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THE FUTILITY OF TRANSITION FROM MDGs TO SDGs IN NIGERIA'S GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT
After the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) had been in place for 15 years, this research takes a close look at Nigeria's acceptance of the SDGs. According to the research, before transitioning to execute the SDGs programme with other nations across the globe, the MGDs failed to accomplish its fundamental aim of reducing poverty. The study aims, in part, to assess the degree to which the Nigerian government is failing to achieve the Millennium Development Goal 1 target of eliminating poverty. (ii) The prevention of corruption and enforcement of the rule of law were obstacles to Nigeria's achievement of the poverty reduction objective set forth in MDG 1. Moreover, it would be futile to go from the MDGs to the SDGs unless corruption is eradicated. The theory behind this project is based on that of USAID (the US Agency for International Development). Researchers used a descriptive research technique and drew data from secondary sources for the study. The Nigerian government's dismal showing on all fronts of effective leadership, according to studies conducted using the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Index (WGI), severely impeded anti-poverty initiatives. According to this study, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) project failed in Nigeria because the country's central government ignored legal requirements while implementing the programme. By preventing rulers from acting arbitrarily, the rule of law makes sure that the political system works well, which is good for everyone involved and helps keep the peace. Nevertheless, the administration has solemnly pledged to maintain the rule of law since the establishment of democratic governance in 1999. Based on this research, Nigeria would not be able to achieve any of the five (5) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) prior to the 2030 Agenda: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership, as long as the country does not have a functioning legal system and due process of governance.

Keywords: MDGs, SDGs, Rule of Law, World Bank's World-wide Governance Index, Partnership.

INTRODUCTION

Many nations started making an attempt to plan for their growth in the second part of the twentieth century. Both as a field and a term, development planning has established itself in the field of development studies. Only the Soviet Union, with the adoption of its First Five

Year Plan in 1929, had devised a methodical strategy for its growth prior to the Second World War (Lewin, 1976). Ibani (2023) and Srikanth and Nathan (2017) note that at the turn of the century, South East Asian countries started to use development planning to raise their standard of living. Because of the positive results shown, development planning is now standard procedure. Much like other emerging nations, Nigeria has been working tirelessly to address its development difficulties. Development planning has been an effort by successive Nigerian administrations to solve the country's development problems. According to Habeeb (1991) and Jelili, Adedibu, and Ogunjobi (2008), the nation has implemented many strategies, both short- and medium-term, to guide its growth since gaining independence in 1960.

In addition to its own development programmes, the Nigerian government has partnered with international planning groups to help reform itself and other developing nations. Among these international initiatives, Nigeria is a signatory to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Eight objectives aimed at achieving societal, economic, and ecological change made up the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Oya, 2011). But since it was at the heart of the MDGs, poverty reduction was the most omnipresent aim. Poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals were major priorities for the Nigerian government, as they were for many other developing nations. Nonetheless, poverty is still prevalent even after the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) implementation period has ended (Adebayo, 2018). Despite Nigeria's enormous riches, the country's poverty percentage remains high. The nation has a wealth of resources, including people, land, water, petroleum, natural gas, and a plethora of untapped solid materials.

The Comprehensive Harmonized Nigeria Living Standard Survey (HNLSS) indicated that as far back as 2010, when the implementation of the MDGs was at its peak, the official poverty remained rather high, at 62 percent (The World Bank, 2016). The country ranked amongst the bottom 20 percent in respect to the success of poverty reduction. In fact, going by the present trend, the World Bank report showed apprehensiveness of Nigeria's capacity to meet the target of reducing poverty to 3 percent by 2030 (The World Bank, 2016). This is especially so as Nigeria was estimated to have risen in ranks over India by acquiring the appellation of the poverty headquarter of the world (Ibani, 2023; Adebayo, 2018; Ibaba, 2015). This appellation which has found itself even in academic quarters is rather derogatory and paints a gloomy picture of a country referred to as the giant of Africa with enormous human and material resources.

International organisations worked together to create the Millennium Development Goals in September 2000; however, their achievement has been uneven among nations, and they were only valid until 2015. According to reports on the MDGs' achievement, emerging nations like Nigeria and those in Africa were unable to reduce poverty. Even though the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for ending extreme poverty have passed, the number of people living in such conditions is actually increasing. According to Nigeria's 2004 Millennium Development Goal Review (MDGR), the nation was failing to reduce poverty. But it was believed that poverty would decrease dramatically if the government kept adopting the MDGs. The World Bank (2015) reports that the country's poverty rate was still rather high in 2015, the year the initiative ended. This research starts with the assumption that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were unsuccessful in reducing poverty in Nigeria, and then moves on to examine why the SDGs were able to succeed.

The study aims, in part, to assess the degree to which the Nigerian government is failing to achieve the Millennium Development Goal 1 target of eliminating poverty. (ii) The prevention of corruption and enforcement of the rule of law were obstacles to Nigeria's achievement of the poverty reduction objective set forth in MDG 1. Moreover, it would be futile to go from the MDGs to the SDGs unless corruption is eradicated. The theory behind this project is based on that of USAID (the US Agency for International Development). Researchers used a descriptive research technique and drew data from secondary sources for the study. The Nigerian government's dismal showing on all fronts of effective leadership, according to studies conducted using the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Index (WGI), severely impeded anti-poverty initiatives. According to this study, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) project failed in Nigeria because the country's central government ignored legal requirements while implementing the programme. By preventing rulers from acting arbitrarily, the rule of law makes sure that the political system works well, which is good for everyone involved and helps keep the peace. Nevertheless, the administration has solemnly pledged to maintain the rule of law since the establishment of democratic governance in 1999. Based on this research, Nigeria would not be able to achieve any of the five (5) Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs) prior to the 2030 Agenda: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership, as long as the country does not have a functioning legal system and due process of governance.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As with many other nations, Nigeria ratified the Millennium Declaration, which led to the MDGs. Following the failure of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015, the Nigerian government and other countries have begun working towards a new set of development targets known as the "Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs).

Many development planning initiatives aim to eradicate poverty. Actually, it is the MDGs' primary objective. It was clear that ending poverty was a top priority as it was a prerequisite for reaching any of the other Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The fact that different nations have varying degrees of success in achieving the Millennium Development Goals for poverty eradication is evidence of this (Adebayo, 2018). Therefore, among the Millennium Development Goals, the most widely supported was the one to end extreme poverty.

This makes perfect sense, given that academic work and theoretical frameworks prior to the MDGs had already established poverty alleviation as a cornerstone of progress. Many emerging nations have apparently made ending poverty their number one priority after realising how it will affect all of their other goals. One way that emerging nations set out to eradicate poverty was by establishing various local policy frameworks and committees. The government of Nigeria also launched a number of programmes and initiatives to address the problem of severe poverty. That all started with NEETS, the nation's plan to empower and develop its economy. Decentralisation of the NEEDS policy occurred at the federal, state, and regional levels. To fight poverty, the government also instituted programmes such as the Federal Teachers' Scheme, Conditional Grants, Micro-Credit, Small and Medium Enterprise Development, Vocational Training, Community Health Insurance, and Universal Basic Education Fund (NMDGs, 2010).

