

## Implications of Poverty and Insecurity on Nigeria's Search for a New Social Order

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**Abstract:** The twin problem of poverty and insecurity in Nigeria has become so pervasive that both government and individuals are overwhelmed. This research sought to ascertain the extent to which poverty induces insecurity in Nigeria and the efforts so far made to curtail the tide. Content analytical approach was used to review the extant documents related to the subject matter. The study adopted the Relative Deprivation Theory propounded by Robert K. Merton in 1938 and the Human Security Approach propounded by Scholars such as Mary Kaldor, Kofi Anan and Thomas Roberts in 1994. It is the finding of this study that poverty and insecurity have been the hydra-headed twin challenge on Nigeria's social, political cum economic development over the years. Poverty and insecurity have long remained endemic in Nigeria despite varied efforts of individuals, governments and international actors and as a consequence, the nation has been blatantly marked as one of the poorest and most security challenged nations of the globe despite her natural resources abundance; hence, constituting a threat to the nation's quest for a new socio-economic cum political order. The study recommended that government and individuals should not relent in their efforts towards poverty reduction and securing the nation, this is with a view to actualizing a new social order; government must work not only to improve incomes but to tackle the many other social and political factors that contribute to poverty; community participation approach to poverty reduction programmes and/or projects is sacrosanct if any meaningful war against poverty in Nigeria was to be won, among others.

**Key words:** Implications • Poverty • Insecurity • Nigeria • Social Order

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### INTRODUCTION

Nigeria has over the years, been the biggest producer of oil in Africa and the sixth oil producer in the world but lamentably, despite its vast resources, it ranks among the poorest and most insecure country in the world. Poverty and insecurity have been the twin problems of Nigeria's quest for a new social order. Numerous heartbreaking reports on poverty and insecurity have been made by various national and global institutions for the nation. A World Bank Report released at a United Nations Summit in 2010 rated her as the second poorest and insecure country in the world with most Nigerians living below poverty line, Ajodo-Adebanjo and Ugwuoke [1]. In a similar report, the National Bureau of Statistics in 2012 reported that about 60.9% of Nigerians in 2010 were living in 'absolute poverty' which is a situation of lacking basic subsistence

like food, shelter and clothing. In 2011, the figure rose slightly to 61.9% and 2012, the number of Nigerians living in poverty was put at 61%; and the highest poverty rates were recorded in the North-West and North East geopolitical zones with a poverty rate of 77.7% and 76.6% respectively (NBS, 2012 in [1]).

Conceptualizing poverty is as difficult as determining its effects. As literature is replete with the definitions of poverty, many scholars for instance, Abumere [2] believes that, this is as a result of many researchers in the field. He further stressed that poverty as a multi-component phenomenon can be defined or measured by one single variable like income that must be defined in terms of many other variables such as consumption, socio-economic resources, access to social and political infrastructure and demographic variables (Life expectancy and infant mortality, political participation, freedom and human rights).

For Ajadi [3], the poverty situation in Nigeria is a response to the process of development brought about by critical stakeholders including government through some approved institutions and so, state decisions about poverty alleviation in whatever guise in Nigeria have always been made within the context of those institutions. To some people, being poor cannot be taken to mean being weak or not hardworking. In that line, Neubeck in Agboti [4] defined poverty as an economic state of being and not as a result of any character deficiency.

For us, since poverty is a relative term, we see it as a state of general lack including: deprivation, being insecure, humiliation, degradation, the sense of being dependent and of being forced to accept rudeness, insults and indifference when one seeks help. This is a common experience in many communities in the country. Most times, poverty is defined based on its telling effect on its victim as expressed by one poor man in the worlds of Narayan [5]. "Don't ask me what poverty is because you have met it outside my house. Look at my utensils and the clothes that I am wearing. Look at everything and write what you see. What you see is poverty". The foregoing reflects just a description of a few of the various perceptions of poverty at least from the poor. Poverty could denote a state of deprivation that is, not having enough to eat, a high rate of infant mortality, a low life expectancy, low educational opportunities, poor water, inadequate health care, unfit housing and lack of active participation in the decision-making process. It could also mean in other words, absence of or lack of basic necessities of life or lack of command over basic consumption needs such as food, clothing and/or shelter, glaring defects in the economy of the concerned persons or groups.

Poverty in whatever form or type has some outstanding variables to include: hunger and food crisis, lack of access to safe water, lack of basic education and electricity, poor health services, unemployment and underemployment, political instability and insecurity, income inequality, deprivations, illiteracy, prostitution, poor diet or low consumption due to income level, low life expectancy including infant and maternal mortality and morbidity [6, 7].

Nwagwu [8] submitted that successive governments have made robust attempts to alleviate poverty in Nigeria. Such notable programmes included the 1972 National Accelerated Food Production Programme and the Nigerian Agricultural and Co-operative Bank; 1976 Operation Feed the Nation aimed at teaching the rural farmers how to use modern farming tools; 1979 Green Revolution Programme

structured to reduce food importation and increase in local food production above subsistence farming; 1986 Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI); 1993 Family Support Programme and the Family Economic Advancement Programme; 2001 National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), designed to boost and sustain poverty alleviation programme in Nigeria, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) launched in January 2000; in 2012, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was introduced; in 2008, Third National FADAMA Development Project (FADAMA III) was launched, in 2012, Subsidy Re-investment Programme (Sure-P) was introduced coupled with the very recent N-Power Programme. All these programmes have either achieved little or have failed woefully and have defiled all economic policies initiated to tackle poverty which is not unconnected with income inequality, long term ethno-religious conflicts, civil unrest and political instability.

Nigeria in recent times has witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity which has made national security threat to be a major issue for the government and has prompted huge allocation of the national budget to security. The reason is not far-fetched as Achumba *et al.* [9] captured that absence of basic services; unemployment, bad governance and corruption provide an avenue for disgruntled members of the society to be radicalized. The situation is such that no day passes without news of one form of killing by insurgents or the other. Many properties have been destroyed. For instance, insecurity in the North led to the declaration of a state of emergency in three states in the zone namely; Yobe, Adamawa and Bornu states. Despite this, killings have continued and the worst aspect of it has been that in recent times, educational institutions have become targets with many pupils and students killed and hundreds of young girls abducted. Besides, there is a spill-over effect with insecurity spilling over to other parts of the country like Zamfara state which had for long been a peaceful state compared to other states in the North suchon Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2014, about 112 people were reported killed by insurgents who stormed Yar'galadima village in Dansadau District of Maru LGA of the state, [1]. Apart from these zones, poverty has also been endemic in conflict zones like the South-South where conflict between Multinational Oil Companies (MNOCs) and militant youths in the region has resulted in the impoverishment of the people. The Niger Delta region which is the source of Nigeria's wealth suffers from a paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty. According to a World Bank Report captured in the Niger Delta

Development Commission (NDDC) report (2008), about 70% of people in the region live below the poverty line which is above African Standard, [1]. It went further to say that the Niger Delta is one of the poorest parts of the world. Poverty in the region is a cause and effect of conflicts between Niger Delta's minority ethnic groups and Multinational Oil Companies (MNOCs) with the former who felt they were being shortchanged and demanded for a share of the 'petrol dollar' as compensation for environmental degradation among others. The violence that erupted as a result of this has not only led to the destruction of means of livelihood but in most cases the loss of bread winners. In addition, it has impeded business investments in the areas, economic growth and productivity, encouraged inflation and unemployment and negatively affected the living standards of the people. As a result of disenchantment with the activities of MNOCs, various militant groups in the Niger Delta emerged and resorted to abducting foreign oil workers for ransom. In the Middle-Belt or North Central Zone, insecurity is also rife.

