



ANALYSIS OF POVERTY STATUS AND ALLEVIATIONS STRATEGIES AMONG RURAL FARMING HOUSEHOLD IN POTISKUM LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF YOBE STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to analyse poverty status among rural farming households in Potiskum, Yobe State, Nigeria. A multistage sampling was used in selecting 118 respondents. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analysed using descriptive statistics and Foster, Greer and Thorbecke (FGT) model. The study used two-thirds of the mean per capita household expenditures on food and non-food items to construct poverty lines. The average monthly expenditure on food and non-food items was N31,350.85 and N17,227.12, respectively. Majority (83.05%) of the respondents experienced food shortage, and averages of 2 children per household were not enrolled in school. In addition 37.29% of respondents had no access to health centre in their community while 74.58%, 34.75%, 77.12%, 88.14% had their source of water supply from wells, no access to electricity, lived in mud houses with toilets, no access to extension services respectively. FGT model revealed a poverty incidence of 0.4068, poverty depth of 0.1158 and poverty severity of 0.0442. Strategies for poverty reduction include wage labour (51.69), selling produce (35.59), and borrowing inputs (41.53) among others. These shows that substantial portion of the respondents lived in poverty in the study area. Governments should provide credit facilities, extension services, electricity, and medical facilities to rural farming households to reduce poverty incidence in the study area. Formation of cooperative societies should be encouraged. And free education for out-of-school children should be provided.

Keywords: Poverty, Status, Rural, Farming, Household

INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a condition in which people or groups do not have the resources and necessities for a minimal standard of living. Therefore, it is impossible to meet their basic requirements, which include those for food, clothing, shelter, medical attention, and education (Chisom and Anowor (2017) and Anowor *et al.* (2013)). According to Sharath (2020) and Anowor *et al.* (2013), there are two perspectives on poverty: absolute poverty and relative poverty. A person is considered to be in absolute poverty if they are unable to pay for necessities including food, shelter, healthcare, education, and transportation. Relative poverty, on the other hand, occurs when an individual's income is below the average for the community but yet adequate for survival. Relative poverty, according to Nowor *et al.* (2013), is defined as having a low income in comparison to other members of the community. Poverty in Nigeria is primarily rural, with most individuals residing there and engaged in agricultural activities (United Nation 2022; Bolarin, 2009). Rural poverty is largely due to residents' inability to provide food, household, clean water, healthcare, education, infrastructure, poor housing, and inadequate nutrition. (Obikize and Ananti, 2015).

Nigeria, like other countries throughout the world, uses consumption expenditures rather than income to calculate poverty (National Bureau of Statistics, 2019). Household income sources and seasons can be challenging to track, but consumption aggregate represents the monetary worth of food and non-food items and services. Ajakaiye and Adeyeye (2001) defined a poverty line as the financial cost of a reference level of wellbeing to a specific person, at a given place and time. They went on to say that individuals who achieve that level of welfare are not poor and those who do not are poor. Africa's poverty rate is rising due to population increase, and from a global standpoint, South Asia has





lost ground to Africa in terms of poverty concentration (World Bank, 2023). Poor people lack basic necessities like food, shelter, education, and health, and face vulnerability to illness, economic dislocation, and natural disasters. They are powerless to influence decisions affecting their lives (World Development Report, 2001). The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) reports that Nigeria's multidimensional poverty index (MPI) is higher in rural areas, with 72% of the population being poor compared to 42% in urban areas (NBS, 2022).

Nigeria's governments have implemented various Agricultural Intervention Programs, including Operation Feed the Nation, Green Revolution, and Strategic Grains Reserves Program, to tackle poverty (Abu and Rohana, 2016). Despite significant government efforts to reduce poverty in Nigeria, evidence indicates that the severity and depth of poverty remain at its highest level. (Nmadu et al. 2015). Poverty in Nigeria leads to high infant and maternal mortality rates due to inadequate funding for basic infant care and inadequate healthcare services for pregnant women. (Chimere and Nathniel, 2019). Extreme poverty can lead to mortality, and the threat of poverty to human survival has persisted everywhere in the world (Bigwa et al. 2020). Upev et al. (2021) suggest various techniques to alleviate poverty, including hiring wage labor in agriculture, selling farm produce, selling landed property, transportation, rental services, political involvement, and loaned agricultural inputs. The objectives of the study were as follows;

- i. To ascertain the respondents' poverty status
- ii. To identify the strategies used by the respondents in alleviating poverty in the study area.

