

The Impact of Poverty on Crime Rate in Sokoto State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Poverty in Sokoto State has contributed to some forms of crimes which have disrupted the relative peace enjoined by the citizens. The aim of the study is to examine the impact of poverty on crime rate in Sokoto State. The study focused on six (6) Local Government Areas (LGAs) across the three (3) senatorial districts where poverty is prevalent in the State. Qualitative method of data collection was employed to capture relevant facts from existing literature, while quantitative method was used to collect data from respondents on the field. This has help in addressing the research objectives which includes identifying drivers of poverty, examining the dimensions of poverty and appraising the impact of poverty on crime rate in Sokoto State. The research adopted structural functionalism theory, which explained that the inability of the systems to provide education, healthcare services, security, job opportunities etc. leads to poverty, hence increase crime rate in the society. The study finds out that the high rate of unemployment constitutes the major driver of poverty in the State, while the citizens suffered educational deprivation as a form of poverty dimension. Findings from the study revealed that out of the numerous crimes committed due to poverty in Sokoto State, assault becomes more prominent. The research therefore recommended; that the State government should embark on massive industrialization programme in order to provide job opportunities for the teaming unemployed youths.

Keywords: Impact, Poverty, Crime, Sokoto State.

Introduction

Poverty is a complex and multidimensional phenomena that cut across the social, psychological, economic and cultural spheres of existence. Available studies show that no country is immune from poverty. According to World Bank (2023) report from Poverty and Inequality Platform report from 2020-2023 connotes that, the global increase in extreme poverty in 2020 is driven by South Asia, where extreme poverty increased by 2.4 percentage points to 13 percentage between 2019 and 2020. In Latin America and the Caribbean, however, extreme poverty continued to decline in 2020, which is driven by Brazil.

Also, United Nations Report (2019) reveals that about 736 million people lived in extreme poverty (less than \$ 1.90 a day), 2.3 billion people lived on less than \$ 5.50 a day(moderate poverty), 3.4 billion of the global population lived on less than \$ 5.50 a day. The report further revealed that in the sub-Saharan Africa, 45% of its population representing over 500 Million people; in South Asia, about 24 % of the population representing over 400 million people; East Asia and the Pacific, 4% of its population (over 10 million people); Middle East and North Africa, about 10 % of the population representing over 50 million people; Latin America and the Caribbean, about 12% of the population (over 70 million people), and Europe and Central Asia ,

with 2% of the population (over 10 million people) lived in extreme poverty. This suffices to say that poverty spread across the globe irrespective of location and pace of development.

These spread of poverty across the globe has equally led to unprecedented number of crimes. This means that “governments trying to deal with poverty often also have to face issues of crime as they try to develop their country’s economy and society”(Beetseh, 2014). Thus, “poverty contributes to robbery because people may find it easier or quicker to steal than to go through the process of finding employment and keeping a job” (Taylor, 2000). These crime have manifested in form of armed robbery, homicide, theft, burglary, drug related crimes, cybercrime, terrorism etc. According to a report from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2022), 133 million Nigerians are multi-dimensionally poor a development that has raised concern by the Nigerian government.

The report revealed that 63 % of Nigerians were poor due to a lack of access to health, education, living standards, employment and security. The multidimensional poverty index offers a multivariate form of poverty assessment, identifying deprivations across health, education, living standards, work and shocks. Some years ago, poverty studies in different states of Nigeria have provided interesting insights into the poverty situation at the grassroots level in different states of the federation. Of the six states covered by the Human Development Reports 1998 study namely, Sokoto, Bauchi, Ondo, Cross-River, Enugu and Kaduna; the first two are among the poorest states in Nigeria, while Ondo, Cross River, Enugu and Kaduna are among the fairly well-to-do states (HDR, 1998).

