

THE CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL POLICY FOR THE SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAM, DEREGULATED AND LIBERALIZED ECONOMY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Social policy represents different courses of action taken by government regarding the criteria of meeting up the basic and vital needs of different categories of people, with the main objective of bridging the gaps of social and economic inequities and inequalities in order to reduce social exclusion through the provisions of social welfare and social security services for sustainable human development in society. In Nigeria, the structural adjustment program (SAP) and policies of economic deregulation and liberalization have seriously compromised and denegated the traditional social policy framework informed by the "institutional redistributive model" based on "egalitarianism" and "altruism" principles and substituted with the "residual model" based on the operatives of market forces as determined by the private sector which is governed by the principles of "corporatism" (control by a clique of business oligarchy) and "profiteering" (derive for excessive profit). The consequences of this situation have made the ruling and privileged classes to benefit from the SAP and policies much more than the poor, underprivileged and vulnerable for whom the policies are of very little or no significance. Hence, the SAP and the policies are essentially "pro-rich" and "anti-poor"; for which reason their negative consequences aggravated harsh poverty, unemployment, under-employment, misemployment, illiteracy, ill health, and criminality of different forms and dimensions within the period of 1986 to the present. This paper argues that since the prime objectives of the SAP and policies of economic deregulation and liberalization are essentially built on "privatization" and "commercialization" of public utility sector based on "crude capitalism" in which the private sector only takes much more than it gives back to society; the possibility of building a sound foundation for an egalitarian social policy framework capable of articulating sustainable human development in Nigeria is very dicey. The methodology for this paper was anchored on the "false paradigm model" developed from "underdevelopment" and "dependency" theories; with the frameworks of "historical materialism" and "dialectical materialism" as the methods for the understanding, analysis and explanation of the impact of the SAP and policies of economic deregulation and liberalization on the existing Nigerian social policy framework, social welfare and social security services provision mechanisms and sustainability of human development. The major recommendation of this paper is that, government must re-visit the policies with the view to correcting their ills as to generally make them pro-people, especially the poor, underprivileged and vulnerable for the attainment of sustainable human development in Nigeria.

Key concepts: "Policy", "Public Policy", "Social Policy", "Social Services", "Social welfare", "Social Security" and "Sustainable Human Development".

Introduction

'the action that promoted the well being and happiness of the greatest number of people was the right one'. Hence, 'the standard by which we must judge all the actions of men, institutions and Governments was the yardstick of human happiness'- John S, Mill, in Whitehead (1972:170).

Adam Smith (1776) therefore argued thus:

'No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which by far the greater part of the numbers are poor and miserable'.

Social policy is an indispensable *interventionist mechanism* for the articulation of *sustainable human development* in society. It is the principle and practical course of action adopted by government to guide its decision-making and decision-taking processes regarding the generalized and specific criteria for evolving and strengthening human development capacities and potentials by means of improving the living conditions, wellbeing and standards of people through adequate provisions of human basic needs and other vital social welfare and social security services. Amongst the human basic needs, which social policy addressed are provisions of food, water, shelter, health, education, employment and other public utilities with the view to checking inequity, inequality and social exclusion of different classes of people, especially the *poor, underprivileged and vulnerable* in the society *as to improve their social welfare and social security in order to motivate their sense of belonging and patriotism.*

In Nigeria however, the negative consequences of de-industrialization arising from the *Structural adjustment program* (SAP) of 1986 and those of commercialization and privatization of the public utility and social overhead sectors arising from the introduction of economic deregulation and liberalization policies of 1990s have led to the undermining, denigration and distortion of the Nigerian social policy framework. This was because the policies have transferred the management of public utility sector to the private sector based on the operations of market forces for the purposes of

injecting into them the culture of *economic efficiency, profiteering and corporatism.* Therefore, the ills which SAP and economic deregulation and liberalization policies had sought to cure coupled with the efficiency they sought to instill in the economy have consequently contributed to the *harsh poverty, widespread unemployment, underemployment, misemployment, illiteracy, insecurity and criminality of different forms and dimensions* in Nigeria.

Consequently, this development led to the substitution of social policy framework established on what Titmuss (1974:31) called the *"institutional progressive redistribution"* model that operates based on *"egalitarian"* or *"altruistic" principles that are "other regarding"* to the social policy framework based on *"residual" and "industrial achievement performance" models that operate based on market forces.* According to Peacock (1960: 11), the residual and industrial achievement performance approaches only *'teach people how to do without the "welfare state" and "welfarism" in the long run.* Hence, the social welfare and social security systems developed from their frameworks became mere adjuncts of the capitalist economic system; the operation of which is essentially determined by the market forces. Because of this situation, the provisions of social welfare and social security services are now by means of *economic empowerment programs* for poverty alleviation and other purposes meant for the needs of some peer-reviewed categories of people that require some forms of financial

assistance in order to lift themselves by their own bootstraps. This situation has now become common in Nigeria for people to provide for most of their social welfare and social security needs especially as regards education, health, alternative electricity generation and water supply for their domestic and private businesses consumptions.

