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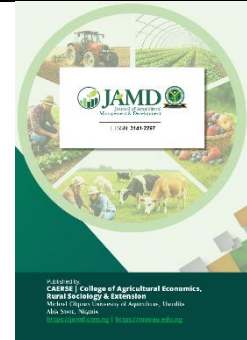
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Impact of Insecurity on the Agroenterprise Sector in North-Western Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the impact of insecurity on the Agricultural Sector in North-Western Nigeria. The study looked at the following specific objectives: evaluate the trend of insecurity on the number of displaced Nigerians between 2014- 2023, determine the impact of insecurity on food prices in north western Nigeria, examine the levies imposed, levies paid, and its implications on food security and highlight the mitigation strategies to eliminate the impact of insecurity on agricultural activities in the study area. The study used secondary data from 2014 to 2023. The study showed that at the early stages of insecurity/insurgency in northwestern Nigeria, there was a higher rate (113%) of displaced Nigerians, while in later years, the rate decreased (1.4%) of displaced individuals. Moreso, the study showed that the activities of insurgents increased the prices of local food crops from 24% to 66%. The effect of these increases in Northwestern Nigeria hurts the prices of the same crop produced in neighboring communities in the Niger Republic. Furthermore, a total of 225 million was imposed on the farming communities, and a total sum of 139.5 million naira was paid, leaving a balance of 85.5 million naira. The implications of not paying the levies charged by the bandits by any individual or community are non-access to their farmland, either for farming/ harvesting activities, killing, raping, or looting of the farmers' produce. These levies are imposed on farmers based on the volume of harvest and the types of crops to be harvested. Furthermore, the different charges/levies on the food crops could have been due to the multiplicity of uses and international demand. The study therefore recommended improved governance, economic development, and security measures that support affected farmers and their agroenterprises on a sustainable scale. By tackling the root causes of insecurity and implementing effective solutions, Nigeria can ensure a more stable and prosperous agro-enterprise sector.

Introduction

Agriculture is a cornerstone of Nigeria's economy, employing a significant portion of the population and contributing substantially to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Rural agri-based

entrepreneurs/individuals contribute to about 40 percent of the national food supply in Nigeria, yet, these farmers lack incentives for effective operation. In the same vein, Agricultural enterprises account for up to 80-90 percent of all enterprises in most countries (IFAD, 2002). Also, agriculture has the potential to generate further employment in rural areas, especially in animal and crop husbandry, fisheries sector and more recently the green agricultural value chain which offers economic potential at the same time play paramount role in reformation and rejuvenating the socioeconomic landscape.

Agriculture and its agro-allied service sectors offer huge potential for job creation and their growth process is considered to be a key engine of economic growth and development in Nigeria. Despite its contribution to the economy, Nigeria's agricultural sector faces many challenges which impact on its productivity. These include: poor land tenure systems, low levels of irrigation farming, climate change, and land degradation. Others are low technology, high production cost and poor distribution of inputs, limited financing, high post-harvest losses, and poor access to markets. These challenges, coupled with the insecurity experienced in the state have stifled agricultural productivity, affecting the sector's contribution to the country's GDP as well as increased food imports due to population rise, hence declining levels of food sufficiency (FAO, 2024). Therefore, this study explores the impact of insecurity on northern Nigeria's agricultural sector, highlighting the problem, objectives, scope, justification, and a review of relevant literature.

Insecurity in Nigeria has manifested in various forms, including terrorism, banditry, and conflicts between farmers and herders. These issues have led to displacement, loss of livelihoods, and a decline in agricultural productivity. The persistent threat to farmers' lives and property has disrupted farming activities, leading to reduced food production and increased food prices (Aluko, 2020). The study would specifically look into the following questions: i) what is the trend of insecurity on the number of displaced Nigerians between 2014- 2023? ii) what is the impact of insecurity on food prices in North-Western Nigeria? iii) what are the levies imposed, levies paid, and their implications on food prices and availability? and iv) what are the mitigation strategies to eliminate the impact of insecurity on agricultural activities in the study area?

The main objective of this study is to examine the impact of insecurity on the agroenterprise sector in north-western Nigeria. The specific objectives are stated as follows to;

1. evaluate the trend of insecurity on the number of displaced Nigerians between 2014- 2023
2. determine the impact of insecurity on food prices in northern Nigeria
3. examine the levies imposed, levies paid, and its implications
4. highlight the mitigation strategies to eliminate the impact of insecurity on agricultural activities in the study area.