The strategies used by the Nigerian government to meet the Millennium Development Goal 1 have clearly not been successful, since the poverty rate continues to rise despite these interventions. According to Nigeria's Millennium Development Goal Review (MDGR), the nation has failed to reduce poverty since 2004. In addition to establishing global partnerships for development, guaranteeing environmental sustainability, and achieving universal basic education, the review did not include the elimination of severe poverty as one of the country's objectives. It was a weird contradiction that poverty rose in tandem with the country's efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals. Ibani (2023, p. 14) and Kale (2012) both report that the percentage increased from 54.4% in 2004 to 69.0% in 2010. Poverty persisted in the nation as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) came to a close. Indeed, according to World Poverty Clock (2018), the nation surpassed India as the one with the greatest rate of severe poverty globally in 2018. Notably, this occurred just three years after a comprehensive development strategy that prioritised alleviating poverty had ended. Therefore, the MDGs were generally considered a failure in their attempt to alleviate poverty in Nigeria.

According to Durokifa and Edwin (2018), political and policy instability is to blame for the non-attainment of MDG 1 due to the fact that it caused inconsistent policy implementation and frequent policy changes. Azeez (2009) and Kanayo (2014) are among those who have pointed the finger at corruption in public service. The omission of climate change from the discussion is another possible explanation (Ibaba, 2015; Janetos, Malone, Mastrangelo, Hardee & Bremond, 2012). While acknowledging the aforementioned problems, this report goes on to say that they stem from the MDGs' poor governance throughout its creation and execution. Researching how ineffective leadership contributed to the failure to achieve the first MDG is, hence, the crux of this research.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The under listed questions serve as the focus of this work:

i) What is the impact of government ineffectiveness in Nigeria on the achievement of goal 1 (poverty reduction) of the MDGs?
ii) How has non-adherence to the rule of law and control of corruption in Nigeria impeded the achievement of goal 1 (poverty reduction) of the MDGs?
iii) Is the transition from MDGs to the SDGs an exercise in futility without adherence to the rule of law?

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The MDGs have been a subject of extensive study by scholars of development over the years. During the 15-year period which the Millennium Development Goals lasted, scholarly efforts were continuously made to understand the degree of success attained in achieving set targets and the chances of meeting the targets before the due date. Consequently, there has been some tacit agreement on some aspects of the MDGs in the literature.

It is almost a settled argument that results from the MDGs were checkered in different countries of the world. Following the post 2015 era, scholars directed enormous attention towards appraising the Millennium goals, and understanding the rationale behind the degree of success recorded and possible room for improvement. According to the research, Nigeria failed miserably in reaching the first Millennium Development Goal.

A lot of the arguments in the literature revolve on the question of why certain nations were unable to reach the MDGs while others were able to. Research goals chosen from the World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) for the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 1 (MDG) are hence the subject of this section. The WGI project states that a country's governance is its system of norms and practices for distributing power. Given the above, we will examine the following variables: This study examines three key aspects: (i) the efficacy of the Nigerian government in upholding the rule of law and combating corruption; (ii) the attainment of goal 1, which focuses on poverty reduction, as outlined in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); and (iii) the potential ineffectiveness of transitioning from the MDGs to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) without ensuring compliance with the rule of law. The first Millennium Development Goal (MDG)—the eradication of severe poverty and hunger—was also the subject of a conceptual framework study that emerged from Nigeria.

In 2015, the United Nations officially supported the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), sometimes referred to as the Global Goals (GGs), as a worldwide call to action aimed at eradicating extreme poverty, protecting the environment, and ensuring universal prosperity and peace by the year 2030.

Development necessitates achieving equilibrium among social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Furthermore, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals acknowledge that acts in one domain will have consequences in other domains. The objectives of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are as follows: The objectives are as follows: (1) Eliminating poverty, (2) eradicating hunger, (3) promoting good health and well-being, (4) ensuring quality education, (5) achieving gender equality, (6) ensuring access to clean water and sanitation, (7) making clean energy affordable and accessible, (8) fostering decent work and economic growth, (8) promoting industry, innovation, and infrastructure, 10) reducing inequalities, (11) establishing sustainable cities and communities, (12) promoting responsible consumption and production, (13) taking climate action, (14) ensuring life on water, (15), and (16) promoting peace, justice, and strong institutions, and (17) fostering partnerships to achieve the goals.

One of the biggest problems mankind has is ending poverty, which is why achieving objective 1 is so important. More than half of the world's poorest individuals saw their poverty levels fall between 1990 and 2015, yet many still lack access to even the most basic necessities of life. Despite the significant contributions made by countries such as India and China in alleviating poverty, there exists a notable disparity in overall development. As of 2015, a substantial 736 million individuals were living below the poverty line of $1.90 USD per day, while a considerable number had challenges in accessing essential resources like as food, water, and sanitation.

Goal 1 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aims to eradicate poverty, including a set of fundamental objectives: The objectives are as follows: (i) to decrease the proportion of individuals, regardless of gender or age, who are living in poverty across all aspects as defined by the country by 2030; (ii) to establish sufficient social protection systems and measures for everyone, including minimum standards, and to achieve significant coverage for the impoverished and vulnerable population nationwide by 2030. (iii) It is imperative to guarantee that by the year 2030, individuals of all genders, particularly those who are economically disadvantaged and susceptible, are granted equitable entitlements to economic resources, access to fundamental services, ownership and authority over land and other types of assets, inheritance, natural resources, suitable emerging technology, and financial services, encompassing microfinance. (iv) By 2030, countries should enhance the ability of the poor and vulnerable individuals to withstand and recover from climate-related extreme events and other economic, social, and environmental shocks and disasters. (v) It is important to gather resources from various sources, including through improved development cooperation, to provide developing economies with the necessary resources to eliminate poverty in all aspects. (vi) It is crucial to establish effective policy plans at the global, regional, and national levels, based on development strategies that prioritise the well-being of the poor and gender-sensitive approaches. This will facilitate increased investment in poverty eradication efforts.

2.1.1 Government Effectiveness and MDGs Goal 1 in Nigeria

When calculating a country's effectiveness as a government, the World Governance Index considers how its citizens perceive its public services, the strength of its civil service and how free it is from political influence, the credibility of its policymakers, and the efficacy of its policymaking overall. Because it shows how well governments can utilise resources to accomplish set goals and objectives, effectiveness is an essential metric of good governance. Accountability, control of corruption, and political stability are further measures of good governance that are obviously necessary for optimal resource allocation and, by extension, for effective government.

Therefore, it is not unexpected that the government of Nigeria has shown a lack of effectiveness. Despite the implementation of three significant legislative changes aimed at enhancing the efficiency and efficacy of public policymaking, the general populace persists in encountering obstacles in addressing their fundamental necessities. The aforementioned excerpts derived from the Constitution of 1999, the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2007, and the Public Procurement Act of 2007 provide directives pertaining to the utilisation and availability of public monies by administrative personnel. The legal foundation for the Nigerian state's efforts to achieve effective governance may be seen in these extracts.

