

Challenges of Food Insecurity in Nigeria and Intervention Strategies (A Study of Orumba South L.G.A) Anambra State

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Abstract: This study was to investigate the challenges of food insecurity in Nigeria and to find out the appropriate intervention strategies with particular reference to Orumba South Local government Area, Anambra State. It had been observed that people of Orumba, are faced with a challenge of lack of food security, which led to increase in malnutrition and high mortality. To investigate this study, questionnaire was the source of data for the study. It was made from the research questions and was issued to farmers in the area. The researcher used simple random sampling technique to select 30 farmers from population of 180. The major findings are that food insecurity was the cause of food economic meltdown in the country, and that many women are under anxiety about inadequate household food, which led to starvation that caused malnutrition. The study discovered that problem of food insecurity was much more in the rural areas. It was also found that active and massive participation in agriculture, helped to serve as a measure in boosting massive food production. Some of the strategies adopted by the farmers and government are: encouraging the development of extension service and provision of food preservation. Based on the findings the researcher made recommendations that there should be adequate supply of agricultural input and technology, extension services to be developed and adequate storage facilities

Keywords: Food insecurity, challenges of food malnutrition, high mortality, food economic meltdown starvation and agriculture.

1. INTRODUCTION

Food is any substance which when taken into the body will provide nutrients for the nourishment of the body. Food and Agriculture Organization (2007) states that food is anything liquid or solid which when eaten digest and is absorbed in the body. Therefore, food should be able to supply the body with nourishment and be able to repair the worn-out tissues (Hildor, 2004). Food means different things to different people in terms of social customs, religious beliefs and psychological satisfaction as well as nutritional needs.

Food insecurity is inability of a country, state or family to ensure a long-term basis that, its food system is unable to provide the total population access to timely, reliable and nutritionally adequate supply of food (Maxwell, 2000). Food insecurity exists when people at a time have no physical social and economic Access to sufficient state and nutritious food in meeting their diet requirements (Word Bank, 2000).

According to Mohammed (2003), food insecurity exists when all people at all times have no physical, social and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food to meet their active and healthy life. It is imperative or vital to note that food insecurity exist when people are under-nourished as a result of physical unavailability of food, lack of social or economic access to adequate food and/or inadequate food utilization (Mohammed, 2003).

Food in-secured people are those individuals whose food supply falls below their minimum calorie (energy)

requirements and those who exhibit physical symptoms caused by energy and nutrient deficiencies resulting from consequences of inadequate consumption of nutritious food (Hinrichson, 2000).

It is an indisputable fact that basic food need is topmost in the hierarchy of wants, thus, achievement of food. Security is a total victory over poverty in any given country. In every nation, its development and health of the people rest on the agricultural product. In order words, when there is no food security, the nations are unhealthy as a result of hunger.

In Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, majority of people within the country are food in-secured, because of high prevailing poverty level, poor performance of the Nigeria agricultural system. Poverty is afflicting many people in Nigeria and it is considered one of the symptoms or manifestation of under development (CBN/World Bank, 2002). According to Sanni (2000), poverty is the main cause of hunger and malnutrition, which are aggravated by rapid population growth, policy inadequacies and inconsistencies.

According to Hannan, (2003), Agriculture is the largest sector in the economy accounting for nearly 40% of GDP and employment for the bulk of the labour force over the past two decades. Agricultural production comprises crop farming, fishing, livestock and forestry. The Agricultural sector was the largest earner of foreign exchange during the first decade of independence, but its role has been overtaken by crude oil export earnings.

Nigeria is the largest country in sub-Sahara Africa with a population of over 140 million or about one fifth of the total population of the regions (Federal Office of Statistics FOS, 2006)

In order words, Nigeria is an oil exporter and the second largest economy in sub-Sahara Africa with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 55.5 million. According to Heduru (2004), its reserves of human and natural resources has the potential to build a prosperous economy and provide for the basic needs of all population but today Nigeria is among the poorest countries in the world. This promoted her many years tactless to go for the structural adjustment programme in effort to reverse the law trend in Agricultural production. This will make food available at reasonable price, increase farming and provide agricultural raw materials to industries. Finally, the challenges of food insecurity in itself does not take place in isolation, therefore, it is necessary in implementation of the following remedies such as:

- a. Development of extension services.
- b. Making storage facilities more available for the local farmers.
- c. There should be adequate supply of agricultural input and technology.

