



Social Intervention Measures and Social Welfare Services in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *The effects of social welfare programs and intervention methods were assessed in this study. It evaluated their chances for long-term poverty reduction and socioeconomic well-being in Nigeria's Cross River State's Calabar South Local Government Area. The study used a descriptive survey methodology, a questionnaire as the primary data collection tool, and chi-square statistical analysis to analyze the data. The outcome showed that social intervention programs like the N-power program have a big impact on reducing poverty in Calabar South Local Government Area. The social well-being of individuals in Calabar South Local Government Area is also greatly impacted by social welfare services. The N-power program should be reinforced and expanded to serve more beneficiaries in order to combat poverty, according to the study's recommendation. The government should also offer interest-free loans to former volunteers who show interest in order to help them launch their small- to medium-sized businesses. A comprehensive social welfare program that encompasses quality and equal education, financial emancipation, and all-encompassing healthcare is required to ensure the wellbeing of Nigeria's most vulnerable citizens.*

KEYWORDS: *Social intervention measures; Social welfare services; Chi-squares; Poverty reduction; Nigeria.*

INTRODUCTION

Nigerians demanded that the federal government move quickly to help the nation out of its socioeconomic bind. Numerous civilian administrations in the nation implemented some social intervention programs with the goal of providing citizens with real sources of income, primarily through the creation of jobs, easing the suffering of the masses, and reducing and outlawing the use of illegal means of subsistence. The Nigerian government's social intervention initiatives are one of the policy strategies adopted to address the issue of unemployment in Nigeria by job creation.

Among these social intervention programs are the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), which was adopted in 2003, Vision 20:2020, which was released in 2009 and later served as the inspiration for subsequent national development plans, and the Transformational Agenda, which was released in 2011 and runs from 2011 to 2015. (SURE-P). The President Muhammadu Buhari-led administration has recently implemented the National Social Investment Programme (N-SIP), also known as the NPower program, the home-feeding program for primary school students, Trader Moni, and the conditional cash transfer to combat poverty and unemployment, particularly among youth between the ages of 18 and 35. (N-SIP, 2018).

Alemu (2015) claims that although while structural change and expansion of the Nigerian economy occurred from 2000 to 2011 (only plunging into recession in 2016), this progress did not result in a decrease in unemployment in Nigeria, which rose from 11% in 2000 to 23% in 2011. Additionally, Osalor (2012) noted that every year, at least 300,000 students graduate from academic institutions in Nigeria. As more graduates enter the workforce, the number of unemployed persons in Nigerian cities increases algebraically, if not geometrically. The implications of this widespread unemployment in Nigerian society are not far-fetched because poverty is the only factor at play, and poverty is a debilitating force that pushes people to engage in illicit activities in order to survive. According to the 2018 edition of the world poverty clock, with 86.9 million people living in extreme poverty, Nigeria surpassed India to claim the title of being the world's poverty capital (Vanguard, 2019). More than half of the country's young people are unemployed, according to the National Bureau of Statistics' 2012 National Baseline Survey, which supports this claim.

The majority of social crimes committed by graduates nowadays in Nigerian society appear to be motivated by unemployment. Unemployment is mostly to blame for the rise in prostitution, armed robberies, oil bunkering, cybercrimes, drug addiction, trafficking, rape, kidnapping, and all other types of social vices (Okeke and Ngonadi, 2017). It is sad that social welfare services in Nigeria have not met the aforementioned threshold, instead "passing" without a thorough social welfare strategy. The provision of healthcare, education, housing, food, clothing, water, recreational activities/facilities, and other infrastructural facilities (road, electricity, decent transportation, etc.) to a few needy among a large number of vulnerable groups in Nigeria has only been fragmented in the absence of a comprehensive social welfare policy.