In places like Plateau state, conflict between the Hausa-Fulani and the Birom people has left many dead while in Benue, Enugu and Abia states among others, the recent conflict between the Fulani herdsmen and the local people led to many deaths and villages being ransacked. Nasarawa state is another conflict-ridden state as communal conflicts have become pervasive to the extent that virtually every local government area has an unresolved conflict at various stages of escalation or de-escalation [10, 11]. There has been conflict between the Eggon-Koro/Migiliin Obi Local Government, the Alagos and Hausa are locked in internecine conflict with the Tiv Community in Awe Local Government over land matters while there has conflict in Nasarawa Local Government between the indigenous Afo and the Hausa/Fulani over chieftaincy dispute. These became entrenched such that in many part of the South-south and South-East and different parts of the country, kidnapping, armed robbery, vandalization of pipelines, rape, prostitution, Fulani Herdsmen conflicts among others have become daily occurrence which have led to insecurity of life in the nation. Insecurity in the regions no doubt affects the nation's national income as it discourages investors.

In order to ameliorate the incidence of crime, the federal government has embarked on criminalization of terrorism by passing the Anti-Terrorism Act in 2011, installation of Computer-based Closed Circuit Television cameras (CCTV) in some parts of the country, enhancement of surveillance as well as investigation of

criminal related offences, heightening of physical security measures around the country aimed at deterring or disrupting potential attacks, strengthening of security agencies through the provision of security facilities and the development and broadcast of security tips in mass media, Azazi [12]. Despite these efforts, the level of insecurity in the country has remained high. In addition, Nigeria has consistently ranked low in the Global Peace Index (GPI), signifying a worsened state of insecurity in the country.

**Statement of the Problem:** The fact that efforts towards quenching the magnified fire of poverty and insecurity ravaging Nigeria have not yielded any significant result has become a source of worry to the citizenry, institutions, governments and the international community, [6]. The poverty situation in Nigeria is quite disturbing. Both the quantitative and qualitative measurements attest to the growing incidences and depth of poverty and insecurity in the country. This situation however, presents a paradox considering the vast human and physical resources that the country is endowed with. It is even more disturbing that despite the huge human and material resources that have been devoted to poverty reduction by successive governments, no noticeable success has been achieved in this direction. Although, predicted poverty reduction scenarios vary greatly depending upon the rate and nature of poverty related policies, actual evidence suggests that the depth and severity of poverty is still at its worst in Nigeria.

Nkwede [7] lamented that over the years, Nigeria has attracted pitiable reports on poverty and insecurity rates such that The World Bank Report in 1996 shows that the Sub-Sahara Africans including Nigerians are among the world poorest class of people in terms of Gross National Product (GNP) and access to social and political life; Social Statistics shows that Nigeria is the worst (In terms of poverty) in the Sub Sahara Africa, despite her numerous natural resources, it held that greater percentages of Nigerians were living below the universal poverty line of US\$1 per day. The 2003 official statistics released by the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) shows that the National Poverty Rate was projected at 70%, amounting to 80 million people as poor in Nigeria [6, 8]. These are but to mention but a few since such disgusting reports and situation have continued till the present day.

Correlatively, the level of insecurity in the country has also remained a source of concern for all and sundry. Nigeria has consistently ranked low in the Global Peace Index, signifying a worsened state of insecurity in the

country. Several lives and properties have been lost as a result of various security challenges at various times in the history of Nigeria. Therefore, the persistence rise in the level of poverty (Unemployment) and insecurity in the country despite several individual and government efforts over the years is the major motivating concern of this study. In view of the foregoing, the following questions become pertinent:

- To what extent does unemployment affect Nigeria's search for a new social order?
- What is the relationship between poverty and insecurity in Nigeria?

**Objectives of the Study:** The broad objective of the study was to find out how poverty and insecurity have affected Nigeria's search for a new social order. Specifically, the study sought:

- To ascertain the extent to which unemployment affect Nigeria's search for a new social order.
- To find out the relationship between poverty and insecurity in Nigeria.

**Hypotheses:**

HA<sub>1</sub>: Unemployment has significantly reduced Nigeria's GDP.

HA<sub>2</sub>: There is a significant relationship between poverty and insecurity in Nigeria.

**Poverty: Meaning, Incidences, Dimensions, Causes and Types in Nigeria:** Defining poverty remains a problematic venture and the debate relating to what it constitutes, how it is measured and how it is to be tackled, rages on. In the first place, the difficulty in defining poverty arises from the fact that different poverty definitions span different spheres of concerns which may not all be easily measured. Secondly, there is the issue of the universality of the definition of poverty. Definitions and measurement indicators applied in one type of society may be difficult to transfer to other societies, without serious modifications, in other words, poverty is a relative social miasma [1]. Hence, a concise and universally accepted definition of poverty is elusive. Different criteria have been used to conceptualize poverty. For instance, Onah [6] citing [2] conceptualized poverty as "A way of life characterized by low calorie intake, inaccessibility to adequate health facilities, low quality of education system, low life expectancy, high infant mortality, low income, unemployment and underemployment and inaccessibility to various housing and other facilities. The

above view is more descriptive than conceptual because, it highlights the various circumstances constituting poverty. By implication, the poor are the most vulnerable and lack resources, capacity to organize themselves and unable to exercise the right to protect their situation.

The poor are those who are deprived, unable and lack resources to acquire basic needs of life and that is why Neubeck cited in Agboti [4] defined poverty as an economic state of being and not as a result of any character deficiency. Similarly, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) gave a multidimensional conceptualization of poverty as an interlinked form of deprivation in the economic, human, political, socio-cultural and protective spheres, [13].

Incidentally, in Nigeria, poverty is largely a rural phenomenon with an average of between 62 and 75 percent of the population living on less than a dollar a day and also tends to be deeper than urban poverty in these regions, [14]. Besides, it has become increasingly evident that within the African region, the poor are heterogeneous and that some element of dynamics does exist with a clear distinction between chronic and transitory poverty. As Nkwede [7] and Ovie and Orhioghene [15] rightly observed, most analyses follow the conventional view of poverty as a result of insufficient income for securing basic goods and services. The concern here is with the individual's ability to subsist and to reproduce himself as well as the individual's ability to command resources to achieve this. Many other experts have conceptualized the poor as that portion of the population that is unable to meet basic nutritional needs while others view poverty in part, as a function of education, health, life expectancy, child mortality, etc. [9] identify the poor, using the criteria of the levels of consumption and expenditure. Poverty is also related to 'entitlements' which are taken to be the various bundles of goods and services over which one has command, taking into cognizance the means by which such goods are acquired and the availability of the needed goods, [15]. Yet other experts see poverty in very broad terms, such as being unable to meet 'basic needs'-physical (Food, health care, education, shelter etc) and non-physical (Participation, identity, etc) requirements of a 'Meaningful life' [6].

