Poverty is referred to as deprivation, social exclusion and inequality in resource distribution. This paper however analyzed the outlook of poverty reduction efforts implemented over the past years. Using secondary data analysis, the paper revealed the outlook to poverty reduction, successes and recommended that poverty should be tackled at the local level using local indicators.

**Keywords:** Poverty Reduction Outlook, Sustainable Development.

**INTRODUCTION**

Poverty is one of the most social problems in the world especially in the developing countries (Deguara, 2008). However, it continues unresolved despite many efforts by national and international community (Atinmo et al., 2009). Bojo and Reddy (2002) stated that poverty is not an individual characteristic, but rather characterizes the situation in which individuals or groups of people find themselves at a point in time, making poverty an intractable problem for social scientists and policymakers.

Poverty is detrimental to sustainable development and it encourages negative and unsustainable natural resource exploitation practices (Ashiomanedu, 2008). This paper however examined the historical trend of poverty discussions with reference to the developing countries.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Simon (1999) stated that poverty was perceived on the basis of subsistence needs. Problems derived from poverty excesses included the collapse of social and political structures resulting in an increase in crime, deprivation and dependency as well as increasing inequalities among individuals, groups and regions (Thompson, 1981).

Poverty further emphasized the need for considering equitable distribution of national wealth. Poverty however is explained as a pronounced deprivation in well-being characterized by hunger, lack of shelter and clothing, sicknesses, diseases and illiteracy. Poor people are particularly vulnerable to adverse events outside their control and are often treated badly by state institutions and society as well as being excluded from voice and power in those institutions.

**Concept of Poverty**

Pillari and Newsome (1998) claimed that poverty can be defined as a structural problem causing homelessness, unemployment and oppression. Sen (2000) viewed poverty in terms of poor living, rather than just as lowness of incomes and nothing else. Poverty is more so basically about inadequate or lack of resources which makes participation in political processes and socio-economic activities impossible (Whelan, 2007).

Nyasulu (2010) argued that poverty should be viewed as a condition that undermined individuals’ dignity and further indicated that poverty is not what a member state says or thinks, or what a particular culture accepts. This situation aggravates the poverty conditions and makes the survival of the poor more difficult and uncertain (World Bank, 2001).

The concept of poverty has also been defined in ‘absolute’ and ‘relative’ terms (Noble et al., 2004 and World Bank, 2000). The concept of ‘absolute’ poverty refers to poverty that exists independently of any reference group, and does not depend on the general living standards of the society in which it is conceived (Noble et al., 2004). Noble et al., (2004) further viewed ‘absolute’ poverty as a situation to a specific locality or group, not a globally accepted pattern of life, and thus poverty solutions must be context specific. UN (1995) however referred absolute’ poverty as a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information.
Absolute poverty is the situation where poverty is usually measured by the value, in real terms, of a given level of goods ensuring some form of minimum subsistence, that is, the value of basic food or the minimum income required to have decent lives (Bellu, 2005).

**Poverty Reduction Approaches**

However, over-concentration on economic growth and development to the neglect of socio-political factors impeded poverty reduction strategy (World Bank, 2000). The MDGs approach advocates for the empowerment and involvement of local community in development decision-making process, involvement of national and regional governments and the pursuit of growth oriented projects (Singleton, 2003). The period was characterized by improvement in governance and institutions as issues of vulnerability at the local and national levels moved to the center stage of global discussion (World Bank, 2000).

The persistence of poverty has been largely due to lack of consideration of local poverty issues, and inappropriate implementation and management strategies which led Singleton (2003) to define poverty reduction as an approach that requires interventions involving considerable social and cultural change. Poverty reduction has been a sustainable development approach in many countries especially the developing countries over the past decades (Todaro and Smith, 2006).

**DISCUSSIONS**

Cobbinah et al., (2011) asserted that the understanding of poverty at the local level as well as strategies to improve the poverty situation in developing countries is important in achieving sustainable development. With the definitions of poverty revolving around deprivation in developing countries, poverty reduction in Africa should not be centered on satisfying international conventions and policies but improving the well-being of the poor through quality education, employment opportunities, good health, participation, environmental awareness education and the implementation of locally oriented development programs (Cobbinah et al., 2011).

**CONCLUSION**

Given that poverty in the developing countries largely revolved around deprivation and lack of access to basic services, governments and non-governmental organizations should direct efforts towards meeting the basic needs of the people. Additionally, governments of the developing countries should be committed to ensuring stable political and economic environments which are necessary ingredients for poverty reduction and sustainable development.

**REFERENCES**