It is against this background that this paper examined the nature of the existing social policy framework for the provisions of different forms of social welfare and social security services in comparison with the previous traditional social framework in order to evaluate the impact of SAP and policies of economic de-regulation and liberalization on the social policy framework vis-à-vis the mechanisms for the provisions of social welfare and social security services for sustainable human development in Nigeria. The main argument of this paper is that since the prime objectives of the SAP and policies of economic deregulation and liberalization are essentially built on achieving economic efficiency of the public sector enterprises through their “commercialization” and “privatization” based on “crude capitalism” in which the private sector only takes much more than it gives back to society; the possibility of building a sound foundation for an egalitarian social policy framework capable of articulating sustainable human development in Nigeria is very dicey.

The methodology adopted for this paper was anchored on the “false paradigm model” developed from “underdevelopment” and “dependency” theories; with the frameworks of “historical materialism” and “dialectical materialism” as the methods for the understanding, analysis and explanation of the impact of the SAP and policies of economic deregulation and liberalization on the existing Nigerian social policy framework, social welfare and social security services provision mechanisms and sustainability of human development.

The paper is divided into six sections with the first section dealing with the introduction. The

second and third sections respectively highlighted the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of the paper. While the fourth section deals with the background to the SAP and economic deregulation and liberalization policies in Nigeria; the fifth section is with the analysis or discussion of their impact or implications on social policy framework vis-à-vis the mechanisms for the provisions of social welfare and security services as well as the sustainable human development framework in Nigeria. The sixth section is regarding the concluding remarks and recommendations of the paper.

Conceptual framework

The key concepts or terms for this paper are “policy”, “public policy”, “social policy”, “social services”, “social welfare”, “social security” and “sustainable human development”.

Policy

The concept of “policy” is what gives the concepts of public policy and social policy their respective and relative credence. By “policy”, it refers to the principle that governs or guides specific actions directed at some given ends as they relate to the public interests, especially regarding the social, economic, educational, health and other issues, needs or problems of society. The concept of policy is generally “problem-solving-cum-action-oriented” as it specifically relates to some identified goals or objectives and the problems of a society. Policy is therefore a necessary instrument of intervention for the promotion of diverse public interest and amelioration of different societal problems for the achievement of social, political, economic and other goals of society.

Public policy

Public policy is a major familiar concept in social sciences. Its applications, usages, purposes, definitions and meanings are in many different ways as drawn from the respective perspective of different theories in the Social Sciences, notably

the political economy theory, structural-functionalist or functionalism theory, general system analysis and the rational choice theory, to mention but a few (Bande and Baba, 2010). Because the main objective of public policy is generally the promotion of some vital public interests as to contain some societal problems; it became necessary to subsume other forms or categories of policies with respect to different issues and problems of a society to include “social policy”, “economic policy”, “health policy”, “education policy”, “agricultural policy”, “transport policy”, etc. For this reason, the concept of public policy is beclouded by different definitions (Dalakwa (2008:1).

However, the concept of public policy is used mainly *‘in reference to what government does in order to meet the yearnings and aspirations of the citizenry as regards distributing, regulating and redistributing of resources in the society’*. Although, there is no precise and a universally accepted definition of the term public policy, it is nevertheless generally used to refer to *the principles, guidelines, statement of intention or orientation, activities and process of decision making regarding choices adopted by a governmental body in guiding the affairs of people in a given polity*. Public policy is therefore from a descriptive perspective defined as *‘a dynamic process that is characterized by a course or pattern of activities carried out with the aim of achieving predetermined objectives’* (Dlakwa (2008:2-9).

Other definitions of public policy also provided by other scholars are those by Knoepfel (2007), Bande (2010) and Lemieux (1995). According to Knoepfel (2007), public policy is a *‘collection of laws, mandates, or regulations established through a political process by which means government maintains order or addresses the needs of its citizens through actions defined by its constitution’*. Similarly, Bande (2010) defined public policy as a *‘series of intentionally coherent decisions or activities taken or carried out by different public and sometime private actors, whose resources, institutional links and interests*

vary, with the view to resolving in a targeted manner a problem that is politically defined as collective in nature’. On the part of Lemieux (1995), public policy simply refers to the *‘activities aimed at the resolution of public problems by political actors whose relationships are structured’*.

Social policy

The concept of social policy too like that of public policy does not lend itself to a precise definition. The definitions and meanings attributed to the concept of social policy are largely a matter of convention as relatively defined by government or international convention of the UN or its agencies. According to Marshall (1965:7), Social Policy is not a technical term with an exact meaning or definition. Social policy however refers to *‘the policy of governments with regard to action having direct impact on the welfare of the citizens, by providing them with services or income’*. According to the Department of Social Policy of the London School of Economics, social policy is an *‘interdisciplinary and applied to subjects concerned with the analysis of society's responses to social needs’*. The concept of social policy is a part of public policy and it is primarily concerned with the principles that govern actions directed at achieving some given social ends such as *“poverty”, “ill-health”, “poor housing”, “insufficient education” and “unemployment”* which the chief architect of British Welfare state, William Beveridge termed the *“five giants”*. Because of the negative consequences of the five giants on the well-being and welfare of members of a society together with *“criminal justice”, “inequality” and “labor”*, the Malcolm Weiner Center for Social policy at the Harvard University in the USA termed them the *“wicked problems”* (Titmuss, 1974: 23 and Bradford, 2012).

