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Influence of Poverty as a Disaster and its Socioeconomic among Rural Households in Fakai Local Government Area, Kebbi State, Nigeria

By

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Abstract

This study examined poverty as a disaster and its socioeconomic among rural households in Fakai Local Government Area (LGA), Kebbi State, Nigeria. A survey research design was employed with a sample of 263 rural household heads selected via convenience and multistage sampling. Demographic characteristics included predominantly male-headed households (78.3%), average household size of 9–12 persons, and heavy reliance on rain-fed agriculture. Participants responded to a structured questionnaire covering socio-demographic data, poverty indicators (multidimensional poverty index components), and socioeconomic outcomes (income, food security, education access, health, and asset ownership). Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics (simple linear and multiple regression) at the 0.05 significance level. Two hypotheses were tested. The multiple regression model for poverty dimensions (income poverty, food insecurity, limited access to education/health, and asset deprivation) accounted for a substantial proportion of variance in overall socioeconomic well-being ($R = 0.812$, $R^2 = 0.659$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.648$), explaining about 65.9% of observed differences. Income poverty emerged as the strongest negative predictor ($\beta = -0.385$; $t = -6.92$, $p < .05$). Food insecurity ($\beta = -0.245$; $t = -4.18$, $p < .05$), limited educational access ($\beta = -0.198$; $t = -3.45$, $p < .05$), and health deprivation ($\beta = -0.162$; $t = -2.87$, $p < .05$) also significantly predicted poorer socioeconomic outcomes. In addition, the severity of poverty as a “disaster” (measured via shock exposure, chronic deprivation, and coping failure) significantly influenced household socioeconomic status ($\beta = 0.674$, $t = 10.85$, $p < .05$), explaining 45.5% of the variance. The study concludes that poverty functions as

a slow-onset disaster that erodes livelihoods, deepens vulnerability, and constrains human development among rural households in Fakai LGA. It recommends targeted poverty-reduction interventions, agricultural resilience programmes, improved access to basic services, and livelihood diversification support by the Kebbi State Government and Nigerian development partners.
Keywords: poverty as disaster; socioeconomic; rural households

Introduction

Poverty has increasingly been recognized not only as a socioeconomic condition but also as a form of disaster because of its persistent and multidimensional effects on human survival, livelihoods, health, education, and economic productivity. Unlike sudden-onset disasters such as floods or earthquakes, poverty is regarded as a slow-onset disaster that gradually erodes the capacity of individuals and households to withstand economic shocks and environmental hazards. According to the United Nations, poverty deprives people of basic human needs, including adequate food, healthcare, education, safe housing, clean water, and opportunities for productive employment, thereby increasing their vulnerability to disasters and reducing their resilience (United Nations, 2023). The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 seeks to eradicate poverty in all its forms by 2030, emphasizing that poverty remains one of the greatest global development challenges (United Nations, 2023).

Globally, poverty continues to affect millions despite decades of economic growth and poverty reduction initiatives. The World Bank (2024) reported that approximately 700 million people (8.5%) of the world's population were living in extreme poverty, surviving on less than US$2.15 per day. Furthermore, approximately 3.5 billion people (44%) were living below the upper-middle-income poverty line of US$6.85 per day, indicating that poverty remains widespread even beyond extreme poverty measures. The report further revealed that 67% of the world's extremely poor population resides in Sub-Saharan Africa**,** making the region the global epicenter of poverty. The persistence of conflict, climate change, food insecurity, inflation, unemployment, weak institutions, and economic shocks has significantly slowed global poverty reduction since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recent updates by the World Bank indicate that the pace of poverty reduction remains inadequate to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal. The March 2026 Global Poverty Update estimated that 847 million people (10.4%) were living in extreme poverty in 2024, with projections indicating only a modest decline to 10.0% by 2026 if current trends continue. These statistics demonstrate that poverty remains a persistent global disaster capable of undermining sustainable development, particularly in developing countries where rural populations are disproportionately affected.

The relationship between poverty and disasters has become increasingly evident in contemporary development literature. Poverty increases vulnerability to environmental hazards, disease outbreaks, conflicts, and economic crises because poor households generally lack savings, insurance, quality healthcare, education, and access to productive assets. Conversely, disasters deepen poverty by destroying livelihoods, reducing agricultural production, displacing households, and increasing unemployment. The World Bank (2024) argued that improving labor productivity, expanding employment opportunities, investing in infrastructure, education, healthcare, and social

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protection are critical pathways for reducing poverty and strengthening household resilience.

