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## AN ASSESSMENT OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMMES OF THE RURAL COMMUNITY IN YOLA- SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ADAMAWA STATE

### ABSTRACT

*This paper assesses the poverty alleviation programmes among rural community in Yola-South local government area of Adamawa state. Poverty alleviation have achieved limited overall success in reducing core income and multidimensional poverty due to weak implementation, poor targeting, and low community awareness. The paper intends to solve the problems of inadequate funding, poor targeting of beneficiaries, political interference, and a lack of infrastructural support in the rural communities. The paper adopts a descriptive survey research design. The population consists of 2,500 community participations with the sample size of 345 community participations compute by using Taro Yamane formula. This paper was carried out from the period 2024 to 2025. A simple random sampling technique was use. The findings reveal that government-sponsored poverty alleviation programmes have largely failed to significantly improve rural livelihoods or reduce poverty indices. The paper concludes that poverty alleviation programs have achieved limited success in structurally transforming rural living conditions. Poverty alleviation and rural development programs are connected to improvements in low-income livelihoods and agricultural output, but overall poverty levels remain high due to flawed implementation. The paper recommend that adopting demand-driven community participation, transparent beneficiary selection processes, enhanced grassroots monitoring, and robust direct agricultural support to ensure sustainable poverty reduction.*

**Keywords:** Poverty Alleviation, Programmes, Rural Community, Yola-South Local Government

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a global phenomenon threatening the survival of humanity, with more than one billion people living in a state of abject poverty. Now it is generally accepted that dangers posed by poverty must be addressed and reduced in the short-run and eliminated in the long-run (Nahuche *et al.*, 2024). The paper aims to improve the quality of life for those people currently living in poverty in rural community. Poverty alleviation is the set of economic and humanitarian measures used to reduce poor living standard of the people by reduce the rate of poverty in Nigeria.

Poverty alleviation is also known as poverty reduction, poverty relief, and poverty eradication and combating poverty. The poverty alleviation in Nigeria has rather proven to be an uphill task as poverty remains endemic, particularly amongst the rural population. Rural poverty remains a critical challenge in Nigeria, where a large portion of the population resides in non-urban areas with limited access to basic infrastructure, healthcare, and economic opportunities. (Ogbari *et al.*, 2024).

Poverty causes misery, hunger and starvation, disease, crime and death. For these reasons it must be eradicated even if it cannot be eliminated complete. Echeonwu *et al.*, (2024), defines poverty as the state of a household when its resources are insufficient to obtain a basket of goods and services, judged to necessary for survival. Poverty is also defined in terms of inadequate income (or more generally of disposable resources) to support a minimum standard of living. Walker *et al.*, (2024) refer to poverty as a condition involving those severe depreciation and adverse occurrences that are closely (but not necessarily exclusive) associate with adequate. Poverty is the one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possessions. Whatever definition one uses, authorities and laypersons like commonly assume that the effects of poverty are harmful to both individuals and society. The eradication of poverty is now one of the central objectives of contemporary development policy. As a global problem the eradication of poverty is also the overriding goal of all government in Africa most particular the Nigeria government.

It should be noted that previous poverty reduction programs in Nigeria did not fully achieve their objectives. It is also important to note that poverty problem in Nigeria is largely a rural phenomenon. Also, higher incidence of poverty profile in Nigeria's rural areas have been traced to some environmental problems associated with agricultural production, high vulnerability to health hazards (Singh & Das, 2023), low level of education, high fertility rate, lack of access to improved seeds and inputs, and poorly developed social infrastructural facilities among others. Similarly, due to lack of appropriate insurance against income shocks, rural poverty is often worsened because farmers dispose their productive assets such as land, livestock, and equipment in order to meet immediate consumption needs (Duetsch & Silber, 2023). Also, farming households face serious risks from inadequate rains/drought, degraded land, input shortages, disease outbreak and low prices for agricultural products. According to Dagum, (2022), the incidence of poverty in Nigeria has always been high despite the effort of government to put smiles on the faces of average Nigerians living in rural community. These policy and programs like N-Power Programme, Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT), Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP), National Home Grown School Feeding Programme (NHGSFP), currently Household Prosperity and Economic Social Protection Project (HOPE-SP) and Hope-Cash Transfer (Hope-CT) had contribute to the rural community in Yola-South local government area.