Methodology

The study adopted the survey design which involves the use of both quantitative and qualitative data collection approaches. For primary sources, data were collected through administering of questionnaire in order to obtain the needed information from the sampled respondents. The filled questionnaires were returned to the researcher through a research assistant. The questionnaire was designed with response options on likert rating scale of five points with: Strongly Agree (SA=5 points), Agree (A=3 points), Undecided (N=2 points), Disagree (D=2 points), Strongly Disagree (SD=1point). Data from the secondary sources were reviewed and analyzed using existing literature from research papers/articles, published Books, e-journals, magazines and newspapers, seminars, online publications etc. Also, Statistical data from research institutes, vulnerability and displacement data from humanitarian agencies were used.

The population of the study comprised of residents of nine (9) Local Government Areas (LGAs) across the three (3) senatorial district of Sokoto State, which includes Gada, Goronyo, Wurno, Binji, Kware, Wamako, Bodinga, Tureta, and Yabo LGAs. The rationale behind the choice of the 9 LGAs is for equitable representation, across the senatorial districts. According to the National Population Commission (NPC, 2022), the projected population of the nine (9) LGAs for the year 2022 based on the assumed annual population growth of 3.5% is estimated at 2,363,300 persons, including the aged, children and others who are under aged in the selected LGAs. Using Taro Yamane’s formula, 399.9 was realized as the sample size. However, in order to obtain a reliable data, the researcher rounded it up to 400 persons as the sample size. In view of this, 400 copies of questionnaires were administered in the nine (9) selected Local Government Areas (LGAs). The respondents selected in each local government area were computed using proportional allocation formula and presented in Table 1:

Table 1: Proportion of the Respondents in each Local Government Area and Sample Size

Senatorial District	Local Government Area	Projected Population (2022)	Sample Size
West	Gada,	429,900	73
	Goronyo	314,300	53
	Wurno,	280,300	47
Central	Binji,	180,000	31
	Kware,	231,400	39
	Wamako	309,400	52
North	Bodinga,	300,900	51
	Tureta,	118,100	20
	Yabo	199,000	34
Total		2,363,300	400

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Conceptual Clarification

Poverty

There is no single definition of the term poverty as it has been viewed by different scholars from different academic stand point. According to Spicker, Alvarez, & Gordon (2016) poverty can be viewed from three perspectives such as: Materials (needs, resources and deprivation), economic (living standards, inequality and economic position) and social conditions (entitlement, social security, exclusion, dependence and social class).Spicker et al (2006) nonetheless, underline the importance of working with scientific definitions of poverty as they meet the standards of the philosophy of science: definition that are testable so that they are falsifiable in a clear way.

The contemporary literature defines poverty in terms of both low living standards and resources (Gordon, 2018). The link between lacking something and a notion of resources to access things leads to a simple scientific definition of poverty (Gordon, 2016): *poverty can be defined as the lack of resources overtime where material and social deprivation are its consequences*. This definition, of course, opens up several questions because it does not clarify what is the set of deprivation that matters and in what sense lacking something is a standard to classify people as poor or not poor. According to Townsend (1987), poverty is relative in the sense that it varies across time and space- the identification of the relevant domain depends on what a society regards as the minimum according to the prevailing standards.

Poverty is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom (World Bank cited in Compassion International, 2020).This poverty definition encompasses living conditions, an inability to meet basic needs because food, clean drinking water, proper sanitation, education, health care and other social services are inaccessible. This poverty threshold starts with fear for the future and broadens to include dependence, oppression and even exploitation (Compassion International, 2020). The most common attribute of poverty include, but are not limited to the following: low income resulting from unemployment and underemployment, poor state of health and living condition, low level of literacy, political apathy, among others (Onibokun, 1996).

Crime

The concept of crime widely been defined by various scholars has no universally acceptable meaning. What appears to be crime in one area may not be in another area. Crime is often thought of as a moral threat and injurious to the society. It afflicts the personality of individual and his property and lessens trust among members of the society (Louis et al., 1981). According to Radzinowicz and King,(1977)crime has become an inescapable reality in human life, therefore no national characteristics, no political regime, no system of law, police or justice have rendered a country exempted from crime .