METHODOLOGY

The Study Area

The study was carried out in Potiskum Local Government Area of Yobe State, Nigeria. With 244,050 residents, the local government occupies 599 square kilometers and is bordered to the east by Fune LGA, to the south by Fika LGA, and to the north-west by Nangere LGA (Udeh and Ikpe, 2022). It is Located in the Sahel savannah vegetation zone, the local government is surrounded by sandy loam soils, has a generally dry temperature, and receives between 600 and 750 mm of rainfall annually. The majority of the farmers in this area are subsistence farmers (Ali *et al.* 2019).

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The study used a multistage sampling technique, in the first stage was purposive selection of all three ADP blocks in the Potiskum local government area which comprises of Potiskum block, Yarimaram block and Mamudo block, second stage was the random selection of two ADP cells from each of the three ADP blocks out of nine cells in each ADP block in the study area and the ADP Cell selected were: Badejo, Ngojin, Jumaa/Bogocho, Arjali, Fara-Fara, Bula/Maibaba. In third stage was the random selection of farming household heads from each ADP cells randomly selected that make the sample size of the study.

The Yamane sampling procedure was used to determine the sample size, with a 7% precision, based on a sampling frame of 295 farming household heads. Moreover, Yamane formula is given as: Sample size: $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$equation 1

Where; n = sample size, N = sampling frame e = level of precision (Adapted from Jonah *et al.* 2020). The proportional sample size method, as proposed by Kothari (2004) and used by Jonah *et al.* (2020), was used to determine the number of respondents in each cell as presented in Table 1.

The proportional sample size method is given by: $NI = \frac{n}{N} \times Ni$ equation 2

Where; NI = Sample size in ADP Cell, n = sample size, N = Sampling frame

Ni = Total number of farming household heads in each ADP Cell.





Table 1: Sample Distribution

ADP BLOCK	ADP Cells	Sampling frame	$NI = \frac{n}{N} \times Ni$	Sample size
Potiskum	Badejo	35	$\frac{120}{295} \times 35$	14
	Ngojin	43	$\frac{120}{295} \times 43$	18
Yarimaram	Jumaa/Bogocho	86	$\frac{120}{295} \times 86$	35
	Arjali,	68	$\frac{120}{295} \times 68$	27
Mamudo	Fara-Fara,	30	$\frac{120}{295} \times 30$	12
	Bula/Maibaba	33	$\frac{120}{295} \times 33$	14
Total		295	273	120

Source: pre field survey (2024)

However, after administering 120 questionnaires to the respondents for the data collection, 118 questionnaires were returned for the data analysis.

Source and Method of Data Collection

Primary data was collected from the rural farming household using structured questionnaire designed in line with objectives of the study supported with oral interview scheduled for the respondents that cannot read or write.

Construction of Poverty Line:

The study used the relative poverty line to calculate the number of poor individuals, dividing the rich from the poor using their per capita consumption expenditures and two-third 2/3of the mean per capita consumption spending was used for the study; Adopted from Samson (2012).

Analytical Techniques

The data was analyzed using the Foster, Greer, and Thorbecke (FGT) model and descriptive statistics.

Foster, Greer and Thorbecke (FGT) model:

$$P_{\alpha}(y; z) = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^{q} \left(\frac{z - yi}{z}\right)^{\alpha} \dots equation 3$$

 $P_{\alpha}(y;z) = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^{q} (\frac{z-yi}{z})^{\alpha}$ equation 3 Where; N = number of households, q = the number of households living below the poverty level, Z= the poverty line, Y_{i} household spending per capita for each respondent, α = Poverty aversion parameter that is not negative (0, 1, or 2)

(Adapted from Mukaila et al. 2022; Mabior, 2015; Adetayo, 2014)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' Farm Income, Nonfarm Income, Expenditure on Food and Non-food Items

According to Table 2, the respondents' average monthly farm income was \(\mathbb{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{monthly}}}}}}\) and \(\mathbb{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{arm}}}}}}}\) standard deviation of ₹13,491.26. Their minimum and maximum farm incomes were ₹7000 and ₹70,000, respectively. Furthermore, the study area's respondents' average monthly non-farm income was №13,279.66, with a standard deviation of №10,124.76, ranging from №0 to №49000. In addition, the table displays the average monthly household food expenditure of *\31.350.85, with a standard deviation of ₹14,154.5, and a minimal of ₹4,900 and a maximum of ₹80,000. Last but not least, the table showed that the average monthly household spending on items that are not food was ₹17,227.12 with a standard deviation of ₹9,697.23, with a minimum expenditure of ₹2000 and a maximum of ₹50,000. However, if the consumption expenditure exceed the income of the household it is more likely for the household to borrow or sale asset to offset the deficit. Similarly Manza (2019) conducted a study on Analysis of Income and Expenditure Pattern of Rural Households in Jema'a Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria, A total of 149 households were selected through multistage sampling procedure. Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics involving frequencies, mean, standard deviation and percentages were used and reported a mean income of №8,191.4430 of the respondents with a minimum of № 0.00 and a





