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Social Protection in Nigeria: An X-Ray of Social Investment Programme as a Panacea for Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria

Monsur O. Jimoh
Senior Planning Officer, Department of Planning,
Ministry of Budget and National Planning, Abuja, Nigeria
Dr. Rahman Mustapha
Lecturer, Department of Business and Entrepreneurship,
Kwara State University, Malete, Kwara State, Nigeria

Abstract:
Poverty and vulnerability remain endemic in most African countries including Nigeria as most citizens are unable to meet physiological needs. Literarily, 46.4% of the population are living below the poverty level while poor children, pregnant women, youths and elderly are most vulnerable groups struggling to live a life of dignity. Government at various levels, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) and development partners implement different lopsided social protection interventions to assist people to meet their basic needs based on their different interests and without a basic target for the interventions. Previous research reported the situation of social protection in Nigeria based on existing programmes without a strategy system. This study examined the impact of Social Investment Programme on poverty reduction among Kwara State beneficiaries of Job creation and Youth Employment (N-Power) programme. Krejcie and Morgan's Table was adopted for sample determination; Linear regression with Correlation Coefficient table was used to test the study's hypotheses. The Estimated Coefficients of 0.541 statistically established that Job creation and Youth Employment has weak significant impact on poverty reduction among youth in Kwara State while Coefficients of 0.907 statistically proved that Job creation and Youth Employment has significant effects on youth empowerment among youth in Kwara State. The study practically shows that large numbers of the beneficiaries used the stipends to cater for their daily square meal in contrary to poverty alleviation it expected to address. The study recommended that the targeting mechanism needs to be adhered to in other to address the objectives of reducing poverty through social protection initiatives while the challenge of population growth also needs to be addressed for Social Protection to have strong impact on poverty reduction.

Keywords: *Social protection, informal social protection, modern social protection, inclusive social protection, interventions.*

1. Introduction

The historical backdrop of Social Protection can be traced back to the nineteenth century when European nations and developing countries fed their poor residents with nourishment like grain to address the challenges of destitution. This arrangement began with the Roman Emperor's initiative of circulating relief materials to vulnerable citizens. The United States also followed this example in providing materials to the defenceless during precarious situations; hence, this was termed informal social protection. Oduro, (2010) noted that this initiative is regarded as Casual Social assurance as such plans are not guided by any formal guidance.

However, there was a social protection rebirth called "modern social protection" in which social protection addresses the broader issues through policy approach that aimed at ameliorating the suffering of the poor. The modern social protection also referred to formal social protection that is expected to be carefully managed to enhance, rather than disrupt, existing informal systems (Harvey and Holmes, 2007). Social protection is all about empowering the poor and the disadvantaged groups like children, women, aged, physically challenged people, the unemployed and internally displaced people in the society to live an improved and better life. However, there are divergent opinions on what actually constitutes social protection as some human capital development, livelihood and food security are care categorised as social protection interventions. (Harvey & Holmes., 2007).

In Africa, Social protection was presented as a means of addressing poverty at the Extraordinary Summit on Employment and Poverty Alleviation held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso in 2004. At the summit, various Governments absolved to improve the living conditions of vulnerable people through inclusive social protection services which comprise improved pensions, health and other social security schemes. Additionally, various gatherings on advancing social protection were held, these include the Inter-Governmental Regional Conferences on Social Protection held in Zambia and Cameroon in 2006. These gatherings approached Governments to incorporate social protection programs in their national plans and budgets. As a follow-up to Livingstone and Yaounde gatherings, three Regional Meetings, which included the five

African Union (AU) Regions, were held in 2008, with the subject: Investing in Social Protection in Africa. The gatherings' suggestions were received by the first Session of the AU Conference of Ministers responsible for Social Development held in Namibia in October 2008 and supported by the fourteenth AU Executive Council and twelfth Assembly of Heads of State and Government in January/February 2009. Likewise, there was Younde Tripartite Declaration on the execution of the Social Protection Floor and Social Ministers' Khartoum Declaration on Social Policy Action in 2010 as well as the Ministers' Addis Ababa Declaration on Social Protection for Inclusive Development in April, 2015 to promote social protection in Africa.