Classification of crimes varies, depending on the country's criminal and justice system. In Nigeria, the Police classification of crime depends on what law prescribed. According to the Nigeria Police Abstract of Statistics (NPACS), offences are categorized into four namely Offences against persons which includes manslaughter, murder and attempted murder, assault, rape, child stealing, grievous hurt and wounding, etc.; Offences against property which includes, armed robbery, house and store breakings, forgery, theft/stealing, etc ; Offences against lawful authority which includes forgery, gambling, breach of peace, bribery and corruption, etc. and lastly offences against local act which include traffic offences, liquor offences, etc.

Causes of crime or criminal behaviour cannot be explained by a single factor, because human behaviour is a complex interaction between genetic, environmental, social, psychological and cultural factor. Different types of crimes are being committed by different types of people, at different times, in different places, and under different circumstances (Danbazau, 2007). Hence, biogenetic factors can influence a criminal behavior. Criminologists are with the opinion that criminal activity is due to the effect of biologically caused or inherited factors (Pratt and Cullen, 2000).

According to Lombrose (1911), a criminal is born, not made; that criminals were the products of a genetic constitution unlike that found in the non-criminal population. Social and environmental factor also influence a criminal behavior (Sutherland, 1939).The environment is said to play significant role in determining criminal behaviour. Factors within the environment that mostly influence criminal behaviour include poverty, employment, corruption, urbanisation, family, moral decadence, poor education, technology, child abuse, drug trafficking and abuse, architectural or environmental design Oyebanji (1982) and Akpan (2002) have attribute the current crime problem.

Review of Empirical Studies on Poverty

Drivers of Poverty in Sokoto State

There are different factor as advanced by different scholar on what contributes to poverty in the society. According to the NBS (2022) Multi-dimensional Poverty Index(MPI) report, security challenges occasioned by banditry and low level of human capital development amongst other variable has led to the rating of Sokoto State as the poverty capital Nigeria.

In his findings on causes of poverty in Nigeria, Olowa (2012) revealed that low economic growth, unemployment, low productivity and wages in informal sector, inappropriate macroeconomic policies, economic degradation, crime and violence, workers retrenchment amongst others constitute major driver of poverty. Similarly, a study on causes of poverty in Africa by Adde-Korankye (2014) finds out that the major causes of poverty includes, corruption,

poor governance, inadequate opportunities in employment, poor use of resources and infrastructure, wars and conflict. Further interrogation revealed that these studies lack empirical evidence.

According to Anyanwu (2013), in an empirical analysis study using National Consumer Survey data, while examining the relationship between poverty and poverty model at individual gender basis, urban and rural basis as well as a national level, revealed that household size, lack of education, not married, living in the North as well as being a Muslim contributed significantly to the tendency of an individual being poor. Ucha (2010) posits that factors that contributed to poverty includes unemployment among graduates, non-diversification of the economy, corruption in public offices, inequality in income, low quality of education, and idleness.

Lack of economic infrastructure has also accounted for poverty in Sokoto State. Large population of the citizens lack access to micro-credit that should have helped them most especially farmers to invest in their crops. Micro-credit which is an essential tool for petty traders in the State to escape poverty is lacking. Massive corruption by government officials has been one of the major drivers of poverty. The lack of a stringent regulatory and monitoring system has allowed for rampant corruption (Aigbokhan, 2000). This has hindered past poverty alleviation efforts to a large extent, since resources which could pay for public goods or directed towards investment (and so create employment and other opportunities for citizens) are being misappropriated (Duffield 2010). Huge resources that should have been used to improve the living standard of the citizens were embezzled and diverted for personal interest.

In his study of the structure of poverty in Calabar Metropolis, Nigeria, Ebang (1986) discovered that the people's annual income, educational level, occupational distribution, residential status and psychological factors have the significantly contributed to poverty. Also, Ayoade and Adeola (2012) examined the effect of poverty on rural household welfare in Oyo state Nigeria and discovered that the main causes of poverty are low-income level and lack of access to good health and house size.

