

# Implication for Teacher Education: An Analysis of the Impact of the Federal Government Poverty Reduction Programmes among Students in College of Education, Akwanga, Nasarawa State

Tigga Moses Riko; Gbande Samson Samuel Kale  
Department of Economics, College of Education Akwanga  
Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Ayuba Shamaki  
Department of Christian Religious Knowledge, College of Education Akwanga  
Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Dahiru Dardau Dalhatu, Ph.D.  
Department of Social Studies, College of Education  
Akwanga Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

## Abstract

This paper focused on the implication for teacher education an analysis of the impact of the federal government's poverty reduction programmes among students of College of Education, Akwanga, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Multi-stage random sampling framework was used to select 200 respondents from 500 respondents among NCE 1 to 3 students in the Schools of Arts and Social Sciences and School of Sciences of the College. Both primary and secondary data were used in this study. The analytical tool used was descriptive statistics. The result of this study shows that the respondents do not benefit from poverty reduction programmes of the government, majority of the respondents were self-sponsored whose parents were farmers and earn less than N10, 000 per month. The result on the effectiveness of government policies in addressing poverty in the study area, the result shows that while (70%) of respondents view the current policies as moderately effective, a significant portion (75%) considers them not effective at all. In view of this findings, appropriate recommendations were made: Government should ensure that poverty reduction programmes should go round not selective; the fight against corruption in the

country should be intensified and students should be counseled against early marriage in order to curb vicious circle of poverty among them.

**Keywords:** Education, poverty reduction, employment, economic development, Nigeria

## Introduction

Education is the bedrock of every societal development and is widely recognized as a fundamental tool for reducing poverty and fostering economic development. In Nigeria, the federal government has initiated several poverty reduction programs aimed at improving the living standards of its citizens, particularly among students in higher education. This research focuses on students at the College of Education in Akwanga, Nasarawa State, aiming to evaluate how these programs impact their educational experiences and future career prospects. Understanding these implications can aid in refining teacher education programs to better prepare educators for the challenges they will face in teaching economically disadvantaged students.

In Nigeria, poverty has persisted despite several interventions to ameliorate poverty Index in Nigeria, even in periods of economic

growth. In all its forms, poverty continues to be a concern and a challenge to humanity. It manifests itself in all spheres of human existence economic, social, political, and environmental and is intricate, multifarious, and multidimensional (Sennuga et al., 2023). Considering that education is a tool of the society in engendering development and raising the standard of living of the society, the high poverty rate of Nigerians may not be unconnected to the deplorable state of the Nigerian educational system.

Poverty is a significant issue in Nigeria despite government efforts to eradicate it through national development plans, sessional papers, and campaigns. It is also widely acknowledged as posing a serious threat to Nigeria's very existence. Because education teaches information and skills that support greater wages, the population with higher levels of education will have fewer poor people (Adeoti, 2014). When it comes to "human poverty," education has a significant indirect impact since it boosts living standards and makes it easier to meet basic needs, both of which contribute to a decrease in overall poverty. Nigeria presently maintains the record for having most number of young people not attending school worldwide, with about 10.5 million youngsters not attending school (UNESCO, 2016). Nigeria is at the top of the list of 12 other nations, with 47% of all out-of-school children worldwide. A dangerous cancer worm that has seeped deeply into Nigerian culture is illiteracy. Growth and progress have been stalled, while poverty has increased. Investment in human capital, which eradicates poverty, and economic progress are positively correlated when it comes to education. Because education increases earnings, income, or wages, it immediately aids in the eradication of poverty (Queiro, 2021; Ajah et al., 2023). Underdevelopment, corruption, shifts in the job market, unemployment, underemployment, and population are all blamed for documented cases of poverty. Every country, no matter how big or little, wants to fight poverty by creating jobs and promoting sustainable development. The goal is to guarantee self-sufficiency, raise living standards, and minimize poverty among the populace.

Using education as a weapon is one of the simplest methods to fight poverty (Bullem et al., 2021). According to Jeffery (2015), a good society is not only an economically prosperous society (with high per Capita income) but also one that is socially inclusive, environmentally sustainable and well governed. The actualization of socially inclusive economic development however, strongly impacts the Earth's bio-system and its carrying capacity. It is clear that poverty, insecurity and poor education contributes inextricably to ecological crisis which in turn creates an unbalanced in the socioeconomic ecosystems. This brings to the fore our challenges as over 40% of Nigerians live below the poverty line, the level of unemployment towering at 33.3%, over 10 million out of school children and the grappling after effects of covid-19 is still a huge scare, the risk of further exacerbating insecurity challenges becomes increasingly alarming (UNESCO, 2016). Nigeria, sometimes known as the "poverty capital of the world," is still struggling with a chronic poverty rate. Numerous interrelated aspects can be linked to the numerous root causes of this persistent dilemma. Income inequality is a major element that contributes to Nigeria's high percentage of poverty. Nigeria is the sixth-largest crude oil exporter in the world and is endowed with an abundance of natural and human resources, yet despite this, wealth disparity and poverty have been steadily rising, creating a vicious cycle of poverty (Adebayo, 2018; Sennuga et al., 2023).