Ideally, poverty alleviation programs projects are designed to empower rural populations by enabling them to actively participate in identifying, designing, and executing projects that address their specific developmental needs. These projects are expected to improve access to basic infrastructure, healthcare, education, and economic opportunities, ultimately leading to sustainable

poverty reduction in rural communities (Chowdhury et al., 2021). However, in practice, many poverty alleviation programs projects in Nigeria have not fully achieved their intended objectives. Challenges such as poor community engagement, poor implementation and management failure, mismanagement of funds, political patronage, bureaucratic bottlenecks, elite capture, lack of transparency, and weak monitoring frameworks have limited their impact. As a result, many rural communities continue to experience high levels of poverty, underdevelopment, and socio-economic exclusion despite the presence of such interventions. If these problems are not resolved, poverty in rural areas will persist, worsening the living conditions of millions of Nigerians.

Despite these policy measures, the desired results is not achieved, largely due to the following variables (political interference, inadequate funding, lack of political will and unwisely scope of poverty reduction programmes, absence of effective monitoring and coordination mechanism and lack of continuity, which result most Nigerians especially children, woman, aged, rural dwellers still go through hardship. This gap that lead to examined the influence of poverty alleviation programs on rural communities in Numan local government area of Adamawa State.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Poverty Alleviation**

Most commonly, poverty is defined as “State of being, in which we are unable to meet our needs” (Ibitoye & Odiba, (2021). However, the concept of ‘need’ itself is defined very differently across different cultures and generations, as technology and changing values alter perceptions of the pre-requisites of an acceptable standard of living. This indicates that the concept of ‘needs includes the notion of what is conventionally regarded as necessary to lead one’s life as an integrated member of a particular society. Eze and Ojo, (2021) define poverty as a “condition involving some deprivations and adverse occurrences that are closely (but not necessarily exclusively) associated with inadequate economic resources”. Some see poverty as “inadequacy of income to support a minimum standard of living”. Closely connected to this is the use of “basic needs” indicators such as food, clothing, shelter etc. to define the concept.

Waziri and Nwanegbo, (2020) assessed the Community-Based Poverty Reduction Projects (CPRP) in Yobe State using surveys, interviews, and ANOVA analysis. They found CPRP improved basic services like potable water through 838 micro-projects but had limited overall poverty reduction due to inadequate funding and reach. They recommended more sustainable funding and wider coverage for better impact.

Nahuche et al., (2024) examined the effects of social innovation and social value on poverty alleviation in Zamfara State. Using survey data analyzed via SMART-PLS3, they found social innovation positively and significantly affected poverty reduction, while social value showed a negative effect. Their study suggests that community programs should prioritize innovative approaches to reduce poverty.

Ibitoye and Odiba (2021) analyzed CPRP's impact on farming communities in Kogi State through multistage sampling and regression analyses. Results revealed communities with CPRP support experienced higher per capita expenditure and better poverty status compared to those without. Socioeconomic factors like gender, age, and infrastructure significantly influenced poverty, underscoring integrated, tailored interventions for rural development.

Ogbari et al., (2024) explored social empowerment's impact on poverty alleviation among women agricultural entrepreneurs in Nigeria using SEM-PLS with survey data from 335 respondents. They found empowerment through access to resources and decision-making positively influenced poverty reduction. The study highlights the importance of gender-focused community development initiatives to sustainably improve livelihoods and reduce rural poverty.