Due to their living conditions in a rural area, social welfare among the poor in Calabar South has been a major source of concern. Their mobility is frequently restricted, they lack access to economic resources and services, and their labor is frequently ignored. Hunger, poverty, and inequality are constant problems for the poor. Their situation extends beyond just being financially difficult; it also affects their capacity to meet fundamental requirements. They have little opportunities to engage in economic, social, civil, and political life and are subjected to conditions that limit their ability to establish stable livelihoods. These disadvantaged folks were not included in development planning during previous socioeconomic development efforts. The poor's well-being could not be altered by the efforts intended to make their lives better. Instead, these programs have only served to further their poverty, which has resulted child abuse, neglect, and hardship. These inquiries come up in light of the aforementioned shortcomings: Have social intervention strategies reduced poverty in Cross River State's Calabar South Local Government Area? How much do social welfare services in Cross River State's Calabar South Local Government Area contribute to the socioeconomic well-being of its residents?

The effects of social welfare programs and intervention methods are assessed in this study. In Nigeria's Cross River State, it evaluates the chances for their socioeconomic well-being and prospects for a sustained reduction in poverty. There are five sections in the paper. Following this introduction, section two evaluates pertinent research on the topic. The third section talks about the methodology. The findings are presented and discussed in section four, and the conclusions and suggested next steps are presented in section five.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Abada and Omeh (2019) looked into social intervention programs and efforts to reduce poverty among young people in Nigeria. The study's data collection and content analysis both used a qualitative methodology. The Empowerment theory serves as a major pillar of the analytical framework. The study's conclusions showed that the government's social intervention programs assisted the disadvantaged kids. The study strongly suggests, among other things, that executive capacity and the institutions involved be strengthened. The N-Power program's contribution to youth empowerment in Cross River State, Nigeria, was evaluated by Odey and Sambe in 2019. The study used a cross-sectional survey design, and beneficiaries were chosen by random cluster selection. Additionally, the study used percentages to analyze the data. The analysis found that the N-Power program's beneficiaries were mostly drawn from the N-Teach strand, followed by the N-Health strand, N-Agro strand, and Voluntary Assets and Income Declaration Scheme (VAIDS) strands, in that order. The study also discovered that N-Power promoted youth empowerment through reducing poverty, fostering ICT competence, empowering women financially, providing work experience, and investing in small enterprises.

In 2019, Bisong looked at how the Npower program affected job creation, recipients' financial security, and the development of their job skills in the Cross River South Senatorial District. The survey research design was chosen for this investigation. Using Pearson product-moment correlation to verify the study's assumptions, the findings showed a substantial positive association between the N power scheme and the following variables: economic well-being, job skill improvement, and employment creation.

N-Power programs' effects on reducing poverty in Nigeria were explored by Akujuru and Enyioko (2019) in their research of Rivers State. The study's data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. To test the hypotheses, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was employed. The study indicated that N-Power Teach, N-Power Build, N-Power Creative, N-Power Agro, N-Power Tech Software, N-Power Tax, N-Power Health, and N-Power Tech Hardware were the main N-Power programs employed for poverty reduction in Rivers State. According to the survey, graduates from universities and polytechnics made up the majority of N-Power Program recipients. The study discovered that the following significant factors significantly impacted the implementation of N-Power programs: inadequate information, failure to pay participants' stipends when due, bribery and corruption, incorrect bank verification number (BVN), overbearing political influence in the program, etc. It is clear and obvious that there is a substantial connection between N-Power programs and reducing poverty in Rivers State as well as a significant connection between N-Power programs and empowering young people in Rivers State.

The N-Power Program Implementation Process and the program's contribution to the socioeconomic well-being of participants in Akwanga Metropolis of Nasarawa State were the focus of a study by Abin (2018). According to the study, N-Power improved beneficiaries' social, material, and financial well-being. The competency and resource use of N-Power

teachers: implications for effective and efficient teaching in Nigerian primary and post-primary schools were also examined in a survey by Okoro and Bassey (2018). The study, however, was only concerned with the N-Teach component of the program and depended on the recipients' proficiency in teacher preparation. In Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, Ekong and Ekong (2016) looked into how the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) combats unemployment through acquiring skills. With little success, the government has implemented efforts to address the problem. They discovered, though not without significant hurdles, that there are favorable linkages between Skills Acquisition by NDE and the reduction of unemployment in Akwa Ibom State using data from both primary and secondary sources for the years 1987 to 2012. The findings of NDE's financial contributions to the US economy through skill acquisition, however, were conflicting. 40 percent accepted a minor influence, compared to 48 percent who claimed a good connection.