In Nigeria, various lopsided and scattered social safety nets programmes being implemented at national and sub-national levels without a targeting mechanism for the beneficiaries as the programmes are tagged with a particular political dispensation marred the social protection system in the country. Also, poverty and vulnerability are endemic as more people becoming vulnerable as a result of unaddressed shocks while poverty rate keeps increasing despite economic growth that did not translate to economic development. There were inequality gaps between the rich and the poor while health, education, nutrition and employment indices were very poor. Thus, National Social Protection Policy was developed to provide the platform where social protection interventions can be delivered in a more coordinated and sustainable manner in which they will address the main purpose of reducing poverty. Abada at el (2019), Abdussalam (2015) and Adebayo (2012) and Baghebo & Emmanuel, (2015) reported the situation of social protection in Nigeria based on existing programmes without a strategy system. Thus, there is need to appraise present government social investment programmes designed to alleviate suffering of the poor. Hence, this study aimed at evaluating the impact of social investment programme (Job creation and Youth Employment) on poverty reduction in Kwara State.

The objectives of the study are:

- To examine the impact of Job creation and Youth Employment (N-Power Programme) on poverty reduction among the youth in Kwara State.
- To ascertain the effect of Job creation and Youth Employment (N-Power Programme) on youth empowerment in Kwara State.
- The research questions for the study read thus:
- Job creation and Youth Employment (N-Power Programme) do not have any significant impact on poverty reduction in Kwara State
- There is no significant relationship between Job creation and Youth Employment (N-Power Programme) and youth empowerment in Kwara State.

2. **Literature Review**

2.1. Social Protection in Nigeria

Social protection was introduced in Nigeria by World Bank through social risk management as the concept was framed in terms of safety nets as an investment in human capital development. International Labour Organisation (ILO) also supported Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment (FML&E) to develop social security policy by shifting from a state-led focus to emphasize on provision of social protection to the informal sector. As such, social protection was conceived mainly in terms of insurance with relatively little attention to non-insurance instrument (Holzman and Jorgensen, 2000). Oversea Development Institute (ODI) supported social protection in Nigeria through mapping of social protection policy, programme and actors. Holmes, Akinrimisi, Morgan, and Buck (2011) provided a position on the need for Nigeria to develop her social protection policy framework to guide different types of interventions and proper coordination of the inter-sectoral activities in social protection. To crown it all, development of Nigeria National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) started in 2012 by then National Planning Commission (NPC) & now Ministry of Budget and National Planning (MBNP) with the support of United Nation Children Fund (UNICEF), the policy adopted a life cycle approach from cradle to grave as enshrined in the Nigeria vision 20:2020 and was approved by the Federal Executive Council in 2017. The concept “Social protection” is essential to furthering UNICEF’s commitment to the realization of the rights of children, women and families to an adequate standard of living and essential services.

The policy is in line with the 1999 Constitution (as amended) under the fundamental objectives and directive principle of state policy, chapter 2 (section 16 &17) provides the basis for social protection in Nigeria. Also, the policy is premised on international agreements ratified by Nigeria which includes the universal declaration of human rights (1948) ILO convention, African charter of Human as well as people’s right (1981). The policy is also in tandem with Nigeria Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) and its vision of achieving inclusive growth by investing in our people through social inclusion, job creation, youth employment and improved human capital.

2.2. Synopsis of Nigeria National Social Protection Policy (NSPP)

Ukpong, (2017) highlighted the objectives in National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) as well as the sixteen (16) policy measures categorised into eight (8) sectors. In addition to the existing literature on the NSPP, the structure of the policy can be further clarified as follows: chapter one of the policy started with introduction and background information on the Nigeria situation and this was followed by the international agreement and social protection floor as well as objectives of the policy. The chapter also dwelt on goals and the rationale for social protection policy in Nigeria as well as the guiding principles which include the Principle of Redistribution, Universal Basic Needs, Citizenship, Human Rights, Social Control and Social Inclusiveness.