maximum of №60,000.00 with a standard deviation of №8,147.06257 and a mean spending of №14,644.0604 with standard deviation of №22,772.20075. Ayinde *et al.* (2017) also conducted a study on Household Level Factors Responsible for Gender Poverty among Cassava Farmers in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State with a sample of 120 respondents and found that a mean monthly per capita household spending for farming households was calculated to be №9,216.795.

Table 2: Respondents' Farm Income, Nonfarm Income, Expenditure on Food and Non-food items in Naira (₦)/ Month

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Farm income	28,351.69	13.491.26	7000	70000
Non-farm income	13.279.66	10,124.76	0	49000
Expenditure on food	31,350.85	14,154.5	4,900	80,000
Expenditure on non-food	17,227.12	9,697.23	2000	50000

Source: Field survey, 2024

Food Conditions in the Respondents' Homes

Table 3 displays the food scarcity experienced by the respondents in their homes. According to the study's findings, 83.05% of the participants reported that they had at least a single food shortfall in their homes during the previous 12 months, while only 16.95% said that they had never encountered such. One indicator of poverty in the study's area is the respondents' houses' insufficient food supply. The analysis supports the World Bank's (2023) report, which emphasizes how poor individuals lack access to basic essentials including food, shelter, healthcare, and education.

Table 3: Food Scarcity Experienced by the Respondents in Their Homes over the Past Twelve Month

Food Scarcity	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	98	83.05
No	20	16.95
Total	118	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Strategies Adopted by the Respondents that Experience Food Scarcity to Manage the Condition

The strategies adopted by the respondents that experience food shortage were presented in Table 4; According to the analysis, 24.49% of the respondents decreased the amount of food in each meal, and 40.82% of the respondents decreased the number of meals they ate each day in order to cope with the shortage situation in their individual houses. Malnutrition by consuming too little food can lead to illnesses or even death. This is in agreement with Bray *et al.* (2019) who reported that Inadequate housing, food, and medical treatment are examples of poor living conditions that can shorten life expectancy, cause obesity and malnutrition, cause emotional distress, and cause social isolation, all of which contribute to the division of society.

The table also showed that 38.78% of respondents sent children to work for food, 6.12% sought food aid, and 43.88% of respondents borrowed food from people who had enough to make up for their food shortages in their own households and paid them later. This result is consistent with Bray *et al.* (2019), who highlight how poverty frequently forces people to begin working at a young age, exposing them to exploitation, poor treatment, and humiliation. Ultimately, the results showed that 52.04% of them sold their animals to pay for food and make up for the food shortages in their homes.



Nigerian Journal of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology (NJAAT) Volume 5, Number 4A, December, 2025



ISSN (Print): 2811-1885; ISSN (Online): 2811-1893

Management Strategies	Frequency	Percentage
Reducing the quantity of meals	40	40.82
Decreased the number of meals they ate	24	24.49
Borrowed from others	43	43.88
Looked for food aid	6	6.12
Sent children to work for food	38	38.78
Sold livestock	51	52.04
Total	202*	206.12*

Table 4: Management Strategies adopted by the Respondents that Experience Food Scarcity

*Multiple responses exist Source: Filed Survey, 2024

Respondents Access to School

Access to education requires consistent enrolment and a fair allocation of learning opportunities.

Availability of School in the Study Area

Table 5 showed the availability of schools in the study area. According to the analysis, 89.83% of respondents said their community had a primary school, 36.44% said they had a high school, and 10.17% said they had no formal education at all. This indicates that the vast majority of the communities within the research area have access to education, which is crucial for reducing poverty.

Table 5: Distribution of School Availability in the Study Area

School	Frequency	Percentage
No school	12	10.17
Primary School	106	89.83
Secondary School	43	36.44
Tertiary Institution	0	0.00
Total	161*	136.44*

*Multiple response exist Source: Filed Survey, 2024

Respondents' Children Enrolments in School and Out of School Children

Table 6 display the Respondents children enrolments in school and out of school children in the study area,

According to the survey, the average number of children in the study area who were enrolled in school was 4 with a standard deviation of 3. The largest number of children per family who were enrolled in school was 15, while some households had no children registered at all. The study also found that averages of 2 children per household in the study area were not enrolled in school, with a standard deviation of 3 and a maximum of 15 children. This suggests that some low-income households are unable to pay for their children's education because of their own poverty, even when there are schools in the area of study. Nonetheless, Oke and Monisola (2015) noted that unemployment and illiteracy both lead to a rise in crime and violence within a community.

