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SOCIAL ASSET AND SUSTAINABLE POVERTY REDUCTION: ANY NEXUS?

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of access to Social asset towards achieving Sustainable Poverty reduction in Sokoto State-Nigeria. Quantitative approach was adopted and the data samples were collected from three (3) local government in each of the three (3) senatorial districts using purposive sampling technique. The data analysis was carried out using Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) and Partial least squares for both preliminary and main data analyses. The results of the study confirm the existence of significant positive relationship between access to Social asset and Sustainable poverty reduction, thus households in the empirical area can assuage their poverty status by harnessing the benefits of Social asset. Suggestions were made as far mechanism need to be in place for accessing Social asset in the study area, which if employed would enhance social resources of the people in the area and in turn affect positively their livelihoods. Similarly, further researches are suggested to bridge the shortcoming of quantitative approach so as to have robust findings as well as the need to explore impact of other livelihood assets and contexts.

KEYWORDS: *Access, Social asset, Sustainable Poverty reduction, Sokoto State, Nigeria*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The incidence of poverty has been militating against mankind for time immemorial, without regards to gender, race, regions, however, literature indicate its more visible in the developing and underdeveloped countries of the world (Obeide & Agu, 2015). As at 2009, World Bank estimates that about 2.8 billion people in the world fell below the poverty line of $2 USD per day, and some 1.4 billion people fell short of $1 USD per day, therefore, the fight against poverty becomes a global one in which concerted effort is required from all and by all (World Bank, 2009). Similarly, it has been estimated that, almost 28 percent of the World's poor are in Sub-saharan Africa (Alkire & Santos, 2010), while 45 percent of the poor in Africa is located in Sub-saharan Africa (World Bank, 2012).

Furthermore, in the context of Sub-saharan Africa, it has been indicated that, Nigeria fell into the category of countries that have high incidence of poverty, with incidence at 53.3 percent; intensity of 56.8 percent; destitute 34.6 percent; and severe poor 32.8 percent (OPHI, 2015). Relatedly, in a Household National Living Standard Survey conducted in 2010, it was found that, in Nigeria there was 41 percent food poor; 60.9 percent absolute poor; and 9 percent relative poor (NBS, 2012).

Additionally, Sokoto State which is the empirical area of the study has its own quantum of the poverty menace. According to a study by OPHI (2015) Sokoto State was indicated to have an alarming rate of poverty incidence, in particular, 85.3 percent; poverty intensity 64.2 percent; severe poor 66.4 percent; while destitute stood at 66.8 percent. In a similar study by NBS (2012) Sokoto State was found to have high rate of poverty which indicates the magnitude of poverty incidence 56.6 percent as food poor; absolute poor stood at 81.2 percent; and relative poor 86.4 percent using $1 USD as the threshold.

Undoubtedly, the above fact spelt how damning the scourge of poverty is in the micro and macro empirical context of this study, therefore, further study need to be conducted confirm or reject the assertion, thus, the present study is justified. Similarly, there is literature gap, empirically, in testing the potency of the livelihood asset-based approach to studying poverty in the present empirical context, and particularly that which tested the impact of social asset in fighting poverty, thus, the justification and need for the present study.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This has two (2) fundamental objectives as follow;

1. To empirically examine the relationship between access to social asset and Sustainable Poverty Reduction.
2. To empirically test the impact of Social Asset on Sustainable Poverty Reduction

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study adopts quantitative approach which is adjudged to be veritable tool for exploring, social reality that

exists in quantities, therefore, can be understood when measured and explained in numerical terms. Aliaga and Gunderson (2000) posit that, quantitative research methodology has the capability of explaining social reality with numerical characteristic or numerical data/information which could be analysed using statistical tools. Additionally, Adamu (2006) submits that, quantitative research approach is proper in empirical studies with quantifiable measures of variables which involve formulation and testing of hypotheses whose results could be generalised (deduction from sample to general population). The choice of this research design was based on the need for research design to be robust and effective for use in data collection and analysis, therefore this study resolved and used quantitative research design.

4.0 SAMPLING DESIGN

Population for this empirical study in Sokoto State in which samples were drawn across three (3) senatorial districts, from three (3) local governments from the senatorial districts. Similarly, purposive sampling was employed in getting respondents/samples with household heads as unit of analysis. The choice of study purposive sampling was found to be convenient by the study for its advantage in capturing exact representation of a study's population (Gray, 2004). The sample size was determined using statistical power test (G*Power Analysis) as suggested (Faul et al. 2009). The result of the G*power analysis indicates that, 89 samples are least required for the study and analysis with actual power of 0.9508527. Similarly, Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination technique was employed and the required sample size is 384 samples out of which 323 samples were found suitable for analysis.

5.0 STATISTICAL DESIGN

The data for the study was coded using SPSS and data screening and other preliminary analyses were carried out for instance data normality, outliers, response bias, while Partial Least Square (PLS) version 3.0 was used for the main data analysis in which items reliability and internal consistency were checked, and measurement and structural models assessed.

6.0 GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The geographical area for this study is Sokoto State which is part of North-western states of Nigeria which include; Jigawa, kebbi, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Sokoto and Zamfara. Sokoto State is one of the 36 States that formed the Nigerian Federation a Country in Sub-saharan Africa. Sokoto State borders Niger Republic.

7.0 RESULTS

This part of the study deals with the evaluation of the empirical data using Smart-PLS software as suggested (Hair et al. 2014). The justification for the choice of PLS is because of its ability to measure both measurement and structural models.