It is on this background that this study analyzes the impact of federal government poverty reduction programmes on students at the College of Education Akwanga, Nasarawa State. The study aims to uncover the implications these programs have for teacher education by assessing how they affect students' academic performance, motivation, and long-term educational outcomes.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Given the Nigerian enormous human and material resources, the country has been experiencing one form of economic problem to the other leading to various reforms strategies in order to address these problems and why these programmes have failed to achieve the desired results of eradicating absolute poverty

among the poor of this country. This forms the statement of the problem for this study

### **Objectives of the Study.**

The objectives of this study are as follows.-

1. To find out whether students also benefit from the poverty eradication programmes.
2. To assess the impact of poverty eradication programmes among the students.
3. To examine the factors that account for the failure of poverty alleviation programmes.
4. To recommend how best to achieve the desired results in alleviating poverty among the people in the county.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant because it will afford the need to know whether poverty alleviation programmes of the Federal Government are yielding result or not.

This study will serve as a document for further study by researchers and policy makers alike.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study is an analysis of the Federal Government's poverty alleviation programmes and the reduction of absolute poverty among students in College of Education, Akwanga, Nasarawa State. This study covers all students from one to three hundred level in the two Schools; namely, School of Secondary Education (Arts and Social Programme) and School of Secondary Education (Science Programme) out of the six Schools we have.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Conceptual Frame Work**

There is no general consensus on the definitions of poverty largely because the phenomenon affects many spheres of human conditions such as physical, moral and psychological. Generally, Nweze and Ojowu (2002), in Abimiku (2009), categorized poverty into three namely: absolute poverty, relative poverty and subjective poverty. These concepts are described below.

Absolute or subsistence poverty deals with basic human needs measured by resources required to maintain physical efficiency (Haralambos and Heald, 1980 & Kuper and Kuper, 1996). Miller (1968); and Plotnick and Skidmore (1978) are of the view that, individuals, families or groups are considered

to be in absolute poverty when they are unable to afford the resources particularly real income needed to obtain the types of diets needed to enjoy some fixed minimum standard of living determined by a given society. This living standard of living considers some amount of goods and services essential and those required who are unable to obtain them are said to be poor. Such goods and services include food, clothing, housing, healthcare, water, sanitation and education. People considered to be in absolute poverty are determined through a yardstick known as poverty line. The poverty line which is based on the level of income or consumption of individuals, households or groups in a given society (Balogun, 1999) provides a threshold whereby those whose income falls below are poor and those whose income is above are non-poor.

The poverty line which is used by the World Bank for international comparison is one dollar (\$) per person per day (Kankwenda et al, (2000; Ali-Akpajiak and Pyke, 2003). Those below the poverty line according to Kankwenda et al (2000) and Balogun (1999) are grouped into two, namely, the poor and core or extremely poor giving rise to two poverty lines (upper poverty line and lower poverty line). While those whose income falls below the upper poverty line but above the lower poverty line are categorized as poor, those whose income falls below the lower poverty line are categorized as the Core or extremely poor. In addition to using income as a yardstick, Kupper and Kupper (1996) and World Bank (2004) opined that absolute poverty is a condition of life characterized by insufficient social services such as health, education, safe drinking water, sanitation and public transport, within the words of Atoloye (1997), disease, low life expectancy, squalor as well as physical and mental retardation as consequences.

Relative poverty is a situation where an individual's or a household's income is less than the average income of the population in the society considered. This means that the individual or household has goods and services which are lower than those of other persons or households in Society (Schiller, 1976: Oladunni, 1999, Kupper and Kupper, 1996). In the words of O'Donnel (1997), those who are in relative poverty have their resources far

below than those possessed by average individuals or households to the extent that, they are, in effect excluded from ordinary Living patterns, customs and activities. This definition is dynamic as it must be related to the needs and demands of a changing society.

The concept of subjective poverty which is "expressed in a range of non-material and intangible qualities (Nweze, et al 2002:2), is based on respondents perception of their standard of living. This perception of whether one is poor or not depends on individual societies and is based on the absolute minimum standard of living in a particular society below which one is categorized as poor (Vaidyanathan, 2202; Haralambos and Heald, 1980).

The various concepts of poverty discussed above reveal that absolute poverty deals with those who find it difficult to live a meaningful decent life due to financial constraint. This implies that they are poor because they lack the financial resources needed for them to obtain the basic necessities of life. Relative poverty has to do with a situation where a household or a person compares itself or himself/herself with another household or person. This means that even if the household or the person is able to meet its or his/her basic necessities of life, he/she could still be comparatively poor. Since subjective poverty is concerned with the acquire basic be comparatively poor. Since subjective poverty is concerned with the feelings of individuals, even those who are able to acquire basic necessities of life and much more might be categorized as poor depending on the yardstick being used.

This study focused on absolute poverty as attempts made by the government in Nigeria to reduce poverty have led to various poverty efforts aimed at attacking absolute poverty. The point here is that the poor in Nigeria are more concerned with obtaining the basic necessities of life (which is a concern of absolute poverty) than meeting up with the living standards of the non-poor (a concern of relative poverty). Thus, absolute poverty which forms the nucleus of this work, can be described as a situation where an individual resources and as a result, unable to meet his/her or its basic necessities of life such as food, clothes, shelter and health.