Like its forbearers i.e. policy and public policy; social policy is a broad and general concept in the context of which are embedded the definitions and meanings of other concepts such as *“social welfare”, “social security” and “social services”*.

These concepts are generally used with reference to the systems of laws, programs, benefits and services aimed at strengthening or providing the social needs and services recognized as basic for the social welfare and social security benefits of the members or some group of people in a society for the purposes of effective functioning and maintenance of social order. This makes the main objective of social policy and other related concepts of social welfare, social security and social services as the establishment of both legal and technical frameworks for addressing “social problems” i.e. *“the unwanted discrepancies in what a society desires for itself”*.

Social problems are mainly addressed by means of provision of social services recognized basic and vital to the improvement of the living standard, wellbeing, welfare and security of people in a society. In the attempt of solving social problems both economic and non-economic measures or factors are being utilized for the purposes of promoting human relations and development of members of a society through “economic redistribution” with “tax” and other “levies” on *income, wealth or goods and services* being used as mechanisms for closing or bridging the gap between the rich and poor or the haves and the have nots. It is in this connection that, Baldock (1989) defined social policy as the *‘deliberate intervention by government in trying to meet and satisfy the social needs of the people as well as to distribute resources among citizens in order to achieve welfare objectives’*.

Social welfare

Like the concept of social policy, that of social welfare is also a blanket term used generally to refer to the mechanisms for the amelioration of social problems due to which the two concepts are synonymous for sharing a common aim, meaning and definition (Titmuss, 1974: 23). Some of the definitions of social welfare include those provided by Titmuss (1974:23) and Zastrow (1982). Titmuss defined social welfare as *“a system of laws, programs, benefits and services*

which strengthen or assure the process and methods of meeting social needs that are recognized as basic for the welfare and wellbeing of the population and for the functioning of social order’ (Titmuss, 1974; 23). On the other hand, Zastrow refers to social welfare as *‘a full range of organized activities of voluntary and governmental agencies that seek to prevent, alleviate or contribute to the solution of recognized social problems or to improve the wellbeing of individuals, groups and communities’*.

Social welfare like social policy and social work is a relative phenomenon associated with the social, cultural, religious, political and economic contexts or conditions from which it emerged and operates. The concepts of social policy, social welfare and social work are both deeply rooted in religion and the moral philosophy of “humanitarianism”; for which reason they are generally considered the main methods of ameliorating societal problems. As phenomena, they have both developed from the compassionate grounds, sense of solidarity and love of humanity that involved provision of mutual aids amongst people as individuals and groups in society. It is on historical records that the earliest example of direct government intervention to human welfare dated back to the regime of Umar al Khattab who was the second caliph of Islam in the 6th century. He used “Zakkat” and other governmental resources and services to provide support and succor to different categories of people, especially the Needies amongst children, youths, orphans, Divorcees, disabled, people of the non-Muslim community, etc through the establishment of pension scheme, income and other supports (Encyclopedia Wikipedia, 2016).

It was however the subsequent developments from the effects of industrial revolution and capitalism in the west that have caused the development of modern social welfare system amongst both the Western European countries and the USA as well as the Socialist countries in the 19th century. Subsequently these social

welfare approaches spread to the Third World Countries which in addition to their respective traditional informal social welfare and social security systems are used for human development. Hence, provision of social welfare generally involves public and voluntary programs and services provided by individuals and other stakeholder groups within and outside the society of origin. *Social welfare according to Talcott Parsons generally helps in "boundary maintenance" between different classes of people in society.* For social welfare to be meaningful as to fulfill the objectives and functions of ameliorating societal problem and improve the living conditions and wellbeing of people, it must be provided at all times and not just when people are in desperate need as in case of economic empowerment and poverty alleviation programs provided under the framework of residual model. Because social welfare is a function of many factors to include social security, industrial welfare and other social services that cut across health, education, housing, environment, etc; it provides the basis of conceptualizing "sustainable human development" needs.

Social services

This concept of social services too is very broad and general in definition, meaning and contexts of application. It is also not easy to provide a common definition of social services that satisfies all areas of its application. In a general sense however, social services connote '*all basic and vital services provided by the government, private sector and individuals for the effective functioning of individuals and society in general*'. Social services take many forms to include the tangible goods and non-tangibles such as opportunities. In specific terms social services include amongst others *employment opportunities, food, health, education and housing facilities* as well as the *security of members of society capable of safeguarding their human dignity, lives and properties*. Although the concept of social services is hard to define, the

following definitions can suffice for the purposes of providing some directions. To this regard, Titmuss (1963: 16) has defined social services as the '*series of collective interventions that contribute to the general welfare (of people in society)*'. Similarly, Khan (1979: 20) cited the United Nations definition of social services to refer to the '*organized action that aimed at helping towards a mutual adjustment of individuals and their social environment*'. Equally also, Goodwin (2005) defined the concept of social services as '*the variety of programs made available by public or private agencies to individuals and families*'. Social services according to Mishra (1977: 25 & 144) '*are the material expression of a set of rights of citizenship similar to civil and political rights*'. Social services are generally used to incorporate the masses into the existing social and political order.

