

The World Bank Poverty Line and Marital Forms in Nigeria's South Western States of Osun and Oyo

Ponnle Solomon Lawson

Department of General Studies,
Federal Polytechnic, Ede,
Nigeria
papaosha@yahoo.com

Abstract: *This study investigated the level of poverty in families with both monogamous and polygynous marital forms in Nigeria's South Western States of Osun and Oyo based on the World Bank poverty line of US\$1.25 at 2005 Purchasing-Power Parity (PPP). The study employed survey involving questionnaire administration as its method of data collection. In all, 30 structured questionnaires each were administered on the household heads of families with both monogamous and polygynous marital forms in each of the in the study areas. The data was analyzed with the use of descriptive statistics tool of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software programme which presented percentages and frequency tables of the rate of poverty at the levels of families with both monogamous and polygynous marital forms based on the World Bank poverty line of US\$1.25 at 2005 PPP. The results generated by the SPSS revealed that while 16.7% of the sampled families with monogamous marital form were living below US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 per day in Osun State, 20.0% of the sampled families with monogamous marital form were living below US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 per day in Oyo State. The results further revealed that while 70.0% of the sampled families with polygynous marital form were living below US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 per day in Osun State, 66.7% of the sampled families with polygynous marital form were living below US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 per day in Oyo State. The results indicated that the rate of poverty is higher in families with polygynous marital form based on the World Bank poverty line of US\$1.25 at 2005 PPP in both Nigeria's South Western States of Osun and Oyo.*

Keywords: *World Bank, Poverty Line, Marital Forms, Monogamy, Polygamy, Polygyny*

1. INTRODUCTION

The World Bank has set international poverty lines over the years. In 1990, the World Bank set the international poverty line at US\$1 a day per person at 1985 Purchasing-Power Parity (PPP.) In 2000, the international poverty line was adjusted by the World Bank to US\$1.08 a day per person at 1993 PPP, and in 2008, it was jerked up to US\$1.25 a day per person at 2005 PPP. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, the incidence of poverty is still very high in Nigeria, the proportion of people living in below a dollar per day in the country stood at 51.6% in 2004 and rose to 61.2% in 2010 (NBS, 2005; 2012). This is a percentage increase of 18.6%. In Nigeria's South Western States of Osun and Oyo, the proportion of people living below a dollar per day in the states stood at 22.66% and 19.28% respectively in 2004 and rose to 38.1% and 51.8% respectively in 2010 (NBS, 2005; 2012). In Osun State, this is a percentage increase of 68.1% while in Oyo State, it is a percentage increase of 167.6%.

The analysis of the poverty profiles of Nigeria and the States therein by the National Bureau of Statistics was not broken down to analyse the incidence of poverty in the country and the states along the line of the family institution based on either the family types or the marital forms. This study is therefore justified as it investigates the level of poverty in the study areas based on the World Bank poverty line of US\$1.25 to provide new findings on the poverty profiles of Nigeria's South Western States of Osun and Oyo.

This study is divided into five segments. The first segment gives a brief description of the World Bank poverty line; the second segment gives a brief account of the marital forms in Nigeria's South Western States of Osun and Oyo; the third segment discusses the methodology used for the

study; the fourth segment analyses the results generated from the study and discusses the generated results; and the final segment states the conclusion of the study and proffers some suggestions as to how the incidence of poverty can be reduced in the study areas and in Nigeria as a whole.

2. THE WORLD BANK POVERTY LINE

Poverty line which in practice is usually higher in developed countries than in developing countries refers to the minimum level of income considered to be adequate in a particular country (Hagenaars and van Praag, 1985; Hagenaars and de Vos, 1988; Ravallion, 1992). The idea of poverty line was popularized by Charles Booth at the turn of the twentieth century by setting the line of between 10 and 20 shillings per week as the minimum amount required by a family of between four and five people to subsist in London, Britain (Gillie, 1996; Boyle, 2000). In his work in 1901, Seebohm Rowntree investigated the level of poverty in York, Britain by talking to working class and poor people in the area to find out what their money were expended on, as he saw poverty in terms of “families whose total earnings are insufficient to obtain the minimum necessities for the maintenance of merely physical efficiency” (Gillie, 1996; Boyle, 2000, p. 86). In this work of Rowntree, poverty line was drawn in terms of a minimum weekly amount of money that was “necessary to enable families to secure the necessities of a healthy life,” which included shelter, food, clothing, light, fuel and also personal and household items (Rowntree, 1901, p. 295). The findings of Rowntree which confirmed that as much as 27.84% of the people of York were living below his calculated poverty line aligned with that Charles Booth and cleared the air on a common view at that time that chronic poverty was confined only to London ((Rowntree, 1901, p. 296).