### **Education and poverty in Nigeria**

Educational renaissance has usually come before significant shifts in a society's intellectual and social attitude (Onwioduokit, 2020). Pre-primary, primary, secondary, and post-primary education are all part of Nigeria's educational system. In addition, Nigeria's current poverty situation is evident in the government's failure to use education as a tool for development. For instance, "over 10.5 million Nigerian children were not in school, with a significant share originating from the Northern region." With notable regional variations, 60.1% of Nigerians live below the poverty line (1,300 Naira, or less than \$1 a day). More and more empirical research, in particular, has confirmed that education has a favorable impact on people's ability to accumulate wealth and on the advancement of equitable and efficient economic development (Global Education Monitoring Report, 2019; Walker et al., 2019). Currently, 150 million Nigerians are considered to be extremely poor. (UNESCO, 2023). The impoverished and those who live disproportionately in rural areas are among the most susceptible (Schmale, 2022). Poor budgetary allocation/underfunding, ill-equipped libraries and labs, Nigeria's flexible curriculum and educational system, low student interest in teacher education, low teacher welfare, non-utilization of educational research findings, a lack of dependable infrastructure and amenities, student population growth, inadequate management of education, and more are among the issues plaguing our educational system (Abdulahi et al., 2023).

### **State of Education and Poverty in Nigeria**

There is no doubt that education in Nigeria has garnered a lot of public attention more than any other social welfare services lately. Because a country's entire development is closely linked to its educational system, society and the government are concerned about the quality of education. The 'seemingly' declining quality of education in Nigeria is at the top of the list (Jaiyeoba, 2015). The reasons given for this state of affairs include the following: parents' lack of concern for their children's schoolwork and extracurricular activities, students' lack of

interest and seriousness, which resulted in all forms of examination malpractice, teachers' declining competence and commitment, inadequate facility provision; non maintenance of available facilities, outdated and largely irrelevant curricula coupled with poor implementation, and the pursuit of the cankerworm of the "get-rich-quick" mentality that plagues today's Nigerian youth and the lost benefits of conventional schooling, which instills in people a strong work ethic, diligence, integrity, and high productivity. describes the government's decision to switch up its educational system in an effort to produce goods of the highest caliber (Jaiyeoba, 2015; Sennuga et al., 2023). Petrakis and Stamatakis, (2017) argued that this system produced the "well-baked" Nigerian scholars of the past, whose contribution to the country's development seems to be diminishing rather than increasing due to the products of modern education. As a result, there is a widespread outcry that Nigeria's educational standards are declining across the board and that solutions are needed. People, academics, and researchers have noticed that graduates of the educational system are performing worse than those who graduated in the past, particularly in terms of reading, writing, and practical abilities that could be the reason Nigeria's system didn't work.

It is regrettable to observe that current Nigerian governments have refused to acknowledge the critical role educators play in meeting high standards for education. They come to and break agreements with teacher unions to enhance their working conditions and resources. Teachers in Nigeria were on a protracted nationwide strike at the time of this study, demanding their salaries and rights, while the government was not only standing by quietly but even threatening to fire the striking educators (Ameh et al., 2023).

Poverty Statistics and Trend in Nigeria Studying the patterns of poverty across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones—especially the northern ones, which are crucial for comprehending the country's complex poverty situation—is vital. Furthermore, to ascertain whether national poverty was successfully decreased by government initiatives. However, Jaiyeoba (2015) observed that although economic growth has been documented,

poverty is still rising in Nigeria, with the North-West and North-East geopolitical zones dominating the poverty indices. This indicates that Nigeria's pattern of poverty differs from that of many other countries. The North West has the greatest poverty rate, at 77.7%, while the South West has the lowest, at 49.8%, according to an analysis of poverty rates throughout the geopolitical zones (Jaiyeola and Bayat, 2019; Iliyasu et al., 2023). Massive mineral resources, including coal, iron ore, barite, zinc, limestone, columbite, tin, kaolin, lead, and gypsum, are abundant in Nigeria. The northern region of Nigeria is home to the majority of these resources.

According to Asoegwu (2018), Nigeria's northern regions are endowed with rich agricultural production, including vegetables, fruits, livestock, fish, dairy products, groundnuts, beans, cotton, yam, cassava, cereal, and many other items. Nigeria is known as the poverty capital of the world, with around 100 million people living in extreme poverty, despite the country's abundance of natural resources and human capital (Jaiyeola and Bayat, 2019). It is extremely unsettling that a sizable portion of the populace lives in poverty in a nation with an abundance of natural resources, a thriving oil industry, and a robust agricultural sector (Simon-Oke, 2016).

As a result, Nigeria's status as the continent's largest economy does not automatically translate into a lower rate of poverty. Two thirds of Nigerians live in extreme poverty despite the country's economic growth, which has led to an absurdity in the country's poverty situation (Faloyo and Bakare, 2015). Studying the patterns of poverty in Nigeria's six geopolitical zones—and, most crucially, in the country's northern regions—is essential to comprehending the country's complex poverty predicament. Nigeria's poverty is most pronounced in the north, with Sokoto state having the highest percentage at 86.4% (Jaiyeola and Bayat, 2019).

