



Effects of Household Structure on Poverty Status Among Farmers in Tambuwal Local Government of Sokoto State, Nigeria

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Abstract – The rapid increase of poverty in Nigeria is quite worrisome. Many studies have been carried out on the subject but the relationship between poverty and household structure in Northern Nigeria still remains a gap to be filled. This study therefore investigates the effects of household structure on poverty status among farmers in Tambuwal local government, Sokoto State. Primary data was collected by the use of structured questionnaire and personal interview of the respondents. Two-third of mean per capital expenditure (MPCE) was used to categorize poverty into poor and non-poor which served as the dependent variable. Also used was the Foster-Greer-Thorbecke (FGT) poverty measurement to determine the intensity of poverty of the respondents. Logit Regression analysis was the inferential statistics used to determine the effects of household structure on poverty level of the respondents. The results revealed that 51% of the respondents fall to the non-poor category, 38% fall to the moderately poor category while only 11% belong to the core poor poverty category. The poverty indices composition in relation to the poverty line of #5,247.26 revealed that about 49% of the population are either moderately poor or core poor while the poverty gap and the poverty severity were 19.04% and 8.69% respectively. The logit regression results showed that farm size owned, farm size cultivated, years of experience in primary occupation and the household size structure of the respondents influenced their poverty status at different levels of significant. The study provides some recommendation from the findings to tackle the menace of poverty.

Keywords – Household Structure, Poverty, Foster-Greer-Thorbecke (FGT), Logit regression Northern Nigeria.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Southern and Northern protectorates were amalgamated in 1914 to be what is known as Nigeria today. Sokoto, which was an independent Islamic caliphate before it was conquered by the British has till today deep rooted Islamic traditions. Sokoto is among the twelve states that have reintroduced the Sharia, which was fully applied in the region before the colonial conquest. Therefore, the structure of a typical household in Sokoto State is hugely influence by Islam.

A typical northern household is large. Relatives live in clusters with the eldest male as the household head. The household structures is largely patrilineal in line with the Islamic injunction of a male being the head of affairs. A

male usually has more than a wife and many children. The Islamic religion has significantly influenced the practice of polygamy in northern Nigeria. Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey 2008 revealed that the highest fertility rate is in the North-West with 7.3 children per woman.

The issue of poverty in Nigeria is indeed a paradox. Despite its abundant natural and human resources, its people remain poor. From the past twenty years, the poverty situation in Nigeria has continued to worsen (Anigbogu et.al, 2014). The Human Development Index has consistently ranked Nigeria as among the poorest nations in the world. The 2014, 2015 and 2016 UNDP Human development index for Nigeria is 0.514, 0.525 and 0.527 respectively which ranked the country 152th among 188 countries. According to this 2016 report Nigeria retained its 2015 status which was two points above the previous computation. Also, according to the most recent National Living Standards Survey presented by the National Bureau of Statistics, about 70 per cent of the country’s population is living below the poverty line of one dollar a day. The intensity of poverty is higher in the predominantly Muslim northern Nigeria than in the southern Nigeria according to Adamu, 2003. With regards to the World Bank Report, poverty appeared to be more concentrated in the rural arrears and this phenomenon has been attributed to both socio and economic factors.

The table I is Nigeria’s poverty index between 2005-2014 as presented by United Nation development programme (UNDP).

Table I. Multidimensional Poverty Index.

Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), HDRO specifications	0.279
Population in multidimensional poverty (%)	50.9
Population in multidimensional poverty, headcount (thousands)	88,425
Population in multidimensional poverty, intensity of deprivation (%)	54.8
Population in severe multidimensional poverty (%)	30
Population living below income poverty line, PPP \$1.25 a day (%)	62
Population near multidimensional poverty (%)	18.4
Working poor at PPP \$2 a day (% of total employment)	76.6

Source: United Nation development programme (UNDP), 2015.