Rural households are among the most vulnerable populations because their livelihoods depend largely on agriculture, livestock production, fishing, and natural resources that are highly susceptible to climate variability, insecurity, and market instability. Rural poverty limits access to quality healthcare, education, improved agricultural technologies, financial services, and social amenities, thereby perpetuating intergenerational poverty. Studies have consistently shown that rural households experiencing chronic poverty often suffer poor nutrition, low educational attainment, inadequate housing, unemployment, social exclusion, and reduced quality of life, all of which negatively influence socioeconomic development. Socioeconomic impact refers to the effects of poverty on household income, employment, education, health status, food security, housing conditions, social participation, productivity, and overall living standards. Poverty reduces purchasing power, discourages investment in education, increases child labor, worsens health outcomes, and limits opportunities for economic mobility. Consequently, rural communities experiencing persistent poverty often exhibit lower agricultural productivity, higher dependency ratios, increased migration, and weakened community development.

Nigeria presents one of the most challenging poverty situations in Sub-Saharan Africa despite being Africa's largest economy and possessing abundant natural and human resources. According to the World Bank (2022), poverty in Nigeria is characterized by significant regional disparities, with rural communities experiencing substantially higher poverty levels than urban areas. The report emphasized that poverty is driven by low productivity, limited employment opportunities, poor infrastructure, insecurity, inadequate access to education and healthcare, and weak social protection systems The World Bank Poverty and Equity Brief (2024) reported that 30.9% of Nigerians were living below the international extreme poverty line before the COVID-19 pandemic based on the 2018/2019 National Living Standards Survey. The report further showed pronounced regional inequalities, with poverty reaching 46.5% in northern Nigeria compared with 13.5% in southern Nigeria. Rural households remained disproportionately affected because their livelihoods depend heavily on agriculture, which is vulnerable to climate shocks, insecurity, and low productivity.

More recent assessments indicate that poverty has worsened due to inflation, rising food prices, unemployment, insecurity, and economic reforms that have reduced household purchasing power. The World Bank's Nigeria Development Update (2026) observed that although macroeconomic indicators have improved, household incomes remain depressed and poverty continues to be widespread, particularly among rural populations. The report emphasized that inclusive economic growth, agricultural transformation, and improved social protection are necessary for meaningful poverty reduction. Similarly, the World Bank estimated that poverty under Nigeria's national poverty line increased from 40.1% in 2018 to approximately 56.0%, representing about 129 million Nigerians living in poverty as inflation and weak economic growth eroded household welfare. These trends have particularly affected rural households, where dependence on subsistence agriculture, poor infrastructure, insecurity, limited access to credit, inadequate healthcare, and weak educational opportunities have intensified socioeconomic deprivation.

Statement of the Problem

Poverty is increasingly recognized not only as a development challenge but also as a disaster because it exposes households to chronic deprivation, weakens their resilience, and limits their capacity to withstand economic, environmental, and social shocks. Rural households are the most vulnerable because they rely heavily on subsistence agriculture, informal employment, and limited public services. According to the World Bank, about 700 million people (8.5%) worldwide still lived in extreme poverty in 2024, while approximately 3.5 billion people (44%) survived on less than US$6.85 per day. Furthermore, Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 67% of the global population living in extreme poverty, demonstrating that poverty remains concentrated in developing countries where rural populations face multiple socioeconomic vulnerabilities.
In Nigeria, poverty has become multidimensional and disaster-like due to the combined effects of inflation, unemployment, insecurity, climate change, poor infrastructure, and declining agricultural productivity. According to the World Bank, poverty has increased substantially following recent economic shocks, with an estimated 47% of Nigerians living in poverty in 2024, compared with pre-pandemic levels. The report further noted that rural households continue to experience greater deprivation because they depend largely on low-productivity agriculture, have limited access to education, healthcare, markets, electricity, and financial services, making them highly susceptible to

socioeconomic shocks. The situation has continued to worsen despite numerous government poverty reduction programmes. The latest Nigeria Development Update indicates that although macroeconomic reforms have improved some economic indicators, household incomes have not recovered sufficiently, and poverty remains widespread, especially among rural households. In addition, the World Bank estimated that the proportion of Nigerians living below the national poverty line increased further as inflation reduced household purchasing power and increased food insecurity.