The North Central zone of Nigeria has a poverty rate of 67.5%, whereas the North East and North West zones have poverty rates of 77.7% and 76.3%, respectively. The majority of Northern Nigerians are subsistence farmers using traditional farming methods and implements. For the purpose of replenishing

the soil, they mostly rely on ruminants, household trash, and animal manure. Thus, a high percentage of unemployment, a rise in crime, a high rate of illiteracy, a high rate of maternal mortality, and more lately, various terrorist and insurgent groups like Boko Haram and herdsmen clashes (Ojeleye, 2018). In addition, the number of children dropping out of school and the lack of access to basic education have increased the rate of poverty in the northern zones. Added to these elements is the incapacity of the economy to support and give the youth population the essential resources for job prospects, skill development, and soft skills grants or loans to support business Startups and entrepreneurial development in order in order to lower the Northern Zones' poverty rate (Jaiyeola and Bayat, 2019). This results from the nation's inability to attain economic development, particularly in the north where there are few chances for economic empowerment, a high rate of youth unemployment, and a high prevalence of violent crimes that are committed as a form of retaliation against oppressors (Akinyoade and Gewald, 2015). Education as a pathway to poverty reduction Undoubtedly, the quality of education in a nation is a major factor in determining the kind and rate of growth of that nation's output and exports. It also plays a crucial role in a system's ability to successfully advance technology. For instance, primary and secondary education, health, and nutrition all increase worker productivity, both in rural and urban areas; secondary education, including vocational training, helps people acquire skills and managerial abilities; tertiary education promotes the advancement of basic science; and all of these factors are crucial for the development of important institutions, such as the government, the legal system, and the financial system, which are all necessary for economic growth and have the potential to impact people's standard of living (Zhang, 2020). Since it is acknowledged as the most dangerous issue "jeopardising balanced society socio-economic development," eliminating poverty has been the main goal for many countries (Balvociute, 2020). One of the main characteristics of unsustainable socio-economic growth is poverty, which is also a recurring issue that can negatively impact

people's life (Bossert et al., 2022; Ameh et al., 2023).

The role of education in economic development A nation's overall productivity, intellectual adaptability, and competitiveness in the global market which is today marked by quickly evolving manufacturing and technological processes all increase with education. Numerous forms of human capital development, including training, research, aptitude development, and basic education, have been demonstrated to produce notable benefits by researchers. Unequal education has a negative impact on per capita income and exacerbates poverty in many countries. One of the main ways to combat poverty is through education. The World Bank claims that education is essential to development. It fosters social cohesiveness and democratic principles in addition to economic prosperity, national productivity, and creativity. The human capital idea states that educational investments are made with the expectation of higher returns or value in the future. Some previous research has suggested that the longer you study or the more training you receive, the more benefits you will receive in the future since knowledge is subject to growing returns because these are non-rival products (Bowen, 2018).

According to Robbin (2016), the following are the impact of education to income and poverty reduction:

- Opportunities for employment will inevitably result in the creation of income and a drop in the high rates of inequality and poverty. The population's well-being will further improve as a result of this.
- Opportunities are levelled by functional education; most graduates of educational institutions will no longer be looking for white-collar employment, which are hard to come by and rare.
- Graduates from functional education will be self-sufficient, enterprising, and prepared to put their academic knowledge into practice. These business owners will eventually hire employees. There will be more revenue and employment created with this network. As a result, a large number of people will be lifted out of the pit of unemployment and poverty.
- Functional education produces manpower of high quality. Any country's educational system

dictates the kind, character, and amount of labor needed. Their degree of success and other national innovations have been linked to the country's educational system and dedication to the development of human resources.

- The functional educational system in Nigeria will bring about high-quality manpower that will turn around the available resources into wealth for the nation. The country will also experience a turnaround in science and technology, which will in turn affect all other sectors of the economy. Thus, the wealth of the nation will be redistributed to favor the poor populace.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study employs four basic perspectives of discussing poverty are the Conservative, the Liberal Reformists, the Radical Structural/Marxists and the Social Exclusion.

### **The Conservative Theories**

The conservative theories namely: individualistic and culture of poverty posit that the poor are responsible for their poverty. This theory is viewed from the angle of the individual's inability to be productive so as to get out of poverty. As argued by O'Donnell (1997), the individualistic theory attributes poverty to individual pathology or weakness. This is the first theory with emphasis on the fact that: The poor were poor because they did not work hard, they squandered money on gambling, drinking and unnecessary luxuries and they had disorder of family life. They had no ambitions, no inner call for work, were fatalistic and suffered an 'intractable in-educability'

This theory is founded on self help and survival in which case those who work hard succeed while, the weak fail to succeed giving rise to the non-poor and the poor respectively. The poor person is poor because his/her behaviour has made him/her so. Efforts made in Nigeria is with this theory are: Poverty alleviation programme (PAP), National poverty eradication programme (NAPEP), Universal Basic Education (UBE) and Nomadic Education Programme and the on-going Social Invest Programme(S.I.P).This is because the first two programmes have been

characterized by payment of stipends (in the case of PAP) and granting of loans to individuals under NAPEP while the last two attempt to address those who have not been able to acquire the needed education.

The emphasis on fatalism and resignation by the theory which explains the situation of the poor in colonial societies or early stages of Capitalism suggests that even if the poor have the ample opportunities that even if they have the ample opportunities for improving their welfare, they lack the initiative and diligence needed to take support to psychologically gear them up to take advantage that may come their way. In Nigeria, government efforts towards averting culture of poverty theory are noticed by awareness creation through the media via the nation's National Orientation Agency (NOA) in addition to allowing the formation of associations by groups and individuals.