Therefore, this study views the poor as people who lack skill and gainful employment, have few, if any, economic assets and sometimes lack self-esteem. The Nigerian poor are deprived access to basic needs, participation in social, economic and political activities in Nigeria.

Dimensionally, many views of the relevant literatures show that poverty may be categorized along five dimensions of deprivation as put forward by Ovie and Orhioghene [15] to include: *Personal and physical deprivation* which can be experienced in health, nutrition, literacy, educational disability and lack of self confidence; *economic deprivation* which includes lack of access to property, income, assets, factors of production and finance; *social deprivation* which involve the barriers to full participation in social, political and economic life; *cultural deprivation* in which People are deprived in terms of values, beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, information and orientation; and *political deprivation* in which ignorance is a fundamental deterrent to the elimination of poverty because it compliments conditions of exploitation, domination and deprivation. Studies have shown that economic constraints, illiteracy and ignorance undermine access to legal institutions. It is the poor who lack political voice. Those who are politically deprived occupy lowly position and are subjected to coercion through physical or economic threat.

The presence of poverty is highly felt by all Nigerians directly or indirectly. In view of this, Onah [6] wrote that no additional instrument either electronically or otherwise is needed to identify the presence of poverty and its negative impact in Nigeria, due to its large, conspicuous and destructive impacts. This entails that there is high incidence of poverty in the nation. Firstly, there is acute hunger and food crisis in Nigeria. Food production in Nigeria is unstable, particularly on her basic foods such as cassava, yam, rice, maize tans etc. due to poor storage facility, losses in post harvest food losses, poor processing, inadequate market system, poor incentive to farmers, poor budgetary allocation and implementation to the agricultural sector and mental poverty. In his view, the ever-increasing population of Nigeria has prompted her into importation of her basic foods, which in 1999 for instance amounted to 14.38% of her total imports. As such, there has been abrupt increase in food prices to a level that is difficult for the majority of Nigerians to afford. Secondly, there is lack of safe or portable water culminating to Nigerians suffering from lack of safe water for consumption [16].

The general indicators or indices of poverty according to previous studies [6, 7, 16] include: Hunger and food crises, lack of or inadequate access to safe and portable water, poor health services, unemployment and underemployment, insecurity and political instability, prostitution and sexual promiscuity and income inequality.

In their views, Agboti [4] and Igbuzor [17] revealed that both the rural and urban towns witness shortage of portable water all over the nation as either the available water is polluted as the case in the Niger Delta region by the activities of Oil Company, who have as well refused to provide alternative water sources or there is none at all; people walk kilometers in search of safe water; and some come to the office with jerry cans, with the hope of fetching safe water back home. For Nkwede [7], the absence of portable water is accountable for the regular epidemic such as guinea worm, cholera, typhoid fever, skin rashes etc, in Nigeria. Thirdly, poor health services speaks volume of Poverty in Nigeria especially in the area of child-health care where there is an estimated 60 million children in Nigeria who have the least progress record in child welfare among the international communities, [18]. According to Onah, [6], Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Under-5 Maternal Mortality Rate (U5MR) are the two measures of a state's position in terms of its child-survival rates and quality of child-care provision. He posited further that the IM measures the probability of a child dying before his or her fifth year. U5MR measures human progress calculation on nutritional status, maternal health and the availability of safe water and sanitation. In Nigeria, it is noted that IMR is about 217 deaths per 1000 live births, while the U5MR is about 178 per 1000 live births in Nigeria, [6]. The high rate of IMR and U5MR is attributable to the high rate of infant mortality diseases namely, malaria, diarrhoea, Acute Respiration Infections (ARI), measles, polio, malnutrition etc, which are evidences of poverty in Nigeria, Orji [19].

More so, the incidence of poverty in Nigeria is evidenced in the high rate of unemployment and underemployment despite regular jingle, advertisements and window displays on the trend of poverty eradication and job creation in Nigeria. Hence, Onah [6] citing [12] confirms that the poor (Unemployed and underemployed) lack income sufficient to cover their minimum standard of living. And that is why many Nigerians lack income for survival. Furthermore, the rate of political instability and insecurity in Nigeria is on the increase. The presence of poverty in every part of the country and its attendant effects on Nigerians is manifesting through the incessant crisis and violence in different parts of Nigeria, thereby causing political instability and insecurity in the country. Nigerians are poor and hungry and need there is no possible means of survival. They resort to violent activities as the only the option to fight for their survival. The poor always agitate for better condition of living, provision of basic needs and resource control as a means

of alleviating their poverty in the area [20]. Youth restiveness, arising from the struggle for resource control has severally put the country under tension.

In the middle belt and Northern regions, the poor (Almajiri) have been an instrument of both political and religious crisis. Finally, the rate at which young girls and women are involved in commercial sex in Nigeria is alarming and as a consequence of unemployment, Nigerian girls and women prefer joining the circle of commercial sex workers locally and internationally than languishing in poverty Onah [6] and Ogunleye [20]. This menace has the risk of exposing Nigerians to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. In summary, high unemployment rate, unaffordable basic education, inequality, insecurity, deprivations fundamental human rights and violence due to constant agitation resources control are practical incidence of poverty in Nigeria.

Typologically, various classes of poverty exist at various times and stages in various parts of Nigeria, based on the socio-cultural, economic and political environment prevailing in the country. However, Ajodo-Adebanjo and Ugwuoke [1], Onah [6] and Aiyedogbon and Ohwofasa [13] advanced that poverty can be classified as: absolute poverty, relative poverty, subjective poverty, dire poverty, subsistence poverty, socio-cultural poverty, urban poverty and endemic poverty. Haralambos and Heald [21] view absolute poverty as a situation where the poor live below the poverty line. It is a state not having enough resources for basic needs of life, such as good health, cloths, shelter, good water and food etc. According to Onah <sup>[6]</sup> absolute poverty refers to a kind of poverty in which the poor are severely deprived of basic needs of life. Here, the Poor are unable to afford the required sources to acquire the elements necessary to sustain life and health. In the case of relative poverty, individuals, families groups in the population lack resources to obtain the types of diets, participate in the activities and have living conditions and amenities which are customary or at least encouraged and approved in the society to which they belong. i resources are below those commanded by the average individual or that they are in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs activities [21]. Subjective poverty is experienced due circumstances because People graduate into it based on the available circumstance and perception of the individual. It arises due to shift or reduction in income and status from a particular level to the other [6]. On the other hand, dire poverty involves inability to afford good portable water for drinking, inadequate food

and shelter due to the activities of the rich who has taken over the control of the state resources. In the case of subsistence poverty as Ajodo-Adebanjo and Ugwuoke [1] posit, is common among the villagers such that most times they could have access to safe water, adequate food, good shelter on their level, but poor because they lack resources to maintain other sectors such as good health, access to good education, social amenities etc. Socio-cultural poverty is influenced by the activities of the culture of the people.