Sustainable Human Development:

The concept of "sustainable human development" took its roots and courses from the concepts of "*development*", "*human development*" and "*sustainable development*". According to Brown (1982: 75), *the concept of development conceals as much as it reveals*; for which reason its meaning, definition, theoretical framework, empirical application or strategy are surrounded by many difficulties and controversies (Todaro, 1992, Mato, 2007:17 and Adedoyin, 2012). The concept is therefore generally lopsided, elusive, disharmonious, ambiguous, vague, obscure and dynamic which made it a mere construct that means different things to different people or societies at different times in history (Onokerhoraye, 1994 and Alanana, 2006). In spite of the problematic associated with the concept of development, it is generally associated with the profound inter-related changes, transformations, improvements or progress in the social, cultural, political, economic, psychological, technological, environmental and other aspects of society.

The concept of development is a multidimensional phenomenon involving the

process of growth for the increased capacity of the individual and society in general in relation to some critical economic and non-economic variables for the purposes of uplifting the living condition, wellbeing, welfare, security and generally *“human dignity”* and *“wellbeing”*. The variables used in the evaluation of development are both tangible and non-tangibles or specifically economic and non-economic regarding both the material and non-material or moral wellbeing of people. While in the evaluation of material wellbeing of people the *“Gross Domestic Product” (GDP)*, *“Gross National Product” (GNP)* and *“Per Capita Income”* are used for the purposes of understanding, analyzing and explaining *“how the benefits of economic growth are shared”* in addressing issues of *“inequity”*, *“inequality”* and *“social exclusion”*; for the non-material wellbeing the *normative principles or variables are involved*.

Amongst the definitions of development that are related with the above stated perspectives are those developed by notably Rodney (1972), Seers (1972) and Streeten (1972) to mention but a few. For example, Rodney (1972) identified *‘increased skills and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being’* as the main critical objectives of development for the individual and for the society to include increased capacity for dealing with environment, improved technology and adequate social, cultural, political and economic organization’. Similarly, Seers (1972) and Streeten (1972) have respectively identified the critical objectives of development to be the containment of poverty, inequality and unemployment in society.

The *“Basic Needs Approach”* that has gained currency in the 1970s and 1980s owed much to the ideas of Seers and Streeten which perhaps gave the Economist Mahbub ul Haq the insight of conceptualizing *“human development”* as the process of enlarging peoples freedom and opportunities for the purposes of improving their wellbeing, security and human dignity. Amongst the most fundamental foundational elements of Human development are *“healthy and*

knowledgeable conditions of life”, *“prompt accessibility to resources”* needed for a decent and secure standard of living and *“environmental sustainability”*. In order to gauge the extent of human development in a society, the Human Development Index (HDI) of the UN has become one of the main yardsticks of evaluating human development in all societies across the globe. It is used specifically to measure and rank societies or countries based on their levels of achievement of the human development needs or goals of a society/country. The HDI is based on four main criteria: *life expectancy at birth, mean years of schooling, expected years of schooling and Gross National income per capita* (Encyclopedia Wikipedia, 2016).

However, regarding the concept of *“sustainable human development”*, although the World Commission on Environment (WCED-the Brundtland Commission) brought it to the limelight of development literature in its World Development report entitled *“Our common future”*; the original usage of the term sustainable development was by Hans Carl Von Carlowitz in his treatise on forestry development in 1713. *The treatise was the first to advocate for effective utilization, conservation and re-generation of forest resources through the most appropriate management approaches that guard against the over-exploitation and depletion of forest environment and resources that seriously affected the production of timber in Saxon, Germany in the early part of the 18th century*. In the treatise, Carlowitz specifically used the German term/word *‘Nachhaltigkeit’* which is the equivalent of the English term/word *‘sustainability’* to indicate the desired procedures and direction upon which forest environment and its resources can thrive and flourish for many generations yet unborn in Saxon (Hsiang, J., Mendis, B., Markiewicz, D. and Weich, R., 2009).

Since the WCED report, the concept of sustainable development has become the new reigning paradigm in development thinking and literature in which the main issue is not just how to attain development but also how to make it

flourish, thrive and become everlasting (i.e. sustainable). It was in this connection and direction that the WCED (1987: 43) defined the concept of “sustainable development” as *‘the process of meeting the development needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of the future generation’*. Amongst the critical objectives/elements of sustainable development identified by the WCED include, *“quantitative and qualitative growth”* that ensure the provisions of essential human (basic) development needs such as jobs, foods, energy, water and sanitation. The other critical objectives of sustainable development are *“population control”, “conservation and regeneration of environmental resource base”, “reorientation of technology”, “efficient management of risk”, “merger of environment and economics in decision making” and “reorientation of international economic relations”* (Isamah, 2002:133).

The other abridged definition of sustainable development provided by the UNDP (1993) is that, it is *‘the development of the people by the people and for the people’*. Accordingly, for the UNDP, the main objective of sustainable development *‘is not just economic growth but also investment in human potentials through adequate provisions of education, training, health and food as well as adequate regeneration of environment and the ecosystem on which the existence of all living things depend’*. Alternatively, the World Bank (1994) defined sustainable development simply as *‘the development that lasts’*. According to Bartoli (2000), for sustainable development to become possible as to last for the benefit of both the present and future generations, the planetary environmental resources must receive adequate protection through appropriate renewability and regeneration approaches by means of appropriate policies and programs. In the light of the above, the concept of “sustainable human development” can therefore be construed and defined as *“the everlasting process of enlarging people’s freedom, opportunities and choices for*

the purposes of improving the wellbeing, security and dignity of human beings by means of adequate preservation of the natural and other resources for the benefit of people in society.