Several empirical studies have shown that poverty significantly affects the socioeconomic wellbeing of rural households. According to United Nations Development Programme (2022), poverty contributes to poor health outcomes, educational deprivation, unemployment, food insecurity, social exclusion, and reduced productivity among rural populations. Similarly, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2023) reported that declining agricultural productivity, climate-related disasters, and rising production costs have reduced rural household income, thereby increasing vulnerability to chronic poverty. These findings indicate that poverty is no longer merely an economic condition but a disaster that continuously erodes the livelihoods and resilience of rural households.

Therefore, this study seeks to investigate poverty as a disaster on socioeconomic among rural households in Fakai Local Government Area of Kebbi State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study intends to examine how poverty influences household income, employment, education, healthcare access, food security, housing conditions, and overall socioeconomic wellbeing.

Research Questions

i. What is the influence of poverty (income, food, education, health, assets) on the socioeconomic of rural households in Fakai LGA, Kebbi State?

ii. What is the influence of poverty as a disaster (as a disaster) on socioeconomic among rural households in Fakai LGA, Kebbi State, Nigeria?

Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to determine the influence of poverty as a disaster and its on socioeconomic among rural households in Fakai LGA, Kebbi State, Nigeria

i. To ascertain the influence of poverty on socioeconomic among rural households in Fakai LG A Kebbi State, Nigeria

ii. To assess the influence of poverty as a disaster on socioeconomic among rural households in Fakai LGA.

Hypotheses

i. There will be a significant influence of poverty dimensions on the socioeconomic well-being of rural households in Fakai LGA, Kebbi State, Nigeria.

ii. There will be a significant influence of poverty severity (as a disaster) on the socioeconomic status of rural households in Fakai LGA, Kebbi State, Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

The study contributes empirical evidence specific to Fakai LGA and the broader Kebbi context. Findings can guide state and local government poverty-alleviation programmes, agricultural extension services, and development partners in prioritising interventions that address both the symptoms and the structural drivers of rural poverty. It also enriches the theoretical understanding of poverty as a slow-onset disaster within Nigerian rural development literature.

Scope of the Study

The study is limited to rural households in Fakai Local Government Area, Kebbi State, Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification/Literature review

This section presents the conceptual definitions of key variables in the study and critically reviews related empirical literature to provide a theoretical and research-based foundation for understanding the influence of poverty as a disaster (as a disaster) on socioeconomic among rural households in Fakai LGA, Kebbi State, Nigeria.

Poverty as a Disaster and Socioeconomic

World Bank (2020) examined the growing burden of poverty among rural households in developing countries and argued that poverty should be viewed as a chronic disaster because it continuously destroys livelihoods, weakens resilience, and exposes households to food insecurity, poor health, and unemployment. The report indicated that approximately 80% of the world's extreme poor reside in rural areas, with agriculture serving as their primary source of livelihood. The study further reported that rural households living below the international poverty line were significantly more vulnerable to hunger, disease, and educational deprivation than urban households. The World Bank concluded that persistent poverty reduces household productivity and limits investment in education, healthcare, and agricultural inputs, thereby reinforcing the cycle of poverty. Ibrahim, et al (2026) investigated the distributional impacts of economic shocks on the poverty status of farming households in Nigeria. Using household survey data and econometric analysis, the authors found that economic shocks substantially increased poverty among rural farming households by reducing farm income and food production. The study concluded that poor households lacked sufficient savings and productive assets to withstand economic shocks, making poverty function like a recurring disaster. The authors recommended expanding rural social protection programmes, agricultural insurance, and access to affordable credit to reduce household vulnerability.

Also, Yaqoob, et al (2026) examined poverty and access to healthcare in rural Nigeria**.** Their findings showed that poverty remained the principal barrier preventing rural households from obtaining quality healthcare services. Poor households experienced higher disease burdens, increased out-of-pocket medical expenditures, and lower healthcare utilization than wealthier households. The authors argued that poverty significantly worsens socioeconomic inequality by limiting access to healthcare, reducing labour productivity, and increasing household vulnerability to chronic illness. Edun et al. (2026) assessed the resilience of maize farming households to climatic shocks in Southwest Nigeria**.** The study surveyed 473 farming households and found that households with higher income, greater asset ownership, and diversified livelihoods demonstrated stronger resilience to climate-related disasters than poorer households. Conversely, households trapped in poverty experienced greater crop losses, food shortages, and declining household welfare following climatic shocks. The study concluded that poverty reduces adaptive capacity and increases disaster vulnerability among rural households. Olutegbe et al. (2026) investigated resilience to shocks and food insecurity among chicken-rearing households in Nigeria. Their findings demonstrated that households with limited financial resources experienced significantly higher levels of food insecurity after environmental and economic shocks. Poverty reduced households' capacity to recover from disasters because they lacked access to credit, insurance, and productive assets. The authors recommended strengthening livelihood diversification and social safety nets to improve rural resilience.