Ogbonna (2017) used a narrative overview to discuss the situation of social welfare services in Nigeria. The study found that social assistance programs in Nigeria are underfunded and underdeveloped. It is therefore unavailable to the majority of those who require it. This could put public health at risk because of a weakening economy brought on by inadequate funding and budgeting. A Comprehensive Social Welfare Policy for Healthy Living in Nigeria must address Social Welfare Services for the Vulnerable, according to Oriji (2018). The report, among other things, outlined the necessity of developing a comprehensive social welfare strategy, which involves ensuring that the vulnerable people in Nigeria have access to high-quality, equal (non-discriminatory), education, and comprehensive healthcare.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Empowerment Theory

The study's theoretical framework is based on Solomon's (1976) proclamation of the empowerment idea in his book "Black Empowerment." His hypothesis states that people need personal, interpersonal, and environmental resources to update their knowledge, skills, and motivation in order to fill legitimate social roles. He also contends that the inability to utilise resources and support to further goals leads to hopelessness and helplessness. Since social institutions prevent some people and communities from reaching their goals together, breaking down social barriers, and finding personal fulfillment, empowerment theory offers an effective support system (Payne, 2005; Okala and Uche, 2014). However, the implementation of several social programs in Nigeria by successive political regimes has given the populace more power, particularly the defenseless youths who are jobless and walk the streets. The Graduate Internship Program, N-Power, and Conditional Money Transfer to the Youths are just a few examples of social programs and packages that have helped and empowered young people. The recipients are committed to applying their newfound knowledge to advance both their own and society's overall development. The youth's participation in decision-making and financial contribution to the expansion of the economy are implied.

Endogenous Development Theory

Endogenous development theory is used in this study as its analytical framework. Endogenous development theory, according to Bassand et al. (1986), contends that the greatest way to improve the socioeconomic well-being of underprivileged places is to recognize and activate the territory's own collective resources (Ray 2000). Additionally, Bassand (1986) claims that "Not only are there quantitative and monetary metrics, but also qualitative and structural markers of growth. In other words, endogenous development combines social costs, long-term

repercussions, and other qualities including cultural, social, political, and ecological values ". The theory of endogenous development was developed as an alternative to the well-known practice of central authorities designing interventions that dealt with areas of social and economic life in isolation from one another or that assumed standard measures could be used to address socioeconomic problems regardless of location or culture. According to this theory, the focus is on what local communities can do for themselves and on the support and assistance that has been designed to promote local economic growth (OECD, 1996). The following are the key elements of the endogenous model of rural development, according to Lowe et al. (1998):

- a. Fundamental tenet is that an area's unique resources—natural, human, and cultural—hold the key to its sustainable development;
- b. Dynamic force: community initiative and business;
- c. Diverse service economies serve rural areas' needs;
- d. The inability of regions and social groups to participate in economic and development activities, which is one of the major challenges with rural development;
- e. Capacity building (skills, institutions, and infrastructure) and combating social exclusion are the main goals of rural development.

Systems Theory

In the 1930s, Ludwig Von Bertalanffy advanced this hypothesis. According to this theory, the people's input into the government comes in the form of demands for their economic and social well-being as well as the provision of basic necessities by the state for the benefit of the populace as a whole. The government acts as a processing unit, receiving inputs in the form of demands, processing those needs, and disseminating outputs in the form of authoritative decisions and policy initiatives that are immediately targeted toward reducing poverty. The theory demonstrates how the government responds to citizens' needs for basic requirements by doing so. The idea emphasizes how public demands are communicated to the government, how it responds to those requests, and how the results are programs that improve public welfare.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study is being conducted using a cross-sectional survey design. This approach is chosen because it permits data collection from sizable samples that accurately represent all study area components while also allowing for statistical analysis.