In the policy, Social Protection is defined as:

"A mix of policies and programmes designed for individuals and households throughout the life cycle to prevent and reduce poverty and socio-economic shocks by promoting and enhancing livelihoods and a life of dignity."

Chapter two of the policy reviewed the existing social protection programme in Nigeria which includes Labour Market Programmes, Microfinance programmes, Child protection, Education and health programmes, The Public Works Programme (PWP), Skills Development and Training Programme, Agricultural Input Support Programme, Social Insurance Programmes, Social Assistance (Social Transfers) and Welfare, and Micro and Area-Based Schemes.Chapter three is the main highpoint of the policy as it captured the 16 policy measures which was categorised into 8 sectors namely: Education & Health, Welfare & Child protection, Social Housing, Livelihood enhancement, Social Insurance, Social Assistance, Traditional Family & Community Support, Legislation & Regulation. Chapter three explained the policy's 16 measures which cut across 8 sectors. The last chapter of the policy captured institutional arrangement roles; Targeting & Registration which makes social protection differs from other interventions, Graduation & Exit and Coordination & Integration.

2.3. Policy Dynamics in Social Investment Programme

Rabbani and Chowdhury (2014) opined that all social policies have not been taken only for reducing burden of poverty since many programmes were the outcome of narrow bureaucratic or political interest. The Muhammadu Buhari led government made several promises in his party manifesto in 2015 prior to the election which includes creation of social welfare programme estimated at about five thousand (5000) naira for each individual that will cater for the 25million poorest most vulnerable Nigerians with the condition that such people would provide an evidence of children's immunisation and school enrolment in order to promote family development and stability, one free meal (to include fruits) daily for public primary school pupils, provision of allowance to the discharged but unemployed youth corps member for twelve (12) months while in skill and entrepreneurial development programme, provision of vocational training, entrepreneurial and skills acquisition scheme for graduate along with the creation of small business loan guarantee scheme to create at least 5 million new jobs by 2019, establishment of free-tuition and scholarship scheme for pupils who have shown exceptional aptitude in science subject at O' levels to study ICT related courses, empowerment scheme to employ 740,000 graduates across the 36 states and federal capital territory. The government fulfilled part of her promise by setting up National Social Investment Office to float some of the aforementioned programmes.

2.4. National Social Investment Office Programmes (NSIP): An Overview

The National Social Investment Programmes (NSIP) were created in 2015 to address the lopsided interventions of past government and to enshrine the values as well as vision of the current Administration for graduating its citizens from poverty through capacity building, investment and direct support to reduce duplication of efforts, roles and responsibilities, waste of resources, proper coordination among the relevant stakeholders on social investment activities. The objectives of NSIP include: Improving access of the poor and vulnerable households to livelihood by providing access to funds and improve ability to absorb economic shocks; Reducing the rate of unemployment and out-of-school syndrome; Improving access to healthcare facilities; Reducing malnutrition of school age children; Stimulating SMEs by providing credit to improve business system; and developing a register for proper targeting for interventions to avoid double dipping and to reduce wastage. The National Social Investment Office Projects include:

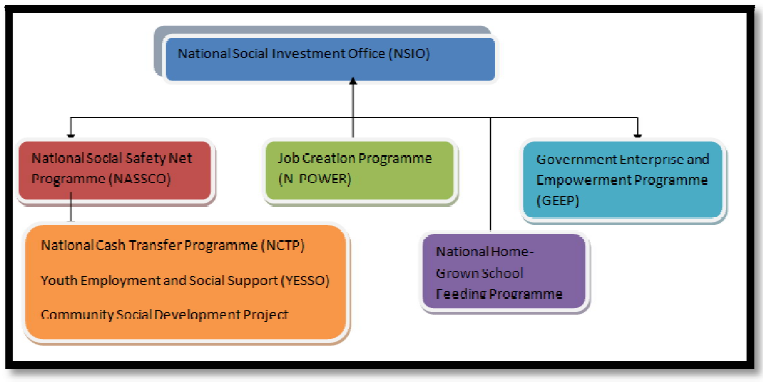


Figure 1: Structure of National Social Investment Office (NSIO)
Source: National Social Investment Office, OVP

2.4.1. Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT)

As part of the initiative of the programme and promises by the Muhammadu Buhari led administration to alleviate the sufferings of most poor and vulnerable groups in Nigeria, the Cash Transfer Program was introduced with the aim of providing targeted transfers to poor and vulnerable households to improve household consumption, ensure human capital development, provide livelihood support in order to ensure that the beneficiary households graduate from poverty. Cash Transfer Cycle expected to last for 3 years with livelihood support to ensure graduation, after which a verification exercise would be carried out to assess the effectiveness and impact of the strategies employed.