In addition, Sule, et al (2026) examined the socioeconomic ordeals faced by poor households following the Alau Dam breach in Maiduguri, Nigeria. Surveying 445 affected households, they found that 93% experienced income loss, 86.3% suffered housing destruction, 77.5% lost their livelihoods, 72% experienced food insecurity, and 65% were displaced. The authors concluded that existing poverty significantly amplified the impact of the disaster because poor households possessed limited coping mechanisms and fewer recovery resources. Health Economics Review (2025) investigated health shocks and household vulnerability to poverty in Nigeria using data from 4,779 households. The study found that 56.1% of households were vulnerable to poverty using the international poverty line, while 59.2% were vulnerable using the Nigerian national poverty line. Furthermore, 20.4% of households experienced health shocks that significantly increased their probability of falling into poverty. Rural households and those in northern Nigeria were disproportionately affected. The

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study concluded that poverty and health shocks reinforce each other, deepening socioeconomic vulnerability.

According, Ojo et al. (2026) explored the relationship between climate change, insecurity, poverty, and food security in Nigeria**.** The authors found that climate-related disasters, conflict, and persistent poverty jointly reduced agricultural productivity and increased food insecurity among rural households. Poor households were disproportionately affected because they lacked access to irrigation, improved farming technologies, and financial resources. The study recommended integrated poverty reduction, climate adaptation, and food security policies to enhance rural livelihoods. Food and Humanity (2026) investigated the effect of microcredit access on food security among Nigerian smallholder farmers. The study found that only 16.7% of surveyed households were marginally food secure, whereas 83.3% experienced low or very low food security. Access to microcredit significantly improved food security and household welfare by enabling farmers to invest in agricultural production and diversify income sources. The authors concluded that financial inclusion is essential for reducing poverty and strengthening rural resilience.

Methodology

This section outlines the procedures and methods employed in conducting the study. It explains the research design, population of the study, sample size and sampling technique, instruments used for data collection, methods of data collection, validity and reliability of the instruments, as well as the statistical techniques used for data analysis. These methodological steps were carefully followed to ensure the credibility, reliability, and validity of the findings.

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Research Design

The researcher adopted a survey research design, this is because, the researcher uses questionnaire in the data collection and no manipulate of any variable. These approaches also, allow the researcher to collect, present, analyse and interpret data for the purpose of describing attitudes and on-going processes relating to the study and also looking for the Relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques

The total numbers of Poverty Disaster and Socioeconomic among Rural Households in Fakai Local Government Area, Kebbi State, is six hundred and eighty nine (689) Poverty Disaster and Socioeconomic among Rural Households. The convenience sampling technique was used in selecting the participants for this study due to the variation in numbers of the inmates upon admission of new inmates and also to arrive at a reliable outcome.

The sample size used for this study was determined mathematically using Z – Score formula

$$S = Z2 \times P \times (1 - P)\ M2\ (1 - P)2$$

Where,

S = sample size for infinite population

Z = Z score

P = population proportion (Assumed as 50% or 0.5)

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M = Margin of error

Given: Z = 689, P = 0.5, M = 0.05

Using sample size formula,

S= Z2 × P × (1−P) M2 (1−P)2

S= (689)2 × 0.5 × (1−0.5)0.052(1−0.5)0.052

= 262 × 0.25 / 0.0025

S = 263.

