

**International
Institute of
Social Studies**

Erasmus

**Three Decades of Persistent Poverty in Nigeria:
A Historical-Institutional Perspective**

A Research Paper presented by:

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Nigeria

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for obtaining the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Major:

Social Policy for Development

SPD

Specialisations:

International Political Economy and Development

Local Development Strategies

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December 2020

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List of Acronyms

CCT	Conditional Cash Transfer
CHA	Comparative Historical Analysis
CJ	Critical Juncture
COPE	In Care of the People
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
FEAP	Family Economic Advancement Programme
GDP	Growth Domestic Product
HI	Historical Institutionalism
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NAPEP	National Poverty Eradication Programme
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NCCHPP	National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy
NDE	National Directorate of Employment
NEEDS	National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy
NSIP	National Social Investment Programme
PAP	Poverty Alleviation Programme
PEM	Punctuated Equilibrium Model
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Acknowledgements

I extend deep gratitude to Amrita Chhachhi and Karim Kniou for all their support during this process. I consider myself fortunate to have had both experts in their respective fields guide me in the development of this academic work. To my discussants and ISS pals, thank you, and to my lecturers whose teachings have contributed to my knowledge beyond the confines of this paper, I am grateful.

My experience in the Netherlands has been a journey of smiles and pain, uncertainties, and hope cumulating into a memory forever etched in my story. For this, I am thankful. I started this journey with the intent of deviating from my previous area of expertise, and by delving into poverty studies and political economy, I am confident to say that I achieved my study objective.

To the greatest cheerleaders anyone could ever ask for – ndi ezinulo m, a huru m gi n'anya!

Abstract

The paper navigates a pluri-causal trajectory to explain why poverty in Nigeria persists despite relative economic growth and decades of implementing poverty alleviation programmes. Several scholars of poverty in Nigeria enumerate corruption, political instability, unemployment, and poor educational system amongst a few others as the reasons for the persistence of poverty. The paper, however, argues that there is something deeper beyond these factors considered symptoms and hypothesise that certain institutional reasons and historical moments though compounded by these symptoms are responsible for the persistence of poverty in Nigeria. Utilising secondary analysis and by adopting a historical institutionalist perspective, this paper presents a trajectory depicting that certain historical moments portrayed through critical junctures in Nigeria's historical timelines left legacies that did not end after the occurrence of the critical juncture but kept reproducing and influencing poverty dynamics. The mechanism of the legacy reproduction exists through institutions and actors within the political, economic and governance structures. The critical junctures discussed in this paper include the military coup in 1966 and the return to democracy in 1999. Through the analysis of economic policies and poverty alleviation/reduction programmes, also taking into consideration an institutional analysis, the paper discusses how the legacies of the critical junctures are visible in the implementation of policies and programmes.

Relevance to Development Studies

The relevance of the paper to development studies is centred in the topic of discourse – poverty. Poverty is a global and national issue that is often a measure of development and prosperity. This development issue is pervasive and persistent in Nigeria like many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa but particularly peculiar to the country is its resource wealth which makes the reality a bewildering paradox. The dominant discourse of the paradox of poverty in Nigeria concentrates majorly on the resource curse theory and the dependency theory that links poverty simply to colonisation and extraction of resources.

It is ethically necessary to reflect on dominant theories while exploring other alternate explanations and the window into colonisation proves a logical consideration in reflection of the historical argument the paper focuses on. The decision for the inattention to the resource curse theory stems from the availability of extensive arguments and counter arguments surrounding the theory. This paradox of economic growth and persisting poverty despite the implementation of poverty reduction programmes makes Nigeria a perplexing yet ideal case for study for an interest in the school of persistence vis-à-vis alternate theoretical perspectives.

By approaching poverty in Nigeria from a historical perspective, the research makes the argument of path dependence and though it takes root in the context of Nigeria, it can provide insight into similar political regimes and socio-economic landscape.

Keywords

Poverty, Critical Juncture, Institutions, Historical Perspectives, Economy/Economic Policy, Political Regimes

Chapter 1 : Introduction and Research Focus

1.1 Research Problem

1.1.1 Situating the Problematique: Poverty in Nigeria

When poverty is discussed in today's climes, the image often conceived revolves around the number of people whose daily living fall below \$1 as set in the 90s, \$1.25 as set in 2005 or \$1.90 as revised in September 2015 (UNDP 2016). However, the lives and experiences of persons in poverty are not limited to this conversation and differs within societies. The notion of declining global poverty is widespread among scholarship (Fischer 2018; Minoiu et al 2011) but this does not paint the picture for every country. For Nigeria, the converse is the reality as trends are increasing.

A National Bureau of Statistics' official publication documented an increase in the country's poverty incidence from 27.2 percent to 69.0 percent between 1980 and 2010 (Dapel 2018). The prevalence of poverty equally shows similar trend. As at 2010/11, 35% of the total population were below the national income poverty line which increased to 39% by 2016 (World Bank 2017). According to the 2019 Human Development Index Report, the prevalence of income poverty was 46% with multi-dimensional poverty at 57% (UNDP 2019).

Different scholars have made attempts to explain poverty through several definitions. Watt defined it as being in a state of inability to meet one's needs; Baratz and Grisby referred to it as a condition involving some deprivation and associated with inadequate economic resources but not exclusively; and for Edozien, it entailed having inadequate income to support a minimum standard of living (Betiang et al 2013).

Amartya Sen (1992) takes a more holistic view of poverty, describing it as capability deprivation which indicates the lack of opportunity to achieve minimal acceptable levels of functioning such as adequate nourishment, clothing and shelter, ability to avoid preventable morbidity, and social achievements such as being able to partake in community life and appear in public without shame. This view recognises poverty as a determinant of the social, economic, and political environment.

Nigeria has a rich political history having experienced both military and democratic rule. It stands as the most populous African nation with over 190 million people as of 2019, and a multi-ethnic and culturally diverse population across 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory. Geographically, the country has a northern and southern region which is further divided into six geo-political zones – north-west, north-east, north-central, south-west, south-east and south-south.

The country's poverty landscape is equally non-homogenous as a coherent divide exists between the Northern and Southern region with the former bearing the brunt (NBS 2010). For instance, in Sokoto state located in the north-west, 87.7 percent of people lived under the poverty line in 2019 compared to the lowest rate of 4.5 percent in Lagos state which is located in the south-west (NBS 2020). Lagos state is the largest economic hub in Nigeria with a gross output of \$136 billion in 2017 (Pilling 2018), presenting an ideal case of low poverty levels vis-à-vis economic growth.

Several studies document that economic growth is an important dynamic for reducing poverty in developing countries (Adams 2003; Anderson et al 2016; Dauda 2017) but the narratives differ with a notable discourse by Adams (2003) documenting that the relationship between the two variables is stronger when economic growth is measured by survey mean

income (consumption), as opposed to when it is measured by GDP per capita which albeit still has a relationship but not as strong as the former. Not focusing on the relationship strength but on the notion of potentiality between the two variables, Nigeria is a deviant case as despite its substantial economic growth, poverty remains unabated (Anderson et al 2016; Dauda 2017) which is the puzzle.

This reality makes Nigeria a perplexing yet ideal case for study in relation to poverty persistence. Despite an age-long discourse with a myriad of scholarships on poverty, there are still unfolding debates in the field. This study looks at three decades 1990-1999; 2000-2009; and 2010-2019 to understand why poverty remains unabated in relation to the puzzle and several decades of implementing poverty alleviation¹ programmes while considering periods beyond these decades. For analysis, the paper will discuss trends and changes in political regimes.

For instance, the country returned to democratic rule in 1999 and by 2001, the first agency mandated to tackle poverty – the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) was established. However, before NAPEP, during NAPEP and post-NAPEP, different regimes and administrations implemented several poverty alleviation programmes which calls to question why poverty is not reducing despite the implementation of these programmes.

Prior to further discussing the justification of the research and methodical approach considered, it is important to briefly discuss the country's economic structure and growth trend, and how poverty is conceptualised and measured which is itself a political debate.

Conceptualisation and Measurement of Poverty in Nigeria

The conceptualisation, measurement, and efforts to address poverty is an age-long and continuous debate which most scholars trace to Speenhamland in the 17th century (Block et al 2003). The world has increasingly sought ways to address and/or group persons as poor with distinctions of deserving and non-deserving in the provision of 'altruistic' support. In recent decades, the discourse on measurement has ranged from absolute or relative poverty measurements to criticisms and justifications of specific approaches (such as human capability/multidimensional, money-metric, livelihood, and social exclusion) to the means of determining poverty lines, and feminists theorisations (Fischer 2018; Saith 2005).

Nigeria conceptualises poverty as multi-dimensional on the notion that no single indicator can capture all aspects of poverty. This multi-dimensional view is characterized on the availability of specific necessities such as food, shelter, clothing, education, healthcare, sanitation facilities, pipe-borne water, and access to information (NBS 2011). Conceptualising poverty as multidimensional provides the standpoint to view poverty beyond living below a particular politically ascertained line but also in terms of (in)access to resources, care and opportunities to enforce agency or the lack thereof, and having a sense of belonging, dignity, empowerment, participation and the awareness of human rights (Chhachhi et al 2009).

Poverty rate in Nigeria is statistically determined based on income and/or consumption, assigning numbers to living standards for easier computation. This is done through three approaches - absolute poverty approach; relative poverty approach; and money-metric dollar per day measurement. However, for international comparison, Nigeria relies on absolute poverty measure and the dollar per day measure (NBS 2011).

Absolute poverty approach is measured by setting a fixed poverty line estimating a level of wellbeing and identifying people below the arbitrarily fixed line (Arndt et al 2016; Foster 1998). To determine absolute poverty and derive the poverty line, Nigeria takes into consideration the multi-dimensional concept relying on three steps – the minimum food needs required to satisfy daily calorie needs; the non-food needs such as access to education, good healthcare, housing/shelter, water and sanitation facilities and access to information amongst

others; and the third being the aggregation of the food and non-food measures (NBS 2011). In calculating this caloric threshold, two approaches can be utilised – the per capita approach and the adult equivalent approach. The per capita approach sets 3,000 calories per person as the minimum daily calorie requirement while the adult equivalent approach considers factors such as sex, age and/or pregnancy when calculating the calorie requirement (NBS 2011).

Relative approach uses current data to generate the poverty threshold considering the standard of living for the population and defines the cut-off as some percentage of this standard or a fraction of the central measure of income such as the mean or median (Foster 1998; Madden 2000). For Nigeria, relative poverty measurement is based on household consumption expenditure per capita. Households with per capita expenditures that are less than two-thirds of the poverty line are considered as poor, while households with expenditure above the line are non-poor (NBS 2011). The relative measure was the country's official poverty measure up till 2009/10 when it changed to the absolute measure to allow for international comparison (NBS 2011).

The third approach and second currently used by Nigeria to capture poverty rates is the money-metric dollar per day. This approach is often known as the income or 'monetary' approach and is the most popular, most contested, and restrictive approach which serves as the background for several development goals and their poverty reduction targets (Fischer 2018). For Nigeria, the money-metric dollar per day measure is set at US\$2 a day and US\$1.25 in the case of extreme poverty (NBS 2011).

With respect to the three decades of analysis², the poverty line used during the first decade with a reference point of 1992 was N395 per person per month which was two-thirds of mean household consumption expenditure per capita while extreme poverty line was pegged at N198 per person per month, one-third of mean household consumption expenditure per capita. In relation to the dollar per day measurement, the poverty line of N395 per person per month was slightly higher than the equivalent of US\$1.00 per day adjusted for purchasing parity (World Bank 1996).

