GENDER INEQUALITY AND POVERTY IN AKOKO SOUTH WEST COMMUNITIES OF ONDO STATE, NIGERIA

Elizabeth Akinjole[1*], Bosede Kudaisi[2] & Mary M. Fasoranti[3]

[1,2,3]Department of Economics, Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State

*Corresponding author's email: akinjoleelizabeth4@gmail.com

Abstract

Poverty eradication has been a persistent global challenge throughout history. While approaches to addressing poverty have evolved, the fundamental issue remains unresolved. Studies have shown that there is a high prevalence of poverty among women, and the fundamental cause of this is gender inequality (SDG 5). Akoko Southwest Local Government Area communities are not exempted from this menace. This study looked at the nexus between gender inequality and poverty in Akoko Southwest Local Government Area communities, Ondo State. It also investigated the dimensions of poverty and areas of gender inequality among the sampled populations. The primary source of data made from self-administered copies of questionnaires was used to collect data from 200 respondents in five communities of the local government area. Of these, 175 questionnaires were valid and analysed. The sample population comprises both male and female adults. In addition, the Alkire-Foster methodology was utilised to analyse the dynamics of multidimensional poverty in the study area. We constructed the poverty index using the 2018 Nigerian Multidimensional Poverty indicators developed by UNDP Nigeria and NBS. We employed descriptive statistics and binary logistic regression. Household was used as the unit of analysis. The results showed high levels of gender inequality in all dimensions. On the multidimensionality of poverty, female-headed households experienced the incidence (88%) and intensity (60%) of poverty while their male counterparts experienced the incidence (54%) and intensity (42%) of poverty. The outcome also showed that female-headed households were more deprived in terms of education, health, living conditions, unemployment, and asset ownership. The binary logistic regression analysis showed there is a positive relationship between the female-headed household and poverty in the study area with a p-value less than 0.1, which suggests that there is a higher prevalence of poverty in female-headed households than in male-headed households. Overall, the findings revealed that gender, age, and education of household heads significantly contribute to the poverty status of the households. The study concludes that poverty in Akoko-Southwest LGA communities is both a symptom and cause of gender inequality as females are more impoverished due to deprivation in areas such as education, nutrition, living standards, and employment.

Keywords: Poverty, Inequality, Education, Nutrition, Employment, Akoko Southwest, Ondo State

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Introduction

Poverty eradication has been a persistent global challenge throughout history. While approaches to addressing poverty have evolved, the fundamental issue remains unresolved. In recent years, the United Nations has placed a significant emphasis on poverty reduction through its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda. Specifically, SDG 1 (No Poverty) seeks to eliminate poverty in all its forms globally. This goal has been widely adopted by countries within the United Nations framework as a key component of their development agendas. Despite these efforts, poverty continues to be a critical issue requiring comprehensive and sustainable solutions. As a global issue, poverty can also be viewed through a gendered lens, with women overrepresented in rural communities and experiencing more violence due

to unpaid domestic chores. A fundamental cause of the high prevalence of poverty among rural women is gender inequality (Scott, 2021). According to Kelly (2000), women make up a large proportion of the world's poor.

The connection between gender inequality and poverty has long been recognized as a critical global concern. This concern is reflected in the fifth of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Gender Equality, which was unanimously set by nations and countries of the world (United Nations, 2015). In alignment with poverty eradication (SDG 1), several nations have made progress in reducing gender-based poverty by increasing investments in gender-responsive social protection measures and public services, particularly in the health and education sectors. However, this problem remains prominent.

In the literature, an important concept that highlights the relationship between gender inequality and poverty is the concept of feminisation of poverty. The feminisation of poverty emphasises the unequal treatment of individuals based on their gender, leading to differences in opportunities, resources, and power (Sen, 1999; Ogundipe et al., 2019). Further, the marginalisation and exclusion of women have been identified as major drivers of gender-based poverty (Mittelman &Tambe, 2000; Owusu, & Dako-Gyeke 2013; Atozuo, Mayuto, & Abodohoui, 2017; Bako & Syed, 2018). The reason for this high prevalence of gender-based poverty could be traced to traditional beliefs and practices leading to women having less or no ownership, access, and control over family assets and resources compared to their male counterparts. While, rural dwellers experience poverty on a larger scale than urban dwellers, and women are overrepresented among the poor within rural communities (Cotter, 2002; Kyzyma, 2019).

Asides from asset ownership, gender inequality manifests through social, religious, and ethical beliefs, leading to restricted access to social protection and public services, which limits the income levels of rural women hence, contributing to poverty. Furthermore, cultural and traditional beliefs in rural areas often exclude women from economic and social opportunities, leading to marginalised positions, which reduces their income and accelerates poverty levels among them. One of the prominent areas of gender discrimination-inducing poverty is education. Education, as a crucial agent for human resource development, positively influences the income level of individuals in society (Kudaisi & Martins, 2014; Hovhannisyan, Castillo-Ponce & Valdez, 2019). The existence of diminishing factors in women's access to high-level education causes a wide gap between the education levels of the male and female gender resulting into lower level of income among women (Ghulam, 2005). Similarly, gender disparities in skill acquisition, healthcare, credit facilities, and household responsibilities contribute to these income disparities (John, 2012).

Despite being a resource-rich country, Nigeria has long struggled with persistent and rising levels of poverty. Between 1980 and 1985, the proportion of rural and urban dwellers in extreme poverty increased from 6.5 per cent and 3.0 per cent to 14.8 per cent and 7.5 per cent, respectively (FOS, 1999, as cited in Kudaisi& Martins, 2014). The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) reported that 40.1 per cent of Nigeria's total population was classified as multidimensionally poor according to the 2018/2019 reports. The reports show that rural areas have the highest multidimensional poverty at 72 per cent. As of 2021, 133 million (63%) people were multidimensionally poor, with a multidimensional poverty index (MPI) of 0.257 (NBS, 2022). In Nigeria, women account for over 70 per cent of those in extreme poverty, despite making up less than 50 per cent of the population (UNGA, 2021). This high incidence of poverty among women stems from factors such as low educational attainment, traditional gender roles, and unpaid domestic labour, which also increases their vulnerability to violence (Ka'oje & Ka'oje, 2022). Hence, gender inequality is a significant issue affecting rural women in Nigeria, manifested in the form of a lack of access to education, healthcare, employment, politics, and property rights (Makama, 2013). Despite massive efforts to promote gender equality, rural women in Nigeria continue to face disparities in education, healthcare, employment, and decision-making.