According to Section 80(2) of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria, it is prohibited to withdraw any funds from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation unless it is to cover expenses related to the fund as specified in this Constitution or if the withdrawal has been authorised by an Appropriation Act, Supplementary Appropriation Act, or Act passed in accordance with section 81 of this Constitution. This clause serves to guarantee that the money cannot be withdrawn from its designated uses as delineated in the Constitution or any other legislation. As stated in section 80(3), it is prohibited to withdraw funds from any public fund of the Federation, save for the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation, unless the allocation of these funds has been authorised by an Act of the National Assembly. According to Section 80(4) of the Nigerian Constitution (1999), it is stated that the removal of funds from the Consolidated Revenue Fund or any other public fund of the Federation must adhere to the procedures prescribed by the National Assembly.

According to Section 26 of the Fiscal Responsibility Act, it is mandated that the Minister must generate and disseminate a disbursement Schedule based on the Annual Cash Plan within a period of 30 days after the implementation of the Appropriation Act. This schedule is intended to facilitate the execution of the Appropriation Act. Section 27(1) of the Fiscal Responsibility Act, 2007 states that the funds allocated for a certain purpose must be utilised only for the purpose specified in the Appropriation Act. All public procurement shall be performed, with the exception of any exception permitted by this Act. The procurement process must adhere to the predetermined review thresholds established by the Bureau in accordance with Section 7(1) (a)-(b). Additionally, the procurement plans must be supported by previous budgetary appropriations. Furthermore, the formalisation of any procurement proceedings must be contingent upon the procuring entity meeting all the requirements outlined in the Public Procurement Act, 2007 (Part IV, Section 16(1)).

The National Assembly's Appropriation Act (budget) or equivalent Acts, as outlined in Section 80 (2-4) of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution, set restrictions on the access to and use of public funds. Also, the Accountant-General will wait for the Minister's signature before releasing any funds. It is plausible to claim that public officials conceal their true intentions when they use the budget medium to steal from the government coffers, even though they claim to be following budget directives. This is because this is the legal framework that controls the access and expenditure of public funds. Olurankinse (2012) claims that public servants may be corrupt when they fail to adhere to legislatively mandated budget constraints and instead spend money on unapproved items and services. The poor quality of government services and policies is a direct result of this chain reaction of ineffective governance, which begins with resource diversion. The National Assembly has been urged by the Centre for Social Justice, the African Network for Environmental and Economic Justice, and the Zero Corruption Coalition to curtail excessive expenditures in the 2014 budget proposal due to apprehensions regarding potential misallocation of public funds. In addition, they advocated for a thorough and all-encompassing evaluation of the anticipated expenses for 2014 and criticised Nigeria's exorbitant governance costs, inefficient spending in the 2013 budget, and inadequate execution of the capital budget (The Punch, October 25, 2013). In summary, in the previous section, we examined the impact of the government's inability to maintain the rule of law, which is the fundamental basis of a well-functioning democracy, on endeavours to combat corruption.

2.1.2 Non-Adherence to the Rule of Law and Control of Corruption in Nigeria.

Preeminence of regular laws over arbitrary ones, equality before the law, and preservation of human rights and individual liberty are the three pillars upon which the rule of law rests (Sagay, 1996). These related concepts became more popular in the years after Nigeria's restoration to democracy in 1999. Most of the disagreements are on how to implement and improve laws to make due process an essential component of governance in the country. Since genuine advancement is impossible in an atmosphere of violence, the rule of law ensures that government functions smoothly without giving rulers the power to manipulate their subjects for their own ends.

Since the current democratic administration took office in 1999, the Nigerian government has just spoken about upholding the rule of law. One such example is the government's pattern of disobeying and sometimes actively disobeying judicial judgements and directives. Democracies are able to endure and even thrive in regions where authoritarianism was once prevalent because of their professional police and military forces, their independent and impenetrable judiciary/court system, their cohesive and vocal civil society, and their prosperous private sector. Criminals, innocent bystanders, and political opponents of the governing party in Nigeria are among those who have their civil liberties and human rights violated by members of the country's police force and other law enforcement organisations. Nigeria does not uphold the principle of equality before the law. Those who are suspected of embezzling billions of naira while holding public office or as governors seem to be treated better than the rest of the nation. They are allowed bail despite the fact that it is not intended that they should be granted bail automatically or under the most liberal circumstances.

The government of President Olusegun Obasanjo flagrantly disregarded the rule of law from 1999 to 2007. It was on full display in the regime's habit of flagrantly defying court orders and rulings that the Nigerian Supreme Court sided with the Lagos state government in its dispute with the federal government over the council budget, which the federal government had withheld. The federal government's ability to unlawfully withhold payments from the Federations Account designated for any of the three levels of government has been raised by the Lagos state government, which has petitioned the Supreme Court to decide. The wise court decided in favour of the Lagos state government. Nwankwere (2007) states that the federal government, then headed by Chief Obasanjo, withheld the monies because the state legislature had constructed 37 more LGAs illegally, even though the Supreme Court had already sided with Lagos State. Because of the lack of consequences, this exemplifies bad and unsafe leadership. Obasanjo's hatred for Alhaji Ghali Umar Na'Abba, who was speaker of the chamber of Representatives at the time, reached into the lower chamber as well. Multiple unsuccessful efforts to depose the speaker almost led to Obasanjo's impeachment on grounds of constitutional infractions (Ali, 2007, p. 21).

Research on poverty and development agrees that corruption is a major barrier to reducing poverty. Corruption is rampant and causes many problems, including the waste of money, poor quality of social services, and infrastructural decay. Therefore, the government must fight corruption and foster an atmosphere that dissuades public officials and bureaucrats from corrupt and self-serving behaviour. Regrettably, tendencies in assessing corruption in Nigeria's state reveal its pervasiveness across all governmental levels. A firm twenty percent of Nigeria's gross domestic product is attributable to corruption, according to Obuah (2010, p.17). In addition, "...Nigeria has consistently ranked towards the bottom of Transparency International's (TI) Corrupt Perception Index (CPI) ratings for several years." Sections 98–115 of the Criminal Code, the penal code, the 1976 corrupt practices decree, the ethical revolution of Shagari (which included a code of conduct for public servants), the War Against Indiscipline (Buhari/Idiagbon), and the ethical and social mobilisation crusade of Babangida are all anti-corruption laws and initiatives that Nigeria has long had.

Ignoring the stereotype of the nation as a "broken behemoth, a stark modern desolate wasteland, a culture that celebrates corruption as a national treasure..." None of these measures have contributed to ending the corruption epidemic, as stated on page 15 by Ojukwu and Shopeju (2010). Politicians and public officials' desire to extend dishonest behaviour by exploiting their trusted and powerful positions is the reason for this. The allegations of financial fraud and corruption against Chief Awolowo and other high-ranking party members in 1962 prompted the establishment of the Coker Commission of Enquiry. Funds supposedly changed hands between National Investment and Properties Company and the Marketing Board, an agency owned by the Western state government. Despite Chief Awolowo's acquittal, questioned spending did occur (Ikejiani-Clark, 2001b, pp. 116-117). According to Egwu (2001, pp. 126–147), who used social system theory to "the psychodynamics of corruption in Nigeria," investigations into misconduct, particularly involving public officials, seldom result in sanctions. Among the several inquiry panels he named were those looking into Eastern and Western Nigeria (the Forster-Sutton Panel and the Coker Commission, respectively): It seems that most of the things mentioned above were deliberate fabrications to avoid criticism, as shown upon closer examination. On page 24 of 2010, Obuah made the following statement to emphasise his point: "...an official inquiry revealed that between 1988 and 1993, an estimated $12.2 billion was routed to off-budget accounts." In addition, "the Transparency Initiative's Global Corruption Report recognised General Sani Abacha (1993–1998) as one of the top 10 presidents between 1988 and 1993 who allegedly embezzled."

