

TERRORISM AND FOOD SECURITY CHALLENGES IN SOUTHERN KADUNA: EXPLORING THE WAY FORWARD

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ABSTRACT

Availability of food, its accessibility and stability, as well as the stability of sufficient quantity of nutritious food, have been the concern and pursuit of the United Nations' Committee on World Food Security. For any nation to develop, its citizens must be adequately fed or allowed at any given time to have equal right to access any preferred food for sustainability. It can be deduced, therefore, that any threat to food security is considered a threat to human existence. This paper investigates the challenges posed by terrorism to food insecurity in Southern Kaduna, which has been plagued by insecurity, partly due to terrorism. It also attempts to present the way out. The research uses the Neo-Malthusian theory of food security for the study. The paper adopted the geospatial method of analysis to identify and monitor the hazards caused as a result of terrorist activities on food security and/or human life in the area of the study. Furthermore, the research investigates the consequences of food insecurity and also proffers possible solutions to the challenges posed by food insecurity. The study also gives an overview of the historical background of food security in Nigeria, as well as the relationship between terrorism and food security. Moreover, it also delineates the components of food security.

KEYWORDS: Terrorism, Food Security, Food Insecurity, Challenge, Sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

Any country that depends on rainfall each year to cultivate will battle with food crises. "No doubt, food is life; hence, food has become an instrument of national power" (Adebayo & Ojo, 2012). Food security is said to be a basic human right. The idea of food security came about through prominent organisations like the Food and Agriculture Organisation in the mid-1970s when adequate food became unsecured, unavailable, and/or inaccessible to people. The insufficiency of adequate food to sustain the populace arose from international and national concern. This yearning came when

questions of how to have and make enough food available and affordable to every individual. In this effort, the writing of this paper became necessary so as to provide effective solutions that will help in redressing the arching concern.

The origin of food security as a concept originated during the mid-1970s, when a series of discussions on international food problems occurred during a time of global food crisis. Among myriads of confronting issues to be dealt with, both at the international and national spheres, the primal focus on how sufficient food can be secured and maintained are, easy access to food by every individual, the provision/availability of food to everyone irrespective of religious, political and cultural affiliations, and also price stability of basic stuffs at the international and national level.

Food security in terms of food supply was, during the World Food Conference of 1974, organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, defined as the “availability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices.” Buttressing the aforesaid, an emphasis was made during the 1996 World Food Summit, reiterating how sufficient food should be made available for everyone to access easily. It is stated in crystal clear terms that “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (World Food Summit 1996). As aforesaid, this definition “introduced a time scale for food security by distinguishing between chronic food insecurity, associated with poverty, and acute, transient food insecurity, caused by natural or man-made disasters. These were reflected in a further extension of the concept of food security to include: “access of all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life” (Berry et al., 2015). The next concept evolution happened in 1994, following the UN Development Programme’s Human Development Report (UN Development Programme, 1994), considering the requirements for human security. It can be said that, at this time, food security, which was within the larger framework of social security, entered the discussion of human rights. Since the studies on food security are often context-specific, depending on which of the many technical perspectives and policy issues, this multidimensional and multifaceted operational construct had no coherent definition then. In an attempt to bring more unity to such complexity, a redefinition of food security was conducted through international consultations, reflecting on the complex interaction among and between individual, household, and even the global level in preparation for the World Food Summit held in 1996 (Shaw, 2007).

In the mid-1990s, as the term “food security” evolved, the terms “nutrition security” and “food and nutrition security” also emerged. Food security is then considered a subset of “food security and nutrition.” The next development of the

definition of food security was redefined further redefined in “The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2001” by adding the social emphasis (FAO, 2002). It was recognised that addressing poverty is necessary but not alone sufficient to achieve this goal (FAO, WFP and IFAD, 2012). Then, at the 2009 World Summit on Food Security, the last official revision, which added the fourth dimension of stability to the concept of food security (FAO, 2009). More recently, it has been suggested that sustainability be added as a fifth dimension to encompass the long-term time dimension (Berry et al., 2015).