The Nigerian government has made a series of efforts toward various poverty reduction policies, programs and strategies. Some of the poverty alleviation initiated by the government includes: National Accelerated Food Production Program (NAFPP), the Green Revolution Program (GRP), Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Better Life For Rural Women (BL), the Directorate for Food Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), Family Support Program (FSP), Poverty Alleviation Program (PAP), National Poverty Eradication Program (NAPEP), National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) and Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YOUWIN) among others. It is quite unfortunate that none of these programs can boast of any significant effect. The strings of poverty are still felt by the majority of the population.

The main problem faced by these poverty reduction policies and programs in Nigeria is 'misplaced priority'. This is as a result of the inability of policy makers to know exactly where the problem lies; who are the poor? why are they poor? where they live and what they really need in order to alleviate their situation (Anigbogu et.al, 2014). In order to see any meaningful effect, beneficiaries have to be involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project. He also identified other reasons for the failure of these policies and programs such as: poor coordination, the absence of a comprehensive policy framework and sustainable mechanism, excessive political interference, institutional conflicts as a result of overlapping functions of various projects and the unwieldy scope of programs, which caused resources to be thinly spread across too many projects.

The major characteristics of a typical traditional Nigerian family are patriarchal and hierarchical, polygamous and extended. The males have special rights, authorities and advantages. The man is considered the head of the family and therefore saddled with the responsibility to protect, provide for his family and final decision maker (Makinwa and Paulina, 2001). Female members are taught to respect, serve and obey the males' members of the family which includes father, brothers, grandparent, uncles and even male cousins. The males are the breadwinners while the females are caregivers. The latter are generally identified as the "Home makers". All lineage and descent are established through the father. In a traditional household structure, women are generally dependent on men culturally, socially and financially.

Particularly, in northern part of the country, which is predominantly Muslim, culture and religion are closely intertwined. Islam also recognizes the authority of man over women (Qur'an 4:34). The Quran has given them their full right without any form of degradation. They are allowed to own and inherit property and are not in any way subject to inheritance (Al-Qur'an 4:11-12, Rosen, 2000). Any form of injustices among women one may witness in the northern Nigeria comes from a cultural perspective rather than religious.

The high rate of unemployment especially in the rural areas has causes men to migrate urban areas mostly

without their families in search for better jobs. This has the potentials to decrease the availability of the father to participate in family life. This urbanization not only weakens the traditional family system but also encourages the desire for smaller family (UN, 2001). World mapping 2013 has indicated that Nigerian women currently give birth to an average of 5.5 children, which implied a declination, compared to close to seven in the eighties.

The hierarchical family structure is at the brim of collapse. In recent times, an elderly member of a family will quickly lose his position to a younger one who is more financially buoyant. Nigerian women who are traditionally known to stay at home to take care of the families are now getting more education and joining the work force (Haregu, Beguy and Eze, 2015). Men no longer take full responsibility of their homes. In many families today, both father and mother go out to work and share financial responsibility. In fact, research findings have shown women to shoulder the larger of burden (Makinwa and Paulina, 2001). In a Modern Family structure, the title of breadwinner, which denotes authority, is not exclusive for the father alone but any person who shoulders the responsibility of the household.

Furthermore, increase in poverty has change the family structure known to Africa and Nigeria in particular. According to the study in Millazo (2015), one in four households in Africa is being headed by a woman. Haregu, Beguy and Eze (2015) shows that in Nigeria, the female-headed household has increased by 30% over the last two decades. Female-headed household have been proved by various researches (Haregu, Beguy and Eze 2015; Millazo, 2015; Tijani and Ogunbanwo, 2008) to be particularly vulnerable to poverty than the male-headed households especially when it includes children who are too young to fend for themselves. A polygamous male-headed household is shown to be better situated. The vulnerability experienced by these women is exacerbated by their occupational segregation to low-income and low-security Jobs. Female-headed household still exist when the husband is present but is not contributing financially to the household due to rising rate unemployment. Due to traditional expectation, this redundancy experienced by the men has an adverse effect on the whole family. It is not far from the truth to say that a typical African Man has closely tied self-worth to the ability to provide for his family. The man undergoes much stress, low self-esteem, and eventually a full-blown family crisis.