Area of the Study

The Southern Senatorial District's Calabar South local government is the subject of the study. It was produced by the previous Calabar Municipal Government. The corporate headquarters are in Anantigha. 264 km² in size, it had 191,630 residents at the 2006 census. The neighborhood's postal code is 540. It has the following eleven wards:

1. Ward 1
2. Ward 2
3. Ward 3

4. Ward 4
5. Ward 5
6. Ward 6
7. Ward 7
8. Ward 8
9. Ward 9
10. Ward 10
11. Ward 11

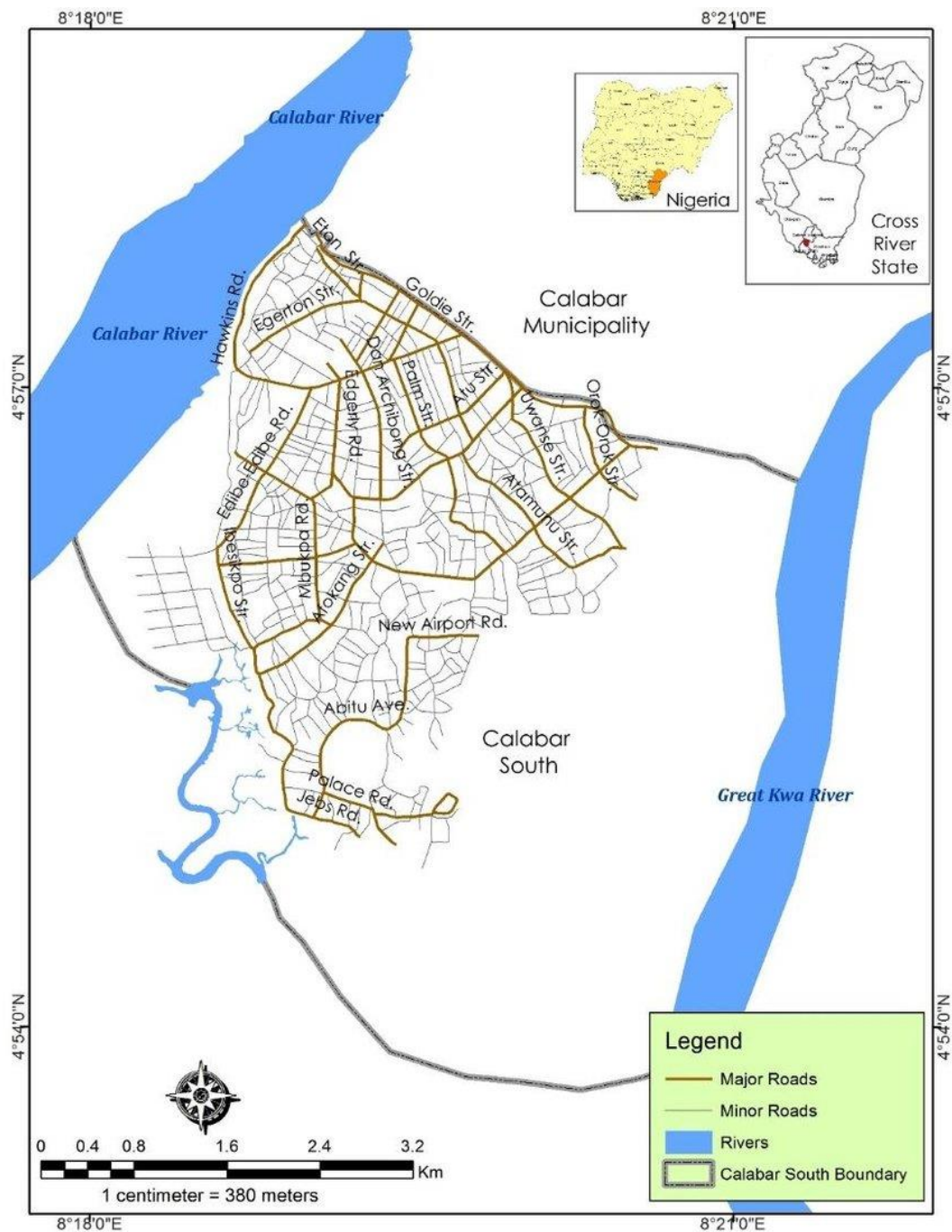


Figure 1: Map of Calabar South LGA

Population of the study

Eight hundred and eighty respondents, comprising women in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State and N-power program participants, make up the study's population.

