
Impact of Rural Development Programs on Poverty Reduction in Kano State, Nigeria

BY

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Abstract

Rural development plays a vital role in improving the general wellbeing of rural people. This is fundamentally due to its relevance in poverty reduction. The study assesses the impact of rural development program on poverty reduction in Kano State, Nigeria. Primary data for this study was sourced from sampled households using a well-structured questionnaire survey. Multistage sampling technique was used in selecting the sample respondents for the study from three (3) administrative zones classified by KNARDA using Taro Yemen formula for sample size determination. Both descriptive and inferential techniques were used. From the regression result, the estimated slope coefficient of all the variables under the study are positive and significance at 1%. The estimated slope coefficient of education (0.9376705) with probability of (0.0483) has positive and statistically significance at 5% influence on poverty reduction, the variable income (0.8730384) with probability of (0.070) has positive and statistically significance at 5% influence on poverty reduction, and health (0.027906) with probability of (0.0779) has positive and statistically significance at 5% influence on poverty reduction. This showed that rural development program of (education, income and health) had influence on poverty reduction. Rural development program can reduce poverty in Kano State, Nigeria. The study recommends that government policies and programs should be geared towards wealth creation, reducing inequality particularly in access to education and health care services in rural areas, doing this will reduce poverty and serve as a panacea for sustainable rural development

Keywords: Rural Development, Programs, Poverty Reduction

1.0 Introduction

Rural development plays a vital role in improving the general wellbeing of rural people. This is fundamentally due to its relevance in poverty reduction. It is a veritable tool for fighting poverty and achieving economic prosperity at the grassroots level. Rural development is action that helps people to recognize and develop their ability and potential and organize themselves to respond to problems and needs which they share. It supports the establishment of strong rural community development agencies that control and use assets to promote social justice and help improve the quality of community life (Nwachukwu & Ezech, 2017). Rural development was a strategy designed at improving economic and social living conditions, focused on a specific group of disadvantaged people in a rural area According to (World Bank, 1975). It helps the most vulnerable members of the rural population to benefit from development.

Rural development programmes focused mainly on increase food production, management and utilization of water resources of the river basins, income generation as well as well-being of the rural people (Emmanuel, 2015). These programmes were also expected to boost the financial base of the rural farming community and encourage productivity at the local level (Raheem & Iyanda, 2014). In addition, members of the rural communities benefited from loans due to the Programmes and rural access roads to connect rural communities, rural to urban centers and farmers to the markets were also provided (Ekpo & Olaniyi, 1995). Furthermore, Rural Programmes have helped in the formation of a Community Bank to provide loan facilities to the rural dwellers (Akpan, 2012). Although, some benefits such as rural feeder roads, potable water and health care centre were witnessed at the beginning of these rural development Programmes (Ogwumike, 1997).

Poverty exists as a major regional and national problem which displays diverse effects on communities. Uzoma & Uzoma (2012), state that this social problem persists as the main global challenge affecting people across all life stages. Every nation exists under some form of poverty conditions. Levels of poverty differ between regions as well as their occurrence patterns (Okungbowa & Eburajolo, 2014). Countries across sub-Saharan Africa, together with South Asia and Latin America stand out as highly vulnerable to poverty since they consistently demonstrate

the highest ratings on poverty evaluation scales and must confront interconnected issues involving restricted socio-economic growth in addition to elevated social insecurity and violent situations as well as nationwide underdevelopment (World Bank, 2022). The World Bank (2004), as cited by Davis & Sanches-Martinez (2014), describes poverty as an extreme decrease in overall welfare that includes poor earnings alongside limited resource access, combined with insufficient health and education, poor sanitation and limited opportunities to improve socioeconomic status. The Nigerian population has experienced constant poverty for many years because of declining economic growth, income inequality, corruption and limited sectoral development of agriculture and industry (Ekpe, 2011).

Poverty reduction is seen as a systematic process which enhances social and economic welfare through expanded resource access to create effective life opportunities with improved living conditions and poverty-breaking solutions (World Bank, 2018). Sen (2014) explains poverty reduction as a method which enhances human capabilities through service access, including healthcare and housing, which enables productive lives without deprivation.

In Kano State, in response to the economic challenges facing the rural poor, the successive administration in the state have been over the years committed in establishing several rural development programs which are aimed at improving the living conditions and reducing

poverty of the rural poor, with an emphasis on youth, women and other vulnerable groups. This includes the establishment of the Community-Based Agricultural and Rural Development Programs, Kano State Agro-Pastoral Development Project, Kano State Agricultural Development Projects and Kano River Projects (IFAD, 2019). Against this background, The objective of the study is to determine the socio economic characteristics of the respondents in the study area and assess the impacts of rural development program on poverty reduction in Nigeria.