Approximately 20% of Nigeria's GDP is attributable to corruption, according to Transparency International; also, the country is among the top countries for the more than $1 trillion in bribes paid abroad annually (Malgwi in Obuah, 2010, p. 18). All of these claims point to the ineffectiveness or complete unfairness of alternative pertinent remedies, including internal and external accountability measures. In addition to the aforementioned, a number of pieces in print, broadcast, and social media attest to the reality that corruption in Nigeria has reached unprecedented levels, and has become more sophisticated in its methods, especially under the current democratic system. One may argue that corruption permeates every level of Nigeria's federal system, including the bureaucracy of state and municipal governments. The weakening of public bureaucracies, the redirection of limited public funds to private interests, the corruption of political and administrative decisions through covert manipulations and lobbying, the stagnation of economic development, and the abandonment of civic duties and national principles are all inevitable outcomes of a corrupt leadership.

2.1.3 Poverty Reduction as an intrinsic Goal of the MDGs and SDGs

It has A consensus has formed in the academic literature regarding the poverty reduction as an underlying objective of the Millennium Development Goals. Numerous academics have argued that the elimination of poverty should take precedence among the Millennium Development Goals. As far as anybody can tell, the MDGs are a set of deadline-oriented objectives with the stated purpose of "reducing extreme poverty and expanding universal human rights by 2015." Ibani (2023, p.39).

According to Langford, Sumner, and Yamin (2013, p.1), the goals essentially represent a new global agreement on development objectives. These goals prioritise poverty reduction and reduce the emphasis on economic growth, economic liberalisation, and donor self-interest. The authors also made a similar point at the start of their paper. With the stated purpose of promoting international cooperation to alleviate the plight of so-called "poor countries," this agreement is not completely out of the question. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) aim to enhance trade links, health conditions, gender equality, and development via international cooperation, with poverty reduction as its central focus.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

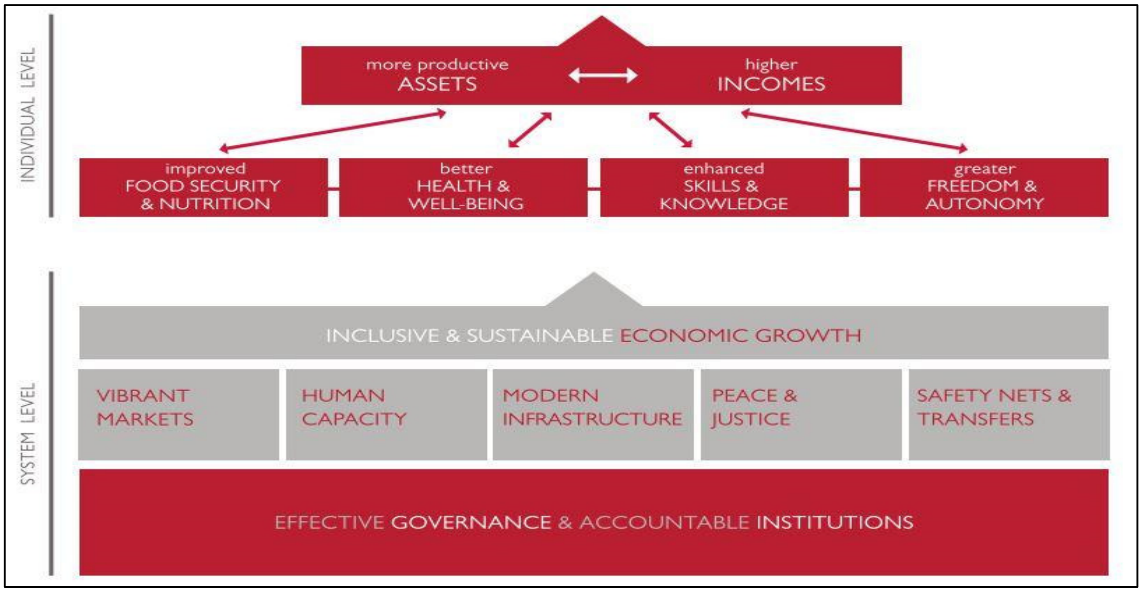
This study use the USAID Theory of Change for Eliminating Extreme Poverty as an explanatory framework to comprehend the accomplishment of objective 1 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which aims to eradicate extreme poverty in Nigeria. Prominent proponents of this concept including Ambassador Jonathan Addleton, Janet Ballentyne, Juan Buttari, Larry Harrison, Carol Lancaster, and Ann Van Dusen. On November 3, 1961, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was formed by John F. Kennedy. The aforementioned entity is an independent division of the federal government of the United States, primarily responsible for overseeing the administration of civilian development assistance and foreign aid.

An institutional structure that encourages effective leadership and responsibility is central to the idea, which states that inclusive economic development is the principal engine for reducing extreme poverty (USAID, 2015, p.2). Economic development that is inclusive of all major income groups, ethnic groupings, and women considerably reduces severe poverty (USAID, 2015, p.13). This perspective lays the groundwork for a paradigm shift away from severe poverty and towards development, sustainable growth, and the alleviation of poverty. This article argues that reducing poverty via economic development is the key to ending severe poverty. Reducing poverty and fostering development are both predicated on economic growth. Economic development that benefits all citizens, supported by transparent and responsible institutions, is the key to ending extreme poverty. While every nation's path to prosperity is unique, there are commonalities in these stories. Modern infrastructure is essential to economic success; investing in people's abilities and human capital is key; peaceful and fair societies are favourable; and robust, reliable safety nets are both a benefit and a prerequisite for economic progress. No amount of political will or local ownership can compensate for its critical relevance. Since the world's poorest people often depend heavily on finite natural resources, any economic expansion must be environmentally responsible and not reliant on depleting these assets (USAID, 2015, p.2).

Sustainable management of shared resources, including animals, forests, and watersheds, is essential for long-term aspirations of reducing extreme poverty, since environmental deterioration disproportionately impacts the very poor. Finally, the record of progress is clear: While ending severe poverty is the end goal of inclusive economic development, getting there isn't easy. Reducing poverty is closely related to economic growth periods. Here we will go over some of the things that are necessary for inclusive economic growth: strong and open markets; investments in human capital and people's abilities; modern infrastructure; peaceful and equitable societies; and strong and reliable public and private safety nets, both formal and informal. Institutions that are both effective and responsible form the basis of these inclusive development pillars.

The theory is based on country experience and describes the world's fast poverty reduction, which saw over 900 million people pulled out of severe poverty and hunger between 1990 and 2011. Using data from 1990 to 2011, USAID's theory of change model shows how extreme poverty and hunger may be eased. It starts with an explanation of the components required to end extreme poverty and hunger at the person level, then continues to the system level, where the theory of change model is constructed. The individual-level paradigm and the theory of change model are then merged to form a complete conceptual framework for poverty eradication (USAID, 2015). "Inclusive economic growth" means that all segments of society, including women, people of colour, and the highest incomes, benefit from economic expansion. It means that everyone, not just a select few, will enjoy a prosperous economy. Strong, reliable safety nets are an asset to and a prerequisite for inclusive economic development, as are modern infrastructures, investments in people's abilities and human capital, peaceful and equitable communities, and vibrant, open markets. Achieving inclusive economic growth requires not just political will and local ownership, but also sustainable development and the prevention of environmental disaster. Good governance and accountable institutions provide the groundwork for these tenets of inclusive development (USAID, 2015). A democratic government may benefit from inclusive economic and sustainable development, as shown in the previous figure.