Education and health improvements are essential drivers in poverty reduction efforts. Access to quality education empowers individuals with skills and knowledge to participate effectively in the economy, while health interventions reduce disease burdens that limit productivity (Khumalo & Ncube, 2021). Investing in these human capital areas not only enhances well-being but also breaks the intergenerational transmission of poverty, enabling communities to escape poverty cycles sustainably.

Governance and institutional frameworks are critical in shaping poverty reduction outcomes. Transparent, accountable institutions facilitate efficient resource allocation and ensure that poverty reduction programs reach intended beneficiaries (Alvarez & Fernandez, 2020). Community participation and local governance strengthen the relevance and effectiveness of poverty interventions, ensuring that policies reflect grassroots realities and priorities, which bolsters ownership and sustainability of development initiatives.

## 2.2 Major Challenges of Poverty Alleviation Programs

According to Ogbari et al., (2024) the following are major challenges of poverty alleviation programs:

**(i) Political Patronage and Corruption:** Interventions are often plagued by mismanagement, lack of transparency, and the distribution of aid based on political affiliation rather than real need. Funds, fertilizers, and loans are frequently hijacked or distributed based on political connections rather than genuine need.

**(ii) Poor Community Participation:** Many programs suffer from a top-down approach where rural dwellers are excluded from project planning and decision-making, reducing long-term sustainability. Many programs fail because implementers use a top-down approach instead of engaging rural dwellers in the actual planning and decision-making process.

**(iii) Inadequate Funding and Policy Inconsistency:** Frequent changes in government priorities, delayed funding, and abandoned projects limit lasting economic transformation. Chronic

underfunding, poor management and policy inconsistency across changing political administrations lead to widespread project abandonment.

### 2.3 Some Key Poverty Alleviation Programs in Nigeria

**(i) N-Power Programme:** Offers young Nigerian digital and professional skills training, education, and temporary job placements,

**(ii) Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT):** Provides regular cash stipends to poor and vulnerable households to cushion economic hardships and basic living costs.

**(iii) Government Enterprises and Empowerment Programme (GEEP):** Issues interest-free micro-loans to market traders, youth, farmers and artisans to expand small businesses.

**(iv) National House Grown School Feeding Programme (NHGSFP):** Serves free meals to public primary school children to boost school enrollment and support local agricultural suppliers.

**(v) Household Prosperity and Economic Social Protection Project (HOPE-SP):** A federal social protection initiative focused on moving vulnerable families away from temporary palliatives and toward long-term economic self-reliance. It divided into two current and recent initiatives; Household Prosperity and Empowerment Social Protection (Hope-SP) project, a \$1billion initiative aimed at lifting millions of vulnerable citizens out of poverty using unified digital registers, which provides direct financial relief for food, school fees, and small livestock.

### 2.4 Classification/Types of Poverty

According to Alvarez and Fernandez, (2020) poverty is classified into five types:

**(i) Absolute Poverty:** This occurs when human being live in a state of deprivation due to meager income or lack of access to basic human needs which include food, clean and safe water, sanitation, good health, shelter, education and information.

**(ii) Relative Poverty:** This sees poverty from a comparative point of view that is not absolute but relative. Relative refers to the position of household or individual comparison. It is measured in three ways: through the low income statistics; through income and through disposable income.

**(iii) Chronic Poverty:** Chronic poverty is one which is persistent, long and vicious. Its causes are more permanent and depend on a host of other factors such as limited productive resources, lack of skill for gainful employment, vocational disadvantage or endemic socio-political and cultural factors.

**(iv) Conjectural Transitory:** This means poverty is temporary or short term and caused mainly by factors such as natural or man-made disasters, war environmental degradation or structural changes induced by policy reforms which result in loss of employment, loss in value of real income assets, etc.

