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Dissertation Abstract

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(Multidimensional Poverty in Nigeria: A Household-Level Analysis Focusing on Vulnerable Groups.
ナイジェリアにおける多次元貧困―脆弱層に焦点をあてた家計レベルの分析)

<abstract>

This thesis provides an in-depth exploration of multidimensional poverty and the effects of school feeding programs (SFPs) in Nigeria, structured across five comprehensive chapters.

Chapter one establishes the foundation by detailing the background, significance, contributions to existing knowledge, and originality of the thesis. It highlights the necessity of addressing poverty through a multifaceted lens, recognizing the intricate and interconnected factors that contribute to poverty. The chapter underscores the importance of innovative and context-specific approaches to foster sustainable development and poverty alleviation.

Chapter two delves into the socioeconomic context of poverty and development policy in Nigeria. It provides a comprehensive overview of historical trends, current challenges, and policy responses. The chapter examines the evolution of poverty in Nigeria, identifying key factors such as economic fluctuations, political instability, and demographic changes. It outlines research questions aimed at understanding these complexities and emphasizes the imperative for holistic, context-specific strategies for poverty reduction and development. The chapter highlights the importance of integrating various dimensions of poverty, including health, education, and housing, to formulate effective policies.

Chapter three presents the core research on the dynamics of multidimensional poverty in Nigeria from 2003 to 2018, with a particular focus on women and children. Using the first-order dominance (FOD) methodology and data from the Demographic and Health Surveys conducted in 2003, 2008, 2013, and 2018, this study offers a detailed analysis of poverty trends over approximately two decades. The findings reveal a persistent north-south poverty gap and significant variability in poverty rankings within regions. The study uncovers divergent trends between household-level FOD results and income expenditure-based poverty headcounts, suggesting a temporal lag in FOD rankings. This lag is attributed to the slower pace of change in multidimensional indicators compared to income. Additionally, the analysis identifies unique trends in child and female poverty, emphasizing the influence of cultural differences and regional disparities. The chapter concludes with policy implications, advocating for prolonged and diverse poverty alleviation measures that address the unique challenges faced by different demographic groups.

Chapter four evaluates the impact of SFPs on the educational and health outcomes of Nigerian children aged 5-12 years. It provides a comprehensive analysis of SFPs' effects on school attendance, illness rates, and household spending on education and health. The findings indicate a positive association between SFPs and school attendance, with significant impact in the northern region. However, the impact on child illness rates is mixed, with no significant differences between boys and girls. The analysis also reveals that participation in SFPs correlates negatively with educational expenditures, but no significant relationship is found with household health expenditures. These results suggest that while SFPs benefit children's school attendance, they do not significantly alter family spending behaviors to enhance these benefits. The chapter discusses the broader implications of these findings, emphasizing the need for region-specific strategies and greater parental involvement to maximize the effectiveness of SFPs. It also highlights the importance of considering cultural and environmental factors in policy design to address local challenges effectively.

Chapter five integrates the findings from the previous chapters and presents the study's conclusions. It emphasizes the necessity of context-aware policies to address multidimensional poverty effectively and improve child welfare in Nigeria. The chapter underscores the importance of tailoring policy interventions to the unique socioeconomic contexts of different regions to achieve more equitable and effective outcomes. It also acknowledges the

limitations of the study, such as the lack of detailed data on factors influencing school attendance and children's health, and suggests areas for further research to fully understand and address these issues. The chapter concludes by advocating for innovative and inclusive policy frameworks that prioritize the most vulnerable populations and foster sustainable development.

In summary, this thesis underscores the complexity of poverty in Nigeria and the critical role of targeted, multidimensional approaches in poverty alleviation and development policy. The thesis highlights the importance of comprehensive and context-specific strategies that address the unique challenges faced by different demographic groups, emphasizing the need for prolonged and diverse poverty alleviation measures. It also calls for greater parental involvement and region-specific strategies to maximize the effectiveness of SFPs and improve child welfare in Nigeria.