Many poverty-related studies have been carried out in the country but the relationship between poverty and household structure in Northern Nigeria still remains a the gap to be filled. The study therefore aims to investigate the effects of household structure on poverty status among farmers in Nigeria using data obtained from the Muslim community of Tambuwal local government, Sokoto State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to examine the poverty status and indices of the respondents and to determine the effect of household structure on poverty status among the respondents in the study area.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Tambuwal Local Government Area of Sokoto, Sokoto State, Nigeria. Its headquarters is in the town of Tambuwal. It has an area of 1,717 km² (663 sq mi) and a population of 224,931 at the 2006 census (Federal Republic of Nigeria, Official Gazette, 2009). The Local Government Area is located on the A1 highway and lies on latitude 12°24' and longitude 4°40'. It is a dry Sahel area, surrounded by sandy savannah

and isolated hills. The area is characterized to be very hot with an annual average temperature of 28.3 °C. The rainy season begins from June to October and thereafter, the climate is dominated by the Harmattan wind blowing Sahara dust over the land. The dry characteristic of the region is only suited for food crop production such millet, rice, corn cereals and beans. The Local Government comprises of five districts; Tambuwal district, Sanyinna district, Dogon Daji district, Jabo district and Gindi district.

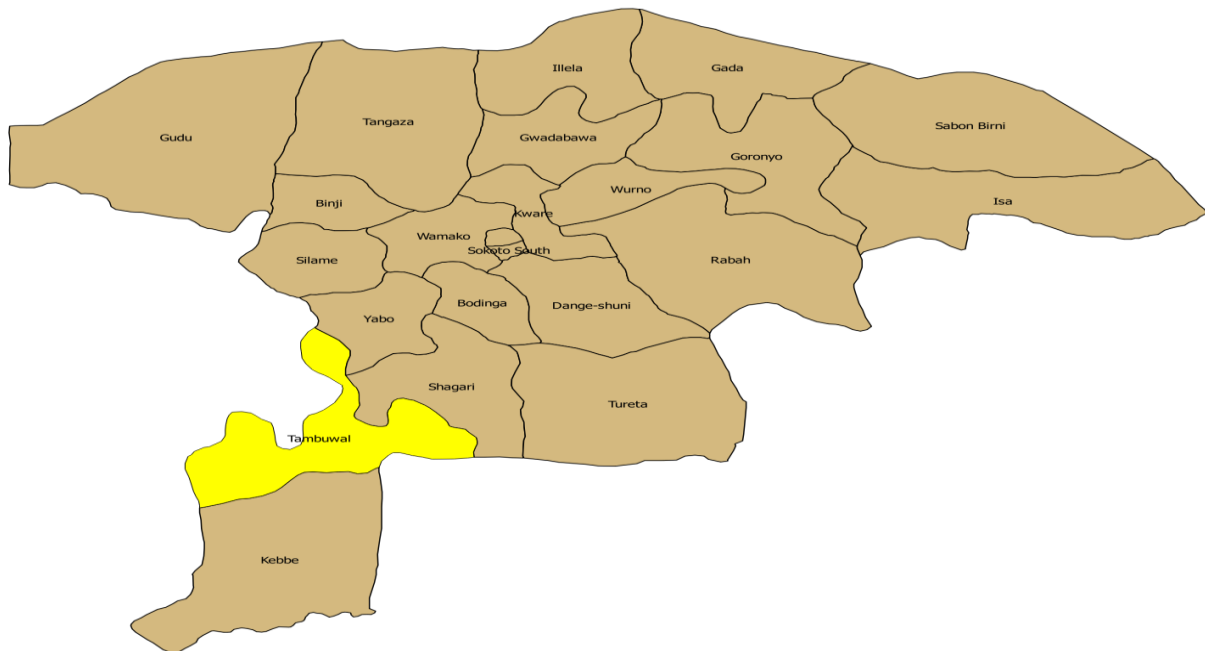


Fig. 1. Map of Sokoto State Showing Local Government Areas.

