

## **IMPACT OF RELIGIOUS VALUES ON POVERTY REDUCTION IN KATSINA STATE, NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

Poverty remains widespread in Nigeria with a consistently increasing rate averaging 68 percent between 2000 to 2011, with the highest rate estimated at 89 percent in 2022 (Garba, 2023). A study conducted by Kabuga and Adamu (2021) revealed that there are poorer households than non-poorer households in Katsina State. The level of poverty in Katsina state is chronic. To buttress their point, Kabuga and Adamu (2021) stated factors such as household size, lack of education and lack of non-farm jobs are among the causes of poverty in the state. This calls for stakeholders to be involved in reducing poverty in Nigeria. This study thus looks at what the Church is doing to reduce poverty for peace and sustainable development in Nigeria. Over the years the incidence of poverty has been on the increase defying all government effort. The issue

of poverty has become a topical discourse in the world that it occupied a front burner. The study adopted survey approach and 400 useable questionnaires were utilized for the collection of data and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The result of the findings revealed the prevalence of abject poverty in the rural areas of Katsina State. The study recommends that the existing poverty alleviation programs in the state and in Nigeria as a whole should be reviewed in such a way to make the strategy more effective in tackling poverty. The main contribution of this study is its empiricism in confirming the items that measure poverty through factor analysis, and the sample size which was adequate enough for making generalization within regions and among regions.

**Keywords:** Religious values, Poverty reduction and Katsina state

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### **Introduction**

Religion and poverty are two of the world's most enduring social and cultural phenomena. They have a long and eventful history, and are not separate from one another, but closely interrelated: on the one hand, there is a long tradition of religiously motivated poverty; on the other hand, giving to the poor is often seen as a religious duty. In recent years, as observed by Garba (2023), faith-based organizations have been recognized in research as an important factor in global poverty reduction. This comment surveys some of the key areas of enquiry and debate focused on exploring the connection between religion and poverty.

The incidence of poverty in the world is so paramount and topical hence, it occupies a front burner. Every responsible government all over the globe sees it as an obligation to its citizens to attempt to reduce poverty (Hatta & Ali, 2013). Consequently, various governments and development donors at different regions embark on programs aimed at reducing poverty to a tolerable level. The United Nations Millennium Goals was articulated toward reducing poverty and other problems that retards development such as hunger, illiteracy, environmental degradation, prevalence of diseases, and gender inequality which were more prevalent in the rural areas of the low-income countries globally (Asraf and Ibrahim, 2014). As a result of this trend, there has been renewed concern on the efficacy of the poverty alleviation strategies which were initiated and implemented by successive governments for the past decades. In their analysis of rural poverty in Katsina state, Kabuga and Adamu (2021) asserted that "the inability of government to tackle the

issue of poverty effectively compels religious institutions in contributing their quota towards poverty reduction in Katsina State”.

Despite several attempts at different times by successive governments to curtail the menace of poverty, the problem defied all the government efforts. This was due to inability of the successive governments, to tackle the source of the problem which is unfair distribution of the nation's wealth as recent report by UNDP (2011) has indicated that less than one percent of the population shared the nation's wealth among themselves while the majority of the masses were left in poverty. It is on this background that this study seeks to empirically examine the incidence of poverty in Katsina State with a view of filling this gap as most previous study on poverty were mostly conceptual in approach.

At least three perceptions or notions can be distinguished in order to understand the connection between religion and poverty:

- i. What role do religion and religious affiliation play in the socio-economic status of populations, and what are the reasons for any influences?
- ii. What role do religion and faith play in the daily lives of people in overcoming their poverty and how they view themselves and the society?
- iii. What role do religion and faith-based organizations play in fighting poverty and engaging with the poor?

