

**Impact Of Income Disparity On Poverty Status In Odogbolu Lga: Implication For The  
Actualisation Of Sustainable Development Goals (Sdgs) 1, 5 And 10**

by

**Ajayi, Olatunde O. Ph. D.**

Department of Sociological Studies,  
College of Social & Management Sciences,  
Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun,  
Ogun State, Nigeria  
ajayioo@tasued.edu.ng  
otunbabobo8191@yahoo.com  
0803 862 2044 / 0807 444 1438

**Abstract**

This study investigated the relationship between impacts of income disparity on poverty status in Odogbolu LGA: implication for the actualisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1, 5 and 10. The study adopted a descriptive survey with correlational design with a population of 339,899 residents of Odogbolu Local Government Area. Probability sampling was used to select 300 respondents which made up the sample of the study drawn from 6 wards out of the 10 wards. Three research hypotheses were raised to guide the study. The instrument of data collected for the study was a self-constructed questionnaire tagged "Income Disparity and Poverty Status Questionnaire (IDPSQ) with a reliability coefficient of .89. The Mean and Standard Deviation, Pearson r and Fisher's Z statistics were used to analyse and test the hypotheses at .05 alpha level of significance. Findings from the analyses revealed that there is a significant relationship between income disparity and poverty status. Based on the findings, it was recommended that policies aimed at reducing income disparity should be complemented with policies that will ensure poverty reduction. For the economy to experience growth, income disparity must be addressed as it will simultaneously reduce poverty. Government and non-governmental organizations should make concerted efforts to assist households in rural communities through the provision of basic amenities.

**Keywords: Income Disparity, Inequality, Gender Equality, Poverty, Development,**

**Introduction**

The concern of stakeholders in the financial sector for a long time has been the pattern of income distribution. The 1990s specifically, witnessed resurgence in theoretical and empirical attention by economists to the distribution of income and wealth (Atkinson & Bourguignon, 2020). This is because high level of income disparity produces an unfavourable environment for economic growth and development. Previous studies have shown that income disparity has risen

in many developing countries over the last two decades (Addison & Cornia, 2021; Kanbur & Lustig, 2019). The seemingly widening dimension of poverty has aroused serious humanitarian concerns and fears. Despite the commitments already shown by many developing countries towards the achievement of the goal of reducing income disparity, efforts geared at achieving this have been greatly hindered by insufficient knowledge of how to design appropriate policies that would call for broad participation, the modality of their implementation procedures and measurement of the overall impact on the economy (Clarke, Colin & Zou, 2023).

In Nigeria, accompanying the rapid economic growth that was had between 1965 and 1974 was a serious income disparity believed to have widened substantially (Ipinnaiye, 2021). Despite the past policy interventions to correct this abnormality, the problem of income disparity has increased poverty depth in the country. During the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP), for instance, Aigbokhan (2019) submitted that a quantitative analysis of the level of income disparity before and after the implementation of the policy shows that income disparity worsened. The termination of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015 saw the inception of a new agenda for sustainable development which contains seventeen (17) global sustainable development goals (SDGs) with 2030 as the target year. Prominent among the goals are three that are relevant to this study. They are: goal 1 (to end poverty in all its forms. Eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than US\$1.25 a day), goal 5 (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) and goal 10 (reducing inequality within and among countries). Since the launch of the goals, nations across the globe have embarked on policies and programmes that are aimed at achieving them, even before the target year. Most countries in Europe, North America, Asia, and some part of Africa (North Africa to be précised) currently, have recorded tremendous progress in the attainment of the

goals, as reported in the 2020 SDG indices and ranking (Sachs, Schmidt-Traub, Kroll, Lafortune, Fuller & Woelm, 2020).

