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Poverty and Christian Welfare Scheme: Evidence from the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) Osun State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Existing studies on welfare schemes in Nigerian Churches have focussed on the political and economic perspectives, neglecting the ethical dimension which has a stronger basis in the Bible. This study, therefore, examined the welfare scheme of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), Osun State, Nigeria as evidence with a view to assessing their method of generating welfare resources, as well as their implementation and monitoring strategy against the provision of the Bible on welfare ethics. Data were obtained through interviews, observation and questionnaire. In-depth interviews were conducted with 90 randomly selected key informants including 12 clergy, 24 poor members of the church, 18 welfare scheme officers and 36 beneficiaries. Four welfare schemes were observed between 1991 -2012 in a total of 30 Anglican Churches in major towns in Osun State. A total of 600 copies of the questionnaire were purposively administered to beneficiaries, church members and welfare scheme officers. Out of these, 550 were retrieved and analysed using percentages. The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) generated resources for welfare schemes through compulsory levies, donations, annual harvest proceeds, offering collection ,tithes/offering and foreign assistance .Four categories of welfare schemes were adopted: Health care delivery, vocational rehabilitation, micro-credit loans, and women's empowerment. One implementation strategy was adopted, namely, social advocacy. The church utilized sensitisation mechanism, widow retreat workshops, free health campaign, radio/television programmes and supportive counselling. Welfare scheme for the Church of Nigeria offered socio-economic benefits to members of the Church, but they were weakened by limited human coverage, insufficient funds

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and poor monitoring. These call for moral reorientation on the part of stakeholders in order to inculcate the ethics of justice and fairness as enshrined in the Bible.

Keywords: Christian, Church of Nigeria, Osun state, poverty, welfare scheme.

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1.0 Introduction

1.01 Poverty

Poverty is a social condition in which material resources are lacking. It is a state in which an individual or a group lacks material resources that are necessary for subsistence. In other words, poverty connotes a condition in which one is unable to live well because of lack of basic needs such as food, water, clothing and shelter (Dzurgba, 2007:112). In Osun State, people are not only poor, having little or nothing to eat, but they are also bereft of ideas that can take them out of their squalor. Some children are stunted in growth and vulnerable to brain damage as a result of malnutrition. In addition, the level of poverty affecting women in Osun State is believed to be a major factor responsible for young women involving in commercial sex work culminating in their being dehumanized and exposed to the risks of HIV/AIDS (Akande, 2005:534).

For instance, as indicated by Federal Office of Statistics at the local government level in Osun State, more than fifty percent of the households considered themselves poor. The statistics of poverty level are as follows: Ayedire (61%), Ejigbo (56%), Ife North (52%), Ife South (81%), Ifelodun (53%), Irewole (69%), Isokan (50%), Iwo (60%), Obokun (63%), Ola Oluwa (58%), and Olorunda (67%). It has been observed that 51% of the female-headed households feel that their households are poorer than the male-headed households. There are households headed by widows, divorced or separated persons who are equally wallowing in poverty. Many households claimed that they could not afford minimum household welfare requirements or needs. Some attribute their poverty to the hard economic situation prevailing in the State. For some people, high prices of commodities are equally identified as underlying the cause of poverty. A high price of agricultural products for peasant farmers is another cause of poverty in the State².

In view of the widespread poverty and its causes in Osun State, people continue to fashion out coping mechanisms to meet the needs of their households. For example, some households reduce the number of meals. This is also followed by informal borrowing and asking for help from friends. Petty trading and other piecework are also adopted as coping mechanisms. It is against this backdrop that the people in Osun State are badly affected by poverty. In Christian tradition, concern for the poor and needy has been an outstanding characteristic of the Church throughout the centuries. For instance, the first Christian community held almsgiving in high esteem; deacons and widows were chosen to dedicate themselves in a special way to the needy members of the community. St. Paul, from his own perspective, suggested that the rich communities should collect alms to meet the needs of the poor. More importantly, the Church equally organized care for the poor, the orphans, the crippled, the sick, and for other groups that were in need. Other pious communities of men and women such as the Apostle Paul sponsored a major offering for the poor in Jerusalem and many of the Macedonian believers dedicated themselves to welfare schemes. To elucidate more on the fundamental basis of poverty alleviation from the time immemorial, Lactantius, following the judgment discourse of Matthew 25:35ff lists corporal works of welfare scheme. These are to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick, console the captive and bury the dead (Peschke, 1992:222-223). Peschke (1992) also holds a similar view in what he refers to as the spiritual works of welfare scheme. Christians are to instruct the ignorant, counsel the perplexed, console the sorrowing, correct the erring, forgive injuries, bear wrong patiently, pray for the living and the dead. Despite the historical gap between the Biblical

age and the contemporary societies, all the above observations still remain valid and relevant today. However, their scope and particular needs need to be broadened and expatiated. In evaluating the works of mercy for the poor and needy of the ancient world, love should be a particular need of each historical period.

According to Dzurgba (2007), there are three major levels of poverty in every community, namely, absolute poverty, relative poverty and subjective poverty. Absolute poverty can be measured in terms of the basic needs of the people and the resources that are available to satisfy those basic needs of life. In this circumstance, anybody whose income is below a certain level of resource is referred to as poor. Relative poverty can also be measured by comparing the material resources of one person with the resources of another person. This is a comparison of two standards of living. For subjective poverty, this refers to a situation in which individuals feel that they are poor when they measure themselves against the standards of the day (Dzurgba, 2007; 112). While the above evaluations are commendable, yet one must ask a pertinent question. How accurate are the measures of poverty in societies? It is obvious that it is difficult to obtain accurate measurements of poverty in societies. From the above analysis, the study asserts that there is a pervasive problem of absolute poverty across Osun State, Nigeria.

Many measures of this absolute poverty deal with the amount and quality of food, water, clothing, shelter, health, security, education, morality, and spirituality. These are seen as necessities of a healthy life. The persistent deterioration of the quality of life in Osun State and the associated socio-economic implications of living in abject poverty make the need for a sustainable poverty reduction mandatory on all intellectuals, Churches, Governments and Non-Governmental Organisations. Successive governments in Osun State have appeared either not committed enough or able to understand what could meaningfully constitute the way out. Hence the seeming helplessness of many in the State. For instance, efforts have been made to address the problem of absolute poverty in Osun State through one political policy intervention or the other. These interventions were packaged in various programmes and institutional arrangements like Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI), Better Life Programmes (BLP), Family Support Programme (FSP), and Poverty Alleviation Programmes (PAP). All Farmers Association of Nigeria, Osun State Chapter, Women and Children Development Initiative Foundation, and Osun State Community-Based Poverty Reduction Agency (Maduagwu, 2000). It is observed that all the lofty efforts made by successive state governments have, however, achieved marginal success. The past and present programmes have failed because they did not promote application of Christian ethical principles and practice in the said programmes. Given the profile of poverty in the Osun State, the present research has intended to fill the vacuum that has been created by the neglect of religious ethical issues which are vital to efficient and productive policy decisions, public programmes, implementation of public projects and sound financial management. In response to this challenge, the researcher takes up the task of carrying out an empirical research with a view to undertaking ethical assessment of poverty and Christian welfare of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), Osun State, Nigeria.