**(v) Spatial/location:** This depends on geographical or regional spread and incidence. It involves urban squalor/poverty typified by the existence of ghettos. Slums and shanties in metropolitan cities and characterized by environmental degradation, inadequate welfare services and social deprivations, low per-capital income, overcrowded accommodation, engagement in informal business, rural poverty characterized by poor living conditions. environmental degradation or structural changes induced by policy reforms

## **2.5 Community Participation and Ownership**

Community participation and ownership are foundational principles in sustainable development and local governance, referring to the active involvement and control of community members in decision-making and project implementation. Participation empowers communities to voice their needs, priorities, and preferences, enhancing relevance and effectiveness of interventions (Khumalo & Ncube, 2021). Ownership ensures that communities take responsibility for the outcomes, promoting long-term sustainability and accountability of development efforts. Effective participation fosters social capital and strengthens trust between communities and implementing agencies. According to Ndlovu and Moyo, (2020), participatory approaches contribute to increased collective action and resource sharing, which improves project success rates. This collaborative engagement shifts power dynamics by enabling marginalized groups to influence policies that directly impact their lives, thus democratizing development processes. Barriers to community participation often include lack of information, limited capacity, and socio-political constraints.

Furthermore, integrating community participation and ownership into development frameworks requires deliberate policy and institutional support. Ogbari et al., (2024) argue that fostering enabling environments through legislation, capacity development, and equitable resource allocation bolsters community agency. Moreover, participatory governance mechanisms contribute to social justice and equitable development, making participation and ownership central to transformative change in communities. The concept recognizes poverty as not only a lack of income but also deprivation in social and economic opportunities, requiring comprehensive interventions to foster sustainable improvements.

## **2.6 Access to Basic Services of the Rural Community**

Access to basic services refers to the availability and ability of individuals and communities to obtain essential resources such as clean water, sanitation, healthcare, education, and energy. These services are fundamental for improving quality of life and promoting socio- economic development. Equitable access is critical for reducing disparities, ensuring that vulnerable and marginalized groups receive adequate support to meet their fundamental needs, thereby fostering inclusive growth. Infrastructure development plays a crucial role in facilitating access to basic services. Adequate roads, healthcare facilities, schools, and utility networks significantly influence service availability and utilization (Thomas & Begum, 2021). Rural and remote areas often face greater challenges in infrastructure, which impedes access and contributes to persistent inequalities. Innovations in infrastructure delivery and financing are increasingly necessary to bridge these gaps and ensure sustainable service provision. Community engagement and participation in decision-making

processes enhance service relevance and sustainability, allowing local needs and preferences to be incorporated into planning and delivery. Economic barriers remain significant obstacles to access, particularly for low-income households who may face high costs for essential services. Subsidies, social protection programs, and targeted assistance are vital to alleviate these financial constraints and promote affordability. Additionally, integrating technology, such as mobile platforms for healthcare and education, has shown promise in overcoming geographic and economic barriers to access.

Moreover, climate change and environmental challenges threaten the stability and quality of basic services, especially water and energy supply (Waziri & Nwanegbo, (2020). Integrating climate resilience into service planning and infrastructure development is essential to safeguard access over time. Furthermore, cross-sector collaboration between governments, NGOs, and private sectors enhances resource mobilization and innovation, promoting sustainable access to basic services for all populations.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This paper adopts descriptive survey research method. The population consisted of rural community participations. The total population was 2,500 community participation with the sample size of 345 community participation. Simple random sampling technique was used. The period used from the period of 2024 to 2025. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by experts in rural development and social research who assessed the relevance and clarity of the items. A pilot test was conducted with 30 respondents from a similar community to refine ambiguous questions and improve the instrument's overall validity. The items were on a 4 modified Likert Scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) & Strongly Disagree (SD). Data collected was analyzed from the respondent using descriptive statistics, including percentages, mean, tables and frequencies, to summarize respondents' characteristics. Turo-Yamane formular was used for determining sample size. The sample size determined is 345 community participations. Below is the process used in finding the sample size;

$$\text{Yamane formular } n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where;