Figure 2.1: Diagram of USAID's Conceptual Framework for Extreme Poverty Reduction.



Source: (Ibani, 2023; USAID, 2015).

The following diagram shows the components of inclusive and sustainable economic growth. These components, when coupled with the theory of change that is based on the foundation of governance and institutions, and when coupled with individual level outcomes, provide a comprehensive conceptual framework for reducing extreme poverty and hunger (USAID, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

Journal articles, textbooks, newspaper articles, and online publications were the secondary sources of data used in this descriptive research study. Data from the research was displayed visually, utilising several graphical representations of statistics. The research questions informed the data analysis that followed, which made use of process tracking.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Research Question 1: What is the impact of government ineffectiveness in Nigeria on the achievement of goal 1 (Poverty reduction) of MDGs?

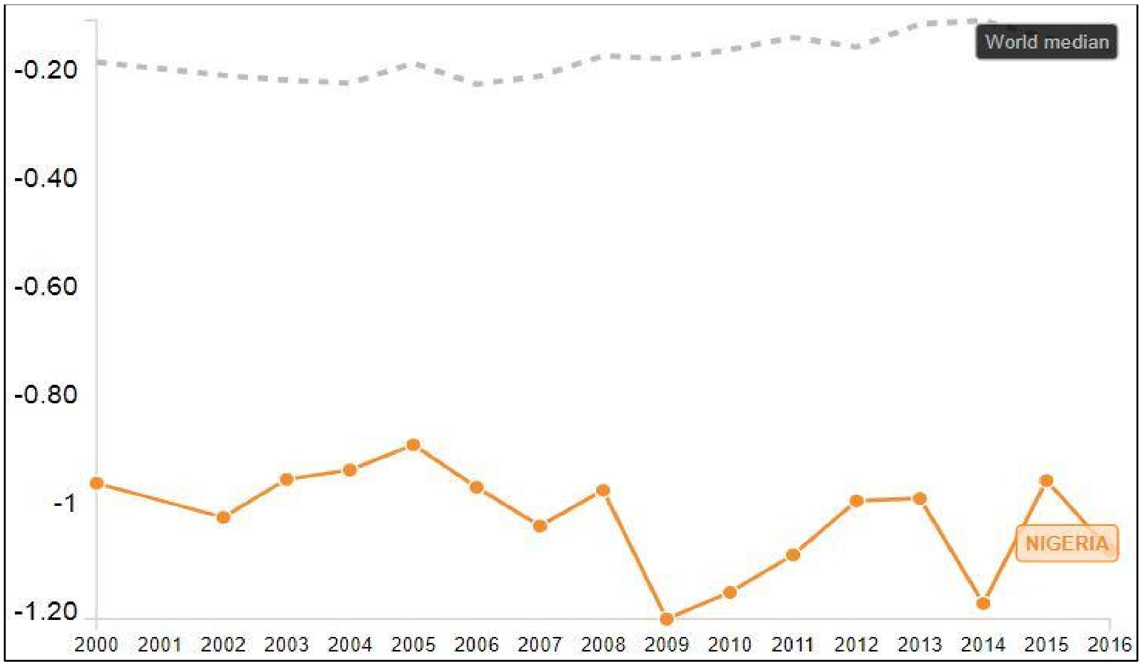
Table 4.1: WGI Scores for Government Effectiveness in Nigeria, 2000 and 2015

Indicator	Year	No of Sources	Score	Percentile Rank	Standard Error
Government Effectiveness	2000	6	-0.96401	14.35897	0.196535
	2002	8	-1.02683	11.73469	0.173912
	2003	8	-0.95659	15.81633	0.176694
	2004	9	-0.93938	15.27094	0.169184
	2005	9	-0.89276	21.07843	0.16772
	2006	11	-0.97137	16.58537	0.170643
	2007	11	-1.04284	16.01942	0.190437
	2008	11	-0.97684	16.50485	0.190656
	2009	11	-1.21464	8.61244	0.184189
	2010	11	-1.16514	10.52632	0.18693
	2011	11	-1.09618	13.27014	0.187781
	2012	11	-0.99648	16.58768	0.187805
	2013	12	-0.99204	16.58768	0.170496
	2014	12	-1.18602	12.01923	0.180167
	2015	12	-0.95881	16.34615	0.175528

Source: Ibani, (2023)

Table 4.2 shows the results for government effectiveness in Nigeria. These results support the claim that the state's policies do not represent the needs and desires of the people and that the government has been generally unsuccessful. The government has persistently received low ratings from the World Governance Index due to its poor bureaucratic structures, policies, and programmes. To dig deeper into this issue, we may look at the nation's performance in comparison to lower middle income countries, sub-Saharan African countries, and the average global country. For this, we have Figures 4.4.

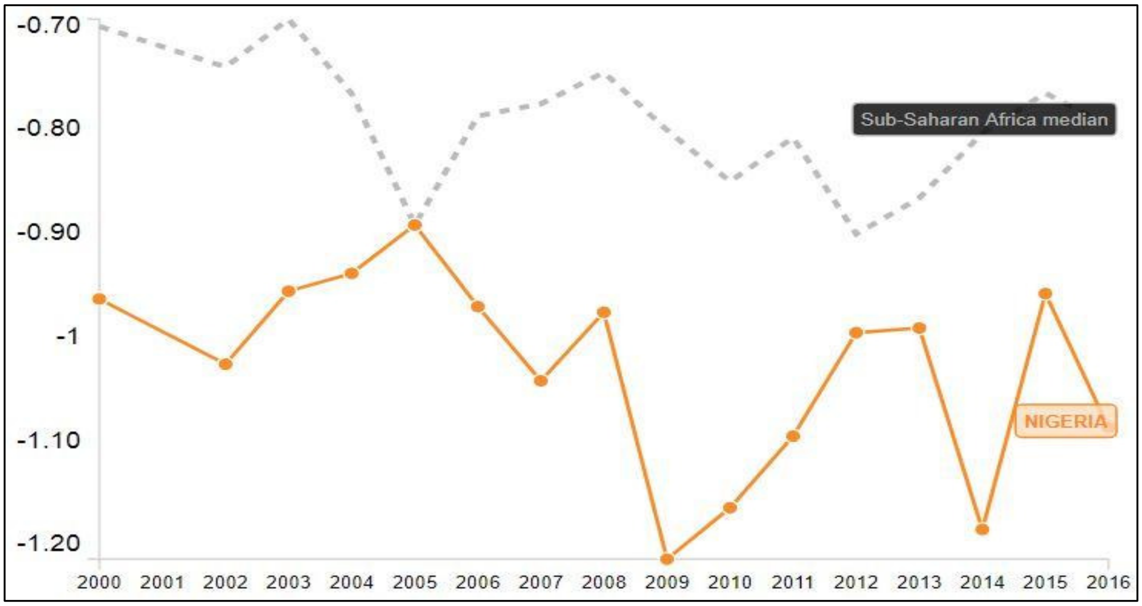
Figure 4.1: Nigeria's Performance in Global Governance Index's measure of Government Effectiveness Showing World Median



Source: Ibani, (2023).