1.02 Conceptual clarifications

In order to forestall for unintended interpretations of these terms, therefore, contextual definition of the terms are offered in this paper:

Poverty. This refers to lack of physical necessities, assets and income. In other words, it describes a general condition of deprivation whose manifestations come in the form of social inferiority, isolation, physical weakness, vulnerability, powerlessness and humiliation.

The Poor. This is defined as the proportion of the population that is unable to meet the basic needs of life.

Poverty Alleviation. This simply means the process of freeing the poor from their state of poverty. It is the process of empowering the poor to get out of their poverty state. A person that is alleviated from poverty must be empowered or helped to permanently overcome poverty. This could be done by helping him or her to: secure a sustainable job and acquire skills that would be enough to provide regular source of earning.

Stakeholder. This is any person, group or institution that has an interest in an aid, activity, project or programme.

Welfare Scheme. Welfare scheme connotes the administration of certain services to individuals and families who find it difficult or impossible to maintain themselves and their dependants in material solvency and in health by their own efforts. Social welfare includes those provisions and processes directly concerned with the treatment and prevention of social problems, the improvement in the quality of life. It involves social services to individuals and families as well as efforts to strengthen or modify social institutions (Atolagbe, 1990:9).

1.03 Research Methodology

Several methods were employed in eliciting information for this work. These were manifested in the fieldwork involving in-depth interviews, observation and questionnaire. The information gathered from these methods formed the bulk of primary sources. In the study, structured and unstructured interview were used. Four welfare schemes, namely: healthcare delivery, vocational rehabilitation, micro-credit loans, and women empowerment were observed in a total of 30 churches in major towns in Osun States. The structured and unstructured interviews were used to elicit data on religious attitude as well as on welfare scheme of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). In using interview for our data collection, 90 key informants were randomly selected including 12 clergy, 24 poor members of the Churches, 18 welfare scheme officers and 36 beneficiaries. The selection was purposively done to include a wide range of people in the state and the denomination. Sufficient privacy was maintained during the interview. Data were content analysed. The researcher equally utilized questionnaire method to obtain information for this study. Six hundred copies of questionnaire were distributed, out of which five hundred and fifty copies of the questionnaire were retrieved and used, the analyses of each item was based on the number of responses to that item and not on the number of questionnaire for each item was calculated as follows:

$$\frac{N \times 100}{TN} \quad T$$

While 'N' stands for respondents, 'TN' represents total numbers of respondents per statement question.

However, unquantifiable data have been inserted in their raw form as they were collected by means of direct quotations or paraphrase references. The bulk of our secondary sources were obtained through the use of theoretical model which involves the use of libraries.

2.0 Background information about Osun state, Nigeria

The indigenes of Osun State in Nigeria belong to the Yoruba tribe from various towns, wards, villages and hamlets. However, non-indigenes from all parts of Nigeria and foreigners who reside in the State live together. Yoruba, Hausa and English are the languages of the people for official and business transactions (Osun State Bulletin). Osun State is divided into three senatorial districts namely, Osun I, Osun II, and Osun III. Each of these districts is further divided into two zones. Osun I is made up of Ede and Iwo zone while Osun II consists of Osogbo and Ikirun zones. Ife/Ijesha zone is the constituent of Ife/Ijesha district. In all, the State is divided into six zones. The State is made up of thirty local

government areas and the Ife East area council (Osun State Bulletin).Geographically, Osun State is a State in Nigeria with a population of about 3,423,535 (three million four hundred and twenty three thousand five hundred and thirty five). Males are 1,740,619 (one million seven hundred and forty thousand six hundred and nineteen), and females are 1,682,916 (one million six hundred and eighty two thousand nine hundred and sixteen), respectively (2006 Census). Osun State is located in the South-Western part of Nigeria. It covers an area of approximately 14,875 square kilometers in area. Osogbo is the Capital of the State and is about six hours drive from Abuja, the capital of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Also, it is about 232 kilometers from Lagos, while Ibadan, the most populous city in West Africa is about 88 kilometers from Osogbo. The State is bounded on the East by Ondo State, on the North by Kwara State, on the West by Oyo State and on the South by Ogun State. The State enjoys an average annual rainfall of between 115cm and 135cm (that is about 45-55 inches). While the rainy season lasts from April to October or early November, the dry season, usually punctuated with harmattan, lasts from November to March. The typical vegetation of Osun State is that of derived savannah. However, there is also a belt of rain forest where timber is exploited. Also, cash and food crops such as kolanuts, cocoa, oranges, palm tree, yams, cassava, plantain and banana are cultivated. Traditionally, the people engage in agriculture (Ministry of Information, Information Division; Osun State, sss 1992).

2.01 Manifestations of poverty in Osun state

Scholarship is replete with various conceptualization of poverty. The common practice is to conceptualize poverty as absolute, that is, poverty is the lack of resources that are necessary for subsistence. Such necessary resources would contain an objective minimum of basic necessities such as food, shelter, clothing, among others. The most pathetic features of Osun State today is that a majority of its members are living in a state of hunger and destitution while the remaining relatively insignificantly minority are wallowing in affluence. For instance, at the local government level in Osun State, more than fifty percent of the households considered themselves poor as indicated by **Federal Office of Statistics** thus: Ayedire (61%), Ejigbo (56%), Ife North (52%), Ife South (81%), Ifelodun (53%), Irewole (69%), Isokan (50%), Iwo (60%), Obokun (63%), Ola Oluwa (58%), and Olorunda (67%). It has been observed that 51% of the female-headed households feel that their households are poorer than the male-headed households. There are households headed by widows, divorced or separated persons who are equally wallowing in poverty. Many households claimed that they could not afford minimum household welfare requirements or needs. Some attribute their poverty to the hard economic situation prevailing in the State. For some people, high prices of commodities are equally identified as underlying the cause of poverty. A high price of agricultural products for peasant farmers is another cause of poverty in the State. In view of the widespread poverty in Osun State, people continue to fashion out coping mechanisms to meet the needs of their households. For example, about twenty percent (20%) of households in the state said that they reduced the number of meals to cope in times of need. This is also followed by informal borrowing (16%) and asking for help from friends (16%). Petty trading (8%) and piecemeal work (6%) are the next most important coping mechanisms adopted by the households. Similar pattern is also observed for male-headed and female-headed households. Besides, several other ways are adopted as coping mechanisms such as: Food-for-work (4%), relief from government and donors (0.4%), eating wholesome food only (0.9%), substituting meals with fruits (1.1%), reducing other household items intake (6%), formal borrowing (2.1%) church charity (1.1%), withdrawing children from schools (0.4%), sale of household assets (0.3%), asking from friends (16%), begging in streets (0.2%), and others (13.4%) (Federal Office of Statistics, Osun State Report).

