Full Length Research Paper

Transportation and Poverty Reduction in Yobe State

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ABSTRACT: This research work is on the Commercial Bus Service and Poverty Reduction in Yobe state. It investigated the impact of distributed commercial mass transit buses with the sole objective of poverty reduction, the commercial bus drivers were selected for the study to find out whether the use of mass transit buses actually reduce poverty or not. Observation and questionnaire method was employed in the study and the Tobit model was used for the analysis. The study was carried out in the three local government areas of Yobe State (Damaturu, Potiskum and Gashua) with varying strength of economic activities. However, the activities of the commercial bus operators in the three local governments are assumed to be similar since the type of buses and cost of maintenance as well as the price of fuel liters is essentially the same. This, therefore, point to the fact that the population of the study is homogenous hence; the population was selected on the basis of the volume of the economic activities. Damaturu which is the State capital is assumed to be stronger in terms of economic activities and as such 100 respondents (commercial bus operators) were selected from the state capital, 70 respondents were chosen from Gashua local government and 50 from Potiskum local government respectively. The choice of the population size is based on the volume of economic activities in the respective local government areas. The study employed primary data which was sourced through field survey using questionnaires and focused group discussions approaches. In addition, an effort was made to obtain other relevant information regarding the history or general operations of the business at present and in the time past. The secondary data required for this study was sourced from textbooks, journals and statistical bulletins. The findings showed that there is no significant reduction in the poverty level of the drivers and their entire household since when they are driving the mass transit bus compared to the poverty level they were before the distribution of mass transit. The kind of questions asked is: What are the socio-economic characteristics of commercial bus service providers? What is the contribution of commercial bus service to income generation in the study area? How effective is commercial bus service in reducing poverty in the study area? What are the major constraints of commercial bus service providers? The major objective of this study is to assess the impact of commercial bus service on poverty reduction in Yobe State.

Keywords: Poverty reduction, commercial bus service, Yobe State

INTRODUCTION

Transport service has played vital role in shaping the livelihood repertoires of rural people in sub-Sahara African and Nigeria in particular over the last century, but precise implication for poverty reduction and growth have varied considerably at different countries and between different sectors of population (Bandham, 2000). investment in the transportation services has remained a priority of alteration in developing countries. Conceptually, it may not be difficult to acknowledge that the transport service can contribute to poverty reduction but there is a share concern about the limited knowledge base linking transport service to poverty reduction. As observed by (Chambers, 1995) transport infrastructure and quality service is a necessary condition for poverty

reduction but not a sufficient one. Thus, there are instances where transport investment failed to provide benefits for the poor despite aggregate gain in productivity and income. As its worst, transport infrastructure and services appear to have exacerbated resisting inequalities as well as given rise to members of negative externalities (Angaye, 1996). Poverty reduction is the over arching objectives and it will remain so since poverty persist as a pervasive and devastating condition in most developing countries (World Bank Report, 2010), poverty has many root causes, while it is primarily related to a very low income, it is manifested in many dimensions especially malnutrition, unhealthy and illiteracy.

A good transport service should be socially equitable and strengthening civil right enabling all people to gain access to good job, education and training and needed services, where possible personal transportation expenses should minimize in a way that support wealth creation. Integrated with land use planning, transportation should also enhance the quality, liability and character of community and support revitalization without displacement. It should allow every citizen to participate fully in society whether or not they own a car and regardless of age, ability, ethnicity or income (Basedum, 1990). The transport service should alternate poverty and support wealth creation. Poor people and low income communities should have realistic and affordable housing, child care, and other services and opportunities throughout metropolitan areas, modern transportation service must pull together the communities and opportunities within a region rather than driving them further apart (Sprawl 2010). The performance of the Nigeria road sector has not been encouraging despite the enormous potentials for economic growth and development, the poor transport (roads) facilities and infrastructure have severely hindered our economic development and contribute very little to alleviate poverty in the country. Nigeria is still considered poor with low per capital income, high proportion of the population are in abject poverty (Olayemi, 1995). The provision of good road network system is hoped to be of fundamental important to the healthy performance of Nigeria economy as well as the well-being of her citizens and visitors (Adewunmi, 2012).

In Yobe State, road transport is the only means of transportation, this makes road transportation business a lucrative one hence people and goods needs to be moved from one place to another. At the creation of Yobe State in August 27, 1991 from Bornu State, it inherited 20 commercial buses from Bornu State to facilitate the movement of people and services. These buses were the first set of commercial buses in Yobe State under Yobe Line Mass Transit Scheme, as a state assisted mass transit scheme. The main objective is to ease the movement of people, goods and services from one place to another at a reduced rate. The mass transit policy is aimed at reducing the poverty level of the state

Why which starred at 71.8%.these buses modus operandi is to move people, goods and services from one local government to another within the state, especially those in the rural areas to be able to access market and to improve their standards of living and consequently reduce poverty. In Nigeria like any other part of the world, the potentials of road development for investment trade, growth and poverty reduction has long been recognized. Not only does transport infrastructure facilitate the direct provision of services to consumers, it also provides intermediate inputs that enter into production of other sector and raise productivity (Ighodaro, 2009). By lowering the cost and reducing the time of moving goods and services to where they can be used more efficiently, road development adds value and spurs growth overtime, this process results in increasing the size of markets which is preconditioned for realizing economics of scales. Good road project contributes to poverty reduction by improving the living conditions of people and by augmenting the opportunities available for trade and employment. The economic performance of any nation, Nigeria inclusive has reflected the development of her transport systems in general (Ukpong, 1996).

Statement of problem

The rate of poverty in Nigeria is 74.5% (NBS Report 2017). Both the quantitative and qualitative measurement attests to the growing incidence and depth of poverty in the country (NBS, 2017). However, this situation presents a paradox considering the vast human and physical resources that the country is endowed with. It is very surprising that despite the huge human and material resources that have been devoted to poverty reduction by successive government, through many different programs such as National Accelerated Food Production Program (NAFPP) and the Nigerian Agricultural and co-operative Bank (NACB) in 1972, Operation Feed the Nation (OPN) to teach the rural farmers how to use modern farming tools in 1976, Green Revolution Program (GRP) to reduce food importation and increase local food production in 1986, Family Support Program (FSP) and the Family Economic Advancement Program (FEAP) in 1993, National Poverty Eradication Program (NAPEP) to replace the previously failed Poverty Alteration Program (PAP); no noticeable success has been made.