It is pertinent to note that several studies have measured rural poverty using the multidimensional approach in Nigeria. Sulaimon (2020) examined multidimensional poverty from a macro level. Jerumeh (2024) considered the incidence and intensity of poverty solely for rural women. However, the majority of these studies rarely gave attention to the level of intensity and incidence of poverty from a gendered

perspective. The study of Adeoti (2014) observed that the intensity and incidence of poverty in both male-headed and female-headed households changed over time but the gender with higher incidence of poverty was not clearly stated. Using secondary data at a macro level, Adepoju (2018) noted that female-headed households had a higher incidence of poverty although there was no stated connection established with the marginalisation of women in rural communities.

Despite the plethora of literature, studies on gender inequality and poverty nexus in Akoko Southwest Local Government Area remain scarce in spite of the popularity of the local government and the prevalence of poverty in the area. Akoko Southwest Local Government Area is a subset of Akokoland and one of the prominent local governments in Ondo State. The only study known to have explored the incidence of poverty and gender in the local government is Fasoranti (2015). Meanwhile, the study only focused on household poverty reduction activities in gender disparity, overlooking whether poverty in the study area is due to gender inequality. According to the National Bureau of Statistics report in 2022, the South West had the lowest incidence of multidimensional poverty index (40%). However, gender disparities are common, especially in rural areas where women frequently face barriers to healthcare and education, as well as higher rates of discrimination and domestic violence.

In addition, this study used the multidimensional poverty methodology developed by Alkire and Foster (2011) to compute the multidimensional poverty index (for the male and female gender) used in the study, unlike the previous studies, which rely on macro data or other measures of poverty. In a bid to provide a nuanced understanding of how gender inequality intersects with other social stratification to shape people's economic outcomes and poverty in rural Nigeria, this study contributes to the existing literature in three-fold: (i) compares the multidimensionality of rural poverty through a gendered lens at a micro level using the Nigerian Multidimensional Poverty Index (2018); (ii) examines the effect of gender inequality on poverty among households using a binary logistic regression model; and (iii) examines the areas of gender inequality in households in Akoko Southwest Local Government Area.

Literature Review

Theoretical underpinning

The Basic Needs Theory is one of the earliest frameworks developed to address the multidimensional nature of poverty. This theory draws upon the concept of human needs, explaining poverty as the result of unmet essential needs. According to the Basic Needs Theory, poverty arises from the deprivation of fundamental resources such as housing, education, sanitation, food, and healthcare. While the theory provides a focused perspective by emphasising material needs and the minimum requirements for a decent standard of living, it operates within a narrower scope. It assumes that these basic needs are universal, applying equally to all individuals. However, the theory has been critiqued for not considering broader aspects of human well-being, such as individuals' capacity for decision-making or achieving freedoms in other areas of life.

Furthermore, the capability theory of poverty is a multifaceted framework that views poverty as the deprivation of fundamental capabilities, which enable individuals to lead lives they value. This approach shifts the emphasis from income-based measures of poverty to the actual opportunities, or capabilities, that individuals possess. The capability approach, pioneered by Amartya Sen in the 1980s, defines capabilities as "the various combinations of functioning (beings and doings) that a person can achieve within a society" (Sen, 1995). Sen contends that poverty should be understood in terms of the absence of freedoms that allow individuals to enhance their quality of life, including areas such as nutrition, shelter, health, and education. Also, this deprivation extends to individuals' inability to participate in community life without shame or fear of reproach. The core strength of this theory lies in its focus on what people are capable of doing and becoming, rather than merely what they possess or how they feel.

Elsewhere, liberal feminism theory emphasises the importance of gender equality in society, particularly in reducing poverty. It argues that poverty is often due to discrimination and unequal access to economic opportunities (Benería, 2003). In developing countries, education is seen as a powerful tool for empowering women and reducing poverty. Educated women contribute to their families and

communities, challenging traditional gender roles.

Lastly, the social exclusion theory explains that poverty is not just the lack of material resources but also the inability to fully participate in society. An important dimension of social exclusion is Gender Inequality. This disproportionately affects women and girls due to unequal power relations and patriarchal systems. It aids the restriction of women's access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities, and contributes to their vulnerability to poverty and social exclusion. In turn, women's lower levels of education and participation in decision-making processes contribute to poverty (Duflo, 2012). Also, women's reproductive health needs are often overlooked, further perpetuating poverty by limiting their ability to plan and care for their families. The theory offers a framework for understanding how gender inequality contributes to poverty and social exclusion, allowing policymakers to design interventions to address poverty and promote inclusive development.

Alkire-Foster Methodology

The Alkire-Foster methodology is a common method of measuring multidimensional poverty. It is based on the concept that poverty is experienced through multiple deprivations across different aspects of life. This methodology involves several key components: the selection of dimensions (areas of poverty), the establishment of dimensional cutoffs (to determine when an individual is deprived in a particular dimension), the assignment of dimensional weights (to indicate the relative importance of each deprivation), and the setting of a poverty cutoff (which determines whether an individual experiences sufficient deprivation to be classified as poor) (Alkire& Foster, 2011). A notable feature of the Alkire-Foster methodology is its flexibility. Dimensions can be selected based on what is considered significant in the specific context of the study area. Additionally, the weights assigned to each dimension and the poverty cutoff can vary depending on the objectives and priorities of the analysis, allowing for a tailored assessment of poverty across different settings.

Table 1: Dimensions for Alkire and Foster Multidimensional Poverty Measures

Dimensions	Thresholds	Weight
Income is measured in poverty line increments and grouped into 15 categories.	A person is deprived if he/she lives in a household falling below the standard income poverty line.	¼
Self-reported health	A person is deprived if he/she reports ‘fair’/ ‘poor’ health.	¼
Health Insurance	A person is deprived if he/she lacks health insurance.	¼
Years of Schooling	A person is deprived if he/she lacks a high school diploma.	¼

Source: Alkire and Foster (2011)

Empirical literature

With the adoption of multidimensional poverty into the body of literature, several studies have examined multidimensional poverty dynamics in Nigeria. Sulaimon (2020) evaluates the determinants of multidimensional poverty in Nigeria using 2016 cross-sectional data. The study identified that a widespread deprivation in health, education and living standards exists across states and geopolitical regions in Nigeria. Using the Alkire and Foster Measure of Multidimensional Poverty, the Markov Model of Poverty Transitions and the Multinomial Logistic Regression Model for analysis, Adepoju (2018) found that multidimensional poverty among rural households is mainly chronic. The education and assets dimension contributed most to the incidence and severity of multidimensional poverty.

Furthermore, numerous studies have discussed the poverty-gender inequality nexus in various countries. The study by Parveen and Leonhäuser (2004) found that education, information, media exposure, and spatial mobility positively affect women's empowerment in Bangladesh, while traditional norms have a negative effect. Nandal (2005) found that economic insufficiency, educational deprivation, and gender inequality in access to assets and decision-making contribute to poverty for Indian women. Chaudhry and Rahman (2009) found that there is a high incidence of poverty in households with a lesser number

of enrolled or literate females, low educational qualification of females, greater number of females, low or no female participation in earning activity, illiterate household head, and large household size. According to Muleta and Mokgokong's (2010) study on Sebayeng village in South Africa, the study found that culture, tradition, unequal resource distribution, poor women's participation, and empowerment are key factors in perpetuating gender inequality.