Against this background and the crisis of food insecurity in Nigeria, the researcher embarked on this study.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Nigeria has been working to make change in agricultural development, to make food more available for its citizen since her independence in 1960. Increasing list of African Union (AU) meetings and activities to address the high level of food insecurity in Africa, especially Nigeria. This challenges in agriculture has brought about social, political and economic problems. The major problem militating against agriculture and food security in Nigeria are: Neglect of agriculture, poor food production and preservation, poor storage facilities, lack of women empowerment, climate change and poor technology.

To solve these problems, the following questions, needed to be answered: does the present economic situation, show that food insecurity affect the economy of Nigeria?

Does the government adopt any programme to challenge food insecurity in Nigeria?

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Specific objectives of this study are:

1. To determine the challenges of food insecurity in Orumba South L.G.A.
2. To identify the prospects of food insecurity.
3. To examine the effects of food insecurity on people of Orumba South L.G.A.
4. To identify Strategies for intervention to food insecurity in Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What are the challenges of food insecurity in Orumba South L.G.A?

2. What are the prospects of food insecurity in Orumba South L.G.A?
3. What are the effects of food insecurity among the average household in Orumba South L.G.A?
4. What are the intervention strategies towards food insecurity in Orumba South L.G.A?

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

- The challenges of food insecurity in Nigeria
- Causes of food insecurity in Nigeria
- Prospects and solutions to food insecurity in Nigeria, programme and project.
- Effect of food insecurity in Nigeria
- Intervention strategies to food insecurity

The Challenges of Food Insecurity in Nigeria

Food insecurity can be defined as inability of a country, region, state or family to ensure on a long-time basis, that its food system, provides that total population access to timely reliable and nutritionally adequate supply of food (Maxwell, 2000).

Food insecurity according to Eyibe (2009), is also defined as no access to sufficient and affordable food that can relate to single household or to the global population. It has been clear that production of food has out placed population growth of the country as far back as 1961. As explained the World Bank (1999) "Food insecurity exist when people at a time have no physical, social and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food to meet their diet". Globally, there is enough food storage but existing empirical data estimated, shows that millions of people in developing countries are under nourished especially in each year about eighteen million of people mostly in children die from starvation and malnutrition.

Mohammed (2003) in his imperative role states that food insecurity, exist when people are under nourished as a result of the physical unavailability of food, lack of social or economic access to adequate food and or inadequate food utilization.

World Bank, (2000) characterized food insecurity in both developed and developing countries and observed that food insecurity was described as being either chronic or transitory, based on whether there was continually inadequate food access respectively. The chronic insecurity results from bad macro-economic and agricultural policies over many years. The only way to deal with these, chronic food insecurity is to restore good economic policies that are favourable to agricultural and rural development over a long time. In particular such policies must promote employment and income generation for the most vulnerable groups (the poor women and children) so as to empower them to be capable to purchase adequate food, if they cannot produce it themselves as farmers. The transitory food insecurity results from disaster and misshape of famine, draught, flood, war which destabilize food production and distribution systems. Intervention such as food subsidies and food aid can be

applied to address transitory food production activities that are re-established. Food unsecured people are those individuals whose food intake falls below their minimum calorie (energy) requirement and those who exhibit physical symptoms caused by energy and nutrient deficiencies resulting from preference for an active and healthy life (Hinrichsen, 2000) thus food insecurity is conceptualized as the consequences of inadequate consumption of nutritious food.

The problem of food insecurity is much more projection by experts in international food policy. Research institution (IFPR) in 1997, show that by the year 2020, nearly 70 percent of the people suffering from food insecurity will live in sub-Sahara Africa and South Asia. The projection further reveals that by the same referenced year 2020 every third person in sub-Saharan is likely to lack security (Pinstrup-Anderson, 2002).

Since the 1980 through 1990s Nigeria's population has been increasing at roughly 3.5 percent every year. It is believed that we have a population of over 140 million since the 1980s through 1990 Nigeria's growth rate of food production at best 2% per year. There are indications that it may be only 1.5%. Recent claims of, 7.5% growth rate are mirage of wishful thinking.