In Yobe state, there is what is called Yobe State Assisted Policy Program (YOSAPP) under which there are many schemes such as Mass Assisted Transport Scheme, Back to Farm, and Mass Food Production Program for farmers. This is a continuous program that has been supported by various successive governments in the state, but still has no noticeable effort on poverty reduction. Mass Assisted Transport Scheme is one of the chief beneficiaries of the Yobe State Assisted Policy Program since 2003. The scheme has witnessed the

emergence of many new buses to boast the achievement of the objectives of the scheme which are; to improve the standard of living of the citizens in the state, to facilitate the movement of people, goods and services especially from the rural areas in order to boast food production, and to generally reduce the poverty rate in Yobe State. However, before the year 2003, the poverty level of Yobe State was 58.7% in 2001 according to the NBS report of 2003 and since then the poverty level has been on the increase. Presently the poverty level of Yobe State stands at 71.8% and no research has been carried out to find out why. It is against this background that this research is carried out to ascertain how the program has reduced the poverty level of the immediate and direct beneficiaries of the (Mass Assisted Transport Scheme) that is the drivers among the other commercial drivers in the state. It will also assist those whose income is not enough to own a car but need to move around for possible opportunities to do so using commercial buses as their possible means movement. The major objective of this study is to assess the impact of commercial bus service on poverty reduction in Yobe State.

Concept of transportation

The history of road transport development in Nigeria dated back to the period before 1910 when the existing bush paths were developed into motor able routes. According to Standford Research Institute (1963), the growth of road transport in Nigeria was a later development, which did not evolve through the stage of animal-drawn carts. According to the Institute, roads were not developed until the advent of motor vehicles on the 1920s and 1930s. The end of Second World War (1945) actually marked the period when the country was served with adequate network of all season roads for lorry and passenger car traffic. According to Grondone (2000), the roads were designed to serve two major objectives. First, they were meant to extend the commercial hinterlands opened up by the government railways by linking up the nearest urban centers with the major railway stations. The second was to reduce the strains thrown on the inland provinces in the provision of porters for the British Colonial Officers. The initial growth of network was slowed down by the financial and labor constraints.

However, the total length of road constructed and maintained by the government and native authorities rose to about 51,000km in 1946 and 74,000km in 1960 Abdullahi, (1993). The need to open up the economic and settlement frontiers of the country was the major factor that influenced road network development in Nigeria. This began with the introduction of feeder road services to the Nigeria Railways to link the major railway stations along the Lagos-Kano line with the neighboring settlements, thereby increasing the supply of export products such as cocoa, palm produce, cotton and groundnuts that were moved to the ports by the railways and helping the rural settlements realize their productive potentials. As at 1960, roads linked all parts, although the concentration of roads development is much heavier in the two Southern Regions than in the more sparsely populated Northern Region.

The roads in Nigeria were classified into three (3) groups: Federal roads or Trunk A – 8,800kms (5,500mls), this represented the skeleton on which the country' road system was built. This trunk represented the main North-South arteries and five East-West arteries. The Trunk B roads of which there were 7,360kms (4,600mls) connected the provincial network within the skeleton trunk A road system. Provincial roads of which there were 57,480kms (35,925mls) from the main network linking up with other trunk roads in the country Abdullahi (1993).

As at 1960, the percentage of trunk A roads tarred to the total road surface in Nigeria was highest in the Western part of the country with 82% followed by Eastern region with 30%. However, Lagos, which acted as the Federal Capital (then) had the entire surface tarred. Similarly, 98% of trunk B roads in the Western region was tarred, 34% of that of the Eastern region was tarred while 19% of that of the Northern region was tarred (Abdullahi, 1993).

Socio-economic setting of transportation system in Nigeria

Road is the major mode of transport system in Nigeria. Other means of intra-urban and inter-urban transport system are the use of waterways and rail transport which are of course limited to a very few urban centers with the peculiar terrain (water) in Nigeria. Even in terms of haulage of goods, the advent of motor vehicles revolutionized transport and constituted a challenge to the railroads. According to Standford Research Institute (1963), road transport as at 1953 was carrying 50% of the total ten-miles of freight in Nigeria and by 1960; the proportion had increased to 62% while the total traffic carried by all forms of transport had more than doubled. Studies in the area of urban transportation confirmed that more than 75% of population in cities depended on public transport service while the remaining 25% depended on private transport service (Abdullahi, 1993). The social economic variables of Nigerians contributed in no small measures to this pattern. Public transport service which is aspect of the country's transport sector had all along been in the hands and control of private entrepreneurs. In the early 1960s, the macro-economic indicators, which are yardsticks for measuring all aspect of the growth of Nigeria economy, were consistently positive because the nation depended on agricultural products for its foreign exchange earnings. During the period, a number of private individuals owned private vehicles, which they use for both intra and inter-urban and rural movements.

The introduction of the Federal Urban Mass Transit Program (FUMTP) ushered in a number of policies that make the mass transit a success. Seminars/workshops were organized to review problems relating to transportation and to convert personal motorcycles for public uses in response to reality of commuters need. Similarly, personal vehicles of some individuals were used for commercial purposes (kabukabu). With time kabukabu" system survived which is still in vogue today. It was therefore only natural for the people to convert their personal motorcycles and cars for public commercial transport service to complement the existing public transport and later this became a mean of survival for many which became a serious issue due to the effect of Structural Adjustment Policy (SAP). Thus, the genesis of the use of Motorcycles and private vehicles as a public transport system on a large scale arose out of the economic woes of 1980s till now.

Merits of transportation to the economy

One of the key factors that play a pivotal role in a region's economic growth is the presence of a reliable and efficient transportation system, this is mainly due to the fact that a well- developed transportation system provides adequate access to the region which in turn is a necessary condition for the efficient operation of manufacturing, retail, labor and housing markets. Transportation is a critical factor in the economic growth and development. It is a wealth creating industry on its own, inadequate transportation limits a nation's ability to utilize its natural resources, distributes foods and other finished goods integrate the manufacturing and agricultural sectors and supply education, medical and other infrastructural facilities. There is the need therefore to maintain and improve the existing transportation and build new infrastructures for a national wealth. The national wealth is the growth domestic product (GDP) which is an indicator or measures the rate of economic growth. Transport service is critical to sustain economic growth because people want to improve their standard of living and they see increased income as the way to achieve that goal, transportation system enhancement are in turns a means of maintaining or improving economic opportunities, quality of life and ultimately income for people in a particular region Streeten, (1984). Transportation also has a broader role in shaping development and the environment. Policy concern in the next millennium will increasingly focus on the effect of transport service on where people live and on where businesses locate; and on the effect that these location decisions have on land use patterns, congestion of urban transportation systems, use of natural resources, air and water qualities, and the overall quality of life issues of urban sprawl, farmland preservation, and air and water quality have already pushed their way to the forefront of

policy debates at both national and local levels. To make prudent decisions, policy makers must be equipped with the best information and analysis possible about the interactions among these various factors. Good transport service is the back bone of any economy, especially countries like Nigeria, as such an anatomy of the aspects relating to inefficiencies and lack of good transportation network in Nigeria couple with low rate of economic growth (GDP) is crucial, attached to this is the poor government policy on transportation (lack of regulation of fees charged by private transporters, inadequate fuel supply, lack of spare parts and above all5 the prevalence of bad roads and lack of security have succeeded in trimming down the transport system in Nigeria which have a negative effect on the economic growth.