Poverty is seen as a complex and multifaceted issue that affects millions of people around the world. Despite significant efforts to reduce poverty, it remains a persistent problem in many countries. One potential solution to this problem is the use of religious values to promote poverty reduction. Religious institutions have long been involved in charitable works and social welfare programs, and many people turn to religion for guidance and support during difficult times. This research paper will investigate the impact of religious values on poverty reduction. Specifically, it will examine the role of religious institutions in poverty reduction, the impact of religious values on individual behavior and decision-making, and the effectiveness of faith-based programs in reducing poverty. By exploring these issues, this research aims to contribute to our understanding of how religious values can be used to promote poverty reduction and improve the lives of people in a community and around the world.

### **Statement of the problem**

Poverty is a major problem that affects millions of people around the world. Despite significant effort to reduce poverty, it remains a persistent problem in many countries especially Nigeria and Katsina State in particular. Ignorance on the part of the people has greatly contributed to poverty despite the role of religious values in poverty reduction which has received relatively little attention. This research aims to address the gap in the literature by investigating the impacts of religious values on poverty reduction. By exploring the role of religious institutions in poverty reduction, the impacts of religious values on individual behavior and decision making, and the

effectiveness of faith-based programs in reducing poverty, this research aims to contribute to the understanding of how religious values can be used to promote poverty reduction and improve the lives of people in Katsina State, Nigeria. The focus of this research is basically that poverty can be reduced through skill development in farming, animal husbandry, poultry, fishing, fast food restaurant, meat processing, among others.

### **Objectives of the study**

The general objective of this study is to explore strategies for poverty reduction in Katsina State, while the specific objectives of the study among others are to:

- i. Investigate the role of religious institutions in poverty reduction in Katsina State.
- ii. Examine the impact of religious values on individual behavior and decision-making in Katsina State.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Poverty**

There is no concise and universally accepted definition of poverty because of its effects on many aspects of human endeavours. Arising from this omnibus nature of poverty, different criteria have therefore been used to conceptualize poverty. United Nations (2015) noted that a poor person is the one whose income is less than \$1.25 a day by 2015. Okolie (2010) conceptualized poverty as a state of deprivation, vulnerability and exclusion; a condition and situation of want; lack of capacity to satisfy man's innate needs for food, clothing, shelter, mobility and primary societal expectation. According to Alegieuno and Attah (2005), "poverty is not just lack of money or material resources but also encompasses lack of access to economic, social, political and religious opportunities." According to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), quoted by Kwakwenda, et al. (2009):

Poverty has many manifestations, including lack of income and productivity resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihood: hunger, malnutrition, ill health or lack of morbidity and other basic services, homelessness and exclusion. It is also characterized by lack of participation in decision making and in civil, social and natural life.

Generally, poverty refers to the inability to attain minimum standard of living. It is a social condition characterized by inadequacy of access to basic human needs (food and non-foods) for the sustenance of socially acceptable minimum standard of living in a given society. Some of these basic determinants of well-being among others are: adequate food, shelter, portable water, health care, education and employment opportunity. As access to most of these facilities is largely market determined, income or disposable resources available to individuals or households invariably determine who has what. A household or individual without enough income to meet the minimum levels of these needs in a given society is generally said to be poor (Bayers, 2014).

United Nations (2015) conceived poverty as inability of having choices and opportunities and thus 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 and 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 in marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation (Oshewolo, 2010).

Holman (2009) defined absolute poverty as a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to social services. The term absolute poverty is sometimes used interchangeably as extreme poverty (Kanayo, 2014). Poverty is a global phenomenon that needs to be tackled and eradicated globally so as to reduce the menace to a bearable level. The World Bank forecasts that 702.1 million people were living in extreme poverty in 2022 compared to 1.75 billion in 2015, and of this figure, about 347.1 million people lived in Sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for 35.2% of the population, and 231.3 million lived in South Asia accounting for 13.5% of the population. Between 2015 and 2022, the percentage of the world's population living in extreme poverty fell from 37.1% to 9.6%, indicating a fall below 10% for the first time (Garba, 2023). Going by the current economic model, built on GDP, it would take 100 years to bring the world's poorest up to the previous poverty line of \$1.25 a day (UNDP, 2011). Similarly, in Nigeria out of the population in absolute poverty more than 75 percent are estimated to live in rural areas (Kanayo, 2014). In summary, poverty means opportunities and choices most basic to human development are denied to lead a long, healthy, creative life to enjoy a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-respect and the respect of others.