In the modern day sense, poverty line is determined by finding the total cost of all essential resources that an average human adult consumes in a year (Ravallion, 2008). In 1990, international poverty line was set by the World Bank at US\$1 a day per person at 1985 PPP, that is, at Purchasing-Power Parity based on 1985 prices. Purchasing power parity (PPP) is defined by the World Bank as “a method of measuring the relative purchasing power of different countries’ currencies over the same types of goods and services. Because goods and services may cost more in one country than in another, PPP allows us to make more accurate comparisons of standards of living across countries” (WHO, 2001; Teichman, 2012). According to Ravallion (2002, p. 1), the US\$1 international poverty line has been chosen by the World Bank since the 1990 World Development Report to “measure global poverty by the standards of what poverty means in poor countries.” In 2000, the international poverty line was adjusted by the World Bank to US\$1.08 a day per person at 1993 PPP, and in 2008, it was revised to US\$1.25 a day per person at 2005 PPP (Chen and Ravallion 2000; Ravallion, Chen, and Sangraula, 2009).

This one-dimensional, money-metric conceptualization of poverty like the US\$1 a day per person has been criticized for a number of reasons. It is criticized on the premise that the World Bank’s description is puzzling in that the measurement of poverty based on US\$1 a day is in a supposed exchange rate terms under which the PPP basically bases the poverty line on a similarity or equivalent of what could be bought by a person in the US with US\$1 (Nye, Reddy and Pogge, 2002). In other words, criticism of US\$1 a day poverty line is based on the premise that there is no reflection of how far US\$1 could go in local currency as it seemingly reflects what US\$1 could buy in the US adjusted in conformity to the domestic price levels of other countries (Lipton, 1996). Also, there is no consistency in the measures used for the PPP, for example, the US\$1 at 1993 PPP emerged from an International Comparison Project which covered 110 countries; whereas the initial US\$1 at 1985 PPP emerged from the World Penn Tables which covered 60 countries (Deaton, 2000). Criticism of Reddy and Pogge (2002) is based on the premise that there cannot be conclusive accurate measurements in the income-based calculations of the World Bank which is methodologically deficient because the choice of the Bank’s international poverty line is arbitrary and it does not correlate to an understandable and meaningful basic conception of poverty which revolve around meeting basic needs such as nutrition or shelter by the poor. They explain that income poverty represents a single aspect of deprivation, therefore, a reliable poverty line should also account for other determinants such as malnutrition, health services access and a lowest set of basic needs which the money-metric poverty line fails to do. Specifically, Reddy and Pogge (2002) attack Ravallion’s assertion that the reason behind the choice of US\$1 a day

international poverty line has basically been about measuring global poverty by the standards of what poverty means in poor countries on the premise that there is no consistency in the correlation of the international poverty line to that of poor countries as there exist disparities in the official poverty lines of these countries with the poverty lines of some coming far below the set line and others going far above it. They again attack Ravallion's assertion on the premise that the PPP estimates fail to correctly define local currency equivalents through space or time as they are deficient of inter-temporal and inter-spacial comparability which renders the yearly exercise of calculating the global poverty estimates using current PPP exchange rates somewhat pointless and inexact. According to them, the reflection of PPP does not establish the actual purchases of poor people as they are based on average prices of all goods which include such luxuries like automobiles or video recorder. Further attacking Ravallion's assertion, they argue that there exists false sense of precision as a result of limited data used to describe national income or consumption levels and the discrepancies of country to country comparisons. According to them, an inaccurate calculation from such limited data aptly generates confused and erroneous deductions and conclusions about global poverty estimates. This assertion is based on the results of some alternative calculations they conducted which suggested biases that pointed to a huge underestimation of the global poverty estimate. These identified shortcomings notwithstanding; the money-metric or income-based approach to describing poverty has been sustained for years because of its simplicity and applicability to all countries, and also because it can be easily remembered (Reddy and Pogge, 2002; Deaton 2000). According to Deaton (2000), dealing with the deficiencies of the PPP exchange requires disregarding a method that bases poverty levels on a general PPP exchange rate for a method that is particularly relevant to an appropriate bundle of goods the poor requires meeting their needs, in order to establish a poverty line with greater meaning from the resulting prices. He further states that for accuracy, it is desirable for poverty lines to be brought up to the present date and check same against national poverty counts to liberate poverty estimates from inconsistencies of the global commodity prices which efficiently changes PPP exchange rates definition and whose shifting basis is not advantageous but rather embarrassing.