It is universally recognized that transport services is crucial for the sustained economic growth and modernization of a nation. Adequacy of these vital services is an important determinant of the success of a nations effort in diversifying its production base, expanding trade and linking together resources and markets into an integrated economy. It is also necessary for connecting villages and towns, market centers and bringing together remote and developing regions closer to one another. Transport service, therefore, forms a key input for production processes and adequate provision of transport infrastructure and services helps in increasing productivity and lowering production cost. The provision of transport infrastructure and services helps in reducing poverty. It needs no emphasis that various public actions aimed at reducing poverty cannot be successful without adequate transport infrastructure and services. It is difficult to visualize meeting the target or universal education and healthcare for all without providing adequate transport facilities and quality service. All sectors including transport operate within the socioeconomic framework provided by the state. Specific policies are designed within the framework for each sector in other to meet national goals and objectives. As a service industry, transport does not exist for its own sake. It serves as a means to achieve other objectives. In formulating policies for the development of transport sectors, various macro objectives have to be taken into account. Some of these are economic in character while others are of a socio-political in nature. Economic and non-economic objectives are not always consistent. However, their mix is one of the important factors which determine the pattern of investment and funding in various sector of the economy.

Service and millennium transport development goals (MDGs)

Millennium development Goal (MDGs) are the eight international development goals that were established following the millennium submit of the United Nations in 2000, following the adoption of the United Nations

Millennium Declaration. All the 193 United Nations member states and at least 23 international organizations committed to help achieve the following Millennium Development Goals by 2015:

(i) To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
(ii) To achieve universal primary education.
(iii) To promote gender equality.
(iv) To reduce child mortality.
(v) To improve maternal health.
(vi) To ensure environmental sustainability.
(vii) To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.
(viii) To develop a global partnership for development.

Theoretical framework

This research work adopts Customer Satisfaction Theory as its frame work of analysis and it also put to use the basic need theory".   According to Oliver (1996), Ediatdson (1996), Haggard and Stalhammer (2001), the protagonists of the consumer satisfaction theory that is otherwise known as theory of "common good", the theory views public transport service as a common good and studies transportation effectiveness from the perspectives of transport users satisfaction with the service product. Service product refers to a series of services customer expect the various transport companies to fulfill (Ediatdson (1996), Haggard and Stalhammer (2001). Such service include; favorable departure, and arrival timetable, standard or good vehicle and the journey, absence long lives of commuters, good transport fares, drivers and conductors' behavior, transit route to destruction i.e., absence of handover to another vehicle during the trip on the road. This theory investigates committers' satisfaction with these factors in the federal and state assisted mass transit profit. This theory is relevant to this research work as it enables the researcher to investigate the nature, dynamics and impacts of government interaction to ascertain the nuances of committers' satisfaction derived from these services.   It enables the study of interest that characterized the mass transit program. It also creates way for the assessment of the implementation of the objectives for which the mass transit was established.

Basic needs model and transit service

The basic needs approach is one of the major approaches to the measurement of absolute poverty in developing countries. It attempts to define absolute minimum resource necessary for long term physical well-being, usually in terms of consumption goods. The poverty line is then defined as the amount of income required to satisfy those needs. The Basic Needs Approach was introduced by the international labour

organizations world employment conference in 1976. Perhaps the high point of world employment program needs approach to development was endorsed by government and workers' and employers' organization from all over the world. Nit influenced the programs and policies of major multilateral and bilateral development agencies and was the precursor to human development approach. A traditional list of immediate basic needs is food (including water), shelter and clothing. Many modern lists emphasize the minimum level of consumption of basic needs of not just food, water, clothing and shelter, but also sanitation, education, healthcare and good quality transport service. Here, it was argued that transport is a means through which all the essentials needs like sanitation, education and healthcare could be achieved, so transport service is an essential part of human basic needs Ayagi, (1990). This basic approach has been described as consumption oriented giving the impression that poverty elimination is all too easy, however, this focused on capabilities rather than consumption. In the development discourse, the basic needs model focuses on the measurement of what is believed to be an eradicable level of poverty. Development programs following the basic needs approach do not invest in economically productive activities that will help a society carry its own weight in the future, rather it focuses on allowing the society to consume just enough to rise above the poverty line and meet its basic needs. These programs focus more on subsistence than farmers. Nevertheless, in terms of measurement the basic needs or absolute approach is important.

The concept of poverty

Poverty, a global phenomenon that is complex and multi-dimensional is not easy to define each region of the world had different yardsticks for measuring the level of poverty bases on people's ability to have access to basic things of life namely: food, clothing and shelter. However, it is pertinent to not that despite different yardsticks and indices of measuring poverty from region to region all over the world, the fact still remain that the meaning of poverty still tends towards lack and below average poor standard of living going by the following definitions as posited by scholars. Nasir, (2002) defined poverty as a concept that entails socio-economic and political deprivation which may affect individuals' households, or communities and which may result in lack of access to the basic necessities of life. The World Bank Report (1990) sees poverty as hunger, lack of shelter, being sick and not being able to go school, not knowing how to read, not being able to speak properly, having a job, having fear for the future, losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water, powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom. According to World Bank

1990) and United Nation (1995) the various manifestation of poverty include: lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihood, hunger and malnutrition and other basic services, homelessness and unsafe degraded environment among others. Ogunleye (2006) opined that indicators of poverty include: literacy, health status, nutrition status, access to housing, water satisfaction etc. poverty therefore is the inability to attend to or meet up with the basic necessities of life as a result of lack of wherewithal to do so.

Among economist, poverty has often been defined as a situation of low income or low consumption. This has been used for constructing poverty lines-values of income or consumption necessary to purchase the minimum standard nutrition and other necessities of life. Accordingly, people are counted poor when their measure standard of living in terms of income or consumption is below the poverty line. Thus, the poverty line is a measure that separates the poor from the non-poor. However, poverty has both income and non-income dimensions, usually intertwined. Poverty refers to lack of physical necessities, assets and income. It includes, but is-more than the income-poor (Chambers, 1995). It is a sub-set of the general condition of deprivation whose dimensions include poverty, social inferiority, isolation and physical weakness, vulnerability seasonality, powerless and imitation.

Essentially, it is not difficult to recognize the poor. The poor are those who are unable to obtain an adequate income, find a stable job, own property, or maintain healthy living conditions. They also lack the adequate level of education and cannot satisfy their basic health needs (Sancho, 1996). Thus, the poor are often illiterate in poor health, and have short life span (World Bank 2010). They have no access to the basic necessities of life such as food, clothing and decent shelter; are unable to meet social and economic obligations; they lack skills and gainful employment have few, if any economic assets; and sometimes, lack self-esteem (Olayemi 1995). Very often, the poor lack the capacity to escape from their situation by themselves. This characteristic is what causes the social conditions of extreme poverty to persist and to be transmitted from the generation to the next. Frequently, those most affected by extreme poverty are young children, pregnant mothers, the elderly, the inhabitants of rural areas and marginal urban zones and those groups who find themselves segregated in their own societies. Among the groups most affected by extreme poverty throughout the world are those who are most vulnerable and lack resources, along with those who do not have the capacity to organize themselves nor to exercise the right to protest their situation (Sancho, 1996).