Goals 1 and 10 of the SDGs in themselves constitute grave challenges to the attainment of sustainable development in Nigeria. Similarly, various dimensions of inequality gap in the country looks too wide. For instance, her gender development index (GDI), which was 0.847 in 2015, rose to 0.868 in 2019, ranking her 158th out of the 189 countries surveyed the same year (UNDP, 2019). Despite decades of rapid progress in reducing poverty and boosting prosperity, a large portion of the world's poorer population still struggles to attain a minimum standard of living across developing regions, especially in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. Progress in reducing extreme poverty seems uneven in these regions because of geographical and country-specific factors. The World Bank (2016) reports that more than half of the world's extreme poor (50.7%) live in sub-Saharan Africa. Asia contains 42.7% of the world's poor, though the whole region has a strong historical performance in reducing overall poverty by virtue of massive growth in emerging large economies. Latin America and the Caribbean contain the next-highest portion of the world's poor (4.4%).

Poverty reduction in developing regions is slowing because of the prevailing nature of extreme income disparity, which is considered a powerful threat to economic progress. To this end, the World Bank set goals to end extreme poverty by 2030 and raise the shared prosperity of the bottom 40% of people in each country through reducing income disparity (Panizza, 2022).

### **Statement of the Problem**

High level of income inequality exists in many nations of the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). This can be better buttressed by the widening dimension of poverty, and general economic

problems in many of these nations. Thirlwall (2014) stated that low income countries contain approximately 62% of the world's population, and earn only 6% of the world's income, medium income countries contain 15% of the world's population and earn 17% of its income, while high income countries contain 25% of the world's population and earn 77% of the income. This shows a great disparity between total incomes and per capita income of the developed and developing countries. In Nigeria, Adelman and Morris (2017) estimated a Gini coefficient of 0.51, showing high level of income disparity. Aboyade (2018), using the 2016/17 household sample survey of 1,635 households, covering wage earners, the self-employed and farmers in the whole country except the eastern region that was going through civil war, estimated the Gini Coefficient to be 0.58. Etukodo (2018) focused on whether income inequality was higher in urban areas than in rural areas. Using data for the Federal Public Service in Lagos and a sample of 400 farming households in Ika village of Cross Rivers State, his results suggested that income disparity was lower in rural Ika than in urban Lagos. More recently, Oyekale (2017), Adejare (2019), Odedele (2020), Ipinnaiye (2021) and Adebayo (2022) have shown that income disparity exists in some rural and urban areas in several parts of Nigeria.

Disparity in income has many social and economic implications. A high level of income disparity results into discontent among the people, which may result into political unrest and instability. It may also lead to increase in violence, corruption, and attitude of helpless resignation to the caprice of nature and poverty. Thus, a careful study of income disparity also gives insight into the incidence of poverty. Reducing inequitable income distribution and poverty is therefore a major challenge in Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that the study is aimed at investigating income disparity and poverty status among households in the study area as it relates to indicators to the attainment of the sustainable development goals.

## **Research Hypotheses.**

To achieve the objectives of the study, the following null hypotheses were formulated:

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between income disparity and poverty status among household in Odogbolu LGA of Ogun State?

HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between income disparity and poverty status among household based on gender in Odogbolu LGA of Ogun State?

HO<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between income disparity and poverty status among household based of location (urban and rural) in Odogbolu LGA of Ogun State?

## **The Concept of Income Disparity**

Income disparity is said to be the extent of disparity between high and low incomes; i.e. the ratio of a high household income to a low household income after adjustment for household size and consumption (Adinde, 2017). This disparity coupled with instability in climate, socio-economic and political environment has continued to hinder economic growth and development and has fanned the flames of the poor living conditions of most households living below USD\$1 per day without access to basic necessities of life. This has resulted into severe poverty with an alarming Global Hunger Index (GHI) of 25.5 in 2016. Disparity in Nigeria is systemic, having the country ranked as one of the highest inequality countries in the world, meaning that income disparity in Nigeria spreads across regions, sectors and occupations. Therefore, people within the lower bounds do not have the opportunity for upward mobility. A close examination according to (Olabisi, Orisadare, & Olamide, 2021). UNDP (2018) shows that the level of poverty in the country is partly a feature of high level of inequality, which is fully manifested in unequal distribution of income and limited access to all basic infrastructure which includes education, credit facility, good road, training, job opportunities and health services which at the end hinders poverty reduction and economic growth.