Another driver of poverty in Sokoto State is attributed to the large family size of households. Most persons especially at the rural areas married two (2) to three (3) wives without sufficient resources to carter for them. This drags them into poverty cycle as they could no longer fen for their large family size. Aliyu (2019) has maintained that poverty in Sokoto State was linked to large family size without a corresponding rise in income.

Dimension of Poverty

Poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon. The World Development Report 2000/2001 (World Bank, 2001) summarizes the various dimensions as a lack of opportunity, lack of empowerment and a lack of security. The window of opportunity remains closed to the poor masses, and this makes them practically inactive in the society. Lack of empowerment limits their choices in almost everything and their lack of security makes them vulnerable to diseases, violence and so on. Similarly, a United Nations statement (1998) says: *"Poverty is a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society. It means not having enough to feed and clothe a family, not having a school or clinic to go to; not having the land on which to grow one's food or a job to earn one's living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals,*

households and communities. It means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living on marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation”.

According to 2022 report of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBC) on Multidimensional Poverty Index (MDP) which states that Sokoto State is the poorest in the country, highlighted the dimensions of poverty used for it report which includes: Nutrition, Food Security, time to Health care, School attendance, unemployment, security shock, housing deprivation and investment etc.

Adamu (2008) advanced three dimensions of poverty namely, poverty material well-being, poverty of ideas, and poverty of courage. He asserted that poverty of material well-being is conceived as lack of basic necessities for sustenance of life. These necessities of life include food, clothes and shelter. Due to high rate of poverty in the country, most Nigerians could not afford the basic needs of life which made them susceptible to different kinds of crime to ensure their survival. Poverty of ideas involves lack of good judgment in supporting good policies and programmes that can better the life of the citizenry.

These ideas include poverty prevention and reduction strategies. According to Adamu, third dimension of poverty is poverty of courage. This means the citizens lack courage positively criticize and hold the government responsible for failing to deliver its core mandate which includes provision of welfare and protection of lives and properties. This inaptitude leads to widened poverty. According to Ewubare and Mark (2018), the manifestation of poverty includes starvation, adult and child malnutrition, infant and maternal mortality, illiteracy, poor health, overcrowded and poorly ventilated habitation, squalid conditions of the environmental situation as well as voicelessness, powerlessness, and vulnerability to events and circumstances which place lives and livelihood in jeopardy.

Another dimension of poverty is from the angle of health care services. Olowononi (1997:9) argues that hazard such as incidence of diarrhea and malnourished children in urban and rural areas, the use of contaminated eater and poor sanitary condition are associated with the increasingly high rate of poverty and diseases. Uniamikagbo (2013) sharing the same view with Olowononi, said in terms of safe water, those in the rural area only have unsafe sources of water such as the streams, well, pond, etc. Sokoto state has witnessed educational challenges over the years due to poverty and crime rate. Olayinka (2019) maintained that many youths were out of school, particularly in urban centers, and employment was not forthcoming. There were more youths but fewer employment opportunities, which was one of the reasons for the emergence of area boys in Sokoto State. Many graduates of Diploma, NCE and Degree programs were roaming the streets of the various towns in the State without employment. Unemployment was a major cause of poverty in Sokoto State.

Impact of Poverty on Crime rate in Sokoto State

Over the years the rate of crime in Nigeria has been on the increase and is largely influenced by the level of poverty in the area. This worrisome trend has led to the formation of various vigilante groups, to combat crimes in some parts of the country (Fajemirokun et al., 2006).

