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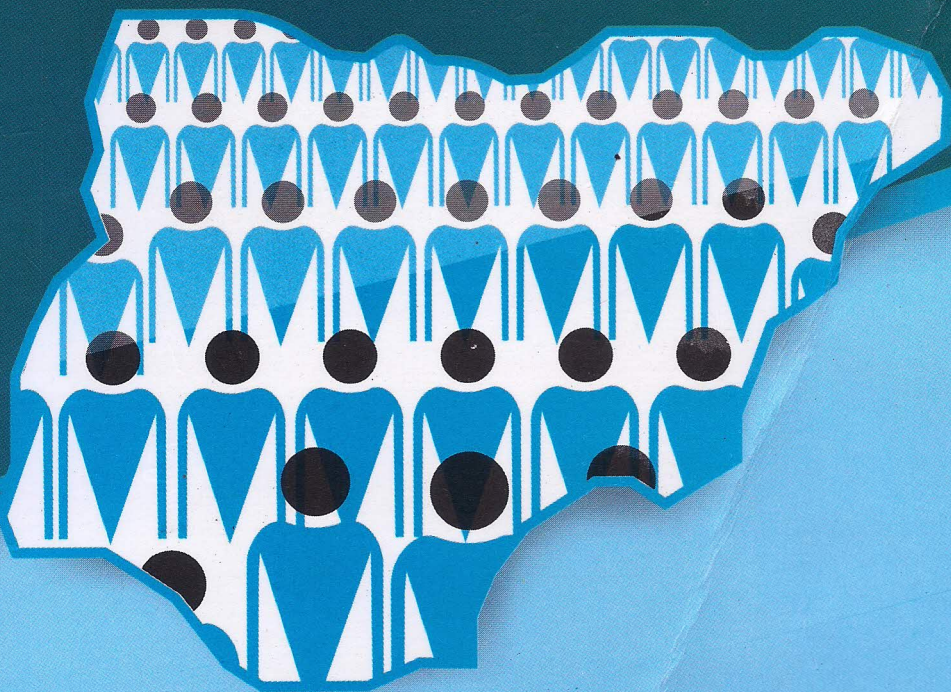
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Contemporary Issues in the Nigerian Society



Edited by

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CHAPTER FIVE

Empowerment and Its Outcomes in Nigeria: The Missing Link

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1.0 Introduction

The deteriorating state of Nigeria's development evidenced in some of the key socio-economic indicators [e.g. high rate of poverty, low life expectancy at birth (years), high adult illiteracy rate, low per centage rate of population with access to health care services, safe water and sanitation facilities, high infant mortality rate, high maternal mortality rate, low GNI per capita, high inflation rate, high external debt profile, high prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS, high rate of unemployment] relative to countries like Mauritius¹ have over the last three decades called for measures that would address the situation. Key among the measures were the introduction of programmes like the Operation Feed the Nation, the River Basin Development Authorities, the Agricultural Development Programmes, the Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme, the Rural Electrification Scheme and the Green Revolution, the Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure, the National Directorate of Employment, the Better Life for Rural Women Programme, the Peoples' Bank, the Family Economic Advancement Programme, the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) and most recent the Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P) (see Anyanwu, et al., 1997; Ijaiya 2007; Agbi 2009; FRN 2012).

Usually included in these programmes as strategy for improving the living standard of the people is economic empowerment of the people that has become

¹ For instance, in 2010, Nigeria's maternal mortality rate per 100,000 live births, infant mortality rate per 1000 live births, life expectancy at birth (years), poverty rate at US\$2 per day and per capita income were 630, 83, 51, 84.5 per cent and \$1,240 to Mauritius 60, 13, 73, 33.1 per cent and US\$7950 respectively (World Bank, 2013).

a slogan of government at all levels (national, state and local government). Unfortunately, these economic empowerment programmes, most especially for youth and women have done little or nothing in uplifting the standard of living of the poor among them because of a number of reasons that include among others; the government and its policy-makers' inability to understand from conception to implementation what empowerment is all about. To most of them empowerment is purely an economic issue, and from the economic point of view it is about giving money out to the people, purchasing and distributing grinding and sewing machines, motorcycles and tricycles and electricity generating sets, leaving out its social, political and psychological components. Other reasons for the failure of the existing economic empowerment programmes in Nigeria are that the programmes have become a platform for political/party patronage, nepotism, embezzlement, mismanagement/misappropriation of funds and a huge platform for corruption. Furthermore, the formulation of the so-called economic empowerment programmes lacks mass participation of the people, especially the poor.