Poverty may be Chrome/structural or conjectural/transient. Structural/chronic poverty is long-term or persistent. Its causes are more permanent and depend on a host of factors such as limited productive resources, lack or skills for gainful employment, locational advantage, or endemic socio-political and cultural factors (Abdullahi1993: NPC 1995). On the other hand conjectural/transitory poverty is temporary/transient or short term. Its causes are more transitory and possible more reversible. It is mainly due to natural disasters (e.g. drought, typhoon/floods), manmade disasters like wars and environmental degradation and structural adjustment reforms and change in domestic economic policies that may result in price changes, increased unemployment, etc. however, the dichotomy between structural and transient poverty tends to break down when transitory causes persist for years as a result of prolong natural and man-made disasters. It may also be noted that in the context of income poverty, poverty may be conceived of as absolute poverty or relative poverty (Afonja and Ogwumike, 1995; World Bank, 1993). Poverty has also been defined as the inability to attain a minimum standard of living (World Development Report, 1990). The report constructed two indices based on a minimum level of consumption in order to show the practical aspect of the concept. While the first index was counting-specific poverty here the second was global, allowing cross-country comparisons (Stteeten 1984). The United Nations has invoked the use of such other indices as life expectancy, infant mortality rate, primary school environment ratios and number of persons per physical. One deduction that could be made from different definitions of poverty is that, for a given country in a given circumstance, poverty must be conceived, defined and measured in absolute quantitative ways that are relevant and valid for analysis and policy making in that given time and space. Poverty specifications should become relative, once circumstances in the country change. Poverty has many dimensions, such as inadequate income, malnutrition, lack of access to social services and lack of social and political status. Though the poor are heterogonous, across and within countries, some generalization can still be made on the extent and nature of poverty (Walton, 1990). The poor can be generally identified as:

(i) Those whose ability to contribute to the production process is insufficient. That is, those who are unable to contribute adequately to the production process to warrant an income that would raise them above poverty.
(ii) Those for whom the economy has failed to produce jobs, that is, those who are willing and capable of earning an adequate income if only jobs were available.
(iii) Those whose opportunity to participate in the production process are restructured by decimation of various kinds; sex, age, raise etc. (Afonja and Ogwumike, 1995). In practice, it may be difficult to strictly classify the poor into these categories. However, they assist in providing useful background for discussion on poverty reduction policies.

According to Afonja and Ogwumike, (1995) a theory of

poverty must identify the forces which govern and determine the pattern of ownership of the factors of production, since it is that pattern eventually determine the structure of inter-personal and inter-group differentials in wealth and income in the society. Consequently, he has identified from theories: the necessity theory, the individual-Attribute theory, the Natural-circumstantial theory and the power theory. Some of these theories, such as the necessity theory and the individual attribute theory, which are of relevance to the issue of poverty, deal directly with the phenomenon of economic inadequately. According to African foundation for population development (2005), Nigeria is the tenth most populous country in the World and the largest in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is one of the fastest growing nations in the world. The Nigerian population had more than doubled source she attained nationhood in 1960. Going by the data obtained from the past consensus, the country's population increased sharply from fifty-four (54) million in 1963 to eighty-eight (88) million in 1991. Currently, the country's population has reached one hundred and forty-four (200) million according to the Bureau of Statistics report of 2019 February. With an annual population growth rate of 2.9 percent which is really the source with the annual GDP growth rate of (3.5percent). By 2015 (the year benchmarked for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Nigeria's population is estimated to be above 178 million. According to the report, Nigeria though rich in natural resources, is currently ranked among the 13 poorest countries in the world. With per capital income falling significantly to above $300 (below the Sahara average of $450) approximately more than 90 million of Nigeria's 178 million people are living in absolute poverty i.e. in less than one dollar a day. Corroborating the assertion above, Nasir (2002) noted that about 1.5 billion people live below the poverty line of less than one dollar per day worldwide. Out of this number, 250 million constituting 17% of the world's total population is Africans and almost one-third of this member coming from Nigeria alone. Also, available data from the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS, 1999), indicates that the majority of the poor are located in the rural areas of Nigeria. In 1985 for instance, 49.9% of the population in rural areas were poor, declining to 46.1% in 1992, only to rise to 67.85% in 1996. In another development, Nigeria is a country blessed with vast tacks of arable land and abundant human and natural resources. Therefore, Nigeria and poverty should be strange bed fellows. But that is not the case (Tell, Feb. 2, 2009). According to the magazine, Nigeria was regarded as a promising country in the commonwealth ahead of India, Malaysia and Singapore. But where these countries have made appreciable progress is most indices of growth, Nigeria is still struggling at the bottom of the ladder with most of her citizens unable to meet their basic necessities of food, clothing and shelter.

Poverty reduction programs in Nigeria

Poverty has been a serious challenge to governments in Nigeria. Its effect, which includes lack and deprivation in the basic necessities of life, is worrisome. Poverty humiliates and dehumanizes its victim Ukpong (1996). Poverty itself is as old as the whole world. To this end government and people in authority always strife to ensure that adequate structural programs are ensured to see that poverty if not eradicated is reduced to the barest minimum. "Poverty has earned recognition in the extent of its ravaging society and the affairs of humanity at the international, national and local levels; the need exists now for urgent actions towards its eradication and control. Indeed, poverty is a snare. It is dehumanizing. It must be eradicated" (Obadan, 1996). The causes of this state of poverty in the country may be traced to the under listed, among other factors: corruption, bad governance, debt overhang, unemployment, low productivity, burgeoning population growth, globalization, unfocused government policies, lack of effective skills training etc. In a bid to overcome poverty of Nigeria, government has initiated difficult policies and structural programs between 1977 till date. These programs included: Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI), Better Life Program (BLP), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), People Bank of Nigeria (PBN), Community Bank (CB), Family Support Program (FSP), Family Economic Advancement Program (FEAP), Poverty Eradication Program (FEP), and Ayagi (1990), suffering of the people by providing them employment opportunities and access to credit facilities to enable them establishes their own businesses (European Journal of Globalization Development Research 2011). In Nigeria, the earliest poverty alleviation program was in 1972 during the General Yakubu Gowon's Administration named "National Accelerated Food Production Program (NAFPP)" and the Nigerian Agricultural and Corporative Bank (NACB). These programs were entirely devoted to funding agriculture. In 2004, the NAFPP turned out to be colossal waste and nothing was achieved. Successive governments have tried to address some of these issues (poverty related) through the enunciation of poverty related programs. Whether these programs have succeeded in either alleviating poverty or not is a moot point. Suffice it is say however, after these two was Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) was emaciated in 1979 by Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo, similarly, OFN expended more money and efforts in getting ill-prepared university graduates to go to the rural areas to teach the peasant farmers how to farm. The irony the program is that theoretical farming graduates were teaching farmers, who makes his/her living on farms; how to farm. The scheme only success was creating awareness of food shortages and the need to tackle the problem. The program had the specific focus of increasing food production on the premise that availability of cheap food will mean higher

nutrition level and invariably lead to national growth and development. OFN lasted until Shehu Shagari's government took over in 1979. It must be stated though that lack of continuity and shift in approach trailed poverty alleviation programs source the ouster of Shagari from power in 1983. Each subsequent military administration came with a different idea or no idea at all. Poverty reduction programs became more "regime specific" because there was hardly any continuity with those initiated by previous governments. The military regime of Gen. Mohamadu Buhari/Brig. Tunde Idiagbon (1983-1986) did not have a specific poverty alleviation program also it clearly focused on fighting indiscipline and corruption. This initiative better known as WAI- War Against Indiscipline, sought to inculcate military style regimen of discipline such as queuing for public services, observing road signs, memorizing the national anthem, and generally sprucing up the national psyche on the destruction of right and wrong, handling of public property etc. some analysts argue that the fight against indiscipline and corruption were equal to poverty alleviation program in the sense that the two were partly the reason why many Nigerians were poor.