Theoretical perspective/framework

The “false paradigm model” developed from “underdevelopment” and “dependency” neo-Marxist theories is adopted to provide the framework of understanding, analysis and explanation of the impact of the SAP and policies of economic de-regulation and liberalization on the new non-egalitarian social policy framework based on residual model that seriously retarded the possibility for the attainment of Sustainable Human Development in Nigeria. The false paradigm model is adopted because the underdevelopment and dependency theories from which background the false paradigm model has developed generally views societal development as a long-term historical process, which for the Third World countries has not yet been effectively realized because of their continuous exploitation by the Developed industrialized countries.

In addition, the false paradigm model of development views the continuous underdevelopment and dependence of Third World countries to the incorrect, faulty and inappropriate models of development that only led the Third World countries to the *“dependent development” which ‘yields not a better life and a brighter future but continuous exploitation and a greater misery’* (Sweezy, 1986:217). For the purpose of understanding, analysis and explanation of the pattern of dependent development and relations between the Developed and Third World countries as well as the *“structural problems”* therefrom, the neo-Marxist theories of underdevelopment and dependency so also the false paradigm models generally employ the methods of *“Dialectical materialism”* and *“Historical materialism”*.

The false paradigm models are essentially developed by the International Agencies within the framework of *“Bourgeois theories of*

development” for the Third World countries to conceive and implement their development strategies, plans, policies and programs (Todaro, 1986:79 and Mato, 2007:19-20). According to Mato (2007:25), the Marxist political economy perspective from the theoretical context of which has developed the neo-Marxist theories of underdevelopment and dependency ‘is a superior paradigm in the study and understanding of development not only in Nigeria but the Third World, and the world generally’. As a result, therefore ‘it forms the theoretical foundations of any meaningful understanding of the basis of development in any society’.

According to the false paradigm models, the relationships entered into between the Developed and Third World countries do not only contribute to their reliance on the advices and directives of the former on vital political and economic issues and policies but also to the destruction of their indigenous political and economic institutions and independent initiatives for development. The framework of false paradigm models is therefore very useful in understanding and analysis of the nature of relationship between “policy” and “development” as the products of historical and materialist conditions of the Third World Countries, Nigeria in particular. The significance of the models in the study and evaluation of impact of policy on development issues lie not just in the respective utilities of dialectical historical and materialist approaches, but also in uncovering who stands to gain from the policies that emerge from the state or its agencies (Ake, 1983: 11). The introduction of the SAP and other economic deregulation and liberalization policies in Nigeria are case examples of how the world powers in collaboration with the indigenous leaders imposed policies on Third World Countries even if the policies are not for the public good of the implementing countries but for theirs. It is the main objective of this paper therefore to within the contexts of the false paradigm models highlight, analyze and explain the variant problems generated on the social policy vis-à-vis sustainable human development

frameworks of Nigeria due to the implementation of the SAP and policies of economic de-regulation and liberalization.

Background to the SAP and policies of economic deregulation and liberalization in Nigeria

In Nigeria, since the colonial era, the public utility enterprises have *assumed increasing diverse and strategic developmental roles in the Nigerian economy*. Before the commencement of privatization in 1988 there were about 1500 public enterprises in Nigeria amongst which 600 were owned by the Federal government and 900 to the state and local governments. Together, the public enterprises accounted for about 50%-60% of formal sector employments and gulped about \$35 billion total investment, 40% non-salary recurrent expenditure and 30% of capital expenditure (Ariyo and Jerome, 2005:53-5). But the problems of public enterprises became eminent to the government during the economic recession of 1981 arising from the collapse of oil prices that seriously affected the average annual average annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

However, due to the poor financial returns and performance of the public sector enterprises in relations to the huge financial expenditure dispensed on them, the Federal government was necessitated to put them under scrutiny; especially due to the outrageous macroeconomic imbalance recorded during the period in relation to the very low per capita, gross domestic product (GDP), inflation and manufacturing sector stagnation. During the period of 1970s the annual economic growth rate was 2.9% and it declined to about 0.7% and 0.20% in 1982 and 1983 respectively (World Bank, 1986).

In July 1986, while against the public outcry for a balance of payment loan from the World Bank which the Federal Government sought to clear some of its backlog of trade arrears of over N2.7 billion it introduced the SAP as its better option of exiting the quagmires of its economic crisis of the 1970s and 1980s (Bamidaro, 1999: 135). Amongst the main goals of SAP include the establishment of real value of Naira in the foreign

exchange market, rationalization of government Parastatals, stimulation of employment through promotion of private sector, improvement of public expenditure, rescheduling of medium and long term debts, promotion of exports and encouragement of foreign investment (Kwanashie, 1987, Bawa, 1990 and Ijaiya, 1999: 135-6).