The Gini coefficient is the maximum often used degree; it is derived from the Lorenz curve, which is a cumulative frequency curve that compares the distribution of variables such as income with a uniform distribution which represents equality (World Bank, 2015). According to the neoclassical school, inequality in income is as a result of various productive activities of an individual or group of people leading to different wages and income ranges. The gap between rich and poor is widening rather than narrowing. Rich individuals and households from business, politics and celebrity culture live in a comfortable and prestigious elite world of pleasure and power. While millions of children are hungry, tens of thousands of women are subjected to domestic violence and poorly paid survivors. There are powerful institutions, customs, and ideologies behind these strong interpersonal contrasts, each strongly implicit in inequality structures. This circumstance creates a situation late Fela Anikulapo called suffering and smelling.

### **The Concept of poverty**

There is no applicable definition of poverty due to the character of poverty and its multi-dimensional effect on the household. The Central Bank of Nigeria (2013) also views poverty in a comprehensive manner as put as: a state where an individual is not able to cater adequately for his or her basic needs of 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 chances of advancing his or her welfare to the limit of his or her capabilities. It is strongly influenced by the resources that people can claim, under what conditions and with what level of choice. It is a broadly multidimensional, partly subjective phenomenon, often viewed as both the cause and symptoms of underdevelopment (Ogunniyi,

Adepoju, & Olapade-Ogunwole, 2021). According to the World Bank (2021) poverty is the economic condition in which people lack earnings to achieve minimum levels of standard of living. It is described as the disability to achieve the lowest living standards. Poverty in its most global sense is the absence of vital demands including food, shelter, medical care and safety which can be typically important for reflection (Awe & Olawumi (2022).

In Nigeria, the incidence of poverty has remained relatively high, the poverty situation remains an overwhelming challenge as findings of a 2013 core welfare indicator has revealed by National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) that over 67 percent or two-third of Nigeria's rural population was poor (Olorunsanya & Omotesho, 2021). The causes of poverty given in most writings are more or less general ones because poverty is produced by several factors that may vary from society to society. Therefore, the CBN (2013) grouped causes of poverty into two categories, namely "Low economic growth and market imperfections". Low economic growth here refers to increase in unemployment and general underdevelopment with low income that is not enough or sufficient to sustain the poor. On the other hand, market imperfection includes those factors which through institutional distortion do not allow the poor to have access to opportunities or access to productive assets which will improve their capacity to adapt to change and survive. Therefore, this inability to adapt breeds poverty and this denied the victims the most basic needs for survival.

### **Income Disparity, Poverty and Development**

Income disparity and poverty are problems affecting every nation of the world and they are parts of the greatest challenges facing mankind today. According to World Bank (2021), out of about world's 6 billion people; 2.8 billion lived on less than US\$2 a day and 1.2 billion on less than US\$1 a day. Of the latter, 24.3 per cent were in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) increasing to

28.3 per cent in 2010. It was estimated that 1.4 billion people had consumption levels below \$1.25 a day in 2010, while SSA of which Nigeria is one, accounted for 388 million of this number (Global Monitoring Report, 2012). In addition, levels of inequalities have been aggravated in Nigeria as a result of the new causes associated with technology changes, lack of good governance, corruption, weak democratic institutions and past military rule which did not allow free discussion of issues or formulation of truly representative governance organs in the society (Aigbokhan, 2020).

To achieve the various expectations of the government including poverty reduction and economic growth, there must be equality in the workplace and other areas within the economy. These could be done by providing for equal wage and opportunity to all without gender consideration; without doubt this will increase labour force participation and lead to increase in productivity and an overall increase in the total labour force output. According to (Thomas, 2019), wage as a source of motivation for any worker has failed to motivate the Nigeria woman, hence they are discouraged from participating in the labour force or prefer casual and family jobs.