To sum it up, the need to define and redefine the concept of food security today has become necessary, looking at the harsh conditions people are in today when it comes to accessing adequate food that will sustain them. Shaw puts it in a more definite perspective, “The occurrence of famine, hunger and food crises required a definition of food security which recognised the critical needs and behaviour of potentially vulnerable and affected people” (Shaw, 2007).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF FOOD SECURITY IN NIGERIA

According to Azih, I. (2008), “Nigeria is located in the western part of Africa in the Gulf of Guinea and is situated between Longitudes 2°2' and 14°30' east and between Latitudes 4° and 14° north. Nigeria is blessed with a land mass spanning over an area of 924,000 km² and is surrounded by the Republic of the Niger to the north, the Benin Republic to the west, the Republic of Chad to the north-east, Cameroon to the east, and the Atlantic Ocean to the south.” Azih (2008) & Aregheore (2011) furthered that “Nigeria is blessed with a very diverse and rich vegetation capable of supporting a large population of livestock and has an estimated surface water volume of about 267.7 billion cubic meters and underground water of about 57.9 billion cubic meters. The ecological zones in Nigeria are also very diverse, with the semi-arid Sudan (Sahel) zone, the Guinea Savannah and Derived Savannah zone, as well as the Forest and Mangrove (high rainfall, moist sub-humid and very high humidity) zone. A few variations exist within each ecological zone. The ecology and trends in precipitation in a region determine what kind of farming system the people will practice, their food preferences, and how they make use of natural resources in their environment.”

It can be said that since the discovery of oil in Nigeria, there have been millions of malnourished people around the world, especially since the year 2000. In the 1970s, the agricultural sector became less important to the government as it could not withstand the economic sagacity of the oil industry. Thus, Nigeria became heavily dependent on the importation of food (Adeagbo, 2012). The rural areas have become even more vulnerable to malnutrition, erratic supply of food items, unaffordable food costs, low-quality foods and sometimes a complete lack of food. This situation is more prevalent in

many parts of the northern region of Nigeria (Akinyele, 2009). The case is becoming worse day by day, as underscored by the World Population Review (2014), which noted that “By 2045, it is projected that the population of Nigeria will surpass that of the US and will reach 390 million by 2050. When Nigeria declared independence from England in 1960, the estimated population was only 45.2 million people. That figure represents a growth of about 268% from the year 1960 to 2012”.

Though Nigeria prides itself as the giant of Africa with its economy becoming the largest in 2014, the poverty rate in the country is alarming (Omorogiuwa, Zivkovic, & Ademoh, 2014). The fact remains that “not less than 70% of the Nigerian population is surviving on less than a dollar per day, while food insecurity prevalence in the low-income urban households and rural areas respectively stands at 79% and 71% (Akerele et al, 2013). It is a noticeable fact that “With over 160 million people, Nigeria is the most populated country in Africa (FAO, 2006) and represents about 47 percent of the population of the entire West African region. Agriculture is the major occupation in Nigeria, employing almost two-thirds of the active work force and contributing 40 percent of the national GDP (Food Security Portal, 2014).

Matemilola and Elegbede (2017) observed that “economists both locally and internationally have severally pointed out that Nigeria’s economic output is underperforming.” Despite the number of resources, the nation sits upon and the rapid economic progress, poverty has remained deeply rooted in Nigeria, as about 70 per cent of the population still lives below the poverty line, as earlier established. Also, the 2012 Global Hunger Index ranked Nigeria 40th out of 79 nations, while the 2011 UNDP Human Development Index placed Nigeria 156th out of 187 countries. The prevalence of poverty and hunger is more pronounced in the rural regions of Nigeria, where up to 80% of the population survives on less than one US dollar per day (Food Security Portal, 2014).