The problem of poverty has also attracted the attention of successive governments and multilateral development institutions. Although an opposing view may claim that food, water, housing, clothing, health care and education are available for the people in Osun State, it is only to some extent. This may be true. Even at that, are these basic necessities of a healthy life that are available in the state worthwhile for decent human life? There are two divides in the state, the rich and the poor. The rich, who can afford qualitative standard of life, may claim that all these basic needs are accessible to them. On the other hand, the majority peasant rural dwellers who are wallowing in abject poverty continue to

lament in their suffering. Some hints as evidenced through personal observations and information gathered during our research will be discussed.

Food

Food is a substance necessary for living creatures which they take into their bodies to give them strength and health. This is a concrete requirements for health's and hygiene of human body, which helps men to develop and live (Peschke, 1992:732). The Holy Scripture states that, *For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church (Eph.5:29)*. In the state, the poor individuals and families can hardly afford one or two square meals regularly, while some just eat any available food even if it lacks nutritional value and normal diets. The poor households are under stress, tension packed situation and even pressed to the wall for lack of food and means of livelihood (National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy, 2005). In the light of this, the situation brings frustration, quarrel, and immoral acts. There are people who eke out a meagre living on the street. Also, at traffic lights, children run between waiting cars, trying to sell wares in the hope of getting some cash. More importantly, it is observed that under-aged children are selling pure water and hawking at motor parks. These are indices of poverty as well as coping mechanisms for feeding. Some women involve themselves in commercial sex work for food, while others that are physically disabled continue to beg for living. In fact, there may be quantity of food for the people but without quality or nutritional values.

Water

The origin of water goes back to the origin of the earth. In the Bible, we find that water is the oldest and commonest substance on earth (Gen. 1:2, 7). Anselm (2002) observes that human survival depends on water, everything on earth equally contains water. For instance, an apple is 80% water, tomato is 95%, pawpaw is 90% water, orange is 95% while the human body is 70% water. Also 70% of the earth surface is water. The symbolism of water is central to Christian faith. Scientifically, for any human being to stay healthy, each person needs to drink at least two and a half (2½) litres of water daily (Anselm, 2002:50-51). The functions of water are manifold. These include, quenching thirst, washing dirt and taking bath, cooking and preparing food, aids the metabolism of food and washes digestive system in the body, keeps blood thin and light so that it flows freely and smoothly, moderates body-heat and serves as lubricant for the muscles and joints, keeping them healthy and strong. From the above, we can see that water is vital to healthy living. We have thirty local government areas in Osun State and each local government area has at least eight wards, but unfortunately each cannot boast of having potable water or standard boreholes. Every village in the remote areas supposed to have access to hygienic potable water or boreholes because food and water go together but it is not so (Nnamani, 2005:20-21). There is hardship in going to a long distance to get water. The condition of the available water is still not desirable. Almost everybody is now selling water whether 'pure or poor' water without National Food, Drug Administration Control's approval because of its necessity in human life. These are signs that there is poverty in the state.

Housing and clothing

House is a place constructed or built for people to live in for a short or long time, while clothing is a material made from wool, hair or cotton by weaving, and used for making garment and coverings of human body. The two have influence on the bodily and mental health of man because the purpose is to provide physical protection against weather, although they serve other ends, such as purpose of profession or cultural outfit. Dirt and uncleanness in housing and clothing are usually in danger to health because under such conditions vermin and germs of illnesses develop more easily. In a related development, there are insufficient housing in Osun State this situation endanger physical and mental health for the poor. As evidenced in our fieldwork survey, 2012 through observations and information collected, we are informed that when it gets dark some people place a layer of cardboard under a lorry and lie down to sleep. They seem oblivious of the noise of cars, buses or motor cycles on the main

streets where they spend their nights. Besides, beggars such as the lame, the blind, women nursing their babies are a common sight in the state.

Healthcare

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as a state of complete physical, mental, spiritual and social well-being. Therefore, everyone is bound to maintain the life, health and integrity necessary for this end such as vaccination against various diseases, pure food and drug regulations and hygienic measures for the prevention of contagious diseases. A great number of sicknesses are also psychologically induced health problem like high blood pressure and hypertension which often emanate from the anxiety on households' livelihood. Manifestations of poverty are evident in a report gathered from Women and Children Development Initiative Foundation (WOCDIF) in Osun State. It was reported that most of the individuals call on the initiator of WOCDIF for assistance for settlement of medical bills which they cannot settle in the hospital because they are poor. Example of such cases are as follows: Kidney transplant for Mr. Shola Awoyinfa in India and Sherifat (from Ile-Ogbo). In November, 2006, WOCDIF reported that the foundation assisted about one hundred and fifty (150) sickle cell patients in Osun State by supplementing food and dioscovite drugs to the patients (Osun State Information Booklet:15). There are physically challenged persons roaming the streets across all the thirty local government areas. There are other types of people with ailments in the hamlets, villages, remote areas and towns, languishing with curable or even terminal health problems but they are poor. All these are manifestations of poverty in the state.

Education

Parents are absolutely bound to educate their children to the best of their abilities. This includes training in the intellectual, social, religious and other virtues which are necessary for a well-ordered and happy life. Despite the fact that there are one thousand four hundred and sixty primary schools and three hundred and thirty secondary schools in the state, many parents are not able to afford the school uniform and writing materials for their children to be enrolled in the public schools. Some parents have formerly enrolled their children in the schools, but latter withdrew them because of the additional expenses on their children. For tertiary institutions, some are given admissions, but they cannot proceed with their studies, while others withdraw because they cannot cope financially. There are private schools but the poor people find it tough to sponsor their children. What we see in Osun State are two areas of people, each with its pool of desperately poor people and a sprinkling of rich ones that is, the poor and the rich. Though the incidence of poverty is much higher in the rural areas than in the urban centres, the urban slum-dwellers form one of the more deprived groups.

