

ESCAPING THE POVERTY TRAP IN THE NIGER DELTA: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

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Abstract

This paper explores the poverty trap in Bayelsa State, in the Niger Delta of Nigeria, identifying the uneven distribution of the resources (oil and gas) produced from the State and the wanton devastation of the environment by the activities of Oil Transnational Corporations in active connivance with the Federal Government are to be blamed for the crisis of poverty in the State which has snowballed into human right issue. The paper identifies the active promotion of functional education as the panacea to break the yoke of poverty trap in the State. The study examined the poverty trap in the Niger Delta, and highlight the imperative of using education as a vehicle to lift the state out of abject poverty. In order to achieve the aims of the study, 10 towns from two clans in two Local government areas of Bayelsa State were chosen for the study. Primary data were collected through personal oral interview (FGD), 80 participants were interviewed, 8 persons per town. Research findings show that educational infrastructure is poor, teachers' motivation is low, girl-child education is relegated to the background and dropout rate is too high to actualize the goal of using education to break the poverty trap in the State. We applied the Political Economy Approach to explain the poverty trap in Bayelsa State. The objective is to ascertain whether education can be used as a tool to reduce the poverty trap in Bayelsa State. It recommends that the girl-child education should be promoted, government should consciously make proactive measures to promote education, the government should change the curriculum of the school system to meet the changing times and teachers' motivation should be given paramount attention.

Keywords- poverty, environment, education, girl-child, underdevelopment

Introduction

The endemic poverty and the general state of underdevelopment being witnessed in the Niger Delta region have attracted both local and international attention. The pervasive poverty index in the region is perplexing and intriguing given that the region is the cash cow of the country, where the bulk of the crude oil and gas resources are sourced from. It generates over 90% of the foreign exchange and 85% of government revenue and the mainstay of the national economy (Ibaba 2005: 27). It presents a paradox that the region is rich but the people are indeed poor. The region is richly endowed with crude oil and gas, and with this condition, the region should rank among the richest in the World

that should have no business with extreme poverty. The pervasive poverty in the Niger Delta region constitutes one of the worst paradoxes in human misery and deprivation in Nigeria. We state that the poverty concerns in Niger Delta are not because of lack of resources to lift it out of poverty, but because the resources are not utilized for the benefit of the people of the area. The irony is that instead of the natural resources sourced from the area being instrumental in abating abject poverty it poses a constraint in the lines of a "Dutch disease," deepening poverty levels and hence occasioning poverty trap that has engulfed the region.

The rising poverty profile in the Niger Delta region is assuming a worrisome

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dimension as several empirical studies have revealed. Corroborating the generally held view of the widespread poverty in the region, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2010) reveals that poverty has been massive, pervasive, and endemic and engulfs a large segment of the Niger Delta region. Consequently, over the years a wide chasm has developed between the Niger Delta region and the rest of the country. Collaborating further, Abiola and Olaopa (2008,49) averred that the scourge of poverty in Niger Delta is an incontrovertible fact, which results in hunger, ignorance, malnutrition, disease, unemployment, poor access to credit facilities, low life expectancy as well as a general level of human hopelessness. Opinion leaders and stakeholders opined that environmental degradation thrown up by the activities of Oil Transnational Corporations has crushed the livelihood of the people, resulting in drastic decline in agricultural output, which has exacerbated poverty in the Niger Delta region.

However, the Federal Government has intervened through several interventionist agencies to tackle poverty in the Niger Delta by the establishment of OMPADEC, NDDC, Niger Delta Affairs Ministry, etc. These agencies are rather one-sided, focusing only on the infrastructural development of the region. Okorosaya-Orubite (2008:1006) also shared similar view that too much emphasis has been placed on infrastructural development to the utter neglect of human resources development in the region such that talents, energies and time of the youth have not been properly tapped, harnessed and channeled to reduce poverty in the region. Educating the youth is gateway to reducing abject poverty and consequently engendering the much-needed development in the region. Apparently, among the four core Niger Delta states, three of them are officially classified as educational disadvantaged states. Therefore, combating the

scourge of poverty and underdevelopment in the region must be human centered, that is developing the human capital (education), because no country has succeeded in reducing poverty without educating its people. Obviously, no government has made a frontal effort on the educational development of the area with a view to reducing poverty.

Therefore, the objective is to ascertain whether education can be used as tool to reduce poverty in Bayelsa State. The key question explored is “can education be used as a tool to break the yoke of poverty in Bayelsa State?”