2.4.1.1. Components of Cash Transfer Programme

Conditional Cash Transfer

- Conditional Transfers of N5,000 monthly per households to HouseHold (HH) caregivers to smoothen consumption. N10,000 is paid to beneficiary bimonthly

Top Up Cash Transfer

- An additional N5,000 monthly is paid to identified beneficiaries that meet the agreed co-responsibilities of the beneficiaries in terms of education, health, nutrition and environment improvement

Livelihood Support

- A one- off livelihood grant will be given to selected productive household members to ensure they have sustainable livelihood that will facilitate their graduation out of poverty.

Capacity Building

- Beneficiaries are provided with capacity building trainings in the areas of Savings and Group Mobilisation (SGM), Life Skills (LS), Micro Business Development Plan (MBDP), co-orientation and nutrition training for co-responsibility.
- Coaching and mentoring support to ensure utilization of knowledge and skills acquired during the trainings for behaviour changes

2.4.2. National Social Safety Net Coordinating Office (NASSCO)

NASSCO Coordinate Social Safety Nets (SSNs) programmes and National Social Register to ensure policy coherence in the social protection sector. Social Register (SR) is an information system that supports the outreach, intake, registration, and determination of potential eligibility for one or more social programmes and it provides access for people to be registered and assessed for inclusion in social programmes.

2.4.3. Job Creation and Youth Employment (N-POWER)

Millions of Nigerian graduates are unemployed because they lack pre-requisite skills to contest for the available jobs, thus, Job creation and Youth Employment scheme designs trainings and modules to help young Nigerians acquire and develop life-long skills to become solution providers in their communities and players in the domestic and global markets. The Job creation and Youth Employment scheme is divided into Graduate and Non-Graduate Programme while each Programme is also sub-divided into the followings:

- N-Power Corps is a programme that aims at providing temporary jobs in the areas of education (teaching), agriculture, health, and tax advocator.
- N-Power Knowledge is an initiative training that provides skills and empowerment to participants in such a way that they can be engaged in the marketplace as freelancers, entrepreneurs and employees.
- N-Power Build is an improved training and certification programme that seeks to engage and train unemployed indigenes. It is aimed at producing a competent and skilled workforce of artisans, technicians and service professionals.

2.4.4. Home Grown School Feeding Program

Home Grown School Feeding Programme (HGSFP) is to provide nutritious balanced meal in public primary school for primary 1-3 pupils to increase enrolment and reduce out-of-school children as well as tackling malnutrition in Nigeria. It also empowers cooks and provides a sustainable income for small holder farmers to stimulate growth and productivity in the communities. HGSF is a program aimed at increasing the enrollment and completion rate at the primary school level by feeding the children with nutritional meals. Advantage of the programmes include building a community value-added chain that will ensure agricultural production, job creation and nutritional/health improvements. Jobs created via recruitment of food vendors will also serve to raise agricultural demand as the vendors will serve as off-takers to local farmers.

2.4.5. Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP)

GEEP (MarketMoni) provides affordable and easily accessible microcredit to market traders, artisans, enterprising youth and agricultural workers. The Federal Government, through GEEP, seeks to provide direct access to finance as well as financial inclusion to Nigerian microenterprises. The beneficiaries participated in the programme through market associations and cooperatives while loans of between N10,000 and N100,000 each are disbursed to the beneficiaries. GEEP loans are delivered to beneficiaries through highly structured relationships with intermediaries who include Commercial and Microfinance banks, Microfinance Institutions, Mobile Money operators and Market Aggregators. The programme provides financial support and training to businesses through access to finance and sustainable financial inclusion.