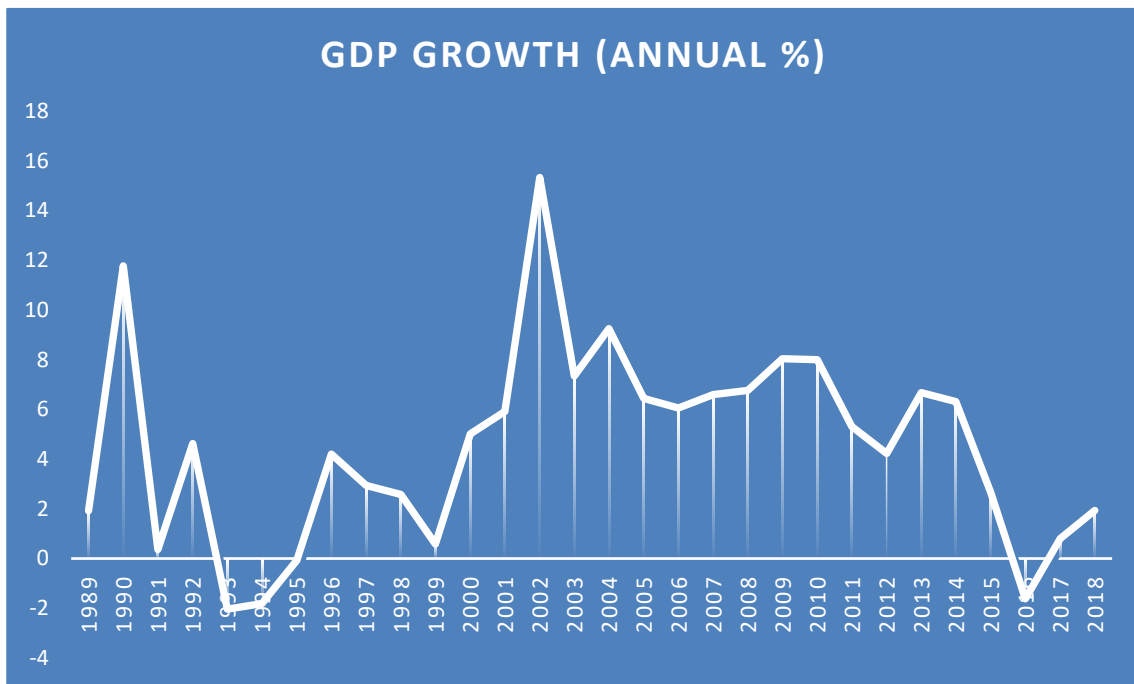
In calculating for the second decade referenced at 2003/04, the threshold which was considered poor was ₦2,403 per person per month (approx. \$1 per day), while for the third decade referenced with the 2009/10 data, poverty line was pegged at ₦4602 per person per month (approx. \$1 per day), accounting for inflation and depreciation of the Naira (NBS 2011). From 2010 till date, the \$2 per day measurement has been utilised as the poverty line for Nigeria.

Economic Structure and Growth in Nigeria: Three Decades

In the 1990s, economic growth in Nigeria as calculated by the annual Growth Domestic Product (GDP) occurred at a slow rate, but by the early 2000s, growth initially showed a positive trend but fluctuated downwardly and stagnated, by 2014 economic growth fell consistently till date reaching an unprecedented minus (-1.62) negative growth rate by 2016. The country also experienced a minus negative growth between 1993 and 1995.

The GDP indicator captures the sum of the gross value added by all resident producers in the economy plus any product taxes, subtracting any subsidies not included in the value of the products. However, it is calculated without making deductions for depreciation of fabricated assets or for depletion and degradation of natural resources (World Bank 2020a). The aggregates presented in the chart are based on constant 2010 U.S. dollars.

Figure 1.1: Annual GDP Growth Rate from 1989 – 2018



Source: Chart developed by Author with World Bank Data Set 1989 – 2018

The economic structure of Nigeria has limited diversification with its primary product oriented and dominated by agriculture and crude oil production (Edo et al 2014). The oil/gas sector drives the Nigerian economy, in terms of revenues, foreign exchange and investments. In 2011, this sector accounted for 79 percent of federal revenues and 71 percent of export revenue; and contributed 14.7 percent to the GDP in 2011 and 12.9 percent in the second quarter of 2013 while agriculture accounted for 40 percent of GDP in 2011 (Edo et al 2014). As of 2018, services (value added) made up 52% of the GDP, higher than oil revenues and agriculture (World Bank 2020a).

Agriculture was the dominant economic activity in terms of export before the oil boom of the 1970s, declining from 75 percent share of export in 1965 to 3 percent in 2012 but has commenced recovery in recent times (Edo et al 2014; Collier et al 2008). However, despite huge inflows of revenues from oil, waste and corruption has been widely documented as undermining economic growth in the country rather than the classical ‘Dutch disease’ syndrome that is often associated with natural resource curse theory (Collier et al 2008).

Contrast to the popular notion of economic growth and the rippling effect of poverty reduction, despite considerable appreciable increases in gross domestic product (GDP) especially since the early years of the 2000s, poverty incidence apparently increased in the 1990s and have persisted till date. (Dauda 2019).

1.1.2 Establishing Persistence and the Rationale for a Historical Perspective

Traditionally, studies of poverty have predominantly focused on trends, debates on appropriate testing or measurement mechanisms, demography risks of poverty, or the growth-inequality-poverty nexus. Little or not nearly enough emphasis is placed on institutions or historical approaches in the understanding of poverty. This trend is however evolving as more scholars are researching into how institutions contribute to shaping poverty dynamics in developing countries (Brady et al 2017). The reality is that poverty exists in Nigeria.

Notwithstanding, the concept of ‘persistence’ is a much deeper debate but first, can it be empirically determined that poverty persists/has persisted in Nigeria?

Poverty is documented to have exacerbated in Nigeria from 1985 with about 43 percent of Nigerians documented as poor (NBS 2005; Omoniyi 2018), a burgeoning increase from 15% in 1960 when the country attained independence (Oshewolo 2010). A decline to 31.4 percent was observed in the incidence of poverty by 1992/3, and while this shows a relatively sharp decline, the size of the population considered poor only slightly reduced from 35.8 million to 34.7 million (Thomas et al 2002). By 2003/4, the national poverty head count had increased to 64.2 percent and by 2009/10, 62.6 percent of Nigerians were living in poverty according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS 2011).

The most recent data from the National Bureau of Statistics’ ‘2019 Poverty and Inequality in Nigeria’ report documents that 40.1 percent totalling 82.9 million currently live in poverty (NBS 2020). The reality differs across both urban and rural population and the geographical south and north divide, with the latter in both cases bearing the poverty burden (NBS 2020). While this reality is relevant to the poverty discourse in Nigeria and should be further explored by scholars to analyse the role/impact of historical institutions on the poverty divergence of the divide, this paper considers and discusses poverty in Nigeria in its totality.

It has been empirically established that poverty has persisted in Nigeria for over 3 decades with several notions on the reasons behind the persistence. Likewise, several authors have developed publications with empirical evidence highlighting this ‘persistence’ (Umu-koro 2013; Dauda 2019). This is also the focus of the paper, to understand the reasons behind the persistence, though utilising a different approach.

The reasons attributed to persisting poverty in Nigeria include bad governance and political instability, corruption, unemployment and inequality (Omoniyi 2018; Ogbeide et al 2015; Dauda 2019), of which inequality is evidenced to have a two-way causality flow (Ogbeide et al 2015). These leading explanations are often interconnected. For instance, high levels of unemployment is attributed to bad governance, weak policy environment, inadequate infrastructure, and the lack of access to improved technology (Omoniyi 2018).

Bad governance is linked to institutions and takes precedence in most conversations on factors responsible for the poverty persistence at the macro level (Omoniyi 2018). A recurring series of information in relation to the persistence paradox includes policy environment, enabling environment, infrastructure, politics and ineffective leadership, and the poor implementation of policies. Embedded in all these reasons is the role and importance of institutions in the discourse, unearthing a consideration of how they emanate long-lasting influence in the social, political, and economic landscape, and a necessity for process tracing into historical timelines to examine these claims.

Addressing poverty has been a development conversation since the country’ independence from colonial rule spanning six decades ago, though the alarming increase in poverty levels spurred approximately three decades ago (Hussaini 2014), framing the decision to focus on three decades while allowing freedom to analyse earlier moments considered influencing to the period of analysis. To fully comprehend this reality requires the understanding of path dependence and how certain moments become structured in time, shaping, and influencing the contemporary. This connotes the need for an institutional assessment vis-à-vis a historical standpoint.

To understand the paradox of persistence, the paper will adopt a historical perspective. This differs from history as the objective of utilising historical perspective as an analytical approach is to sharpen one’s understanding of the present through a reflection and analysis of the past. There is no current study which has looked at the three decades from a historical

perspective to understand why poverty persists. A study that has come close to this is the 2018 study of “Three Decades of Poverty Mobility in Nigeria: The Trapped, the Freed, and the Never Trapped” by Zuhuman Dapel. The author analysed household surveys (1980–2010) to document poverty transitions of households across time and space in relation to the (in)escape of poverty in Nigeria.

In this paper, the following sectors and areas will be assessed to answer the research questions – governance in relation to poverty, poverty alleviation programmes, economic trajectory, and relevant policies.

According to Sir John Vereker, the poverty problem of Nigeria is not really poverty of resources and living potential standards but rather, a result of poverty of leadership considering the amount of resources available to the country (Richards 2001). This sums up several debates on the poverty discourse in Nigeria, and in addition to the role of institutions which are interconnected, it raises the question – how does the poverty in leadership translate to poverty among the populace and how is it reproduced?

1.3 Research Objectives and Methodology

1.3.1 Research Objectives and Questions

The objective of the study is to analyse the poverty landscape in Nigeria through a historical and institutional perspective to understand why poverty persists in the realm of plenty and the reality of diverse efforts to address it. For an in-depth analysis, the study will examine one poverty alleviation programme implemented within each decade, as well as one economic policy implemented within similar timelines. The paper will assess the relevant social, political, and economic landscape to explore the historical contexts that have contributed to the increasing poverty trend and the role institutions have played in shaping the poverty landscape.

By approaching poverty from a historical perspective in line with the research objective, this paper does not seek to present a monocausal model or response but will navigate a pluricausal trajectory while seeking to unearth if a solution to halting the trend can be found in historical timelines. While the study takes root in the context of Nigeria, it can provide insight into similar political regimes and socio-economic landscape.

Research Questions

Why has poverty in Nigeria persisted despite economic growth and the implementation of poverty reduction programmes and what arguments can explain this paradox?

Sub Questions

1. What are the historical and institutional reasons for the persistence of poverty in Nigeria and how have these reasons/factors contributed to the persisting poverty paradox?
2. What economic policies were implemented within the three decades and how did they contribute to the poverty trend?
3. In what ways have the poverty alleviation programmes models implemented in the last 3 decades contributed to the poverty trend?
4. What factors could reverse this trend?

1.3.2 Research Design

The research design for this study is a descriptive-typical and exploratory causal study. The methodology will feature the secondary analysis of existing literatures, reports and relevant policy documents which will be grounded with a critical analysis of findings using a theoretical framework.

1.3.3 Data Sources

The paper analysed literatures on Nigeria’s history, institutions and political regimes within the study timeline and beyond; socio-economic and political factors responsible for poverty persistence; poverty trends; poverty alleviation programmes; and relevant economic policies implemented within the study timeline.

The resources analysed for this paper covered the colonial era and post-colonial era till date. These resources³ included books, journal articles, conference papers, newspaper articles, video and internet publications, amongst others which were majorly culled from google scholar, academia.edu, and research gate.

Table 1.1: Coordination Matrix between Research Questions and Methods

Research Questions	Data Gathering Method
Main Question: Why has poverty in Nigeria persisted despite economic growth and the implementation of poverty reduction programmes and what arguments can explain this paradox?	
What are the historical and institutional reasons for the persistence of poverty in Nigeria and how have these reasons/factors contributed to the persisting poverty paradox?	<p>Secondary analysis of journal articles on the historical and institutional analysis of the poverty dynamics and landscape and in Nigeria within 1990 to 2019 (and beyond where relevant) including historical moments in relation to poverty</p> <p>Secondary analysis of journal articles on poverty and related policy institutions, key roles, actors and ideas that shaped/shaping the poverty landscape in Nigeria in relation to the increasing trend</p> <p>Comparison of findings with an analysis of the concepts and theoretical frameworks</p>
What economic policies were implemented within the three decades and how did they contribute to the poverty trend?	Literature review of journal articles on related economic policies with poverty implications that were implemented between 1990 to 2019 (and beyond where relevant)
In what ways were the poverty alleviation programmes models implemented in the last 3 decades contributed to the poverty trend?	Secondary analysis of journal articles and national reports of poverty alleviation/reduction programmes in Nigeria with focus on three programmes (one for each decade)
What factors could reverse this trend?	Analytical framing from results/findings

Table 1.2: Levels of Analysis

Areas of Analysis	1990 – 1999	2000 – 2009	2010 – 2019
Poverty alleviation programme	Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP)	National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) In Care of the People (COPE)	
Economic policy	Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP)	Vision 20:2020; and Transformation Agenda (TA)	
Institutional analysis	National Directorate of Employment (NDE)	National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP)	
Historical moments	Colonisation and Nigeria’s Independence	Military Regimes	

1.3.4 Study Limitation

The research limitations are primarily based on how far the studies documenting historical timelines are reliable. The erasure of history is a major problem which plagued the colonial and particularly, the military era as some regimes resolved to erase large aspects of history to control how history is documented and manipulate the future (Odom 2008). To mitigate the impact of this erasure, the paper adopted quality assurance mechanism through conducting a wide search and consulting two or more articles before a narrative is adopted and reflected in the paper.