The chart in Figure 4.1 shows that the country performed very poorly when compared to the average global scores in government effectiveness. It also reveals a downward slope for the Nigerian state between 2000 and 2015 as the country's performance in government never exceeded scores of -0.96 but remained extremely low, hitting an all- time low score of -1.18 in 2014.

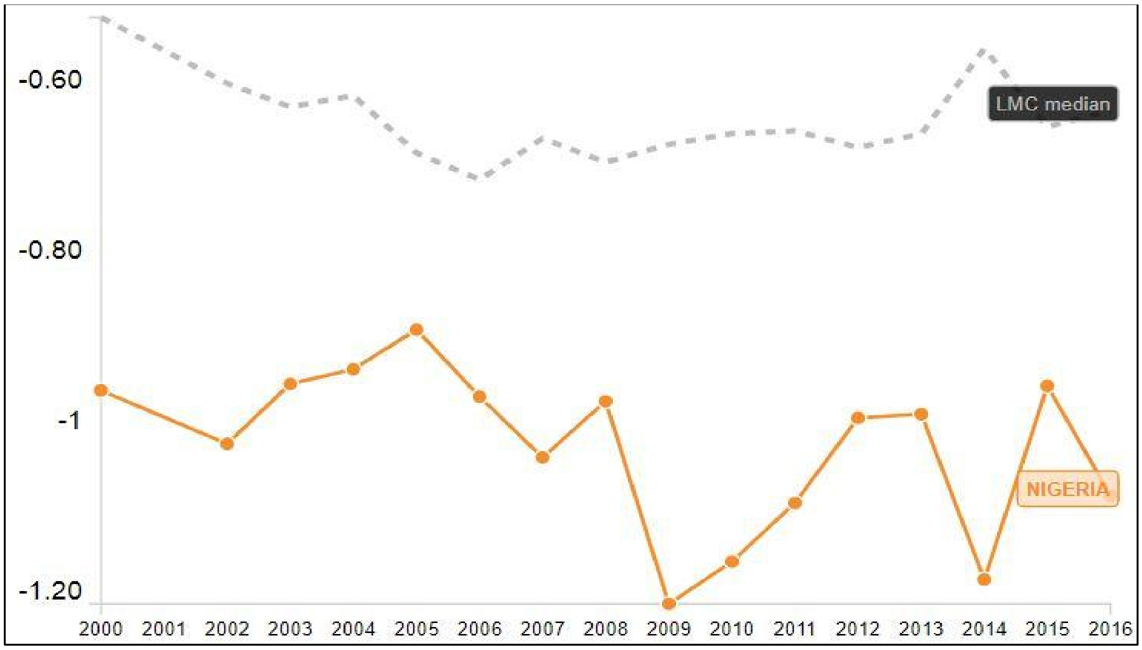
Figure 4.2: Nigeria's Performance in Global Governance Index's measure of Government Effectiveness Showing Regional Median



Source: Ibani, (2023)

Figure 4.2 is comparative performance of the country to the sub-Saharan Africa sub region also shows that the government effectiveness has been below the average regional position in Nigeria. Although the general trend in the region can be seen to be poor, as it remained largely below -0.70, it was even worse for Nigeria as Nigeria only hit the average score in 2005 and consistently remained below the regional average in every other year through the period of implementation of the MDGs.

Figure 4.3: Nigeria's Performance in Global Governance Index's measure of Government Effectiveness Showing Income Level Median



Source: Ibani, (2023)

Scores for lower middle-income countries were similar to those of the sub-Saharan African region, not exceeding -0.70 between 2000 and 2015. The average score however, was much more stable as the curve takes on something similar to a moderate depth U-shape. Results from a comparison of scores from the Nigerian state to the income group average however show worse performance for the country as it did not hit the average mark even once.

Research Question 2: How has non-adherence to the rule of law and control of corruption in Nigeria impeded the achievement of goal 1 (Poverty reduction) of the MDGs?

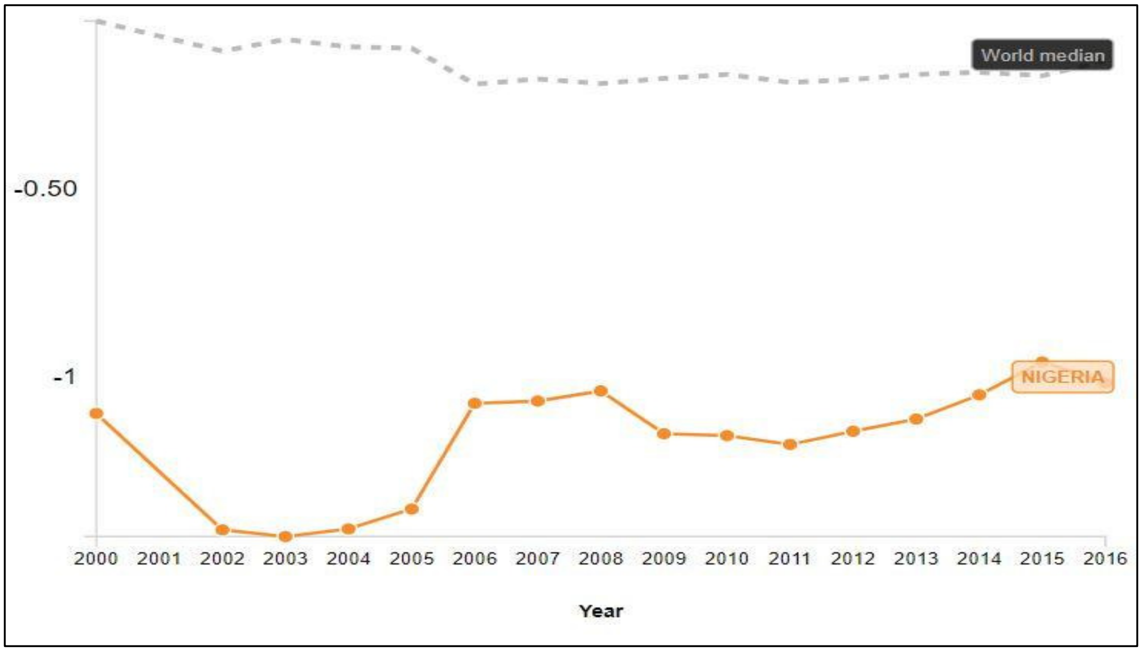
Table 4.2: WGI Scores for Rule of Law in Nigeria, 2000 and 2015

Indicator	Year	No of Sources	Score	Percentile Rank	Standard Error
Rule of Law	2000	10	-1.09887	15.34653	0.163704
	2002	12	-1.40923	6.435644	0.17088
	2003	13	-1.42721	5.445545	0.173989
	2004	14	-1.40678	6.698565	0.158938
	2005	14	-1.35381	8.133971	0.150622
	2006	17	-1.07191	13.8756	0.140857
	2007	17	-1.06567	13.39713	0.142318
	2008	17	-1.03877	14.90385	0.138293
	2009	17	-1.15301	11.84834	0.13613
	2010	17	-1.158	12.32228	0.133985
	2011	18	-1.18154	12.67606	0.127387
	2012	18	-1.14628	10.32864	0.130855
	2013	18	-1.11368	12.20657	0.128346
	2014	16	-1.04924	13.46154	0.138334
	2015	16	-0.96162	15.86539	0.139598

Source: Ibani, (2023)

The world governance index scores for rule of law in Nigeria presented in Table 4.2 shows that the Nigerian state has consistently performed poorly with regards to respect for the rule of law. Just how poor are these figures when compared to global, regional and income level averages? The figures below provide an answer to this.