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (2012), rates Nigeria as the number one producer of yams, cassava, and cowpea in the world; yet Nigeria remains a food-insecure nation and relies heavily on the importation of grains, livestock products, and fish. Omorogiuwa et al. (2014) suggested what could be the cause of food insecurity in Nigeria. He noted that “Nigeria has about 75 per cent of its land suitable for agriculture, but only 40 per cent of it is actually cultivated. The majority of the rural populace engage in subsistent farming on small plots of land to feed their households and rely on seasonal rainfall. Lack of access to necessary infrastructures, such as roads, has further worsened the rural poverty situation by disconnecting the rural farmers from required inputs and the markets.” To sum it up, it is obvious to ask the question of where we are today as a country, and also why we are battling the challenge of food insecurity. In the 40s and early 50s, food insecurity was not a common issue that Nigeria had to contend with. The agricultural system practised was able to sustain the

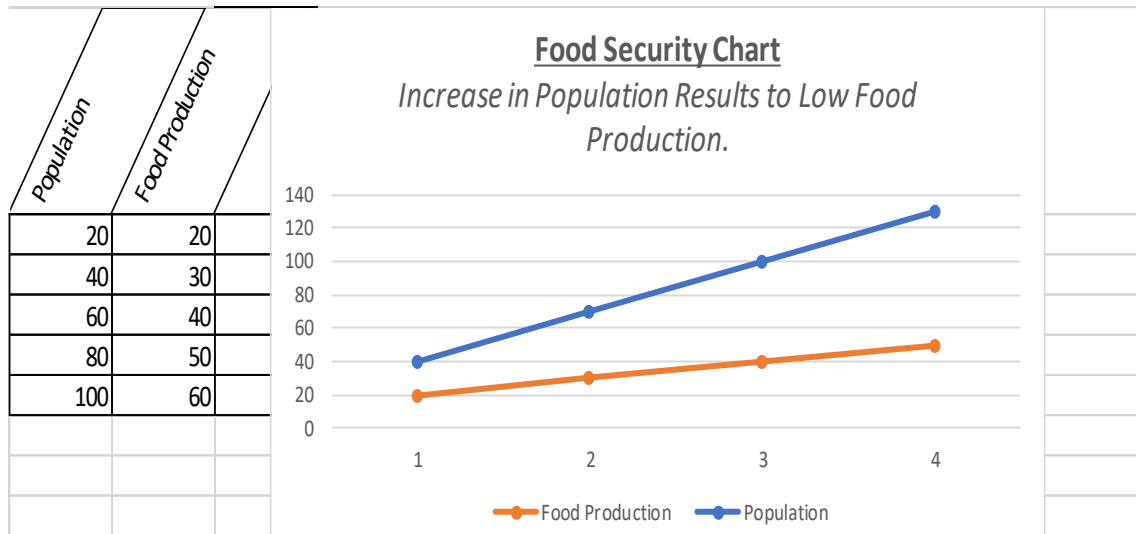
population and had a surplus to export. Different regions in Nigeria specialised in different kinds of crop production, whether food or cash crops, and there was unity in the diversity. This system strengthens the country's food self-sufficiency. However, the agriculture sector began a downturn when oil was discovered in 1956. When exportation of petroleum products started in 1958, interest in agriculture began to dip. The effect of the decline is gradual but steady, with rising cost of food items, particularly those of staple foods (Ojo & Adebayo, 2012).

From the aforesaid, it is evident that Nigeria is considered one of the most food-insecure countries and highly affected by some key drivers. "For one, the country is vulnerable to price instability and successively hit by environmental disasters, which impact people's livelihoods. Furthermore, its economy is thriving, but around 48.0 percent of its population lives below the poverty line" (World Bank, 2020; World Poverty Clock, 2020). In addition to these key drivers, the fact remains that "since 2009, northeastern Nigeria has been struck by insurgency. Essentially, sustainability in economic growth is dependent on the achievement of food security" (Manap & Ismail, 2019).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Neo-Malthusian theory of food security is the theory adopted for this research. This theory was postulated by Thomas Malthus (1826), who posited in his essay on the principles of population growth that as population increases, it poses a negative threat to food security. Neo-Malthusian theory emphasises the fact that a massive increase in population constrains food production in many areas, especially hinging on the fact that there will be a lack of sufficient available land to be cultivated by everyone. It is a noticeable fact that the growth ratio in the human population cannot be compared with the slow growth ratio of food production; hence, it threatens food security.

Food security is tremendously influenced by the rapid increase in population. Overpopulation is a prime factor leading to terrorism, conflicts, wars, and other forms of social vices. Concurring with Malthus' theory, Ehrlich (2009) further submitted that humans were going to fail in the battle against hunger if the human population continued to increase. Thus, to set the equilibrium between population growth and the adequacy in food production to contain the mass, one of the surest ways is by birth control. In addition, both government and non-governmental organizations are embedded with the huge task of aiding the populace with adequate food to sustain them.