The analysis is also limited by substantial gaps in the availability of quality data on measures of poverty and access to comprehensive evaluative reports on poverty alleviation programmes and economic policies in Nigeria. Hence, the paper had to pull from a myriad of articles and rely on brief descriptions of scope with limited information on outcomes. A mitigating strategy was to leverage the available secondary literatures while analysing findings critically through a theoretical lens.

1.4 Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 consists of a background detailing the focus of the paper and literature review: it situates the problematique; discusses the economic structure of Nigeria and the dynamics of poverty conceptualisation and measurement; provides the justification for the research; and illustrates the research objectives, questions, and methodology. Chapter 2 discusses the theoretical framework for analysis which is historical institutionalism with major emphasis on the critical juncture model. Chapter 3 and 4 builds on the theoretical framework to analyse critical junctures in Nigeria's historical timeline as reflected in political regime transitions with chapter 3 focusing on one critical juncture and chapter 4 on another. The final chapter – chapter 5 concludes the paper building on findings discussed in Chapter 3 and 4.

Chapter 2 : Theoretical framework – Historical Institutionalism

2.1 Introduction

The theoretical framework being utilised for this study analysis is historical institutionalism to create an array of exploration within the structure-agency discourse. While historical institutionalism is more structural in analysis, an in-depth understanding of the discourse reveals that structure cannot be disassociated from agency.

Historical institutionalism (HI) has been used to explain democracy and governance regimes in various parts of the world (Erdmann 2011) but has been rarely applied in the understanding of poverty dynamics and trends to explain the problems of poverty reduction despite its potential as a theoretical framework. HI provides an approach to studying politics and social change through its attention to real-world empirical questions, its historical orientation, and by concentrating on the ways in which institutions structure and shape behaviour and outcomes (Steinmo 2008). It places emphasis not just on the role of history but also the role of institutions in shaping the present, unearthing path dependence and path shaping.

An in-depth understanding of historical institutionalism reveals how connected history is to the present and how institutions and their policy manifestations are continuously replicating historical events in current times revealing a diachronic relationship within time and space. It emanates from an understanding that history and institutions are not dis-embedded. Like the structure-agency debate, the material with a big ‘M’ will posit that institutions are structures within a historical context actively influenced and shaped by history while the ideational will posit that institutions shape history, the paper tilts more to an ideational-material argument realising how they act and interact with each other to produce outcomes that can be studied both historically and institutionally.

For this study, I use historical institutionalism as a theoretical lens to provide a framework for the analysis of the institutionalism of poverty reduction and the implementation of poverty alleviation and reduction programmes as a response in Nigeria within the last three decades. To ground the study in the theoretical framework of historical institutionalism, this section of the paper will briefly discuss theories that support historical arguments and exhibit relevance to the paper.

These theories include the punctuated equilibrium model which is a popular theory in the field of public policies, the Acemoglu and Robinson’s argument of ‘why nations fail’ which is a dominant theoretical view in the global poverty discourse especially in relation to sub-Saharan African and Latin American countries, and an alternate theoretical approach – the critical juncture model. The critical juncture model argues that certain critical moments or events that occurred in earlier timelines were important and remain important as they influence the contemporary reality. The theories will first be elaborated and then a case made for selecting the theory to be applied in this study.

2.2 A Punctuated Equilibrium Model

The punctuated equilibrium model is credited to Frank R. Baumgartner and Bryan D. Jones whose initial observation from a historical insight, showed that public policies were characterized by long periods of stability and short periods of radical change occurring at intervals, and led to their development of a model to question the idea that public policies evolve in a

regular and gradual process. (NCCHPP 2018; Givel 2010). Public policy and organisation subsystems are largely autonomous and unconstrained to democratic principles, and usually composed of few actors who benefit from these systems and thus, erect barriers and defence mechanisms to protect their interest (NCCHPP 2018).

Given this dynamic, these systems/subsystems are particularly resistant to change, thus requiring a drastic moment or event for change to occur. To further understand the model, the National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy (2018) highlights two key concepts that interact and explain the continual strengthening and possible weakening of the systems – policy images and policy venues. As the name suggests, policy images refer to the way public policies are portrayed and discussed in the public. Though factual, it is subjected to interpretation through the lens of beliefs and values. In line with this, the subsystems work to project the positive and suppress the negative facts represented in public policies.

The second concept refers to organisations and decision-making institutional locations that either function in the decision-making capacity or as influencers in the policy image. The interaction between these two concepts, explain the creation, maintenance, change and destruction of political sub-systems (NCCHPP 2018). There is a positive – negative balance, in the sense that when policy image is positive, subsystems remain strengthened and thrive, conversely, when negative as a result of events or unforeseen actions, the policy subsystems are affected and inadequacies highlighted. The two concepts can be mutually reinforcing.

In explaining radical decisions from the past, it places the policy process on a dual foundation of political institutions and rational decision-making while projecting the role of these two concepts/elements (True et al 2007). The theory depicts how these concepts by mutually reinforcing within policy processes can be both obstacles as well as avenues for change which make the theory relevant to policy discourse and outcomes (True et al 2007; Cairney 2012). These concepts are sometimes documented using different nomenclature by different PEM scholars but represent the same idea. For instance, True et al (2007) refers to the concepts as issue definition and agenda setting, while Cairney (2012) discusses it as policy frame and agenda setting.

The model makes a case for policies taking into consideration norms and institutions, regarding not just the structure of the policy and implementation but also the factors surrounding its emergence (Goertz 2003). However, several studies have critiqued its universality and lack of precision, as well as documented that the ideology and deductive argument it presents is not often valid as a theoretical standpoint (Givel 2010; NCCHPP 2018). This criticism is largely disputed by core scholars of the theory reinforcing its prominence in the explanation of both stability and punctuated policy change in organisational and political processes.

2.3 Why Nations Fail: Inclusive and Extractive Institutions

The question of why some nations are wealthy and powerful and others remain poor has intrigued social and political scientists for ages and produced numerous hypotheses. In the book *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty*, Daren Acemoglu and James Robinson (2012) discussed and largely dismissed several hypotheses while projecting an alternate hypothesis revolving around the notion of *institutions* which proves increasingly valid.

The first series of argument focused on the nature of economic and political institutions of nation-states. The two-contrasting nature of institutions depicted were inclusive and extractive, of which the workings of the economy and responsiveness of the population were depicted as largely dependent on the nature of institutions made to thrive by the political regime.

Economic institutions are created by the society, and in this context are intertwined with the state in its ability to coordinate, regulate and maintain stability. To the authors, inclusive economic institutions are synonymous with growth and prosperity including access to public services, technological advancement and education that contributes to more productivity. Conversely, extractive institutions are designed for exploitation, extracting income and resources from one or more groups in the society to benefit a different group.

Like economic institutions, political institutions can either be inclusive or extractive. However, they are more structured and take the position of path shaping in the debate determining the power dynamics in the society and synergistically influencing economic institutions. The authors argue that while inclusion and power distribution is important, political centralisation is what deters a downhill into chaos.

Extractive political institutions concentrate power in the hands of few elites who utilise this power to extract resources and structure extractive economic institutions that sustain the extractive political institutions, depicting a co-dependency. Inclusive political institutions contribute to inclusive economic institutions due to functional systems that cannot easily be undermined. The summary of the first series of argument points to a notion that nations fail due to extractive economic institutions that are supported by extractive political institutions that constraint and obstruct economic growth.

The second series of argument is centred on why poor nations do not choose prosperity despite an understanding of inclusive and extractive institutions. The debate proposes that inclusive economic institutions potentially redistribute income and power which clashes with the interest of predatory political regimes, thus the decision to retain the status quo. Economic growth is often described as transformative and destabilizing to old structures, introducing a concept of creative destruction. This does not mean that extractive institutions do not achieve economic growth, but this is only feasible and allowed when it does not interfere with the influence and power of the political regime.

Another core argument posed by the authors is that extractive political institutions do not produce sustainable growth and development making reference to China and predicting that the growth experienced by the nation will end due to the extractive nature of its political institutions. This is a minimalist and unconvincing argument expressed by the authors without an inclination to how long before such economy will seemingly topple. In addition, for decades, the Chinese economy has sustained an upward economic growth trend and currently shows no trend of failing. This stance does not however, ultimately dispute the credibility of the limitations of extractive institutions.

For change to occur, the authors indicate the need for a rupture or a punctuation that disrupts the antecedent reality. This was theorised as a critical juncture referring to a major event or cumulation of factors that disrupts the existing economic or political equilibrium in a society. Critical junctures are neither necessarily positive events nor result in positive outcomes but are often defining in a society's history. Its emergence can give rise to the opportunity to end the cycle of extractive institutions, enabling more inclusive ones to emerge or it can intensify the already existent extractive institutions in a society.

2.4 Critical Juncture Model

The critical juncture model is one of the many theories within the framework of historical institutionalism that tries to explain path dependence. The model is quite popular in comparative-historical analysis (CHA) as it makes possible a means to study political origins, legacies or changes, alongside important institutional reforms and arrangements that have long-

lasting influence on the social and political environment (Capoccia 2015; Collier et al 2002). Collier and Collier (2002: 29) defined a critical juncture as:

“a period of significant change, which typically occurs in distinct ways in different countries (or in other units of analysis) and which is hypothesized to produce distinct legacies”.

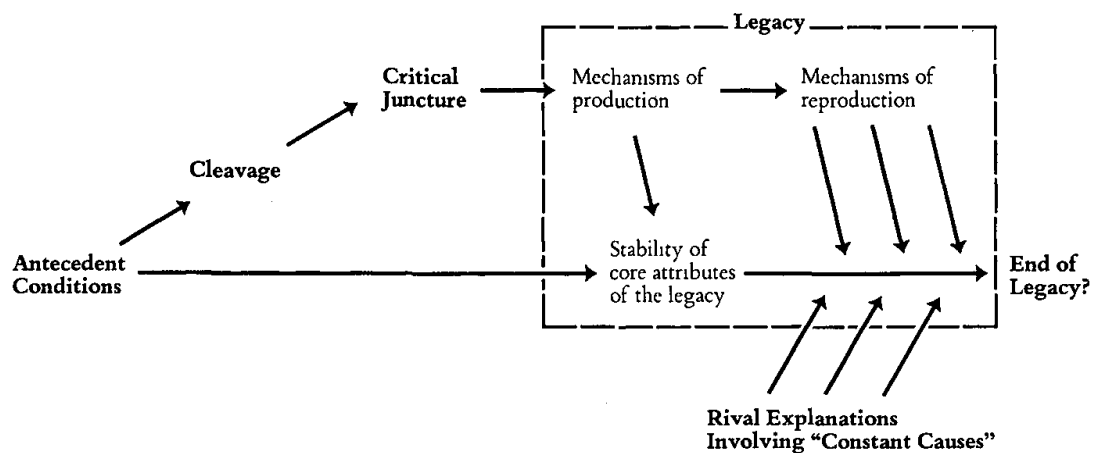
A major phenomenon surrounding the model of critical juncture is the concept of temporality especially in connotation to long-term patterns. Another important concept is that of institutionalism, denoting majorly to the theory of new institutionalism which doesn't solely focus on institutions themselves but adopts a sociological viewpoint that recognises institutions as agents in themselves, as well as how they interact, influence and shape the social, economic and political environment, while being equally influenced by the environment including social actors, thereby attaining structuration.