The first policy that accompanied SAP was the introduction of the “second-tier foreign exchange market” (SFEM) that led to the devaluation of Nigerian currency; the negative effects and consequences of which led to the unprecedented inflation that made both the private and public sector enterprises to operate below their required capacities. Consequently, this led to the massive downsizing of employees of both public and private sectors through massive retrenchment. Shortly after the implementation of the SAP in July 1988, against the societal reaction to privatization and of course commercialization; the Federal government of Nigeria promulgated decree number 25 that ushered the first phase of implementation of the policies of economic de-regulation and liberalization of some public utility sector enterprises. By 1998 with the promulgation of decree 28 by General Abubakar AbdulSalam, the second phase of privatization of public enterprises commenced and the implementation of the policies started by 1999 under the civilian regime of General Olesugun Obasanjo.

Discussion

Inefficient and ineffective operations that contributed to the low productivity, unprofitability, wastages and huge budgetary burdens were amongst the main reasons which government advanced for the implementation of the privatization and commercialization policies in Nigeria (Ayodele, 1990, Adinuba, 1995 and Ijaiya, 1999). The main questions that now remain are, to what extent have these policies achieved their objectives and goals? To what extent have the SAP and the policies of economic deregulation and privatization informed and

shaped the social policy framework as to impact and influence sustainable human development of Nigeria? Answers to these questions are what this section of this paper critically examined.

According to some economists and the apologist of the SAP of 1986 and the privatization and commercialization of the 1990s that followed in Nigeria, the policies have generally positively impacted the Nigerian economy by contributing to its rapid growth (Bajomo, 1988), Adenibu, 1995 and el-Rufai, 2003: 31). Contrary to this, by taking into account the state of social welfare and social security services and mechanisms for which they are provided in Nigeria today, one may argue that the policies did not bring about positive change on human development. Rather the policies have generated much more economic ills than they sought to correct or contain prior to their implementation. The policies have as such generated grievous negative consequences on the Nigeria’s superstructure in which harsh poverty, unemployment, underemployment, misemployment, insecurity and criminality predominate. This was because provision of social welfare and social services are no longer under the principles of egalitarianism and altruism but rather the residual and industrial achievement performance approach. Under the residual-cum-industrial achievement, the perspective and mechanisms of provision of social welfare services only provide incentives for piecemeal empowerment and poverty alleviation on political grounds.

Consequent upon the privatization and commercialization of some public utilities, Nigerians started to learn to lift themselves by their bootstrap; thereby learning to live without “welfare state” and “welfarism” It has as well taught Nigerians due to which it has now become the common government principle to withdraw most subsidies from which people usually benefitted. This has made government to gradually and consistently disengaged itself from the provision of social services all in the name of “efficient allocation of resources” for economic growth to the detriment of sustainable human

development of the country (Bawa, 1990: 5). The new approach has now made the perspective and mechanisms for the provision of social welfare and social security services in Nigeria as mere adjuncts of the economy guided by market forces and the interests of a clique of business oligarchy made up of the ruling and privileged classes that benefitted from the SAP and the policies much more than the poor, underprivileged and vulnerable for whom they are of very little or no significance. Instead of the policies to bring about sustainable human development in the country, they have seriously compromised, undermined and denigrated it. Because, since the implementation of these policies, the main concern of government is only how to articulate and ensure growth in the economy rather than how to extend the benefits of the growth judiciously across the different categories of people in the country. Amongst the people who mostly benefit from economic growth in Nigeria are the political, economic and bureaucratic elites mainly through corrupt practices and through the officially approved exorbitant packages of salary, allowances and other benefits.

The reasons for these claims are not farfetched taking into cognizance the nature, dimension and implications of the variant social and economic problems which implementation of the economic deregulation and liberalization vis-à-vis privatization and commercialization policies has instigated on the living conditions and wellbeing of people due to the denigration of the existing social policy framework, its perspective and mechanisms. Thus, the consequences of implementation of policies have had serious repercussions that created chain of problems on the economy and the lives of majority of people in Nigeria. First amongst the negative effects of the policies was the introduction of stagflation in the country that commenced since the introduction of SAP in 1986.

The massive retrenchment of workers in both the public and organized private sectors due to the closures of different organization under the

sectors were the major cause of this problem that contributed to high rate of unemployment, under-employment and misemployment in the country. Accompanying that problem was also the high rate of inflation arising from high cost of foreign exchange that caused the prices of various goods and services to rise. Altogether, stagflation has generated harsh poverty in the country with a large number of people unable to provide for their basic needs. Moreover, bifurcation of the system of provision of the social services such as education and health services in the country along two-tier system has contributed in the distortion of the perspective and objectives of millennium development goals.

The practice now is that private schools and health facilities coexist and operate side-by-side with the public schools and health centers; with the former being well equipped, better funded and staffed; thereby providing better services for the needs of the well-to-do who can afford their charges/fees. The other tier constituted by the public schools and health facilities on the other hand that still remains under the control and management of the state/government is poorly equipped, underfunded and badly managed. This as such has contributed to the dilapidation, redundancy, desolation and near dysfunctional state of the public sector facilities. Majority of the Nigerian citizenry relied on this badly equipped public sector in the fulfillment of their education and health needs since their access to the sector that provide better services are curtailed for the fact that they cannot afford their charges/fees due to their lack of adequate funds/income.