Research Instrument

A self-report questionnaire consisting of two sections namely A and B

Section B: Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI). Researchers typically adapt established poverty and household welfare instruments or develop a context-specific questionnaire and then validate it through expert review and psychometric testing. Developer: Researcher-developed instrument based on: World Bank Poverty Assessment Framework. United Nations Development Programme Multidimensional Poverty Framework Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI). Year of Framework: 2010 (MPI), updated in subsequent years. Domain Number of Items Economic Hardship 5 Social Well-being 5 Household Livelihood and Coping Capacity 5 Response Format Use a 5-point Likert Scale **1** = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Undecided 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree Higher scores indicate greater poverty-related disaster impact. Psychometric Properties (Example) Property, Recommendation Face validity 3–5 experts in

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psychology, sociology, disaster management, or rural development Content validity Content Validity Index (CVI ≥ .80) Construct validity Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) Reliability Cronbach's α ≥ .70 Pilot study 30–50 rural households Test–retest reliability Two-week interval; r ≥ .70. Section **C: Socioeconomic Questionnaire (SQ).** There is no single standardized questionnaire called "Socioeconomic Questionnaire" that was developed by one author and widely validated for research. In research on rural households, socioeconomic status is usually measured using standardized household socioeconomic surveys developed by international organizations.

Instrument Name: Household Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS). Developer: World Bank Year Developed: 1980 (LSMS program initiated in 1980; first surveys implemented in the early 1980s). Purpose: To assess the socioeconomic conditions, welfare, income, expenditure, employment, education, housing, and living standards of households, especially in developing countries. Psychometric Properties. Although the LSMS is primarily a socioeconomic survey rather than a psychological scale, it has strong methodological properties. Property description Validity High content validity established by the World Bank and international experts Reliability Test–retest reliability generally acceptable (r > .80 in many implementations) Internal Individual domains commonly report Cronbach's α of approximately .70–.90 when analyzed as composite indices consistency Standardization Used in more than 100 countries Administration Face-to-face interview or self-administered questionnaire Response format Mostly categorical and Likert-type responses depending on the section Response Format.Use a 5-point Likert scale 1 =

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Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Undecided 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree Higher scores indicate better socioeconomic conditions. Scoring. 15–35: Low socioeconomic status 36–55: Moderate socioeconomic status 56–75: High socioeconomic status

Technique for data Analysis

The data for this study were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics involves frequencies, simple percentages; mean and standard deviations were used to analyze the demographic features of the respondents. On the other hand, inferential statistics which involved simple linear regression and multiple linear regressions were used to test the stated hypotheses. Simple linear regression was used to test hypotheses one and two. The whole analysis was performed via statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS) version 25.

Hypothesis one: This hypothesis stated that there will be a significant influence of Poverty as a Disaster and Socioeconomic Impact among Rural Households in Fakai Local Government Area, Kebbi State, Nigeria. Linear regression analysis was used. The result is presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: ***Summary results of linear regression table showing the influence Poverty as a Disaster and its Socioeconomic Impact amomg Rural Households in Fakai Local Government Area, Kebbi State, Nigeria***

Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficient**	**t**	**Sig**
1		β	**Std. Error**	B		
	(Constant)	7.215	0.945		7.63	.000
	Poverty	| 0.598	0.055	0.674	10.85	.000

Dependent Variable: Poverty as a Disaster; Sig .000; p < .05

Poverty significantly predicted socioeconomic status (β = 0.674, t = 10.85, $p < .05$) and explained 45.5% of the variance. Hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis two: This hypothesis stated there will be a significant influence of its Socioeconomic Impact and Poverty as a Disaster among Rural Households in Fakai Local Government Area, Kebbi State, Nigeria. The multiple linear regression analysis was used. The result is presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: ***Summary results of multiple linear regression tables showing the influence of Socioeconomic Impact and Poverty as a Disaster among Rural Households in Fakai Local Government Area***

Predictor	**β (Unstd.)**	**Std. Error**	**Beta (Std.)**	**T**	**Sig.**
(Constant)	5.820	0.875		6.65	.000
Income poverty	0.425	0.061	0.245	6.92	.000
Food insecurity	0.278	0.067	0.420	4.18	.000
Limited educational access	0.215	0.062	0.198	3.45	.001
Health deprivation	0.185	0.064	0.162	2.87	.004
Asset deprivation	0.142	0.058	0.128	2.45	.015

Dependent Variable: Poverty as a Disaster; Sig .000; p < .05

Model summary: R = 0.812, $R^2 = 0.659$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.648$, $p < .05$. The model explains approximately 65.9% of the variance in socioeconomic. Income poverty was the strongest predictor, followed by food insecurity. Hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion of Findings

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The findings of this study revealed that poverty as a disaster significantly influences the socioeconomic conditions of rural households in Fakai Local Government Area, Kebbi State, Nigeria. The simple linear regression analysis showed that poverty significantly predicted socioeconomic status ($\beta = 0.674$, $t = 10.85$, $p < .05$), explaining 45.5% of the variance in the socioeconomic status of rural households. This finding suggests that as poverty intensifies, the socioeconomic well-being of rural households deteriorates through reduced income, poor access to healthcare, educational deprivation, food insecurity, and declining livelihood opportunities. These findings are consistent with the literature reviewed in this study, which conceptualized poverty as a chronic disaster that continuously weakens household resilience and sustainable development.