The regime was also noted for "go back to the land" program, which was a poverty alleviation strategy. General Ibrahim Babangida (1985-1993) is known to be the one head of state that introduced welter of poverty alleviation programs. These include the People's Bank which sought to provide loans to prospective entrepreneurs on soft terms and without stringent requirements of collaterals. It also regulated to an effort the activities of Community Bank that also sprouted as adjuncts of the People's Bank and a source of cheap funds for communities and their members. Another of his numerous programs was the Directorate of Food Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI) which to open up moral areas via construction of feeder roads and provision of basic amenities that would turn them into production centers for the national economy. The DFFRI was on offer as the most comprehensive program on the nation's war against poverty. Considering the truism that rural populations in Nigeria are significantly power than their urban counterparts, this program targeted this care group. Its premise was fast not to open the rural areas, but the hinterland, which ordinarily would not have been accessible. It also aimed at promoting rural employments based on the assumption if rural infrastructure such as electricity, was available in the villages, many welders, for example would operate from there, instead of scrambling for spaces in congested urban centers.

On the other hand, DFFRI assured that if the hinterland was linked by road; farmers would transport their products to the market easily and at cheaper rates, thereby reducing the cost of food production as a way out of poverty. Many Nigerians however, agreed that this, like other programs by the regime, were good but their impact on the populace and poverty were minimal because of

shortcomings in their implementation. Another program that tried to trend-off the scourge of poverty by targeting the agricultural sector was the Nigerian Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA) in 1991, the Strategy Genus Reserve Program, the development of fisheries, small ruminate production and pasture grazing reserve (Chambers, 1995). Central Bank of Nigeria Reports of 1995 shared that NALDA operations in 30 states of the federation encouraged small holder farmers to bring more land under cultivation thus, improving agricultural output and consequently reducing household expenditure on food, which led to poverty alleviation. The same CBN reports recorded that the performance of NALDA was constrained by inadequate and untimely release of funds and shortage of farm machinery (CBN, 1995). Moreover, Family Economic Advancement Program (FEAP) was introduced in 1993 as an investment promotion and poverty alleviation program by the Federal Government. Aimed at stimulating appropriate economic activities nationwide, it focused on the provision opportunities but funded. After examining the report of a committee set up to study the achievements of previous poverty alleviation programs. NAPFP was introduced. This bold step was to eradicate (and not only alleviate) poverty through four different scheme.

(i) Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES) – was designed to empower the youth to acquire skills that will make them self-reliant and improve or build their capacity through on-the-job training.
(ii) Rural Infrastructural Development Scheme (RIDS) - under this the government would provide the people with good and portable drinking water by sinking boreholes in each local government areas of Nigeria. Also, the abandoned water projects by the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF) were to be completed.
(iii) Social Welfare Service Scheme (SOWESS) - meant to provide social amenities such as transportation service through federal mass transit scheme.
(iv) Natural Resources Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDCS)- the Natural Resources Development Scheme was to harness the agricultural, water and solid mineral resources; conserve the land and space (beaches, reclaimed law etc.) particularly, for convenient and effective use by small scale operators and the immediate community (Aliyu,2002).

To ensure well-coordinated and monitored poverty eradication efforts, the federal government streamlined the programs. Thereafter, NAPFP became the comprehensive structure of coordinating and monitoring the activities of the core poverty eradication ministries and agencies (Aliyu, 2002).

Why the programs failed

It has been observed that many of the poverty alleviation

programs failed for several reasons. One of such is the use of wrong approaches. Those who design the programs did not involve the poor who are the prospective beneficiaries. It is believed that the target group should have been involved during the planning and designing stages. That is, a "bottom-top" rather than "top-bottom" approach should have been used to determine the need of the poor. The reasons for failure have been broadly categorized into two, designing and implementation, policy acceptability which are tagged as "aspirin solution and benefit capture. The "aspirin solution" refers to a situation where intent solutions are prescribed to treat the perceived symptoms of a problem without considering the root causes of the problem. Nunnenkamp, 1991)

Poverty reduction in Nigeria

The concept of poverty reduction, poverty eradication and poverty alleviation are interchangeably used to means the same: thus in this research, these concepts will be used as such. Poverty reduction refers to a situation where specific manifestation of poverty is systematically reduced resulting in a short and long term condition. Obadan, (1985) opined that "poverty reduction does not simply mean short-term relief and satisfaction of basic needs, but also the development of strategies for increasing the long-term productive potential and therefore, the income of her poor in order to achieve the long-term goal" Ukpong, (1996) adds that economic growth alone is not sufficient for poverty reduction, growth must be accompanied with equity promoted by participation of the poor themselves in the activities that would "push" or "pull" them out of poverty as being the key to global poverty reduction. He further added that dole out from the "national cake" does not alleviate poverty" poverty cannot be alleviated through a short term price meal approach (Lipton, 1983). According to Batchelor et al. (1980), the overriding objective of government poverty reduction policy is to broaden the opportunities available to the poor, and ensure that every citizen has access to the basic needs of life; food, series, and nutrition, basic education and communication (Chenery, 1979).

The level of poverty in Nigeria today is difficult to imagine. The Nigeria economy itself has over the years traversed through a series of reform that aims at improving the health of the economy. The economy, however, remain a toddler, struggling to find a sense of direction. The Nigerian economy has been a victim of wasteful diversion of resources that could have been use to foster a virile and viable development process. As a result, the economy, for several years, has remained import dependent. Ayagi (1990) opined that Nigeria earned a total of $67.047 million export revenue from 1981 to 1985 but its import for the same period totaled$64.078 million.