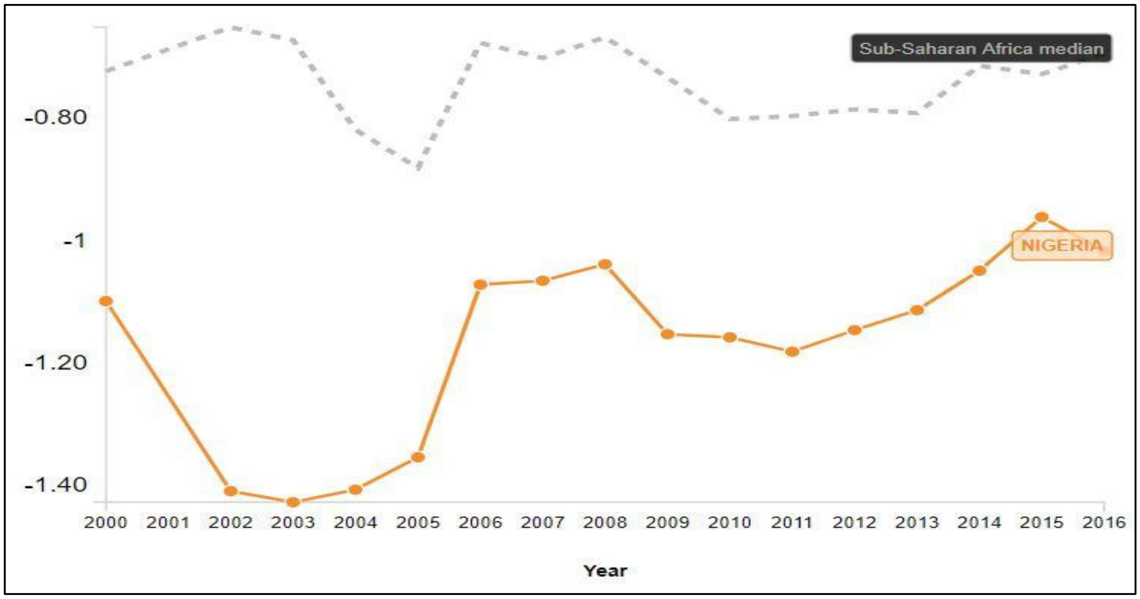
Figure 4.4: Nigeria's Performance in Global Governance Index's measure of Rule of Law Showing World Median



Source: Ibani, (2023)

There are two curves in the graphic, one representing the rule of law performance of the Nigerian state and the other representing the average performance of states worldwide. The graphs clearly demonstrate that the Nigerian state's performance is far worse than the average worldwide performance. When placed against the world average, Nigeria's rule of law performance is severely lacking.

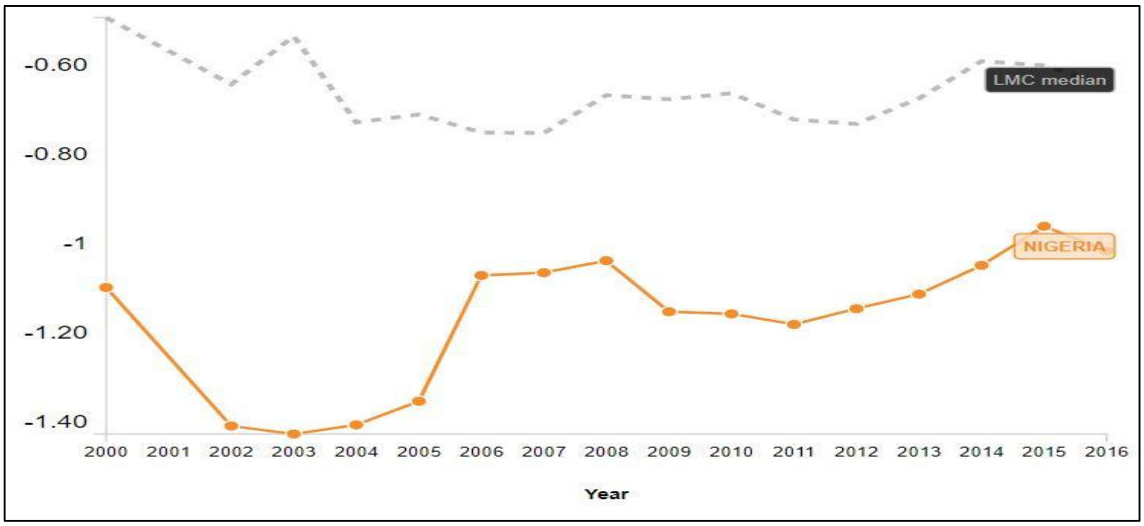
Figure 4.5: Nigeria's Performance in Global Governance Index's measure of Rule of Law Showing Regional Median



Source: Ibani, (2023)

The Figure 4.5 shows performance in the rule of law in global governance index measure by the Nigerian state and the average performance by states across the world. According to the curves, there is a significant disparity between the regional average and the performance of the Nigerian state. When compared to other states in the area, Nigeria's performance in rule of law is shockingly low.

Figure 4.6: Nigeria's Performance in Global Governance Index's measure of Rule of Law Showing Income Level Median



Source: Ibani, (2023)

The figure indicates Nigeria's performance in global governance index measure of rule of law showing income level median and the average performance by states in the same income group as Nigeria. The curve shows that the performance of the Nigerian state was poor when compared to the average performance of other lower-middle income countries.

Research Question 3: Is the transition from MDGs to the SDGs an exercise in futility without adherence to the rule of law?