Sample Size and Method of Sampling

Sample Size: In this study, since the finite population is known, the Yaro Yamane formula (1967) was used in determining the sample size as follows:

$$n = N / (1 + (N \cdot e^2))$$

Where: n = Sample size

N = Actual population

e = The error term (0.05)

$$\begin{aligned} n &= 880 / [1 + (880 \times 0.05^2)] \\ &= 880 / [1 + 880 \times 0.0025] \\ &= 880 / (1 + 2.2) \\ &= 880 / 3.2 \\ &= 275 \\ &= 275 \text{ Sample size} \end{aligned}$$

In order to choose the sample for this study, the researcher used the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling, according to Odu (2007), is the conscious application of judgment to pick a sample that is representative of the population by including representative neighborhoods or groups. Due to the type and character of the variable being studied, this technique was chosen.

Method of Data Collection

A questionnaire was used to gather the study's data. The researchers hired research assistants and instructed them on how to administer surveys during the data collection process. After the training, the researchers and their research assistants went to the beneficiaries' principal work locations and gave the respondents their questionnaires.

Method of Data Analysis

Chi-square statistical analysis with k-1 degrees of freedom was used to analyze the data for this study. The argument for employing this method is that the responses are represented as categorical data, where K is the number of categories. In addition, the chi-square non-parametric test is employed to determine the relationship between two variables.

The following is the chi-square fundamental formula:

$$X^2 = \frac{\sum (Of - Ef)^2}{Ef}$$

Where:

X^2 = Chi-square statistics

\sum = Summation sign

Of = Observed frequencies

Ef = Expected frequencies

The degree of freedom for chi-square is computed as

$$df = (R - 1)(C - 1)$$

Where, df = degree of freedom

C = Column

R = Row

Sources of data

The data sources for this study were grouped into primary and secondary sources.

- i. Primary sources: This consist of first-hand information obtained from respondents during fieldwork. The questionnaire, interview and documented studies made up the primary data for this study.
- ii. Secondary sources: The secondary sources of data shall consist of library research, including an E-library for reviewed works of other scholars, journals and other official information on the significant variables of the study. They constitute the literature reviewed in this study.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

Presentation of Results

Table 4.1: Percentage Summary of respondents

Questionnaire	Responses	Total	Percentage (%)
No. returned	270	270	98.18
Not returned	5	5	1.82
Total	275	275	100

Source: Field Survey by the Researcher, 2021

In accordance with table 4.1, 275 questionnaires were distributed to respondents; 270 of them were returned, while 5 were not. 270 questionnaires in all were returned, representing a response rate of 98.18%.

Table 4.2: Percentage of Respondents by Gender

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	140	51.85
Female	130	48.15
Total	270	100

The following table demonstrates that of the 270 respondents who filled out the study's questionnaires, 140 male respondents made up the majority (51.85%), while 130 female respondents made up the remaining 48.15 percent. By dividing the frequency of each gender by the total number of respondents, the percentage was calculated, and the result was multiplied by 100 (percent).

Table 4.3: Percentage of Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20 – 25	60	22.22

26 – 30	75	27.78
31 – 40	95	35.19
41 and above	40	14.81
Total	270	100

The aforementioned table reveals that 95 respondents, or 39.18%, are between the ages of 31 and 40, which makes up the majority of the respondents. When it came to respondents' ages, those between 26 and 30 years old recorded 75 responses, or 27.78%; those between 20 and 25 years old recorded 60 responses, or 22.22%; and those 41 years and over recorded 40 responses, or 14.81%.

Table 4.4: Percentage of Respondents by Marital Status

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	163	60.37
Married	107	39.63
Total	270	100

The following table demonstrates that a larger percentage of people who answered the questionnaire—163, or 60.37 percent—are single. However, there were 107 married respondents, or 39.63% of the total.

Table 4.5: Percentage of Respondents by Educational Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SSCE	45	16.67
HND/B.Sc	205	75.92
Master's degree	18	6.67
PhD	2	0.74
Total	270	100

The table above shows that 205 respondents, or 75.92% of the total, were HND/B.Sc. holders, which represents the majority of those who answered the questionnaire. SSCE holders came next, accounting for 45 or 16.67%. 18 respondents had master's degrees, or 6.67 percent of the total, while 2 respondents had PhDs, or 0.74 percent.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

First hypothesis: Social intervention programs like N-power have little to no impact on reducing poverty in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River.