Within a unit of analysis, there may be one or more critical junctures. In this context, analysing a critical juncture requires first, the identification of what can be considered a critical juncture. This is most relatable to a certain historical moment that plays a key causal role in shaping the path of development an institution embodies, a path that has a long time bearing and persists long after the moment has passed (Capoccia 2015). This persistence does not simply exist but constitutes mechanisms of reproduction that sustains or produces outcomes after the critical juncture has occurred.

To identify what constitutes a critical juncture, Collier et al (2002) discusses three components that constitutes the concept and five elements that must be considered. The three components include a. the claim or recognition that a decisive change occurred within each case or unit of analysis; b. the claim that this change is distinct in the case studied or that it took place in distinct ways in different cases (in the case of comparative analysis); and, c. the explanatory hypothesis is proven true as the hypothesized critical juncture produced a legacy – thereby asserting that the historical moment identified is indeed, a critical juncture (Collier et al 2002).

In addition to these components, five elements must be considered: the antecedent conditions, cleavage(s) or crisis, components of the legacy, rival explanations, and the end of the legacy (Collier et al 2002).

Figure 2.1: Elements of the Critical Juncture Framework



Source: Collier, R.B. and Collier, D. (2002) 'Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labour Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America'

The antecedent conditions refer to a “*base line*” (pp. 30) used to assess the critical juncture and legacy. These conditions are related to the legacy depicting continuity which shows

that the impact or causal relationship is not halted or interfered with by the critical juncture. The second element – the cleavage is a resultant of the antecedent condition(s) that triggers the critical juncture.

The third element comprises of three components: The *Mechanisms of production* of the legacy, the *Mechanisms of reproduction* of the legacy, and the *stability of the core attributes of the legacy*. The first component posits that the legacy is produced not as an immediate reaction to the critical juncture but is shaped by and becomes structured in time through a series of events. In relation to the mechanism of reproduction, series of events, most notably institutional and political processes contribute to the stability and structuration of the legacy. The third component describes the basic attributes and visible outcomes that are resultants of the critical juncture (Collier et al 2002).

The fourth element proposes a converse on rival explanations often involving “constant causes” (Collier et al 2002: 31) to make certain that a critical juncture occurred which is depicted in an argument detailing a distinct historical cause(s) as opposed to frequently occurring constant causes. Finally, the fifth element purports that an end of the legacy is inevitable and must occur at some point which must be adequately considered. All these components and element are important in the analytical application of the critical juncture model, in addition to the concept of process tracing.

2.5 Adopting a Theory for Analysis

The paper is grounded in the perspective that historical moments and causes are backdrops to the manifestations of certain factors within a legacy deemed responsible for the persistence of poverty. While several scholars of poverty in Nigeria enumerate corruption, political instability, unemployment and poor educational system amongst a few others as the reasons for the persistence of poverty in Nigeria, the paper seeks to argue that there is something deeper beyond these factors considered symptoms and hypothesise that certain institutional reasons and historical moments though compounded by these symptoms are responsible for the persistence of poverty in Nigeria. Path dependence is central to this argument.

To determine the theory to adopt for analysis, it is vital to reflect on the three considered theories against the backdrop of the core argument the paper seeks to present. The three theories make both a historical argument as well as the argument of path dependence but do so differently. For the punctuated equilibrium model, this is done on the basis that the equilibrium persisted not because there were no challenges or events that could derail it but that only exogenous problems such as huge financial crises or disasters can derail the equilibrium. The argument is that small things cannot alter how institutions work once the equilibrium has been created.

The preliminary empirical evidence available in relation to the study reflects a different reality which might be constraining to its application. While prior events might have had exogenous origination, the problems observed are largely endogenous. A positive feature of this theory that aligns with a key argument in this paper is its consideration of the emergence of public policies thus recognising the role of ideas vis-à-vis social actors. This portrays that the punctuated equilibrium model also deals with power, but its view of power is limited in that it views power as a given, thus a material that exists within a political system (Cairney 2012).

In addition, PEM predominantly focuses on policies which the paper’s framework extends beyond. Policies are vital to institutions and path shaping but they exist within the formal and an understanding of path dependence shows the role of both the formal and the informal in structuration. While the theory recognises and acknowledges the importance of

informal institutions like norms, it does so within the confines of policy frameworks, thus situating the informal within the formal which can be analytically limiting. This theory though important, falls short in relation to the key arguments of the paper, making it difficult to fully accept the model for in-depth analysis.

The second theory by Acemoglu et al (2012) presents an interesting perspective and relates directly to the core topic of this paper. The perspective shared strikes a related conversation of how societal arrangements and organisation matter to both economic and political outcomes determining where a nation-state gets positioned on the spectrum of poverty and prosperity. The authors paint a picture of oligarchy with the consolidation of power and national resources among a few, implying that such extractive tendencies can be detrimental to growth and prosperity for a nation and its citizens. These institutions established on the grounds of extractive interest create a foundation and mode for continuance of extraction and exploitation.

However, beyond the criticism in relation to China, the monocausal explanation and the dualist view of institutions as either inclusive or extractive and determinant to specific outcomes is problematic and restrictive as an analytical standpoint especially in relation to the complexity of political structures and dynamics. Another contestation is their definition of inclusive institutions which when critically analysed mainly in consideration of the conceptualisation of poverty, also includes some exclusionary tenets. Though this is less boggling under the context of institutions, it is critical to the wider framework of poverty even in relation to institutions.

Also problematic to its application, is the way political centralisation is presented. This is done almost in opposition to federalism and raises a valid question - what becomes the reality of countries that practice federalism in their institutional interactions; and how do they fit into the context discussed? These questions are particularly valid to the Nigerian context which operates a federalised mode of government and still features a level of political centralisation that faults the argument of Acemoglu et al (2012). More importantly, the debate of centralised versus decentralised can be categorised as trivial in consideration of deeper forms of politics and power relations.

The limitations of the punctuated equilibrium model and Acemoglu and Robinson's argument in relation to this paper, led to the consideration of an alternate theoretical approach. The alternate approach being considered was recognised by Acemoglu et al but for a critical view, the model as discussed by Collier and Collier is more relevant. Drawing on Collier and Collier's (2002) definition of critical juncture as a period of significant change or institutional revolution hypothesized to have produced distinct legacies, one can attest to its historical connotation and argument towards path shaping and through legacy making, path dependence. Notably, unlike PEM, it recognises that both exogenous and endogenous factors/forces can trigger the critical juncture or change which is relevant to the context of study.

The model makes feasible the studying of trajectories of political change, outcomes, and legacies they leave behind that can reproduce and exist long after the critical juncture has passed. This provides a rational theory to the reality of the political dynamics within the context of study, not limited to political regime transitions that have occurred in historical timeline. As discussed by Collier et al (2017), in the application of the model, some substantive areas can be studied or discussed, they include: state formation, political regimes, party systems, neoliberal transformation, religion, law, economic growth, and colonial rebellion, indicating a few. Of these, political regimes, party systems, an aspect of neoliberal transformation, economic growth, and colonial rebellion are relevant to the paper's debate, though at varying magnitudes.

A concern with the application of the model is in its particularly popular application in CHA especially with studies based on cross-national comparisons which deviate from the focus of the paper. Notwithstanding, an exception to this rule is that it can also be applied to research on long-term patterns of change within individual countries (Collier et al 2002). Reflecting on the existing preliminary empirical data surrounding the study, the long period of time and significant events being studied for analysis ascertains a potential feasibility of application.

In consideration of the underlying hypothesis of this paper, the critical juncture model presents itself as the most relevant theory under the larger historical institutionalism framework to discuss empirical evidence on the persistence of poverty in Nigeria. Understanding how history and critical junctures shape the path of institutions and their replicating tendencies can present a clear theoretical understanding of the emergence and/or institutionalisation of poverty.

Chapter 3 : A Critical Juncture: the Coup of 1966

3.1 Antecedents: Colonisation and Independence

Nigeria gained independence in 1960, after approximately 60 years as a British colony. The antecedent conditions of colonisation and succeeding independence contributed to shaping the legacy of institutions even after the colonial era was over. The post-colonial period ushered with it several debates on the positive and/or negative impact of colonisation on the country. Despite the angle of debate, an unwavering truth is that institutions and structures created during colonial era were exploitative and to the benefit of the colonial administration.

Access to public services like transport infrastructures and tenets of a booming market economy like free trade and international trade were the reality of this timeline but these served for the exploitation and extraction of resources for the British market as internal markets were neglected (Seidler 2011). The reality was not entirely gloom as trade routes within the country became safe resulting from the British's interest and efforts in ending inter-tribal wars/conflicts, but this was done without genuinely integrating tribes (Seidler 2011; Feit 1968).

The political landscape was not just exploitative in the amassing of natural resources and delimiting of internal markets, but also in the subjugation and exploitative taxation of citizens while utilising traditional institutions. The principle of indirect rule introduced by the colonial administrators compromised the legitimacy of traditional institutions as traditional rulers now had to act within the limits extended by the administrators. This was not a total loss for the tribal rulers who could preserve some authority backed by the weight of colonial authority which alleviated any fear of reprisal from their tribesmen, thus allowing concentration on building their influence while enforcing colonial taxations (Feit 1968).

However, with the spread of formal education especially in Southern Nigeria, there emerged a group of new educated elites who demanded political rights in line with their realised elevated status (Archibong 2018). This led to a change in the political system as the political authority of local traditional leaders mainly imposed by the colonial administrators was replaced with democratically elected officials as local government authorities (Archibong 2018). These new elites were equally responsible for the nationalist struggle which intensified in the 1940s in the height of the second world war owing to dissatisfaction with colonial policies and the activities of the press in stimulating national consciousness (Ubaku et al 2014; Olasupo et al 2017).

The events and influence of World War II is equally important in Nigeria's history within the colonial timeline as the country's resources both human and natural contributed to funding the war. To keep up with the demands of the war, taxation further increased and in defiance of the harsh reality, unionisation also increased among the Nigerian populace, banding against the increased taxation, regulation of markets, discrimination, and oppression (Journey of an African Colony 2018).

By 1942, due to the burden of increased taxation and inflation resulting from WWII, union leaders negotiated with the colonial government to grant a Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) to workers to assuage the effects of inflation. This was granted, making COLA the first alleviation effort in the history of Nigeria. However, the allowance was meagre and with rising prices, the workers' union commenced a call for an increase in the succeeding year, and by 1945 with no success, an ultimatum with threats of a nationwide strike and protest was given to the administration (Lindsay 1999; IFWEA 2018; Oyemakinde 1975).

This timeline was marked by several worker protests both active like the 1945 nationwide strike for improved worker welfare with reference to COLA and less active like the 1949 Iva valley Go-Slow⁴ protest arising from the rejection of worker demands for improved working conditions, welfare, and unfair termination which eventually ended in a massacre that increased the agitation of Nigerians, the progress of nationalism and calls for self-rule (Joliba 2020; Journey of an African Colony 2018; Jaja 1982).

These series of events⁵ and years of negotiations led to the eventual independence in the year 1960. Federal elections were held in 1959 and with the ushering of independence, Nigeria was projected for greatness both politically and economically (Akindola et al 2017). However, this anticipated prosperity has failed to materialise owing to institutions and path dependence which will be further explored.

3.2 Cleavage: Regionalism, Electoral Fraud and Political Instability

On attaining independence, Nigeria continued the 1954 constitutionally established federal structure of government but failed to provide an institutional framework for basic political and economic institutions on a national scale which impeded development and the economic use of Nigeria's resources (Seidler 2011). The arbitrariness of the amalgamation of different regions into modern-day Nigeria and the lack of a workable system became clear with the exit of the British as informal institutions had been distorted and replaced with weak, centralised institutions.

The political landscape post-independence was complex, power interests fuelled competition which led to corrupt practices to acquire wealth and sustain influence, further mired with lack of concern for the interests of the poor, evident in the limited access to basic services, such as health care, safe drinking water and education, thus sustaining poverty (Akindola et al 2017). In addition, the country was united yet disunited originating from the lack of proper integration despite the amalgamation, and the divide and rule strategy of the Colonial administrators which culminated into splitting of the country into three ethnically dominated administrative and political units by virtue of the 1946 Constitution (Olasupo et al 2017).

The political parties that emerged post-independence were regionalised along these ethnic lines and became a vehicle for further tribal conflict and strategic positioning for one region to dominate power over the other (Feit 1968). The tipping point that triggered the eventual military coup is linked to the 1964 and 1965 election rigging that sparked riot and political chaos in some parts of the nation, threatening the political stability of the country (Feit 1968; Ogueri 1973; Obioha 2016).