Theoretical frame work- the political economy approach

A theoretical framework becomes imperative in the bid to give this work the necessary insight. This is to simplify and enable us to abstract from the real world factors relevant to understanding the Niger Delta poverty trap. Handy in thought is the political economy paradigm. It is scientific in that it allows social scientists to study the unfolding processes of society.

Ake (1981, 11) posits that the productive forces of the society express the overall productive capabilities of the society. Therefore the state of development of the productive forces ultimately determines the level of poverty in any society. Consequently, we can infer that the Niger Delta region is enmeshed in vicious poverty trap as a result of the fact that the productive forces in the region are not developed to engender development in order to break the yoke of poverty, that the pervasive poverty in the region today reflects the state of underdevelopment of the productive forces.

Therefore, it is through the conscious development of the productive forces by the state government that (educational system) the region can be lifted

out of the poverty trap that is the continuous improvement of the educational system in the state.

The importance of the political economy approach model to this study is far reaching. It provides a new dimension to the explanation of the poverty trap in the Niger Delta. It explains the role of education (productive forces) in reducing poverty in Bayelsa State.

Overview of concepts

Poverty is an age long phenomenon that has ravaged all societies before the beginning of recorded history. Societies have been sharply divided between the rich and the poor and it was a defining characteristic of the earliest civilizations such as the ancient Egypt, summer in the Middle East, the Indus valley of the present day India.

Consequently, the 17th century British legal Act, the Poor Law Act was promulgated to mitigate the menace of poverty (Corbett 2009,9) is a precursor of the current welfare system being practised in the Western World. Poverty encompasses inadequate income and denial of the basic necessities of life, such as education, health services, clean water and sanitation (World Bank 2007, 19) which are essential for human survival and dignity. Besides, Gass and Adetumbi (2000,52) asserted that poverty denies its victims the most basic needs for survival, such as food, water, clothing, shelter, etc. Poverty manifests itself not only in economic deprivation but also in terms of an individual's inability to access basic social amenities (World Bank 1999,13) and constraints individual's ability to actualize his/her potentials. But others see poverty as a consequence of the uneven distribution of resources around the World on an international, national and even on regional scale as the case in the Niger Delta region which aptly typifies the plight of the people of the area.

The issue of the pervasive poverty and the largely underdeveloped state of the Niger Delta region has been well documented in several literatures. Copious of research literatures have been written by scholars, opinion leaders and stakeholders to underscore the increasing level of poverty that has become a recurring decimal in the Niger Delta. There appears to be a consensus that in spite of the evident and abundant resources (including crude oil and gas, which generate over 90% of foreign exchange and 85% of government earnings), the region paradoxically represents one of the extreme situations of poverty and underdevelopment, lacking virtually all the indices of development (Ibaba 2005, 27). The prevailing perception in the region is that the people are being deprived of the benefits of oil and gas exploitation and this has consequently generated the widespread poverty in the area (Ikporukpo 2001, 38).

It is an indisputable fact that the Niger Delta area has been enmeshed in vicious poverty traps which have been supported by empirical studies (MBS 2010, 1) and have been described as a "bewildering paradox" in view of the enormous resources generated from the area. The Report of the Political Bureau set up by the Federal Military Government of Gen. Babangida gave credence to this fact. Attention has been drawn to the very deplorable conditions of all the oil producing communities throughout the country. In the Cross River, for example, whole communities have been reduced to penury following the combined activities of oil prospecting and extracting companies (FGM 1987:171). A school of thought that seemly reflects the trends of opinion in the Niger Delta argues that the pervasive poverty in the region is a logical outcome of the peculiar nature of Nigerian Federalism which has been shaped by ethnic-based political domination. Thus, Naaneen

(1995:78) attributed the abysmal high rate of abject poverty in the oil-bearing communities to a myriad of factors which include:

(i) ethnic-based political domination which is used to expropriate the resources of oil communities for the dominant groups. (ii) the alliance between the dominant oil companies and the state enterprises which restricts the minorities access to the modern and more rewarding sectors of the economy.