It is against this backdrop that this chapter seeks answers to the following questions. Why are the present economic empowerment programmes devoid of conceptual understanding of the dimensions and principles of empowerment by the government/policy-makers? What are the governance and institutional matters needed in addressing the existing and future economic empowerment programmes in order for them to achieve their desired objectives of uplifting the standard of living of the people? And how important is involving the people, especially the poor, in the design and implementation of any empowerment programme?

2.0 Conceptual Clarifications

Meaning of Empowerment

Empowerment connotes self-strength, control, self-power, self-reliance, own choice, life of dignity in accordance with one's values, capable of fighting for one's rights, independence, own decision making, being free, awakening, and capability. When perceived from the word "power", empowerment therefore is the expansion of freedom of choice and action to shape one's life. It implies control over resources and decisions. It also means increasing both the capacity of

individuals or groups to make purposeful choice and their capacity to transform these choices into desired actions and outcomes. When linked to the poor, it is referred to as the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives (World Bank, 2002; Grootaert, 2005; Mason, 2005; Narayan, 2005; Peterch, Smulavitz & Walton, 2005).

Dimensions of Empowerment

According to Narayan (2005), apart from economic empowerment which connotes ownership of material assets, such as land, housing, livestock, saving and income, that enable people to withstand shocks and expand their horizon of choices, other forms of empowerment are social empowerment that include social belonging, leadership, relations of trust, a sense of identity, values that give meaning to life and the capacity to organise; political empowerment that include the capacity to represent one-self or others, access information, form associations and participate in the political life of a community or country; and psychological empowerment that include self-esteem, self-confidence and an ability to imagine and aspire to a better future (see also Deshmukh-Ranadive, 2005; Diamond, 2005; Diener & Biswaas-Diener, 2005; Malthotra & Schuler, 2005).

Elements/Principles of Empowerment

In the views of the World Bank (2002) and Narayan (2005), successful efforts at empowering people (especially the poor), increasing their freedom of choice and action in different contexts often share four elements. These elements are:

- i. Access to information: Access to information is paramount because information is power in that informed citizens are better equipped to take advantage of opportunities, access services, exercise their rights, negotiate effectively, and hold state and non-state actors accountable. Without information that is relevant, timely, and presented in forms that can be understood, it is impossible for the people to take effective action. Information dissemination does not stop with the written word, but also includes group discussions, poetry, storytelling, debates, street theater, and soap operas, radio, television, and the Internet. Laws about rights to information and freedom of the press,

particularly local press in local languages, provide the enabling environment for the emergence of informed citizen action. Timely access to information in local languages from independent sources at the local level is particularly important, as more and more countries devolve authority to local government.

- ii. Inclusion and participation: Inclusion focuses on the 'who' question, i.e., who is included? While participation addresses the question of 'how' they are included and the role they play once included. Inclusion of the people, especially the poor and other traditionally excluded groups in priority setting and decision making is critical in ensuring that limited public resources (build on local knowledge and priorities), are build on commitments to change. However, an effort to sustain inclusion and informed participation usually requires changing the rules so as to create space for people to debate issues and participate directly or indirectly in local and national priority setting, budget formation and delivery of basic services. Participatory decision making is not always harmonious and priorities set may be contested, so conflict resolution mechanisms need to be in place to manage disagreements. Participation can take different forms depending on the issue. Participation may be direct (representational, by selecting representatives from membership-based groups and associations), political, through elected representatives, information-based, with data aggregated and reported directly or through intermediaries to local and national decision makers and based on competitive market mechanisms which removes restrictions and other barriers, increases choice about what people can grow or to whom they can sell to and who they can buy from.