The inability of citizens in Sokoto State to meet up their basic needs such as food, clean drinking water, proper sanitation, education, health care and other social services spurred them to different forms of crimes such as armed robbery, cattle rustling, kidnapping, smuggling, human trafficking, banditry, etc. Poor communication, a lack of social amenities such as good roads,

appropriate power, and health facilities, as well as poverty, exacerbate the problem, making it an ideal environment for rustling, smuggling, and small arms trade (Abdulyakeen, 2021)

According to the Sokoto State Command of the Nigeria Police Force, that 33 armed robbery suspects were arrested in the 23 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the state in 2013. He also added that 335 suspects were arrested for theft, 11 for house breaking, 2 for kidnapping, 6 for rape, five for breach of public peace. (Vanguard, 8th January, 2014). In March, 2024 the Sokoto State Command of the Nigeria Police Force, still arrested a group of notorious unrepentant armed robbers who were involved of various operations and also recovered their arms and ammunition (New Telegraphy, 26th March, 2024).

The rate of armed robbery has skyrocket over time in the state. Poverty contributes to armed robbery because people may find it easier or quicker to steal than to go through the process of finding employment and keeping a job” (Taylor, 2000). It is argued that some crimes continue for generations in families, while others are planned for moral response (London, 2014, p 1-74).

Poverty has led to large scale of kidnapping for ransom of innocent citizens including school children. Most youths in Sokoto State are poor and could not fend for themselves have resorted to join criminal gang of kidnapping either directly or indirectly to earn a livelihood. Africa Centre for Strategic Studies publication on North-West Nigeria complicated banditry titled “Nigeri’s Diverse Security Threats” March 2021 revealed that criminal gangs in Northwest Nigeria have been behind a wave of kidnappings for ransom targeting boarding schools, taking advantage of a security vacuum (Africa Center, 2021).

According to a report conducted by SBM Intelligence, a total of 176 kidnap cases were recorded in Sokoto State out of 1,921 cases recorded North-West region of the country in between July 2022 to June 2023. For instance on 9th March, 2024 gun men attack and kidnapped at least 15 Tsangaya students from a school in Gidan Bakuso in Sokoto State. The kidnappers demanded a ransom of 20 Million naira to secure the release of the students (Punch, 2014).

Another criminal enterprise driven by poverty in Sokoto State is that of cattle rustling. The rate of poverty in the State has spurred many idle youths in cattle rustling. This form of crime involves stealing of livestock by criminal gang for financial gain or to replenish one’s own herd. It is increasingly an economically based form of criminality perpetuated by informal networks, despite being driven by various needs and factors (Kwaja, 2013) According to the Sokoto State Command of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), it operatives in conjunction with Vigilante group of Wurno LGA arrested 7 notorious cattle rustlers terrorizing Turta, Dange, and Rabah axis. Most herders in the State have suffered loss of their livestock amounting to millions of naira to cattle rustlers. In June, 2022 over 300 livestock were rustled away from a popular farm center, Sarkin Gobir Diya Farms located in the outskirt of Sokoto State.

Due to the increasing rate of poverty in the state, many of the citizens have engaged in the business of trafficking in persons in order to carter for their basic needs. The Sokoto Zonal Command of the National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIPS) reported that it was able to secure conviction of 64 offenders while 22 cases were still in court (UNHCR, Factsheet for Sokoto North-West, Nigeria, 2021).

Poverty and crime such as banditry has forced some communities to flee their homes due to fear of being attacked or kidnapped. This situation has forced internal displacement of 56,600 individuals into different parts of the State and 80,900 registered as refugees in Niger Republic out of which 71% are biometrically registered (UNHCR, 2021).

Smuggling of drugs and other contraband items assumed a worrisome dimension in the state due to increasing rate of poverty. Most people in the State have resorted to smuggling directly or indirectly at the expense of the State in order to ensure their survival. According to the International Center for Investigative reporting (ICIR, 2024), most idle youths at the border communities of Sokoto State, have resorted to smuggling contraband goods in and out of the country as a means of livelihood due to poverty.

A study conducted by National Working Group on Armed Violence (AVN, 2012) and Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) on overview of armed violence in Nigeria. The findings of the study established the relationship between poverty and armed banditry in Nigeria. The study further discover that in spite of Nigeria's vast and abundance resources, majority of Nigerians live in absolute poverty. Even at state level poverty exists absolutely; there exist differences between elites and the rest of the population. Equally there is inequality of income and wealth in the nation. Incidence of this nature will trigger conflict and by extension an indicator of armed banditry in the country.