Similarly, this view is also shared by Okoko and Nna (1997:46) who contended that “the plight of the oil producing area is a reflection of political domination and economic marginalization by the major ethnic groups” which have inexorably led to the current high spate of poverty in the region. A corollary of the above assertion is that the oil

TNCs have in collusion with the Federal Government through sub-standard environmental protection laws, undermined local economies of the communities through oil based environmental degradation without the provision of viable alternative (Naaneen 1995,78) and this has invariably led to the present state of abject poverty in the region. The abrasive high rate of poverty has also been substantiated by research carried out by NBS in 2010. The Nigerian poverty profile Report 2010 released by the National Bureau of Statistics, Abuja on Monday 13th February 2012, gave a frightening insight of the endemic rate of poverty in the region. Below is the table for 6 geopolitical zones and the 36 states of Nigeria, including the Federal Capital Territory.

Table 1: Shows Nigeria Poverty Profile for 2010 Released by NBS

		Food Poverty		Absolute Poverty		Moderately poor based on 2/3 of the weighted mean household per capita expenditure regionally deflated (Relative poverty)		Dollar per day based on an adjusted PPP	
		Food Poor	Non Poor	Poor	Non Poor	Poor	Non Poor	Poor	Non Poor
sector	Urban	26.7	73.3	52.0	48.0	61.8	38.2	52.4	47.6
	Rural	48.3	51.7	66.1	33.9	73.2	26.8	66.3	33.7
	National	41.0	59.0	60.9	39.1	69.0	31.0	61.2	38.8
zone	North Central	38.6	61.4	59.5	40.5	67.5	32.5	59.7	40.3
	North East	51.5	48.5	69.0	31.0	76.3	23.7	69.1	30.9
	North West	51.8	48.2	70.0	30.0	77.7	22.3	70.4	29.6
	South East	41.0	59.0	58.7	41.3	67.0	33.0	59.2	40.8
	South South	35.5	64.5	55.9	44.1	63.8	36.2	56.1	43.9
	South West	25.4	74.6	49.8	50.2	59.1	40.9	50.1	49.9
state	Abia	30.5	69.5	57.4	42.6	63.4	36.6	57.8	42.2
	Adamawa	55.4	44.6	74.2	25.8	80.7	19.3	74.3	25.7
	Akwa Ibom	35.6	64.4	53.7	46.3	62.8	37.2	53.8	46.2
	Anambra	34.2	65.8	56.8	43.2	68.0	32.0	57.4	42.6
	Bauchi	54.1	45.9	73.0	27.0	83.7	16.3	73.1	26.9
	Bayelsa	23.3	76.7	47.0	53.0	57.9	42.1	47.0	53.0
	Benue	48.5	51.5	67.1	32.9	74.1	25.9	67.2	32.8
	Borno	33.2	66.8	55.1	44.9	61.1	38.9	55.1	44.9
	Cross-Rivers	46.4	53.6	52.9	47.1	59.7	40.3	52.9	47.1

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Gombe	71.5	28.5	74.2	25.8	79.8	20.2	74.2	25.8
Imo	33.3	66.7	50.5	49.5	57.3	42.7	50.7	49.3
Jigawa	71.1	28.9	74.1	25.9	79.0	21.0	74.2	25.8
Kaduna	41.7	58.3	61.5	38.5	73.0	27.0	61.8	38.2
Kano	48.3	51.7	65.6	34.4	72.3	27.7	66.0	34.0
Katsina	56.2	43.8	74.5	25.5	82.0	18.0	74.8	25.2
Kebbi	47.0	53.0	72.0	28.0	80.5	19.5	72.5	27.5
Kogi	50.1	49.9	67.1	32.9	73.5	26.5	67.3	32.7
Kwara	38.1	61.9	61.8	38.2	74.3	25.7	62.0	38.0
Lagos	14.6	85.4	48.6	51.4	59.2	40.8	49.3	50.7
Nassarawa	26.8	73.2	60.4	39.6	71.7	28.3	60.4	39.6
Niger	20.4	79.6	33.8	66.2	43.6	56.4	33.9	66.1
Ogun	41.8	58.2	62.3	37.7	69.0	31.0	62.5	37.5
Ondo	36.1	63.9	45.7	54.3	57.0	43.0	46.1	53.9
Osun	19.5	80.5	37.9	62.1	47.5	52.5	38.1	61.9
Oyo	24.6	75.4	51.8	48.2	60.7	39.3	51.8	48.2
Plateau	44.0	56.0	74.1	25.9	79.7	20.3	74.7	25.3
Rivers	26.3	73.7	50.4	49.6	58.6	41.4	50.6	49.4
Sokoto	56.6	43.4	81.2	18.8	86.4	13.6	81.9	18.1
Taraba	45.2	54.8	68.9	31.1	76.3	23.7	68.9	31.1
Yobe	58.5	41.5	73.8	26.2	79.6	20.4	74.1	25.9
Zamfara	44.4	55.6	70.8	29.2	80.2	19.8	71.3	28.7
FCT	32.5	67.5	55.6	44.4	59.9	40.1	55.6	44.4

Source: NBS 2010 Report, Abuja.

