

Zakat and Poverty Alleviation:
A Lesson for the Fiscal Policy Makers in Nigeria

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Abstract

In spite of her natural endowment and resources, most Nigerians are still languishing in abject poverty. Seventy percent of Nigerians live below poverty line and there is nothing to write home about in all her sectors. Both the military and civilian governments in the country, in their bid to alleviate poverty among its citizenry have come up with numerous programmes. There are equally some non-governmental organizations established for the same purpose. With these efforts, the problem of poverty still persists in the country. It is identified that the secular orientation of Nigerians has influenced them to view material conditions as the only ingredients of well being of the society. We thus feel strongly that our government could borrow a leaf from the institution of zakat as enshrined in the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet and practiced by the companions. This ranges from the issues of nisab, percentage to be deducted, its distributions and the mode of collection.