2.02 Causes of poverty in the state

The causal factors leading to poverty have to do with religious and secular perceptions, feelings, attitudes and consciousness. The result of the field work survey that is questionnaire came out for the purpose of this research. Efforts reveal that three dimensions are quite significant to note in describing the causes of poverty. The responses to certain questions asked in the questionnaire confirm reasons that lead to the condition in which one is unable to live well because of lack of basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter in households in Osun State, Nigeria. Another cause of poverty in the state is corruption and abuse of power. Out of the 550 who responded to the question, 410 respondents agreed that corruption and abuse of power cause poverty in Osun State, 100(18%) disagreed with this point while 40 respondents (7%) did not give any opinion. The highest number therefore, perceived that corruption and abuse of power are major factors leading to poverty in households in the state. It is also evident that out of 550 subjects that responded to the question, 350 (63%) agreed that lack of education and skills usually result in poverty and ignorance which are indices of backwardness. 200 respondents (37%) disagreed in their own opinion. The highest number of the respondents therefore has established the fact, that lack of education and skills are important factors that have caused

poverty in the state. It can be deduced that natural and artificial disasters are other prominent reasons that lead households to poverty in Osun State. This is quite clear from the proportion of respondents who agreed with this opinion and those who disagreed. Out of 550 subjects who responded to the questionnaire, 420 respondents (76%) agreed, while only 130 respondents (24%) disagreed. It is now evident and conclusive that natural and artificial disaster actually causes poverty in households in the state. Laziness and idleness are other causes of poverty in the state; it is evident and conclusive that on this matter, out of 550 subjects who responded to the question, 400 respondents (73%) overwhelmingly agreed that laziness and idleness are major causes of poverty. On the other hand, only 150 respondents (27%) disagreed with the opinions. However, the highest responses confirmed the fact.

2.03 Effects of poverty on the people of Osun state, Nigeria

The effects of poverty on a particular society are always expressed in some specific ways and through some specific avenues that are available to, and characteristic of, that society. There is, therefore, the need to consider the various specific indicators of poverty in Osun State, Nigeria. The respondents were asked to identify various effects of poverty on the people of Osun State.

Table 2.03 Showing Respondents' Opinion on the Effects of Poverty on the People of Osun State, Nigeria

S/N	Characteristic	Agree and percentage	Disagree and percentage	No opinion and percentage	Total responses and percentage
A	Hunger and illness	450 (82%)	100 (18%)	-	550 (100%)
B	High rate of despair and emotional instability	400 (73%)	150 (27%)	-	550 (100%)
C	Poverty circuit	390 (91%)	16(29%)	-	550 (100%)
D	Human trafficking	430 (78%)	120 (22%)	-	550 (100%)
E	Lack of future prospect	400 (73%)	100 (18%)	50(9%)	550 (100%)
F	Untimely death	440 (80%)	100 (18%)	10(2%)	550 (100%)
G	Ignorance	330 (60%)	200 (36%)	20(4%)	550 (100%)
H	Crime and immoral activities.	460 (84%)	90 (16%)	-	550 (100%)
I	Over-indebtedness	380 (69%)	17 (31%)	-	550 (100%)

Source: Fieldwork Survey, 2012.

Out of the 550 subjects that responded to the question, 450 (82%) were disposed to supporting that one of the moral effects of poverty is hunger, and that it leads to poor health and series of diseases; 100 respondents making 18%, did not see it that way, possibly because they are less affected in their various wards. However, the highest percentage (82%) of 450 respondents claimed that poverty adversely affects the people. Also 400 respondents (73%) agreed that high rate of despair and emotional instability can result from poverty. This is because a hungry person is an angry person. On the other hand, 150 (27%) disagreed with the observation, may be because things are rosy for them. This work further sought to test respondents' opinions on poverty circuit. Out of 550 respondents who responded to this question, an overwhelming majority opinion of 390 respondents (71%) confirm the reality of poverty circuit to be one of the effect of poverty. Only 160 (29%) were of the opinion that poverty circuit does not exist.

The respondents equally express their opinion on human trafficking as one of the effects of poverty on households in Osun State. Human trafficking here refers to the idea of gathering some under-aged and adolescents from remote areas either with their parents' consent in the disguise of helping them to cater for the children. Some poor parents have lost their children in that circumstances. Out of the 550 respondents that attended to this question, 430 (78%) confirmed that human trafficking is another adverse effect of poverty in Osun State. However, 120 (22%) disagreed with the opinion. The results reveal that the future prospects of youths in the society are at stake. This is evident from the fact that out of 550 subjects that responded to the question, 400 respondents (73%) overwhelmingly agreed that the future prospects of youths are bleak because of lack of job opportunities, unimproved social services, unavailability of social security, and unpredictable governments, while 100 respondents constituting 18% disagreed. However, 50 (9%) are undecided on the matter. Untimely death is another

adverse and moral effects underlining the poor condition of the people of Osun State. 100 (18%) disagreed while 10 (2%) did not have any opinion. Majority, possibly those who cannot afford private hospital bills, actually felt the impact of their poor condition in their wards. In the light of this, the highest number of respondents 440 (80%) agree. Sixty percent respondents acknowledged the fact that poverty brings ignorance to the people. While 200 respondents (36%) vehemently objected to this; 20 (4%) had no opinion on the matter. This shows that the highest number of respondents link poverty with ignorance. Four hundred and sixty respondents (84%) believed that poverty can lead to crime and immoral activities and 90 respondents (16%) disagreed. Besides, the highest number and percentage of respondents 200 (36%) established that there is widespread poverty in Osun State, because of unemployment. Consequent upon this, some undesirable youths may like to get psychological solace by engaging in drug addiction and alcoholic drinks. This encourages criminal tendencies which are part of the adverse moral effects of poverty. For instance prostitution underscores the act of immoral behaviour, particularly among women, when it concerns feeding and social welfare. It is evident here that wants, suffering and discomfort result in crime and immoral activities which invariably affect people's attitude to moral responsibilities.

More importantly, 380 respondents (69%) agreed that over-indebtedness is one of the various coping mechanisms for the poor households, such as begging from friends, informal borrowing from friends and relations. Invariably, over-indebtedness will set in with embarrassment and shame on the part of the poor. Only 170 respondents (31%) were of the opinion that over-indebtedness does not have any adverse effect on the borrower. From the foregoing analyses and discussions, it is quite evident and conclusive that poverty exerts far-reaching and profound adverse effects on all areas of social life of the people of Osun State which equally require fundamental and far-reaching welfare schemes as enshrined in the Bible. This may not be fully provided without the application of Christian ethical principles and practice. Poverty poses great challenges to Christian organisations in Osun State. The extent of the effectiveness of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in responding to the situation in Osun State, therefore determines, to a large extent, the future of the poverty problem. This forms the focus of the subsequent unit of this research.