Random selection of four districts from the five main districts in the Local Government Area was made and the selected districts are Tambuwal, Jabo, Dogon-Daji and Sanyinna. Systematically selection of 25 households was made from each of the selected districts to make a total sample size of 100 farming households. To achieve the study objectives, primary data was collected by the use of structured questionnaire personal interview of the respondents. The information that was elicited from them includes; information on their socio-economic characteristics (e.g. sex, age etc.), primary occupation, total farm size (ha), total farm size under cultivation (ha) etc. Likewise, questions were asked on the family structure, which include households' size, number of family labour used, source of food consumed, etc. Questions on household monthly expenditure (food and non-food expenditure) were also asked among others.

To analyze the data that was obtained, various analytical techniques was used. These include two-third (2/3) of mean per capital expenditure (MPCE) used to categorize poverty into poor and non-poor which served as the dependent variable and the Foster-Greer-Thorbecke (FGT) poverty measurement to determine the intensity of poverty of the respondents. The Foster-Greer-Thorbecke

(sometimes referred to as FGT) metric is a generalized measure of poverty within an economy. It combines information on the extent of poverty (as measured by the Headcount ratio), the intensity of poverty (as measured by the Total Poverty Gap).

The formula for the FGT is given by:

$$FGT_{\alpha} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^H \left(\frac{z - y_i}{z} \right)^{\alpha} \quad (1)$$

Where

z is an agreed upon poverty line.

N is the number of people in an economy,

H is the number of poor (those with incomes at or below z),

y_i are individual incomes and α is a "sensitivity" parameter. The higher the FGT statistic, the more poverty there is in an economy.

Likewise, Logit regression analysis was the inferential statistics used to determine the effects of household structure on poverty level of the respondents. Logit regression has been defined as the amount of change in the value of one variable associated with a unit change in the value of another variable; Logit regression analysis

therefore helps to determine the effect of changes in the explanatory variables on the dependent variable. Logit model is used whenever the dependent variable is binary (also called dummy) which takes values 0 or 1. Logit regression is a nonlinear regression model that forces the output (predicted values) to be either 0 or 1. Logit model estimates the probability of your dependent variable to be 1 ($Y = 1$). This is the probability that some event happens. It is expressed as:

$$Y_i = X_i \beta + u_i \quad (2)$$

In this model, the response variable was binary, taking values as one if the household was poor, zero otherwise and assuming that the cumulative distribution of u_i was logistic; a logistic model was employed. In this case, the probability of being poor was estimated by using the logistic probability model given as:

$$\text{Prob}(Y_i = 1) = [\exp(X_i' \beta)] / [1 + \exp(X_i' \beta)] \quad (3)$$

Where;

Y_i^* = The limited dependent variable, which represents the status of households' poverty.

β = Vector of unknown parameters.

ε_i = Is a disturbance term.

$i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ (n is the number of possible observations).

The explanatory variables that were used to categorize farmers are defined thus;

AGE = Age of household head (in years).

HHSZ = Household size (no).

MSTAT = Marital status (D = 1 if polygamous, otherwise D = 0).

FMXTR = Family structure (D = 1 if extended, otherwise D = 0).

FMLY LAB = Family labour used on farm or at work place (D = 1 if yes, otherwise D = 0).

ODPRNT = Older parent working (D = 1 if yes, otherwise D = 0).

EXPRNC = Work experience (in years).

ASSOC = Member of Association (D = 1 if yes, otherwise D = 0).

FMSZ = Farm size (in hectares).

EDUC = Years in school.

MOCCUP = Major occupation (D = 1 if civil service, otherwise D = 0).

MOCCUP = Secondary occupation (D = 1 if civil service, otherwise D = 0).

TFEXP = Total monthly food expenditure (in naira).

TNFXP = Total monthly non-food expenditure (in naira).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Household Poverty

Table II revealed the distribution of the respondents based on their poverty status class; it was revealed that 51% of the respondents fall to the non-poor category, 38% fall to the moderately poor category while only 11% belong to the core poor poverty category. It is evident from this finding that half of the respondents belong to the

non-poor category while the rest half fall to either of moderately poor or core poor categories going by the prevalent poverty line.