### **The Liberal Reformists Theory**

The liberal reformist's perspective which deals with situational theory of poverty is hinged on the fact that poverty results from experiences that individuals or groups pass through. It Views poverty as a reaction to situational constraints rather than an issue of culture. That poverty results from imposed constraints such as low income, unemployment and illness (O'Donnell 1997; Haralambos and Heald 1980). The theory holds that people are poor due to the fact that they find themselves in a situation of no resource opportunities for them to advance their welfare. This theory underpins the establishment of the National Directorate of Employment where school leavers who are unemployed can be engaged.

### **The Radical Structural/Marxist Theory (Power Theory)**

On their part, the radical structural/Marxist perspective which is also known as the power theory argued that capitalism produces poverty due to its exploitation syndrome. The theory is hinged on the fact that capitalism brings about fundamental social problems including severe inequality which leads to poverty. Those stricken by poverty are often subjugated by the bourgeoisies so as to glean (collect underserved) profits and Capital via exploitation. It is thus the macro-structure of a capitalist society that produces inequality and

consequently poverty. Institutions and class exploitation account for poverty as people suffer in the hands of the privileged class and institutional arrangements. The poor are unable to attain higher living standards and thus come out of poverty because the capitalist arrangement is biased against them (Archbong, 1997) and Uniamikgbo, 1997).

It is important to stress that the degree of success or otherwise of the exploiting class depends on the consciousness of those oppressed to revolt as well as their organizational capacity to resist exploitation and overthrow the mechanisms of the oppressive property system. This theory therefore explains the situation in Nigeria where there is co-existence of low political consciousness due largely to high rates of illiteracy on the part of the masses, and a high degree of centralization of resources which elusive ruling political class exploit. This theory forms the basis of Nigeria's anti-corruption Crusade via the Independent and Financial Crime Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) which is a direct intervention towards ensuring that corrupt enrichment of public officers is curbed. The success of this action, all things being equal is expected to make more resources available for execution of projects and consequently raise standard of living of Nigerians including the poor

### **The Social Exclusion Theory**

The social exclusion theory is predicated on poverty resulting from people who tend to be excluded from effective participation in a society's activities due to segregation. This theory which was officially adopted in a World Summit which took place in Copenhagen in 1995 holds that certain people within the society become more vulnerable to poverty because of discrimination. This approach which has been described as people centered as against goods centered is characterized by three paradigms namely: solidarity, specialization and monopoly (Anyanwu, 1997). The solidarity paradigm results from moral integration and cultural (1997) boundary in which those who do not belong suffer exclusion. Specialization paradigm emphasizes the interdependence of specialized spheres of the Society in terms of

exchange of goods and services. The conduct of individuals depends on interests and capabilities' such that the social structure is based on specific form of division of labour which determines the extent of individual interaction. In the monopoly paradigm, different interest groups based on class, status and political power exert control over available resources. By so doing, they create inequality and form monopoly groups who tend to perpetuate power and privileges through social closure and labour market segregation thereby enforcing exclusion. This means the poor are not the problem but rather, the inaccessibility of realistic opportunities as a result of exclusion that prevents them from getting out of poverty. Nigeria's advocacy and promotion of community based poverty alleviation programmes emphasized by the nation's National Economic Development Strategy (NEEDS) as well as formation of self-help projects by communities and NGO are aimed at tackling poverty that results from the claim of this theory.

### **Empirical review**

Poverty in Nigeria is explained by the combined actors of inadequate food supply and limited entitlement to food as the most rudimentary manifestation of poverty is hunger and malnutrition (Abimiku 2009 in Atoloyeetal, 1997). In dealing with the problem of poverty alleviation Abimiku, 2009 in Archbong (1997) opined that two opposing measures (direct measures which tackle poverty issues and indirect measures of promoting welfare through economic growth) exist. The direct approach assumes that economic growth by itself is too slow to provide substantial benefits to the poor in a reasonable period. Thus, it posits that government should provide goods and services directly to the population in order to ensure that the poor receive an equitable share. On the other hand, the indirect approach is on the view that policy makers should reduce government role in the provision of goods and services and rather concentrate on increasing long-term economic growth (Abimiku (2009) in Archbong (1997) continued that poverty alleviation programmes adopted so far in Nigeria reflects a mixture of the direct and indirect approaches. The realization of the

adverse effects of the structural Adjustment Programme introduced in Nigeria in 1986 on the poor prompted the introduction of policies and programmes to alleviate poverty and provide safety-nets for the poor in the economy (National Planning Commission, (1995).

According to Abimiku (2009) in Egware (1995), Ogunwunmike (2001), Obadan (2001), Ali-Akpajiak and Pyke (2003) there have been special relief package projects targeted at alleviating poverty during and after Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). Such projects which can also be classified under the direct approach discussed above include the National Directorate of Employment (NDE); family support programme which was later replaced by the Better Life Programme which was later replaced or changed to Family Economic Advancement Programme; the people's Bank; Community Banks; the Community Action Programme for Poverty Alleviation (CAPPA) and currently the Social Investment Programme (SIP). All these programmes were initiated by the Federal Government to alleviate poverty in the country. However, with all these efforts poverty reduction efforts put in place by respective governments, poverty keeps on increasing in Nigeria in geometric progression.

## **Research Methodology**

### **The Study Area**

This study was carryout in College of Education, Akwanga, Nasarawa State Nigeria. The state is situated in North Central Nigeria. The state is shares boundary with Plateau and Kaduna State in the North, Benue State from the south as well as Federal Capital Territory from the west (National Bureau of Statistics, 2015).

