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<td>NWIGWE, Samuel I.O.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Author 2</td>
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UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA
DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY

TOPIC
THE PERILS OF ENDEMIC POVERTY OF THE MASSES

A TERM PAPER
WRITTEN IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE COURSE G.S P 104
(SOCIAL SCIENCE II)

BY

NWIGWE, SAMUEL I.O.
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LECTURER: MRS. UGWU J.

JUNE, 2008.
THE PERILS OF ENDEMIC POVERTY OF THE MASSES: ANY REMEDY?
DEDICATION

WITH GRATITUDE TO THE ALMIGHTY GOD, I DEDICATE THIS TERM PAPER TO MY LORD JESUS CHRIST.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I cease this opportunity to thank my beloved friend Dickson Nwogu who has been of great support to me. I sincerely appreciate his love, kindness and support.

Special thanks to my lecturer Mrs. Joy Ugwu who through a motherly approach has imparted a lot of virtues and knowledge necessary for this course. May the good Lord richly bless her.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION TO POVERTY

1.1 MEANING OF POVERTY

Poverty: This is the state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possession.

Types:

Cyclical poverty: Refers to poverty that may widespread throughout a population the occurrence itself is of limited duration.

Collective Poverty: In contrast to Cyclical poverty insufficiency of means to secure basic needs a condition that may be so general as to desirable the average level of life in a society of that may be concentrated in relatively large groups in an otherwise prosperous society.

Concentrated collective poverty: This kind of poverty is usually seen a particular demographic group.

In relatively affluent, industrialized countries. This is usually seen in ghettos or areas where industrialization, agriculture and employment are low and it is usually long termed.
Case Poverty: This type refers to inability of an individual or family to secure basic needs even in social surroundings of general prosperity. People involved in this type include: the helpless aged, the blind, physically handicapped, chronically ill and chronic mentally ill.

(i) By contrast, those persons who have handicaps in social Nigeria leaders lack integrity. They engage in money laundering which in-turn reduces the volume of money available for development projects, leading to a high level of poverty.

(ii) Nigeria leaders lack vision. They do not have what it takes to transform Nigeria’s economic situation their economic programmes have failed to translate into practical solutions to poverty in Nigeria. There is high level of gross inefficiency in the way Nigerian leaders pilot the affairs of the state. They make wrong policies which often increases the burden of poverty. An example is the increase in fuel prices which
led to untold hardship on the adaptability have long been
associated with improvidence, a label covering such
behaviour as lawness, the inability to manage money,
drunkenness and producing too many children.

1.2 POVERTY IN NIGERIA

Nigeria is ranked as one of the fifteen poorest countries of
the world. Nigeria has a population of about one hundred and forty
million with a gross domestic product less than 500 dollars.

Many Nigerians cannot have access to basic amenities such
as good food, suitable clothing and a comfortable shelter. Despite
this, poverty is still on the rise. Economic growth is still below ten
percent coupled with the high rate of population growth.

It is therefore obvious that poverty in Nigeria is endemic.
CHAPTER TWO

CAUSES OF POVERTY IN NIGERIA

2.1 POOR LEADERSHIP

Leadership in Nigeria has failed, this has led to a high level of poverty. Some of the problems of leadership in Nigeria are stated below;

(iii) masses. (iv) Leadership in Nigeria is pivoted on ethnicity and nepotism. This simply means that if an Hausa man becomes a president, most of his economic and development projects will be directed to the North at the expense of the south. This had made development lop-sided in Nigeria, thereby increasing the level of poverty in the affected areas. Ethnicity is also considered in political appointments which has led to mediocrity in leadership. (v) Nigerian leaders do not adhere to the constitution. There is often gross abuse of power and also high incidence of
political manipulation. As long as social justice thrives in the Nigerian society, the struggle against poverty will be unrealistic.

(v) Nigerian leaders have not been able to unite the various ethnic groups in Nigeria. Unity of purpose and vision is paramount for development. Without this, Nigeria will continue to be a shadow of itself and the masses would continue to wallow in poverty.

2.2 LOW LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT

There is still a high level of illiteracy in Nigeria. This hinders development and poverty continues to increase.

The culture of white collar jobs left to us by the British has given less attention to manpower development. Unlike the advanced countries of the world, Nigeria does not have a technology culture, the zest for creativity and the spirit that pursues and embrace change.
Nigerian education is tailored towards providing theoretical knowledge with little and insufficient practical exposure. One wonders why our graduates cannot compete with their counterparts abroad. Nigerian education had failed to translate into high level manufacturing as can be found in the leading industrialized countries of the world.

Without sound education, Nigeria will not be able to overcome poverty. Even our abundant natural resources will not be able to provide for our basic needs. An example is Japan.

Japan has no major natural resource but is the second most industrialized country in the world. It has a gross domestic product of over $30,000. This is as a result of high level of education. The Japanese are one of the most creative people in the world.

Nigeria should learn from Japan and other advanced countries if it will be able to tackle the problem of poverty.
2.3 FAULTY POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEM

Firstly, Nigeria's political system does not support development and poverty eradication. Nigeria does not operate a true federalism. It has combined a mixture of federalism and the unitary system of government.

In a true federalism, we should have states handle most of their affairs independently. These affairs include security, economy, provision of infrastructure, basic primary education, primary health care etc. In Nigeria this is not the case. The government is highly centralized. There is a high concentration of power at the centre which dictates the pace of development. This has led to duplication of the functions of the state at national and local levels of leadership. Development is also very slow. This has not helped in speeding-up the poverty eradication process.

Secondly, Nigeria's economic system is a faulty one. Nigeria has tried to copy the policies of advanced countries at the detriment of its own development. Nigeria operates a semblance of capitalism, which is because government intervention has failed