2.0 Conceptual and Theoretical Review

Concept of Rural Development

Rural Development simply connotes a sustained improvement in the quality of life of the rural people. It implies consistency in approach in which micro and macro-economic, social, political, cultural and technological variables are engineered, combined and implemented as an organic and dynamic whole for the benefit of the people (Nwachukwu & Ezech, 2017).

Rural development is action that helps people to recognize and develop their ability and potential and organize themselves to respond to problems and needs which they share. It supports the establishment of strong rural community development agencies that control and use assets to promote social justice and help improve the quality of community life (Nwachukwu & Ezech, 2017). It also enables community and other public agencies to work together to improve the quality of government. Idike (1992) cited in Otigba (2013) defined rural development as a strategy designed to improve the socio-economic and social life of the people in the rural areas. He added that rural development constitutes a process of planned change for which one approach or the other is adopted for the improvement and or transformation of the lot of the rural populace. Adelakun (2013) believed rural development generally to be the process of improving the quality of life and economic well-being of people living in relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas. He stated further that rural development has traditionally centered on the exploitation of land-intensive natural resources such as agriculture and forestry. However, changes in global production networks and increased urbanization have changed the character of rural areas. Increasingly tourism, niche manufacturers, and recreation have replaced resource extraction and agriculture as dominant economic drivers.

Rural Development programs

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Concept of Poverty

Conventionally, the concept of poverty refers to as a condition in which people live below a specified minimum income level and are unable to provide the basic necessities of life needed for an acceptable standard of living. Poverty is a plaque which affects people all over the world, though generally considered as one of the manifestations of underdevelopment.

Poverty, as cited in Aderonmu (2010), was defined as lack of command over basic consumption needs (Ravallion & Bidani, 1994), having inadequate level of consumption (Aluko, 1975), and inability of a person to attain a minimum standard of living and high status in a society (World Bank Report, 1990).

Nevertheless, to attempt a compromise definition of poverty, one can see it as a condition "where an individual is not able to cater adequately for his/her basic needs (such as food, clothing and shelter), is unable to meet social and economic obligations, lacks gainful employment, skills, assets and self esteem; and has limited access to social and economic infrastructure (such as education, health, potable water and sanitation), and consequently has limited chance of advancing his/her welfare to the limit of his/her potentials and capabilities. The perceptions as to what constitutes poverty has evolved over the centuries and varied across societies and culture (UNDP, 1997).

Concept of Poverty Reduction

The World Bank (2018) explains poverty reduction as a systematic process which enhances social and economic welfare through expanded resource access to create effective life opportunities with improved living conditions and poverty-breaking solutions. Sen (2014) explains poverty reduction as a method which enhances human capabilities through service access, including healthcare and housing, which enables productive lives without deprivation. Numerous poverty reduction initiatives have been introduced through governmental programmes across the globe. Multiple poverty alleviation programmes operate within Nigeria under the names National Directorate of Employment (NDE), National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), Open Apprenticeship Programme (OAP), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P), and Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (You Win) (Dauda & Ajayi, 2019; Atakpa, 2024). In addition to these programmes, the Better Life Programme and the People's Bank with their Graduate Job Creation Loan Guarantee Scheme existed alongside agricultural sector employment schemes (Dauda & Ajayi, 2019). According to Adeola (2020) & Olalekan (2021), these programs demonstrate potential yet fail to assist the most vulnerable populations because systemic flaws exist in their implementation.

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Theoretical Framework

There are diverse views on the phenomena of rural development whereas some people see rural development as an approach, other see it as method, programme or process. Many strategies have been designed to address the problem of rural development. Some of the theories that influence rural development are

Basic Resource Theory:

The basic resource theory is a rural development theory that is based on the basic natural resource or environmental resources in a given area. The assumption of the theory is that the development of any given locality is a factor of the presence quality and magnitude of basic natural resources within the stipulated area. Essang (1975) reported that the development of these natural resources attracts investment capital to these areas and increases income and employment. The endowment of natural resources in a given region or locality plays a crucial role in the overall development of the area. The availability of this valuable asset in an area helps to improve the quality of life of the people. The extraction of natural resources in any given area provides employment. The inhabitants of the area tend to have a higher income and grow faster in terms of development than those with meager natural resources.