The electoral fraud coupled with the political chaos and regionalist tendencies revealed the level of disunity and fragility of the country's political structure but provided a crack to be exploited by the coup organisers who projected an interest to curb 'corruption'. As discussed by Feit (1968), the fact that a small group of people 'the army' could depose off the civilian government without serious resistance attests to how fragile, and unsubstantial the political institutions were.

As Muhammad (2014:140) puts it, the "*mistakes of the First Republic politicians invited the military to interfere in governance after more than a total of six decades of colonial misrule*". Despite the supposed mistake by the first republic politicians, Akpan (1988) documents that these factors including the narrative of curbing corruption were a ploy narrative in the personal ambition of the military officers who were instrumental to the coup d'état.

3.3 A Critical Juncture: The Military Coup

In 1966, the country experienced a historic moment in the form of military take-over from the six-year civilian rule post-independence, ushering in a military regime that lasted from 1966 to 1999 with a short return to democracy in 1979 which was equally brief ending in 1983 with another coup d'état. The coup took place on January 15, 1966 and witnessed the assassination of some prominent Nigerian political leaders as well as some high-ranking military officers by a group of young officers (Obioha 2016; Ogueri 1973).

The military takeover was justified on the grounds of curbing the corrupt practices of early politician whom they accused of corruption, mismanagement, and inefficient administration which was initially welcomed by Nigerians (Akindola et al 2017; Obioha 2016). However, the goodwill was short-lived as the era was marked by strict authoritarian rule. In addition, the series of coups and counter coups projecting the same reason was realised to be majorly driven by power interest and intent control of the country's resources (Obioha 2016).

The resource curse and dependency theory has been widely explored as an explanation for the persisting poverty, inequality, and poor development outcomes in Nigeria. The debate in the section of this paper is not aimed at establishing similar inference, rather it posits to explore how power interests and the desire to control the country's oil resources contributed to creating weak and exploitative institutions.

3.4 Legacy: Institutionalising Corruption and Neopatrimonialism

3.4.1 Policies and Military Decrees

With the ascent of the military into the political sphere, policy statements backed by decrees were instituted in a bid to restructure the polity (Muhammed 2014). The military commanders made attempts at reconstituting the administrative-traditional alliance of the colonial era through the local government heads in the states, and in the process, also making themselves the equivalent of the colonial governors and lieutenant-governors (Feit 1968), strategically positioning for exploitative interests. A policy architecture enacted to advance this exploitative interest was the Petroleum Act of 1969 which centralised control of the country's oil resources (Abutudu 2010).

The resultant wealth from oil resources has been documented as a primary driver of the rent-seeking activities and corruption in the country. Though the military era witnessed increased foreign exchange earnings owing to the oil boom, the utilisation of the resources for public service was plagued with corruption (Onuoha et al 2018). In addition, the increase in the composition of federal revenue from oil totalling over 80% led the military regime to enact another policy instrument to further secure their interest, guaranteeing maximum control of revenue and direct control of the political landscape and institutions (Archibong 2018). The policy introduced was the 1976 Local Government Reform Law.

Patron-client relationship existed within informal institutions in the pre-colonial era but became strained owing to reduced resources available to rulers and the disruption of informal institutions by colonisation. However, due to being embedded in the structure of the society, it did not dissipate, rather, with the end of colonisation, it metamorphosed negatively infusing with clientelism, political interest and corruption.

The 1976 Local Government Reform Law stripped ethnic leaders including democratically elected ethnic leaders, i.e. the local government chairs off their power, relegated them

to advisory roles and authorized the transfer of political autonomy to the military government (Archibong 2018). Compliance to the policy entailed that the ethnic leaders transition into the role of being simply ‘figure heads’ without inciting rebellion among their constituents, abstain from local governance politics, and ensure remittance of all tax revenues to the regime (Archibong 2018).

Failure to comply to this policy necessitated total deposition and/or punishment in the form of underinvestment of public services in their constituents (Archibong 2018). This meant that these ethnic leaders had to become and remain loyal to the regime for their constituents to benefit from state resources. The policy informally indoctrinated neopatrimonialism on a state structural level as opposed to the patron-client relationship that was more individualised in pre-colonial Nigeria. These policies and military decrees enforced by the regime served as mechanisms of production of the legacy.

Gupta et al in Anderson et al (2016) found that an increase of one standard deviation in corruption increases income inequality and reduces income growth, depicting that if corruption persists, poverty persists, and the inequality gap widens. According to Omoyibo (2013), the military regime represented a hallmark for corruption in Nigeria. The regime saw both the 1970s boom and the 1980s collapse in world oil prices which revealed the precarious condition of the country’s economic and financial portfolio.

With the collapse of world oil prices in the 1980s, the annual gross domestic product (GDP) reduced drastically and ushered with it, series of coups and countercoups with each military regime seizing power on the claim of ending corruption and alleviating the suffering of Nigerians (Nwaobi 2004). However, with each coup, the corruption persisted. These coups and countercoups can be referenced to what Collier and Collier described as “reactions and counter reactions,” (Collier et al 2017:6).

3.4.2 Reforms and Weakening of Institutions

The frequent change of government owing to the coups and countercoups and disregard for continuity meant that projects and programmes started by one government were abandoned by the next without credence to the huge amounts of resources that had been awarded and/or expended.

The Nigerian economy in the early 1960s was largely dominated by the agricultural sector supporting the country’s food, labour, and export needs (Nwaobi 2004). However, by the late 1960s, the sector began to stagnate for reasons credited not solely to the popular theory of oil boom and dependency but also to the growing burden of taxation by the regime – an exploitative mechanism culled from the colonial era, rather than increasing investments to the sector (Nwaobi 2004; Akindola et al 2017).

This meant the loss of job opportunities and income, and increased dependence on the state for salaried jobs. The reality persisted over the years despite punctuations such as regime transitions and characterised by continued decline in the country’s development outcomes. The difference between Botswana and Nigeria in development outcomes and the utilisation of its natural resources can be traced to the immediate period following independence. While Nigeria’s political landscape was strife resulting in weak institutions and bad economic policies, Botswana was able to develop strong institutions within the early determining years post-independence (Anderson et al 2016; Seidler 2011).

Beyond the policies and decrees earlier discussed, the regime introduced other administrative reforms and principles in a bid to restructure the civil service and direct loyalty to the regime which can be referenced as the mechanisms of reproduction within this framework due to their self-replicating structure. Introduced by the regime was the principle of federal character later enshrined in the 1979 Constitution and finally constituted as the Federal

Character Commission Act of 1996 (Abutudu 2010; Muhammad 2014). The principle established a regional/state quota system in recruitment which is documented as still affecting bureaucracy and the Nigerian civil service, sustaining corruption and the legacy of neopatrimonialism (Muhammad 2014).

The regimes were largely corrupt with complete lack of budgetary discipline and financial accountability, fraudulent transactions, and the outright transfer of funds from state treasury to personal accounts. To enable such mismanagement, the regime ignored the inquiries of financial accountability institutions like the Office of the Auditor-General, thus weakening the institution and its governance capacity which released them from the accountability measures established between 1960 and 1966 (Osoba 1996).

There are aspects of continuity from the antecedent system of colonisation characterised by the exploitative taxation and syphoning of resources rather than adequately investing in the country. As described by Stinchcombe, this explanation of continuity depicts the involvement of a specific type of historical cause within the legacy (Collier et al 2002).

The implementation of the policies introduced by the regime changed the country's economic and political landscape and by extension, shaped subsequent path, and trajectories. By the era of the economic downturn, external debts increased and several measures including tighter monetary policies and austerity measures such as budget cuts were adopted, with the most popular and widely studied measure being the structural adjustment programme (SAP) adopted in 1986. Also introduced were socio-economic policies and programmes to increase food production and alleviate the economic burden on citizens (Anyanwu 1992). The outcomes and impact of these policies and programmes including SAP will be briefly discussed in the next section.

Foregrounding that poverty in Nigeria exacerbated during the military era, specifically from 1985 with about 43 percent of Nigerians documented as poor (NBS 2005; Omoniyi 2018). The link between poverty and corruption has been established by several authors with the major debate arguing that funds stolen and diverted for personal benefit and sustenance of cronies, would have been invested in the nation's development and efficiently utilised to improve access to public services for the benefit of citizens. Idowu et al in Omoyibo (2013) documents that:

“Sani Abacha stole the nation blind, paralyzed the machinery of governance and pauperized the citizenry in five years of dictatorship and frenetic looting..... By the time he died in 1998, Abacha had corruptly enriched himself and the family by as much as \$3 billion lodged in more than 130 bank accounts at home and abroad.”

The military period and the events that transpired gradually produced strong political reactions and calls for democracy signalling a possible end to the legacy of this critical juncture.

3.4.3 Attributes of the Legacy on Economic and Poverty Reduction Efforts

Economic Dynamics, Policies, and Institutions

The decline in oil prices negatively affected the country's economic landscape giving rise to austerity measures to counter its effects. One of such measures was the structural adjustment programme (SAP) which was internationally conceived, indirectly imposed by the IMF but imported into the country by national actors. This statement is viable on consideration of a series of events leading to the programme adoption, specifically, a loan request made in 1983.

A seventeen-item conditionality was requested by IMF, of which the Nigerian actors⁶ agreed to with the exception of trade liberalisation, the removal of a petroleum subsidy, and the devaluation of the Naira which led to a rejection of the loan request in 1985 (Anyanwu 1992). However, with the economic crisis being witnessed by the country, the government of Gen. Babangida in 1986 adopted the “economic recovery programme”, a supposedly home-grown SAP which was in reality the creation and recommendations of the IMF (Anyanwu 1992:6; Momoh 1996).

During this period of SAP implementation, inflation skyrocketed from 5.4% in 1986 to 40.9% in 1989 (Anyanwu 1992). In addition, the power of the Naira commenced a downward trend reaching a high of N21.89/\$1 in 1993 from N1.76/\$1 in 1986 (World Bank 1994) which can be linked to the devaluation and exchange rate policy adopted under SAP. Considering Nigeria as a highly import dependent country, the inflation and exchange rate implications were not merely national indices but impacted the lives of citizens and small businesses with cost of living increasing and purchasing power reducing.

As documented by Anyanwu (1992), the inflation was SAP-induced and resulted in adverse income redistribution that heightened institutional tensions, deterred investment, inhibited consumer spending, and increased financial insecurity due to the impact on savings. Conversely, the World Bank documented that the foreign exchange system, trade policies, and business and agricultural regulations reforms adopted by Nigeria contributed to a 5 percent annual GDP between 1986 and 1992 (World Bank 1994). This contradicts with majority of scholarship documenting that neither macroeconomic stability nor poverty reduction was achieved after more than a decade of SAP implementation in Nigeria (Onyeiwu et al 2009).

Specific to the poverty debate, critics and scholars of the adjustment policies increasingly questioned the impact of the macroeconomic outcomes on poverty alleviation and improvements in citizens’ quality of life, arguing that the policies hurt the poor and vulnerable groups (Ali 2003; Killick 1995). In defence, the World Bank and the IMF argued that countries that persisted in the rigorous implementation of the programme, were more successful in alleviating poverty and improving the quality of life of citizens (Onyeiwu et al 2009). Certain authors of scholarship on SAP and Sub-Saharan Africa questioned these conclusions and charged the World Bank of highly selective use of data (Ali 2003; Demery et al 1996).

This, however, does not represent the entire debate as both arguments are subjective to the different actors’ bias – with reference to both the World Bank/IMF and certain scholars of SAP that focus on the negative outcomes of the programme. A different school of thought faults both the World Bank/IMF and political regimes on the inability of SAP to robustly contribute to poverty reduction in the Nigerian context. This school of thought projects that while adjustment has the potential to contribute to the reduction of poverty, it lies with national actors to be concerned about the poor and institute anti-poverty programmes and policy architectures that are non-tokenistic, beneficial to the poor and with long-term strategies, in addition to ensuring its consistent implementation while acknowledging that the financial institutions are not absolved of sharing in the responsibility of this actualisation (Killick 1995).