Due to the segregationist situation which the policies have brought about not only amongst the different social classes of people in the country but also between rural and urban places, the policies of economic deregulation and liberalization vis-à-vis privatization and commercialization are generally considered anti-poor but pro-rich as well as anti rural but pro urban. The policies are anti-poor because of their negative consequences on them by compounding their problems. The policies have made the poor,

underprivileged and vulnerable in Nigeria even more deprived, marginalized and impoverished than they were prior to the implementation of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in 1986 and the subsequent implementation of the privatization and commercialization policies. Before the implementation of SAP and the economic deregulation and liberalization vis-à-vis privatization and commercialization policies, the mechanisms for the provision of social security and welfare services in Nigeria were more egalitarian than they are now when economic empowerment and poverty alleviation programs become the major sources.

The claim that the policies of economic deregulation and liberalization are anti-rural is evident in the ways they have compounded rural problems; thereby contributing to what Mabogunje (1980) once referred to as the “urbanization of growing poverty”. In this process, the very rapid rate of rural-urban migration and commuting processes has rapidly increased, thereby contributing to the very rapid rural drain and urban growth in courses of which rural poverty and other rural problems found their ways into most of the urban places in Nigeria. This process has contributed in compounding the problems of un-employment, illiteracy, ill health and harsh poverty, which conversely also contributed to the unprecedented criminality, violent conflicts and insecurity in most urban places of the country. It was due to this process that the urban problems were further exacerbated and compounded due to much pressure placed on their very few available and badly equipped social services and opportunities. The evidences of these claims are not farfetched, especially taking into cognizance of the urban growth and poverty profiles of Nigeria within the stated period.

Statistics have shown that, in the 1970s, urban growth in Nigeria was just about fifteen (15%) percent, but by 1980s it increased to about twenty-five (25%). By 2000, urban growth significantly increased to about thirty-nine (39%) percent. It is estimated that by 2020 the rate of

urban growth will rise to about sixty-five (65%) percent, especially considering the current growth rate of about five point five (5.5%) percent per annum (CBN/FOS/NISER, 2001, FBS, 2004 and Nwaka, 2005). Regarding the incidence of poverty in Nigeria on the other hand, the studies by the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) in 2005 and the National Planning Commission in 2006 have shown that since the implementation of the SAP and the other economic deregulation and liberalization policies, poverty levels have jumped from 28.1% in 1980 to 43.3% in 1995. By 1996 poverty levels have reached 65.5% and by 1999 to about 87%.

Similarly, statistics provided by the UNDP (1997) and Federal Office of Statistics (FOS-1999), have shown that within the period of 1980 to 1985, poverty situation in Nigeria was about 50% and between 1985 to 1992 it dropped to about 43.3% only to rapidly rose to about 65.6% by 1996. In absolute figures by 1980 there were only about 18 million people out of the Nigerian population of about 80 million living below poverty line of \$1.00 per day. The figure rapidly rose to 35 million by 1985. By 1992 and 1996, respectively the figures increased to 39 million and 67 million respectively. Accordingly, the urban poverty profile in Nigeria was about 17.2% as from 1980 and by 1985, it increased to about 37.8%. By 1996, it jumped to about 58.2%.

In addition, from the Human Development Index (HDI) initiated by the UN and the Capability Poverty Measure (CPM) advocated by the UNDP, it is clear from the table 1 below that poverty has been in the increase since 1985. The growing harsh poverty in the country has serious impact on the conditions of health, food and diet, education and personal security of great majority of people who are poor in Nigeria (UNDP, 1997 and 1998). From this table it is clear that within the period of 1990-2014, the Human development Index has declined from about 0.322 in 1990 to about 0.246 in 1993. It however increased to 0.384 in 1994 and equally rose to about 0.400 in 1996. By 2005 it also increased to

about 0.466, by 2008 to about 0.483, by 2010 to about 0.492, by 2011 to about 0.496, by 2012, to about 0.500, by 2013 to about 0.504 and by 2014 to about 0.514. Equally, according to the UN human index report, Nigeria ranked the 159th out of 177 on poverty incidence. Because of the

severe and harsh poverty situation in Nigeria, the country was amongst the five (5) countries of the world in which two-third (2/3) of their respective national population live in extreme poverty (Abumere, 1998, FBS, 2004 and UNFPA, 2007:27).

Table 1: Profile of Nigeria Human Development Index (HDI) 1990-2014

Date	HDI	HDI Ranking
2014	0.514	152
2013	0.504	152
2012	0.500	153
2011	0.496	153
2010	0.492	153
2008	0.483	142
2005	0.466	140
1996	0.400	N.A.
1994	0.384	N.A.
1993	0.246	N.A.
1990	0.322	N.A.

Source: Nigeria HDI report (Encyclopedia Wikipedia, 2015) and other literature sources

Due to rapid increase in harsh poverty situation in Nigeria, morbidity of various diseases has increased. This is evident in the rise of the cases of heart diseases, high blood pressure and strokes, diabetics, etc. Similarly, cases of criminality, violent conflicts and insecurity have also significantly heightened. According to the Habitat International (1996), violent crime rates are growing higher and faster in urban places. Under this circumstance, significant number of people has resorted to sourcing their sustenance through illegitimate means due to the widespread unemployment and under-employment especially amongst the youths who constitute about 53% of the Total population of Nigeria by 2012.