Aiyedogbon and Ohwofasa [13] noted that in the traditional Hausa/ Fulani communities for instance, women are not given equal opportunities like their male counterparts when it comes to formal education. This deprivation is due to the ethics of their culture. More so, urban poverty is common and associated with the urban areas. Poverty exists due to the sheer absence of the required basic needs of life in the urban area. In this there could be shelter, portable water and good food, etc, but these are inadequate due to the level of demands [17]. Finally, endemic poverty is cause caused by low productivity and low income and poor nutrition health. The productivity and income of many individuals is low. Since income is low, they lack sufficient resources to afford adequate food, health and shelter.

However, poverty in Nigeria is caused by numerous forces which [6] identified corruption as one of them. In his words, corruption has contributed immensely to poverty and misery of a large segment of the population. Corruptions exacerbate poverty and disproportionately affect those of lower income because it pulls resources from the national treasuries, placing the money into the account of few individuals, who are politically powerful. Secondly, Civil, ethnic and religious wars and crises immensely contributed to poverty whereas poverty conversely causes crisis and insecurity. During the Nigerian civil war for instance, innumerable lives and property were lost, which would have been used to develop the economy, Orji [19]. In view of this, Ibrahim and Igbuzor <sup>[22]</sup> articulated that conflicts have rendered millions of Nigerians homeless, frustrated and poor. He further mentioned instances such as the Urhobo-Itshiri crises, Igbakiri, Okika-Elleme, Kalagbarietc crisis in the Niger Delta; the Jos, Kaduna, Tiv crisis etc in the North. The devastating effect of Boko-Haram crisis has significantly contributed to abject poverty in the North-East and nation in general to mention but a few. Thirdly, the influence of colonialism in impoverishing Nigerian state has been highlight by all and sundry. The colonialists built and structured Nigeria economy to

facilitate the exploitation of resources for British economic growth and development, thereby leaving Nigeria with poverty and dependency such that Nigerians are more comfortable with foreign made goods, thereby killing local industries.

Furthermore, Poor leadership has played no small role in engendering poverty. Ajodo-Adebanjo and Ugwuoke [1] wrote that most civilian governments had at one time or the other been accused of misplacing priority due to political interest, expropriation of public funds for personal interest, etc. The civilian governments have been characterized by politics of ethnicity, nepotism, favouritism, brotherhood and god-fatherism in Nigerian. These activities discourage efficiency and hard work, but encourage laziness, idleness and several criminal activities, which in turn induces poverty. Indeed, poor leadership of the various civilian governments in Nigeria contributed to poverty in Nigeria. Interestingly, Onah [6] argued that poverty itself is one of the causes of poverty in Nigeria. It may sound strange to say that poverty is responsible for the poverty in Nigeria. Realistically, the poor are unemployed, lack income, have no saving, lack investment, are deprived and lack power to fight for themselves, the true position is that since they are poor, they are unable to go into any capital investment that could yield income for them, Yakubu and Aderunmu [16] and Igbuzor [17].

**Challenges to Poverty Reduction Programmes in Nigeria:** Ogunleye [20] observed that, despite the several attempts of governments, donor agencies, NGOs and other related bodies, the scourge of poverty is still apparent. He enumerated the following as the major challenges to poverty alleviation programmes in Nigeria:

- Poverty alleviation policies of successive governments in Nigeria have always remained a mere political slogan or statement. Federal, state and local governments in Nigeria have always introduced one form of poverty alleviation or another to better the lots of the people, but, no sooner had these policies were formulated and lunched with fun-fare, that they were abandoned. The implementation aspects of the policies have been weak.
- Lack of proper funding on the part of government is also a problem. As good as the poverty alleviation or reduction programmes were or would have been, the coordinators turned the exercise to appear like mere policy statements.

- Political instability and lack of confidence in sustainable democracy is yet another threat to improved quality of life in Nigeria. This is why any attempt to create a positive self image of the country as to attract investors, will continue to hit a brick wall.
- Poor infrastructural development which always hinder economic expansion. Good roads, portable water, electricity and the likes, no doubt, determine the productivity levels of artisans and even the organized private sector, but the level of infrastructural development in the country falls below average.
- Unavailability of a reliable population data as a benchmark for proper planning as the previous attempts of doing so have always ended in shambles. For Onah <sup>[6]</sup> and Yakubu and Aderunmu [16] the challenges to poverty reduction programmes revolve round lack of targeting mechanisms for the poor, political and policy instabilities, inadequate coordination of the various programmes of poverty alleviation, severe budgetary, management and governance problems and over extended scope of activities, example DFRRRI. Obadan [23] had summarized the problems of any poverty alleviation or reduction programme to include corruption, inadequate fund, ethnicity, inadequate/lack of skilled implementing manpower, visionless leadership or lack of political will. From the positions of the scholars, it is a truism that the factors that challenge every poverty alleviation efforts are many and varied and therefore, the following problems cannot be ignored:

**Neglect of Agricultural Sector:** This is an important reason for the perpetual poverty in Nigeria. Before the discovery of oil in the Niger-Delta (Ilobiri) in 1956, agriculture was the mainstay of the nation's economy as more than 95% of the major foreign exchange earnings of the country came from it. It is unfortunate that shortly afterwards particularly during the oil boom of 1970s, the concern from both the government and individuals for agriculture began to dwindle because they saw the "back gold" as the easier means of getting money. Unemployed people prefer going to the cities to staying in the hinterlands for the purposes of agriculture.

- Lack of accountability and transparency on the part of the implementers making the poverty alleviation programmes to serve as conduit pipes for draining the nation's common wealth.

- Inappropriate programme/project designs reflecting lack of involvement of the targeted beneficiaries in the formulation and implementation of the programmes.

Uncontrolled population growth as a result of lack of effective planning which make parents to give birth to the number of children they cannot comfortably cater for.

Be that as it may, we summarize the causes of poverty in Nigeria to include: corruption that makes it difficult for evenly and justifiable distributions of common wealth by the government, inability to discover, develop, manage and control local resources, insufficient law and order, lack of financial investment knowledge, inability to exhibit brotherly spirit by the haves which makes them not to help the poor among them, lack of access to quality education, discrimination by the government in project allocation, effects of crises, among others.

**Dynamic Nature of Insecurity in Nigeria:** For Wikipedia, the word security simply defined is the degree of resistance to, or protection from, harm. It applies to any vulnerable and/or valuable asset, such as person, dwelling, community, item, nation or organization. When the concept of security is discussed, what easily comes to mind is "National Security" which has to do with the utmost goal or responsibility of the government to protect and preserve the lives and property of both the state and the citizens against all kinds of attacks and threats using its constitutional might. Anything to the contrary is usually regarded as insecurity.