There is therefore, a serious gap between the rate of growth and the rate of growth production. Therefore, the future of food security in Nigeria is meawing. Food deficit is where to stay and it is wide each year. Recent statistic by F.O.S suggests that Nigeria spent ₦130 billion or 81 billion U.S Dollar in Food Imports in 1999 (Ngoddy, 2008).

Causes of Food Insecurity in Nigeria

The major causes of food insecurity in Nigeria, is underdeveloped agricultural sector. This was characterized by over reliance on primary agricultural low fertility solid, minimal use of external inputs, environmental use of sufficient food crop less both-per-end post harvest. Minimal value and production differentiation and inadequate food storage and preservation results in significant commodity price fluctuation. According to Ngoddy, the causes are identified as:

- Lack of working capital
- Inadequate farm input
- Inadequate capital expenditure
- Low level of education
- Low rate of technology adoption
- Environmental hazards
- Poor preservation and storage

Prospect and Solution to Food Insecurity in Nigeria/programme and Project

Over the year, it has become clear that, if Africa is short of food, it is neither diagnosis or prescription, this being the case, the Nigeria Summit can perhaps make its greatest contribution by taking the first step towards focus on a few

areas of commitment for Africa to dedicate the bulk of it energies to:

Several plans, has been put in place to address the issue of food insecurity in Nigeria.

Government's plans to develop efficient input procurement and distribution systems that will ensure timely delivery of adequate quantity and quality of farms inputs to farmers have not been successful. Despite the large sum of money that had been spent on procurement and subsidization of farm input, the problem on availability, stability and sustainability, still remain some measures to have been employed by the state government to ensure effective procurement of farm inputs. As a result, the recent food crisis that rocket the nation and world at large around March 2018, the federal government has announced for the resuscitation of the agriculture and water resources.

Abba (2007) explained, that the funds which will be; developed in four years will comprise the Agricultural Development Fund (ADF) and the National Resources Fund (NRF) with a take off fund of ₦120 billion by the federal government included, initially ordered the importation of 530,000 metric tones of rice from Thailand the federal government embarked on the other programme that is designed to attain self sufficiency on vegetable oil production, processing and marketing in the country over five years period. The production targets are oil palms (1 million hectare about 5 million tones) groundnut (1 million tone of about 640,000 tones of cotton seed).

Root and Tubers expansive programme progress on other programme aimed at project, Root and Tuber Expansion Program (RTF) has been taken to Niger State as a result of the positive support by the present administration. The Niger Project II (FemdmanII) in order to participate fully in the project and subsequently enjoy its financial obligations which is in form of counterpart funding. The 2005 and 2006 bas-log of area totaling ₦45 million unpaid by immediate past administration and participating local government has been settled because of the success recorded in the Defama II Project, (Ekpo, 2009).

The new civilian administration launched a special programme for the modernization of agricultural production, processing storage and distribution through the infusion of improved technologies and management so that agriculture can be more responsive to the demands of other sectors of the Nigerian economy. The policy supports the promotion of animal traction and handles tool technology, government policy to modernized equipments as tractors, plough, seed planters, harrowers, harvesters, threshers, millers, grinders. To the end the government increased the input of tractors and operated tractor hiring service schemes where farmers could hire tractor. This was closely followed by the establishment of an institution (Stryermtors) to assemble tractors in Nigeria (Odigbo, 2000).

Women in Agriculture and Food Security (Gender Empowerment)

In Nigeria, as in many other developing countries, women play a major role in agriculture and food production, but women face major obstacle to increasing their productivity and living standards. Nigeria faces economic challenges to improve food security, provide employment and ensure that women main-streamed into economic activities. Despite the lack of data, there is increasing realization of the critical role of women in agriculture and food production and of the fact that the empowerment of women is necessary for bringing about sustainable development at a faster pace Iheduru (2002).

Various studies have shown that women produce between 60 and 80 percent of the food in most developing countries and are responsible for help in the world's food production, FAO studies confirmed that while women are the farm labour force and day family subsistence, they have more difficulty gaining access to resources such as land, credit and productivity enhancing inputs and services. Women are faced with many factors constraining their effective participation in achieving food security of which the major constraint is the scarcity of gender disaggregated data for purposes of planning and policy making various ways in which women can expand food and agriculture production (FAO, 2003).