COMPONENTS OF FOOD SECURITY

There are different components of food security. However, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2008) identified four basic dimensions, which are: (1) availability of sufficient food, (2) accessibility of food products by the consumers, (3) utilisation of food commodities, and (4) stability of food prices. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) is a body that ensures every individual has access to both sufficient quantity and quality food to live a healthy and full life, enabling a person to realise his or her potential. It is pertinent that food and water must be safe and clean to enhance a better livelihood.

These four dimensions of food security are basic elements that facilitate a healthy life. Below is a succinct discussion on each:

Availability

Food Availability means the physical existence of a sufficient quantity of food of appropriate quality, and is determined by domestic food production, domestic stocks, food imports, and/or food aid (World Bank, 2007). It is significant to clarify one obvious fact: the *availability* of an adequate food supply does not necessarily guarantee household or individual levels of food security.

Accessibility

Food access can be achieved through adequate income or resources that allow the purchase or acquisition of appropriate food products for a nutritious diet (World Bank, 2007). It is always argued that lack of easy access to food often results in a greater problem than even a lack of a much larger amount of nutritious food, especially for the

most malnourished people. Access to food should remain unaffected even during sudden shocks such as war, climate events, or economic crises.

Utilisation

According to the World Bank (2007), food utilisation refers to the process through which the body utilises various nutrients in the food. The idea of food utilisation also requires proper food preparation and hygiene practices, sound eating habits, a diverse diet, which necessitates the availability of all essential nutrients, and proper intra-household distribution of food. By ensuring sufficient calorie and nutrient intake as well as safe food, food utilisation may significantly influence the nutritional status of individuals.

Stability

Food stability is the effort to secure the dimensions of availability, access, and utilisation over time (World Bank, 2007). Clarifying on the aforesaid, FAO (2006) opined that “to be food secured, a population, household, or individual must always have access to adequate food. They should not risk losing access to food because of sudden shocks (e.g., an economic or climatic crisis) or cyclical events (e.g., seasonal food insecurity). The concept of stability can therefore refer to both the availability and access dimensions of food security.”

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TERRORISM AND FOOD SECURITY IN SOUTHERN KADUNA

One cannot talk about food security without discussing the causes of food insecurity, the consequences of food insecurity, and the possible solutions to combat food insecurity. The fact remains that every effort to combat food insecurity is an effort to secure food for the populace. It is not even about securing food for the populace, but securing sufficient nutritious food that will sustain the people, especially in the case of Southern Kaduna. Southern Kaduna has been known to be plagued by insecurity and other forms of terrorist activities of different degrees to include herdsmen and farmers clashes, stealing, drought, Covid-19, etc, which have affected both the availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability of food for the sustenance of the inhabitants. This section of the paper addresses both the causes, consequences, and solutions to food insecurity in Southern Kaduna as mentioned above.

Causes of Food Insecurity in Southern Kaduna

Collier et al. (2003) aver that “Food insecurity is both a cause and a consequence of violence, contributing to a vicious cycle or ‘conflict trap’. Food security is critical for political stability. It is linked to increased risk of common failure, protests and rioting,

communal violence, and civil conflict. Violent conflicts, in turn, create food insecurity, malnutrition, and in some instances famine. Thus, food insecurity can perpetuate conflict, although its effects depend on the context....”

There are many causes of food insecurity in different regions of the world. However, in the Southern part of Kaduna State, Nigeria precisely, some of the common observable causes includes terrorism activities such as stealing, conflicts/violence and attacks by Fulani militia, poverty, natural disasters such as climate change, financialization/high pricing of food produce, wastage of food, lack of access to farming lands (inability to buy and owned personal lands to boost agricultural productivity as it can be used to produce various food crops even at a small-scale level), land grabbing (ceasing of traditionally owned lands by the governments, or large investors), fast-paced population growth, Covid-19, urbanization, corruption which results to unfair trade rules, etc. The above-listed common causes of food insecurity in Southern Kaduna reveal the kind of effects afflicting the inhabitants of the region.