Obadan [23] and Aminu *et al.* [24] see insecurity as political, economic, social and environmental threats that affect the individuals as well as the state at national and international levels. By implication, insecurity is the presence of threat to acquire values or tendencies that would undermine national cohesion and peace. Similarly, Beland [25] saw insecurity as lack of protection from crime (Being unsafe) and lack of freedom from psychological harm (Unprotected from emotional stress resulting from paucity of assurance that an individual is accepted, has opportunity and choices to fulfill his or her own potentials including freedom from fear. Corroborating the above, insecurity has been broadly conceptualized by Akin [26] as lack of freedom from danger or threat to a nation's ability to protect and develop itself, promote its cherished values and legitimate interest and enhance the well-being of its people. Thus, insecurity is the absence of freedom from or the presence of those tendencies which could undermine internal cohesion and the corporate existence

of a nation and its ability to maintain its vital institutions for the promotion of its core values as well as danger to life and property. However, this work posits that insecurity as an antithesis of security refers to a condition that exists due to lack of effective measures put in place to protect individuals, information and property against hostile persons, influences and actions and uncertainty on the part of the citizens or government as it concerns the nature of their future conditions or wellbeing. It is simply a situation in which individuals in a given society cannot go about their daily activities as a result of threat to and harmful disruption of their lives and property and are not sure of their wellbeing and future conditions.

The dynamic nature of insecurity in Nigeria can be grasped from the various manifestations of insecurity in the nation's quest for a new social order. Hence<sup>[24]</sup> proposed that the dynamism of insecurity in Nigeria can be seen from various manifestations of conflict and insecurity such as ethno-religious conflicts. Communal and societal conflicts according to Ibrahim and Igbuzor<sup>[22]</sup> have emerged as a result of new and particularistic forms of political consciousness and identity often structured around ethno-religious identities. In all parts of Nigeria, ethno-religious conflicts have assumed alarming rates. It has occurred in places like Shagamu (Ogun State), Lagos, Abia, Kano, Bauchi, Nassarawa, Jos, Taraba, Ebonyi and Enugu State respectively. Groups and communities who had over the years lived together in peace and harmony now take up arms against each other in gruesome "War" owing to claims over scarce resources, power, land, chieftaincy, local government, councils, control of markets, "Osu caste system" and sharia among other trivial issues which have resulted in large scale killings and violence amongst groups in Nigeria<sup>[24]</sup>. In these conflicts, new logics of social separation and dichotomy have evolved in many communities in Nigeria. There is the classification of the "settler" and "Indigene", "Christian" and "Moslem" and "Osu" (Slave) and "Nwadiala" (Free born). These ethno-religious identities which have become disintegrative and destructive social elements threatening the peace, stability and security in Nigeria can be inevitably linked to poverty. Secondly, politically based violence has exemplified the level of poverty and insecurity in the nation. Politics in the current civil dispensation like the previous Republics have displayed politics of anxiety which has played down on dialogue, negotiation and consensus. The anxiety is as a result of perceived or real loss of power by an elite stratum. Put different the quest for political power is among those elites that won it before, those that lost it and those who want it back.



Currently, politicians are already strategizing about the control and retention of power come 2019 elections. To this end, inter and intra-political party conflicts have become rife in which politicians are deploying large resources to out-do each other, changing the rules and legislations of the political game, distorting laws and employing violence and political assassination to settle political scores. Party meeting, campaigns and conventions have become war threats where small and light weapons like guns and cutlasses are freely displayed and used to rig elections, harass and intimidate electors. Aminu *et al.* [24] lament that a resort to violence, including armed militancy, assassination, kidnap, et cetera, have somewhat suddenly become attractive to certain individuals in seeking to resolve issues that could have ordinarily been settled through due process. The end-products of such misadventures have often been catastrophic. They include the decimation of innocent lives, disruption of economic activities and destruction of properties among others. Similarly, economic-based violence and insecurity is another dynamic aspect of insecurity in Nigeria. According to Eme [27] in a popular parlance, this thesis is also known as "Political economy of violence" in which cries of resource control and revenue sharing regularly rent the air between proponents and opponents. Although by no means limited to oil in the Niger Delta, the most prevalent campaign about the link between resources and conflict focuses on oil and the Delta region. Put differently, there is evidence to suggest that oil has given rise to vertical and horizontal conflicts between National, State and society or between dominant and subordinate geopolitical zones, classes and groups across Nigeria, given the pivotal role that oil plays in the restructuring power relations in Nigeria. Assets such as grazing and farming and water resource, have tended to give rise to horizontal conflicts that involve communities across the geopolitical zones and the Fulani Herdsmen.

The other thesis is that conflict in Nigeria is poverty induced. This explanation is closely related to relative deprivation, rather than absolute poverty. Moreover, organized violent groups have heightened insecurity threat in the nation such as ethnic militia, vigilantes, secret cults in tertiary institutions and political thugs. Various reasons and circumstances account for their emergence. The causes of the manifestations are the failure of the state and its institutions, poverty, economic disempowerment, the structure of the state and Nigeria's federalism, non-separation of state and religion, politics of exclusion, culture of patriarchy and gerontocracy and ignorance and poor political consciousness.

However, the associated impacts of these insecurity situations in the nation's quest for a new social order are imminent. In his opinion, Eme [27] highlighted a checklist of the impact of conflicts and insecurity in a social order to include but not limited to: social dislocation and population displacement; social tensions and new pattern of settlements which encourages Muslims/Christians or members of an ethnic group moving to Muslim/Christian dominated enclaves; heightens citizenship question and encourages hostility between "Indigenes" and "Settlers"; dislocation and disruption of family and communal life; general atmosphere of mistrust, fear, anxiety and frenzy; dehumanization of women, children and men especially in areas where rape, child abuse and neglect are used as instruments of war; deepening of hunger and poverty in the polity; atmosphere of political insecurity and instability including declining confidence in the political leadership and apprehension about the system; governance deficit as a result of security agencies inefficiency and corruption. Conclusively, the worst consequence of the dynamism of insecurity in Nigeria is aggravated by poverty.

**Efforts at Curbing Poverty and Insecurity in Nigeria: A Revisit:** Over the years, Nigerian government, international institutions, philanthropic individuals and agencies have exerted concerted efforts in the eradication of poverty and insecurity in the nation. Ovie and Orhioghene [15] espoused that the Nigerian Government, as far back as 1971, had identified poverty and insecurity as the bane of rural development in the country. According to them, early poverty alleviation measures were targeted at the agricultural sector. The rural areas which comprise more than 90 percent of the agricultural sector of Nigeria are believed to have the highest level of poverty in the country. Between the 1960s and 1980s, rural development was viewed as agricultural development. Intensification in rural development worldwide was to eradicate poverty, raise the standard of living of rural dwellers and improve agricultural productivity and curb insecurity. In order to tackle this obstacle to rural development, government in line with the recommendations of the World Bank based on its agricultural survey of Nigeria, embarked on the implementation of three pilot integrated agricultural and rural development projects in Funtua, Gusau and Gombe. The purpose of these projects was to stimulate increased food production and enhance the income of the rural population [24] in Ovie and Orhioghene [15].