When people are unemployed and homeless, social unrest may take over and lead to increases in crime. When people have no money to buy necessities, they may be forced to turn to theft in order to survive. Homelessness and high crime rates affect the people of a country and can create many problems within society (Office, 2014).

It is clear that poverty has far-reaching effects on people with a clear connection between poverty and crime. From 1975 to 1995 in Europe, scholars noticed that unemployment amongst uneducated youth spurred a massive increase in theft and violence. In France, "the crime rate soared like never before" (Terms, 2016). Once unemployment is reduced the rates of crimes inevitably decrease.

Individuals lacking the basic means of subsistence are more likely to become involved in criminal activity when they experience a negative income shock. As income levels decline, engaging in property crime becomes more opportune relative to participating in more "peaceful" economic activities and the stolen property might be regarded as a buffer in alleviating distress (Papaioannou, 2017). In simple economic theory of crime, originally introduced by Becker (1968) cited in Papaioannou (2017), individuals are more likely to become involved in criminal activity when they experience a negative income shock. This reasoning is framed in terms of an opportunity cost model; as income levels decline as a result of unfavourable conditions, engaging in crime becomes more opportune relative to participating in more "peaceful" economic activities (Grossman 1991; Seter 2016 cited in Papaioannou, 2017). From the foregoing, abject poverty experienced by the people compelled them to engage in different kind of crimes to survive.

Theoretical Framework

In order to address and explain factors that led to poverty and increase in crime rate, various schools of thoughts have emerged with different postulations. However, the paper adopted theory of structural-functionalism.

Theory of Structural-Functionalism

The structural functional theory was adopted from Sociology and Anthropology, which interpret society as a structure with interrelated parts. The most significant contributors to theory include Malinowski, David Emile Durkheim, Talcott, Robert Merton, Marion Levy, Jr, Gabriel Almond, David Apter and Fred Riggs (Ekhaton, 2002). According to Ekhaton, the Structural Functional theory look at the structures of a social system and tries to analyse the inter-relatedness and inter-dependence of the various sub-structure in performing their functions to achieve set goal. He added that the structural functional approach provide a significant mechanism for analysis of various social processes. He said that all social structures exist to perform certain functions.

The basic assumption of the theory is that all social structures perform some function and there are certain necessary basic conditions, which are pre-requisite for the attainment or achievement of a set goal. Relating this to the study, poverty in the society is driven by the failure of certain structures to function well. The inability of the systems to provide education, healthcare services, security, job opportunities etc. leads to poverty, hence increase crime rate in the society. Although the theory has been criticize by many scholars such as Karl Marx, over neglects of power dynamism and inequalities within societies, its apt for this study as it explained certain structural –dysfunctional that contributed to poverty and crime in the society.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents and discusses empirical results for the analysis of the impact of poverty on crime rate in Sokoto State. A total number of four hundred (400) questionnaires were administered to the respondents in the study area. However, only three hundred and seven five (375) questionnaires were retrieved from the respondents while twenty five (25) were missing.

Table 2: Socio-Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Variable	Variable option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	205	54.7
	Female	170	45.3
Total		375	100
Age	Below 20 years	84	22.4
	21-30 years	121	32.3
	31- 40 year	107	28.5
	41 years and above	63	16.3
Total		375	100
Marital status	Single	97	25.9
	Married	161	42.9
	Widower	52	23.2
	Widow	30	8.0
Total		375	100
Education	Non Formal	90	24.0

	Primary School	85	22.7
	Certificate Secondary School	80	21.3
	Certificate		
	OND/NCE	46	12.3
	HND/BSC	28	7.5
	MSC and above	46	12.3
Total		375	100
Occupation	Trading	64	17.1
	Civil Servant	113	30.1
	Farming	74	19.7
	Unemployed	122	32.5
	Others	2	5.0
Total		375	100

Source: Field survey 2025

Table 2 shows a pool of information on the socio-demographic distribution of respondents where 205 of them are male while, 170 are female. This shows that more male were accessible than female, which may be attributed to the custom and tradition of the people. Also, 22.5 % of the respondents are within the age bracket of below 20 years, 32.3% fall within the age range of 21-30 years, 28.5% of them between 31- 40 years, while 16.3 % of the respondents are 41 years and above. This shows that majority of the respondent fall between 31-40 years of age.