Kaka (2013) highlighted the serious problem of poverty among women in Africa, emphasising the need for poverty reduction. Owusu, and Dako-Gyeke's (2013) study in Kyebi, Ghana, found that cultural practices, gender socialisation, poverty, and discrimination in land access contribute to gender inequality. Deressa (2014) opined that larger household sizes increase poverty in female-headed households in rural Ethiopia, while household heads' literacy, livestock ownership, and landholdings contribute to poverty. Cheteni, Khamufula, and Mah (2019) found a negative relationship between gender and poverty in South African rural areas, with females being more likely to be in poverty. The study also highlighted the role of culture in shaping gender and poverty incidences. Additionally, with the application of the Alkire and Foster Method (2011) and a binary logit model, Charles et al (2023) found that the living standard dimension contributes more to multidimensional poverty and that the female was more vulnerable to poverty than their male counterparts in rural Tanzania.

Similarly, using the multidimensional poverty approach, Soseco, Hidayah, and Rini (2022) revealed that female-headed households are more prone to poverty situations than their male counterparts in Indonesia due to a high dependency ratio and the higher tendency of older household heads in female-headed households. However, there was no explicit explanation for the gender difference in the severity of poverty. In the same vein, using the Alkire-Foster method, Maket (2024) revealed that higher poverty incidence, intensity, and urban multidimensional poverty exist among females in Kenya. Comparably, Ichwara, Kiriti-Ng'ang'a, and Wambugu (2023) accessed the changes in gender differences in household poverty in Kenya, findings show that females have a higher chance of falling into poverty than males.

Atozuo, Mayuto, and Abodohoui (2017) found that women are more vulnerable to poverty due to discrimination in the labour market, lack of access to financial services, and marginalisation in decision-making and management. Mcferson's (2010) study on women's poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa found a close relationship between weak governance and poverty among African women. Additionally, Covarrubias's (2023) study on the individual level of the multidimensional poverty index in Mexico found that the multidimensional poverty index is greater for women than for men. Diwakar (2022) revealed that primary schooling is lower among girls compared with boys in chronically poor households, with implications for the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Similarly, Hanim and Apriliana's (2020) study on the relationship between gender inequality in education and poverty reduction stressed that improving women's education helps reduce the overall poverty rate in Indonesia. Exploring the interconnectedness between gender inequality, poverty, and social inclusion using secondary sources, Goswanee and Dutta et al. (2024) found that gender inequality significantly enhances and perpetuates poverty, especially among women and marginalised genders due to limited access to resources and opportunities. In estimating multidimensional poverty and gender differences in Brazil from three perspectives: intrahousehold, interhousehold, and intracouple, Tavares and Betti (2024) found that women are disadvantaged in terms of economic security and access to resources, both of which are essential agencies for empowerment.

In the Nigerian context, Adenugba and Raji-Mustapha's (2013) study stressed the role of women in promoting agricultural productivity and improving the quality of life in rural areas, where they produce 80 per cent of food but also face hunger, malnutrition, poverty, high fertility, and maternal mortality rates. Ugwueje (2014) explored the impact of gender equality mainstreaming on poverty reduction and sustainable development, finding that harmful cultural practices worsen poverty, perpetuating inequality, particularly for women. Fasoranti (2015) revealed that while females were more than willing

to participate in activities that would further reduce their household poverty, they were often relegated to non-economic activities such as household chores. This limitation hinders their active participation in economic endeavours that could improve their financial well-being and contribute to poverty alleviation efforts. Anyebe (2017) found that only a small proportion of women achieve higher education, highlighting the need for education for women and girls. Aluko and Mbada (2020) found that female literacy rates in rural areas are lower than males due to dropout rates and non-farming employment Ezenekwe and Umeghalu (2021) found no causal relationship between poverty rate and gender inequality but found a significant negative relationship between labour participation and poverty rate. To reduce gender inequality, income levels should be increased, along with improved access to quality education, healthcare, and freedom. Oyekanmi and Moliki's (2021) study observed that poverty will continue to rise among women, particularly those with low literacy levels and low-income jobs.

Additionally, several works of literature on how gender inequality and poverty individually affect rural women have also surfaced in literature, with mixed conclusions. Dao (2004) and Mokgokong (2010) revealed no relationship between unequal income distribution and poverty reduction in developing countries. However, productivity in agriculture and fertility rates have a significant impact on poverty incidence. Saleem et al. (2023), using a multilevel binary logistic model, revealed that poverty is highly influenced by low socio-economic status and low education, with the largest odds ratio in Pakistan. Li and He (2024), on analysing multidimensional poverty among rural women in China from an individual level, revealed that rural women were more likely to be multidimensional poor than women in other subgroups due to low educational attainment and possibly the existence of a strong patriarchal culture in rural areas, which deprives opportunities and resources for female development. Likewise, Anthony and Udoka (2023) revealed that gender inequality emanates from religion, culture, and imbalance in value- based status and concluded further that gender inequality deprives women of the opportunity for society's growth and development and is, therefore, a threat to society. Using the multidimensional poverty index approach, Jerumeh (2024) concluded that security shocks, unemployment and time to health care services are the biggest contributors to the multidimensional poverty of rural women in Nigeria.

Methodology

The Study Area

The study was conducted in AkokoSouthwest Local Government Area (LGA), located within the Ondo North Senatorial District of Ondo State, Nigeria. With its administrative headquarters in Oka Akoko, the LGA consists of 15 towns, including Oka-Akoko, Akungba-Akoko, Supare-Akoko, Ikun-Akoko, Oba-Akoko, Eti-Oro-Akoko, Okia, Korowa, Ikese, Iwonrin, Ebo, Owalusin, Ayepe, Okela and Bolorunduro. The region is predominantly agrarian, with the majority of the population engaged in various forms of farming. Key crops cultivated in the area include groundnut, vegetables, tomatoes, maize, cocoa, cassava, yam, plantain etc. In addition to agriculture, residents are also involved in modern occupations such as teaching, business, and commercial ventures like banking, cyber cafés, and the trading of industrial goods. Akoko Southwest LGA has an area of 226 km^2 and a population of 228,383 (Census, 2006), of which 114,773 belong to the male population and 113,610 make up the female population. The young adolescents below 14 years make up 84,667, between 15-64 years of age make up 135,260 while 65+ make up 8,456 individuals. The area is characterised by rugged topography, with various highlands and rocky formations. The soil is predominantly reddish-brown, and the region is home to tropical hardwood species such as Mahogany, Iroko, and Afara. Like many rural areas in Nigeria, Akoko Southwest LGA operates under a patriarchal cultural system. A 2008 survey conducted by the Ondo Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget revealed that household responsibilities, such as cooking and laundry, are primarily undertaken by women. The survey further indicated gender-based discrimination in employment opportunities and political administration, with a significant portion of respondents expressing the belief that men are more entitled to work and make more effective administrators than women.