3. MARITAL FORMS IN NIGERIA'S SOUTH WESTERN STATES OF OSUN AND OYO

Usually, family commences via two main marital forms which can either be endogamous or exogamous; it is endogamous when marriage is permitted or prescribed within a certain kin-group or social group where the members or the group are allowed to marry only within the group but not to one's brother or sister; it is exogamous when members of such group are permitted to marry outside the group of which helps to bind various groups together via relationships, first through marriage and subsequently, through blood when a child is or children are born. These marital forms are majorly structured into monogamy and polygamy; while monogamy refers to a marriage where one man is married to one wife at a time, that is, "the practice and principle of marrying only once," polygamy whose Greek translation is "many married" refers to a marriage where there are more than two partners at a time (Preble, 1962, p. 127; Zeiten, 2008, p. 3). Monogamy according to Wojtyla (1981) is an institutional union of two people who are in love with each other; it also used to be an encompassment of an ethical personalistic norm, and thus qualifying it as the sole means of making true human love possible. As for polygamy, it can take two forms which are polygyny and polyandry; polygyny refers to a marriage setting where a man marries more than one wife at a time, that is, the same man is husband to all the women while polyandry (which no known society currently practices) refers to a marriage of one woman to two or more men at a time; polyandry used to be found among both the poor and elite in societies with insufficient environmental resources who held the belief that it capped population growth and boomed child survival; or societies which held the belief that to survive an unpleasant environment resulting from scarcity of available land, more than one husband would provide more food (Ware, 1979; Goode, 1963; Goldstein, 1978, Stone, 2009; Cassidy and Lee, 1989). A Christian family exemplifies monogamy as it is consistent of only one wife and one husband at a time. Indigenous family and Islamic family exemplify polygamy; while the former is consistent of more than one wife married to one husband at a time, the latter may not consist of more than four wives married to one husband at a time.

In Nigeria's South Western States of Osun and Oyo, the marital structure is characterized by both monogamy and polygyny; the Christianly structured type where one wife is married to one husband at a time comes under the monogamous setting while the Islamic structured type where not more than four wives are married to a single husband at a time, and the indigenously structured type where there exist more than a single wife married to a single husband at a time come under the polygynous setting. The last two take the form of both co-residential polygyny and serial-monogamy and they are common habits and customs in Nigeria (NpoC, 1998). The co-residential polygyny refers to a situation where a man dwells in the same housing unit with his wives while the serial monogamy accommodates the 'outside wife' or 'outside wives' types under which a married man dwelling in the same housing unit with his wife or wives (monogamy or polygyny) has extra wife or wives outside of his monogamous or polygynous home; this makes him an unsettled husband to the women as he makes himself rotational amongst them in terms of sexual and financial relationships. More often than not, the women involved in the outside relationship bear the family name of the man and the man's authentic wife or wives is/are aware of the 'outside wife' or 'outside wives.' Serial monogamy has seemingly got the earmark of polygyny in its reproductive outcomes as a man has got the ability to make use of the reproductive lifespan of more than a woman (Jokela, et al., 2010).

4. METHODOLOGY

The data for this study was collected primarily relying on household survey. Specifically, the study employed the questionnaire administration as its type of survey and the mode of questionnaire administration adopted by the study was the face-to-face questionnaire administration. The structured questionnaires were administered on the household head of each family. For the study, the samples included 30 families with monogamous marital form and 30 families with polygynous marital form in each of Nigeria's South Western States of Osun and Oyo, and a non-random sampling in form of a pseudo-random sampling method was used. The data for the study was collected in December, 2013.

The standard used to measure poverty based on the World Bank poverty line was family household earnings of less than US\$1.25 a day which is the international poverty line defined by the World Bank (Ravallion, Chen and Sangraula, 2009), and investigation was based on the PPP exchange rate. To determine the daily US\$1.25 per day poverty line based on the PPP exchange rate, the figures of the international market rate exchange change of ₦162.35 (which was the international market exchange rate of US Dollar to Nigerian Naira for December 31, 2013 according to XE Currency Tables (2014)) was cross-multiplied by US\$0.50 which was the equivalent of US\$1 in Nigeria as at the time of the conduct of this study (World Bank, 2014). At the PPP exchange rate, US\$1.25 a day per person was calculated thus:

$$\text{If } 1 = 0.50, \text{ then, } 1.25 \text{ would be: } 1.25 \times 0.50$$

This equalled to US\$0.625 which meant that US\$1.25 was equivalent to US\$0.625 (₦101.47) a day per person at the PPP exchange rate. In a month, it equalled to ₦3,086.38 (US\$19.01) per person, and in a year, it equalled to ₦37,036.55 (US\$228.13) per person. The poverty line at the family household level was calculated by adding up all the income the family household members receive from all sources supplied by each respondent, that is, each household head. This was followed by converting it to daily family household income, and dividing the total by the family household size. The results were arrived at by using US\$0.625 (₦101.47) as poverty line at the PPP exchange rate and any family households with either monogamous or polygynous marital form whose levels of income were less than ₦101.47 (US\$0.625) a day after computation were classified to be living below the World Bank poverty line of US\$0.625 (₦101.47) a day.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study used the descriptive statistics tool of a quantitative software programme known as the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 16 for analysis. The software programme analyzed the data collected by using descriptive statistics to present percentages and frequency tables of the levels of poverty in families with both monogamous and polygynous marital forms in the study areas based on the World Bank poverty line of US\$0.625 (₦101.47) a day. The results generated by the SPSS are given tables 1 and 2 below:

The World Bank Poverty Line and Marital Forms in Nigeria's South Western States of Osun and Oyo

Table 1. Nigeria's South Western States of Osun and Oyo - Families with Monogamous Marital Form

Families with Monogamous Marital Form	Osun State		Oyo State	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/ ₦101.47	5	16.7	6	20.0
US\$1.25 (US\$0.625)/ ₦101.47 and above	25	83.3	24	80.0
Total	30	100.0	30	100.0

Table 2. Nigeria's South Western States of Osun and Oyo - Families with Polygynous Marital Form

Families with Polygynous Marital Form	Osun State		Oyo State	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/ ₦101.47	21	70.0	20	66.7
US\$1.25 (US\$0.625)/ ₦101.47 and above	9	30.0	10	33.3
Total	30	100.0	30	100.0

Table 1 above shows that based on the sample of the study for Osun State which was composed of 30 families with monogamous marital form, 5 families constituting 16.7% were living below US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 per day while 25 families constituting 83.3% were living on US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 and above per day. The same table shows that based on the sample of the study for Oyo State which was composed of 30 families with monogamous marital form, 6 families constituting 20.0% were living below US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 per day while 24 families constituting 80.0% were living on US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 and above per day.

Table 2 above shows that based on the sample of the study for Osun State which was composed of 30 families with polygynous marital form, 21 families constituting 70.0% were living below US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 per day while 9 families constituting 30.0% were living on US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 and above per day. The same table shows that based on the sample of the study for Oyo State which was composed of 30 families with polygynous marital form, 20 families constituting 66.7% were living below US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 per day while 10 families constituting 33.3% were living on US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 and above per day.

Comparison between the Nigeria's South Western states of Osun and Oyo with respect to living below the World Bank poverty line based on families with monogamous marital form reveals that the rate of families with monogamous marital form living below US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 per day in Oyo State is 19.8% higher than that of Osun State while the rate of families with monogamous marital form living on US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 and above per day in Osun State is 4.1% higher than that of Oyo State. Comparison between these states with respect to living below the World Bank poverty line based on families with polygynous marital form reveals that the rate of families with polygynous marital form living below US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 per day in Osun State is 4.9% higher than that of Oyo State while the rate of families with polygynous marital form living on US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 and above per day in Oyo State is 11% higher than that of Osun State.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Having analyzed the collected data in the study areas and having got results from the analyses, the study concludes that the incidence of poverty is higher in families with polygynous marital form than in families with monogamous marital form in Nigeria's South Western States of Osun and Oyo based on the World Bank poverty line of US\$1.25 (US\$0.625 PPP)/₦101.47 a day per person. In view of these important findings by this study, it is recommended that the state governments of the study areas and the Nigerian government as a whole should provide social

security schemes to improve the welfare of its citizenry particularly, those in poverty as this would go a long way to close the gap between the rich and the poor within the states and the country as a whole. The schemes should be introduced in both urban and rural areas of the country and should include giving monetary assistance to the poor to enable them meet their housing, feeding, and clothing needs and also gainful employments should be provided for adults of all family households to enable them meet the basic needs of life. On the part of the people that constitute families with both monogamous and polygynous marital forms who are individually deficient or lazy, it is recommended that they should do away with all forms individual deficiencies and laziness that are not allowing them and the members of their families to be off the poverty trap.