The above table rightly captures the high level of poverty prevalent in the Niger Delta area. A further breakdown of the table indicates that on zonal level, the South-South has absolute poverty rate of 55.9, relative poverty rate of 63.8% and general poverty rate of 56.1%. A further analysis of the table on individual states basis also reveals a similar harrowing state of poverty in the Niger Delta States. On per state, Akwa Ibom has absolute poverty rate of 53.7%, relative poverty rate of 62.8% and general poverty rate of 53.8%. Bayelsa State has absolute poverty rate of 47.0%, relative poverty rate of 55.9 % and general poverty rate of 47.0%. Cross River have absolute poverty rate of 52.9%, relative poverty rate of 59.7% and general poverty rate

of 52.9%. Delta State has absolute poverty rate of 63.3%, relative poverty rate of 70.1% and general poverty rate of 63.6%. Edo state has absolute poverty rate of 65.6%, relative poverty rate of 72.5% and general poverty rate of 66.0%. Rivers state has absolute poverty rate of 50.4% relative poverty rate of 58.6% and general poverty rate of 50.6%.

The above analysis confirmed that the poverty trap in the Niger Delta is real and is choking the region. It is a true reflection of the alarming rate of abject poverty in the region. It is unacceptable, incomprehensive and paradoxical that the region that produces the wealth of the nation would at the same time be at the receiving end i.e. enmeshed in vicious poverty trap, which has consigned its people to frustration, despair, despondency, etc. The above cannot be allowed to continue. The

reality that more than half of its population is living in abject poverty is human right abuse. With the resources produced from the six states, they have no business whatsoever to belong to that category. This apparently calls for proactive measures from the three tiers of government with a view to extricating the region from the poverty trap.

Education and Poverty Reduction

Various models have been suggested by experts, stakeholders, opinion leaders etc, as the panacea to reduce the high rate of poverty in the region, such as infrastructural development, community assistance programme, aids, venture capital etc. However, all these models have been tried previously and have failed to reduce the scourge of poverty in the region. The contention of this paper is that the best model at the disposal of authorities is to tackle the alarming rate of poverty in the region lies in education of the youth. A lot have been written to highlight the correlation between poverty reduction and education Worldwide. That good quality education will play a major role in sustainable and enduring development of the region through the well-rounded development of the human being. Contributing further on the essential of education for harnessing human potential as a recipe for poverty reduction, Fagerlind and Saha (1989:6) explained that it is based on the assumption that both societies and individuals have innate biological, psychological and sociological capacities which can be evaluated in terms of their level of actualization.... Societies can be judged as efficient or inefficient in making possible the actualization of their human potential.

Furthermore, Nduka (2006:4) stressed the imperative of education in mitigating poverty. The totality of the concerned efforts made by individual societies (nations) to overcome weaknesses by

acquiring increasing control over the forces of nature thereby progressively eliminating the centuries old scourge of poverty, ignorance and disease and making life on earth more worth living. Therefore, man is the centre of all forms of development and the purpose of education is to develop man so that he "can create or recreate" himself and the society according to his desires in the attempt to break the yoke of the poverty trap that has engulfed him. In addition, the national policy on education (2004:8) emphasized that, education shall continue to be highly rated in the national development plans because education is the most important instrument of change, any fundamental outlook of any society have to be preceded by an education revolution.

According to Okorosaye-Orubite (2008:1006), education is believed to exercise some modern influence on the values, belief and behavior patterns of people, which are necessary to break the cycle of poverty. Therefore, sociologists have asserted that "in order for a society to become modern (to develop economically and socially with a view to mitigating poverty), it must be composed of a modern population meaning modern values, belief and behavior" (Fagerlind and Saha 1989:510). And it is only good education that can engender these values, beliefs and behavior in the society. Okorosaye-Orubite (2008:1007) added that modern societies accord social, political and economic statuses to the individual in commensurate with their level of modern educational attainment and competence in the performance of certain technical tasks. We can therefore infer that education does not only lead to the socio-economic development of the society, but also the economic development of the society is dependent on the productive capacities of the people, which in turn is dependent on the quantity, quality and relevance of education at the disposal of the people.

