaluate the effect of poverty and political participation in Nigeria and looked at the challenges, issues and prospect and tries to fill the gap in knowledge on the acceleration of poverty in Nigeria. It is against this background that this paper examines the effect of poverty on political participation in Dutse Local Government Area in Jigawa State from 2015-2021.

Theoretical Framework

Though, there are many theories that can explain the effect of poverty on political participation in Dutse Local Government area of Jigawa State – Nigeria from 2015-2021 such as the Elite theory, Rational Choice theory and the Marxist theory of capitalism among others but the Rational Choice theory is hereby adopted to explain the topic under consideration in this article.

Rational Choice Theory

It is concerned with rationality in a theoretical or philosophical discourse; the pioneer of this theory was a sociologist George Humans (1961), the rational choice model is abridged concisely by Down (1959) as a rational man is one who behaves as he can always make decision when confronted with many alternatives and always makes the same decision each time he is confronted with the same alternative (Downs 1959). The fundamental subject of this theory is that individuals choose a course of action that is in tandem with their personal preferences.

This paper decided to use the Rational Choice Theory in order to bring to attention the problem of poverty in political participation in Nigeria; the Theory is significantly appropriate to explain the problem under investigation, by going through the theoretical views of the rational choice theory which centers on the individuals choice of a course of action that is suitable to their personal preferences through rationality poverty is a major problem of Socio economic and political development which negatively affect the level of political

participation of the citizenry. The rationality of Human being shows how his/her participation in the political processes would be in a society that is adversely affected by poverty leading to low political participation. This explains the differences between developed and developing countries; in western countries participatory political culture is actualized because of their welfare practices which encourages the citizenry to participate actively in politics and helps their government in attaining their desired democratic principles through massive political education and mobilization of the society against the challenges of poverty, on the other hand in developing countries like Nigeria there is insular political culture because of poverty and her citizens tend to be inactive in politics especially in Dutse local government area of Jigawa state where the relationship between participation in politics and poverty is shown to be very strongly connected and that the relationship between income and political beliefs are widely accepted and agree that those living in poverty have lower participation in politics than those who are not. However Rationality of individuals in the society significantly affects their level of participation in political activity due to poverty, this explains the reason why the developing countries are continuously having the problem of poor leadership and because of poverty other social vices tends to ensue.

This theory is important to the study because it explain how political culture emerges in society though the theory has been criticized for being too individualistic about the nature of man being selfish and neglect the idea of collective action in the process of solving societal problems; taking a look at the various poverty alleviation programs in Nigeria, they have left much to be desired because those charged with the responsibility of governance enunciate and implement policies that are not realistic, the poor masses whom the programs are meant for were often not consulted and are not given the opportunity to take active part in issues that affect them. Majority of the poor people were neglected in the areas of policy making, wealth acquisition, and welfare improvement. Therefore the application of rational choice theory seems appropriate to explain the topic under consideration in this paper.

Research Method

Both primary and secondary sources of data were used; primary data included use of questionnaire. Secondary source of data includes newspapers, articles, journals, paper presentation, textbooks and internet materials related to the topic of study. The population of this study is drawn from the entire wards of the local government councils 251,135 (NPC: 2006) that make up Dutse Local Government. The target population is Dutse Local Government Area of Jigawa State which comprises Ten (10) Wards: Abaya, Chamo, Dundubus, Duru, Jigawa Tsada, Kachi, Karnaya, Kudai, Madobi, And Sakwaya is approximately 251,135 (NPC: 2006). The sample size of this research work are 100 respondents and 100 questionnaires were distributed to the target population which was a selected sample size from the area under study.

Taro Yamane (1964) formula was adopted to arrive at the target population of the research with margin error of 10; the sampling technique used for the study is the random probability sampling. The objective was to give every respondent under study equal chance of being selected. Ordinarily, it is impossible to study the whole population of an area; therefore, there was a need to systematically select a small proportion of the population upon which conclusions could be drawn from. It believed that the random probability sampling could

reduce bias to the barest minimum, so to ensure that the sample to be taken would be a true representative of the population, the stratified random sampling method was used.

The study uses questionnaire for the primary source and a review of existing literature for the secondary data was also utilized. The choice of this instrument was necessary because the study required the use of primary data. According to Cohen (1989), questionnaire is a self-report instrument used for data collection. It consists of questions eliciting information through responses from Respondents. In designing the questionnaire, adequate care was taken to structure the questions using' Open and Closed ended style' for the demography of the respondent while 'Likertstyles' for the main body of the questionnaire. Field Information collects in the course of this study which the research is guided by the research questions, objectives of the study and research hypothesis, and items on the questionnaire will be spread out in order to capture the qualitative and quantitative responses expected from the respondents. Technically the study adopts the use of tables and chi-square statistical methods for analysis of data. However, in presenting the tabulated data, the use of simple percentage will be adopted. Information gathered from secondary sources would be treated through descriptive method in order to validate inferences drawn from it.

