

IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT SOCIAL INTERVENTION PROGRAMS ON POVERTY REDUCTION IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study critically assessed the impact of government social intervention programs on poverty reduction in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya, Oyo State, Nigeria. The study employed a descriptive survey design using structured questionnaires administered to 100 randomly selected respondents comprising beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of social intervention programs. A total of 95 valid responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics including mean scores and standard deviation. Findings revealed that social intervention programs have been moderately effective in improving the living standards of beneficiaries, with respondents acknowledging timely implementation and fairness in beneficiary selection. However, the actual reduction in poverty levels and adequacy of support were perceived as limited. Socio-economic determinants such as income level, educational background, household size, gender, and residential location significantly influenced program access and success. While the programs show potential for long-term sustainability, challenges such as inconsistent funding, weak monitoring, and limited community involvement remain evident. The study concludes that although the programs are well-structured and fairly implemented, their long-term effectiveness in eradicating poverty requires improvement in resource delivery, targeting mechanisms, and sustainability strategies. It recommends consistent funding, data-driven beneficiary selection, enhanced monitoring and evaluation, and increased community involvement to strengthen program outcomes and ensure equitable and lasting impact.

Keywords: Social intervention, poverty, funding, sustainability, Oyo State.

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Introduction

Poverty represents a profound development challenge that continues to afflict millions in Nigeria, despite various government efforts aimed at its reduction. The National Bureau of Statistics (2022) reports that over 133 million Nigerians live in multidimensional poverty, indicating widespread deprivation in health, education, and living standards. Successive governments have implemented several social

intervention programs intended to alleviate poverty and enhance the welfare of vulnerable populations. These include the National Social Investment Program (NSIP), encompassing initiatives like N-Power, Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT), Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP), and the Home-Grown School Feeding Programme (HGSFP).

Social intervention programs are designed to provide financial and material support to economically disadvantaged groups with the central goal of improving their livelihoods and creating pathways out of poverty (Ajakaiye & Olomola, 2003; Ijaiya et al., 2011). While these interventions are well-intentioned and have recorded some successes, questions persist regarding their efficiency, coverage, and long-term impact especially in the context of institutional weaknesses, corruption, and political interference.

Adedokun and Akinola (2021) assessed the impact of Nigeria's Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) program on household income and consumption. Using a quasi-experimental approach, they found that while the program temporarily improved household welfare, it lacked long-term economic sustainability due to inflation and weak institutional frameworks. Similarly, Oyekale (2023) examined Nigeria's National Social Investment Program (NSIP) and found that poor targeting and bureaucratic inefficiencies hindered its effectiveness in lifting people out of poverty permanently.

In Kenya, Kinyua and Mutua (2022) analyzed the impact of the Inua Jamii cash transfer program on poverty reduction. Their findings indicated a positive short-term effect on food security and access to basic services but highlighted that beneficiaries often struggled to transition into self-sufficiency once funding ended. Similarly, Banerjee et al. (2023) conducted a randomized controlled trial (RCT) in India and found that cash transfers improved immediate consumption but did not significantly alter long-term economic behavior.

In emerging economies, such as Brazil, South Africa, and Indonesia, have implemented large-scale social assistance programs with varying degrees of success.

Brazil's Bolsa Família program is widely recognized as one of the most effective social intervention initiatives in the Global South. De Souza and Ferreira (2022) found that Bolsa Família significantly reduced extreme poverty

and improved school enrollment rates among low-income households. However, they also highlighted challenges related to dependency on government support and the need for complementary economic empowerment programs.

In South Africa, the social relief of distress grant was expanded during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide financial assistance to unemployed citizens. Research by Moyo and Sibanda (2023) indicated that while the program reduced short-term economic distress, its sustainability remains uncertain due to fiscal constraints and concerns about long-term dependency.

This study focuses on evaluating the extent to which these interventions have contributed to reducing poverty in Oyo State. The region presents a useful case study due to its diverse socioeconomic landscape and significant participation in various national poverty alleviation programs. By systematically assessing the effectiveness of these government interventions, the research seeks to identify best practices, challenges, and lessons that can inform policy design and implementation in the future.

Statement of the problem

Poverty remains a major socio-economic challenge in Oyo State, Nigeria, with deep-rooted impacts on livelihoods, human capital development, and social inclusion. Before the introduction of government social intervention programs, the state faced high rates of unemployment, low household income, inadequate access to healthcare and education, and widespread infrastructural deficits particularly in rural communities. Vulnerable groups such as women, children, youths, and the elderly bore the brunt of this deprivation, experiencing multidimensional poverty that affected both income and access to essential services.