REFERENCES

- Boyle, D, 2000. *The Tyranny of Numbers: Why County Can't Make Us Happy*. Bethesda: HarperCollins.
- Cassidy, M.L. and Lee, G.R., 1989. *The Study of Polyandry: A Critique and Synthesis*, *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 20(1), pp. 1-11.
- Chen, S. and Ravallion, M., 2000. *How Did the World's Poorest Fare in the 1990s?*, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, (2409).
- Deaton, A.; 2000. *Counting the World's Poor: Problems and Possible Solutions*, Research Programme in Development Studies, Princeton University.
- Goldstein, M.C., 1978. *Pahari and Tibetan Polyandry Revisited*, *Ethnology* 17(3), pp. 325–327.
- Goode, W.J., 1963. *World Revolution and Family Patterns*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gillie, A., 1996. *The Origin of the Poverty Line*, *Economic History Review*, 49(4), pp. 715-730.
- Hagenaars, A. and De Vos, K., 1988. *The Definition and Measurement of Poverty*, *Journal of Human Resources*, 23(2), pp. 211-221.
- Hagenaars, A. and Van Praag, B., 1985. *A Synthesis of Poverty Line Definitions*. *Review of Income and Wealth*, 31(2), pp. 139-154.
- Jokela M., Rotkirch A., Rickard I., Pettay J. and Lummaa V., 2010. *Serial Monogamy Increases Reproductive Success in Men But Not in Women*, *Behavioural Ecology* 21(5), pp. 906–912.
- Lipton, M., 1996. *Successes in Anti-Poverty*, *Issues in Development Discussion Paper 8*, Development and Technical Co-operation Department, ILO, Geneva.
- NBS (National Bureau of Statistics), 2005. *Poverty Profile for Nigeria*. Lagos: NBS (National Bureau of Statistics).
- NBS (National Bureau of Statistics), 2012. *Nigeria Poverty Profile 2010*. Abuja: NBS (National Bureau of Statistics).
- NpoC (National Population Commission), 1998. *1991 Population Census of the Federal Republic of Nigeria: Analytical Report at the National Level*. Abuja: National Population Commission.
- Nye, H., Reddy, S.G. and Pogge, T.W., 2002. *What is Poverty? In response to Globalization: Stiglitz's Case*. New York Review of Books.
- Preble, R.C., ed., 1962. *Monogamy*. *Britannica World Language Dictionary*. Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica Incorporated, p. 1275.
- Revallion, M., 1992. *Poverty Comparisons. A Guide to Concepts and Measures Living Standard Measurement*, Working Paper No. 88, Washington, World Bank.
- Ravallion, M., 2002. *How Not to Count the Poor? A Reply to Reddy and Pogge*, World Bank, Development Research Group, Washington, DC.
- Ravallion, M., 2008. *Poverty Lines*. In Durlauf and L.E. Blume (eds.) *The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics*. 2nd ed. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ravallion, M; Chen, S. and Sangraula, P., 2009. *Dollar a Day Revisited*, *The World Bank Economic Review*, 23(2), pp. 163-184.
- Reddy, S.G. and Pogge, T.W., 2002. *How Not to Count the Poor! - A Reply to Ravallion*. Available at: <www.socialanalysis.org> [Accessed 16 January 2014].
- Rowntree, B.S., 1901. *Poverty: A Study of Town Life*. London: Macmillan.
- Stone, L., 2009. *Kinship and Gender: An Introduction*. 4th ed. Boulder: Westview.
- Teichman, J., 2012. *Social Forces and States: Poverty and Distributional Outcomes in South Korea, Chile, and Mexico*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

The World Bank Poverty Line and Marital Forms in Nigeria's South Western States of Osun and Oyo

- Ware, H., 1979. Polygamy: Women's Views in a Transitional Society, Nigeria, 1975. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 41(1), pp. 185-195.
- WHO (World Health Organization), 2001. *Macroeconomics and Health: Investing in Health for Economic Development*. Geneva: WHO (World Health Organization).
- Wojtyla, K., 1981. *Love and Responsibility*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press.
- World Bank, 2014. PPP Conversion Factor (GDP) to Market Exchange Rate Ratio. Available at: <<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/PA.NUS.PPPC.RF>> [Accessed 31 August 2014].
- XE Currency Tables, 2014. Current and Historical Rate Tables. Available at: <<http://www.xe.com/currencytables/?from=USD&date=2014-09-06>> [Accessed 31 August 2014].
- Zeitzen, M.K., 2008. *Polygamy: A Cross-Cultural Analysis*. Oxford: Berg Publishers.