Data Presentation and Analysis Respondents' Perception on Main Causes of Poverty

Responses	F	Frequency	P	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed		23	9	29.48
Agreed	3	31	3	39.74
Undecided	1	11	1	4.10
Strongly disagreed	3	3	3	3.84
Disagreed	1	10	1	2.82
Total	7	78	1	100

Source: Research Data, 2022

The table above shows that 23 of the respondent representing 29.48% strongly agreed and 31 respondents or 39.74% Agreed that the main cause of poverty are unemployment, corruption, poor environment, lack of capital, lack of health care services among others.

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Responses on Cultural Practices as Factor for Poverty

Response	F	Frequency		Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed		18	2	3.07
Agreed	2	27	3	4.61
Undecided	7	7	8.	8.97
Strongly Disagreed	8	8	1	0.25
Disagreed		38	2	3.07
Total	7	78		100

Source: Research Data, 2022

In table above, shows 18 of respondents representing 23.07% strongly agreed and 27 respondents representing 34.61% Agreed that certain cultural factors cause poverty in Nigeriaand Jigawa state, particularly in Dutse local government area; thusa total of 45 representing 59.68 who are the majority believed that cultural practice is the measure factor poverty in the local government area.

Respondents' Identification of Causes of Poverty in Dutse Local Government Area

Options F	Frequency P	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	16	20.51
Agreed	23	29.48
Undecided	7	8.97
Strongly Disagreed	16	20.51
Disagreed	16	20.51
Total	78	100

Source: Research Data, 2022

The above data shows that 16 respondent representing 20.51% strongly agreed and 23 respondents representing 29.48% agreed, that lack of access to income generating opportunities, families system, lack of pragmatic education and usage, rural-urban drift and poor policies cause poverty particularly in Dutse Local government area of Jigawa state; therefore majority of the respondents who are 49 representing 43.45% believed that those identified features are the major causes of poverty in the local government area.

Responses on the Level of Political Participation in Dutse Local Government

Options	F Frequency	P Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	13	16.66
Agreed	2 25	32.05
Undecided	8 8	10.25
Strongly Disagreed	9 9	11.53
Disagreed	2 23	29.48
Total	78	100

Source: Research Data, 2022

The above table indicates that 13 of the respondent representing 16.66% and 25 respondents representing 32.05 % Agreed that the level of political participation in Dutse local government is high, so 38 persons representing 48.71% of the respondents who are less than the majority agreed that the level of political participation in Dutse local government is high.

Respondents' View on Poverty has Negative Impact on Political Participation

Options	F Frequency	PPercentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	10	12.82
Agreed	3 33	4 4 2.30
Undecided	1 23	16.66
Strongly Disagreed	8 8	10.25
Disagreed	14	17.94
Total	7 78	1 100

Source: Research Data, 2022

The data in the table above shows that 10 of the respondents representing 12.82% were of the opinion that they strongly believe that poverty has serious negative impact on political participation in Dutse local government area. 33 respondents representing 42.30% agreed that poverty has serious negative impact on political participation; hence a total of 43 responses which represent 55.12% and also the majority agreed poverty has serious negative impact on political participation in Dutse local government area.

Responses on how People cast their Votes because of the Money or other Gift

Options	F F	requency	Р	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	1	18	2	23.07
Agreed	2	27	3	34.61
Undecided	1	11	114	1.10
Strongly Disagreed	4	4	5.1	2
Disagreed	18		223	3.07
Total	78		1	100

Source: Research Data, 2022

People believe they cast their vote because of the money or other gifts; out of 78 respondents, 18 respondents representing 23.07% strongly agreed,27 respondents representing 34.61% concurred that people in Dutse local government cast their vote in return for money or other gift; so from the above data, majority of the respondents 45 respondents representing a total of 57.61% agreed that people in Dutse local government cast their vote in return for money

Responses on whether Poverty Provides Human Tools for Political Violence

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	10	12.82
Agreed	29	37.17
Undecided	11	14.10
Strongly Disagreed	99	11.53
Disagreed	19	24.35
Total	78	100

Source: Research Data, 2022

In the table above shows 12, 10 respondents representing 12.82% strongly agreed that poverty served as tools for political violence, 29 respondents representing 37.17% Agreed that poverty served as tools for political violence; this shows half of the respondents agreed; 39 respondents representing 49.99% agreed that poverty served as tools for political violence in various forms such as political thuggery, hijacking of ballot box and the other form of political violence.