Social Protection Theory

The research utilised Social Protection Theory as its theoretical framework. Researchers Armando Barrientos and Stephen Devereux created this theory, which demonstrates how social safety nets protect vulnerable rural communities from poverty based on their work (Barrientos, 2009; Devereux, 2001). Social Protection Theory has undergone development throughout several years to establish that policy measures must provide basic support and protection mechanisms beyond agricultural productivity growth, specifically for rural groups facing social marginalisation. Barrientos (2009), Devereux (2001) and other researchers demonstrated that social protection programmes hold vital importance for resolving distinct rural community issues (Barrientos & Hulme, 2010). Various forms of interventions make up social protection programmes, such as direct cash payments, food aid schemes, social insurance coverage and public employment programmes. The government implements these programmes to help people move out of poverty and improve nutrition while making them stronger to resist economic disturbances.

Social protection measures that deliver targeted monetary support and service access play a fundamental part in decreasing poverty and creating rural development that includes all communities (Devereux & Sabates-Wheeler, 2004). These policies adapt to the requirements of three main vulnerable groups, which include smallholder farmers, landless agricultural workers and female-headed households. These populations form the focus of these policies, which produce enduring livelihood options and stimulate equal agricultural community growth (Barrientos et al. 2004). Through this method, developers protect minority groups by designing programmes targeting rural communities and their well-documented inequalities

3.0 Methodology

The Study Area

The study is conducted in Kano State. The State was created in 1967 situated in the Sudan savannah agro ecological zone of Nigeria. It lies between latitudes 13°30'N and 11°30'N and longitudes 10°30'W and 8°30'E and has a total land area of about 20, 131Km square, with arable land of about 90% (Sani & Sulaiman, 2018). There are two distinct seasons: wet season (May-September) with an average rainfall ranging from 600mm-1000mm annually and dry season period (October-April) and the maximum temperature ranges from 21°C-41°C (KNSG, 2020). The state is one of the most populous in Nigeria and had a population of

about 9,383,682 people (NPC, 2006) and its population growth rate is estimated at 3.5% per annum. Based on this, estimate of the state population stands at 24 million (KBS, 2024). Kano State has 44 Local Government Area (LGAs) which are classified into three administrative zones by the Kano State Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (KNARDA, 2019). **Zone 1 Rano:** comprises 14 LGAs which are Rano, Tudunwada, Doguwa, Bebeji, Kiru, GarunMallam, Kura. Kumbotso, Madobi, Gwarzo, Karaye, Rogo, Kibiya and Bunkure. **Zone II Danbatta:** with 13 LGAs include; Danbatta, Bchi, Bagwai, Shanono, Tsanyawa, Kunchi, Kabo, RimiGado, Tofa, DawakinTofa, Makoda, Minjibir and Ungogo. **Zone III Gaya:** with 17 LGAs include: Gaya, Ajingi, Wudil, Albasu, Garko, Takai, Sumaila, Dawakin Kudu, Warawa, Gezawa, Gabasawa, Kano Municipal, Gwale, Tarauni, Dala, Fagge, and Nasarrawa. The people of Kano State engage in agriculture as means of sustenance and commercial purposes. However, they also engage in other economic activities such as civil service, petty trading, carpentry, auto mobile works and other vocational business activities. Availability of many earth dams in the state makes it possible for irrigation farming and perhaps all year round farming activities.