Table II: Household Poverty Status

Poverty class	Frequency	Percentage
Core poor	11	11.0
Moderately poor	38	38.0
Non-poor	51	51.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Data Analysis, 2017

IV. POVERTY INDICES DECOMPOSITION

Also, in Table III revealed the poverty indices decomposition. Poverty head count ratio P_0 shows that the number of people (farming households) living below the poverty line was about half (49.0%), which is low in the study area at a moderate poverty line of N5247.26k; the poverty gap P_1 which measures the depth of poverty was 19.04% while that of the poverty severity P_2 was 8.63%. It can be inferred from these indices that there exist relative poverty in the study area especially among about half of the residents; this poses a serious issues to general household well-being which has to be urgently addressed through appropriate policy measure interventions. Islam does not encourage poverty. In fact, one of the main objectives of Sharia is the protection of wealth. Ample of Qur'anic verses and Hadith of the prophet has put emphasis on social security of each and every member of the society as well as provide measures for the elimination of poverty (Ahmad 2014). The Quran has always promoted work, earnings and self-reliance as evident in Surah Jum'ah. "And when the prayer has been concluded, disperse within the land and seek from the bounty of Allah, and remember Allah often that you may succeed" (Quran 63:10). It was also narrated that the Prophet ﷺ used to recite this du'a:

"O Allāh, expand your sustenance for me when I become old and at the end of my life." (*Tabrānī*)

Poverty often leads to crime and sins such as Murder, theft, lie and deception. The prophet ﷺ has taught His followers to always supplicate to Allah against poverty. 'O my Lord protect me from incapability and laziness'.

And also,

'O Allah, make your lawful bounties sufficient for me so as to save me from what is unlawful, and from Your Grace grant me sufficient abundance to make me free from the need of all except you!' (Muslim).

Table III. Poverty indices decomposition.

Respondents	Poverty line	P_0 (%)	P_1 (%)	P_2 (%)
Farming households	2/3 of poverty line = N5247.26k	49.0	19.04	8.63

Source: Data Analysis, 2017

V. EFFECTS OF FAMILY STRUCTURE ON POVERTY STATUS

The logistic regression estimate from the fitted model (which follows a standard normal distribution) in which the response variable is poverty status of the respondents while the explanatory variables are the selected socio-economic characteristics of the respondents as well as family structure variables. The estimate revealed an LR χ^2 of 89.44, $\text{prob} > \chi^2$ of 0.0000 and pseudo R^2 of 0.6454; all these suggest that the model has a good fit.

From the result presented in table IV where being poor is the dependent variable, it was revealed that the farm size uncultivated has a direct and significant ($p < 0.1$) relationship with poverty status, which suggests that increase in farm size increase the likelihood of being poor; this does not conform with a-priori expectations but the reason could be adduced to the fact that number of plots owned does not translate to increased production if not cultivated and resources used efficiently. This result conforms to the research of FAO and World Bank (2001) while analyzing farming system approaches of Sub-Saharan African farmers. All Projections has shown a very slow decline of poverty. Therefore, the challenge remain on how the government as well as private institution can provide incentives to enable farm household achieve agricultural growth and poverty reduction simultaneously. In agreement with this finding, Olukunle (2013) has identified price of Agricultural labor, inadequate storage and processing facilities, unstable input and output prices, marketing and technical constraint among the challenges faced by a typical farmer in the rural area. Studies have shown that in recent years, there is a significant reduction with regard to varieties of farm produce cultivated especially cereal crop which are most popular in Sokoto area. This is as a result of the intense pressure suffered by forest and woodlands that has affected biodiversity.

On the other hand, farm size under cultivation, years of experience in primary occupation and household size have

inverse relationship with poverty status and are significant at ($p < 0.1$, $p < 0.05$ and $p < 0.01$ respectively); this suggests that, increase in farm size cultivated is expected to reduce the likelihood of being poor. In the same vein, it was revealed that the more the years of experience in primary occupation, the less the likelihood of being poor because experiences gather over the years will boost the productivity and by extension income realized. The research of Appleton and Balihuta, (1996) portrays that this is not entirely conclusive as reports shows mixed effects of experience and schooling on farm productivity. But this finding is however in consistent with submission of Evenson and Mwabu (1998), that farming experience as well as farm management abilities are major determinants in farm yield.