Agricultural improvement strategies such as Operation Feed the Nation and the Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme Funds, among others, were adopted in this period. Before the commercial mining of oil in early 1959, the Nigerian economy was mainly dependent on agricultural products for its domestic food supply and foreign exchange earnings. This was soon to change with the coming of the oil boom which led to the neglect of the agricultural sector. This neglect led to the massive importation of food. Many attempts have been made to correct this distortion through agricultural programmes such as Operation Feed the Nation, Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme Funds and the Green Revolution, but they have not achieved the desired objective of food security for the masses, Forae [28]. He noted further that the oil boom of the mid 1970s to the early 1980s did not reveal the vagaries of the international oil market with the result that Nigeria's economic policies of that period wittingly neglected other viable areas of the economy such as agriculture and the non- oil export sector. By 1982 he added, when the volatility of the oil market became a stark reality, the economy was already caught in the throes of a depression.

To reverse this condition, the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) was adopted in 1986. The most important of the various policies under the programme was the restructuring of the production as well as the export base of the economy with a view to restructuring the ailing economy and breaking the mono-product nature of her export sector. The programme was plagued by a lot of contradictions and distortions that inhibited its full implementation and was subsequently abandoned after six years<sup>[28]</sup>. In 1986, a mass mobilization approach which included integrated rural development and basic needs strategies, were adopted in Nigeria. Programmes that were created in this macro approach included; the Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructures (DFRRI); the National Directorate of Employment (NDE); Mass Mobilization for Social Justice and Economic Reconstruction (MAMSER); Better Life for Rural Women; the People's Bank, Community Banks; Rural Health Schemes; the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI); the Directorate for Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructures (DFRRI) was expected to provide basic amenities like access roads, rural electrification and portable water to ease the living conditions of the rural people. The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) was to help provide self employment opportunities for unemployed youths in rural and urban areas.

The 2000s saw the emergence of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Schemes, Mass Adult Literacy Programmes and Primary Health care Programme. The government was determined to create more jobs for unemployed persons and stimulate production within the period of one year. Within the same period, the government recognized that about 70 percent of Nigerians are poor in real terms and earmarked 50 percent of Poverty Alleviation Programmes (PAP) jobs for youths; 25 percent for women and the remaining 25 percent for the men, with special preference for the destitute and disabled persons. The jobs thus created were spread among states at (5000 persons each) while the balance of 15,000 was shared among thickly populated cities. In addition, PAP participants were paid monthly stipends of N3500 each. In less than two years however, the original outlay of the Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) was amended and renamed National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP); its major components are the Mandatory Attachment Programme (MAP), the Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES) and the Capacity Acquisition Programme (CAP) [15].

However, interested researchers have revealed that such policies have failed to achieve the objectives of poverty alleviation and curbing insecurity in the country. In this vein, Ovie and Orhioghene [15] exposed that the causes are divided into two broad categories. Those associated with policy design and implementation and causes associated with policy acceptability. Factors that relate and have bearing on these causes include: misunderstanding of the policies made for the people by the policy makers; misplaced priorities; favoritism and benefit capture, which breeds contempt for the policies. A situation where the change agents or policy makers do not know the people they make the policy for, especially their felt needs, they either overestimate or underestimate the problems of such people and are also likely to misplace priorities. The prevailing public policy on poverty alleviation and reducing insecurity is at variance with the people's perception of what constitute their development. It is obvious from the above assertion, that the poor do not share government's enthusiasm for poverty alleviation and insecurity resolution. In most cases they do not adopt the type of poverty alleviation proposals, programmes and projects that are espoused in the official national development programmes. They therefore undertake other types of projects that they think are more relevant to their "felt needs" and "Aspirations". In résumé, efforts of government towards curbing

insecurity cannot be efficacious with pragmatic alleviation of poverty which is the root cause of insecurity in the nation's search for a new social order.

**Theoretical Framework:** Theoretically, this study adopted the Relative Deprivation Theory propounded by an American sociologist, Robert K. Merton in the year 1938 quoted in James [30] and the Human Security Approach propounded by Scholars such as Mary Kaldor, Kofi Anan and Thomas Roberts in the year, 1994. As a sociological theory, Relative Deprivation Theory proposes a view of social change and movements, according to which people take actions for social change in order to acquire something (For example, opportunities, status, or wealth) that others possess and which they believe they should have too, Wikipedia [29].

Some sociologists believe relative deprivation theory explains why people join social movements or advocate for social change. For example, in this view, gay people join the movement for gay marriage in order to acquire something (The right to marry) which they believe others already possess; relative to these people, such advocates of gay marriage believe they are deprived, James [30]. Critics claim that relative deprivation theory does not explain the real reason why some people join movements that apparently do not benefit them directly (Animal rights movements, say) after all, some people are naturally lazy, thus refusing to work out their salvation, short-term oriented and violent irrespective of the measures used in resources distribution. According to the theory, Relative deprivation is the lack of resources to sustain the diet, lifestyle, activities and amenities that an individual or group are accustomed to or that are widely encouraged or approved in the society to which they belong. Measuring relative deprivation allows an objective comparison between the situation of the individual or group compared to the rest of the society. Relative deprivation may also emphasize the individual experience of discontent when being deprived of something to which one believes oneself to be entitled; however, emphasizing the perspective of the individual makes objective measurement problematic. In this regard, Wikipedia [29] noted that it is a theory used in social sciences to describe feelings or measures of economic, political, or social deprivation that are relative rather than absolute. The term is inextricably linked to the similar terms poverty and social exclusion. The concept of relative deprivation has important consequences for both behavior and attitudes, including feelings of stress, political attitudes and participation in collective action.

By a way of theoretical relevance, the Relative Deprivation Theory suggests that poverty, which is an output of deprivations of wealth, power and other benefits is a potential cause of social movements and deviances, leading in extreme situations to political violence such as rioting, terrorism, civil wars and other instances of social deviance such as crime. Similarly, individuals engage in deviant behaviors when their means do not match their goals and as such, activities that promote insecurity become inevitable. Instances are the Boko-Haram insurgency, the separatist movements of Igbo ethnic group (MASSOB/IPOB), the kidnapping and vandalisms in Niger Delta region among others.

The second theoretical framework adopted for this work is the Human Security Approach propounded by Scholars such as Mary Kaldor, Kofi Anan and Thomas Roberts. The concept emerged in 1994. Unlike the traditional goal of national security which emphasized the defense of the state from external threat, the central argument of this approach is that security should focus on the individual because a people centred view of security is required for national, regional and global stability [1]. This is premised on the fact that threats to human life emanate not only from situation of violent conflicts but other non-conflict sources of threats such as poverty, infectious diseases, terrorism, environmental degradation etc. Human Security is therefore concerned with the protection of people from critical and life-threatening dangers. United Nations Development Programme's 1994 Report in Ajodo-Adebanjo and Ugwuoke [1] identified seven categories of threats to human security which include economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security. Unarguably, the poverty level of Nigeria which is related to conflicts and insecurity in the country demands that government addresses the human security situation of the country.