Regarding the marital status of the respondents, 25.9 of them are Singles, 42.9 % are married, 23.2% are widowers, and 8% are widows. This indicate that majority of the respondents are married perhaps who suffered the brunt of poverty most. The educational qualification of the respondents shows that 24% of them have informal education, 22.7% have attended primary school, while 21.3 have completed their secondary education. Also, 12.3 of the respondents have NCE, 7.5% obtained HND/BSc and 12.3% of them have acquire MSc and above educational qualification.

The table also shows that 17.1 % of the respondents are traders, 30.1% are civil servants and 19.7 % are Civil Servants. Those who are unemployed make up 32.5% of the respondents and others 5%. This indicates that majority of the respondents are unemployed.

Table 3: Showing Drivers of Poverty in Sokoto State.

Drivers of Poverty	SA	A	U	D	SD	FX	N	$\frac{\cdot}{X}$	RANK
Corruption and bad governance	119	84	79	42	51	1301.25	375	3.47	4 th
Poor access to education	126	80	92	66	11	1368.75	375	3.65	3 rd
Unemployment	135	125	67	36	12	1458.75	375	3.89	1 st
Banditry	106	137	78	39	15	1402.5	375	3.74	2 nd
Large Households	110	103	68	42	52	1301.25	375	3.47	4 th
Poor access to Healthcare	76	115	98	65	21	1282.5	375	3.42	5 th

Source: Field survey 2025

From the table above, data on drivers of poverty in Sokoto State were collected and the results show that unemployment is the most contributing driver to poverty which ranked first with (X=3.8), followed by banditry with (X=3.74), and poor access to education (X=3.65). Other drivers of poverty includes, large households, corruption and bad governance which ranked fourth (X=3.47) and poor access to healthcare (X=3.42). From the above data, it implies that unemployment is the major driver of poverty in Sokoto State.

Table 3: Showing Dimensions of Poverty in Sokoto State.

Dimensions of Poverty	SA	A	U	D	SD	FX	N	\bar{X}	RANK
Education	118	111	70	51	25	1368.75	375	3.65	1 st
Health Care service	83	102	75	67	48	1230	375	3.28	4 th
Monetary	99	83	72	64	57	1226.25	375	3.27	5 th
Nutrition	57	89	79	68	82	1095	375	2.92	7 th
Food insecurity	91	90	105	44	45	1260	375	3.36	3 rd
Housing/Shelter	57	92	102	69	55	1151.25	375	3.07	6 th
Investment	96	103	75	47	54	1263.75	375	3.37	2 nd

Source: Field survey 2025

From the table above, data on dimensions of poverty in Sokoto State shows that the citizens suffered most from educational poverty as being ranked first with (X=3.65), followed by investment (X=3.37), food insecurity and healthcare services (X= 3.28). other dimensions of poverty experience in the State includes, monetary with(X=3.27), housing /shelter with (X=3.07) and Nutritional dimensions of poverty in the State. This indicates that citizens of Sokoto state experienced educational poverty most.