Also, the more the household size (a proxy for family structure), the less the likelihood of being poor; this findings does not conform with a-priori expectation because increase in household size is expected to expose households to poverty vulnerability but reverse is the case here, the reason could be attributed to inherent individual differences as well as heterogeneity in geographical locations. The findings in Lanjouw and Martin (1995) seem to conform to this research. It cautions against concluding that larger families equals poor family due to existence of size economies in household consumption. The finding shows that larger family can actually translate to a more secured and easily supervised work force for it own production activities. The finding of Anyawu (2014) begs to differ. He uses 2009/2010 data of the Harmonized Nigeria Living Standard Survey to conclude that the increase of household size increase the probability of being poor. The Quran has made no correlation between poverty and family size. God is the ultimate provider and sustainer. This is evident in Surah Isra:

“And do not kill your children for fear of poverty. We provide for them and for you. Indeed, their killing is ever a great sin”.

Table IV Logistic Estimates of Family Structure and Poverty status.

Poverty status	Coefficient	Std. Error	Z	P> Z
Constant	2.89013	3.24658	0.89	0.373
Age	0.0550	0.0656	0.84	0.402
Years spent in school	0.0752	0.0716	1.05	0.293
Secondary occupation	0.5146	0.6046	0.85	0.395
Farm size owned	2.2987*	1.2210	1.88	0.060
Farm size cultivated	-2.8229*	1.5975	-1.77	0.077
Years of experience in primary occupation	-0.1756**	0.0760	-2.31	0.021
Access to extension agent	0.7817	3.4769	0.22	0.822
Frequency of extension visit	-1.1036	1.3142	-0.84	0.401
Extended family structure	0.6570	0.9888	0.66	0.506
Household size structure	-0.7382***	0.2026	-3.64	0.000

Source: Data Analysis, 2017

* Significant at 10% level

** Significant at 5% level

*** Significant at 1% level

VI. RECOMMENDATION

The study therefore recommended that:

1. *Agricultural Land should be efficiently used:*

The efficient use of land is a sure way to reach a desired and sustainable agricultural development. It is unfortunate that large tract of land, which are suitable for farming, remained uncultivated. The proper use of these lands through irrigation can boost the productivity of agricultural sector, which translate to overall economic development. These lands can be utilized and it maximum benefit extracted through well guided agricultural policies and strategies:

- i. Effort should be made by government to establish large-scale commercial farming and agro-industries in these areas.
- ii. The Government should also provide basic infrastructure and appropriate settlement policies in order to ensure adequate supply of labor as well as woo private investors.

Umar bn Abdul Azeez (RA) expanded productivity by introducing the irrigation farming. Land were distributed equally among the people for cultivation. He established a policy where uncultivated land will after three years be seized and given to someone who is ready to work on it.

2. *Provision of true leadership Devoid of Corruption:*

There is need for leaders who will offer themselves for the service of the nation, never to seek to enrich themselves through public office.

3. *Provision of Quality Education:*

A good, quality education should indeed be high priority of any poverty elimination strategy. Unemployment will be drastically reduced when members of each household are given equal opportunities to sound education and skill acquisitions in other to contribute to family income. Gender based differences in economic opportunities has negative effect on the impact of poverty reduction. Educating the girl child and their integration into labor force is one of the ways of breaking the poverty circle. The Islamic Law has accord women the right to be educated and encourage their empowerment. The History of Khadija R.A and other female companions has shown that women are allowed to work, trade and make their lawful earnings. To have a quality education:

- i. Government should provide good learning facilities, experienced teachers and sound curriculum under a secured environment against local and foreign insurgencies.
- ii. Teachers should be thoroughly screened and this can be done through an aptitude test and interviews. Those who failed should be trained if trainable and if otherwise should be duly sack. Teachers generally should be trained and retrained at least annually to optimize performance.
- iii. The basic education curriculum should be designed to meet local circumstances and Economic opportunities.
- iv. Entrepreneurship skills should be included in our curriculum right from primary school level in order to match up with the fast changing business environment.

This will groom the children to be job creators in the future instead of waiting for the government.

- V. Serious attention should be given to the modernization of the Almajiri Schools. Basic literacy and numeracy skills should be introduced alongside with vocational training.

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