In addition, during the World Education Forum held in Dakar in April 2000, the international community underscored the urgent need to eradicate extreme poverty and expressed its collective commitment to work towards this through education (International Workshop on Education and Poverty eradication, 2). A commitment to reduce abject poverty was also one of the major outcomes of the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1985, where abject poverty was considered a severe injustice and an abuse of human rights as the case in the Niger Delta region.

Therefore, it proposed action programmes to support livelihood systems and acquiring survival skills to help poor people to combat the scourge of poverty through education. Subsequently, the United Nations General Assembly (UNO) declared the period 1997-2006 as the First United Nations Decade for the eradication of poverty through access to universal primary education (International Workshop on Education and Poverty Eradication 3). Thus, the role of education in poverty reduction in close co-operation with other social sectors is crucial in the battle to break the poverty trap. Thus, no country has succeeded in reducing abject poverty without giving priority attention to education of its youths. We note that education is not only important in reducing poverty, but it is also a key to wealth creation through acquiring marketable skills. This was the focus of Dakar Framework for Action – Education for all. Meeting our collective commitment was “to promote EFA policies within a sustainable and well-integrated sector framework, clearly linked to poverty elimination and development strategies” (International Workshop on Education and Poverty Eradication, 2001,1).

The role of education within this context is fused on achieving universal primary education and adult literacy. Besides,

the Secretary-General of United Nations within the context of the Decade for the Eradication of Poverty confirmed that universal primary education is central to the fight against abject poverty (International Workshop on Education and Poverty Eradication, 2001, 6) because according to him, this is the level of education through which most poor children can break the cycle of poverty. In addition, special attention must be paid to breaking the poverty trap for children from poor backgrounds. In this regard, the adaption of systemic changes should be encouraged to ensure good quality education for all children. Some countries, for instance, Indonesia, is attempting to design their educational systems to cater for children's diverse needs and even to provide additional support outside academic programmes (International workshop on Education and poverty eradication,2001,3). Such countries have combined school programmes with health care, guidance and counseling services, and income generating activities (wealth creation).

It would be pertinent to highlight the relationship between education and wealth creation. Wealth creation is a significant aspect in education programmes intended to contribute to poverty reduction in the developing World. The question that comes to mind is, how can education assist children to create wealth? This can be achieved through the integration of school curriculum within the economic activities of a community. For instance in predominately fishing and farming communities in the Niger Delta Area, children can be taught on the practical aspect of fishing and farming or in the Urban setting, children can be taught carpentry and carpet-weaving. In this way, school education would help children to improve traditional skills of the village alongside other curricular contents. This would ensure their future employment

possibilities, which could be self-employment, and contributes immensely to the socioeconomic well-being of the people, thus contributing to poverty reduction. Therefore, for the educational system to truly respond to the needs of children from poor backgrounds and to contribute to wealth creation in communities, it needs to take the issue of poverty reduction into special consideration in the planning of educational programmes. The above discourse has highlighted the view that education is the most potent instrument to reduce abject poverty in the Niger Delta area and the World at large.

Methodology

Our choice of Bayelsa State is informed by the fact that it is considered as one of the core Niger Delta States. Also, it is where the issue of abject poverty is abysmally high. Out of the eight Local Government Areas in the state, the study focused on two Local Government Areas, namely Southern Ijaw and Yenagoa. We decided to select Bomo and Gbaran clans as the case study. The key instruments for data collection were focus Group Discussion (FGD), interviews and observations. The study focused on five communities each from the two clans, making a total of 10 communities. We conducted one FGD, six persons in each of the ten selected communities. This was further supplemented by three unstructured key personality interviews in each of the communities. Our survey embraced 8 persons in each community, thus bringing the total to 80 participants for the study. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, purposive and simple random techniques were used. We selected Peremabiri, Ikewei, Opuama, Igbomotoru 1 and Diebu in Bomo clan. In Gbaran clan, Okolobiri, Polaku, Oghia, Obunagha and Koroama were chosen. Furthermore, the key personality interviews were conducted with principals, teachers,

students, chiefs, etc. This is informed by their possession of necessary information for the generation of accurate data. Our secondary sources of data are published works relevant to the subject.