### **Population of the study**

The population of the study comprises of students in the two hundred students in two (2) selected schools in College of Education Akwanga- school of Arts and social sciences and school of sciences. The population of the study area consist of over 2500 students in which a total of which two hundred (200) respondents were used for the study. The respondents were randomly selected using a purposeful random sampling techniques.

### **Method of data collection**

Data for this study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were obtained through administered of questionnaire and interviews.

Secondary data were collected through the use of libraries, research journals, books, newspapers and magazines etc.

### **Sample and Sampling techniques:**

A survey design was employed for the study. The data were collect through the use of questionnaire, in which a sample of 200 respondents were randomly selected from 2 selected schools in College.

### **Method of data analysis**

Data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Linear regression analysis was used to compared relation between poverty and access to education among students. The data were analyzed with the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.

### **Results and Discussion**

Two hundred copies of structured questionnaire were distributed by the researchers and they were all returned and analyzed using simple percentage based on the research questions stated. The results of the analysis are presented in the tables below.

### **Demographic Distribution of the Respondents**

To understand the impact of federal government poverty reduction programs on students, it is vital to first examine the socio-economic characteristics of the students. The socio-economic profile of students includes factors such as gender, age, occupation, income level, marital status, provides valuable insights into the vulnerability and poverty rate of different groups within the study. These characteristics play a significant role in determining how individuals are involved in crime.

Analyzing these socio-economic variables is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it helps to identify the most vulnerable groups within the population, such as female farmers, the elderly, or low-income households, who may

face greater challenges in their studies. These socio economic variables are presented and discussed on Tables 1 below.

**Table 1: Demographic Distribution of the Respondents**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	120	60
Female	80	40
Total	200	100
<b>Age</b>	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
16-19	80	40
20-23	100	50
24-27	20	10
Total	200	100
<b>Level</b>	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage(%)</b>
100	50	25
200	70	35
300	80	40
Total	200	100
<b>Marital status</b>	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Married	40	20
Single	150	75
Divorced	10	5
Widowed	-	-
Separated	-	-
Total	200	100

Source: Field survey, 2025

From table 1, the result of the analysis on the sex distribution of the respondents shows that majority 60% of the respondents were men while 40% female. On the age distribution of the respondents, majority 50% are between 20-23 years, 40% of the respondents are between 16-19 years while 10% of the respondents are between 23-27 years.

The result also shows that out of two hundred respondents only 50 respondents (25%) were

in 100 level while 70 respondents (35%) were in 200 level and the remaining 80 respondents which also represents (40%) were in 300 level respectively. The study further revealed that out of two hundred respondents only 40 respondents (20%) are married while 150 respondents are single and the remaining 10 respondents (5%) are divorces.

**Table 2: Analysis of the Respondents Parents' Employment Status**

<b>Option</b>	<b>No of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: field survey, 2025.

The result obtained in table 2 above indicates that fifty(50) respondents making twenty five percent of the respondents agreed that their parents are employed while one hundred and fifty(150) of the respondents making seventy five percent of the respondents said that their

parents are not employed. It can be seen that majority of the respondents' parents are not employed.

**Table 3: Responses of Respondents on Type of Parental Employment.**

Option	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Paid Employment	50	25
Self-Employment	150	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 3, above shows that fifty (50) respondents making twenty five percent of the respondents said that their parents are in paid employment while one hundred and fifty of them making seventy five percent of the respondents are self employed. The study reveals that out of two respondents

interviewed, majority of their parents are self employed.

**Table 4: Analysis of the Respondent's Responses on their Primary Occupation**

Option	No of Respondents	Percentage
<b>Farming</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Trading</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2025

From the above table, it indicates that one hundred and fifty (150) respondents are farmers making seventy five (75) percent of

the respondents while fifty percent (50) of the respondents are traders.

**Table 5: Analysis of the Responses on Level of Income**

Income Brackets	No of Respondents	Percentage
<b>Less than N10, 000 per month.</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>N10, 000-N20, 000 per month.</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>N20,000-N30,000 per month.</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>N40,000-N50,000 per m</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>N50,000-N60,000 per month</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Above N60,000</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

Source:-Field Survey, 2025.

This table shows that out 200 respondents, 40 respondents earn N50,000-N60,000 in a month while 10 respondents earn N60,000 and above. Majority of the respondents, precisely, 120 of

them making sixty percent of the respondents earn less than N10, 000 in a month.

**Table: 6 Analysis of the Respondents Responses on Type of Sponsorship**

Option	No Of Respondents	Percentage
Under Government Sponsored	-	-
Self-Sponsorship	200	100
Non-Gont.Organisation	-	-
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

From the table above, out of the 200 respondents making One hundred percent have

agreed that all of them are under self-sponsorship.

**Table 7: Analysis of the challenges face by Respondents in their academics**

Response	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	200	100
No	-	-
Total	200	100

Source: Field survey, 2025

The table above revealed that all the respondents (200%) of them agreed that they

faced academic challenge as a result of not having sponsorship from the government.

**Table 8: Responses of Respondents on the Kinds of Academic Challenges Faced**

Response	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
Having C.O	150	75
Having probation	50	25
Total	200	100

Source: Field survey, 2025

The table shows that out of 200 respondents, one hundred and fifty respondents (75%) are having carry over as one of their academic challenges while fifty of them making 25% of

the respondents confirmed that they earned probation as one of their academic challenges.