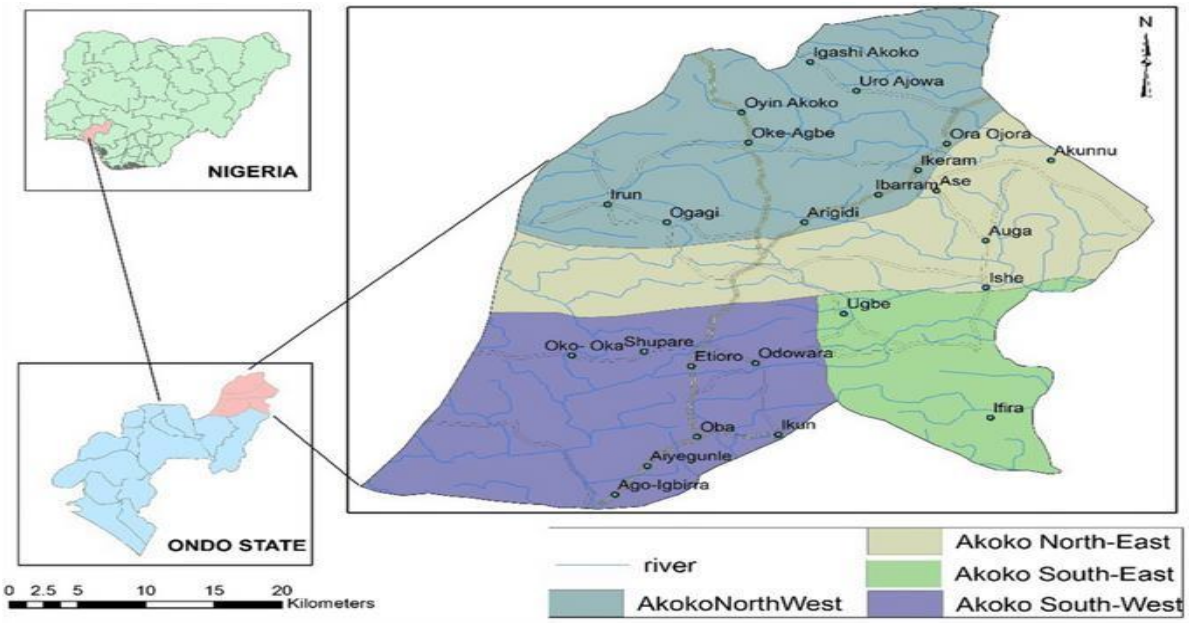

Figure 1: A Map showing the Akokoland and Akoko Southwest LGA in Akoko Land

Research design and data sources

The data used for this study was collected through a well-structured questionnaire shared with five communities in Akoko Southwest LGA, namely: Akungba-Akoko, Oke-Oka-Akoko, Iwaro-Oka, Eti-Oro-Akoko, and Supare-Akoko. Here, these questionnaires were self-administered among rural households in the communities with information collected from both females and adult males above 18. Closed-ended questions were used to capture the dimensions of poverty, identify the areas of gender inequality, and determine the effect of gender inequality on poverty among rural women using household as a unit of analysis. For this study, the questionnaires in the study were shared with both males and females' gender because poverty impacts both genders, despite variations in its severity. Additionally, gender inequality arises not only from women's actions but also from societal beliefs and norms, which involve men. Therefore, their perspectives are essential for this study.

Sampling and Sample Size

The sample size was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula. It is an appropriate formula when the study's population is less than the total population known and large. The formula is as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} \quad (1)$$

Where n= sample size (the unknown), N=total target population which is the total households. e =marginal error. According to the Ondo State Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget (2011), the total number of households in Akoko Southwest LGA is 49,080 and 8 per cent is chosen as the author's desired margin of error. Hence, the sample size:

$$n = \frac{49{,}080}{1 + 49080(0.08)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{49{,}080}{1 + (49080x0.0064)}$$

$$n = \frac{49{,}080}{1 + 314.112},$$

$$n = \frac{49{,}080}{315.112}, \quad n = 155.7 \approx 156 \tag{2}$$

Having determined the sample size approximately to be 156, the 10 per cent (15.6) attrition, in case of no response is added to the sample size to be 156 + 15.6 = 171.6. Therefore, to the nearest tens, n=180, which is rounded up to 200, if some questionnaires were returned blank or incomplete.

However, to efficiently use the sample size determination, a three-stage sampling procedure was used for the household's selection. The first stage involved a purposive selection of 5 towns in the LGA which represent the majority of the total population, namely: Akungba-Akoko, Oke-Oka-Akoko, Iwaro-Oka, Eti-Oro-Akoko, and Supare-Akoko. In the second stage, the cluster sampling method was adopted. The sample size was divided equally among the five selected locations, thus, each location takes 20 per cent of the sample i.e. 40 households from each location. At the final stage, a simple random sampling technique was applied. Lastly, the 40 households from each of the selected towns were chosen using a simple random sampling method. The random sampling method is the method where every household in each community has an equal chance of being selected.

Validity and reliability of the instrument

The study's instrument was validated through a pilot study. A pilot study consisting of informal, unstructured face-to-face interviews was conducted to ascertain the relevance of the questions to the study's objectives. We explore perceptions of gender roles and their influence on household decision-making, ultimately contributing to poverty. The interviews involved three adult women and two adult men, conducted at different times. The insights gained from these interviews were instrumental in refining the research questions to better align with the prevailing conditions in the study area. The interviews revealed that, although modernization and education have improved perceptions regarding the economic significance of women in society, the local culture and traditions, which remain patriarchal, continue to dominate the societal framework. While the data from the pilot study were not systematically analysed, the findings were valuable in shaping the overall research direction and informing the survey design used in the main study as well as ensuring the reliability of the instrument. Given the exploratory nature of the pilot, these findings are not intended to be representative but played a critical role in refining the research methodology, validity and reliability of the proposed instrument.

Measurement of data

The poverty status for each household was measured using the NG-MPI (2018) approach, a modification of the Alkire-Foster Measure (see Table 1), where each of the four dimensions is assigned equal weights. Each dimension relates to the following SDGs: No Poverty (SDG 1), Zero Hunger (SDG 2), Health and Well-being (SDG 3), Quality Education (SDG 4), Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6), Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7), Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11) and Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8).