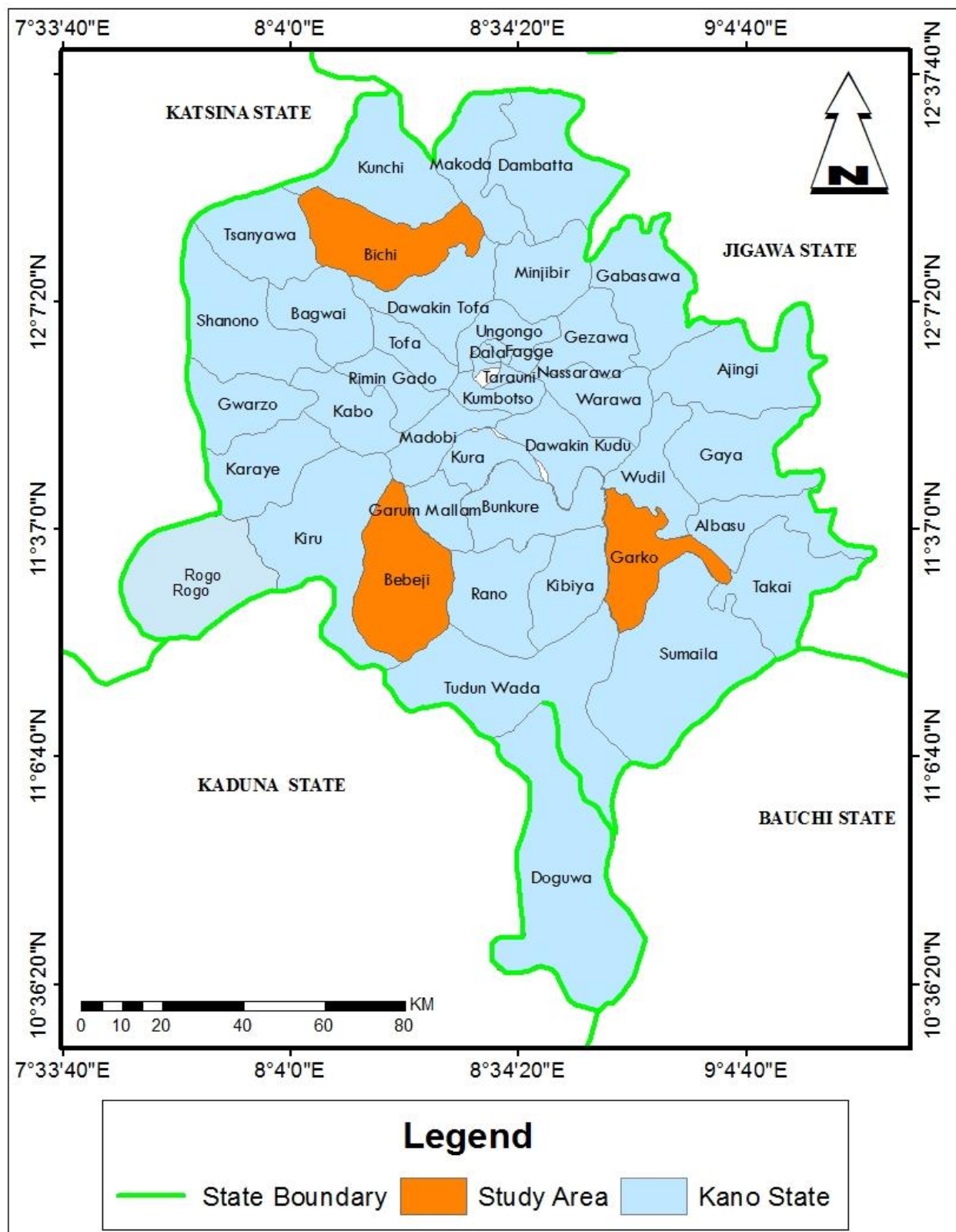


Figure 3.1 Map of Kano State Showing Study Area

Source: Modified From Administrative Map of Kano State.

Population of the Study

The target population of this study comprises of nine villages Gwarmai (11271), Kofa (22542), Jibge (14652), Danzabuwa (20804), Badumai (10402), kaukau (6934), Sarina (16320), Kawo (6660) and Garin Ali (18980) making the total of 128565 respondents.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Multistage sampling technique was used in selecting the sample for the study. Since the State is classified into three (3) administrative zones by KNARDA, the first stage involved the random selection of one Local Government from each zone making a total of (3) LGAs in the state, Zone I, Bebeji, zone II, Bichi and zone III, Garko. The second stage involved a purposive selection of three (3) villages wards from each local government area (with a total of nine 9 villages' wards) this is due to high concentration of rural people in the villages. These villages Gwarmai, Kofa, Jibge, Danzabuwa, Badumai, kaukau, Sarina, Kawo and Garin Ali which form the total population, Taro Yemen formula is used to determine the sample size. The formula is given by $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$, Where: n = sample size, N = Population size, e = margin of error set at 5%. $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$. Thus, $\frac{128565}{1+128565(0.0025)}$. Therefore, $n = 399$ Finally, $n = \frac{n}{N} * 100$. $n = \frac{399}{128565} * 100$. $n = 31\%$

Table 1: Summary of Sampling Frame

Zone	LGAs	Village	Sampling Frame	Sample Size (31%)
I	Bebeji	Gwarmai	11271	35
		Kofa	22542	70
		Jibge	14652	45
II	Bichi	Danzabuwa	20804	65
		Badumai	10402	32
		Kaukau	6934	22
III	Garko	Sarina	16320	51
		Kawo	6660	21
		Garin Ali	18980	58
		Total	128565	399

Source: Pilot Survey, 2025

Technique of Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive involved the measures of central tendency such as frequency distribution, percentage. For the inferential statistics multiple regression models was used to achieve the objectives of the study. These analyses were achieved using STATA software.

4.0 Results

Socio Economic Characteristics of the respondents

The respondents are classified based on gender, age, marital status, level of qualification and occupation. Below we present the demographic distribution of the collected data.