7.1 Measurement Model Determination

In this context PLS algorithm was ran and the reliability of the individual items was assessed with the following factor loadings of not below the critical threshold of 0.543 to 0.812 which is acceptable in line (Hair et al. 2014). This has exposed the fact that, the reflective constructs of this study (SA & SPR) have internal consistency and reliability which show goodness of fit of the model, which by and large, entails universal acceptability (Hoe, 2008). Additionally, the AVE and composite reliability of the construct are all within the threshold of the critical values Social asset (Composite reliability 0.82 and AVE 0.50); while Sustainable poverty reduction (Composite reliability 0.84 and AVE 0.51). It suffices, therefore, to submit that this study attained internal consistency, reliability and convergent validity. Furthermore, discriminant validity of the construct was assessed which indicated that, the square root of AVE is greater than the loadings below it (see Table 11.1 & 11.2).

7.2 Structural Model

This part of the study deals with the evaluation of the structural (inner) model in which the relation between the independent and dependent constructs was examined through hypothesis testing, which usually is determined by path coefficient values. In this study, there is one hypothesis and it was examined via path-values. The result of the statistical testing of the hypothesis reveals that, there is significant positive relationship between access to Social asset and Sustainable Poverty reduction which is expressed as Beta (0.44); Standard Deviation (0.04); T-statistics (10.98) which signified that access to Social asset influences Sustainable Poverty reduction (see Table 11.3), this therefore confirms the assumption of this study which also concurs with some previous studies in other contexts, for instance studies' findings by Ibrahim and Kamaruddin (2018), Alfonso (2015), Lim and Mansur (2015), Bosongo et al.(2014), Mendez-Lemus and Vieyra (2014), Kamaruddin and Samsudin (2014), Samsuddin and Kamaruddin (2013) all attested to the effect of access to Social asset on sustainability of livelihoods and by implication poverty reduction.

7.2.1 Evaluation of R-Square (R^2)

This study evaluates the coefficient of determination (R^2) which very important as its explains the total effect of independent construct and the dependent construct (Hair et al.2014); and in this study total effect of Social asset on Sustainable poverty reduction with a coefficient value of 0.196 (see Table 11.4), which is moderate in line with (Cohen, 1988). It should be noted that the coefficient of determination is used to explain total impact of predictor construct on the criterion construct, therefore it is important to observe that, in this study access Social asset contribute about 20 percent towards attaining Sustainable Poverty reduction.

7.2.2 PREDICTIVE RELEVANCE

Assessment of predictive value of the model was carried-out using blindfolding technique, the essence is to ensure that model fit is attained. Geisser (1974) avers that, predictive relevance assesses goodness of fit that when predictive value is greater than zero (> 0) reliability of the model achieved (see Table 11.5).

8.0 SUGGESTIONS

Drawing from the results/finding of this study, the following suggestion are advanced:

1. That as Social asset is found to be a veritable instrument for enhancing sustainability of livelihoods and poverty reduction households in the empirical context should rise up and explore Social asset.
2. That social bonds and bridges should be embraced by households in Sokoto State to tap from the benefit of social relations amongst the households.
3. That government should encourage the development of third-sector (NGOs) so as to unlock bountiful opportunities by the households and individuals.

4. That households in the empirical area should actively engage in community-based organisation/association to benefit from one another.
5. That active political participation should be encouraged by the government, so as to enhance political awareness and consciousness, and make the people more informed, which by and large, would enhance their social capabilities.

9.0 CONCLUSION

Conclusively, this study was carried out to evaluate the impact of access to Social asset on Sustainable Poverty reduction in Sokoto State. Findings of the study reveals that access to Social asset by households in Sokoto State would influence Sustainable Poverty reduction in the empirical area. This study would be valuable to households in the empirical area, academic community, and particularly, the existing literature livelihood and poverty in relation to the empirical area by espousing the impact of livelihood asset (in this context Social asset) on poverty reduction. Similarly, this study suggests mechanisms towards harnessing the opportunities/ benefits tied to Social asset. This study concludes that, access to Social asset would lead to Sustainable Poverty reduction.

10.0 AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

This recommends further research in other contexts to confirm the submission of the present study, especially, the use of qualitative research design or mixed method, the use of other statistical tools, and exploration of the effect pf other livelihood assets on Sustainable Poverty reduction.

11.0 TABLES

Table 11.1 Factor Loading, Reliability & Convergent Validity

Construct	Items	Loading	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Social Asset	SA02	0.59	0.82	0.50
	SA03	0.64		
	SA04	0.68		
	SA05	0.81		
	SA06	0.70		
Sust. Poverty Reduction	SPR06	0.54	0.84	0.51
	SPR07	0.77		
	SPR08	0.76		
	SPRR09	0.75		
	SPR10r	0.74		

Source: PLS Output

Table 11.2 Discriminant Validity

	Social Asset	Sustainable Poverty Reduction
Social Asset	0.69	
Sustainable Poverty Reduction	0.44	0.72

Table 11.3 Hypothesis Testing (Path Coefficient)

Beta	STDEV	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
0.44	0.04	10.98	0	Supported

Source: PLS Output

Table 11.4 Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Construct	R Square
Sustainable Poverty Reduction	0.196

Source: PLS Output

Table 11.5 Predictive Relevance (Blind-folding)

	SSO	SSE	Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)
Sustainable Poverty Reduction	1,615.00	1,464.51	0.093

Source: PLS Output

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