Table 2: The Nigerian Multidimensional Poverty Index

Dimensions	Indicators	SDG	Thresholds	Weight	Total Weight
Education	Year of Schooling	SDG 4	A household is deprived if any member 15 years has not completed five years of schooling.	1/8	¼
	School Attendance	SDG 4	A household is deprived if any child between 5-15 is not attending school in years 1-8.	1/8	
Health	Child Mortality	SDG 3	A household is deprived if any child less than 15 years has died in the family.	1/8	¼
	Nutrition	SDG 2	A household is deprived if any adult or child for whom there is nutrition information is malnourished.	1/8	
Living Standards	Electricity	SDG 7	A household is deprived if the household has no electricity.	1/24	¼
	Sanitation	SDG 6	A household is deprived if it lacks adequate sanitation or has a shared toilet.	1/24	
	Water	SDG 6	A household is deprived if he lacks access to safe drinking water or walks more than 30 minutes from home to the source.	1/24	
	Floor	SDG 11	A household is deprived if it has a dirt, sand or dung floor.	1/24	
	Cooking Fuel	SDG 7	A household is deprived if he cooks with dung wood or charcoal.	1/24	
	Asset	SDG 1	A household is deprived if he does not own more than two assets or owns a car.	1/24	
Unemployment	Unemployment	SDG 8	A household is deprived if a member 15 years and above is unemployed	1/4	¼

Source: National Human Development Report (2018)

The dimensions of multidimensional poverty are equally weighted (1/4) and further divided across eleven (11) indicators. Two education indicators are used: years of schooling and child school attendance. Hence, to refer to a household as being deprived of education, such a household will have a member who is 15 years and above and has not completed 5 years of schooling or has a child between ages 5 and 15 years who is not attending school. The health dimension is represented by child mortality and nutrition. In terms of nutrition, a household is deprived when at least one member is malnourished. The Standard of living dimension is indicated by cooking fuel, sanitation, drinking water, electricity, housing, and assets. For cooking fuel, a household that cooks with dung, wood, or charcoal is deprived. Although sanitation is exhibited in other households, yet, a household is deprived if the household lacks adequate sanitation or if their toilet is shared. Concerning drinking water, a household that lacks access to safe drinking water (in this context well water is classified as not safe) within a short distance is deprived. A household is also deprived if it has floors made up of rudimentary materials. Furthermore, a household that lacks one or more assets, such as a motorbike or car, is said to be asset-deprived. By the unemployment dimension, a household is deprived if any member 15 years and above is unemployed.

Model Specification

To examine the multidimensionality (severity and incidence) of poverty in the study area, the 2018 Nigeria-Multidimensional Poverty Index (NG-MPI) approach is used. MPI is calculated as the product of the incidence (H) and the intensity (A) of poverty. The incidence of poverty is the percentage of people that are poor, i.e., the headcount ratio, while the intensity of poverty (A) is the average proportion of weighted deprivations that poor people face at the same time. The model is specified below:

NG-MPI= H*A (3)

This study takes on the Alkire-Foster (2011) technique of multidimensional poverty which is a set of measures that draws on the counting approach. We use the household as a unit of identification for the sake of this study. The Alkire-Foster methodology computes two key variables:

- The incidence of multidimensional poverty (H) measures the proportion of people (within a given population) who experience multidimensional poverty. It is expressed as:

$$H = \frac{q}{n} \quad (4)$$

  Where H = incidence of poverty, percentage of multidimensionally poor households, and n = total number of households under study.

- The intensity of multidimensional poverty (A) measures the average deprivation experienced by households identified as multidimensionally poor. It provides more information on the depth or severity of poverty. It is expressed as:

$$A = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{q} C_i(k)}{q} \quad (5)$$

Where A = intensity. c_i= deprivation score, which can be expressed as:

$$C_i = w_1 I_1 + w_2 I_2 + w_3 I_3 + w_4 I_4 + \cdots + w_d I_d \quad (6)$$

Where $I_i = 1$ if the household is deprived and 0 if otherwise, and w is the weight attached to the indicator, such that $\sum_{i=1}^{q} w_i = 1$, and k is the deprivation cutoff. We used the cutoff (k) of 0.25, from the NG-MPI Index (2018), such that a household is multidimensionally poor when the C_i is greater than 0.25 and a household is multidimensionally non-poor when the C_i is less than 0.25. Thus, the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is a product of the incidence and intensity of poverty such that:

$$MPI = H \times A \quad (7)$$

The Alkire-Foster methodology is used to determine MPI because it goes beyond the traditional approach of measuring poverty using income or consumption levels of households by accessing poverty based on different indicators. Also, the MPI focuses on poor households and the severity of their deprivation.

The nexus between gender inequality and poverty in Akoko Southwest LGA communities is examined using the binary logistic regression model. This research adopted the binary logistic regression model used by Nisak and Sugiharti (2020). The model comprises household poverty status for both male-headed (MHHs) and female-headed (FHHs) households. However, some modifications were made following the model of Nisak and Sugiharti (2020) such as:

$$po = \beta_0 + \beta_1 work_{i,j} + \beta_2 age_{i,j} + \beta_3 edu_{i,j} + \beta_4 marr_{i,j} + \beta_5 sani_{i,j} + \beta_6 water_{i,j} + \beta_7 elec_{i,j} + \beta_8 hhs_{i,j} + \varepsilon_t \quad (8)$$

Where *p*o= poverty status of the household, *work* = household head type of work, *age* = household head's age, *educ* = final education of the household head, *marr* = marital status of household head, *sani* = sanitary conditions of the household, water = quality of water in the household, *elec* = source of lighting of the household, hhs = household size. ; β_0= intercept; $\beta_1 - \beta_8$ = coefficient of the variables. The subscripts *i* and *j* indicate individual households *i* in location j

To capture the effect of gender inequality on poverty, equation (8) is re-specified to replace the marital status of the household head with the gender of the household head:

$$po = \beta_0 + \beta_1 work_{i,j} + \beta_2 age_{i,j} + \beta_3 edu_{i,j} + \beta_4 gender_{i,j} + \beta_5 sani_{i,j} + \beta_6 water_{i,j} + \beta_7 elec_{i,j} + \beta_8 hhs_{i,j} + \varepsilon_t \quad (9)$$

Where Po is the poverty status, which is derived using MPI. Thus, 1= if the household is deprived of ¼ or more of the weighted indicators; 0= if the household is deprived of less than ¼ of the weighted indicators. 0= intercept; 1- 8 = regression (coefficient) parameter; work = household head type of work (1 = agriculture; 0 = non-agricultural); age = household head's age (1 = above 70 years of age; 0 = 70 and below years of age); education = Final education of household head (1 = no formal education, primary education and secondary education; 0 = tertiary education); gender = gender of household head (1 = female; 0 = male), sanitation = sanitary conditions (1 = unworthy; 0 = feasible); water (1 = well water; 0 = other source of water (e.g. public tap and piped water); electricity = source of lighting (1 =unworthy; 0 = worthy); hhs = number of people in the household (1 = more than 5 people; 0 = maximum 4 people).