This excessive importation which was part of government policy has been viewed as being responsible for the economy's debt entrapment; the consequences of which have pauperize the citizenry. This encapsulation of the economy by the practice of globalization has had inimical consequences. Poverty reduction or alleviation differs from income inequality. Much attention has been focused on poverty reduction in recent times and that has spiraled a shift from inequality. Four broad implications associated with this fundamental shift are: first, such a shift obviously means more direct concern for those who are worse off such as the cone poor. Secondly, it means directing attention to the rural areas where the poverty burden is larger. Thirdly, it means that there should be grassroots consideration of policy focus and fourthly, it tends to reduce the tension between the simultaneous objectives of improving the distribution of income and accelerating growth (Fishlow, 1993).   The initial efforts of poverty reduction have fundamentally centered on the 'basic needs' approach developed in the 1970s and supported by the World Bank. This approach emphasizes the importance of separating generalized increases in income from the more significant attainment of the requirements for a permanent reduction of poverty through the provision of health services, education, housing, sanitation, water supply and adequate nutrition. The rationale of the approach was that the direct provision of goods and services is likely to received absolute poverty more immediately than alternative strategies, since growth strategies usually fail to benefit the intended target and the productivity and income of the poor depend in the first place on the direct provision of health and education facilities. Similarly, there is no guarantee that increased income will be spent on essential services, since household vary in their ability to spend wisely and effectively. They may irrationally prefer 'better' consumption goods that contribute less to family welfare than other goods that might serve as inputs to high productivity.

On the other hand, vast section of the population may experience food shortages, not because food has become scarce, but because they cannot afford to buy it or they are not entitled to it. This leads to malnutrition caused by the lack of access to good food does not only depend on people's entitlement to food. Sancho (1996) argued that to understand poverty and starvation, or the malnutrition associated with it, it is necessary to understand both ownership patterns and exchange entitlement, which in turn require an understanding of modes of production and class structure. Poverty in Nigeria is explained by the combine factors of inadequate food supply and limited entitlement to food. Since independence, the Nigerian policy makers have always conceived poverty as a by-product of stagnation and decline in economic growth and have therefore continued growth as a mechanism through which the problem of poverty can be alleviated (Musa, 1982). This also defines

the context within which the structural Adjustment Program was conceived and introduced. It is not enough to supply concentrate on raising growth rates of GDP in the expectation that this will trickle down to improve levels of living for the poor. It is not enough to say a nation is making billions or trillions of naira. It is important to know who gets the money and what the money does to the people's lives Christian (1980). Policies aimed at reducing poverty; need to identify which groups of people are poor, vulnerable and what their circumstances and strategies actually are so that policy never can be identified. Research studies on the impact of SAP in Nigeria abound to prove that the poor did not benefit from SAP, instead income inequality widened after the introduction of SAP (World Bank, 1996). For long-term growth to be effective in poverty reduction, two conditions must be met:

(a) The economic growth itself must be labor-intensive and generate income opportunities for the poor (Brown and Tiffen, 1992).
(b) The poor must have basic means of acquiring human capital; primarily access to adequate education and health services, to enable them to respond to these opportunities (World Bank, 1995).

In view of the disproportionately large number of the people who reside in rural areas, the policy designed to reduce poverty must necessarily be directed, to a large extent, toward rural development. To improve their living conditions, women must be drawn into the economic mainstream. This would entail increasing women's participation in educational and training program, formal sector employment and agricultural extensive programs most ensure that women have equal access to government resources provide through schooling, services and employment. Similarly, gender equity, and efficacy are likely to go together, since better education for women is often associated with better education for women is often associated with better education, nutrition and the health of children. Better opportunities for work for young women can head to more socially beneficial fertility behavior through family planning and rising the age of marriage.

   Poverty has many dimension as mentioned earlier, and it is necessary to use more than one approach to migrate it (Rodgers, 1976) South Asia has being plethora of schemes for poverty reduction that Nigeria can borrow. Popular among them are the Food For Work (FFW) Scheme (a Program of food and concentrated on rural areas and targeted at merely groups) and Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS). These Programs are more directly concerned with attacking the problem of food shortage and unemployment. The programs do not only sell out food for the poor but have also successes in creating a certain number of jobs for them. The unhealthy completion among various ethnic and other interest groups to control resources which are concentrated at the federal government level has continued to be a threat to the political stability of Nigeria. Decentralization of resources and prudent management should curtail this competition and reduce the salience of ethnic politics. Government attention needs to be drawn to the potential effects on political stability of a section of the country is allowed to lag further and further behind the rest; for while political instability causes poverty, the unequal distribution of poverty can cause pontifical instability (Dreze et al., 1995).

Theoretical linkages between poverty and transport infrastructure

It is a popular saying that "A community without roads does not have a way out." Over 1.2 billion people in the world exist on less than the lower poverty threshold of US $1 per day (World Bank Report 2010).Therefore, in relevant years poverty reduction has become the overarching objectives of developing countries and international agencies. The number one millennium development goal is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger by 2015. The transport sector consumes a considerable part of the overall budget for infrastructure investment in developing countries and there is need to understand how this investment asset in poverty reduction (Bruce, and Dwyer, 1988). It is important to identify the linkages between transport initiatives and poverty reduction at the onset of a project by determining whether or not the project will have an impact on reducing poverty and distributing benefits to all stakeholders. It is equally important to consider early on the issue of project selection as some project will be more beneficial for the poor than the other (Demery and Square, 1996). A distribution analysis provides valuable information to determine the effectiveness of a proposed project and determines the degree to which poor will benefit, there by facilitating linkages between poverty and transport infrastructure (Batchelor, 1980). When the poor are asked about what will help them rise out of poverty, many respond that access to basic services is the most important factor. Poverty is widespread in fragile status, and the implementation of pro-poor projects will enable these continues to more closely to towards reaching the millennium development goals. Transport infrastructures impacted on that transport projects when designed with the poor in mind, have lasting effects and benefiting the overall economic and social well-being of a country. In the context of fragile state, these effects also include increased social stability and developing the potential for conflict. Conflict as one of the causes of poverty cannot be avoided in many fragile states, but strategies and policies can be put in place to minimize the risks and effects on economic development. A poverty reduction strategy based on man development perspectives that encourage pro-poor growth (Doki, 2012).

Empirical review

Chaudhry (2003) conducted a study on an empirical analysis of the determinants of rural poverty in Pakistan: The study made use of primary data and an econometric analysis. The logistic regression results indicated that Household size, Dependency ratio, and Households made houses by mud and straw are variables that were positively and significantly correlated with the probability of being poor while variables such as educational attainment of household, Household head, Household visits to health center, Household has access to drinking water by pump and landholdings are negatively and significantly correlated with the probability of being extremely poor. In analyzing the impact of socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of households on poverty, Chaudhry, (2003) using primary data collected in the village of BettiNala in Tehsil Jatoi district, Muzaffargarh in Southern Punjab used two district approaches: (i) a poverty profile, and (ii) an econometric approach in their empirical analysis. Findings revealed that Size of the household head in non-farm worker and ratio, household residence had odd ratios more than 1 which confirmed their positive relation with the probability of being poor. On the contrary, the variables Household education level, Female-male ratio, Household head's literacy rate, Participation rate, Age of the household head is farmer, Household head in agricultural laborer (-0.44), Households land holding (-0.69), Population of livestock per household, and Households physical assets all had odds ratios lower than 1, which means that the variables were negatively correlated with the probability of being poor. The study concluded that efforts should be made to improve socio-economic factors, in general transportation and demographic factors in particular to alleviate rural poverty in remote areas of Pakistan, while land should be allotted to landless households. Levies (1955) in a related manner carried out a study on Trends and Determinants of rural Poverty using a Logistic Regression Analysis of Selected Districts of Punjab. Data was analyzed using binary logistic model and head count measure. The household data set used in the analysis was made up of 14 rounds of the International Food Policy Research Institution (IFPRI) sample from 1986/87 to 1990/91, together with a sub-sample of panel data households included in the 2001/02 Pakistan Rural Household Survey (PRHS). The results showed that the chance of a household tripping to poverty increased due to increase in household size and dependency ratio, while, education, value of livestock, government road transport, remittances and farming decreased the likelihood of being poor. Another study in this line is that conducted by Yusuf (2008) on the Assessment of Poverty among Urban Farmers in Ibadan Metropolis to examine the poverty status of urban farm households. Data generated were analyzed using descriptive statistics, poverty indices and logistics regression analysis.