The current stance of growth and development literature, particularly those that are based on neoclassical and endogenous growth theories diverges significantly from this because households are assumed to own resources and engage in savings (Todaro & Smith, 2015; Ravallion, & Chen, 2019). Therefore, the less the inequality gap, the lower the level of poverty and this can in turn raise savings; thus, contributing to better economic performance and enhancement of sustainable development. High poverty and inequality in their various forms constitute drags on sustainable development because development has always been a problem in an unequal and poverty driven society. In fact, inequality can cause poverty and poverty can create inequality while both of them depress development (Ogbeide & Agu, 2015). Most of

developing nations in Africa are beset with high level of poverty and inequality, because poverty and inequality are among the root causes of underdevelopment while underdevelopment can also engender poverty and inequality (Dauda, 2019). It was reiterates that income disparity is the cause and consequence of the failure of the market system as well as the political system; and it also contributes to economic and political instability, which in turn leads to increased inequality Aigbokhan (2017).

### **Gender Factor of Income Disparity and Poverty Status**

Gender gap is defined as the discrepancy in opportunities, status, attitudes, etc. between men and women. Inequality between men and women causes lack of opportunity and poverty which is detrimental to development (Duflo, 2015). Gender wage gap measures the differences in earnings between male and female in paid employment in the labour markets. It compares the differences in overall income earned by men and women (CONSAD Research Corporation, 2019). Researchers have used several terms to characterize this phenomenon which include; occupational selection, occupational sorting, occupational segregation, and occupational crowding. Globally because women in formal employment have disproportionately worked in occupations with relatively low wages (e.g. teachers, nurses, secretaries, retail sales clerks) and men have disproportionately worked in occupations with comparatively high wages (e.g. executives, managers, doctors, lawyers, engineers, scientists), the average and median earnings of women in general has been much lower than the average and median earnings of men, (CONSAD Research Corporation, 2019). According to Kolawole, Omobitan, and Yaqub (2015) women are still greatly under-represented in most of the highest paying professions, especially in the private sector which has taken its toll on the high level of poverty among them.

The gender wage gap (2021) shows that worldwide, men and women live in quite different working worlds and even though the gap has reduced in the last decades there is still a considerable income gap in favour of men, particularly in developing countries. Gender differences are also analyzed in terms of the conditions prevailing in the working environments of men and women, the levels of satisfaction with their lives, pay, job, leisure time and division of household tasks etc. Worldwide, outside of the agricultural sector, in both developed and developing countries, women are still averaging slightly less than 78% of the wages paid to men for the same work, a gap which refuses to close in even the most developed countries. This may be as a result of the fact that the number of women represented in well paid jobs and managerial positions is much smaller than that of men, (Augusto & Saadia, 2015). Studies of gender wage gap have generally divided possible determinants of the wage gap into two groups: those related to human capital, and those related to labour market related institutions and rigidities (Castello, & Domenech, 2022).

Some researchers have concluded, based on the available empirical evidence that the narrowing of the gender wage gap is largely due to narrowing of the gap in human capital development between men and women (CONSAD Research Corporation, 2019). To Fatile and Adejuwo (2020) high gender inequality and poverty persist in Nigeria with negative implications for the actualisation of sustainable development goals.

### **Location Factor of Income Disparity and Poverty Status**

A high level of income inequality is perceived to exist between Nigerian rural and urban areas. This is because urban dwellers usually earn more than rural dwellers due to their higher literacy level. According to Udo-Aka (2015) higher incomes go to people who have invested time and money to acquire skills. This differential between rural and urban incomes, most times,

accounts for the rural–urban migration. Most times, inhabitants of rural areas migrate to the urban areas in search of the proverbial pot of gold or greener pastures because they feel the urban areas hold more opportunities for them than the rural areas. This influx of rural dwellers into the urban areas results in over-population and over-taxing of the amenities available in the urban areas. Also, most rural communities are agrarian as compared to urban communities (which engage mostly in paid employment), thus they earn less than urban communities. The problem then arises as to how high level of income inequality can be reduced.