Method of Analysis

The binary logistic regression method is used to analyse the relationship between gender inequality and poverty. Binary logistic regression is a type of regression analysis that models the relationship between a set of independent variables (binary or non-binary) and a binary dependent variable. This approach is suitable when the dependent variable is dichotomous or binary, that is it has only two possible outcomes, when observations are independent of one another. The coefficients derived from the binary logistic regression are interpreted in terms of odds ratios. For a one-unit change in the independent variable, the odds of the event occurring change by a factor of Exp(βi) where βi is the coefficient of the independent variable (i). Thus, an odds ratio greater than 1 indicates an increase in the likelihood of the event, while an odds ratio less than 1 indicates a decrease in the likelihood of the event occurrence.

To ensure the reliability of the statistical analysis in the binary logistic research carried out, the following assumptions of the binary logistic model were met: binary dependent variable; no multicollinearity among the independent variables of the model (this was tested using the Spearman's Rho Correlation); sufficient sample size (the same size was determined using Yamane (1967) formula, and no extreme outliers.

Results and Discussion

Background information of the households

From Table 3, it is evident that the majority of household heads are male, with the overall mean age being 57 years. However, gender disparity is evident in education with approximately 27 per cent (male) against 7 per cent of female heads possessing secondary education, while about 35 per cent of male heads and 3 per cent of female heads had tertiary education qualifications. Marriage status is also a significant factor, with 69 per cent of household heads being married. The majority (47) of male heads are salaried-employed, while the majority of female heads are artisans (26) and traders (20). The living conditions of the households show that households collected firewood followed by cooking gas, and charcoal. The least used method is the electric stove. Most female-headed households collect firewood, while male-headed households use cooking gas. Water sources are also significant, with public taps being the most used, followed by well water. The majority of female-headed households use public taps and well water, while the majority of male-headed households use public taps. Additionally, both categories of households are connected to an on-national grid source of electricity. These findings highlight the disparities in household income, cooking methods, and water sources in the Akoko-South West LGA.

Table 3: Respondents' Background Information of the Households

	Category	Frequency			Percentage (%)
		Male	Female	Total	
Age Group of Household Head	21-30	2	0	2	1.1
	31-40	11	3	13	7.4
	41-50	44	6	51	29.1
	51-60	33	8	41	23.4
	61-70	23	9	32	18.3
	71-80	12	20	32	18.3
	81-90	1	3	4	2.4
	Total	126	49	175	100
Educational Qualification of Household Head	No Formal Education	4	15	19	11
	Primary Education	14	16	30	17
	Secondary Education	47 (26.9)	13 (7.4)	60	34.3
	Tertiary Education	61(34.9)	5(2.9)	66	37.8
	Total	126	49	175	100
Marital Status of Household Head	Married	120	-	121	69
	Separated	-	2	2	1
	Divorced	-	10	10	5
	Widowed	6	37	43	25
	Total	126	49	175	100
Household Size	1-4	29	14	43	25
	4-above	97	35	132	75
	Total	126	49	175	100
Occupation of Household Head	Unemployed	1	6	7	4
	Agriculture	28	25	53	30
	Artisanship	26	2	28	16
	Salaried-employed	47	4	51	29
	Trading	20	11	31	18
	Others	4	1	5	3
	Total	126	49	175	100
Respondents' living standard					
Cooking Methods	Charcoal	41	20	61	67
	Collected Firewood	77	41	118	6
	Kerosene Stove	5	5	10	3
	Electric Stove	3	2	5	63
	Gas	93	18	111	67
Sources of Water	Pipe-borne Water	24	2	26	15
	Public tap	62	27	89	51
	Well Water	47	27	74	42.3
	No Source	1	5	6	3.4
Source of Lighting	On National Grid	108	37	145	82.9
	Off-Grid (i.e. Solar)	23	3	26	14.9
	Others	3	0	3	1.7

Source: Authors' calculations

Dimensions of poverty in the study area

Table 4 shows the occurrence of the basic deprivations in total and by gender. The one-dimensional deprivation rates are estimated to examine the deprivation in each dimension, according to the dashboard approach suggested by Ravallion (2011). In this case, the mean value of each index represents its threshold. The main results indicate that overall, households are mostly deprived in terms of cooking fuel, whereas, on the other end of the spectrum, they are less deprived of electricity, sanitation, and floor indicators. Additionally, it can be seen that inequalities are observed in all dimensions since female households seem to be more significantly deprived than their male counterparts. Additionally, Table 5 shows a higher prevalence of poverty among female households than their male counterparts in Akoko Southwest LGA. Overall, 54 per cent of male-headed households are multi-dimensionally poor, compared to 88 per cent of female-headed households in Akoko- Southwest. The MPI of female-headed households is 0.525, which is higher compared to the MPI of male-headed households (0.227). This outcome supports the work of Covarrubias (2023). Also, the intensity of poverty for female-headed households is higher, with deprivations in 60 per cent of all indicators, compared to that of male-headed households (42%). Accordingly, on average, female- headed households are deprived of a larger share of indicators than male-headed households.

Table 4: Occurrence of basic deprivation indicators (Mean Average by Gender of Household Head in Akoko South West Communities of Ondo State)

Dimensions	Indicators	Total	Male	Female
Education	The household member above 15 years that has not completed 5 years of schooling	0.274	0.206	0.458
	A child between 5 - 15 years old in the household that is not in school	0.074	0.063	0.104
Nutrition	A child less than 15 years that has died	0.371	0.198	0.667
	A child or an adult within the household diagnosed as malnourished	0.257	0.151	0.542
Source of Power	A household that is not connected to any electricity source	0.171	0.143	0.250
	The household without adequate flooring	0.171	0.103	0.354
Sanitation	The household does not have adequate sanitation	0.171	0.143	0.250
Water	The household without access to clean water/safe drinking water	0.234	0.167	0.417
Cooking energy	The household cooks with firewood	0.737	0.675	0.917
Asset	The household does not own a car/motorcycle	0.509	0.365	0.896
Employment	The household has a member who is 15 years and above looking for a job and is available to work.	0.594	0.468	0.750

Source: Calculations using Field Survey, 2023

Table 5: Multidimensional Poverty by Gender in Akoko

Gender of Household Head	Frequency	MPI	Incidence (H, %)	Intensity (A, %)	Population Share (%)	Number of poor people
Male	126	0.227	54%	42%	54%	68
Female	49	0.525	88%	60%	59%	29

Source: Calculations using Field Survey, 2023

Areas of gender inequality

Appendix 2 shows the areas of gender inequality which are grouped into 8 categories: politics, education, domestic responsibility, health, asset ownership, decision-making, employment opportunities, and early marriage. The results in Table 8 (see appendix) reflected that 50 per cent of the respondents agreed with the fact that men are better administrators than women, while 20 per cent of the respondents disagreed. The survey found that 35 per cent of respondents strongly agreed that male politicians are superior, while 21 per cent objected. However, 49 per cent disagreed that women should be ignored in society. This analysis attests to the fact that women are marginalised in terms of political representation. This finding corroborates Oloyede (2016), Chukwurah, Nduba, and Izunwanne (2020), who concluded that Nigerian politics is highly patriarchal with men preferring the front-row positions and women occupying the back seats.