Table 1 Socio economic characteristics of the respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentages	Cumulative frequency
Sex			
Male	293	73.43	26.57
Female	106	26.57	100.00
Age			
Less than 20	29	7.25	7.25
21-30	142	35.50	42.75
31-40	181	54.25	88.00
41-50	30	7.50	95.50
51 and above	18	4.50	100.00
Marital status			
Single	80	20.05	20.05
Married	319	79.95	100.00
Level of education			
Non formal	228	57.14	57.14
Formal	171	42.86	100.00
Occupation			
Civil Servant	32	8.02	8.02
Trading/Business	74	18.55	26.57
Farming	174	43.61	70.18
Hand craft	112	28.07	98.25
Others	7	1.75	100.00
Household Size			
1-5 children	155	38.85	38.85
6-10 children	58	14.54	53.38
11-15 children	70	17.54	70.93
16-20 children	89	22.31	93.23
Above 20 children	27	6.77	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 1 shows that, the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. The result shows that majority of the respondents 73% were males. The variable age of the respondents depicts that most of the respondents were within the productive age bracket of 31-40 years representing 54% this also showed they were in their active and productive age. It also implied that younger people were in poverty. The age was important in this study since in the study areas age has a correlation with socio economics activities. This finding is in line with finding of Bichi (2021), who also discovered that, the respondents were within the age bracket of 31-40 year. Table 1 shows that, marital status of the respondents' shows that 80% married and 20% single, This shows that most of the respondents in the study area were married this could be attributed to the norms and culture of the people in the area that supported early marriage. This indicates that the married people are more affected by poverty.

Table 1 shows that, level of education of the respondents' shows that, 57% have informal education and 23% have formal education. This shows that respondents had attended informal school. The implication of this result is that, few of the respondents can read and write either in Arabic or in western education which can seriously affect their decision to accept and understand developmental project that can be used to reduce poverty. Table

2shows that, Occupation of the respondents' shows that, Civil Servant 8%, Farming 43.6%, hand craft 28%, 1.75%. The result shows that majority of the respondents were farmers. Farming is one of their major economics activities in the area. This is in line with the Abubakar and Akinola (2020), majority of the respondents were farmers. Table 2 shows that, Household Size of the respondents' shows that had 1-5 children representing 38.85 %. This shows that the respondents had kids' household size; this is not surprise as many of them had early marriage which is permissible in their culture.

Impact of rural development program on poverty reduction in Kano State, Nigeria

The diagnostic statistics showed the improvement in explanatory variable that is included in the logistic model in table 2 as shown by the chi-square statistics of 11.40 % which is statistically significant at 1% implying that independent variables have significant relationship with the dependent variable. The strength of association between the dependent and independent variables are captured by the R^2 estimated value of 0.56. This means that the independents variables explain the variation in dependent variation by 56%.

Table 2: Logit Result on the impact of rural development program on poverty reduction

Variables	Coefficients	Standard Error	P> z
Education	0.9376705	.0860211	0.0483
Income	0.8730384	.0653714	0.070
Health	0.027906	.9008457	0.0779
Constant	64.94525	69.53696	0.000
LR chi2(3) = 11.40			
Prob > chi2 = 0.0098			
Log likelihood = 216.7308			
Pseudo R2 = 0.0256			

Source: Computed and Compiled by the Researcher using STATA 14 (2025)

From the result also the estimated slope coefficient of all the variables under the study are positive and significance at 1%. The estimated slope coefficient of education (0.9376705) with probability of (0.0483) has positive and statistically significance at 5% influence on poverty reduction. The variable income (0.8730384) with probability of (0.070) has positive and statistically significance at 5% influence on poverty reduction, and health (0.027906) with probability of (0.0779) has positive and statistically significance at 5% influence on poverty reduction. This showed that rural development program of (education, income and health) had influence on poverty reduction. Rural development program can reduce poverty in Kano State, Nigeria.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

- i. From the results and based on the objectives of this study stated in chapter one i.e. impact of rural development program on poverty reduction in Kano State, Nigeria. it can be concluded that of education has positive and significant influence on poverty reduction, this means that access to education reduces poverty. It also concluded that

income has positive and significant influence on poverty reduction. This means that rural development program on the income generation can reduce poverty. The study further concluded that health has positive and significant influence on poverty reduction. This means that improve in the health care services can reduce poverty. Government policies and programs should be geared towards wealth creation, reducing inequality particularly in access to education and health care services in rural areas, doing this will reduce poverty and serve as a panacea for sustainable rural development.

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