- iii. Accountability: This refers to the ability to call public officials, private employers or service providers to account for their stewardship and being answerable for their policies, actions and use of funds. There are three types of accountability mechanisms: (i) political accountability; (ii) administrative accountability; and (iii) public or social accountability. Political accountability is linked to the political parties and people's representatives and increasingly through elections. Administrative accountability is linked to accountability in government agencies.

Public or social accountability is when citizens hold government agencies accountable on the services they provided to them. Citizen action or social accountability can reinforce political and administrative accountability mechanisms. A range of tools exist to ensure greater accounting to citizens for public actions and outcomes. For instance, access to information by citizens builds pressure for improved governance and accountability, whether in setting priorities for national expenditure, providing access to quality schools, ensuring that roads once financed actually get built, or seeing to it that medicines are actually delivered and available in clinics. Access to laws and impartial justice is also critical to protect the rights of poor people and pro-poor coalitions and to enable them to demand accountability, whether from their governments or from private sector institutions. Accountability for public resources at all levels can also be ensured through transparent fiscal management and by offering users choice in services. At the community level, for example, this includes giving poor groups choice and the funds to purchase technical assistance from any provider rather than requiring them to accept technical assistance provided by government. Fiscal discipline can be imposed by setting limits and reducing subsidies over time. Contractor accountability is ensured when poor people decide whether the service was delivered as contracted and whether the contractor should be paid. When the poor hold the providers accountable, the control and power then shifts to them.

- iv. Local organisational capacity. This refers to the ability of people to work together, organise themselves, and mobilise resources to solve problems of common interest. Often outside the reach of formal systems, poor people turn to each other for support and strength to solve their everyday problems. Poor people's organisations are often informal, as in the case of a group of women who lend each other money. They may also be formal, with or without legal registration, as in the case of farmers' groups or neighbourhood clubs. When communities are organised they are likely to have their voices heard and their demands met and also influence government decision making and gain collective bargaining power.

Determinants of Empowerment

At the individual level, the individual's control of economic resources (human capital, earned income or liquid assets) determines his or her power. For example, wives who are employed in income-earning activities are assumed to be more empowered than those who engage exclusively in unpaid work. This also goes for recipients of microcredit. Borrowing tends to enhance their income and their empowerment. Factors like community traditions that restrict women from participating in community activities, unfavourable taxation policies of government and employer practices among others can weaken or remove the link between earning and income thus inhibiting empowerment. For instance, in a Muslim society such as Bangladesh, a woman's movement beyond her home may be an indicator of increasing freedom, whereas in Jamaica, where women's movement are not culturally restricted, it has little relevance. Same with the use of veil that could be seen as restricting and oppressing women or as providing them safety and freedom to move about without male harassment (Mason, 2005; Narayan, 2005).

At the national level, Mason (2005) and Narayan (2005), identified the following as some of the key determinants of empowerment:

- i. Reforming public administrations which are pro-poor and less corruptive: Corruption thus known to manifest itself in many different forms; key among the types are administrative corruption and state captured corruption. Administrative corruption refers to bribe and other illicit payments to public officers in order to obtain an advantageous implementation of existing laws, rules and regulations. State captured corruption refers to actions by individuals, groups or firms to influence the formation of laws, rules, regulations and policies to their advantage;
- ii. Making the legal system more responsive to poor people which amount to making rule of law work. Rule of law refers to a country's formal rules that are upheld through the judicial system. For rule of law to be a mechanism of empowerment, two conditions must be met: (a) the rules have to apply equally to all citizens; and (b) the state must be subjected to the rules;

