

Neoliberalism and the Paradox of Poverty Pedeution

Neoliberalism and the paradox of poverty pedeution: A synthesis of poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) Experience in Benin and Nigeria.

The paper interrogates the context within which PRSP as a development policy framework was implemented in Benin and Nigeria, and how this provides opportunities and constraints for the implementation.

The paper argues that within the context of neoliberal ideology and strategy of development which guide the formulation and implementation of poverty reduction strategy, poor developing countries have not experienced reduction in poverty and the promised development.

The majority of the citizens in poor countries do not influence the policy process. Powerless by the condition of their poverty, the poor are often excluded from decision process, their voices muted, and as such often times policies targeted at the poor failed to address their problems.

The agenda of the poor in the process of the PRSPs tends to fizzle out with the dominant conditions of the neoliberal agenda which pervades both the formulation and implementation of PRSPs in Africa. The need for social protection policy to address the problem of the poor becomes imperative. With special reference to African countries, and Nigeria in particular, my research in the area of social protection focus on how programs such as Conditional and Unconditional Cash Transfers can be effectively implemented through appropriate governance mechanisms like Community-Based Targeting Mechanisms.

The ongoing research and interests in social protection builds on Dr Banji Akinola's PhD research and dissertation, which was passed without any revisions in April 2017. The PhD research focused on how conditional cash transfers programs (CCTs) are governed through community-based targeting mechanisms in developing countries. At a time, global actors and organizations around the world are increasingly becoming aware

of the importance of providing social protection systems for poor and vulnerable people in developing countries, the research makes a significant contribution to the literature on community development, local/international development and governance, and social protection in developing countries.

The findings of the research informed the argument in this dissertation for governing CCTs through reciprocal accountability mechanisms involving state and non-state actors and organizations at the community, local, national, and international levels. The findings of the research have been presented, and well received, at high-level international conferences, including some that were organized and/or sponsored by United Nations agencies/organizations. These presentations form part of the more than thirty (30) international conferences and workshops that disseminated some of the findings from the different research projects to academic and non-academic audiences in the past six years.