**Table 9: Effectiveness of Government Policies in Addressing poverty**

Policy Effectiveness	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Highly Effective	140	70
Effective	150	75
Moderately Effective	90	45
Low Effective	135	67.5
No Effectiveness	102	51

Source: Field work, 2025

\*multiple responses allowed\*

The result in table 9 above is on the effectiveness of government policies in addressing poverty in the study area, the result shows that while (70%) of respondents view the current policies as moderately effective, a significant portion (75%) considers them not effective at all. This suggests that the existing policy framework may not be sufficiently addressing the needs of poverty in Nasarawa State. This finding supports the conclusions of other studies, which argue that despite the existence of policies and frameworks, there are often issues with implementation, monitoring, and local relevance (Adebayo, 2013). The limited effectiveness could be attributed to a lack of proper coordination between

government agencies and other stakeholders or inadequate policy enforcement.

### Summary and conclusion

The study revealed that out of the two hundred (200) respondents, one hundred and two students interviewed were male students while the remaining ninety eight students were female students. Out of the two hundred (200) interviewed, majority of the students, one hundred of them (100) making 50% of the total respondents were between 20-23 years of age. The study also revealed that eighty (80) respondents were in 300 level making 40% of the respondents. Furthermore, majority and fifty respondents were single, making 75% of the respondents.

Based on the outcome of this study, it revealed that parents of majority of these respondents

are farmers whose monthly income is less than ten thousand naira in a month. The result of the study also revealed that all the respondents, two hundred of them making 100% have said that they are under self-sponsorship. That is, they don't enjoy any form of government sponsorship. Finally, the study revealed that out of two respondents making 100% of the respondents agreed that they faced academic challenges due to lack of government sponsorship. One hundred and fifty (150) of the respondents making 75% of them respondents that they had carry over in some courses because of their inability of resuming earlier because of struggling for school fees, since most of them are self-sponsored students. And fifty (50) of the respondents making 25% of the respondents. The result on the effectiveness of government policies in addressing poverty in the study area, the result shows that while (70%) of respondents view the current policies as moderately effective, a significant portion (75%) considers them not effective at all. This suggests that the existing policy framework may not be sufficiently addressing the needs of poverty in Nasarawa State. The limited effectiveness could be attributed to a lack of proper coordination between government agencies and other stakeholders or inadequate policy enforcement.

In summary, federal government's poverty alleviation programmes do not go round as students in C.O.E Akwanga do not benefit notable imitative by the government. It can also be seen that most of these students are self-sponsored and they and their parents are living below the poverty line.

### Recommendations

- i. Government should ensure poverty alleviation programmes be extended to states and local government areas in the country and not sampled some states and local governments in the country.
- ii. The private sector in the economy should also be involved in educational development in the country.
- iii. Students' Loan Bank should be established so that students can access loan at minimal interest rate so as to reduce the rate of drop – outs from school.

iv. The fight against corruption in the country should be intensified in order to conserve scarce resources in order to provide quality education in the country.

v. In order to combat poverty head-on, we must place a high priority on functional education. A more educated populace is better equipped to address the numerous issues pertaining to electricity development, agriculture, especially food technology, and transportation.

vi. It is imperative that Nigerians adopt an entrepreneurial mindset by creating their own jobs rather than waiting for the government to take action in this area.

vii.

### References

- Abdulahi, R. O., Sennuga, S. O., Bamidele, J., Osho-Lagunju, B. and Ameh, D. A. (2023). Policy issues for Improving Monitoring and Evaluation of Agricultural Extension Programmes in Nigeria: A Critical Review, *Journal of Agricultural Economics, Extension and Rural Development* 11(10), 29-47
- Adebayo, B. (2018). Nigeria overtakes India in extreme poverty: Implications for Poverty Reduction. <https://www.google.com/amp/s/amp.cnn.com/cn/2018/06/26/africa/nigeriaovertakes-india-extreme-poverty-intl/index.html>
- Adewale, T. M. (2014). Fundamentals of academic programmes carrying capacity in Nigerian universities. *Journal of Educational Review*, 7 (3), 320-325
- Adejumo, A. V., Olomola, P. A., and Adejumo, O. O. (2017). The Role of Human Capital in Industrial Development: The Nigerian Case (1980-2010). *Modern Economy*, 4(10), 639
- Agile, H. E. (2018). Expanding Access to Education Opportunity in Nigeria: Matters Arising. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, 1(3), 345-356.
- Ajah, J., Unamba, F. C., Sennuga, S. O., Bamidele, J., Onjewu, S. S. & Omole, A. O. (2023). Socio-Economic Factors Affecting the Adoption of Farm Chemicals by Small-Scale Rice Farmers in Abuja, *Journal of Agricultural Science and Practice*, 8(4), 70-79.
- Akinyoade, A. and Gewald, J. B. (2015). African road to prosperity: People en route to