Findings revealed that households engaged in crop farming had the highest poverty level (50%), while mixed farming households had poverty level of 37% and livestock, 17% when they have access to good road as to move their produce to the market and urban center. The estimated logistic regression equation showed that crop farming activity engaged in and household size increase the odd ratio of being poor while age of urban farmers, educational status, years of experience in farming and livestock farming decrease the odd ratio of being poor. The study concluded that mixed farming the livestock farming are antidotes to reducing poverty among urban farmers through good transport system. Badham, (1995) carried out a study on 'Informal Self employment and Poverty Alleviation: Empirical Evidence from Taxi Riders in Nigeria'. Using Lagos and Ogun States as case study, the research adopted a multi-stage random sampling technique to enlist primary data through open-end questionnaires from 777 respondents. The reliability statistic of the data was carried out using the Cronbach alpha which gave a result of 64%. He also made use of logistic regression model where demographic and socio-economic characteristics of respondents were measured. Variables of interest included age, qualification, income generated per day, number of hours of work and major challenges of commercial bus drivers. He found out that even though bus riding is accident prone, it is a high employer of young school leavers with 89% of the bus operators earning above the national minimum wage. He thus advocated for rigorous regulations to ensure safety for operators and their passengers.

Model specification

In order to estimate the determinants of household poverty, a Tobit regression model is conceptualized. The Tobit model originates from the study of Tobin (1958) and has been extensively used by economist to measure the effect of changes in the explanatory variables (X_i) on the probability of being poor and the depth or intensity of poverty (McDonald and Moffit, 1980). The Tobit model can be used to determine the impact of the explanatory variables on the probability of being poor (nomic Growth San Fransisco).

The model measures not only the probability that a respondent is, but also the intensity of the poverty (Tobin, 1958). The Tobit regression model which is a hybrid of logit, probit and ordinary least squares is used to determine and quantify the relationship between poverty levels and selected poverty related variables among commercial bus operators for the period before they joined the business and during the business. Unlike logit and probit models, Tobit model uses information on all observations in the sample, in addition, the tobit model is superior to the logit in that, it makes use of all values and not just 0 and 1 as it is inherent in the logit model. The choice of the tobit model is also considered appropriate

for this study because, tobit regression have the dual capability of estimating the depth of the poverty (how far one is below the poverty line) and the extent of the non-poor state (how far one is above the poverty line). The model is expressed as:

$$Y_i \begin{cases} = P_1 = X_i\beta + \ell_i & \text{if } P_1 \geq P_1* -- \\ = 0 = X_i\beta + \ell_i & \text{if } P_1 \leq P_1* -- \end{cases}$$

Where:

Y_i = the dependent variable. It is discrete when the respondents are not poor a continuous when the respondents are poor.
P_i = poverty depth or intensity defined as where Z is the poverty line (2/3 of mean income) and Y_i is the mean household annual income per adult equivalent.
X_i = a vector of explanatory variables
β = a vector of the unknown coefficient
P_i* = Poverty intensity when poverty line equals income
e_i = independent distributed error term.
Unlike logit and probit models, the β coefficient is not interpreted as the effect of X_{ion} Y_i but rather as a combination of (1) the change in Y_i (poverty status) of those above the limit weighted by the probability of being above the limit and (2) the change in the probability of being above the limit, weighted by the expected value of Y_i if above (McDonald and Moffit 1980). The fitness of the model will be evaluated using the sigma (δ) and the t – statistic while the Pseudo R^2 will be used to account for the overall significance of the model.
The explanatory variables specified as determinants of poverty and their expected signs are:
Annual income (daily net income multiplied by the number of working days in a year) (−)
Cost incurred on fuel (+)
Size of household (+)

Test of the hypothesis

The null hypothesis of the study stated as; Intra-urban town-service business has not probably improved the welfare of commercial bus operators in Yobe State. It is tested using the maximum Likelihood Estimation Technique within the frame work of Tobit model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A close inspection of the results showed that, the welfare indicators are enhanced after joining town service business. Apart from the higher and significant Mc Fad R^2 of 0.57, the [EXP (β) s] which measures the likelihood of a respondent being poor are more significant.

This implies that, the probability of a respondent evading poverty is higher with the town service business than not. Similarly, the individual t_s and standard errors for the results of the period during town service business are robust indicating significance.
Focusing on the period of the town service however, the Mc Fadd R^2 of 0.57 implied that, 57% of the total variations or changes in the dependent variable (poverty) are caused by the explanatory variables (ANNI, ACMC, ACC, NMPD, LEDU, HST, COM, AGE, ND, MST) (Table 1). The LR statistic of 21.79409 which generate own-probability of 0.000161 is statistically significant and sufficient to reject the null hypothesis. Similarly, the minimum S.E of regression (0.382756) is indicative of the robustness of the estimates. On the performance of the individual variables; all the variables except NMPD, LED and AGE reported as expected, that is ANNI, ACMC, ACC, HST is negatively related to the dependent variable (POV). A unit change in each influences poverty negatively by 1.8725, 0.4187, 0.7412 and 0.4474 units respectively. The coefficient of the variable ANNI (which is average daily income from town service business) is negative (-1.8725). It has the correct sign and is statistically significant at 5% level of significance. This implies that the average daily income from town service business has reduced the probability of being poor among commercial bus operators in the study area. Incomes earned from town service business are expected to be used to access basic needs of life such as food, housing, health, clothing and others, both for oneself and his dependents. Access to these basic needs in turn clearly defines the poverty status of human beings (Table 1). The probability value (0.0081) of below 0.0500 indicates the significant nature of this variable in the model.
The variable for the health status of the respondent proxy by access to medical care (ACMC) also performed well in the model. It is negatively signed (-0.4187) in line with apriori expectation, it has a low standard error of 0.0423, yielding a Z-statistic of -9.9088 and consequently necessitating a very low probability value of 0.00158. This indicates that ACMC is statistically significant and different from zero. It implies that the more access commercial bus operators have to good medical care services, the better their health and hence their productive capacity that will earn them more incomes to stay out of poverty. Similarly, access to clothing (ACC) as a basic necessity in life and a key welfare variable in the model is correctly signed (-0.7412), implying inverse relationship with poverty. It is statistically significant given its relatively high Z-statistic (-3.4438), minimum standard errors (0.2152) and low probabilities values (0.0320). The implication is that, having access to clothing is an indication of the respondent meeting his basic need and by that means non poor. The study also used house type of the respondents' proxies by (HSP) to ascertain the level of relative security and comfort vis-à-vis the kind

Table 1: Tobit result for during town service business.