Table 5: Showing Impact of Poverty on Crime rate in Sokoto State

Crime Committed	SA	A	U	D	SD	FX	N	X	RANK
Armed Robbery	94	78	103	57	43	1245	375	3.32	3 rd
Kidnapping	90	72	71	64	78	1155	375	3.08	7 th
Cattle Rustling	107	56	59	78	75	1166.25	375	3.11	6 th
Theft	115	86	73	65	36	1301.25	375	3.47	2 nd
House and Store breaking	121	60	76	50	68	1237.5	375	3.30	4 th
Child stealing	94	45	100	93	43	1177.5	375	3.14	5 th
Assaults	133	90	71	43	38	1361.25	375	3.63	1 st
Rape	87	62	74	63	89	1117.5	375	2.98	8 th

Source: Field survey 2025

From the table above, data on crime rate as result of poverty in Sokoto State were collected and the results show that the most crime committed as a result of poverty is assault, which was ranked first among the crimes with a weighted mean of X=3.63, followed by theft (X=3.47), Armed Robbery (X=3.32), House and Store breaking (X= 3.30) and Child Stealing (X=3.14) respectively. Other crimes committed as a result of poverty includes Cattle rustling Kidnapping, and Rape. This result implies that assault on citizens has been the most frequent crime committed as a result of poverty in the State.

Discussion and Findings

Findings from the study revealed that so many factors have contributed to poverty in Sokoto State. These drivers include corruption and bad governance, poor access to education, high rate of unemployment, banditry and other forms of insecurity, large family size and poor access to health care services.

From the data collected and analyzed, it was discovered that unemployment has been the major driver of poverty in Sokoto State as thousands of graduates are roaming the street in search of job opportunities. The result aligns with the work of Olowa (2012) who noted that the growing rate of unemployment largely contributed to poverty in the society. He added that this is because they could not afford money to cater for their numerous needs, hence they remain poor.

Findings from the study also revealed that the dimension of poverty in Sokoto State is largely on educational deprivation. It shows that most citizens lack access to quality education that will equip them to be self-reliant. This finding is in agreement with the survey report by (Sokoto State Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2023) where 776,000 out of school children were identified roaming major streets of the state. Also, data from the 2023 Cable Index revealed that Sokoto State has 64.4% of out-of-school children ranking second in the country which contributed to the rate of poverty in the area.

Also, the study discovers that out of the numerous crimes committed due to poverty in Sokoto State, assault becomes more prominent. This suffices to say that poverty leads to frustration and frustration leads to transfer of aggression and finally assault becomes inevitable. This finding is in line with the assertion of (Usman et al, 2012) that the highest and commonly committed crimes in Sokoto State among crime against person are Assault. Similarly, the finding is supported by the report of (Save the Child Initiative in Nigeria, 202) which reported that a total of 426 Gender Based Violence (GBV) was recorded in Sokoto State between January to November, 2022. These assaults are mostly related to or raised from poverty and anger amongst the citizens. This finding also aligned with the National Demographic Health Survey (NDHS, 2018) report that at least 32.8 % of every married woman, aged 15-49 years experienced emotional. Physical or sexual violence committed by their current or most recent husband/partner in Sokoto State.

Conclusion

Today, no society is immune from poverty in respect of its level of growth and development. What matters most is the dimension and prevalence of poverty and suffered by the people. There is no doubt that poverty which is driven by massive corruption and bad governance, unemployment, insecurity, and large family size has impacted negatively on communities in Sokoto State. This phenomenon has increased crime rate such as armed robbery, assault, theft, house/store breaking, rape and cattle rustling in the state which is making life difficult for the citizens. Therefore, there is a need for government intervention to address the menace of poverty and crime to ensure peace and overall development in the State. Decreasing unemployment remains fundamental to breaking the cycle of poverty and crime and restoring some social conformity (Larsson, 2015).

Recommendations

The study proffers the following recommendations in order to address the impact of poverty on crime rate in Sokoto State.

- i. The State government should embark on massive industrialization programme in order to provide job opportunities for the teaming unemployed youths in the state. This will help to address the high rate of unemployment as a driver of poverty in the State.
- ii. The state government should increase it budgetary allocation for education and also partner with federal government and other stakeholders to revamp schools in Sokoto State. This will tackle the issue of educational deprivation which is associated with poverty.
- iii. The Government should provide adequate social services and ensure wealth redistribution, to ameliorate the spate of poverty in the State which often leads to assault. Also, stiffer penalty should be mated on those convicted of assault. This will serve as deterrence to others.

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