3.0 Welfare scheme and the intervention of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in Osun state

The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) is a product of the evangelistic efforts of the Church Missionary Society which was founded in 1799 in England (Outline History of Churches, 2007:6). Christianity entered Osun in the last decade of the 19th century through the activities of some founding fathers. The creation of Osun Anglican Diocese was taken on 12th April, 1986. This was in conformity with the provincial standing committee at its meeting in All Souls' Church Bodija, Ibadan, by virtue of Article II Chapter XII and Article I Chapter XIII of the Constitution of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) 1979). On 3rd of August 1987, the new Diocese of Osun was inaugurated and the Rt. Rev. Seth Oni Fagbemi was enthroned at all Saints' Cathedral, Balogun Agoro, Osogbo. The ministry of the Bishop, Rt. Rev. S.O. Fagbemi, as the pioneering Bishop began. The pioneering Bishop laid a good foundational structure upon which the incumbent continues to build, as well as laying more formidable ones. In essence the Bishop, Rt. Rev. J.A. Popoola came on board in the year 2000 to date (Outline History of Churches, 2007:4-6). The Social and Economic Development Commission of Osun Anglican Diocese (SEDECOAD) was initiated by the Bishop Rt. Rev. J.A. Popoola in November 2005, but the constitution embarking on the commission was signed on 15 September, 2009 (Constitution of the Commission, 2009:20). It is a social arm of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) with the aim of catering for and supporting the underprivileged people across religious frontiers. There are various forms of welfare schemes under this commission.

3.01 Mission statement and objectives of the welfare schemes

Mission Statement

The Social and Economic Development Commission is a social arm of the Church in Osun Diocese. Its mission is to seek holistic improvement of the larger society irrespective of religious, ethnic or social background with special reference to the poor, youths and women's empowerment through positive programmes of social values, justice and development. According to Article 2 of the Constitution of the Social and Economic Development Commission of Osun Anglican Diocese (SEDECOAD) Osogbo, it has basic mission statements for welfare scheme for the poor.

Objectives

According to article 2 the Social and Economic Development Commission of Osun Anglican Diocese (SEDECOAD) Osogbo has the following as her objectives:

- i. To serve as the social arm of the Osun Anglican Diocese.
- ii. To serve as a reference point for the Youth in the Anglican Communion, Osun State and Nigerian society at larger.
- iii. To cater for and support the women, children, youths, the aged, orphans and widows in the community.
- iv. To plan, organize and carry out such programmes that promote health and good living through seminars, workshops and conferences.
- v. To establish and cooperate with other NGO's, Government and International bodies on reducing the scourge of HIV/AIDS and other diseases that pose threat to humanity.
- vi. To liaise with other NGO's and the Government in the pursuit of actions and activities that promotes socio-economic well-being of people in the society.
- vii. To establish economic empowerment programmes and activities for youths, women, the disabled in the society in programmes like small scale business and rural agro-allied enterprises.
- viii. To organise and promote peace and justice in the society through programmes for conflict resolution and centers for the same.
- ix. To promote equity and justice in the society through legal aids and support on issues relating to human rights.
- x. To identify with, and participate in activities and interventions at crises points especially natural disasters and communal clashes.
- xi. To render assistance to refugees during crises, wars and emergency situation.
- xii. To promote activities that enhance safe environment in providing safe habitation and drinkable water.
- xiii. To establish vocational training centers for youth development.
- xiv. To educate the public about anti-social behaviours and practices and to encourage positive social habits such as industry, integrity, credibility and self-reliance.

3.02 Classifications of the welfare schemes of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in Osun state

The programme of activities cover a wide area of human developments which include: health care services, prevention of HIV/AIDS, good governance and democracy, human rights, legal aids and prison welfare, peace building and conflict resolution, agriculture and rural development, women's, children's and youth development, microfinance and general administration. There are four departments through which the Social and Economic Development Commission reaches it's numerous beneficiaries, namely, Agriculture and Rural Development, Vocational Training of Women Youths, Micro credit Loans, Welfare and visitation.

3.03 Organizational structures of the schemes

The Commission has two broad units of administration, which are The Board of Trustees and The Management Board. The Board of Trustees is the policy-making organ of the SEDECOAD and its

composition includes the following: Firstly, the Bishop who is the Chairman, Chief Shepherd of the Diocese and a Trustee of the Diocese of Osun Anglican Communion in legal terms the Holder of the Commission is the Chairman of the policy-making Board. Secondly, a Coordinator appointed by the Bishop to represent him in all his responsibilities and functions as the chairman. In addition, the Secretary and other appointees of the Bishop for part of the commission.

3.04 Sources of revenue for the implementation of welfare schemes

The sources of income for the implementation of welfare scheme by the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) are:

- i. Offertory
- ii. Tithes
- iii. Church offering
- iv. Annual harvest proceeds
- v. Donations
- vi. Economic ventures
- vii. Assistance from non-governmental organisations
- viii. Compulsory levies and multiple offerings.

Source: Fieldwork Survey, 2012

3.05 Strategies adopted for the implementation of welfare schemes

The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) utilized the following strategies to implement their welfare schemes:

- i. Social advocacy
- ii. Sensitization mechanisms
- iii. Agencies
- iv. Workshops
- v. Free health campaigns
- vi. Radio and television programmes
- vii. Vocational training.

Source: Fieldwork Survey, 2012

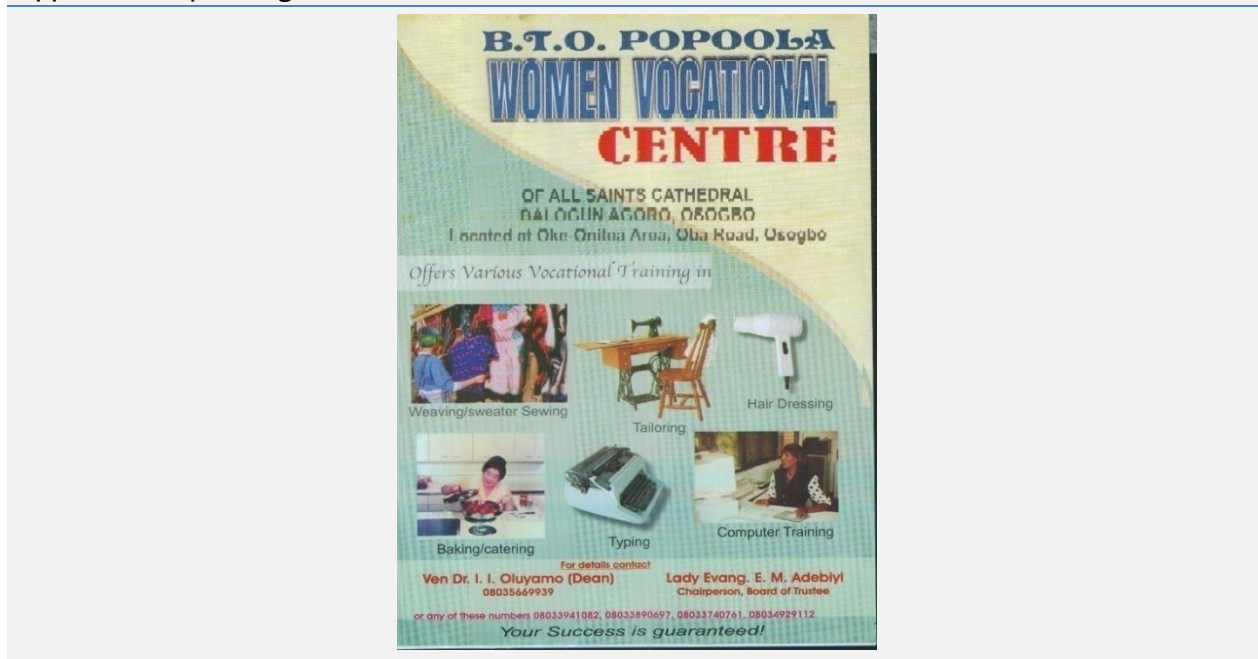
3.06 Performance of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)'s welfare scheme for the people of Osun state