Exploitative taxation implemented by the regime in the late 1960s already stagnated the agricultural progression trend. Coupled with the removal of subsidies for agricultural inputs resulting from the implementation of SAP, agricultural production was further undermined as rural farmers were forced to diversify their income sources to survive (Onyeiwu et al 2009). The subsidy removal was also applicable to social programmes such as health and education which altered the social fabric of the society (Onyeiwu et al 2009) and further increased the degree of commodification within an already commodified society.

While the implementation of SAP extended beyond the military regime with increased intensity post-regime transition, this paper focused on the analysis of SAP within the 1986

to 1998 military regime timeline while acknowledging that by the mid-90s, the implementation stalled under the regime of General Abacha. To provide evidence on the role and impact of actors in re(shaping) the poverty and economic landscape, Onyeiwu et al (2009) documents that the first civilian President, Olusegun Obasanjo's administration implemented SAP with increased tenacity which materialised into lower inflation rate, increased economic growth, falling budget deficits and rising international reserves between 1999 and 2007. While the impact of SAP on the economy within the assessed timeline is predominantly negative, its impact on national poverty is a largely contested debate.

Institutional Analysis and Poverty Reduction Efforts

As a result of the burgeoning economic hardship faced by Nigerians during the regime post-adoption of SAP, certain programmes were established including the Directorate of Food, Roads, and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) in 1986, the Better Life for Rural Women movement in 1987, the People's Bank of Nigeria in 1989 and a few others. For analysis in this paper, the Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) established in 1997 will be discussed. An institutional analysis will also focus on the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) which was established in 1989 by the political regime to combat high unemployment in the country resulting from global and national economic instability, the implementation of SAP, and decline in agricultural production (Joe 2016).

Given that unemployment and underemployment are linked with poverty especially in highly commodified societies, the National Directorate of Employment was instituted to design and implement policies and programmes aimed at addressing mass unemployment through work and labour-intensive capability (Ogwumike 2002; Joe 2016). This was the country's first attempt to develop an institutionalised mechanism for addressing a development issue. Though the institution focused on unemployment, its objectives and mission statement reflect poverty reduction through employment and self-employment (Toluwase et al 2013; NDE (no date)).

Most early economic and poverty related state-initiated programmes not specific to Nigeria took roots with focus on strategies involving cash for public works and gradually expanded to include focus on human capability. Likewise, the NDE had a special public works programme (SPW) and three other programmes including a Vocational Skills Development Programme (VSD), Small Scale Enterprises Programme (SSE) and the Agricultural Employment Programme (Ogwumike 2002).

NDE is documented to have made some progress in skills development and employment of young people through programmes implemented. Of all economic and poverty reduction interventions implemented by the military regime, NDE is recorded as the most impactful, apparent in its survival beyond the regimes and existence till date (Ogwumike 2002; Joe 2016). However, this is politically argued as some scholars refer to the institution's programmes as not having noticeable impact on beneficiaries (Ogboru et al 2011). Notwithstanding the arguments, a constant is that during this timeline, one can infer to the legacy of corruption evident in the institution's inadequate funding and the diversion of existing funds, limiting its impact and ability to cater for the needs of the country's increasing unemployment (Ogwumike 2002; Madu et al 2018; Ogboru et al 2011).

While NDE focused directly on unemployment to address poverty as well as being an institution, the Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) was largely documented as a poverty alleviation programme in comparison to other iterated measures explored by the regime despite its objective being rooted in economic growth and development, and seeking to increase productivity and economic power through the provision of loans for the establishment of small scale industries (JICA 1999).

The FEAP architecture bears a similarity to SAP in that its initiation was inspired by external factors. The programme was an outcome of theoretical concepts observed from Gen. Abacha's visits to Latin American and South East Asian countries, portraying the permeation of international ideas into national frameworks through actors. While programme inspirations can be culled from a myriad of sources, local input including input from beneficiaries and context consideration is vital which was a major reason for the programme's criticism and failure (Orji 2005). Beyond the lack of focus on the poor, its failure was also linked to poor implementation, diversion of funds and other corrupt practices that are outcomes of weak institutions (Madu et al 2018; Ugoh et al 2009).

The military through its institutions and established policies created a legacy of institutionalised corruption and neopatrimonialism, effectively replicating through weak economic and political institutions. The narrative of corruption and political instability that presented the cleavage into the military take-over became more pervasive as documented, permeating and negatively affecting the impact of poverty reduction programmes and affiliated institutions that emerged during this era. By the end of the military regime in 1999, the country's political and economic landscape was worse off than at the emergence of the regime in 1966.

Chapter 4 : A Second Critical Juncture – 1999 Transition to Democratic Rule

4.1 Cleavage: Protests and Sanctions

For this critical juncture, the antecedent condition is the military regime transition which was particularly salient as evidenced in the critical juncture earlier discussed. Beyond corruption which was reflected in the poverty alleviation programmes and the activities of the military political regime, human rights violations increased and while freedom of speech was constitutional, freedom after speech was not guaranteed.

The military regime was marked with impunity and the prosecution of journalists, activists, oppositions, and democratic candidates. The neglect of due process and the principle of the rule of law, replaced by a non-justiciable form, and the denial of the right of association to all sectors of civil and political society (Olukoshi 2000) entailed that citizens could not actively protest the detrimental actions of the government due to suppressed freedom.

Several military regimes on ascent promised Nigerians the transfer of power back to civilian rule but often reneged. During the Babangida regime, an election was held on June 12, 1993 but was annulled which led to wide protests, his step down from office, an interim government, and another coup by General Sani Abacha, all within five months (Muhammed 2014). The election annulment prompted sanctions by the West such as the suspension of arms sales and travel restrictions on government officials (Muhammed 2014).

Towards the mid-1990s, the call for democracy reached its tipping point owing to the execution of Ken Sarowija, an environmental activist and 8 other persons at Ogoni by the late General Abacha in November, 1995 due to their activism against petroleum exploitation (Chujor et al 2017). With the internal and external pressures from protests and western sanctions respectively, coupled with the death of Sani Abacha, his successor General Abdulsalami Abubakar commenced a third and the final attempt which transferred power to civilians.

4.2 A Critical Juncture: 1999 Transition to Democratic Rule

The end of the military regime and introduction of democratic governance created a tide of optimism in the political landscape with the expectation of good governance and political order, as well as improvement to the social and economic development context, including poverty alleviation (Nyewusira et al 2012; Ezirim 2009).

Nigerians are optimistic and cling to hope for a better tomorrow which is a dominant expectation with the adaptation of governance in the history of the modern state (Nyewusira et al 2012). Hence, with every regime and administrative transition, the optimism gets renewed, but this is often short-lived as witnessed with the political transition to military regime discussed as the first critical juncture.

With the transition to democracy, Nigeria re-adopted the federalised mode of government combining federal and state governments within its political system and under its constitution held elections every four years. The newly elected democratic president commenced his administration with similar rhetoric of commitment to combating the societal ills that plagued the country. Among scholars, there was a consensus on the potential of democratic rule to regain the loss of progress and development the military regime failed to achieve. However, the modality and nature of democratic rule that would usher in this change was contested with some scholars expressing positivity in the newly formed democracy and

others indicating that the process of democratic consolidation would be a long one (Adejumobi 2010).

4.3 Legacy: Neo-military Regime and Discontinuity

4.3.1 Institutional Frameworks and Democratic Autocrats

The use of the terminology ‘neo-military’ regime is to highlight that the democratic transition brought a new form of military administration⁷ through institutional frameworks and ex-military state actors now being democratic actors. The military were architects who designed and laid the foundation for the transition to democratic rule as the last military head of state, General Abubakar enacted Decree No. 24, 1999 known today as the 1999 Constitution and commonly referred to as the Military Decree of 1999 (Nyewusira et al 2012).

Despite being in a democratic rule, the country’s number 1 policy architecture is not based on any democratic constitution but founded on a military decree. By the return of the country to democracy in 1999, a bourgeoisie class made up of military elites (retired and acting) and civilian cronies with an ideology of self-interest, non-interest in the collective development of the country for the benefit of citizens, and a disconnect from the reality of the masses had evolved into the ruling class (Betiang et al 2013; Nyewusira et al 2012).

Institutions in a country and actors within the political systems through their ideas and decisions respectively act as instruments in the mechanism of production and reproduction of the legacy. The political regime transition to civilian rule did not create a new set of democratic leaders, rather, the transition re-introduced a past military ruler, Major general Olusegun Obasanjo⁸ as the first democratic President of Nigeria. This continues to reinforce the idea of power and resource control as a driving force for political interest in the country.

Of the 21 years of democratic rule in Nigeria, 16 years of rule has been by past military rulers including the current head of state, Muhammadu Buhari – a past acclaimed military dictator who led a coup d’état toppling a democratic administration in 1983 (Ogbondah 1992). The institutionalisation of neo-military regime within democratic rule was not an isolated occurrence but strategic, utilising political parties which are building blocks of democracy within a country’s political system as instruments to advance the agenda (Nyewusira et al 2012; Betiang et al 2013).

In 1999, 2003 and 2007 presidential (federal) and governorship (state) elections, the top political party candidates were dominantly retired military and para-military officers with some key civilian actors that served in the military administrations (Nyewusira et al 2012). The 2007 election had the incumbent president, Olusegun Obasanjo declare his intention not to transfer power to the next elected official if his chosen candidate did not emerge winner under the guise of not handing over power to anyone he believed would not continue his economic reform agenda (Nyewusira et al 2012). This is commonly referred to as ‘God-fatherism’ which plagues Nigeria’s political landscape till date.

The continuation of projects and programmes is a major shortfall of the Nigerian political landscape as the emergence of a new administration often entailed the abandonment of programmes of the previous administration to make visible their vision and institute their legacy. This is particularly detrimental to poverty reduction efforts as graduation from poverty requires prolonged implementation and consistency for structural impact and change.

With the emergence of democracy, the country decided to forge a new path by adopting a new policy trajectory – the Economic Policy Directions for Nigeria (1999-2003) which aimed to promote a market-oriented private sector-led economy with the government playing a catalytic role while providing an enabling environment (Onwumele 2015). This was

however truncated before its implementation as the country commenced the process of developing an interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in 2001 as a conditionality of debt relief under the Enhanced Highly Indebted Poor Countries (Onwuemele 2015).

Like the 1999-2003 economic policy direction, the draft PRSP was never implemented as the government choose to embark on a different poverty strategy framework – the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) which was described as the country’s homegrown PRSP to be implemented from 2004 to 2011 under 2 phases – 2004-2007 and 2008-2011 (Onwuemele 2015). This strategy will be further discussed as one of the poverty reduction programmes for analysis in this paper.

The phase II of NEEDS was also never implemented as a new administration emerged in 2007 with its own policy direction anchored on a 7-Point Agenda which was predominantly economic with one agenda focused on poverty reduction (Onwuemele 2015). This policy titled ‘Vision 2020 Economic Transformation Blueprint’ will also be discussed in the section below as the economic policy for analysis.

With the emergence of the next administration in 2011, the same discontinuity was observed with policies and programmes and continues till date. There are aspects of continuity from the antecedent system of the military rule in relation to the legacy of a neo-military regime and discontinuity/erasure of predecessor’s legacies. While the former can be linked to historical causes emanating from the antecedent system, the later cannot be described as contingent, though disregard for continuity was witnessed in the military era with projects and programmes started by one regime being abandoned by the next. With respect to the erasure, evidence perused in the development of this paper reveals that every government, both military and civilian introduced at least one economic policy and/or poverty alleviation programme.

Ezirim (2009) in her paper ‘Democratic Governance and Poverty Eradication in a Post-Military Nigeria: Any Significant Differences?’ tried to establish if democracy contributed to a positive poverty reduction trend as opposed to the military era and concluded that “democratic governance in Nigeria in the first decade of the 21st century has not been favourable to the Nigerian populace in terms of political and socio-economic development” (Ezirim 2009: 114). Hence, indicating the absence of any significant difference in the poverty eradication efforts and outcomes between the political structures of the military regime and the democratic regime. The early paragraph highlighting that the transition did not create a new set of leaders, posits a logical explanation of the rationale behind the reality discussed by Ezirim (2009) but it does not provide an encompassing rationale.