### **Religion and poverty: Religion and the lives of the poor**

A number of important questions are worth exploring. First, to what extent are religion and poverty connected at the demographic level (Keister, 2011; Thorat, 2010; Hoverd et al, 2013) Are members of certain religions more affected by poverty than others? In which social and geographical areas is this case and why? What historical developments, which connects religious affiliation and poverty, have become entrenched at the social level? Are there other socio-economic characteristics that connect religion and poverty (for instance, that certain religions are mainly lived by migrants)? Is the link between religion and poverty consequently due to other socio-economic factors, and is religious belonging a random characteristic? In exploring such question, it is important that lived religious practice be distinguished from the mere belonging to a religion, and in both cases local characteristics have to be taken into account in each case. After all, religions, especially the 'great world religions', are extremely diverse in themselves and the composition of their adherents is inevitably heterogeneous. A case in point concerns the relationship between religious affiliation and beliefs about the actual causes of poverty. A study conducted in the United States (Hunt, 2002) showed that "religious factors" have a significant



influence on the assumed causes of poverty and whether this is explained as “individualistic”, “structuralist” or “fatalistic”.

Questions also arose about the role of religion in the lives of poor people (Sullivan, 2011; Yurdakul and Atik, 2016; Puffer et al., 2012; Dillen and Van Hoof, 2016). First, it seems trivial to note that religions (which can be understood as complex cultural practices and belief systems) can sometimes play an important role in the lives of poor people to help them understand themselves and interpret the world around them, their social and economic positions, and their immediate society. For example, in a recent study (Hoverd and Sibley, 2013) examining a representative sample in New Zealand showed that religious people living in deprived neighbourhoods have higher subjective well-being than their non-religious neighbours living in the same area. Under impoverished conditions, the difference in well-being between religious and non-religious people is evident, while in affluent neighbourhoods, subjective well-being was high regardless of religiousness.

All religions have something to say about poverty, and other issues related to social inequality, and offer implicit and explicit interpretative templates (Beyers, 2014). Religions can relieve and burden, they can stand against poverty and legitimize resistance, but they can also justify inequalities, poverty and exploitation. It's in a case like this that religious belief systems can frequently be understood in different ways and that they can produce texts, discourses and practices that can be interpreted multifariously. For researchers, and especially for those people and institutions that are engaged in poverty reduction, the potential impact of religions whether positive or negative is clearly of importance and interest (Beyers, 2014).

### **Religion and poverty reduction**

In recent years extensive research has been undertaken to explore the extent to which religions can contribute to poverty reduction. At the micro level, this may be related to the role of religion in the everyday lives of those in poverty, and the formation of norms and practices for example, when it turns out that religiosity, or even belonging to a particular religion, has the potential to reduce poverty, such as by acting on it at the motivational level and encouraging people to try to break out of poverty rather than to submit to it. However, the focus of most research tends to be on those who fight poverty through philanthropic activities, faith-based organizations (FBO) and via other outlets (Ani et al, 2015).

Individuals' motivations to work with poor communities in whatever form, be it charitable, professional or political can be founded on and inspired by religious beliefs. In many religions, helping the poor and the marginalized people has a long tradition as a form of lived faith. Giving alms to those in need, for example, often becomes part of a believing Muslim's character and one of the five pillars of the Islamic way of life (Ali and Hatta, 2014; Raimi et al., 2014). Zakat is considered a compulsory almsgiving, which means that it is a duty for all who have received their belongings from God to help the needy members of the community. In Christianity, the support of the poor by wealthy individuals, monasteries and the Church is widespread and can be traced back to the faith's origins (Holman, 2009). The relationship between the help offered by an

individual or at the level of 'the church', on one hand, and the establishment of state support programmes and social rights, on the other hand, is interpreted inconsistently and differently in religious traditions. At the level of organizations and institutions, commitment to poverty reduction can be bundled, channeled and institutionalized, thereby becoming more than the sum of any individual parts (Furness and Gilligan, 2012).