As one of the objectives of the Commission, the foundation of the Cathedral Vocational Training Centre, Oke-Onitea, Osogbo was laid on 17 January, 2008 to develop and empower women and youths and alleviate the poverty of many people in the society. The vocational centre was named as 'B.T.O Popoola Vocational Centre' and was dedicated on 7th April, 2009. In this vocational centre, many youths and women were afforded the opportunity to be trained in various artisan works as mentioned below:

- i. Weaving and Sweater Sewing. This is the acquisition of knowledge on how to unite threads into a kind of close network by means of weaving machine or at times long needle to make knitted clothing or knitwear. Women and youths are currently receiving training on this aspect in this centre.
- ii. Tailoring is another Important Area where beneficiaries were equally trained on the process of making outer garments for men and women by cutting and sewing cloth, especially, fitting closely to the person's measurements.
- iii. Hair Dressing. This is a vocation or art of shaping the hair, especially for women into different styles such as cutting, setting or changing the colour: The training involves having deep knowledge about different styles of making hair to be fashionable such as using hairgrip,

- hairnet, hairpiece, hairpin bend and application of hair restorer, hair slide and other chemical substances to put the hair in good and hygienic condition. Beneficiaries are on course in this centre.
- iv. Baking and Catering. This is another area of specialization for any interested candidate, particularly the underprivileged women and youths, to be empowered and to become self-reliant. Under the B.T.O. Vocational Centre many people have been trained on how to use dry heat in a special electric box or oven to produce fast foods like bread, egg roll, cake, meat pie and so on. Some of the ingredients used are sugar yeast, flour, egg, fish and so on.
 - v. Computer Training/Typing. B.T.O. Popoola Woman's Vocational Centre of All Saints' Cathedral, Osogbo have exerted some positive economic and moral influence on many of the underprivileged people in Osun State such as getting the means of livelihood. The Centre equally affords the poor an opportunity to be computer-literate. Many are presently acquiring training on electric calculating computer set machine that can store and recall information while calculations can still be made at very high speed on computer set. Besides, type-written materials can also be prepared for the printer or type-setting for printing. Trainees were exposed to various skills in this center. Through research efforts, that is, participant observation and interview, plate 4.6 hereby confirms the vocational training center; and the apprentices who were equally operating different machine tools.

Plate 3.06. Showing vocational training Centre established by all Saints' Cathedral Church and the apprentices operating the machine tools.



Source: The Lord Bishop's Court, the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) Diocese of Osun, 2012.

Many widows and underprivileged ones that have lost hopes are opportuned to restore back their hopes through these inspirational ideas from the Osun Diocesan Vocational Training Centre, while many unemployed graduates' lives have been re-orientated towards these types of empowerment and sustainability mechanism. It is pertinent, however, to ask the question: How are these apprentices going to acquire their personal machine or tools to establish their private enterprises? An interview conducted with the Dean of the All Saints' Cathedral reveals that these various tools like computer sets, sewing machine and other equipment are usually donated by the Church, although, there are problems of unfaithfulness, favouritism and corruption. More importantly, Chief Bosun equally added that the Vocational Centre of the Church had been registered and linked up with Vocational Training Board of Osun State. This is another avenue of procuring machine tools for their apprentices. Also SEDECOAD had also registered with the Ministries of Women's Affairs, Agriculture, Youth and Social Development, and Education.

Micro-credit Finance: The Social and Development Commission of the Anglican Diocese (SEDECOAD) gave a loan of five thousand naira (₦5000.00) to fifty underprivileged and poor members of the All Saints Cathedral payable in six months. Apart from SEDECOAD's micro-credit loan offer for the poor, another set of people are equally given two thousand naira (₦2000.00) each. This is done under "Operation Help" for the poor in the church without interest for six months. The Social and Economic Development Commission of Osun State Diocese organized another micro-credit offer of five thousand naira without interest to twenty five underprivileged members of the Church. Welfare scheme cut across all Arch-Deaconry in Osun State. Welfare schemes for the underprivileged are quite imperative to all the Churches.

In a similar dimension, research efforts through participant observation revealed that at All Souls' Church, Osogbo the amount of micro-credit loan offer for the indigent members to alleviate their poverty is even higher than five thousand naira. The sum of two hundred and fifty thousand naira was disbursed to members of All Souls' Church, Osogbo on 22nd April 2008. The offers have effected a lot of positive changes in the lives of all the beneficiaries. Besides, another batch came up in May, 2009. Some of the beneficiaries were: Mrs. Foluke Kehinde who was given ten thousand naira, Mr. T.A. Falola was given ten thousand naira while naira Mr. Bayode collected twenty thousand naira. These micro-credit finance offers are limited to only church members because of repayment. More importantly, *the Cathedral of All Saints'* report of achievement in the year 2008 to 2009 revealed that the Education Committee under the leadership of Professor. M.O. Ologunde paid school fees of two students at Osun Anglican Diocesan Comprehensive High School, Agbeye. In addition to this, twelve students in various secondary schools and sixteen school pupils were assisted. All these children are from poor homes (Reports of Achievement, 2009:2).