Furthermore, the survey found that 38 per cent strongly disagreed that education is more important for boys than girls, while 24 per cent indicated that it is more important for boys. In terms of education, 39 per cent of respondents disagreed that boys' university education is more important than girls', while 44 per cent preferred girls to leave school for boys in financial difficulties. This outcome indicates that poverty is a significant contributor to the gender disparity in education. This finding supports the assertions of Kapur (2019) and Shayan (2015) who claimed that insufficient income causes poor people to prefer educating the boy child while the girls are trained in household responsibilities and minor jobs to earn income to support their family.

In addition, 30 per cent of the respondents agreed that girls' education should end in the kitchen, while 42 per cent of the respondents disagreed with the statement. However, 55 per cent strongly supported that females are responsible for house chores, as opposed to 25 per cent who disagreed with the statement. According to Samtlebem and Müller (2022), house chores negatively affect labour market participation and the working hours of working individuals. Thus, the increased participation of the female gender in household chores usually undermines women's career progression, professional advancement (Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010), and psychological well-being (Claffey& Mickelson, 2009) and buttresses gender power dynamics within society (West & Zimmerman, 1987). The majority of respondents (34%) believe boys should receive more food than girls, while 29 per cent strongly disagree and 48 per cent strongly disagree about proper healthcare for boys.

Also, respondents have varying opinions on gender equality in asset ownership, with 50 per cent of the respondents strongly agreeing that women should be allowed to own land and other assets while 10 per cent disagreed. The majority of respondents, 45 per cent, strongly believe that men should receive a larger share of inheritance than women, while 15 per cent disagree with this statement. 40 per cent of respondents believe there are disparities in life achievement between boys and girls, while 29 per cent strongly disagree. The majority of respondents (50%) disagreed with the notion that women make better choices than men, while only 25 per cent agreed, whereas 42 per cent supported women's autonomy in life decisions. Besides, 46 per cent and 25 per cent of the respondents agreed and disagreed that when jobs are scarce, men are more entitled to the job than women, respectively. 5 per cent supported that girls aged 13-18 years old are eligible to marry, while 45 per cent of the respondents disagreed.

Gender inequality and poverty

From the result of the analysis, Appendix 1 shows the result of the Spearman Rho's Correlation test, there is no significant level of multicollinearity among the independent variables in the model. Table 6 shows the binary logistic regression of the nexus of gender inequality and poverty in Akoko Southwest LGA. Age, education, gender, and clean water are statistically significant at 10 per cent. While the other variables are not statistically significant. The classification table showed that the binary logistic model correctly predicted 71.4 per cent of the regression. Gender has a positive and significant effect on the poverty status of the household. The results showed that the probability that female households are 2.640 times more likely to be poor than male households. Therefore, it can be equally said that females are poorer than males. This finding corroborates the results of Javed and Asif (2011), who found a positive relationship between female households and poverty. The size of the household has a negative relationship with the poverty status of the household. This means that households with more than four members are less likely to be poor. The probability is 0.933 lower than households with fewer than or equal to 4 members. This result is in line with the findings of Meenakshi and Ray (2002) and Rajaram (2009). They conclude that an increase in the number of household members could achieve economies of scale in household consumption. However, these findings are contrary to the conclusion of Nisak and Sugiharti (2020), which concludes that households with larger family sizes are more likely to fall into poverty.

Furthermore, the sanitary condition has a positive effect on the poverty status of the household, implying that a household with an unworthy sanitary condition is more likely to be poor. The possibility is 1.001 times higher than in a household with good sanitary conditions. However, this relationship is not statistically significant. Additionally, a negative relationship exists between water sources and poverty status, suggesting that households' water source has no substantial contribution to the communities. Also, power supply is negatively related to the household's poverty status. This means that households with unworthy lighting conditions are less likely to be poor with a probability of 0.894.

Table 6: Result of binary regression of gender inequality and poverty in Akoko Southwest LGA.

Dependent variable: Poverty

	Coefficient	Standard error	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Work	0.012	0.480	0.001	0.981	1.012
Age	-2.020	0.723	7.806	0.005	0.133
Education	-0.723	0.394	3.369	0.066	0.485
Gender	0.971	0.508	3.651	0.056	2.640
Sanitary	0.001	0.525	0.000	0.998	1.001
Clean Water	-1.872	0.605	9.586	0.002	0.154
Electricity	-0.112	0.554	0.041	0.839	0.894
HHS	-0.070	0.412	0.029	0.865	0.933
Constant	3.338	0.815	16.768	0.000	28.171

Source: Author's Computation (2023)

Discussion of Findings

This study surveyed poverty and gender inequality in 5 communities in Akoko South West LGA, Nigeria using a survey research design questionnaire. Descriptive statistics and a binary logistic regression are employed for data analysis. The outcome of the analysis found that gender disparities manifest in education, with male-headed households having more education than female-headed

households. Another important finding was that the majority of the male-headed households were salaried earners, while the primary source of income for the majority of the female-headed households was agriculture and trading. This is explained by the low academic qualifications and exposure of the female. Adopting the Alkire-Foster methodology and the Nigerian Multidimensional Poverty Index (2018) indicators, it revealed that female-headed households are the most deprived in terms of education, health, living conditions, unemployment and cooking fuel indicators. The study, further confirmed that the majority of female-headed households use firewood for cooking than their male counterparts. This may be because a large number of females engage in agriculture; hence, they have easier access to firewood, coupled with the incessant rise in cooking gas prices, they might find it difficult to purchase cooking gas due to their low earning capacity.

The study revealed that poverty is another factor that promotes gender inequality due to a lack of necessary resources to train their children for school. People prefer to invest in the boy child's future due to societal lower values placed on girls and women. This further widens the gender inequality gap. This finding is consistent with those of UNICEF (2020) and Crispina et al. (2020), who identified poverty as another factor that promotes gender inequality within households.

Finally, the binary logistic results found a significant positive relationship between the gender of a female-headed household and poverty in Akoko South West LGA, possibly due to low occupational status as most of the heads of female-headed households are engaged in agricultural activities. Also, there is a negative and significant relationship between the age of the household head and poverty, implying that as their age increases, their poverty status also decreases as dependents tend to take care of the older ones. However, contrary to expectations, the education of a household head showed a negative and significant relationship with the poverty status of the household, which indicates that households whose heads have low academic qualifications are less likely to be poor than those whose heads possess a high academic qualification. It is difficult to explain this finding, but this may be related to the fact that those with low educational status are older and, thus, have larger household sizes. The findings should be approached with caution due to the small sample size, as they may not apply to the general population.