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \text{sample size} \\ N &= \text{Total population} \\ e &= \text{merging of error (0.05)} \\ 1 &= \text{constant valve} \\ n &= \frac{2,500}{1 + 2,500(0.05)^2} \\ n &= 345 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 &1 + 2,5000 \times 0.0025 \\
 n = &2,500 \\
 &1 + 6.25 \\
 n = &2,500 \\
 &7.25 \\
 n = &345
 \end{aligned}$$

#### 4. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND FINDING

**Table 4.1: The level of community participation in planning and execution of poverty alleviation programs?**

| Details           | No of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Strongly agree    | 55                | 15.9           |
| Agree             | 130               | 37.7           |
| Disagree          | 100               | 29             |
| Strongly disagree | 60                | 17.4           |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>345</b>        | <b>100%</b>    |

**Sources:** Field Survey, Jul - Aug, 2026

Table 4.1.6; above shows that 19.6% of the respondents have strongly agreed and 37.7% agreed on the level of community participation in planning and execution of poverty alleviation programs, while 29% of the respondents have disagreed and 17.4% strongly agreed with this subject matter. This analysis indicates that the majority of the respondents have agreed of the view that the level of community participation in planning and execution of poverty alleviation programs.

**Table 4.2: Poverty alleviation programs offer a framework for rural development?**

| Details           | No of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Strongly agree    | 100               | 29             |
| Agree             | 145               | 42             |
| Disagree          | 70                | 20.3           |
| Strongly disagree | 30                | 8.7            |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>345</b>        | <b>100%</b>    |

**Sources:** Field Survey, Jul - Aug, 2026

Table 4.1.13, above shows that 29% of the respondents have strongly agreed and 42% agreed that poverty alleviation programs offer a framework for rural development, while 20.3% of the

respondents have disagreed and 8.7% strongly agreed with this subject matter. This analysis indicates that the majority of the respondents have agreed of the view that poverty alleviation programs offer a framework for rural development.

### Findings

**High lack of Access to Credit and Training:** This show that a vast majority of rural respondents report receiving zero credit training from intervention packages.

**Deficient Rural Infrastructure:** Basic infrastructure like accessible feeder roads, pipe-borne water, reliable electricity which keeps agricultural economies stagnant.

**Reliance on Informal Coping Strategies:** Because formal interventions fail to reach them, primary data shows rural residents rely heavily on informal survival mechanisms.

**Implementation Bottlenecks:** The primary data reveals that programs are heavily constrained by corruption and mismanagement of funds, lack of consultation, political interference, elite capture, poor targeting mechanisms and inadequate funding.

### CONCLUSION

The assessment concludes that poverty alleviation programs in Yola-South local government area have achieved limited success in structurally transforming rural living conditions. Poverty alleviation and rural development programs are connected to improvements in low-income livelihoods and agricultural output, but overall poverty levels remain high due to flawed implementation. The data implies that isolated interventions fail unless they paired with localized infrastructural investments and direct community participation in design and executions. Empirical outcomes strongly support shifting strategic focus toward strengthening local cooperative societies, micro-agricultural extension services, and community-driven development initiatives rather than relying solely on micro-level bureaucratic policies. This paper also, concludes that formal government and non-government intervention programmes have statistically insignificant impact on reducing deep-seated rural poverty.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations have been made:

- i. Adopting demand-driven community participation, transparent beneficiary selection processes, enhanced grassroots monitoring, and robust direct agricultural support to ensure sustainable poverty reduction.
- ii. Government should provide practical agricultural, vocational training and basic infrastructure to make these programs sustainable, instead of temporary cash handouts in the rural community.
- iii. Governments, donors, and stakeholders need to ensure adequate and sustained funding for poverty alleviation programs projects. Reliable financial support is critical to overcoming resource constraints and enabling projects to effectively address poverty reduction goals.
- iv. Establishing robust management frameworks and transparent monitoring systems can help address inefficiencies and ensure accountability.

- v. Development agencies and project implementers should prioritize inclusive and participatory approaches that actively involve community members in all phases of projects planning, implementation, and sustainability.

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