- iii. Decentralisation is an important means of steering empowerment in a direction that takes the needs of local communities more into account. Decentralisation is defined as the formal devolution of power to local decision makers. The transfer of tasks from the central to the local level has to be matched by a genuine transfer of fiscal and enforcement power to the local level. This process can be achieved by the following, fiscal, administrative and political decentralisation simultaneously and by coordinated fashion;
- iv. Promoting democratic politics is essential for empowerment by virtue of the emphasis it places on human freedom that is manifested in the granting of political rights and civil liberties to citizens. Important aspects of political rights and civil liberties are political stability, orderly transitions of power without violence and the independence of the media;
- v. Removing social barriers and discrimination on the bases of ethnicity, race, gender, religion or social status which prevents people from taking advantage of opportunities for economic and social advancement are paramount; and
- vi. Building social institutions and social capital. Social institutions are often referred to as local organisations which helps empower their members, while social capital are networks with underlying norms and values that govern the interactions among people in a society. They also play an important role in enhancing the productivity of other assets available to the poor and in protecting their basic needs and in managing risk. Social capital in the form of solidarity and innovation networks helps household-based enterprises obtain information in order to increase profits (Grootaert, 2005).

Importance of Empowerment

- i. Empowerment is a promising source of more effective and more inclusive development. It is seen particularly as a means of increasing the capacity of the people mostly the vulnerable or the poor and subordinate groups to influence development processes since through it they are able to access ideas and information, get involved in planning and decision making, and engaged in problem solving,

- collective action and conflict negotiation. Empowerment also helps to expand their ties to other networks and resources (Peterch et al., 2005).
- ii. Empowerment can be used to strengthen good governance and in turn enhances growth prospect. For instance, when citizens are engaged, exercise voice and demand accountability, government performance will improve and corruption becomes harder to sustain. A case in point was the introduction of participatory budgeting in the 1980s in Porto Alegre, Brazil. The reform allowed for direct citizen involvement in identifying municipal spending priorities and neighbourhood public works and channeling of funds based on population and need (Peterch et al., 2005).
 - iii. Empowerment also allows individuals to reach their full potential, to improve their political and social participation, and to believe in their own capabilities. When linked to women, empowerment has important ramifications for the rest of the household because empowered women will have fewer children and higher child survival rates, healthier and better-fed children and a generally greater allocation of resources to children (Duflo, 2012; Kandpal, Baylis & Arends-Kuenning, 2013).

Empowerment Programmes in Nigeria

Empowerment programmes in Nigeria are synonymous with all development and poverty reduction programmes put in place since independence in 1960. In fact, there is none of the programme that did not emphasise on the empowerment of the people of the country. For instance, the empowerment programmes of the 1960s to early 1970s were embedded in the First, Second, Third and Fourth National Development Plans. The jettisoning of National Development Plans since the mid 1970s for sectoral programmes that addresses the nation's development challenges also had in them some components of empowerment. Table 1 presents some of the development programmes from 1972 to 2012 that had some components of empowerment.

Table I: Selected Empowerment Programmes and Institutions in Nigeria 1972-2012.

Programme/Institution	Year	Main Objective
National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP)	1973	Designed to increase food production
Nigerian Agricultural Cooperative Bank	1973	Devoted to funding agriculture
Operation Feed the Nation (OFN)	1976	Designed to encourage food production, food security and eventually attain self-sufficiency in food supply
River Basin Development Authorities	1976	Improve agricultural production by development of land and water resources
Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme (ACGS)	1977	Designed to increase the flow of credit to the agricultural sector
Green Revolution Programme (GRP)	1980	Designed to encourage self-reliance in food production and the diversification of Nigeria's sources of foreign exchange earnings
Go Back to Land Programme	1984	Same as above
Directorate of Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI)	1986	Mandated to open up the rural areas and provide basic amenities which could transform them into production centers for national development
Peoples' Bank of Nigeria	1986	Empowered it to offer soft loans to prospective entrepreneurs without collaterals
National Directorate for Employment (NDE)	1986	Mandated to design and implement programme to battle the menace of mass unemployment and also to