- sociocultural and economic transformation. 4(2), 119-124.
- Ameh, D. A., Sennuga, S. O., Bamidele, J., Osho-Lagunju, B. and Abdulahi, R. O. (2023). Linkage Behavior and Practices of Agencies in the Agricultural Innovation Transfer Sub System in Nigeria: Issues for Agricultural Extension policy, *Journal of Agriculture & Education Research* 1(1), 1-6.
- Arafat, M. and Khan, M. (2022). Effect of education on poverty and wellbeing of rural households in District Hangu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. *Journal of Managerial Sciences*, 16(1), 63–92
- Asoegwu, S. N. (2018). Leveraging food security challenges in Nigeria: Through agricultural production, processing and storage for mitigating economic recession. Federal University of Technology, Owerri Press limited, 1(3), 23-27
- Asongu, S., Nnanna, J. and Acha-Anyi, P. (2020). Inclusive education for inclusive economic participation: the financial access channel. *Working Papers of the African Governance and Development Institute*, 35(5), 481-503.
- Balvociute, R. (2020). Social assistance for poverty reduction in the EU Countries: An aspect of socio-economic sustainability. *European Journal of Sustainable Development*, 9(1), 469– 469
- Bossert, W., Cato, S., and Kamaga, K. (2022). Generalized Poverty-gap Orderings. *Social Indicators Research*, 164(1), 189–215
- Bowen, H. (2018). *Investment in learning: The individual and social value of American higher education*. Routledge. [https://www.amazon.com/Investment-in-Learning-by-Bowen, Howard R. Bullem, A.G., Ibor, A.S. and Catherine, T. N. \(2021\) vocational education and training: an important tool for poverty reduction in Nigeria, 1\(2\), 7-9](https://www.amazon.com/Investment-in-Learning-by-Bowen-Howard-R-Bullem-A-G-Ibor-A-S-and-Catherine-T-N-2021-vocational-education-and-training-an-important-tool-for-poverty-reduction-in-Nigeria-1-2-7-9)
- European Commission. (2015). *Employment, education and other means of reducing poverty: Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion*, 5(2), 31-47.
- Faloyo, O., and Bakare, A. M. (2015). Empirical assessment of economic growth on poverty reduction in Nigeria. Tax Field Audit Unit (TAFU), Lagos State Internal Revenue, Lagos, Nigeria. *American Journal of Economics*, 5(6), 565–573
- Global Education Monitoring Report. (2019). *Building bridges for gender equality: gender report 2019*. UNESCO. <https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/>
- Jaiyeola, A. O. and Bayat, A. (2019) Status of Living Standards in Nigeria between 2010 and 2013: *Journal of Poverty*, 24(1), 45-71
- Khan, A. and Cheri, L. (2016). An examination of poverty as the foundation of crisis in Northern Nigeria: Insight from Africa, *Journal of insight on Africa*, 8(1), 59–71.
- Khan, M. Y., Alvi, A. K. and Chishti, M. F. (2019). An Investigation on the Linkages between Poverty and Education: A Statistical Review. *Gomal University Journal*, 35(1), 44-53
- Ibrahim, Y. (2018). Education Policy Development in Nigeria: Challenges and way forward. *International Journal of Advanced Studies in Social Science and Innovation (IJASSI)*, 2(1), 213-245
- Iliyasu, H., Sennuga, S. O., Bamidele, J., Osho-Lagunju, B. and Abdulahi, R. O. (2023). A Critical Review of the Impact of Climate Change on Food Security in Nigeria: A Vulnerability Assessment, *Merit Research Journal of Agricultural Science and Soil Sciences* 11(6).
- Jeffery, D. S. (2015). *The age of sustainable development*. New York, NY: Columbia University press. [http://cup.columbia.edu > book > The Age of Sustainable Development](http://cup.columbia.edu/book/The-Age-of-Sustainable-Development)
- Kolawole, C. O. (2015). The Role of Lecturers in the Provision/Maintenance of Quality Assurance in Higher Education: *Kwara State University, Malete, Ilorin, Nigeria*, 2(5), 17-19
- Ogbonnaya, N.O. (2019). *Principles and Applications of Educational Policies in Nigeria*, Nsukka: University Trust Publishers, 9(8), 27-33
- Ogunode, N. J. and Ahaot, G. N. (2020). Educational Strategic Plans in Nigeria: Challenges of Implementation and Ways Forwards. *International Journal on Integrated Education*, 3(9), 134-136
- Ojeleye, O. A. (2018). Agriculture and economic development in Nigeria: The strong case for production of food crops in Northern Nigeria. *International research journal of innovation in engineering and technology (IRJIET)*, 14(1), 58–65.
- Olohunlana, A. O. and Dauda, R. O. S. (2019). "Implications of financial development on poverty and inequality: Evidence from Nigeria,"

- Romanian Economic Journal, Department of International Business and Economics from the Academy of Economic Studies Bucharest, 22(71), 42-59,
- Ololube, N. P. (2016). Education Fund Misappropriation and Mismanagement in the Provision of Quality Higher Education in Nigeria: Critical Review. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, 9(4), 333-349.
- Simon-Oke, O. O. (2016). Petroleum resources and Nigeria's poverty profile. *Journal of Economics and International Finance*, 8(10), 168–177.
- Thisday Newspaper (2019). Atiku Decries Diversion of Education Funds by States. <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2019/12/06/atiku-decries-diversion-of-education-funds-by-states/>
- Thorn-Otuya, B. and Inko-tariah, D. C. (2016). Quality Education for National Development: The Nigerian Experience. *African Educational Research Journal*, 4(3) 101-104
- UNESCO (2016). *Inclusive and Sustainable Cities*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing. <https://en.unesco.org/events/inclusive-and-sustainable-cities-municipalities-good-practices-in-lebanon>
- UNICEF (2018). *Gender and Education*. [Accessed November 6, 2023] Available <https://data.unicef.org/topic/gender/gender-disparities-in-education/>