The Chi-Square was employed to investigate this theory.

Table 4.6's analysis yields a chi-square value of 365.311, which is higher than the table value of 36.42 at 22 degrees of freedom, and a p-value of 0.000, which is lower than the significance level of 0.05. We therefore reject the null hypothesis and draw the conclusion that social intervention programs like the N-power program significantly contribute to the decline in poverty in Calabar South Local Government Area.

Table 4.6: Summary of Chi-square computation of the relationship between social intervention measures and poverty reduction in Calabar South Local Government Area

Test Statistics	
	Social intervention measures and poverty reduction in Calabar South
Chi-Square	365.311 ^a
Df	22
Asymp. Sig.	0.000

The relationship between social welfare services and a person's social well-being in the Calabar South Local Government Area is summarized in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Summary of Chi-square computation of the relationship between social welfare services and social well-being of people in Calabar South Local Government Area.

Test Statistics	
	Social welfare services and social well-being of people in Calabar South.
Chi-Square	146.148 ^a
Df	22
Asymp. Sig.	0.000

Second hypothesis: The socioeconomic wellbeing of residents in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River is unaffected significantly by social welfare services.

The Chi-Square was employed to investigate this theory.

From the analysis result in Table 4.7, it can be seen that the chi-square estimated value of 146.148 is higher at 22 degrees of freedom than the table value of 36.42. The significance threshold of 0.05 is below the p-value of 0.000. We consequently reject the null hypothesis and draw the conclusion that social welfare services have a significant impact on residents of the Calabar South Local Government Area's social well-being.

Discussions of Findings

We learned from the results that social intervention programs like the N-power program had a big impact on reducing poverty in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State. The findings of Abada and Omeh (2019), Odey and Sambe (2019), Bisong (2019), Akujuru and Enyioko (2019), and Abn (2019) are in agreement with this finding (2018). This finding suggests that the N-power initiatives N-Teach, N-Health, N-Agro, and Voluntary Assets and Income Declaration Scheme (VAIDS) have helped youth empowerment by reducing poverty in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State through ICT proficiency skills, financial empowerment, on-the-job experience, and investment in small businesses. This indicates that youngsters now live above the poverty line thanks to the federal government's

social intervention program. They are able to support themselves and their immediate family as a result, making a vital contribution to the growth and development of the Calabar South Local Government Area in the Cross River State.

Additionally, we learned from the results that social welfare services have a big impact on people in the Calabar South Local Government Area's social well-being. This outcome is comparable to that of Abn (2018), who came to the conclusion that government initiatives have a considerable impact on citizens' social well-being. This finding, however, conflicts with Ogbonna's (2017) analysis, which found that social assistance programs in Nigeria are underdeveloped, underfunded, and unavailable to the majority of individuals who need them. However, this finding suggests that the social welfare programs offered to the poor, widows, prisoners, and others by the Calabar South Local Government Council and the Cross River State government have significantly improved these groups of people's social well-being in the Calabar South Local Government Area.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The effects of social welfare programs and intervention methods were assessed in this study. It evaluated their chances for long-term poverty reduction and socioeconomic prosperity in Cross River State's Calabar South Local Government Area. The population and sample size for this study were 275 respondents, and the descriptive survey design was used. The questionnaire was used to gather the data, and the Chi-square statistical method was used to analyze the data using SPSS software. According to the study's findings, social intervention programs like the N-power program have a big impact on reducing poverty in Calabar South Local Government Area. Additionally, the social well-being of residents in the Calabar South Local Government Area is strongly impacted by social welfare services.

Policy recommendations

These research findings inform the following recommendations:

- i. To accommodate more people and help reduce poverty, the N-Power program should be reinforced and expanded.
- ii. The government could offer interest-free loans to former volunteers who are interested in starting small or medium-sized businesses.
- iii. A comprehensive social welfare program that encompasses quality and equal education, financial empowerment, and all-encompassing healthcare is required to ensure the wellbeing of Nigeria's most vulnerable citizens.

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