In an effort to mitigate these conditions, the Nigerian government introduced various social intervention programs such as N-Power,

TraderMoni, Conditional Cash Transfers, and MarketMoni. These initiatives were designed to improve access to income support, skills training, and microcredit, with the goal of alleviating poverty and promoting economic self-reliance among the poor and vulnerable.

However, recent data reveal that poverty remains pervasive. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2019), approximately 27.6% of the population in Oyo State over 2.9 million people were classified as poor, earning less than ₦137,430 annually (or about ₦376 daily). More strikingly, report from UNICEF in 2024 indicates that over 500,000 children in Oyo State are still deprived of access to essential services such as education, nutrition, clean water, and health care, underscoring the persistence of multidimensional poverty in the state.

While the Oyo State Government launched a Social Protection Policy in 2024 aiming to reduce poverty by 50% by 2031, with targeted assistance to nearly 491,500 poor and vulnerable residents, the expected transformation has not yet been fully realized. Many beneficiaries of existing programs report that the benefits are short-lived, poorly monitored, or inconsistently delivered. Issues of poor implementation, limited program continuity, and lack of data-driven evaluation have further limited the reach and impact of these interventions.

Ideally, social intervention programs should bring about measurable improvements in living standards, access to services, and economic empowerment, especially among the most vulnerable populations. The reality, however, reveals a gap between policy objectives and outcomes. There is a significant lack of independent, empirical assessment of how these interventions have influenced poverty dynamics in Oyo State.

This study, therefore, seeks to fill that gap by critically assessing the impact of government social intervention programs on poverty alleviation in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya, Oyo State.

Objective of the study

The primary objective of this study is to assess the impact of government social intervention programs on poverty reduction in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya. specific objectives are to:

- (i) evaluate the effectiveness of social intervention programs
- (ii) analyze the socio-economic determinants of program success
- (iii) assess the sustainability of government social Protection measures

Methodology

The study used the descriptive research design to examine the impact of government social intervention programs on poverty reduction in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya. The sample size for the study comprised 100 beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries selected randomly from cities in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya. Data for the study were collected through the questionnaire designed to reflect five (5) point Likert scale. The questionnaires were administered to 100 respondents made up of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries in Akinyele Local Ggovernment, area of Oyo State. Out of the distributed questionnaires, 95 were properly filled and returned representing a response rate of 95%. The questionnaire addressed the effectiveness of government social intervention program on poverty reduction in the study area. The data were analyzed by the use of mean and standard deviation to answer research questions raised in the study. For opinion purposes, any item means 2.50 and above was accepted while any item mean below 2.50 was rejected.

To achieve objective one which is to evaluate the effectiveness of social intervention programs in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya

Options: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

Table 1: Mean responses and standard deviation that shows the effectiveness of social intervention programs in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya.

S/N	Item Statement	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
1.	The social intervention programs in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya have significantly improved the living standards of the beneficiaries.	95	2.96	0.511	Accepted
2.	The implementation of social intervention programs in the local government area is timely and well-coordinated.	95	3.15	0.637	Accepted
3.	Beneficiaries of the intervention programs in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya receive adequate support and resources.	95	2.72	0.526	Accepted
4.	Social intervention programs have reduced the level of poverty in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya	95	2.68	0.514	Accepted
5.	There is transparency and fairness in the selection of beneficiaries for social intervention programs in the local government.	95	3.15	0.502	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2025

All mean scores are above 2.50, meaning respondents generally agree that the programs are effective. This indicates positive perceptions among the surveyed individuals regarding the implementation and impact of the programs. The mean scores in item 2 (3.15) and 5 (3.15) show that people feel the programs are fairly administered and efficiently managed. Item 4 and item 3 with relatively lower scores suggest that while programs exist and are organized well, the depth of impact (especially in poverty reduction and resource adequacy) may still be moderate or incomplete. Standard

deviation 0.502–0.637 values are low and close to one another, showing that respondents had similar views, which strengthens the reliability of the data collected.

To achieve objective two which is to ascertain the socio-economic determinants of the Program Success in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya

Options: Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 2: Mean responses and standard deviation that shows the socio-economic determinants of the program success in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya

S/N	Item Statement	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
1.	Does the income level of residents influence their access to social intervention programs in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya?	95	3.79	0.674	Accepted
2.	Does the educational background of beneficiaries determine their participation in social intervention programs?	95	3.41	0.512	Accepted
3.	Is employment status a key factor in determining who benefits from social intervention programs in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya	95	2.85	0.599	Accepted
4.	Do gender and household size affect eligibility for social intervention programs in the area?	95	3.73	0.601	Accepted
5.	Is access to social intervention programs influenced by the location (urban vs rural) of the residents in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya.	95	3.51	0.594	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The results in Table 2 clearly show that various socio-economic factors significantly influence the success and accessibility of social intervention programs in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya. All items recorded mean scores above 2.50, which indicates a

high level of agreement among respondents. standard deviations (0.512–0.674) indicate consistent agreement among respondents, confirming that these factors are commonly perceived as crucial by people in the community.