Ven. J.K. Adesina (JP), a member of All Saints' Cathedral unilaterally sponsored a physically challenged candidate named Niyi Ibikunle at Ogbomoso. Ven. J.K. Adesina gave five thousand naira to Niyi Ibikunle monthly. This sponsor, Ven. J.K. Adesina died on 4 July, 2009. However, his children continue with the scholarship programme to Niyi Ibikunle. In the Church, there is an offertory collection that is money collected from the congregation during communion service. This collection is particularly meant for the poor, to alleviate their problems. The distribution of this money is not limited to church members but for anybody who is in want or anybody identified to be in need by the welfare and visitation committee. The welfare and visitation committee gave gifts to the motherless babies, widows and old members of the church. The church received cash donations and assistance from members of the congregation to give to the poor and needy such as free clothes, food and other materials. The Social and Economic Development Commission of Osun Anglican Diocese (SEDECOAD) organized "Free Eye" service for the poor and underprivileged ones that have sight problem. This programme comes up every year in October. The information is disseminated to the congregation during Sunday services or other weekly programmes.

4.0 The challenges facing the Church of Nigeria in the implementation of the welfare scheme to the people

The research efforts and field survey have been able to provide us with a comprehensive and in-depth grasp of the pattern of welfare schemes of the selected Churches for the underprivileged. Through the analyses, we are able to identify or decipher certain challenges that need to be addressed in order to be adopted as appropriate template for successful church welfare schemes in Osun State, Nigeria. To do this, five problems designated A-E were identified and respondents were asked to take agree or disagree with each of them they were asked to mention problems they know.

Table 4.0 showing Respondents' discovery of the main problems confronting the Implementation of Welfare Scheme of the Church of Nigeria

S/N	Suggested Problems	Agree and Percentage	Disagree and Percentage	No Opinion and Percentage	Total Responses and Percentage
A.	Lack of adequate financial resources	460 (84%)	90 (16%)	-	550 (100%)
B.	Favoritism and corruption in the distribution of resources to the poor	358 (65%)	193 (35%)	-	550 (100%)
C.	In-effective strategies because of shortage of manpower and utility vehicles.	330 (60%)	220(40%)	-	550 (100%)
D.	Lack of proper monitoring of the loaners to ensure prompt re-payment.	300 (55%)	190 (35%)	60(10%)	550 (100%)
E.	Awareness and sensitization mechanism problems.	400 (73%)	150 (27%)	-	550 (100%)

Source: Fieldwork Survey, 2012.

The analysis in item A of Table 4.0 revealed that 460 respondents 84% agreed that one of the major problems is unavailability of adequate financial resources. However, there were 90 respondents constituting (16%) that indicate negative opinion towards inadequate financial resources. Nevertheless, it is evident from Table 4.0(A) in conjunction with other pieces of information from key informants that the stakeholders have financial predicament in their respective welfare schemes. Another variable that was suggested for verification as a problem confronting the selected churches in implementing their welfare schemes is favoritism and corruption. This usually occurred particularly in the distribution of resources to the beneficiaries. The results in Item B of Table 4.0 showed that 358 respondents (65%) agreed that there is corruption, favoritism and insincerity in the distribution of resources to the poor, while 193 respondents expressed disagreed with that opinion.

Another problem considered is the ineffective strategies because of shortage of manpower and utility vehicles. Item C in Table 4.0 revealed that 330 respondents (60%) agreed with the opinion that this was a major problem confronting the implementation of welfare schemes in the selected churches. On the other hand, 220 respondents (40%) disagreed with this opinion. Earlier in item A of Table 4.0 we had an overwhelming result of 460 respondents who agreed that there are inadequate financial resources culminating into limitation of movement across the thirty local government areas of the state and inadequate supply of provision of welfare package to the poor. This point corroborates the results in Item C of Table 4.0 which shows an overwhelming support of the opinion that there are ineffective strategies because of shortage of manpower and utility vehicles.

Item D in Table 4.0 sought to verify the lack of proper re-payment of the money ensure prompt re-payment of the money, constituted a major challenge to the selected churches in the implementation of their welfare schemes. Out of 550 respondents, 300 (55%) agreed that there was no proper monitoring, of the loans to ensure their prompt re-payment. 190 respondents (35%) disagreed with the opinion on this. That means that they believed that there was proper monitoring while 60(10%) had no opinion on the matter. Therefore, it is evident and conclusive from the results in Item D of Table 4.0 that there was no proper monitoring of the beneficiaries, particularly those that received soft loans. Surprisingly, some of the loans defaulted and that eventually had affected other potential beneficiaries.

Item E Table 4.0 aimed at finding out the implementation of welfare schemes of the selected churches. It was discovered that out of the 550 respondents, 400 respondents (73%) observed that there was low level of awareness and sensitization mechanism, also affected the implementation of the welfare schemes of the selected churches. It is clear and evident from the results in Item E Table 4.0 above that there was slow level of awareness and sensitization within the thirty local government areas of Osun State, while only 150 respondents (27%) disagreed with that opinion. Although radio, television, local magazine, churches and mosques were used, human physical presence was lacking. However, the sensitization mechanisms required regular and consistent human practical links from all the nooks and

crannies of the state. This is because many of the peasant farmers, aged, widows, the physically challenged and the sick could not be reached through the media that is why consistent human practical links were quite imperative. This situation lends support to the earlier findings which pointed to the fact that the other prevailing problems such as financial resources served as impediments.

5.0 Conclusion

This work has demonstrated that the Church of Nigeria has positively influence the social and moral life of the people of Osun State. It has also established the entrenchment and intensification of poverty consciousness, class differences and backwardness in the state. This situation of poverty has adversely affected all aspects of social relationship in the state, especially the moral and social systems. This study has enabled us to see very clearly and coherently the interrelationship between the Churches and poverty in Osun State. It has established that certain aspects of the Church of Nigeria such as performance, organization and social relations reflect benefits and challenges of welfare scheme for the poor. The research has indicated the necessity of addressing the issue of poverty cleavages such as hunger, untimely death, crime and immoral activities in the effort to live a meaningful life. In doing this, there is need to plan on how to accentuate positive Christian ethical principles and practices. Certain guidelines for achieving this goal have also been put forward in the study. The findings have strongly validated and authenticated the ethical issues arising from the conditions of poverty such as ethics of communal living, supportive counseling, It is evident from the foregoing results that the presence of poverty in Osun State contradicts the ideals of Christian brotherhood which rejects all ideas of hunger, destitution and suffering in the midst of wealthy brethren as well as preferences and discriminations among believers. More importantly, the concern for poverty alleviation through welfarism, empowerment and sustainable development has been a dominant to the general quest for a comprehensive and interdisciplinary understanding of the research. This work is an original contribution to the existing knowledge of how well organized faith-based welfare schemes built on the ethical principle of love, compassion, mercy, impartiality and brotherhood. As found in equitable distribution of socio-economic burdens and benefits; as it can assist the seemingly un-yielded efforts of the government and other secular organizations in effectively handling the endemic problem of poverty characteristic of most modern world societies as Osun State. The work established that Churches remain the last hope and positive source of moral direction in situations of social problems. Based on this conclusion, we make some recommendations.