2.5. Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Nigeria

Abdussalam (2015) noted that Poverty endangers human life and the situation of poverty depends on people to people, society to society, economy to economy and history to history. Also, poverty is viewed as the inability to provide necessary basic necessity such as nutrition, health as well as possession of skill to participate actively in the society, (Okoye, 2014). In addition, Yunus (2016), states that poverty is lack of ability to afford nutritional food, health care facilities, water and sanitation, decent home, education, intellectual aspirations, positive freedom, enjoyment, dignity and security. Social Intervention Programme is not new in Nigeria as various levels of governments, individual, groups; both

national and international development partners embark on pocket on interventions to address some of the country's socio-economic challenges through poverty reduction mechanism without a coordinated targeting method.

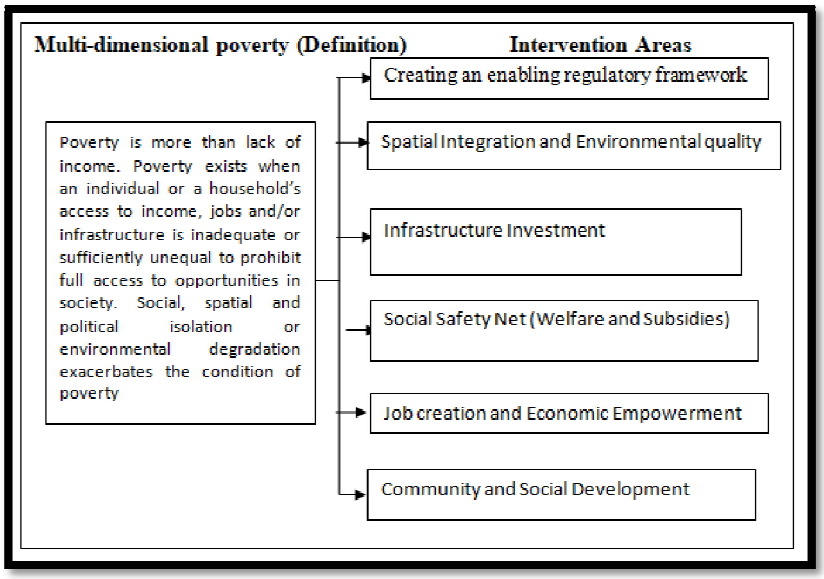


Figure 2: Poverty Alleviation from A Multidimensional Perspective
Source: Pieterse and Parnell (1999)

The diagram above connotes that six intervention areas meant to reduce multidimensional poverty which ranges from individual or household lack of access to income, jobs and/or infrastructure. This aligns with present administration initiatives to reduce poverty through creating enabling regulatory framework (National Social Protection Policy); Social Safety Net, Job Creation, Community and Social Development which are in tandem with the Social Investment Programmes including Community and Social Development Programme (CSDP).

Year	Poverty Incidence (%)			Estimated Population (Million)
	National	Urban	Rural	
1980	28.1	17.2	28.3	65
1985	46.3	37.8	51.4	75
1992	42.7	37.5	46.0	91.5
1996	65.6	58.2	69.8	102.3
2003-04	64.2	52.2	73.4	135.4
2009-10	62.6	51.2	69.0	159.6

Table 1: Poverty Head Count by Year
Source: Poverty Profile for Nigeria, 2005 and 2009-10(Abridged Report), NBS

Available data from National Bureau of Statistics shows that 62.6% of Nigerians live below poverty level, as at 2009 – 2010 compared to 1980 when 28.1% were living below the poverty level. This shows poverty trends increase in Nigeria. Also, the graph below depicts the population in poverty in Nigeria between 1980 and 2010.