Other scholars of this legacy have also documented similar positions stating that democratic rule in Nigeria has not significantly changed the political landscape and resultant outcomes as the military rule structured the culture of governance in the country (Igwe 2020; Nyewusira et al 2012). Electoral processes are key tenets of democracy but with the flawed and sometimes failed elections that bedevil the Nigerian political structure, leaders who emerge from the process feel and acknowledge limited obligation of accountability to citizens (Igwe 2020). As Anthony Enahora (2006) in Adejumobi (2010) quoted:

“First of all, I want you to leave democracy out of it. We do not have a democracy in Nigeria, at least for now . . . We have a government that is not responsible to anybody. Nobody to question them, it is a sad situation.”

4.3.2 Attributes of the Legacy on Economic and Poverty Reduction Efforts

Economic Dynamics, Policies, and Institutions

In 2007, the second civilian administration post-military rule proposed and articulated the Vision 20:2020 plan, embedding a Seven-Point Agenda for its implementation towards the development of the country with the aim of improving the general wellbeing of citizens and making Nigeria one of the biggest economies globally by 2020 (Oshewolo 2010; Adenipekun 2013). The first agenda was to focus on critical infrastructural development with focus on power, transportation, national gas distribution, and telecommunications (Oshewolo 2010; Madu et al 2018).

The second focus of the seven-point agenda was to address the existing issues of development and insecurity in the Niger Delta region through the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the Niger Delta ministry (Oshewolo 2010). The third to sixth agenda were food security, human capital development, the land tenure reform, and national security respectively, while the seventh agenda focused on poverty alleviation through the creation of wealth (Oshewolo 2010; Madu et al 2018). Though launched in 2007, the implementation of the seven-point agenda did not commence till 2009.

To cater for the seventh focus area, an estimated N186 billion (about \$1.16 million) was proposed over the phase I period (2009–2012) for social protection expenditure, although no clear strategy was indicated on how the funds would be generated or allocated within the social protection sector beyond the mention of the National Health Insurance Scheme (Umukoro 2013) which currently provides coverage for less than 5% of Nigerians (Abdulkareem et al. 2019). Despite a seemingly broad area of coverage reflected by the seven-point agenda, the programme was widely criticised by economic experts on the grounds of being utopian and overly ambitious in reflection of historical antecedents of policy implementations and failure in the country (Bello et al 2020; Onyenekenwa 2011).

Achieving the goal of making Nigeria one of the top 20 economies in the world entailed raising the country's GDP to a minimum of US\$900 billion and a per capita income of not less than US\$4000 by 2020, indicating the need to approximately triple the country's GDP and increase per capita income by over 200% from the 2009 equivalent (Nakah 2013; World Bank 2020c; World Bank 2020d). While some scholars and national economic experts critiqued the policy as being unrealistic, other national scholars and economists like Nakah (2013) and Inegbenebor et al (2018) expressed feasibility of its achievement and described the policy as an important economic policy with a transformational potential if the seven-point agenda is judiciously implemented and the economy diversified.

Nakah (2013) however, expressed concern on the continuity problem that plagues the Nigerian landscape which could hamper the realisation of the Vision 20:2020 goals. Other criticisms of the Vision 2020 Economic Transformation Blueprint were on the modalities of its development, design, and components. It was depicted as being disconnected from the reality and needs of the country's citizen, predominantly a top-down approach, merely cosmetic and lacking a monitoring mechanism which is improper for such a large-scale plan (Onyeji 2020).

Though the programme was earmarked to end in 2020, with the exit of the programme initiator, President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua⁹ in 2010, the 7-point agenda was abandoned by the next administration despite the huge funding invested in its development (Onyeji 2020). In its stead, the Goodluck Jonathan¹⁰ administration launched the 'Transformation Agenda' in 2011 (Onwumele 2015). The Transformation Agenda (TA) developed a national implementation plan, drawing from the Vision 20:2020 seven-point agenda to develop policies

that support job creation, good governance, accountability, education, and infrastructural development (Udeh et al 2018).

The transformation agenda was a five-year development plan to be implemented from 2011-2015, focusing on three key areas – strong, inclusive, and non-inflationary growth; employment generation and poverty alleviation; and value re-orientation of the citizens (Gyong 2012). The first key area sought to develop the Information Communication and Technology (ICT) sector, revitalise ailing industries and provide enabling environment for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMES) to thrive.

The second key area was more expansive on its plan for employment generation in comparison to poverty alleviation which only referenced the provision of safety nets for vulnerable groups as opposed to the five itemised approaches to generate employment (Gyong 2012). The third key area was aimed at promoting good governance, the public sector reform and advancing the fight against corruption. The policy covered 13 sectors ranging from legislature and judiciary to foreign policy, governance, labour, and basic public services (Gyong 2012).

The policy recorded outcomes of employment generation and economic empowerment through several schemes including Community Service Scheme (a public works scheme), Graduate Internship Scheme, and YOUWIN (a business grant scheme) (Awojobi 2015). By a 2015 assessment, only 152,400 persons had been impacted by the schemes which did not translate into national poverty reduction as expected (Awojobi 2015).

From 2007 till 2014, the economy grew strongly averaging an approximately 7% annual growth rate, making the Nigerian economy within this timeline, the 5th fastest growing economy in the world but this did not translate to poverty reduction (Igwe 2020). According to Dauda (2019), the reasons behind this paradox of economic growth not translating to poverty reduction in Nigeria include widespread corruption, poor governance and political instability which undermine economic progress and widen the poverty gap. The larger argument made by the paper is that these factors are symptoms/manifestations of the political landscape structured in time and linked to Nigeria's historical and institutional architectures depicting path dependence.

Despite the achievements in advancing the economy, the transformation agenda was lacking in sectoral linkage and consistency in its implementation, as well as being plagued with high level of corruption amongst the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) that were mandated with the task of implementation (Igwe 2020; Awojobi 2015). The positive economic growth trend experienced in the previous years halted and between 2015 and 2019, the trend rapidly dwindled averaging less than 2% per annum, with the country experiencing a recession and negative growth in 2016 (World Bank 2020b).

As discussed by UNDP (2010), the poor quality of governance is a major obstacle to economic development and poverty reduction in Nigeria. The antecedent reality marred by governance challenges such as political instability and ineffectiveness, and rife with corruption did not end with the political regime change. Rather, it transcended and continues to impact the current efforts and interventions which is not devoid of the reality of the formally and informally institutionalised governance challenges resulting in a further complex reality.

As observed from the historical timeline taking roots from the colonial era to the military regime, the country's developmental focus has been predominantly on the economy with little concern for poor and vulnerable groups. This extended beyond economic policies as poverty reduction efforts within these timelines were focused on work and economic advancement with poverty alleviation taking a secondary status or being set up majorly as a requirement from international organisations. It was until the democratic era with the

establishment of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) that the country took a focused institutional approach to addressing poverty (Okoye 2006).

Institutional Analysis and Poverty Reduction Efforts

Institutional Analysis

NAPEP was both a reduction programme and the first poverty institutional framework established by any Nigerian government. The Programme was created in 2001 to replace PAP – a public works focused poverty alleviation programme which was launched in 2000 but greatly critiqued on its inability to reduce poverty resulting from poor coordination and corruption, and its focus on alleviation as opposed to reduction or eradication (Oshewolo 2010; Ugoh et al 2009).

This led to the incorporation of an eradication goal for NAPEP with the timeline of eradicating poverty by 2010 (Oshewolo 2010); and the prioritisation of coordination in its mandate for improved service delivery, increased impact, and accountability in the utilisation of resources (Abubakar 2013). An organisational structure headed by the President with membership of 13 ministries – National Poverty Eradication Council (NAPEC) was also instituted to coordinate and ensure the actualisation of the NAPEP mandate (Ugoh et al 2009; Okoye 2006).

NAPEP was structured to feature four programmes representing four sectors considered relevant for the eradication of poverty in the country. They included youth empowerment scheme (YES) to address youth unemployment through capacity building and empowerment; Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme (RIDS) for infrastructural development in rural areas; Social Welfare Service Scheme (SOWESS) for the provision of basic social services with focus on quality basic education, primary healthcare and food security; and the Natural Resources Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDCS) for the sustainable development of agriculture, mineral, and water resources (Oshewolo 2010; Abubakar 2013).

As with the incidence of poverty within this decade and the decade after, the institutional framework failed in its core objective despite the cogent prioritisation of coordinated management adopted by the programme which did not materialise in the reality of its implementation. The reasons behind this failure is often credited to the lack of clearly defined policy frameworks with adequate guidelines, poor targeting mechanism, political instability, corruption, political deception, and limited focus on the poor (Oshewolo 2010; Abubakar 2013; Ugoh et al 2009).

Targeting is a popular terminology in the poverty discourse playing an instrumental role in policy implementation and/or institutional processes. Like several aspects of the poverty debate, targeting in poverty alleviation programmes is greatly critiqued by scholars such as Amartya Sen and Thandika Mkandawire. Targeting is quite popular in the Nigerian poverty context both as an institutional process and a strategy employed to reach beneficiaries in the implementation of programmes. One of the factors attributed to the failure of NAPEP is that of poor targeting mechanism.

For instance, there is no clear depiction of the targeting mechanism employed by the youth empowerment scheme to identify and reach beneficiaries with skill building exercises and empowerment opportunities; and with respect to its impact, the only documented contribution was the leasing of tricycles to young Nigerians to engage in transportation services which was not sustained (Ugoh et al 2009). The institutional framework lacked inclusivity as proposed beneficiaries ‘the poor’ were only viewed through the lens of needing altruistic support and not as agents in their reality which is a major critique on the politics of targeting as discussed by Sen (1992). The poor were neither involved in the planning, policy formulation nor direct implementation beyond a passive view as beneficiaries engaged solely in the identification of projects (Ugoh et al 2009).

As discussed, neopatrimonialism had been indoctrinated on a state structural level and despite the regime transition, it persisted not necessarily because of resistance to change but the fact that the regime transition did not necessarily bring about a change of actors or ideologies. Evaluations of NAPEP revealed that the top-ranking officers responsible for the programme were political appointees and were therefore subject to political loyalties to those who appointed them (Ugoh et al 2009). NAPEP was plagued with lack of accountability and transparency serving as a tool for the extraction and diversion of national resources, conversion of public funds to private use and misrepresentation, normally discussed under the terminology of corruption (Ugoh et al 2009).

These instances highlight not just programme failure but institutional failure of the country's first institutional approach to addressing poverty. The persistence of poverty in the country is beyond the simple reflection of poverty and the immediate effect on the 'poor'. In clearer perception, it is an indication of the failure and underlying inability of existing institutional frameworks to address poverty (Onwumele 2015).

Poverty Reduction Efforts

As part of the eradication goal, beyond the programmes embedded into NAPEP, other poverty reduction programmes were implemented by the country including two which will be analysed in this paper – the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) which was launched in 2004; and 'In Care of the People' (COPE) (also known as In Care of the Poor) conditional cash transfer (CCT) programme which was launched in 2007.

The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) was implemented from 2004-2007 and dubbed a homegrown poverty reduction strategy paper (NPC 2004; Onwumele 2015). The strategy was embedded in the idea that economic investments in telecommunication, electricity and tourism will help generate employment and reduce poverty (Madu et al 2018). Its implementation objectives also involved fighting corruption, improving citizen's welfare with focus on education, health, empowerment, security, and value reorientation (Bello et al 2020).

NEEDS was built on four key strategies – the reforming of government institutions for effective service delivery; growing the private sector while implementing policies of privatization, de-regulation and liberalization; implementing a social charter for the people directly linked to poverty reduction, improved basic service and welfare; and re-orientation of the people with an enduring value system of efficiency, professionalism, anti-corruption and patriotism (NPC 2004). The programme identified inadequate growth as a leading cause of poverty in the country and stressed the need to invest in rural development and poverty reduction (Adogamhe 2010). However, the programme did not provide any solution or itemise strategies to address rural poverty (Adogamhe 2010).

In line with Nigeria's federalised mode of government, NEEDS was the comprehensive blueprint, and entailed the development of a state-level and local government level strategy implemented through the State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) and the Local Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (LEEDS) respectively. Like programmes before, NEEDS failed to achieve its goal of reducing poverty which was linked to its lack of sectoral linkages and concrete programme design, poor policy periodization, over-ambitious targets that were lacking in articulation and operationalisation, poor funding, and the lack of political will and effective coordination among states and local governments to implement SEEDS and LEEDS respectively (Igwe 2020; World Bank 2005; Adogamhe 2010).

