

## **Poverty Alleviation and Agricultural Management Policies in Nasarawa State of Nigeria: Lessons from the Roots and Tuber Crops Expansion for Increased Food Production (1996-2011)**

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**Abstract :** The problems of socio-economic development have been a major challenge bedeviling the Nigerian post-colonial state since her political independence from Britain in October 1, 1960. Critics have argued that the dilemma of Nigeria's economic survival started since the early 1970s when the agricultural sector which supposedly was the economic mainstay has been literally substituted with the gains of the oil petro-dollars coming from the foreign exchange earnings. Agriculture therefore, which used to be a major player in terms of human and national upliftment in Nigeria have been given a back seat while oil and gas has taken over the front burner in virtually every aspect of Nigeria's national life. This study is therefore an exposition of the efforts of the Nasarawa state government in reversing the dangerous trend in which the over reliance on oil wealth has caused to persons, individuals and groups in terms of the prevailing levels of poverty and other attendant vices therein. The study focuses on the management policies of the various regimes in the state since its inception in 1996, with particular reference to the regime types-military and civilian alike in propelling the needed policy change, which could transform the economy in line with international best practices. Particular emphasis will be paid to the BADA-KOSHI agricultural scheme whose interest was to recover the lost glory of rural agriculture through series of roots and tuber expansion, and particularly such crops as yam minisettes, cassava, sweet potatoes and coco-yam, respectively. The paper covers the period between 1996 -2011, a period considered to be critical in the agricultural revolution of the state. The study adopts a theoretical approach via secondary methods of analysis for the efficient explanations of the burning issues under consideration. The paper sums up with policy recommendations and conclusion.

**Keywords :** poverty, agriculture, Badakoshi, rural policy management

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