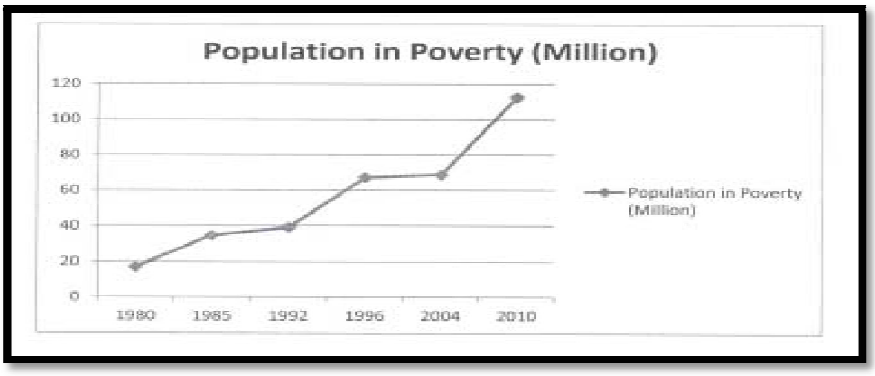


Figure 3
Source: Poverty Profile for Nigeria, 2005 and 2009-10(Abridged Report), NBS

		Food Poverty		Absolute Poverty		Relative Poverty		Dollar Per Day based on adjusted PPP	
		Food Poor	Non-Poor	Food Poor	Non-Poor	Food Poor	Non-Poor	Food Poor	Non-Poor
Sector	Urban	26.7	73.3	52.0	48.0	61.8	38.2	52.4	47.6
	Rural	48.3	51.7	66.1	33.9	73.2	26.8	66.3	33.7
	National	41.0	59. 0	60.9	39.1	69.0	31.0	61.2	38.8
Zone	North Central	38.6	61.4	59.5	40.5	67.5	32.5	59.7	40.3
State	Kwara	38.1	61.9	61.8	38.2	74.3	25.7	62.0	38.0

Table 2: Nigeria Poverty Profile by sector, zone and state
Source: National Bureau of Statistics, HNLSS, 2010

The table above shows dimension of different poverty in respect of sector, zone and particularly, kwara state. It explained further the food poor and non- poor component of poverty dimension. Kwara State is poor at food poverty at 38.1%, poor in absolute poverty at 59.5%, poor in relative poverty at 74.3% and recorded 62% on dollar per day based on adjusted PPP.

3. Methodology

This study aimed to analyse the impact of social protection on poverty reduction in Nigeria. To investigate this question, 15,106 Kwara State beneficiaries of Job Creation and Youth Employment (N-Power) Programme of Social Investment Programmes were captured as the population of the study. The table below shows the population of the study:

N-Power Graduate			Non-Graduate					
			N-Build			N- Knowledge		
						N-Power Tech		N-Power Creative
Batch 1	Batch 2	Sum (Batch 1 & 2)	Batch 1	Batch 2	Sum (Batch 1 & 2)	Hardware	Software	
5559	8595	14154	420	290	710	142	100	-
Total Number of The Beneficiaries in Kwara State							15, 106	

Table 3

In line with above population for the study, Krejcie and Morgan's Table of sample selection (1970) was employed for sample determination. 375 Kwara State beneficiaries of Job Creation and Youth Employment (N-Power) Programme of Social Investment Programmes were selected as the sample size for the study. Linear regression with Correlation Coefficient table was also used to determine if there is any significant impact between the Job Creation and Youth Employment (N-Power) Programme and Poverty. The model specification is presented below:

Economic model specification

$Y = f(x)$

Y = Dependent variable

X= Independent variable

Thus $P = f(SP)$

Where SP and P mean Social Protection and Poverty respectively

$y_{1i} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + e_i$

y_1 = Poverty

x_1 = Social Protection

β_0 = Intercept i.e. Constant term

β_1 = Coefficient of the independent variable

e_i = Stochastic variable i.e. Disturbance term

4. Analysis and Findings

The analysis and findings are as presented below:

Table I: Result of Social Protection and Poverty

Coefficient[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.936	.352		2.721	.001
	N-Power Programme	2.711	.411	.541	6.543	.000

Table 4: Shows If Job Creation and Youth Employment (N-Power Programme) Has Any Significant Effect Impact on Poverty Reduction among Youth in Kwara State
Dependent Variable: Poverty Reduction among Youth in Kwara State
Source: Field Survey, 2019

The TABLE 5provides information on the effects (the "Estimated Coefficients" or "beta") of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The coefficient is 5.41 with p-value of 0.0001 less than the critical value. This implies that the variable has contributed to the model. Hence, it shows that the model has weak statistically significant because it has 50% contribution to the dependent variable. Therefore, Job creation and Youth Employment (N-Power Programme) has weak significant impact on poverty reduction among youth in Kwara State.