Consequences of Food Insecurity in Southern Kaduna

Evidently, food insecurity has posed a series of grievous consequences globally. “Rather than a complete lack of food, food insecurity indicates a lack of access to nutritious food and a reliance on the cheapest and lowest-quality products” (Mollenkamp, 2025). This peril has also been manifested in the southern part of Kaduna State, where the inhabitants are exposed to the challenge of insufficient food and/or inadequate nutritious diets, which expose people, especially children, to health complications. Food crises in this region have been seen to be the cause of the devastating poverty and hunger, which often leads to depression, just as the saying goes, “a hungry lion is an angry lion.” The increased death rate is today linked to man’s inability to afford what to eat, which most often is caused by poverty, as mentioned above, or the hike in food prices. Food insecurity is believed to be one of the major causes of some conflicts within families in southern Kaduna. The high rate of unschooled children in this region is also a result of food insecurity. It is obvious that concentration in school is not guaranteed for an unfed child; thus, he becomes weak and lazy. Many homes today are rendered desolate in Southern Kaduna as a result of food insecurity. Therefore, efforts should be made by the government and other capable people to rescue the inhabitants from this great challenge posed by food insecurity.

Solutions to Food Insecurity in Southern Kaduna

Numerous strategies exist to address food insecurity, from short-term relief to long-term sustainable solutions (Kagel, 2024). The speediest and workable ways of dealing with the devastating effects of food insecurity in Southern Kaduna are to first identify the root causes. Obviously, the challenges posed to food security across the

globe are extremely entrenched in many of the institutional and deeply ingrained social issues, which can be almost impossible to fully eliminate. Nevertheless, there are solutions governments and the international community can take to help combat food insecurity, and some of these ways includes: reducing and/or eradicating poverty, which is adversely affecting the inhabitants of Southern Kaduna, increase agricultural productivity of the area, combating climate change in the region, calling for charity and international aid by able stakeholders from the region, amicably resolving terrorism acts such as conflicts between herders and farmers in that stringent policies should be enacted to handle anyone who destroy any crop that does not belong to him/her and also reprimanding anyone caught stealing any food produce that does not belong to him/her. It is also significant to note that “addressing food loss and waste is another critical element in the fight against food insecurity. Approximately one-third of all food produced globally is wasted through spoilage, inefficient storage, or consumer waste. Reducing loss and waste throughout the food chain—at the production, distribution, and consumption levels—can significantly improve food availability” (Kagel, 2004).

Additionally, to address the challenges of food security in Nigeria, and especially in Southern Kaduna, it is significant to control the rapid increase in the population of the region since the Neo-Malthusian theory of food security has postulated that the larger the population of the people, there is always a tendency of posing the negative threat to food security. When there is sufficient land to cultivate, there is a high tendency to produce more food to sustain the people.

CONCLUSION

Nigeria is a country blessed with abundant fertile land suitable for agriculture, and the land is also rich in human resources. However, the country is facing grievous challenges in terms of securing food for its citizens. The country has suffered severely when it comes to accessing proper food, availability of these foods, utilisation, and stability of sufficient food to sustain the people, as seen in some fast-growing Southern Kaduna communities such as Zikpak, Ungwan Maigizoh, Fadan Kagoro, Manchok Township, Zonkwa, among others. The devastating nature of food security can be restore, but only when some of the features militating against its restoration such as terrorism activities within some worse-hit Southern Kaduna communities such as Zikpak, Tsonje Kagoro, Zango, Kurmin Masara, etc, which include stealing, conflicts/violence and attacks by Fulani Militia, poverty, inefficient policies, climate change, lack of access to farming lands, financialization /high pricing of food produce, and many more factors are dealt with. In Southern Kaduna, available evidence reveals that these factors have greatly affected food security, and several efforts have been put in place, such as peacebuilding between farmers and herders, and even communities are

maintained; boosting agricultural productivity and the exploration of mineral resources richly blessed in the land; and most importantly, controlling of prices of goods in the market. This will enhance food security. Accordingly, the Neo-Malthusian theory argued that when the population increases, it in turn affects food security. Controlling the wanton population growth will enhance food security in Southern Kaduna.

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