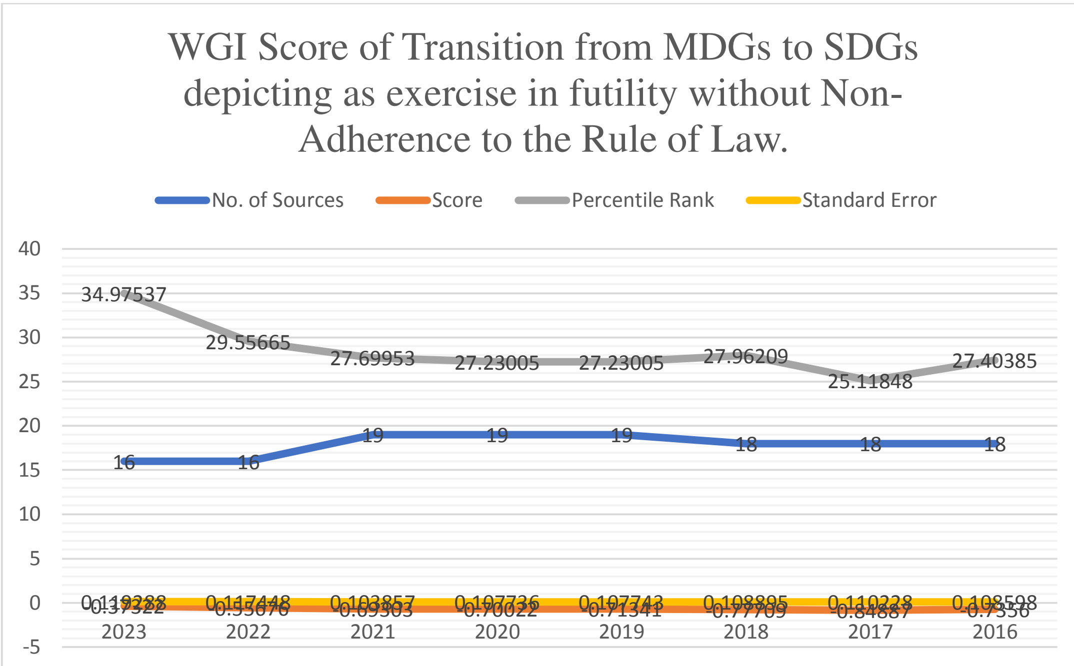
Table 4.3: WGI Scores of Transition from MDGs to SDGs depicting an exercise in futility without adherence to the rule of law.

Indicator	Year	No of Sources	Score	Percentile Rank	Standard Error
Transition from MDGs to SDGs	2023	16	-0.37322	34.97537	0.119288
	2022	16	-0.58676	29.55665	0.117448
	2021	19	-0.69303	27.69953	0.103857
	2020	19	-0.70022	27.23005	0.107736
	2019	19	-0.71341	27.23005	0.107743
	2018	18	-0.77709	27.96209	0.108895
	2017	18	-0.84887	25.11848	0.110228
	2016	18	-0.7356	27.40385	0.108598

Source: Ibani, (2023)

From Table 4.3 the world governance index scores for the transition from MDGs to SDGs as being a futility without to adherence to the rule of law, it is clear that the Nigerian state has performed poorly. This is as the country has often found itself at the negative side of the divide. This is depicted in the line graph below:

Figure 4.7: WGI Scores of Transition from MDGs to SDGs depicting an exercise in futility without adherence to the rule of law.



Source: Ibani, (2023.)

Illustration 4.7 With respect to the rule of law's observance, the Nigerian state is plainly inadequate, as shown in this line-chart of the World Governance Index (WGI) ratings for the shift from MDGs to SDGs as being futile without it.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Based on data retrieved from the World Governance Index, the following table summarises the status of Nigeria's performance across important governance indices. Our primary objective was to determine if there was a positive correlation between the global governance index's adherence or non-adherence to its key components and its performance in relation to Goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals. That is why the study questions laid forth the following claims:

16. Government ineffectiveness in Nigeria on the achievement of goal 1 (poverty reduction) of the MDGs
17. (ii) Nigeria's rule of law and anti-corruption measures hindered the completion of objective 1. (poverty reduction) of the MDGs and;

18. The transition from MDGs to the SDGs an exercise in futility without adherence to the rule of law.

Findings from the research inform an acceptance of all three propositions highlighted above. This is as the country was shown to have performed poorly in all indicators of good governance studied when compared to global, regional and income level averages. As a result, the research shows that the rule of law is totally disregarded and that ineffectiveness and inefficiency are widespread across government agencies. These factors mainly explain why past attempts to reduce poverty in Nigeria and elsewhere failed. Based on this, we can say that the government's approach to implementing the MDGs was the same as it had been for past poverty reduction programmes and projects, and that moving from the MDGs to the SDGs without following the law is a fruitless endeavour.

CONCLUSION/ RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the study's data shows that all the World Governance Index (WGI) measures of good governance are positively connected with poverty reduction, either directly or indirectly. Thus, this research concludes that the country's underwhelming performance in good governance was the root cause of the failure of the many poverty eradication programmes implemented throughout the MDGs. This provides logical justification for the following assertions: The successful transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) would be hindered if the rule of law is not upheld, resulting in the failure to eliminate poverty. This is exemplified by Nigeria's inability to achieve goal 1 of the MDGs, which aimed to alleviate poverty.

The study therefore recommends the following: (i). As revealed in the findings of the study lack of effectiveness in governance also account for the failure to achieve the goal 1 (poverty reduction) of the MDGs. Thus, the government should also ensure effectiveness in governance and service delivery. This means that any resource allocated to a particular project should be adequately utilized and ensure that the objective of the project is met. This is a necessary step towards achieving policies aimed at ending poverty. part two). The results also demonstrated that (1) the reduction of poverty was a major obstacle to achieving goal 1 of the

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and (2) the present transition from the MDGs to the SDGs will be fruitless if the government does not enforce the rule of law.

Public officials and the general public alike should adhere rigidly to the rule of law, according to the report. Corruption in the nation can be better managed with this as well. However, we must also make concerted attempts to remove corruption in our nation. This demands openness in government spending. subject four. The study's most startling conclusion is that the MDGs' implementation was very similar to previous poverty reduction projects and policies in Nigeria, which is a huge obstacle to achieving target 1 of the MDGs, which is to eradicate poverty. So, it was the same as before; the outcome was that it was unsuccessful. Therefore, it is important to learn from the mistakes made while implementing past programmes and policies and to tweak future ones as needed to get the intended outcome. (part v). A well-thought-out plan for addressing governance deficits and punishing corrupt officials should be part of every development strategy to combat poverty. section (vi). First and foremost, development planning should aim to achieve excellent governance. Thus, it is essential to recognise that successful poverty reduction requires excellent governance. This knowledge should underpin efforts to reduce poverty on a global and local level. Therefore, throughout the planning, launch, and execution phases of poverty reduction programmes, they should include steps to strengthen accountability and voice, promote political stability and nonviolence, and limit corruption.

CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

The literature so far centered on the formation process, limited scope and poor enforcement/implementation mechanisms as impediments to the success of the MDGS in eradication of extreme poverty. However, this study is original in a number of ways. First, the study appropriated empirical data on governance deficit induced implementation process of the MDGs and the current SDGs. To do this, we connected the dots between the MDGS's poverty eradication program's success or failure and the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI). The study is therefore a sharp divergence from the existing studies which only blame the formation, limitation and enforcement processes as hindrances to the achievement of the MDGs without specificity and adequate data to explain the relationship.

This study is also novel in that it empirically demonstrated that the implementation method of goal 1 (eradication of poverty) of the MDGs and the current SDGs was no different from the implementation methods of prior poverty eradication programmes and policies. This logically explains why the result too was no different. This unlike other studies that focused only on the implementation processes without empirically comparing it to prior poverty eradication programmes to identify similarities as a means to explain the similar outcomes.

Finally, this research is unique in the sense that it objectively shown that Nigeria fell short of all the metrics of good governance using the standard of the World Bank's Worldwide metrics (WGI). As a result, it connected the dots between it and the country's inability to reach objective 1. (poverty eradication) of the MDGs in the country and further shows the same pattern playing out in the ongoing SDGs. This is also in variance with others that focused on the formation, limited scope and implementation processes without paying attention to the role good governance plays in implementing poverty eradication programmes and policies.

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