Religious and faith-based social organizations, as well as denominations and congregations, are engaged in a variety of ways in poverty reduction and the provision of social and health services and assistance to the people (Furness and Gilligan, 2012; Thornton et al. 2012; Göçmen, 2013). They do this both in the developed countries of the global North and in the developing countries of the global South, where different forms of organizations and degrees of institutionalizations and internationalizations can be found. For example, a study involving case studies in Indonesia, Fiji and Samoa (Thornton, Sakai, and Hassall, 2012) showed that the contributions of religious groups in providing disaster relief and welfare services to their members and advocacy for the poor is often present but not always comprehensive. The influence of religious groups in the public sphere and as institutions can also exacerbate unresolved tensions between different ethnic and secular groups. However, given the impact of limited state capacity, natural disasters and climate change, there is a clear need for effective partnerships between governments and religious groups to ensure the efficient and sustainable delivery of social services and to bring about social change for the benefit of those in poverty. Among other things, FBOs differ greatly in their size and level of professionalization. Some are well connected global players with highly professional structures and many resources, while others are local initiatives and smaller bodies (e.g., churches) with little infrastructure. In any case, FBOs have established themselves as important actors in the field of poverty alleviation on a global scale and became important partners for other NGOs and government institutions (Thornton, Sakai, and Hassall, 2012).

The role of religion in the fight against poverty is by no means uncontroversial and conflict-free (whether within organizations or among their religious sponsors) as well as in the theological discourses within these religions. To what extent religion should be socially active and how this can be justified within religion and theology continues to be a subject of vibrant debate (Clarke, 2011; Togarasei, 2011; Noble, 2014; Rajkumar, 2016).

### **Poverty eradication in Nigeria: Any hope from the Church?**

The failure of the government to reduce or eradicate poverty calls for all the social actors to be involved in handling the issue. In this regard, the role of the Church becomes relevant. The Church is very influential, with a rich history of social teachings and actions that could be used in the Nigerian context. Actually, the Church adheres to the teachings of Jesus Christ that uphold in an unequivocal term option for the poor (see Luke 4:18, Matthew 25:34–36, Luke 6:20–21, John 13:34). This means that other than feeding the poor spiritually, the Church also attends to the material needs of the poor (Acts 2:44; 4:32).

In the modern time, the Church has played prominent roles in the society, especially with regard to poverty and poor people. Like Jesus Christ who identified and cared for the poor, the church

strives to free all humans from hunger, misery, oppression, ignorance, institutionalized injustice and hatred which are rooted in humans' selfishness (Achunike, 2004). The Church's option for the poor is part of its vocation in the world. In the words of Oborji (2012):

The Church's care of the poor is not a mere social service which others would as well do, but it is rooted on the very nature of the Church in continuing the redeeming work of Christ of bringing integral salvation to men and women. It is founded on the divine command of love of neighbour (p. 169).

In order to buttress this aspect of its life in the world, the Church operates a twofold programme of action for the poor. The first consists of the Church's teaching apostolate, while the second is the church's pastoral care of the poor. Some of the social teachings of the Church are found in the encyclicals and pastoral letters of the Popes and Ecumenical Councils. In the Second Vatican Council document on Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the modern World, *Gaudium et Spes* (GS), the Church states that 'the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the men and women of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well' (Oborji, 2012).