Another poverty reduction programme implemented in the country was the In Care of the People (COPE). COPE was one of the major cash transfer programmes to have been

implemented in Nigeria (Umukoro 2013). It was the first nation-wide government-run conditional cash transfer programme and it focused directly on poverty reduction. The programme provided monthly cash transfer payments of \$10 to \$33 (depending on the number of children) for a year to eligible¹¹ poor households with a conditional requirement that their children of basic school age are enrolled and maintain at least 80% school attendance; and participate in all free maternal, neonatal and child health (MNCH) programmes (Umukoro 2013; Holmes et al 2012).

After one year, a graduation package of about \$560 called Poverty Reduction Accelerator Investment (PRAI) was provided to the head of the household, in addition to entrepreneurship and life skills training to maximise the impact of the PRAI (Holmes et al 2012). Though a national programme, the coverage of COPE CCT programme was extremely small, reaching approximately 18,750 to 20000 household in over 4 years of operation which accounted for less than 0.001 percent of the poor (Holmes et al 2012; Umukoro 2013). Evidence suggests COPE failed in its graduation objective, notable in the reality that most beneficiaries were still in poverty by the end of the one year and spent their PRAI funds on sustenance as opposed to investing in a business (Holmes et al 2012).

With the legacy of discontinuity/erasure of predecessor's history through the discontinuation of their administration's policies and programmes, COPE and NAPEP became replaced by the National Social Investment Programme (NSIP) launched in 2016 by the Buhari administration (Akinleye et al 2019). Like NAPEP, NSIP is both an institution and a programme that has embedded in it four economic empowerment, welfare and poverty reduction schemes including a CCT programme (Akinleye et al 2019).

The CCT programme provides monthly cash transfers of approximately \$14 (NGN 5,000) to eligible¹² poor household, capacity building on life skills, entrepreneurial/technical skills and financial inclusion, and coaching/mentoring support to boost beneficiaries' income and improve their economic status (NSIP 2020). Though the NSIP is the most recent government efforts to address poverty in Nigeria, this paper intentionally chooses not to focus on it as there are limited reviews and evaluations of the programme considering the short timeline between its launching and the development of this research paper.

The critical juncture of the 1999 political regime transition into democratic rule continued the path dependent structuration from the antecedent reality of the military rule. Though a critical juncture occurred, the institutions embedded in previous regimes influenced its contemporary reality in addition to the fact that the political actors transcended the regime change and through them the legacy continued its mode of reproduction in the economic and political while manifesting in the social vis-à-vis poverty reduction programmes.

Chapter 5 : Conclusion

5.1 The Historical Argument

The arguments made by this paper with regards to the question of why poverty persists in Nigeria is unconventional but would be unsurprising for scholars who have studied the Nigerian poverty dynamics in relation to the bewildering puzzle, and appreciate a perspective based on historical arguments. Obviously, the argument is not to say the 1966 military coup or the 1999 transition back to democracy independently and unattached explains the persistence of poverty. Rather, it makes a larger argument positing that the patterns, otherwise theorised as legacy through a series of events become structured in time as certain components of the reproduction of this legacy contributes to this structuration.

The nature of the economic and political institutions in Nigeria today has root alignment with the events and institutions of colonisation due to path dependence. Discourses that use historical perspective to analyse poverty often link the persistence of poverty as originating from colonisation. Though colonisation was instrumental to the formation of Nigeria as a nation state, limiting the discourse to this is at best basic. This paper took a different approach where colonisation was viewed as an antecedent condition to the critical junctures in Nigeria's historical timelines.

As observed from the historical timeline taking roots from the colonial era to the military regime, the country's focus has been predominantly on the economy with little concern for poor and vulnerable groups to the point that poverty reduction efforts within these timelines were focused on work and economic advancement with poverty alleviation taking a secondary status or were set up as requirement from international organisations. It was until the democratic era with the establishment of NAPEP that the country took a focused institutional approach to addressing poverty which, however, did not materialise into reduced poverty due to issues of corruption and weak institutions.

With the analysis of the critical junctures discussed, it was empirically established that institutions and policy architectures have an accelerating or impeding impact on poverty, acting as mechanisms of reproduction. With the case of Nigeria, they have contributed to the persisting poverty paradox, shaping both the outcomes of the economic landscape and the affiliate poverty reduction efforts, and in some instances, contributing to the acceleration of the poverty scourge.

The paper has analysed a crucial historical transition documented as political regime transitions from a nascent short-lived democracy to approximately three decades of military regime and the transition back to democratic rule. The first period of democracy emanating from a nascent independence from colonial rule was of no significance due to its short time span. This is evident in the shown continuity of the antecedent condition of colonisation within the legacy of what was considered the first critical juncture – the 1966 military coup.

Policy interventions and programmes aimed at cushioning the effects of poverty constitute as observed with the circumstances surrounding its emergence and launching are largely reactive as opposed to being proactive; often inspired by external factors; and are not reflective to the reality of the poor. A major problem and factor that contributed to the established legacy is the development culture in Nigeria as efforts are geared towards packaging policies and programmes as mere documentation to serve as checklists for multilateral organisations like the World Bank for political correctness or in receipt of grants and loans.

Due to the rippling effect and influence of poverty on other development issues, poverty itself can be conceptualised as a reason for its persistence. Simply put, people are poor

because they are poor and the institutions, policies and programmes implemented in the nation-state are not made to eliminate poverty. A cross-cutting finding with all poverty reduction programmes analysed in this paper is that of limited number of beneficiaries in comparison to the number of people who require such policy interventions which relates to the inability to achieve national poverty objectives affiliated with the programmes.

In addition, the impact of programmes analysed did not categorically document any outcome of reduced poverty in the country but focused on the project output and individualised benefit to beneficiaries which were not always significant nor sustained beyond the programme duration. This was observed across all poverty reduction programmes and with the economic policies, we witnessed the legacy of erasure via discontinuity of predecessor's policies and programmes and replacement with a different but sometimes similar approach. This does not just erase the policy and/or programme but entails that the fiscal investment in its development and implementation become pointless.

In summary, an understanding of path dependence makes clear that certain moments and institutional dynamics gets structured in time and creates a legacy that though ends, does not end in itself as the components of its reproduction transcends the critical juncture and past antecedents. As evidenced, critical junctures are neither necessarily positive events nor result in positive outcomes but are defining in a society's history. For Nigeria, these critical junctures did not produce positive outcomes.

5.2 A Way Forward

It is largely stated that the first solution to a problem is the identification of the problem and its foundation. By approaching poverty in Nigeria from a historical perspective, this paper has navigated a pluri-causal trajectory to explain why poverty in Nigeria persisted despite economic growth and the implementation of poverty reduction programmes. In line with the secondary objective of seeking to unearth if a solution to halting the trend can be found in historical timelines, this section will present possible solutions stemming with the analytical findings, though not predicated on the theoretical framework.

The need for political stability and strong institutions cannot be over-emphasised. A reflection on the poverty reduction efforts presents a logical argument to why national actors need to be concerned about the poor and institute anti-poverty programmes and policy architectures that are non-tokenistic, specific to the objective of poverty reduction, beneficial to the poor and have long-term strategies to revert the decades of weak policies, institutions and institutional frameworks.

In addition, efforts for its consistent implementation should be built into the framework of the programme, collaborating with relevant sectors including financial institutions who are not absolved of sharing in the responsibility of this actualisation to eliminate the constant of limited and inadequate funding. The development of the poverty reduction programmes should equally be considered in the larger framework of social protection and mechanisms instituted with protective measures that address poverty including contingent poverty and specific vulnerability.

Though the solution presented seeks a focus on poverty reduction for programmes implemented, diverging from the popular norm of economic empowerment to translate into poverty, it does not negate the role of the economic in the poverty matrix or the need to also prioritise economic growth and diversification of the landscape. The political is particularly important in this discourse as the economic and the social are reflections of the political. Only an administration committed to the development and improvement of the welfare of its citizens will implement strategic policies and programmes that alter the status quo.

While we reflect on the possibility of the vision, it is worth considering a pertinent question in relation to the possible emergence of a new critical juncture. “Could restructuring the country’s political structure to introduce regional autonomy present a critical juncture that finally ends the legacy of corruption, neo-patrimonialism, discontinuity and neo-military regime? Could it possibly address the political instability and fragility of institutions that plague the country?”

There have been increased calls and agitation for the restructuring of Nigeria’s political structure majorly centred on resource control and allocation but also on security issues and mechanisms, political imbalances, fear of domination and perceived marginalisation. This possible critical juncture would be important for future research keeping in mind the critical junctures analysed and presented in this paper which could serve as antecedent systems in the discourse.

Appendices

Appendix 1
Sample of Search Phrases for Resource Gathering

Political	Economic	Social (Poverty Reduction Programmes)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why has poverty persisted in Nigeria? • Why is Africa Poor? • Historical analysis of poverty in Nigeria • What are the historical reasons for the persistence of poverty in Nigeria? • The military regime and poverty in Nigeria • How did the military regime contribute to poverty in Nigeria? • Democracy and poverty reduction in Nigeria • What factors contributed to Nigeria's independence • The nationalist movement and independence in Nigeria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the National Directorate of Employment 1989 – 1999 • Analysis of economic policies in Nigeria • Analysis of the 1990s economic policies in Nigeria • Vision 20:2020 Nigeria • Analysis of the impact of Structural Adjustment Programme in Nigeria • Structural Adjustment and Poverty Alleviation • Analysis of Structural adjustment program and poverty in Nigeria • Economic policies in Nigeria since independence • Analysis of Nigeria's vision 20:2020 • Analysis of Nigeria's transformation agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies for poverty reduction in Nigeria • Analysis of the Family Economic Advancement Programme in Nigeria • In Care of the People (COPE) alleviation programme in Nigeria • Past and present Nigerian economic policies with poverty implications • Explaining the persistence of poverty in Nigeria • Poverty reduction efforts in Nigeria • Analysis of the National Poverty Eradication Programme • Cost of living allowance (COLA) introduced in Nigeria during the colonial era

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Notes

¹ The use of the terms – alleviation and reduction are used interchangeably unless indicated otherwise. This is because they largely portray or represent the same thing in the description of anti-poverty programmes in the Nigerian context.

² This does not contribute to the larger debate of the paper but highlights how poverty measurement and the economic situation including inflation has progressed influencing poverty dynamics over the years.

³ The list of references provides comprehensive details of resources analysed in the development of this paper. A table of search phrases is presented in Appendix 1 and though distinctions are made into political, economic, and social/poverty reduction, some articles were cross-cutting

⁴ The Colliery company who managed the Iva valley mines were notorious in hiring and firing at will. To avoid this, the miners devised a new method of protest – ‘A Go-Slow’ in which they did not refuse to work but worked at a very slow pace which affected production and greatly annoyed the company as they produced only handfuls of coal daily as opposed to wagons.

⁵ These events were neither particularly devoid of each other nor happened in isolation. For instance, the unions and associations within these unions were mainly responsible for the protests against increased taxation, discrimination and oppression, and the nationalist were majorly political elites, some of who led the negotiations with the British including visits to England and the Queen to discuss terms for the country’s independence.

⁶ Actors in this context refer to the decision maker in Nigeria’s political sphere. The negotiations featured 3 military regimes. It started with Shagari’s regime through Buhari’s regime and finally, Babangida’s regime.

⁷ The paper utilises regime to describe military rule and administration for democratic rule. In the context of this sentence, the use of administration despite referring to a new form of military rule is done for the sake of the democratic ambivalence communicated.

⁸ Major General Olusegun Obasanjo was the military head of state from 1976 to 1979 and later, President of Nigeria from 1999 to 2007

⁹ President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua died while in office on the 5th of May, 2010.

¹⁰ President Goodluck Jonathan was the vice-president in the Yar’Adua administration and thus was an actor in the establishment of the Vision 2020 Economic Transformation Blueprint. However, rather than continue with the implementation of the policy, it was abandoned to launch his own initiative.

¹¹ The eligibility criteria for the programme was households with basic school-age children that are headed by either persons who are aged; living with physical disability; has vesicovaginal fistula (VVF); living with HIV/AIDS or a poor female.

¹² Eligible households for the NSIP CCT programme must have either a pregnant woman who is registered and attends ante-natal and post-natal clinic, a lactating mother with children between 0-2 years, children between 6 and 18 years old, or a woman between 18 and 40 years. Proxy means testing is utilised to determine the ‘deserving’ poor who can benefit from the programme.