The great majority of those who live in rural areas in Nigeria are poor and depend on agricultural production and allied activities for food and income (Omonona, 2019). The rural dwellers are thus more vulnerable to income disparity and poverty than urban dwellers who can invest their money and time to acquire education and skills for better opportunities and enumeration. Therefore, low living standard, hunger, malnutrition, poor health status and inaccessibility to other basic necessities of life have continued to plague the rural households who are the main producers of the food needs of the country. This situation persists despite the various interventions programmes such as, the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) and the Nigeria Millennium Goals (MDGs), put in place by the government to address these challenges (Osahon, 2021).

The current official statistics released by National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) shows that the national poverty rate is 69 per cent, while sectoral disaggregation shows urban poverty rate of 61.8 per cent and rural poverty rate of 73.2 per cent (NBS, 2022). Incidentally, the rural sector is the predominant sector in the Nigerian economy (63 percent). It plays some fundamental roles, which include job creation at relatively low unit costs, and thus remains the most important

sector with which to grow the nation's economy. The findings revealed high level of income disparity, with a Gini index of 0.987 and per capita income less than the national minimum wage. Similarly, poverty level was high, giving the head count index of 0.567 as well as a poverty gap of 0.568.

In fact, geographically, the levels of all forms of inequality and poverty are higher in the Northern than in the Southern part of Nigeria (World Bank, 2016; Dauda, 2017). Accordingly, inequality appears higher in the rural compared to urban areas in the country while poverty rate in the rural area exceeds the rate in the urban area. It therefore implies that policies geared towards poverty alleviation can reduce inequality while programmes aimed at lowering inequality can also reduce poverty.

## **Methods**

The study adopted a descriptive research design to assess the relationship between the impacts of income disparity on poverty status of households in Odogbolu Local Government Area, Ogun State. The population of the study is 339,899 which comprise the youths, adults and elderly persons from Odogbolu LGA. (National Population Census, 2016). The probability sampling was adopted since it enhances the probability that each member of the population will have an equal chance of being included in the sample. First, simple random sampling was used to select 5 out of 10 districts in the Odogbolu Local Government Area. Secondly, respondents were stratified based on the five selected wards according to their occupations (civil servants, artisans, traders or farmers). The instrument used in the study was a self-created questionnaire tagged "Income Disparity and Poverty Status Questionnaire (IDPSQ)". This is a 30-item questionnaire developed by the researcher. This instrument measures an individual's poverty status in meeting basic needs due to the impacts of income disparity. The scale revealed all variables in the study. The items were with four preferences ranging from "Strongly Agree" (4) to "Strongly Disagree" (1) establish the reliability of the instrument; a test-retest was used. The initial and the final scores were

correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics. A reliability score of 0.82 was obtained which indicates good reliability. Data were processed, cleaned, coded, entered, and analyzed using the Social Sciences Statistical Package (SPSS version 26) software program. The hypotheses were analysed and tested at the .05 alpha significance level using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics and Fisher's Z statistics.

## Results

H0<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between income disparity impact and poverty status among household in Odogbolu LGA.

Table 1: Pearson Correlation Analysis of Income Disparity Impacts and Poverty Status

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r	p	Remarks
Income Disparity	300	3.24	0.65			
Poverty Status		3.21	0.64	0.487	0.000	Significant

$p > .05$

Table 1 shows a Pearson r value of 0.487 with a p-value of 0.000 at an alpha level of 0.05. The p-value (0.000) is lesser than the alpha value (05), therefore the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between income disparity impact and poverty status among households was rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between income disparity impact and poverty status among households in Odogbolu LGA.