		articulate policies that would develop work programme with labour intensive potentials
Better Life for Rural Women (BLRW)	1986	Designed to bail out Nigerians especially women from debilitating poverty
Nigerian Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA)	1991	Designed to encourage large scale commercial farming by assisting farmers with inputs and developing land for them at subsidised rates
Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP)	1993	Designed to bail out Nigerians especially women from debilitating poverty
National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP)	2001	Designed to wipe out poverty from Nigeria
National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS)	2004	Designed for wealth creation, poverty reduction, employment generation and value orientation
Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P)	2012	Designed to liaison with the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Petroleum Resources, the subsidy savings estimates for each preceding month and ensure that such funds are transferred to the Funds' Special Account with the Central Bank of Nigeria for the purpose of alleviating the impact of subsidy removal on Nigerians by constructing, completing and rehabilitating railways, refineries, key federal high ways, hydro stations information technology and water projects.

Sources: Anyanwu, et al. (1997), Ijaiya (2007), Agbi (2009), FRN (2012)

A look at these programmes indicates that they were all aimed at ameliorating the suffering of the people by reducing poverty, providing employment opportunities providing credit facilities which would enable them start or expand their businesses. Taking the Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P) as a case in point and its components of empowerment; Community Services Scheme (CSS), Graduate Internship Scheme (GIS), Public Works (FERMA) and Vocational Training (VT) in the year 2012 alone, 3,000 secondary school leavers, holders of National Diploma and the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) were employed in each state and Abuja in the following fraction: women (30%), physically challenge persons (20%) and others (50%). The employment scheme and stipends given were at three levels. Those employed under the Federal Government's scheme got ₦10,000.00 per month, those who got SURE-P jobs under the state were given ₦6,000.00 per month, while those who were employed under the local governments scheme were paid ₦4,000.00 per month each. In addition to this are many youths that were given the opportunity to acquire skills in various vocations with which they were self-employed (Mohammed, 2013).

Empowerment Outcomes: Meaning, Types and Evidences

Empowerment outcomes often referred to as the results of empowerment are also synonymous with development outcomes which include having access to outside employment, being physically mobile (i.e., ability of someone to leave the household without permission to seek for livelihood, especially a women), presence of political awareness and ability to participate in socio-economic and political activities, having the bargaining power to engage in greater share in natural resources, having access to economic and human security, having the capacity to involve in decision-making process, having the freedom from domestic violence/abuse, ownership of assets and having access to credit programmes (micro-finance organisations or rotating saving and credit associations) (Peterch 2005; Kandpal, et al., 2013).

Narayan (2005) opines that empowerment outcomes include having self-confidence, walking with dignity, feeling respected, living without fear, having access to health care services and education, having some freedom of choice

among options, having control over one's life, having access to the market and business services and having access to justice.

Evidences of these outcomes are captured in a number of studies in recent times. For instance, the study by Uphoff (1996) cited in Narayan (2005) explained how farmers' involvement in a large, broke-down irrigation system in Sri Lanka led not only to the rehabilitation and more efficient functioning of the system, but also to the revisions of the nation's policy. Given this situation more than 500,000 farmers have become members of the participatory irrigation management system throughout Sri Lanka. A study by Kandpal, et al. (2013) on the impact of the Mahila Samakhya programme on women's economic, social, and intra-household empowerment in India indicated that the programme has resulted in significant increases in women's access to outside employment, ability to go out without restriction, and political participation, all of which are associated with higher levels of empowerment.

On the contrary, a study by Ijaiya (2006) on the level of involvement of the people of Offa town on the performance of borehole water projects constructed by DFRRI shows that the people were never involved in the construction of the boreholes. But only took over the management/maintenance of the boreholes because of government's neglect and the state of disrepair since they are the end users. The neglect by the government as observed in the study was linked to the governments' inability to provide a clear framework on how to involve the people in the first place, from the design and the construction of the projects.

Empowerment and Its Outcomes in Nigeria: The Missing Link

Empowerment and its outcomes are two of a kind in that the outcomes as indicated above are made possible by the commitment put in place by individuals, communities and government in the design, implementation and to some extent in the monitoring and the evaluation of the programmes established for the purpose of empowerment. At the stage of the design of any empowerment programme for the people, the conceptual issues surrounding empowerment must be known and understood, the governance issues for effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the programmes must be strictly adhered to and the programme designed for the purpose of empowering the people must be inclusive of all, including the poor that the programmes are meant

for, from the design to the implementation, the monitoring and the evaluation stages.