The research into the effect of food insecurity on the health of children, in developing country, previously mentioned also states that at least children are more likely to have poorer mental health be withdrawn or socially disruptive and suffer greater rates of behavioural disorders. Although the economic security of a poor family's household in a developing country is completely different as they spend over 70% of their income on food, in comparison to the 10% of an average American Family, plan has witnessed similar and truly more negative effects on the health of children who for the first time enter the Early Childhood Community Development Centers (ECCD) and other educational projects in plan countries (Peter, 2007).

The Intervention Strategies to Food Industry

There are some steps to take to achieve food security.

Efficient and Expanding growth of food and agricultural production farm input play very crucial role in the modernization or small holder agriculture, which help to boost food production. The government should provide more of these farm inputs at a more subsidized rate to reach rural and urban farmers. The private sector should also be involved, as it is believed that they are better equipped technically to handle the distribution.

Employment and income generating opportunities to enable rural and urban poor to purchase an adequate or improved diet. The farmers need credit for the purchase of tools, equipment and other agricultural inputs. The income generated from the farming activities to the poor farmer should be increased. This increase income engendering by more intensive farming all year round as some of the farms

have access to water through sunk bore holes, wells, streams, and rainfall to guarantee steady supply of water for all year-round farming.

Adequate gain surplus reserves and or reliable trading agreements for protection against bad harvest, national disaster and uncertain world food supplies point to be taken by the federal government to ensure prepare food production, food processing and storage techniques (Ngoddy, 2009).

The Government should encourage forestry. The forests are source of life providing food, fruits, oil, medicine, forage, fuel, game, employment and income for rural population as well as conserving the environment for sustainable agriculture and protection of biodiversity. Forestry contributes substantially to food security and poverty eradication in Nigeria. It also contributes to direct food production and conservation of the environment and must be fully integrated with agriculture, livestock and fishery to achieve food security in Nigeria (HRR, 2000).

5. METHODOLOGY

Methodology adopted for this study is discussed under the following headings;

Design of the Study

This study used survey design to elicit opinion of people in Orumba South Local Government Area, Anambra State on challenges of food insecurity in Nigeria.

A survey according to Eze (2000) "is a study which seeks to document and describe what exist or the present status of existence or absence of what is being investigated". It is suitable for study since it seeks to find out the challenges faced by people of Orumba South local government area. This was collected by eliciting answer from the respondents through the questionnaire items.

Area of Study

The study was carried out in Orumba South Local Government Area, Anambra State because of increase of food insecurity. The local government is made of 15 towns

Population of the Study

The population of the study consisted all the farmers in the towns in Orumba South local government area both literate farmers and non-literate ones.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Simple random sampling was used to select six towns out of the fifteen (15) towns in Orumba South local government area. Also, simple random sampling was used to select 30 farmers from each of the six towns selected making the sample size of 180 respondents. The towns selected are; Ogbunka (30), Isulo (30), Umunze (30), Ihite (30), Eziagu (30), Ezira (30).

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire designed in accordance with specification from research questions to elicit information. This method was through the use of questionnaires with a total of 4 research questions, each has 1-8 items, 6-14 items, 15-21 items and

22-26 items respectively. And instructions were also given to guide respondents while filling the questionnaires. The questionnaires was constructed with 4 point like scale; Strongly agree, "SA" Agree, "A" Disagree "D", Strongly Disagree "SD".

Validity of the Study

The instrument was personally distributed to respondents. The researcher solicited the cooperation of the respondents to complete the questionnaire items and hand them over on exist visit.

A number of one hundred and eighty (180) questionnaires were administered to the registered farmers and local farmers, out of which all the questionnaires were collected.

Method of Analysis

The data collected were analyzed to answer the research questions 1-4, the tables involves the use of frequency tables and mean. All the items were analyzed using the mean point value to determine the degree of agreement or disagreement of the challenges of food insecurity in Nigeria and our local government area.