In 1891, Pope Leo XIII in his social encyclical *Rerum Novarum* on the 'condition of labour' affirmed that the Church's desire is that the poor should rise above poverty and wretchedness, and should better their condition in life (1891:par. 23). Pope Pius XI in his *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) stated the need to pay workers just wages, which are for him a family wage. In view of this, he proposed a social order built on social justice and charity as a panacea for poverty reduction in the world (par. 59). The *Mater et Magistra* (1961) was written by Pope John XXIII against the indifference of wealthy nations on the hunger, misery and poverty of nations whose citizens are unable to enjoy even elementary human rights. It stresses the solidarity that binds human beings together as members of a common family (par. 157). The same concern was also raised in Pope Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio* 'Development of the peoples' (1967). The Pope pointed at the threatening world poverty (no. 29) and argued that it is as a result of unjust economic relationships between the rich and the poor countries (no. 57) and new forms of colonialism and economic manipulation (no. 52). The Pope advocated for solidarity among nations (no. 13) and maintained that the new name for development is peace (no. 76). The apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975) by Pope Paul VI states that evangelization will be incomplete if it did not take account of the unceasing interplay of the gospel and people's social lives, both personal and social. He notes that evangelization will not be complete without care of the poor. This implies that caring for the poor is very important in the social teaching of the Church.

With the papacy of Pope John Paul II, the world witnessed a vibrant approach to the Issue of world poverty. In 1981, he wrote the encyclical *Laborem Exercens* on 'Human Work', reiterating the Church's concern for the poor, the evil of unemployment, dehumanizing social structures and just wage. For him, work and just wage is crucial in human life and in maintaining social imbalance (par. 3). The Pope affirmed that the nature of humanity is to work, because work confers dignity on humans (par. 6). He proposed 'worker solidarity' as a panacea against workers' exploitation and injustice in society. In another encyclical, *Sollicitudo rei socialis* [the social



concerns of the church] (1988), the Pope decried the bastardisation of the world into different categories of first, second and third worlds (art. 14). While lamenting over the overwhelming poverty in the poor countries, he recommended that developing nations should take their fate in their hands and collaborate with each other without violence (art. 39). Though he sought the help of the rich nations, he maintained that the poor nations should not wait for this help that may not come (art. 44).

In all these social teachings, the Church educates the world on poverty and disabuses people's minds of certain unfounded notions about it. The Church affirms that poverty is not accidental and not the result of nature's whims. It has been created by decisions and policies in the socio-economic-political realms, and it is a matter of justice and injustice (Kammer, 1991). Government policies that undermine social justice gives birth to poverty. Hence, the Church rejects the claim that poverty is a result of laziness or people's unwillingness to work. She also rejects the notion that wealth, riches, health and prosperity are God's blessings, while poverty and sickness are curses from God and the actions of evil spirits on men. Rather, the Church affirms that human freedom that leads to disdain for God and humanity is the cause of poverty. Through different kinds of disobedience to God in terms of hatred, division, materialism and exploitation of natural resources, humanity creates poverty in the world (Achunike, 2004).

The Church in its social teachings states clearly that poverty is a threat to humanity; hence, it does not direct its teachings to only Christians, but to every human being. Every human being must be at the side of the poor. Giving to the poor is simply restoring to them what is theirs by right (1 John 3:17). It means doing something, and this forms the second part of the Church's initiative against poverty in the world. The second part of the church's programme for the poor is pastoral care of the poor.

The Church in Nigeria has established many schools and scholarship schemes to provide education to the masses and has built hospitals, orphanages, old peoples' homes and motherless babies' homes, among others (Holman, 2009). It is not always that the efforts of the Church to reduce poverty are welcomed. The government does not involve faith-based organizations in poverty reduction programmes. The government would not want the involvement of the Church in the poverty reduction programmes because the church will not condone corruption within the system created for poverty reduction in Nigeria (Ani et al. 2015). Sometimes also, because of religious bias and suspicion, the Church's poverty reduction programmes are seen by other religious groups as a kind of proselytism. In view of this, occasionally, the programmes are outrightly rejected and sabotaged. On the other hand, there is the case whereby the programmes target only members of the Church, thus being discriminatory (Dillen and Van Hoof, 2016).

It is on this note that the study insists that poverty reduction should be everybody's concern and most importantly the government. Poverty reduction is the bedrock of nation-building and a mark of civilization. It should be the primary assignment of the government because it helps to build peaceful coexistence among the citizens and sustains the rule of law. What the Nigerian government needs is, the will power to tackle poverty as evidence of good governance so as to cement Nigeria's nascent democracy.