Respondents' Believe that Poverty has a Powerful Effect on Political Participation

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	11	14.10
Agreed	29	37.17
Undecided	10	12.82
Strongly Disagreed	9	11.53
Disagreed	19	24.35
Total	78	100

Source: Research Data, 2022

In the table above, the data showed that 11 respondents representing 14.10% strongly agreed and29 respondents representing 37.17% Agreed that Poverty has a powerful effect on political participation, while 10 respondents representing 12.82% were Neutral, 9 respondents' representing 11.53% responded of Strongly Disagree; 19 respondents' representing 24.35% Disagreed that Poverty has a powerful effect on political participation in Dutse local government. The above analysis shows that majority of the respondents – 40 people representing 51.17 agreed that Poverty has a powerful effect on political participation in Dutse local government as the highest percentage.

Table 14: Responses on Major Effect of Poverty on Political Participation

Options	F	Frequency	Р	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	1	18	2	23.07
Agreed	3	31	3	39.74
Undecided	1	18	2	33.07
Strongly Disagreed	4	4		5.12
Disagreed	7	7	8.	8.97
Total	7	78	1	100

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Source: Research Data, 2022

The above shows that 18 respondents representing 23.07% and 31 respondents representing 39.74% respectively Agreed that the major effect of Poverty on political participation in Dutse local government is due to weak political culture, corruption, illiteracy, bad government among others, hence 49 respondents who constitute the majority representing 62.74% agreed that the major effect of Poverty on political participation in Dutse local government is due to weak political culture, corruption, illiteracy, bad government among others

Responses on Poverty Results to Electoral Violence

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	11	14.10
Agreed	23	29.48
Undecided	33	23.84
Strongly Disagreed	31	39.74
Disagreed	10	12.82
Total	78	100

Source: Research Data, 2022

In the table above, 11 respondents representing 14.10% strongly agreed and 23 respondents representing 29.48% Agreed that poverty in Dutse local government always resulted to electoral violence, which mean 34 respondents representing 43.58 agreed.

Responses on whether Politicians dictates who the Electorates should Vote because of financial inducement

Options	F	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	1	19	24.35
Agreed	2	29	37.17
Undecided	9	9	11.53
Strongly Disagreed	4	4	5.12
Disagreed	1	17	21.79
Total	7	78	100

Source: Research Data, 2022

In the table above,19 respondent representing 24.35% strongly agreed and 29 respondents representing37.17% Agreed that politicians dictate who the electorates vote because of financial inducement while 9 respondents representing 11.53% were Neutral, 4 respondents representing5.12% 'Strongly Disagree'. 17 respondents representing 21.79% Disagreed. This indicates that 48 respondents representing 61.52 %believed that politicians dictate who the electorates vote because the politicians induced them financially on or before election in Dutse local government.

Responses on whether Poverty Negatively Impact on Democratic Consolidation

Options	F	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	1	14	17.94
Agreed	2	23	29.48
Undecided	1	12	15.38
Strongly Disagreed	1	15	19.23
Disagreed	1	14	17.94
Total	7	78	100

Source: Research Data, 2022

Table The above table shows that 14respondents representing 17.94% strongly agreed and 23 respondents representing 29.48% Agreed while12 respondentsrepresenting15.38% remained Neutral, 15 respondents representing 19.23% 'Strongly Disagree' and14 respondents representing 17.94% Disagreed that Poverty has negatively impact on Democratic Consolidation in Dutse local government area of Jigawa State. This indicates that 37 respondents representing 47. 42 believed that poverty has negatively impacted on the democratic consolidation in Dutse local government area of Jigawa State

Responses on the Significant Relationship between Poverty and Political Participation

Options	F	Frequency	Р	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	1	18	2	23.07
Agreed		31	3	39.74
Undecided		18	2	23.07
Strongly Disagreed	4	4		5.12
Disagreed	7	7	8.	8.97
Total	7	78		100

Source: Research Data, 2022

The table above shows that 18 respondents representing 23.07% strongly agreed that there is significant relationship between poverty and political participation in Dutse local government area of Jigawa state. 31 respondents representing 39.74% Agreed, 18 respondents representing 23.07% were Neutral, 4 respondents representing 5.12% Strongly Disagree and 7 respondents representing 8.97% disagreed; thus 49 respondents or 62.81 agreed that there is significant relationship between poverty and political participation in Dutse local government area of Jigawa state which majority were of the opinion that there is significant relationship between poverty and political participation in Dutse local government area of Jigawa state

Respondents' Suggestions towards Improving Political Participation

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	23	29.48
Agreed	41	52.56
Undecided	0	0
Strongly Disagreed	5	6.41
Disagreed	9	11.53
Total	78	100

Source: Research Data, 2022

In the tableabove,23respondents representing 29.48% strongly agreed that the issue of poverty be given adequate attention in order to increase political participation and also to reduce electoral violence in Dutse local government area of Jigawa state, 41 respondents representing 52.56% Agreed while none of the respondent were undecided, 5 respondents representing 6.41% Strongly Disagree on the suggestion. 9 respondents representing 11.53% responded that they disagreed that poverty should be given adequate attention in order to increase political participation and to reduce electoral violence in Dutse local government area of Jigawa state. Though 64 respondents or 82.04% who made the majority of the respondents agreed that poverty should be given adequate attention in order to increase political participation and also reduce electoral violence in Dutse local government area of Jigawa state and in Nigeria.