Conclusion

Poverty in Akoko-South West LGA is both a symptom and cause of gender inequality, as parents prioritise education for their male children, resulting in their daughters pursuing low-income economic activities later in life. The MPI index and logistic regression indicate that female-headed households are more impoverished due to deprivation in areas such as education, nutrition, living standards, and unemployment. The study confirms that rural women face significant poverty due to their occupational status. The research suggests that harmful transgenerational customs, such as the early marriage of young girls to older men, can be eradicated through proper sensitization and opposition.

Based on our empirical findings, the research recommends the following: effective enlightenment by traditional rulers on the importance of upholding women’s inheritance rights and voice in society. By doing so, they will help to create a more just and equitable society for all. The government should collaborate with women's movements and civil society to conduct aggressive awareness campaigns and educate society on the benefits of women participating in politics. Campaigns aimed at dispelling myths and stereotypes about women's political participation will encourage more women to hold political positions. Research indicates that women's involvement in politics leads to a positive influence on governance, policymaking, and societal development. The Nigerian government and NGOs should intensify their efforts to promote women's participation in politics and enhance their education. Local families should be educated about the significant role of girls' education in society and the economy. Programs must be implemented to prevent financial constraints from excluding girls from low-income

families from education. The statement urges all stakeholders to prioritise and invest in achieving gender equality and promoting economic growth.

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Appendix 1

Spearman Rho's Correlation Test for the Effect of Poverty on Gender Inequality in Akoko Southwest LGA.

Correlations										
			Work	Age	Education	Gender	Sanitary	CleanWater	Electricity	HHS
Spearman's rho	Work	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.650**	.170*	.477**	.170*	.170*	.227**	.192*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.025	.000	.025	.025	.003	.011
		N	175	175	175	175	175	175	175	175
	Age	Correlation Coefficient	.650**	1.000	.292**	.550**	.292**	.142	.245**	.219**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.061	.001	.004
		N	175	175	175	175	175	175	175	175
	Education	Correlation Coefficient	.427**	.403**	.221**	.378**	.221**	.129	.196**	.246**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.003	.000	.003	.088	.009	.001
		N	175	175	175	175	175	175	175	175
	Gender	Correlation Coefficient	.477**	.550**	.302**	1.000	.302**	.144	.262**	-.042

		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.057	.000	.579
		N	175	175	175	175	175	175	175	175
	Sanitary	Correlation Coefficient	.170*	.292**	1.000	.302**	1.000	.216**	.153*	.021
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.025	.000	.	0.000	.	.004	0.044	.778
		N	175	175	175	175	175	175	175	175
	CleanWater	Correlation Coefficient	.170*	.142	.216**	.144	.216**	1.000	.196**	.091
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.025	.061	.004	.057	.004	.	.010	.231
		N	175	175	175	175	175	175	175	175
	Electricity	Correlation Coefficient	.227**	.245**	.153*	.262**	.153*	.196**	1.000	.043
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.001	.044	.000	.044	.010	.	.569
		N	175	175	175	175	175	175	175	175
	HHS	Correlation Coefficient	.192*	.219**	.021	-.042	.021	.091	.043	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	.004	.778	.579	.778	.231	.569	.
		N	175	175	175	175	175	175	175	175

Source: Authors' computation

Appendix 2

Areas of Gender Inequality in Akoko Southwest LGA.

Areas of Gender Inequality	Variables	Responses	Frequency	%
Politics	Men make better administration than women.	Strongly Agree	42	24
		Agree	88	50
		Disagree	35	20
		Strongly Disagree	10	6
		Total	175	100
	Male political leaders are better than female political leaders.	Strongly Agree	61	35
		Agree	62	35
		Disagree	36	21
		Strongly Disagree	16	9
		Total	175	100
	Women should be seen, and not heard.	Strongly Agree	13	7
		Agree	24	19
		Disagree	85	49
		Strongly Disagree	43	25
		Total	175	100
Education	Education is more important to boys than girls.	Strongly Agree	10	6
		Agree	42	24
		Disagree	57	32
		Strongly Disagree	66	38
		Total	175	100
	University education for boys is more important than girls.	Strongly Agree	16	9
		Agree	50	29
		Disagree	59	34
		Strongly Disagree	69	39
		Total	175	100
	When there is limited financial resources, the	Strongly Agree	19	11

	girl should leave school for boys.	Agree	77	44
		Disagree	46	26
		Strongly Disagree	33	19
		Total	175	100
Domestic responsibility	Girls' education should end in the kitchen	Strongly Agree	11	6
		Agree	53	30
		Disagree	77	42
		Strongly Disagree	38	22
		Total	175	100
	The females should be responsible for house chores.	Strongly Agree	96	55
		Agree	44	25
		Disagree	20	11
		Strongly Disagree	15	9
		Total	175	100
Health	Boys should be given a greater portion of food than girls.	Strongly Agree	16	9
		Agree	60	34
		Disagree	49	28
		Strongly Disagree	50	29
		Total	175	100
	Boys should be given greater access to healthcare than girls.	Strongly Agree	13	7
		Agree	14	8
		Disagree	65	37
		Strongly Disagree	83	48
		Total	175	100
Asset Ownership	Women should be allowed to own land and other properties.	Strongly Agree	88	50
		Agree	66	38
		Disagree	17	10
		Strongly Disagree	14	2
		Total	175	100
	Men should get a greater portion of inheritance than women.	Agree	53	30
		Strongly Agree	79	45
		Disagree	27	15
		Strongly Disagree	16	9
		Total	175	100
Freedom to choose and make decisions	Is there any difference in a level which a boy and a girl can attain	Strongly Agree	19	11
		Agree	51	29
		Disagree	70	40
		Strongly Disagree	35	20
		Total	175	100
	Women make better decisions than men.	Strongly Agree	21	12
		Agree	43	25
		Disagree	87	50
		Strongly Disagree	21	14
		Total	175	100
	Women should be allowed to make their life choices	Strongly Agree	68	39
		Agree	73	42
		Disagree	26	15
		Strongly Disagree	8	4
		Total	175	100
Employment opportunities	When jobs are scarce, a man should have more right to work than a woman.	Strongly Agree	29	17
		Agree	80	46

		Disagree	44	25
		Strongly Disagree	22	12
		Total	175	100
Early Marriage	Girls between 13-18 years are eligible to get married.	Strongly Agree	8	5
		Agree	8	5
		Disagree	79	45
		Strongly Disagree	80	45
		Total	175	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023