**Findings and Implications:** Based on the foregoing investigations, several findings surface; they are as discussed thus:

There have been high incidences of poverty in Nigeria. In Nigeria, citizens suffer from abject poverty emanating from relative deprivation of resources and benefits. As such, the consequence has been the inducement of insecurity vis-a-vis movements and activities geared towards addressing such relative deprivation. The study revealed that Nigeria has over the years been ascribed with disheartening poverty profile

Table 1: the growth of Poverty and unemployment rates of Nigeria from 1987-2017

Year	Poverty	Unemployment	Agriculture	Manufacturing	Services	Population	Inflation
1987-1991	44.0	4.6	4.4	6.9	8.7	164.3	27.4
1992-1996	54.3	3.0	2.8	-2.8	3.5	2.9	51.3
1997-2001	67.4	10.2	4.1	1.5	10.7	2.9	10.2
2002-2006	57.4	13.0	16.6	9.3	11.5	3.5	13.6
2000-2011	60.0	18.5	6.2	8.3	29.1	3.2	10.8
2012-2017	75.3	29.7	10.8	6.4	21.3	3.8	39.8

Source: Adapted with update from Aiyedogbon and Ohwofasa [13] and CBN Annual Report and Statement of Account (Various issues) 2017.

Table 2: Dynamism and Incidences of Insecurity in Nigeria from 2000-2017

Year	Theft	Armed Robbery	Kidnapping	Assassination	Fraud	Ethno-religious crises/ killings
2000	29127	1877	243	1255	7927	1254
2001	40796	2809	349	2120	10234	2421
2002	35231	3889	337	2117	9134	545
2003	33124	3497	410	2136	9508	2185
2004	37289	3142	349	2550	9532	1424
2005	46111	2074	798	2074	9580	2455
2006	41901	2863	372	2000	6395	5421
2007	21082	2327	277	2007	5860	4823
2008	23927	2340	309	1956	5058	4125
2009	52004	3245	381	5852	5221	3998
2010	55210	3559	395	2782	5447	45721
2011	56412	4001	405	2648	6001	86584
2012	62043	4223	428	3589	5432	75682
2013	40554	4678	434	4201	4524	85444
2013	67825	4861	398	4258	5451	89954
2014	59064	3897	584	3990	4987	90154
2015	58773	3993	531	7201	6425	86954
2016	69464	4287	587	466	7201	4284
2017	70054	3694	392	203	6912	2587

Source: Adapted with modifications from Eme [27] cited in Aiyedogbon and Ohwofasa [13].

despite numerous efforts at curbing the incidence. In Table 1 below, the growth rate of unemployment and poverty in Nigeria from the period of 1987 to 2017.

The table shows that the growth profile of poverty, unemployment and not agricultural, manufacturing and other services which contribute to real GDP in Nigeria have been on the increase. Growth rate of the population and inflation rates are equally shown in the table. For the period 1987-1991, poverty level in Nigeria averaged 44.0 percent while unemployment recorded 4.6 percent. Poverty level increased to 54.3 percent while unemployment declined to 3.0 percent in the period of 1992-1996. Poverty and unemployment levels further increased to 67.4 and 10.2 percent between 1997-2001 respectively before declining to 57.4 percent for poverty level while unemployment recorded 13.0 percent from 2002-2006. In the period, 2007-2011, poverty level in Nigeria averaged 60.0 percent while unemployment increased to 18.5 percent respectively and in the last period, 2012-2017, poverty level increased to 75.3 percent while unemployment increased to 29.7 percent. The table also revealed that from 1987-1991, agricultural

contribution to real GDP was 4.4 percent, manufacturing 6.9 percent and services sector averaged 8.7 percent. During the 1991-96, the real sector contributions declined to 2.8 percent for agriculture, -2.8 percent for manufacturing while services sector averaged 3.5 percent. In 1997-2001, the contribution of the agricultural sector to real GDP was 4.1 percent, manufacturing 1.5 percent and 10.7 percent for the services section. Also, an increase for the real sector contributions from 2002-2006 recorded 16.6 percent for agriculture, 9.3 percent for manufacturing and 11.5 percent for services sector. In the final period, there was a decline in contributions to real GDP from agriculture and manufacturing while services sector recorded an increase. Thus, agricultural sector contribution was 6.2 percent, 8.3 percent for manufacturing and 29.1 percent for services sector. It can also be seen from Table 2 that average population and inflation growth rates for the period 1987-1991 was 164.3 and 27.4 percent respectively. During the 1992-96, average population growth declined to 2.9 percent while inflation increase to 51.3 percent and between 1997-2001, population growths

remained the previous level while inflation rate declined to 10.2 percent. In 2002-2006 periods, average population growth was 3.5 percent and 13.6 percent for inflation. In 2001-2011, average population and inflation growth declined marginally to 3.2 and 10.8 percent respectively. Finally, from 2002 to 2017, population growth increased minimally to 3.8 growth rate while, inflation is heating the roof at 39.8 percent.

The implication of the foregoing result is that poverty and unemployment have become endemically generalized in the nation and as a consequence, induce insecurity at the highest order.

The high incidence of poverty has significantly induced high level of insecurity in Nigeria. The nation has been bedeviled by numerous social, political, religious and ethnic cum economic insecurities. A number of security threats have been recorded over the years in the nation such as kidnapping, armed robbery, theft, thuggery, bombing and ethno-religious wars, among others which all trace their roots to endemic poverty. In the following table, a graphical illustration of the dynamism of insecurities traceable to poverty is presented:

A critical look in the table shows that from 2000, the various crimes were on the increase until 2007 when there was a little reduction in the crime rates. But from 2008, the rate of theft, armed robbery and kidnapping which reduced in 2007 were on the rise again. The rate of theft, armed robbery especially in the banks, kidnapping and assassinations have continued to rise especially in the southern part of the country while the rate of ethno religious crisis and killings were generally on the increase. Also the vandalization of business installations and oil pipelines in particular, were on the increase. Research has

indicated that these vices are not equally distributed in the country. South-East and South-South states of the country have the highest incidences of kidnapping, armed robbery and fraud while the northern states are characterized by bombing by the Islamic Sect, Boko Haram. With the incessant Boko Haram bombings in the northern part of the country, Nigeria indeed joined those isolated countries that carry that revolting tag of being referred to as terrorist states.

The implications of the malady are numerous; first, the nation has been ranked over the years as one of the most security challenged countries in the world such that in a Global Peace Index ranking, Nigeria ranks among the most turbulent states in the West Africa from 2009 to 2016 chiefly caused by poverty. This ranking is as shown the following table:

From the table, in 2016, Nigeria ranks as the most insecure nation in Africa and the 160 out of 163 countries in global peace ranking. This is attributable to the various bombings and killings in the country. The bomb explosions and killings initiated by various groups have been on the increase leading to enormous loss of life and property and a general atmosphere of fear and social tension in the country. In fact, Nigeria has been identified as the least peaceful country in West Africa <sup>[31]</sup>. According to Igbuzor <sup>[17]</sup> West Africa is among the most unsecured region in the world and Table 3 indicates that Nigeria is the most unsecured country in the region as it has consistently ranked high among the countries in West Africa. On the contrary, Ghana a neighbouring country to Nigeria has consistently ranked low and is taken as the most peaceful country in the region. The cause has been found to emanate from high incidence of poverty as illustrated in the diagram below:

Table 3: The place of Nigeria and other West African countries in the Global Peace Index ranking 2009-2016

S/N	Country	GPI Score 2009	GPI Rank 2009	GPI Score 2010	GPI Rank 2010	GPI Score 2011	GPI Rank 2011	GPI Score 2012	GPI Rank 2012	GPI Score 2013	GPI Rank 2013	GPI Score 2014	GPI Rank 2014	GPI Score 2015	GPI Rank 2015	GPI Score 2016	GPI Rank 2016
1	Ghana	1.76	52	1.78	48	1.75	42	1.81	50	2.14	54	1.99	64	4.71	78	3.48	81
2	Sierra Leone	-	-	1.82	53	1.90	61	1.86	52	2.31	55	2.01	68	4.79	81	4.07	85
3	Burkina Faso	1.91	71	1.85	57	1.83	51	1.88	56	2.75	77	2.69	86	5.04	76	4.99	89
4	Gambia	-	-	-	-	1.91	62	1.96	74	-	81	3.04	96	5.64	97	5.47	104
5	Senegal	1.98	80	2.03	79	2.05	77	1.99	78	2.99	96	3.75	101	6.07	109	5.84	122
6	Guinea	-	-	-	-	2.13	92	2.07	92	-	97	4.01	95	6.74	112	6.03	104
7	Guinea Bissau	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.11	95	-	-	5.40	89	-	-	6.62	134
8	Liberia	-	-	2.15	99	2.16	97	2.13	101	3.4	99	-	-	7.05	122	7.95	147
9	Mali	2.09	96	2.24	109	2.19	100	2.13	102	3.7	121	5.81	112	7.44	124	7.98	149
10	Benin	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.23	114	-	-	5.99	123	-	132	7.98	149
11	Niger	-	-	-	-	2.36	119	2.24	116	3.91	124	5.65	135	7.64	141	7.99	151
12	Mauritania	2.48	124	2.39	123	2.43	130	2.30	125	4.71	126	6.41	138	7.77	151	8.21	153
13	Cot d'Ivoire	2.34	117	2.30	118	2.42	128	2.42	134	5.1	138	7.21	146	8.12	157	8.34	158
14	Nigeria	2.60	129	2.76	137	2.74	142	2.80	146	5.4	148	5.48	154	5.72	161	2.877	160

Source: Compiled from Global Peace Index [31].

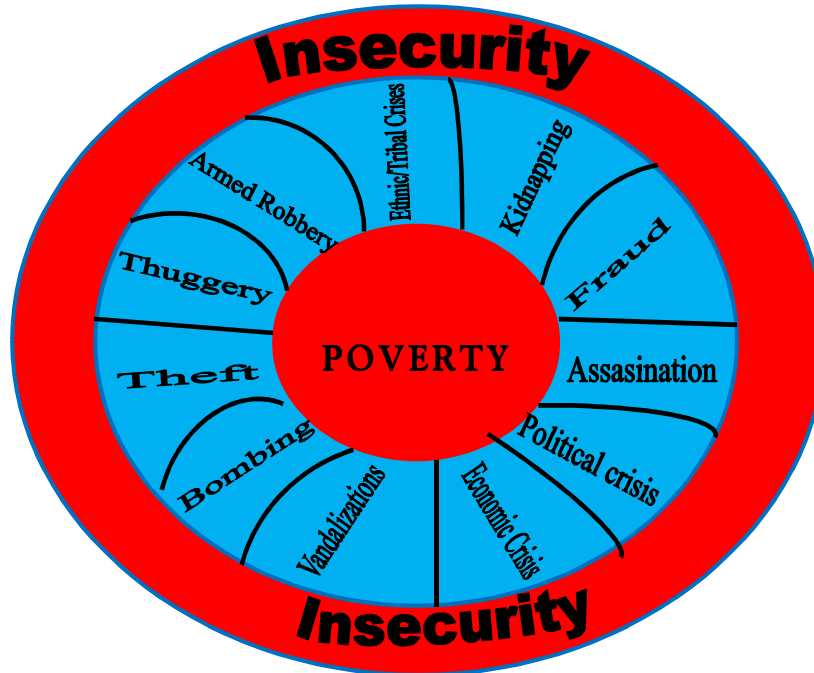


Fig. 1: The Environment of Poverty and Insecurity in Nigeria as Developed by the Researchers

Individuals and government have made several efforts at curbing the incidence of poverty and insecurity in the country. These efforts have been revealed not to have made the desired impact in the eradication of poverty and insecurity in the country considering the continued incidence of security challenges and poverty across the nooks and crannies of the nation. This has continually thwarted the nation's continued search for a new social order.

### CONCLUSION

In résumé, there is an unholy correlation between poverty and the high level of insecurity in Nigeria. In Nigeria, the incidence of poverty has remained high in spite of growth and the existence of a number of poverty alleviation programmes such that majority of the citizens live in abject/absolute poverty. Similarly, the disgusting rate of unemployment bedeviling the nation has induced the youths into various forms of crimes which have consequently heightened the level of insecurity in the country. Moreover, the problem is more than just unemployment and income inequality, it is a social, cultural and economic issue responsible for poverty and underdevelopment and consequently, insecurity. Also, several efforts have been made over the years by the government and individuals towards reducing the

incidence of poverty and insecurity in Nigeria; unfortunately, those efforts have failed to curb the menaces.

Therefore, it is the position of the author that every Nigerian irrespective of the political, social-cultural and religious backgrounds has the right to adequate social security like reasonable employment basic amenities for life sustenance such as: portable water and sanitation, nutrition, clothing, shelter, electricity, basic education and health care, as well as physical security and the means of making a living.

**Recommendations:** Based on the revelations of this research, the following recommendations are pertinent:

- There is need for government and individuals to intensify efforts towards the reduction of poverty in Nigeria for actualization of the nation's search for new social order. Having discovered poverty in its varied dimensions to be the chief cause of insecurity in the nation, new rural development strategies such as self help approach needs to be adopted in tackling the menace. Efforts are therefore required to induce broad based growth and provide social services and infrastructures aimed at reducing the depth and severity of poverty across the country. Government must work not only to improve incomes but to tackle

the many other social and political factors that contribute to poverty which will consequently reduce the incidence of insecurity in the nation.

- There is need for government and individuals to develop appropriate security strategies such as rural/community policing promotion in order to reduce the incidences of the dynamisms of security threats to the nation's quest for a new social order. Involving the people in fighting security threats will hasten the achievement of a balanced social order in Nigeria.
- Community participation approach to poverty alleviation programmes and/or projects is sacrosanct in any meaningful war against poverty in Nigeria. Without the participation of the people in poverty reduction strategies, the real needs of the people will not be solved and the consequences are social deviance, underdevelopment and insecurity. We therefore advocate for the involvement of the rural poor in the whole process of poverty alleviation activities from the early stage of problem identification to the stage of design and implementation. It is therefore vital to understand what the poor think poverty is and their strategies for long-term solutions to the problems of chronic and persistent poverty. Consulting the poor and seeking their understanding of poverty, is not an end in itself, since consultation without participation in efforts directed at their welfare, amounts to no consultation.

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