Table 6: Respondents Children Enrolments in School and Out of School Children

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Children enrolments in school	4	3	0	15
Out of school children	2	3	0	15

Source: Field Survey, 2024





Respondents Access to Health Centre

This concerned with rural farming households' access to and use of healthcare in the study area.

Availability of Health Centred in the Selected Communities

The response of respondents to the availability of health centre is presented in Table 7; and it showed that 62.71% of respondents had access to a health centre in their neighbourhood, however a respectable portion of respondents (37.29%) said they did not have access to a health centres. Level of poverty is significantly influenced by the development of the infrastructure such as health institutions (Samson, 2012)

Table 7: Distribution of the Respondents According Access to Health Centres in the Communities

Availability of health centre	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	74	62.71
No	44	37.29
Total	118	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Distribution of Health Centres in the Selected Communities

Table 8 shows the distribution of health centres' based on respondents who reported having health in their communities. The results showed that primary health care centres made up 93.24% of all health facilities in the participant's communities, with chemists and medicine hawkers accounting for 10.81% of all health facilities. Nevertheless, the rural communities within the study area lacked a Federal Medical Centres, a State Government General Hospital, and a Private Hospital/Clinic.

 Table 8: Distribution of Health Centre in Respondents in the selected Communities

Health centre	Frequency	Percentage
Federal Medical centre	0	0.00
State Government General Hospital	0	0.00
Primary Health care Centre	69	93.24
Private Hospital/ Clinic	0	0.00
Chemists/ Medicine hawkers	8	10.81
Total	77*	104.05*

*Multiple response exist **Source:** Field Survey, 2024

Respondents Distance to Health Centre

Table 9 shows the respondents' distribution based on how far they lived from the health centres; and revealed that 26.27% of the respondents travel a distance of less than 1km to the health centre, while 38.98% travelled a distance of 1- 2km and 34.75% of the respondents travelled a distance of more than 2km to reach the health centre. Being close to the health facility is crucial, particularly in an emergency situation.

Table 9: Distribution of the Respondents According to Distance to Health Centre

Distance to health centre	Frequency	Percentage
< 1 km	31	26.27
1 - 2 km	46	38.98
> 2 km	41	34.75
Total	118	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2024





Respondents Access to Water Supply

Table 10 shows how respondents were distributed based on where they obtained their water supply. The study showed that 13.56% of respondents obtained their water from rivers, 9.32% from streams, 74.58% from wells, and 42.37% from boreholes.

Table 10: Distribution of Respondents According to Access to Water Supply

Source of water supply	Frequency	Percentage
River	16	13.56
Streams	11	9.32
Wells	88	74.58
Borehole	50	42.37
Total	165*	139.83*

*Multiple response exist **Source:** Field Survey, 2024

Housing Type of the Respondents

Table 11 displays the respondents' distribution by type of home. Analysis showed that 16.10% of respondents in the study area had mud houses without toilets, while the majority of respondents (77.12%) had mud houses with toilets. Additionally, 2.54% of respondents had cement houses with toilet, 3.39% had cement houses with toilet, and 0.85% had houses made of straw and grass without toilet.

Table 11: Distribution of the Respondents According to Type of Housing

Type of house	Frequency	Percentage
Mud house without toilet	19	16.10
Mud House with toilet	91	77.12
Cemented House with toilet	3	2.54
Cemented House with toilet	4	3.39
House made up of straw and grass without toilet	1	0.85
Total	118	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Respondents Access to Electricity, Access Road, Market and Extension Service

Table 12 shows the respondents' distribution by good road, extension service, market accessibility, and electricity availability. The study found that 65.25% of respondents did not have access to electricity, whereas only 34.75% did. In addition, 53.39% of respondents said they had access to good roads, compared to 46.61% who said they had none. It also showed that 20.34% of respondents had access to a market, compared to 79.66% of respondents who said they had no market in their community. Furthermore, the study discovered that only 11.86% of respondents overall had access to extension services, while 88.14% of respondents did not. This result showed that more infrastructure development is required in the study area, including access to a market, electricity, a good road, and extension services. Similarly, Michael *et al.* (2019) observed that the multifaceted deprivation (poverty) of human welfare manifests itself in Nigeria's rural areas in a number of ways, including restricted access to basic social amenities and services (particularly reliable roads, healthcare, education, electricity, and potable water).