The method of analysis was the political economy approach, with the concept of productive forces given a pivotal place.

Discussion of findings

The study is carried out against the backdrop of the rising poverty profile in Bayelsa State and attempts to reduce the menace of abject poverty in the state through the instrumentality of education. Therefore, the study examined educational facilities, teachers' motivation and commitment, girl-child education, dropout rate, students' perception, backgrounds of parents, etc.

Education Infrastructure: We witnessed a sorry state of infrastructural decay in both primary and Secondary schools visited. The state of decay is in an affront to civilization i.e. in the 21st century, children in an Oil producing state could be subjected to such deplorable conditions of learning. All the school buildings were old and dilapidated. Most of the school buildings do not have roofs and children sit on bare floor to receive lessons. At G.S.S Opuama, which was established in 1973, 40 years after, no renovation has been carried out. Therefore when it rains, the students are sent home. The schools neither have libraries nor laboratories which are main instruments for academic success.

Teachers' Motivation and Commitment: Teachers' motivation and commitment is paramount to the success of the educational system if it must achieve its objective of poverty reduction. However, from our investigation and interaction with teachers, it was noted that teachers' motivation and commitment is very low. In the first

instance, the attitude of government does not motivate them, the working environment is poor, no material incentive to encourage them, considering their pivotal role. As a result, they are not committed to their work as most teachers spend more time in Yenagoa, the State capital. Also, we noticed the issue of lack of qualified teachers. Most schools do not have science teachers or English teachers.

Girl-Child Education: The education of the girl-child is so paramount and central to poverty reduction in communities that it is considered as the beginning of any meaningful attempt to fight poverty. Therefore the saying that, "if you educate a girl, you have developed a whole nation". It is the single most important variable to fight poverty. But the reverse is what we noticed in our study, where the girl-child education is relegated to the background. Our investigation also revealed that some parents still have lukewarm attitude towards the education of their girl child. Consequently, the ratio of enrollment for girls and boys in the secondary school is about 7:3 in most of the schools visited. Also, of common impediment to girl child education is the high rate of drop-out due to early pregnancy and marriage. If girls drop-out of school, the next thing is marriage. In most cases, the children from such union are consigned to the poverty trap. The children cannot attend good school because the parents cannot afford it. Furthermore, uneducated girls are more likely to have a bigger family size with limited resource. We noticed that the bigger the family, the more they are exposed to the poverty trap. On the other hand, educated girls are more likely to have small family, thereby breaking the poverty yoke.

Drop-Out rate: The issue of drop-out is not confined to the girl child only. The rate of drop-out is also high among the boys.

Generally, drop-out rate is higher among uneducated poverty-stricken families from our study which can be attributed to myriad of factors i.e. poverty and uneducated parents. Some parents are so poor that they cannot afford to send their children to school, thereby deepening the poverty trap. The above factors have continued to deepen the poverty trap in Bayelsa State.

Conclusion

The basic thrust of this paper was to examine poverty trap in the Bayelsa State and how education can be used as a vehicle to reduce poverty in the state. However, from our field work, we discovered that due to numerous factors that have posed as impediments, the educational system cannot rescue the people from the scourge of poverty in the state. Therefore the state is entrenched in poverty trap.

Recommendations

Based on our findings, we are impelled to recommend the followings:

- Promoting girl-child education - this should be the first step by any government to reduce poverty in the state. The education of the girl-child should be given a priority attention by the government and parents. Therefore, government should consider incentives for girls.
- Improving quality of education - Improving the quality of education is essential if we must meet the overall objectives of using education as an instrument to reduce poverty in Bayelsa State. Because it is on record that the quality of education is very poor and as a result, its products are not marketable, therefore they are trapped in abject poverty. Government should make conscious efforts to improve the

quality of education, through massive infrastructural development at the primary and secondary school levels.

Changing the Educational curriculum - This is one area government should focus attention. Because the curriculum is outdated and does not fit into the objective of education as a vehicle to reduce poverty. Therefore, the school curriculum should be tied to wealth creation, which should imbibe in children the virtue of working. This will go a long way to reduce poverty in our time.

Teachers Motivation: Teachers' motivation should be at the front burner of the government to achieve the objective of poverty reduction via the medium of education, because they are the drivers of the system, therefore, they should be well motivated in terms of good salary package, incentive, etc.

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