H0<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between income disparity and poverty level among household based on gender in Odogbolu LGA

Table 2: Pearson r and Fisher's Statistics of Analysis of Income Disparity and Poverty Status Based on Gender.

Gender	N	r	Zcal	Zcrit	Remarks
Male	152	0.524	-2.43	-1.96	Significant
Female	148	0.484			
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>				

$p \geq .05$

Table 2 shows a calculated Fisher's z value of -2.43, tested at an alpha level of .05 level of significance, with  $z_{\text{Critical}}$  value of -1.96. It showed that  $Z_{\text{crit}}$  (-1.96) is lesser than Zcal (-2.23), therefore,

the hypothesis was rejected. This revealed that significant relationship existed between income disparity and poverty level among households based on gender.

H0<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between income disparity and poverty status among households based on location in Odogbolu LGA of Ogun State

Table 3: Pearson r and Fisher’s Statistics of Analysis of Income Disparity and Poverty Status Based on Location.

Location	N	r	Zcal	Zcrit	Remarks
Urban	112	0.447	-2.30	-1.96	Significant
Rural	188	0.597			
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>				

$p \geq .05$

Table 3 shows a calculated Fisher’s z value of -2.30, tested at an alpha level of .05 level of significance, with  $z_{\text{critical}}$  value of -1.96. It showed that  $Z_{\text{crit}}$  (-1.96) is lesser than  $Z_{\text{cal}}$  (-2.23), therefore, the hypothesis was rejected. This showed that significant relationship existed between income disparity and poverty level among households based on location.

### Findings

The result of hypothesis one showed a significant relationship between income disparity impact and poverty status among households. This implied that the household poverty status was dependent on income disparity, it shows that the hypothesis was rejected. In the same vein, UNDP (2019) shows that the level of poverty in the country is partly a feature of high level of inequality, which is fully manifested in unequal distribution of income and limited access to all basic infrastructure.

Hypothesis two revealed that there was no significant relationship between income disparity and poverty level among households based on gender. The result is in line with Duflo (2015) who stated that income disparity between men and women causes lack of opportunity and poverty which is detrimental to development. In agreement, Alao (2015) opined that high gender income disparity and poverty persist in Nigeria with negative implications for the actualisation of the

sustainable development goals 1, 5 and 10. This may be as a result of the fact that the number of women represented in well paid jobs and managerial positions is much smaller than that of men.

Hypothesis three revealed that there was a significant difference between urban and rural households. This is in consonance with more recent findings of Oyekale (2017), Adejare (2019), Odedele (2020), Ipinnaiye (2021) and Adebayo (2022) which have shown that income disparity exists in some rural and urban areas in several parts of Nigeria.

## **Conclusion**

The paper concludes that there is a strong relationship between income disparity impacts and poverty status among households. In terms of gender in the context of this study, the reasons behind wage gap were differences in individual characteristics, differences in employment characteristics and preferences of women to work rather than differences in pay rates of men and women in similar job. The empirical results of income disparity and poverty status of households in rural communities is higher than urban centres because the levels of employment were higher in the urban areas than rural areas.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this research the following recommendations are made:

- i. Policy makers should identify and formulate all-inclusive policy interventions that will have long-lasting positive impact on households alongside the general economic policies of the country. Policies aimed at reducing income disparity should be complemented with policies that will ensure poverty reduction. It is recommended that for the economy to experience growth, inequality must be addressed as it will simultaneously reduce poverty.

- ii. Workers should open up their spectacle to more income generating activities to boost their financial status and reduce poverty in the area.
- iii. Policies should be made to increase the human capital investment of women, provide mandatory quota for women in boardrooms, in management and in governance. With the development of science and technology women should be made to move into male-dominated jobs.
- iv. Government and non-governmental organizations should make concerted efforts to assist the households in rural communities through the provision of basic amenities.

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