Table 12: Distribution of the Respondents According to Access to Electricity, Good Road, Market and Extension Service

		Frequency		Percentage
Response	Yes	No	Yes	No
Access to electricity	41	77	34.75	65.25
Access to good road	63	55	53.39	46.61
Access to market	24	94	20.34	79.66
Access to extension service	14	104	11.86	88.14
Total	142	330	30.08	69.92

Source: Filed Survey, 2024

Respondents' Poverty Incidence, Depth and Severity

Table 13 displays the respondents' incidence, depth, and severity of poverty as determined by the Foster, Greer, and Thorbecke (FGT) model. According to the FGT, the poverty incidence for rural farming households was 0.4068; this implies that 40.68% of the respondents were poor; this suggests that a sizable percentage of study participants were impoverished. The respondents' level of poverty (poverty depth) was 0.1158; this implies that poor rural farming households in the study area required 11.58% increase in their consumption spending to move above the poverty line to be nonpoor. Among the rural farming households, the severity of poverty was 0.0442. This indicates that 4.42% of rural farming households in the study's area were severely poor, requiring policymakers to focus on providing food assistance, sources of income, free high-quality healthcare, free education, housing facilities, and clean water. The result of the study was similar to that of Mukaila et al. (2022) who conducted a study on Drivers of Poverty Among Rural Women in Nigeria: Implications for Poverty Alleviation and Rural Development using Foster-Greer-Thorbecke (FGT) model and reported that rural women had a poverty incidence of 0.691, poverty depth of 0.1265 and poverty severity among rural women was 0.0374. Additionally Adetayo (2014) studied the poverty status of farm households in Ogun States, Nigeria. The study's sample size consisted of 117 farm residences that were selected at random through a multistage selection process. The study's analysis made use of the Foster, Greer, and Thorbecke (FGT) poverty indicators. His/her results showed that the poverty severity (P2), poverty depth (P1), and poverty prevalence (Po) of farm households were 0.430, 0.558, and 0.7810, respectively.

Table 13: Respondents' Poverty Incidence. Depth and Severity

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Indices	Measure
Poverty incidence (P ₀)	0.4068
Poverty Depth (P_1)	0.1158
Poverty Severity (P ₂)	0.0442

Source: Author's Computation, 2024

Poverty Alleviation Strategies Employed by the Respondents'

The distribution of respondents based on the methods used for alleviating poverty in the study area was displayed in Table 15. In order to reduce the impact of poverty in their households, 51.69% of the respondents used wage labour in agriculture; 35.59% sold some farm produce before they finished harvesting; 10.17% sold some landed property; 14.41% engaged in the transportation industry; 9.32% used rental services; 6.78% actively participated in politics; 41.53% borrowed agricultural inputs from middlemen; 2.54% embarked on seasonal migration; 6.78% used trading; and 1.69% used washman or involved mechanic.





Table 14: Distribution of Respondents' According to Poverty Alleviation Strategies Employed

Poverty alleviation strategies employed	Frequency	Percentage
Wage labour in agriculture	61	51.69
Selling some farm produce before it is harvested	42	35.59
Selling some landed property	12	10.17
Transportation business	17	14.41
Rental services	11	9.32
Active involvement in politics	8	6.78
Obtaining agricultural inputs on loan from middlemen	49	41.53
Seasonal migration	3	2.54
Trading	8	6.78
Others: washman, mechanic	2	1.69
Total	213*	180.51*

*Multiple response exist **Source:** Field Survey, 2024

CONCLUSION AND RECCOMENDATIONS

The study concludes that a significant portion of the respondents in the study area lived in poverty. Food scarcity is a problem for the majority of respondents' households. Despite the fact that there were schools in the study area, poverty in the households prevented an average of two children per household from attending the schools. Most of the respondents lived in mud homes without electricity and had very little access to extension services. However, among other things, the households' methods for lowering poverty include selling some farm produce before it has been fully harvested, using paid labour in agriculture, and borrowing agricultural inputs from middlemen among others. Based on findings, the study recommends that:

- i. The government should provide adequate extension services, electricity, and medical facilities in the study area,
- ii. Rural farming households should join cooperative societies in order to help themselves.
- iii. The government should encourage rural farming households to enrol their out-of-school children to school by providing free education to everyone.

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