Knowing and understanding the conceptual issues surrounding empowerment is important because over time, most policy-makers' in Nigeria, sees empowerment mostly from economic perspective excluding the political, social and psychological issues surrounding it, which include, social belonging, aspiring to leadership positions, having trust in people, having a sense of identity, having values that give meaning to life and the capacity to organise. Others are the capacity to represent oneself or others, having access to information, ability to form associations and participate in the political life of a community or country, having self-esteem, self-confidence and the ability to imagine and aspire to a better future. Even, the economic aspect of empowerment as perceived by the government and her policy-makers is narrow in scope, in that emphasis is much more placed on giving money to the poor in the form of credit facilities. The money when given is usually based on political patronage, nepotism and favoritism which in turn is based on either belonging to a particular political party, tribe, religion or all.

The above were the situations experienced in most states of the Federation, which drew criticism from a number of people. For instance, as observed by Fagbemi (2014), the Federal Government seems to be using the SURE-P jobs as a bait to coerce members of the opposition to join the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Kwara State.

As he posits:

the PDP government is using SURE-P to coerce people into joining their party, thus bringing a new set of dimension to its implementation. They are now threatening people with SURE-P. You can't force people to join you. And stop saying that Jonathan is the owner of SURE-P. I want to correct the impression; SURE-P belongs to Nigerians and as Nigerians, we are all entitled to it. We've informed our people that they should resist any attempt by anybody to lure them into PDP forcefully under the pretext that they are going to be get job or be sacked from the SURE-P. We'll do everything humanly possible to resist any attempt by anybody to coerce people to move to PDP using the SURE-P.

It is also important to note that other aspects of economic empowerment, which include making the poor own material assets, such as land, housing, livestock, etc., are never thought of in the present empowerment programmes of government.

Equally important, to the working of empowerment and its outcomes are some key institutional issues and the components of good governance that would make empowerment programmes sustainable. As observed by the World Bank (1994, 1997) cited in Campos (2000), the institutional demission is characterised with the structure and working of government which comprises the executive, the legislature, the judiciary, the bureaucracy/policy-makers and the civil society. At all time, it is expected that these organs of government should abide by the rules and regulations guiding the working of all empowerment programmes. The executive branch of the government must be accountable for its actions. The legislature must come up with laws, rules and regulations that would guide the working of the programmes and undertake oversight duties to confirm the workings of the programmes. The quality of the bureaucracy should be high ("imbued with a professional ethos") such that it is efficient and capable of adjusting to changing social needs. The policy-makers should be open and transparent in the process of implementation of the programmes so that all affected groups may have inputs into the decisions to be made. The civil society should be strong so as to enable it to participate in the design and implementation of the programmes (see also Rodrik, 2000).

The components of good governance such as accountability and responsibility, transparency, openness, predictability and rule of law are essential ingredients in determining the workability of any empowerment programme. Coupled with these are civil liberties, such as the freedom of individual expression, a pluralistic and free media, the ability of groups to organise, and freedom of dissent and criticism which facilitate greater citizen voice and enhance more effective government action on development; and economic liberties that fosters entrepreneurship, market activities and economic growth (Brautigam, 1991; Landell-Mills & Serageldin, 1991; Paul, 1991; Martial, 1992; Paul, 1994; Isham, Kaufman & Pritchett, 1997; Paul, 1998; Grigorian & Martinez, 2000; Knack & Azfar, 2000; Wei 2000).