Nominal values were assigned to different scaling items thus:

Strongly agree	SA	4
Agree	A	3
Disagree	D	2
Strongly Disagree	SD	1

The simple mean on each item was calculated by multiplying the frequency of responses category by adding them and dividing the sum of value obtained by the number of respondents who gave response to it.

$$x = \frac{\sum FX}{N}$$

Where x = mean of sample

F = Frequency of responses under each category

X = Normal value of each category

\sum = Summation

N = Total number of responses

After finding the mean, a cut-off was determined by dividing the sum of nominal values with the number of dealing items in the way.

Sum of nominal value (10-10/4 = 2.5 number of scaling items 92.5). an interval value of 0.5 was added to then arithmetic mean of 2.5 that is 0.5 + 2.5 = 3.00. therefore, the calculation of any item which receive a mean of 3.00 or above will be regarded as agreed or accepted while any item which received a mean score of less than (c) 3.00 will be regarded as disagreed or rejected.

Presentation of Result Analysis

The data collected were analyzed and presented. The findings were presented according to research questions, based on the analysis that helped the researcher to extract meaningful information from the data gathered.

Here also present a summary of the major findings of the research.

Research Question 1: What are the challenges of food insecurity in Orumba South L.G.A?

Majority of the respondent agreed that items stated were the challenges of insecurity in Orumba South local government area.

Research question 2: What are the prospects of food insecurity in Orumba South L.G.A.?

Almost all the items agreed except 1 and 2. The items that agreed on some prospect or plan or step that can be used to reduce the level of food insecurity in Orumba South Local Government Area

Research Questions 3: What are the effect of food insecurity among the average household in Orumba South L.G.A.?

All the items show that the respondents agreed that food insecurity have many effects to the average household in Orumba South L.G.A.

Research question 4: What are the intervention strategies towards food insecurity in Orumba South L.G.A.?

Respondents agreed with all the items as the intervention strategies towards food insecurity in Orumba South Local Government Area.

6. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The researcher found out that, food insecurity is a problem to the poor and also to the Nigeria economy at large. According to Ekpo (2009) he describes that experience of food insecurity among the poor people, especially the women with children very anxious about inadequacy of household food and the supplies. He also explains that food insecurity has led to the low level of quality and quantity of women's food intake. He further recommends that food insecurity will rather strengthen the meltdown, was some sort of acid test for Nigeria and right help the country to explore its potentials and lead to greater heights. The researcher observed that food insecurity has led to the increase in food production, it has make people to come out in large number to force the challenges of food insecurity. The researcher also found out that food insecurity has cause economic crisis or economic meltdown of our country. It has also made the poor people to find it very difficult to meet their dietary need.

The researcher also found out that some measures has been taken by the government to reduce the level of food crisis in the country. Also, on these findings, Osaji (2009) said that people choose their experience, it is said that people's natural place is in unified spirit and that while skill in it they choose to experience its opposite. Agriculture is unified and blissful and we choose to experience the opposite separation, pain, suffered hunger. The researcher observed that many poor people are improvised the more and it has done many problems to our country especially in Orumba South area. Also, on the research, the researcher finds out that the food insecurity has done or caused many effects and increased the rate of malnutrition and high mortality in the area.

Malnutrition can be defined as a condition that results from a lack of food or the right food to eat and the appropriate

nutrients needed. Finally, on the findings the researcher also finds out that some measures can be taken to reduce the rate of food insecurity in Orumba South and the country at large.

This is the same measures to use to reduce food insecurity;

- Development of extension services
- Making storage facilities more available for local farmers
- There should be a timely finding to the agricultural project etc.

7. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the following positive responses of the respondents, the researcher conclude that food insecurity has led to the effect and problem of the rural/poor and the world at large.

Secondly, from the positive responses of the respondents, the researcher conclude that food or agricultural production has a lot in contributing to the life of people and to the nation development.

Thirdly, the researcher conclude that agriculture has a contribution to the nation employment.

Finally, the researcher conclude that the agricultural production should put in the top level of the nation's planes.

Recommendations

From the basis of the finding of this study, the researcher makes the following recommendations.

1. There should be adequate supply of agricultural input and technology.
3. Provision of adequate storage facilities.
4. Both genders should be empowered to have access to land, capital credit etc.
5. There should be awareness on the need for agro-forestry and forest conservation.
6. Adequate and timely funding of selected project should be ensured.

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