## Methodology

### Study Area

The study area for this research is Katsina State which was carved out of Kaduna State in 1987; it is made-up of thirty-four (34) Local Government Areas (LGAs) and the state is located in the North Western part of Nigeria. It is bordered by Niger Republic in the North, Kano State in the South, Kaduna State in the South-West, Jigawa State in the East, Sokoto and Zamfara States in the West. The native people are predominantly Hausa and Fulani, Islam is their major religion, while Christians constitute a small proportion of the population. Katsina State has a total population of 5,801,584 as at 2006 census (NPC, 2007). The main economic activity of the rural people of Katsina State is farming (small scale farming, animal husbandry and food processing). Informal trading and other micro entrepreneurship are also playing a crucial role in their economic life.

This study adopted descriptive survey method approach and the data for the study was obtained through questionnaire distributed to 400 respondents selected from five (5) Local Government Areas in Katsina state, namely: Katsina metropolis, Daura, Jibia, Funtua and Malumfashi Local Government areas. Snowballing sampling was used in selecting respondents for this study. The respondents were drawn from 10 different churches, 2 from each zone.

The questionnaire was a structured undisguised format. All the 13 items in the instrument were stated in a 5-point Likert format ranging from SA: Strongly Agree=5, A: Agree=4, U: Undecided=3, D: Disagree=2 and SD: Strongly Disagree=1 respectively using SPSS package to analyze the data. The questionnaire, containing questions ranging from respondents' demographic profile, as well as their opinions on the impacts of religious values on poverty reduction in state were used and Focus Group discussions (FGDs) was also used to elicit more information to determine the extent of the responses. Mean of the responses was used to determine the rejection or acceptance of a particular statement. Conclusively, the entire variable means was computed to determine the level of poverty in the state as represented by the sample of this study.

## Results

**Table -1: Demographic profile of the respondents**

### (1) Sex:

S/No.	Demographic factor	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Male	86	46.5
2	Female	99	53.5

### ↓(2) Marital Status: ↓

S/No.	Demographic factor	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Married	58	31.4
2	Single	102	55.5
3	Widow/widower	25	13.5

### ↓(3) Occupation: ↓

S/No.	Demographic factor	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Civil servant	21	11.4
2	Farming	42	22.7
3	Business man/woman	15	8.1
4	Student	8	4.3
5	Unemployed	99	53.5

### ↓(4) Educational Qualification: ↓

S/No.	Demographic factor	Frequency	Percentage
1	Primary School Leaving Certificate	12	6.5
2	SSCE	14	7.6
3	NCE/Diploma	22	11.9
4	HND	9	4.8
5	B. Ed/B. A/B. Sc	77	41.6
6	Postgraduate	51	27.6

**Source: Field Survey, 2025**

Table 1 describes the demographic profile of respondents which further classified into 4 sections. The first section on the table shows that out of 185 respondents, only 46.5% are male while 53.5% are female that responded to the questionnaire. Majority of the respondents are single with 55.1% while 31.4% are married and the widow/widower pulled 13.5%. Larger number of the respondents happened to be unemployed with 99%, no wonder poverty is at its peak in the selected study areas. Going by the educational qualification of the respondents, majority of them are having higher degrees with 86% compared to 14% School cert. and SSCE candidates who are still dependents.