Coefficient[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.742	.479		1.810	.001
	N-Power Programme	2.041	.312	.907	5.391	.000

Table 5: Explain the Extent at Which Job Creation and Youth Employment (N-Power Programme) Enhances Youth Empowerment in Kwara State.
Dependent Variable: Youth Empowerment In Kwara State
Source: Field Survey, 2019

The table 5 provides information on the effects (the "Estimated Coefficients" or "beta") of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The coefficient is 9.07 with p-value of 0.0001 less than the critical value. This implies that the variable has contributed to the model. Hence, it shows that the model is statistically significant. This implies that each of the variables has contributed to the model. Hence, it can be concluded that Job creation and Youth Employment (N-Power Programme) has significant effects on youth empowerment in Kwara State. In conclusion, the Estimated Coefficients" or "beta of 0.541 statistically established that Job creation and Youth Employment (N-Power Programme) has weak significant impact on poverty reduction among youth in Kwara State while Coefficients" or "beta of 0.907 statistically proved that N-Power Programme has significant effects on youth empowerment in Kwara State.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The outcome of the study showed a weak positive correlation between Social Protection and Poverty due to other variables which include increasing population that is not considered. Hence, there is no gainsaying that poverty and vulnerability remain endemic in Nigeria as the number of citizens in extreme poverty increases every minute despite various government interventions. These categories of Nigerians are unable to meet their basic needs and it cuts across all age-groups as the highest percentage of the population is vulnerable as they struggle to live a life of dignity. Although, government has been implementing different sorts of social safety net programmes across the country but the programmes are not meeting the objectives of reducing poverty as the population of the country continues to grow, unemployment is increasing as most tertiary institutions produced graduates every year without entrepreneurial skill that can make them self-dependents as they are leaving schools.

This paper found that before the present administration, social safety net programmes were implemented haphazardly based on political-motivation without reliable and comprehensive targeting mechanism and policy guide. Presently, Government has taken care of the policy aspect of the Social Protection, but the targets mechanism of the programmes needs to be adhered to in other to address the objectives of reducing the poverty. Also, serious enlightenment and sensitization of the people need to be carried out for the poor and vulnerable to be aware of the policy which is meant for their benefit. Although, the government is allocating resources to the implementation of social protection interventions, there is need to coordinate these interventions to be in line with the policy objectives to avoid policy somersault that may arise from uncoordinated interventions as witnessed in the previous administrations. Thus, population need to be controlled for the social protection to have impact on poverty level in Nigeria.

6. Recommendations

There is no an iota of doubt in the fact that the poverty rate is Nigeria is sky rocketing on a daily basis while government efforts to curb the menace is either being sabotaged, or frustrated by the stakeholders which includes the beneficiaries. Since youths are the driving force of the nation, there is need, not only to promulgate policies that will guarantee self-reliance, alleviate their vulnerability but also to find a lasting solution to reduce the poverty. In view of this, this paper recommends as follows:

- Government should be consistently concentrating on policies that can alleviate poverty in all ramifications and improve on the implementation and sustainability strategy.
- The National Assembly should always extend its searchlight on the activities of the executive with respect to Social Investment Programmes Implementation Strategy in order to ensure that objectives are accomplished.
- Government should inculcate in the people, the resilience strategy to cope with poverty and its vulnerability and how to eventually overcome it within the scope of their resources.
- The issue of corruption should be holistically tackled to ensure that government's effort towards alleviating poverty in Nigeria is achieved.
- Finally, there should be a private monitoring institution that will be examining the programme to ensure that the funds are used for its intended purposes in alleviating poverty to prevent diversion and misappropriation.

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