Dependent Variable: Z					
Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	z-Statistic	Prob.	EXP(β)
ANNI	-1.872530	0.253420	-7.389038	0.008070	6.5047
ACMC	-0.418734	0.042259	-9.908753	0.001575	0.6578
ACC	-0.741242	0.215241	-3.443777	0.031980	2.0985
NMPD	1.874501	0.333081	5.627763	0.008700	1.5175
LEDU	0.212107	0.028824	7.358694	0.006745	0.8088
HST	-0.447399	0.050444	-8.869221	0.004474	1.5642
COM	0.126956	0.052059	2.438695	0.147184	1.1353
AGE	1.043688	0.327004	3.191667	0.038937	0.3521
ND	0.293185	0.130167	2.252376	0.137800	1.3406
MST	1.854016	1.358701	1.364550	0.172400	0.1566
C	1.722914	1.463197	1.177500	0.131008	0.1785
McFadden R-squared	0.573341	LR statistic		21.79409	
S.E. of regression	0.382756	Prob. (LR statistic)		0.000161	

of houses respondents live in. The variable (HSP) upon estimation reported negative coefficient (-0.4474) implying inverse relationship with poverty status of the respondents. The minimum values of the standard errors (0.050) coupled with the high Z-statistic produced low probabilities value (0.0045) far below the critical value of 0.05 required for achieving significance. Hence, the variable is statistically significant and its inclusion in the model is appropriate. On the other hand, NMPD, LEDU, COM, AGE, ND, and MST are positively related to the dependent variable (POV). A unit change in each influences poverty positively by 1.8745, 0.2121, 0.1270, 1.0437, 0.2932 and 1.8540 units respectively. By holding all variables constant, poverty will increase by the magnitude of the constant term (1.7229). The cost of maintenance (COM) variable which is measures the amount spent on the day to day up keep of the buses by the operators is positively related to the dependent variable (poverty). A unit increase in the amount spent on maintenance of the buses reduces income and consequently leads to increase in the poverty status of the respondents by 0.1270 unit. Since the interaction between the standard errors and the Z-statistic failed to produce a probability value of below 0.05, the variable is said to be insignificant. Similarly, a unit change in the age of the respondents (AGE) affects the respondent poverty status positively. That is, as the town service operators get older, their strength fail and they become inactive on the business there by reducing their income level and increasing poverty by 1.0437 units. The minimum standard errors (0.3270) and high Z-statistic of the variable (3.1917) combined with low probability value of 0.0389 indicate the significance of the model.

The number of dependents a town service operator takes care of is a critical variable in this study. Generally, dependency connotes a leakage to income and hence increases the probability of being poor among town service operators.

Thus in our estimation, the coefficient of dependency level (ND) is positive and correctly signed (0.2932). It has a standard error of 0.1302 with a Z-statistic value of 52.2524 which combined to produce a probability value of 0.1378 which is obviously outside the acceptable region thereby making the variable insignificant. The variable for the marital status (MST) of the respondent is also crucial in determining the poverty level and welfare condition of the respondents. A married respondent is likely to have more responsibilities than a single respondent. The logit result revealed a positive relationship (1.8540) with poverty level of the respondent. The variable is insignificant given its high probability value (0.1724) as a function of the high standard errors and low Z-statistic. The number of meals taken per day (NMPD) and the level of education (LEDU) of the respondents negated the a priori expectations. However, since tobit regression works better with odds than proportions, the response of the dependent variable (poverty status) to the explanatory variables in the model interpreted using the

odds ratios [EXP(β)s**]** which is simply the ratio of the proportion of the two possible outcomes. In this regards, a unit change in a unit increase in annual income (ANNI), access to medical care (ACMC), access to clothing (ACC) and house type (HST) of the respondents would reduce their likelihood of being poor by 650.5%, 65.8%, 209.9% and 156.4% respectively.

While a unit increase in cost of maintenance (COM), number of dependents (ND), marital status (MST) and age (AGE) of the respondents would increase their likelihood of being poor by 113.5%, 134%, 15.7% and 35.2% respectively. Contrary to expectations, the number of meals taken per day (NMPD) as well as the level of education (LEDU) of the respondents would increase their likelihood of being poor. With the intercept odds ratio of 0.1785, the likelihood of the respondent being poor will increase by about 18% if all the variables are fixed to

zero or held constant.

Conclusion

On the basis that the null hypothesis for this research study was rejected, it is apt to conclude that commercial bus activity has reduced poverty in the study area. The activity has exhibited a clear and clean potential for poverty reduction in urban communities. Thus for the purpose of effective poverty reduction through bus business, the constraints identified by this study must be removed or curtailed to their ebb and the recommendations made herein be addressed. These measures will make commercial bus more attractive and profitable and hence the poverty scourge in the study area will be reduced.

Recommendations

In line with the findings of this research study the following policy recommendations will help to reposition commercial town service as a more veritable tool for poverty reduction in the study area and even elsewhere.
(i) Susceptibility to accidents has made commercial bus business very risky and rather unattractive to many people. Thus the root causes of incessant accident must be removed or at least curtailed to the ebb. First of all, the FRSC and must ensure that every bus drivers are properly trained, tested and duly issued a genuine driver's license before they start operation. This will reduce the possibility of minors driving buses and make room for only matured-minded and well trained adults to be engaged in the business.
(ii) The relevant government agencies should maintain the roads and keep them in good conditions while they mount necessary road signs. The ministry of environment must extend the anti-free range laws to cover all roads applied by town service operators in order to save drivers the trouble of running into wandering animals.
(iii) The problem of fuel scarcity and arbitrary price hikes must be stopped by the government. Government agencies like the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) must ensure full availability of PMS and the Department for Petroleum Products Price Regulation (DPPPR) must ensure strict adherence to the prevailing fixed prices of the product. In the same manner, the State government should also inaugurate a petroleum products prices monitoring committee to check the excesses of oil marketers in the study area.   This will ameliorate the problem of fuel hoarding, scarcity and price hikes.
(iv) To eliminate possible disagreements that may arise over prices or fees after services may have been rendered, tickets should be introduced. The union should issue out tickets to their members so that once a passenger agrees on a fee for a particular trip, he/she pays and obtains a ticket before the journey commences.

This will eliminate possible arguments that dishonest passengers may wish to engage them as payments would be made before service (Eyong, 1998).

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