The youths who are a special category of people for being the leaders of tomorrow coupled with their resourcefulness, dynamism and receptiveness to change and also who now constitute about 57% of the total national population of about 180 million are however the mostly hard hit by the harsh poverty situation of

1986-2015 in Nigeria (UNFPA, 2007). The very limited accessibility of the youths to employment opportunities and other social services that can help them to develop their resourceful potentials have contributed to their relative deprivation, marginalization, exclusion, impoverishment and vulnerability that contributed to their frustrations, shattered hopes and state of powerlessness.

This is evident in the fact that, amongst the youths in Nigeria about eighty (80%) percent are unemployed, having no or very limited access to employment, income, food, health, education, housing and other urban facilities, services and opportunities (World Bank, 2015). Amongst the twenty (20%) percent that are employed, more than fifty (50%) percent are engaged in the marginal petty economic activities of the Informal Sector (CBN, 2015). The rest of them remain idle and redundant due to which they become pre-occupied by unproductive temptations and ventures that often lead them into different delinquent and criminal behaviors. Little

wonders, the most notorious of the youths have become the “Area boys”, who are in the forefront in most criminal activities who for a small stipend can be mobilized by the political class to create havoc in society.

According to the UNCFPA (2007:18) report, youths of the age of 15-24 years commit the largest number of violent crimes and they are the principal victims of violence. Hence, due to the unprecedented and harsh poverty that the SAP and the other economic reform policies have negatively generated, the living conditions and wellbeing of people in general are seriously retarded. Criminality has mostly become the order of the day amongst all categories of people. Hence, crimes have generally graduated from the little thievery, burglaries and inter-personal conflicts and skirmishes to major professional urban crimes and violent conflicts. Amongst such crimes that have now become rampant and common include drug trafficking and abuse, thuggery, brigandage, organized day-light armed robbery, abduction, kidnapping, insurgency, rape, ritual killing, political and economic murders and cybercrimes as well as other different economic, financial and other forms of crimes and violent conflicts.

With regard to education and health as the most hardly hit sectors by the negative effects and consequences of SAP and other economic reform policies, statistics have shown that Nigerian investment on education and health sectors were very low. For example in the year 2000, Nigerian investment on education was only 0.7% of its GDP compared to other countries in Africa, such as Angola with 4.9%, Cote d’Ivoire with 5.0%, Ghana with 4.2%, South Africa with 7.9%, Tanzania with 3.4%, Mozambique with 4.1% and Uganda with 2.6%. It was also recorded that the literacy rate for the people of ages 15 years and above in Nigeria was about 61.1% below that of for example south East Asia and Pacific with about 88.2% and for Latin America and Caribbean with about 87.7%. In addition, the combined gross enrolment ratio for all educational sectors in Nigeria in the same year

was 43%, compared to that of the Arab States with about 60%, South East Asia and Pacific was 68% and Latin America 74%.

The low-key concern for the educational sector in Nigeria has always been the main bond of contention between the Nigerian Government and the Academic Staff Union of Universities due to which on several occasion the ASUU embarked on strike (Yaqub, 2003:41). Regarding the health sector, only about 67% of the Nigerian population by 1993 had access to health care services/facilities (Ijaiya and Aliyu, 2004: 169). Compared to other African countries, Nigeria invested only 0.2% of its GDP, to the health sector while other African countries such as Angola, Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, South Africa, Tanzania, Mozambique and Uganda respectively invested, 1.4%, 14%, 1.8%, 7.1%, 1.3%, 2.1% and 1.8% of their GDPs respectively (Yaqub, 2003” 43). Due to the lackadaisical attitude of government to the health of its citizens the cost of securing health in the country has skyrocketed; the consequences of which has contributed to the high rates of morbidity and mortality in Nigeria.

Concluding remarks

The conclusion drawn from the discussion of this paper is that, the SAP and economic deregulation and liberalization policies mainly articulated through the privatization and commercialization of public utility and social overhead sector in Nigeria have had some serious negative consequences on the traditional social policy framework, perspective and mechanisms in Nigeria based on egalitarianism and altruism. The policies have seriously denigrated and undermined the social policy framework, perspective and mechanisms for the effective dispensation of social services for the sustainable human development in Nigeria. The consequences of this situation in the country have contributed to the chain of problems in Nigeria with unemployment, underemployment, misemployment, harsh poverty, criminality and insecurity becoming very rampant across the

country. The paper is on the view that unless the government squarely address these problems the circle of poverty will ever remain in country. Amongst the many possible ways of addressing the problems is for the government to re-visit the policies of privatization and commercialization especially with respect to the very basic and vital utility services such as health, education, water, housing, electricity, Tele-communication, etc. The 'Utility services are not ordinary commodities, the quality and quantity could be

programmed. Because the citizenry may have no option to some of these utilities, it is feared that, outright privatization of these necessities may impair their accessibility and affordability by the poor and vulnerable groups within the polity. Therefore it is important to evolve a pro-active framework that will ensure that the pitfalls of the past experience from privatization and commercialization are avoided as to make the processes purposeful, result-oriented and pro poor' (Ariyo and Jerome (2005: 2-3).

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