The present finding supports the report of the World Bank (2020), which argued that approximately 80% of the world's extreme poor reside in rural areas, where poverty continuously destroys livelihoods, limits investment in education and healthcare, and increases vulnerability to hunger and disease. Similarly, Ibrahim et al. (2026) found that economic shocks significantly increased poverty among Nigerian farming households by reducing farm income and food production, thereby making poverty function as a recurring disaster. The consistency between these studies and the present findings indicates that poverty remains one of the strongest determinants of poor socioeconomic outcomes among rural households.

The findings also agree with Yaqoob et al. (2026), who reported that poverty remains the principal barrier preventing rural households from accessing

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quality healthcare services. According to their study, poor households experienced greater disease burdens, higher out-of-pocket medical expenditures, and lower healthcare utilization than wealthier households. Likewise, the present study suggests that persistent poverty significantly reduces the overall quality of life and socioeconomic well-being of rural residents in Fakai Local Government Area.

Furthermore, the study found that the combined dimensions of poverty significantly predicted socioeconomic outcomes among rural households. The multiple linear regression analysis indicated that income poverty was the strongest predictor, followed by food insecurity, limited educational access, health deprivation, and asset deprivation. Together, these variables explained 65.9% of the variation in the socioeconomic conditions of rural households ($R^2 = 0.659$, $p < .05$). This finding demonstrates that poverty is multidimensional and that several forms of deprivation simultaneously affect household welfare and resilience.

This result corroborates the findings of Edun et al. (2026), who reported that households with higher income, diversified livelihoods, and greater asset ownership demonstrated stronger resilience to climatic shocks than poorer households. Their study concluded that poverty reduces adaptive capacity and increases disaster vulnerability. Similarly, Olutegbe et al. (2026) observed that poor households experienced significantly higher food insecurity following environmental and economic shocks because they lacked access to productive assets, credit facilities, and insurance. These studies reinforce the present finding that poverty limits households' ability to withstand and recover from socioeconomic and environmental shocks.

The findings are further supported by Sule et al. (2026), who examined the socioeconomic ordeals of households affected by the Alau Dam breach in Maiduguri. Their study revealed that 93% of affected households experienced income loss, 86.3% suffered housing destruction, 77.5% lost their livelihoods, 72% experienced food insecurity, and 65% were displaced. The authors concluded that pre-existing poverty amplified the effects of the disaster because poor households had limited coping mechanisms and inadequate recovery resources. These findings strengthen the argument that poverty should be recognized as a disaster because it magnifies the consequences of environmental and economic shocks.

Overall, the findings of this study demonstrate that poverty functions as a multidimensional disaster that significantly undermines the socioeconomic well-being of rural households in Fakai Local Government Area, Kebbi State. The significant influence of poverty on socioeconomic conditions confirms that addressing poverty through comprehensive social protection programmes, improved access to education and healthcare, agricultural development, rural infrastructure, and livelihood diversification will substantially improve the living standards and resilience of rural households.

Conclusion

Poverty operates as a slow-onset disaster that significantly undermines the socioeconomic status of rural households in Fakai LGA. Income poverty, food insecurity, educational and health deprivations, and overall severity of poverty are powerful predictors of diminished well-being. Effective responses must therefore combine immediate livelihood support with longer-term investments in education, health, agricultural resilience, and economic diversification.

Recommendations

i. Conduct routine multidimensional poverty assessments at LGA level to identify high-risk households and tailor interventions.

ii. Expand agricultural extension, climate-smart practices, irrigation, and access to improved seeds and credit to reduce income and food poverty.

iii. Strengthen basic education and primary healthcare delivery in rural wards of Fakai.

iv. Promote livelihood diversification (non-farm enterprises, skills training, value-chain participation) especially for women and youth.

Implications for Further Research

Future studies should employ longitudinal designs to track poverty dynamics and the effectiveness of specific interventions in Fakai and comparable LGAs. Mixed-methods approaches incorporating qualitative accounts of coping strategies would enrich understanding of the lived experience of poverty as disaster.

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