In the tableabove,23respondents representing 29.48% strongly agreed that the issue of poverty be given adequate attention in order to increase political participation and also to reduce electoral violence in Dutse local government area of Jigawa state, 41 respondents representing 52.56% Agreed while none of the respondent were undecided, 5 respondents representing 6.41% Strongly Disagree on the suggestion. 9 respondents representing 11.53% responded that they disagreed that poverty should be given adequate attention in order to increase political participation and to reduce electoral violence in Dutse local government area of Jigawa state. Though 64 respondents or 82.04% who made the majority of the respondents agreed that poverty should be given

adequate attention in order to increase political participation and also reduce electoral violence in Dutse local government area of Jigawa state and in Nigeria.

Findings of this Paper

This paper found out that unemployment, corruption, poor environment, lack of capital, lack of health care services causes of poverty not just only in Dutse local government of Jigawa state but also the country at large but cultural factors are among the major cause poverty in Jigawa state particularly in Dutse local government being the area under investigation; not only that, lack of access to income generation opportunities, families structure, lack of pragmatism in education and

usage, rural-urban drift and poor policies cause poverty. The result from this study indicated that there is high level of political participation in Dutse local government despite the lack of social amenities across the local government and the state at large; that is to say the level of political mobilization and its assimilation by the people have impacted on the active politicking in the respective wards of the local government.

Many people believed that poverty has a serious negative impact on political participation in Dutse local government area because the challenges of poverty in the area under consideration makes them asses to participate in politics not for the sake of good governance but rather because of the impact of poverty among the people so they use electioneering campaign and election period to cast their vote in return for money or other gift from the politicians, this suggest that poverty provide opportunity to politicians to use money to ascend to power in government using poor people as hoodlums for political thuggery, hijacking of ballot box among the other form of political violence; because people in local government cast their vote in return for money or other gift poverty they don't engage in electoral violence, it could be deduced that the level of political mobilization and assimilation of people have impacted on the active politicking because politicians dictate who the electorates vote for because they induce the electorates financially.

The result of the study also revealed that Poverty affect political participation in Dutse local government due to weak political culture, corruption, illiteracy, bad government; so for the fact that poverty has negatively impact on Democratic Consolidation, this shows that there is significant relationship between poverty and political participation because poverty tend to determine the level of political participation by the people; respondents held that the possible solution to improve political participation in the local government is to give poverty adequate attention in order to increase political participation and also reduce electoral violence in Dutse local government, Jigawa state and Nigeria in general.

Conclusion

Based on the findings from the study, it could be

deduced that, there is a high rate of poverty in the area under study and Nigeria in general; political participation which serves to consolidate democracy and governance to alleviate the menace of poverty has continued to serve the interest of the ruling class to the detriment of the masses which negates the reasons for political participation and democratic principles, Majority of the people which are supposed to be the beneficiaries policies of government on poverty eradication are being manipulated by politicians to ascend to power. The research also reveals that the low political participation side by side whit pervasive poverty in Dutse, Jigawa State and Nigeria at large has posed a considerable threat to Nigeria's democratization process.

The issue of poverty must be addressed to allow full political participation by the people; democracy does not thrive well in an environment infested with poverty, the findings in this research suggest that democracy cannot not flourish well in Dutse local government area of Jigawa state where the rate of poverty is high and that the challenge of poverty to the survival of democracy has been monumental raising fear of the possibility of democratic reversal if urgent measures are not taken. Therefore, to consolidate democracy in Dutse local government, the political class must embrace good governance through prudent use of available resources, provision of social amenities and critical infrastructures so as to reduce or eliminate poverty among the people and allow them to participate in the political development of the local government, the state and the country at large.

Recommendations

From the foregoing, it is pertinently clear that the phenomenon of poverty in Nigeria is a reality tied to the nature and character of the capitalistic Nigerian state, and its criminal elements with modern manifestation of the culture of impunity among the political and ruling class that uses the instrument of poverty to ascend to power. Based on the findings made from the study, the following recommendations are merely proffered.

1. Government should provide employment and create a favorable environment for

- wealth creation aimed at eradicating poverty among the populace.
- 2. Corrupt politicians should be discouraged from enticing the masses with money to vote for them.
- 3. People should be allowed to participated in the decision making process regarding steps taken by government towards eradicating poverty among the people.
- 4. There should also be a diversification of state or national economy in order to increase the income level of the entire population of the states or nation at large so that people can participate in politics freely.

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