**Table 2: Responses from research items**

**Responses**

S/No	Items	SA	A	U	SD	D
1.	I am sustainable in my living conditions	-	185 (100%)	-	-	-
2.	The level of poverty at moment is much	5 (2.7%)	180 (97.3%)	-	-	-
3.	Many families cannot boast of three-square meals in a day	176 (95.1%)	-	-	-	9 (4.9%)
4.	With proper mindset, poverty can be reduced	183 (98.9)	2 (1.1%)	-	-	-
5.	Religious leaders give time to teachings on poverty reduction	-	4 (2.2%)	-	-	181 (97.8%)
6	Faith-based Organizations do organize seminars for us on poverty reduction	-	-	5 (2.7%)	-	180 (97.3%)
7	We have a Cooperative society in my religious organization	-	-	-	-	185 (100%)
8	Periodically, my religious organization do give us financial and material assistance	-	4 (2.2%)	-	179 (96.7%)	2 (1.1%)
9	Religious and Faith-based organizations are seriously fighting against poverty	-	178 (96.2%)	7 (3.8%)	-	-
10	We wish our people are trained to fish instead of feeding us with fish	134 (72.4%)	51 (27.6%)	-	-	-
11	Applied knowledge of basic economics and finance can help reduce poverty	142 (76.8%)	43 (23.2%)	-	-	-
12	Religious and Faith-based Organizations need to train and empower the people on Agriculture	15 (8.1%)	170 (91.9%)	-	-	-
13	We are living happily as a result of the Religious and Faith-based activities among us	-	-	4 (2.2%)	-	181 (97.8%)

**Source: Field Survey, 2025**

**Discussion**

The findings on the impacts of religious values on poverty reduction in Katsina state, Nigeria revealed that all the respondents are sustainable in their living conditions since all of them agreed without reservation. Larger number of respondents represented by 97.3% were of the opinion that

presently, the level of poverty is much hence, many families cannot boast of three-square meal any more. But with proper mindset, they all believed that poverty can be reduced. It is disheartening with the findings from items 5 through 8 that the so-called religious leaders are neither giving time to teachings on poverty reduction nor organizing periodical seminars for their members on poverty reduction talk less of establishing Cooperative society to cater for their members' needs. It was also discovered that only few religious organizations willingly give financial and material assistance to their members and as a result, the respondents felt that they should rather be trained to fish instead of feeding them with crumbs that fell from king's table and empower them on Agriculture.

### **Conclusion**

The study on the impacts of religious values on poverty reduction in Katsina state, Nigeria, reveals that poverty is a significant challenge in the region. The findings indicate that the level of poverty is high, and many families struggle to access basic necessities like food. However, the study also suggests that with proper mindset and support, poverty can be reduced. The role of religious institutions in poverty reduction is crucial, but the study reveals that many religious leaders do not prioritize teachings on poverty reduction or organize seminars for their members. Additionally, few religious organizations provide financial and material assistance to their members.

The study's findings have implications for policymakers, religious leaders, and development practitioners. They suggest that poverty reduction initiatives should be designed to address the specific needs and challenges of the local population, and that religious institutions can play a vital role in supporting these efforts. In conclusion, the study provides valuable insights into the impacts of religious values on poverty reduction in Katsina state, Nigeria. The findings highlight the need for a comprehensive approach to poverty reduction that involves government, religious institutions, and other stakeholders. By working together, it may be possible to develop effective strategies for poverty reduction and improve the lives of people in the region.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the study's findings, here are some workable recommendations:

- i. Religious institutions should prioritize teachings on poverty reduction: Religious leaders should incorporate teachings on poverty reduction and economic empowerment into their sermons and programs.
- ii. Establish Cooperative Societies: Religious organizations should establish Cooperative Societies to provide financial support and resources to their members, helping them to access loans, savings, and other financial services.
- iii. Organize seminars and workshops on poverty reduction: Faith-based Organizations should organize seminars and workshops on poverty reduction, entrepreneurship, and skills development to equip their members with the knowledge and skills needed to break the cycle of poverty.



- iv. Empower people through agriculture and vocational training: Religious and Faith-based Organizations should provide training and empowerment programs in agriculture and vocational skills to help people acquire sustainable livelihoods.
- v. Promote economic literacy: Faith-based Organizations should promote economic literacy among their members, teaching them basic economics and finance principles to help them manage their resources effectively.
- vi. Collaborate with government and other stakeholders: Faith-based Organizations should collaborate with government and other stakeholders to access resources, expertise, and funding to support poverty reduction initiatives.
- vii. Focus on sustainable development: Poverty reduction initiatives should focus on sustainable development, empowering people to become self-sufficient and reducing their dependence on external assistance.

These recommendations can help address the poverty challenges in Katsina State, Nigeria, and promote sustainable development and economic empowerment among the population.

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