Unfortunately, these institutional and governance issues are little or never adhered to in Nigeria. This is evidenced in the number of programmes that were introduced and could not be sustained because of institutional failure that has to do with none adherence with the rules and regulations establishing the programmes and the high level of corruption that have led to embezzlement and misappropriation of funds, high level of political/party patronage, nepotism and favoritism. At the level of the executive arm of government are personalisation of office and highhandedness by some of the chief executive officers and high rate of executive turnovers. At the level of the legislature hardly can one pinpoint a programme on empowerment that was legislated on before its introduction. That was why immediately there is a change in government existing programmes were abolished for new ones, even when they have the same philosophy and objectives. Examples are, Better Life for Rural Women (BLRW) in 1986, Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) otherwise known as Family Support Programme in 1993, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) in 2004 and the Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P) in 2012. For SURE-P there were wrangling between the executive and the legislature arms of government on the inability of the executive to account for the huge sums of money expended on the programme since 2012 (Mohammed 2013). And in Kwara State, some beneficiaries of SURE-P were owed three months arrears of the stipends given to them Fagbemi (2014). To buttress this position Mohammed (2013) further asserts that:

SURE-P has translated to nothingness to Nigerians. This is because the SURE-P Committee of 21 President's hand-picked, chaired by Dr. Christopher Kolade has proved to be another massive fiscal siphon. The Committee is busy duplicating projects and paying for projects already embarked upon and financed by the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

For any empowerment programme to succeed, it must be pro-poor and participatory or inclusive of all the people irrespective of tribe, gender, religion or party affiliation because people's participation in any development process allows for adequate representation, information flow, consultation, mediation and the influencing of decisions by the people in the design, formulation, implementation,

monitoring and to some extent evaluation of the programmes (see Ijaiya, 2002; 2006). This situation seems not to be the case with the programmes on empowerment that were introduced by the government in Nigeria. And probably that was why the programmes were not sustainable because the non-inclusion of the people at every stage of the programme cycle did not allow for people's commitment but instead their apathy. To the ordinary Nigerian, programmes like that are always referred to as government programmes, so whatever happens to them is the problem of the government not theirs.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter examined the concept of empowerment and its outcomes vis-à-vis the dimensions, the elements, the determinants and the importance to development. The chapter also examined some of the empowerment programmes in Nigeria, [the most recent being the Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P) which was introduced in 2012] and established reasons for their inability to improve the living standard of the people they were meant for. One of the reasons is the inability of governments and their policy-makers at all levels to articulate appropriately the conceptual issues surrounding empowerment. To most of them, empowerment is only about dishing out money to the needy, without knowing that apart from economic empowerment (which also includes ownership of material assets among other things) there exists also political, social and psychological empowerment. Other reasons also established were bad governance (the lack of accountability and responsibility, transparency, openness, predictability and rule of law), political patronage, nepotism and favoritism either at the political party, tribal or religious line. The inability to involve the people from the point of the design to the implementation of all empowerment programmes also contributed to their failure in achieving their objectives.

To make the existing and future empowerment programmes work, it is therefore imperative for all stakeholders in development issues first to understand the concept of empowerment, which has gone beyond dishing out money to the needy. The political, social and psychological components of empowerment must be studied, understood and incorporated into the existing and future empowerment programmes given their significance to the improvement of human capability. For instance, having access to information, having high level of

self-esteem, having high level of self-confidence and the ability to imagine and aspire to a better future will put someone in a better pedestal than just being empowered monetarily.

Incorporating all the institutional (rules and regulations) and governance issues (accountability, transparency, openness and rule of law) into the process of empowerment of the people is also important. For instance, there are no way institutions responsible for delivery of social services when asked to adhere to the rules and regulations governing them will not also perform well by serving the people better. Similarly, there are no ways public officials and service providers when held responsible and made to account for their stewardship and answerable to their policies, actions and use of fund would not perform their duties diligently. But when corruption and rent seeking are allowed as already seen, the programmes will fail.

Making empowerment programmes pro-poor and inclusive is also very important. Number of benefits comes with allowing those who the programmes were meant for to be part of the design and implementation of the programmes. There will be no apathy and there will be commitment among the people in making the programmes sustainable. Participation by the people would make them feel part owners of the programmes. And there is no way programmes of such would not achieve their desired objectives.

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