6.0 Recommendations

These recommendations are believed to enhance the solution of the problems created by poverty, causes and effects of poverty and the neglect of ethical principles that have stronger bases in the Bible. Poverty in Osun State reflects, to a large extent, the national situation in a way that warrants the generalization of the results of the study to the national context. The recommendations put forth in this section, will be useful not only to Osun State, but also to the whole states in the country. We recommend strictly the principles guiding welfare of the poor in the Bible. There is a need for the church to adhere strictly to the principle guiding welfare of the poor in the Bible as follows:

6.01 Re-definition of Church mission

The Churches should re-define their mission to go beyond one that focuses primarily on the saving of souls from eternal damnation and include one that directly addresses the misery and poverty experienced by many people. All Churches should have strong advocacy welfare schemes, apart from emergency services to the poor. Churches should continue to instill religious values as moral obligations into the faithful, who are obligated to alleviate poverty in ways that may be lacking in secular institutions. Churches should address spiritual as well as material needs by cultivating a new mind-set similar to the notion of the 'mission church' in the colonial era in which the Bible and the plough were understood as mutually re-enforcing. On national, state and local levels, Churches should serve as

effective representatives for the marginalized segments of the society. The Churches should always insist on its prophetic tradition which provides meaningful critique against social injustice and corruption in public, civic and political life. The church should compel national, state and local political leaders to empower citizens, to develop skills, to acknowledge the rights of the poor and to elect responsible leaders.

6.02 Need for collaboration

Progressive religious institutions constitute a significant segment of any society. Developing programmes to alleviate or eradicate poverty should be seen in this context of progressiveness and embraced by every Church. Religious institutions and other civil societies such as trade unions, universities and other non-governmental organization can get involved in the critical work of social change in the state. Hence the unions of these spheres should not be assumed inappropriate in alleviating and eradicating poverty in the state today through sustainable development. It is established that money is one of the major challenges facing the Churches in embarking on efficient, effective and productive welfare schemes. Churches should braze up and have networks with other Christian relief organizations in the world such as Little Saints Orphanage and Safe Our Souls. For example, the Churches, that is, Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), Christian Care (CC), in Zimbabwe and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in many countries as well as the Village Polytechnic in Kenya. These are Non-Governmental Organizations or Agencies which are not specifically Christian in nature. However, they can give assistance, support and financial aids to Churches once the honesty and sincerity of the programmes are guaranteed. In view of this development, Churches should have network with agencies like Oxfam, War on Want, Live Aid and School, Aid inspired by Bob Gedaf.

Churches should forge new partnerships with the International Monetary Bodies (IMF) and the World Bank. This would be credible partners. These partnerships will be beneficial as the bank will not only provide expertise in specific aspects of poverty and policy but also the body has special access to national and international decision makers. New opportunities will even be made available. For instance, in the year 2000 the Nairobi Conference entitled “Alleviating Poverty in Africa (Olupona,2009:xv-xviii)” was sponsored in partnership with the Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa and the World Bank participating in a Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa (CAPA) training course for new Bishops in Ibadan, Nigeria (Olupona,2009:xv-xviii). Every Church should be encouraged to inaugurate special agency or commission for welfare schemes like the Roman Catholic Church and Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) with particular attention to vocational training and empowerment. The agency should be all encompassing, embracing and enabling to fashion out theoretical and practical modalities for meaningful approach to alleviate the problem of the poor. For example, categories of alleviation can be grouped thus:

- (i) The poor that require attention for long-term strategy and sustainability during the period of training.
- (ii) The poor that require attention for short-term prescription approach.
- (iii) The poor that inform emergency services.
- (iv) The poor that need permanent and lifelong attention.

All the Churches should be wary, careful and cautious towards the various religious, social and economic implications of their activities on the poor adherents in the church. This is because at times Christian beliefs may lead to either improving or diminishing the quality of lives of the poor.

6.03 Youth empowerment

Youths should be given proper attention and focus by the Church on how to earn a living instead of depending on parents, relatives and friends. Idleness and laziness should be discouraged. The people

should be made to understand that efficient and productive work is the major source of wealth. They should be made to realize that hard work is the greatest and most effective remedy for poverty.

6.04 Prevention of compulsory offering for generating resources

In generating resources for the implementation of welfare schemes, compulsory offerings should be jettisoned because it is against the provision of the Bible. Instead, Welfare Scheme Foundation should be inaugurated and as well spelt out voluntary needs for the protection and caring for the poor. The committee system on monitoring of the welfare schemes should be specifically inaugurated for monitoring and motivating the beneficiaries in particular. Distribution of welfare resources should be fairly distributed, while corruption and favoritism should always be rejected.

6.05 Revisiting government policy on agriculture

Government should undertake modern and mechanized farming for farmers at subsidized rates, and produce appropriate farm implements to reduce the drudgery associated with traditional farming techniques. Fertilizers should also be made available at affordable prices to peasant farmers. In order to boost food production and reduce the incidence of high price during the off season, effective storages and proper marketing should be guaranteed by the government. Provision should be made by the government to assist and encourage unemployed graduates for the pursuit of practical agriculture. Government should equally encourage private fish farms, bee farms, poultry farm, and animal confinements through technical assistance and input distribution at subsidized rates. The state government should designate each local government area as an industrial development center with the responsibility of facilitating the acquisition of land within the areas for industrial location.

6.06 Fighting of corruption

Corruption, opportunism and nepotism should be constantly checked. Funfair in the commissioning of projects should be reduced so as to avoid distraction and corruption. There should be more room for technocrats while traditional leaders should play advisory roles or serve as patrons. Women should be more involved in the development committee and local ownership should continue to be emphasized.

6.07 Mass moral orientation

The first recommendation to citizens is the moral re-birth of the people and everybody in the state. In transforming an ailing economy of Osun State into a dynamic, vibrant and prosperous economy, the people should embrace technological changes and the need for a continuous modernization as well as to move towards service-oriented leadership. Monitoring should be a consistent feature of all the programmes with standard parameters. It should also be sensitive to specificities. Osun State citizens outside the State and abroad should be mobilized and encouraged to support the anti-poverty campaign not just with ideas, skills and resources but also through direct investments. Special attention should be directed to Osun State indigenes in the Diaspora encouraging them to visit home and invest in the State. Religious organizations and government alone can never eradicate the problem of poverty in the state but it requires joint efforts of everybody. The poor need not just money but an enabling environment and adequate empowerment to become self-reliant and self-sufficient. It is hoped that the implementation of these recommendations by the church, the government and citizens in Osun State, in particular, and Nigeria, in general, will ensure the eradication, or at least the alleviation of poverty in the state in particular and the nation in general.

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