Table 3: Mean responses and standard deviation to assess the sustainability of government social protection measures

S/N	Item Statement	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
1.	Government social protection programs are consistently funded in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya	95	2.89	0.674	Accepted
2.	There is proper monitoring and evaluation of social protection initiatives.	95	3.00	0.512	Accepted
3.	The benefits of current social protection programs can be maintained in the long term.	95	3.55	0.599	Accepted
4.	Local communities are actively involved in sustaining government intervention programs.	95	2.93	0.601	Accepted
5.	Social protection programs are adaptable to future economic or social changes.	95	3.71	0.594	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The results show that respondents believe that government social protection measures in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya have some degree of sustainability, though improvements are needed in certain areas. Standard deviations between 0.512 and 0.674 indicate relatively close agreement among respondents, lending reliability to these observations.

Discussion

Evaluate the effectiveness of social intervention programs

Respondents agreed that the programs have significantly improved living standards. This implies that beneficiaries are experiencing better quality of life. This aligns with prior findings by Ajakaiye and Olomola (2003) and Ijaiya et al. (2011), which underscore the potential of social programs to enhance livelihoods when properly implemented. Timely and coordinated implementation with a mean of 3.15, suggests that the respondents acknowledge good planning and prompt execution of these programs. This contrasts with common critiques in literature about poor bureaucracy and delays, which often reduce program effectiveness (Oyekale, 2023). support and resources provided although accepted (Mean = 2.72), this score is relatively low. It suggests that while support exists, it may not be adequate or sufficient to fully meet the beneficiaries' needs. This supports findings by Adedokun and Akinola (2021), who observed that interventions often have short-term benefits and struggle with sustainability. reduction in poverty level with a mean of 2.68, reflects modest success. It shows that while the programs have an impact, the level of poverty reduction may not be substantial or widespread. This aligns with the UNICEF (2024) report indicating that over 500,000 children in Oyo State still lack access to basic needs despite these programs.

Socio-economic determinants of the program success

Respondents strongly believe that income status determines access to government support. Those with lower income may be more likely to qualify, but in some cases, people with better social connections may benefit unfairly. This aligns with findings by Banerjee et al. (2023) who noted that poor targeting limits equitable access to support. Education influences participation, possibly because literacy and awareness determine whether individuals know about, apply for, or navigate program requirements. This supports previous studies, such as Kinyua and Mutua (2022), which found that limited education reduces beneficiaries' ability to utilize and sustain benefits. Larger families and women-headed households are seen as priority groups, possibly due to their higher vulnerability. This perception aligns with global best practices, where vulnerable demographics are given priority in social protection programs (De Souza and Ferreira, 2022). Location plays a role in program reach. Rural dwellers may face accessibility barriers due to poor infrastructure or inadequate awareness. This reflects broader patterns observed in developing countries, where rural populations are often underserved.

Conclusion

The findings of the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the status and impact of government social intervention programs in Akinyele Local Government, Moniya. The findings affirm that these programs are generally perceived as effective in improving the living conditions of beneficiaries, with satisfactory implementation and fairness in beneficiary selection. However, their impact on actual poverty reduction and adequacy of support remains modest, suggesting a need for deeper structural reforms. Furthermore, socio-economic factors such as income level, education, employment status, gender, household size, and location significantly

influence access to and participation in these programs, revealing underlying inequalities in program reach and effectiveness. Although respondents recognize the potential sustainability of the programs particularly their adaptability and long-term benefits—concerns persist about inconsistent funding, limited community involvement, and weak monitoring mechanisms. Therefore, while the programs have laid a strong foundation for poverty alleviation, their success depends on improved targeting, enhanced funding, community ownership, and stronger evaluation systems to achieve more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable outcomes.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, it is recommended that government social intervention programs be strengthened by improving the adequacy and timely delivery of support to beneficiaries. Targeting should be data-driven to ensure that vulnerable groups, especially those with low income, limited education, and rural residence, are effectively reached. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be enhanced to track progress and ensure accountability. Consistent and transparent funding is essential for sustainability, while active community involvement in program planning and implementation will promote ownership and long-term impact. Lastly, programs should remain flexible and adaptable to changing economic and social conditions.

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