Literature Review

Security and insecurity are two sides of the same coin. The concepts of security and insecurity are used concerning the individual, society, or state. In this paper, insecurity is used in the context of the individual in the Nigerian state and not threats to the survival of the state itself. Onoja (2014) defined insecurity as 'peoples' relative feeling of the presence of economic, political, social, cultural and psychological fear'. As rightly noted by Onoja (2014), insecurity of individuals in society is a broad and multidimensional phenomenon. It encompasses economic, political, social, cultural and psychological dimensions. At the level of the individual, insecurity portends fear in any of these dimensions but particularly the fear of death or threat to lives and property. Insecurity also denotes the inability of individuals to improve their wellbeing and promote their interests in society. Economic insecurity, which is basic to the survival of individuals in society, implies the loss of livelihood, unemployment, hunger, disease, homelessness etc that affects the economic well-being of individuals in society.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 goals set by the international community for nations to achieve between 2015 and 2030. The goals were adopted by 193 nations at the end of the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit of September 2015. It is the global response to sustain the gains of the MDGs beyond its terminal date of 2015. While the MDGs were primarily targeted at poor and developing countries, the SDGs broadened the scope and reach of the objectives of the goals to include both developed and developing countries. The SDGs are therefore more ambitious and broad-based goals set by the international community for countries to achieve by 2030. The goals are a global call to action for countries to make individual and collective efforts to improve the lives of people globally. Four themes

were developed as the focus of global efforts: economic, social, environmental, and global peace and security. The goals envisioned a present and future that is economically sustainable, socially inclusive and environmentally resilient in a world that is peaceful and secure. Specifically, this study is aimed at the actualization of SDG goal 2 (end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and sustainable agriculture). The SDGs are, therefore, a conscious effort by the international community to improve the lives of people globally and create an environment that is sustainable for future generations.

Several studies have examined the impact of insecurity on Nigeria's agroenterprise sector. According to Amadi-Robert *et al.* (2024), insecurity has significantly affected agricultural performance, with kidnapping and armed robbery rates having both positive and negative effects on the sector's contribution to GDP. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2017) reports that Nigeria's food production capacity has been steadily increasing, but the reality on the ground is more complex due to the pervasive insecurity. Insecurity has led to the displacement of farmers, destruction of crops, and loss of livestock, resulting in decreased agricultural productivity. For instance, banditry and herder-farmer conflicts have caused significant disruptions in farming activities, leading to reduced food production and higher food prices (Marion *et al.*, 2011). Additionally, the cost of farm inputs has risen due to insecurity, further exacerbating the challenges faced by farmers. Furthermore, the effect of insecurity, banditry, and community unrest has led to situations where members of communities are displaced from their ancestral homes. The UNDP Report (2020) aptly noted that the conflict in the north-east has set back development in the region by decades. The consequence is a drastic slowdown in the progress of some of the basic goals of the SDGs.

Theoretical Framework on Insecurity and Agroenterprise Development

A theoretical framework provides a structured approach to understanding the complex relationship between insecurity and agricultural development. This framework integrates various theories and concepts to explain how insecurity affects agricultural productivity, food security, and overall economic development. In the context of northwestern Nigeria, which comprises 7 states, this framework can help identify the underlying causes of insecurity and its impacts on agriculture, as well as potential solutions.

Key Theories and Concepts

1. **Rational Choice Theory:** Rational choice theory posits that individuals make decisions based on a rational evaluation of the costs and benefits. In the context of agricultural development, farmers and other stakeholders assess the risks associated with insecurity (e.g., violence, theft) and make decisions that minimize their exposure to these risks (Aluko, 2020). This theory helps explain why farmers might abandon their lands or reduce their investment in agriculture during periods of heightened insecurity.
2. **Human Security Framework.** The human security framework broadens the concept of security beyond military threats to include economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political security (FAO, 2008). This holistic approach is crucial for understanding how insecurity in Abia State affects agricultural development. For instance, economic insecurity can lead to reduced investment in agriculture, while personal insecurity (e.g., fear of kidnapping) can deter farmers from working their fields.
3. **Food Security Framework:** The food security framework focuses on four key dimensions: availability, access, utilization, and stability (Marion *et al.*, 2011). Insecurity can disrupt all these dimensions. For example, communal conflicts can reduce the availability of food by destroying crops, while economic instability can affect access to food by reducing purchasing power. Understanding these dimensions helps in identifying specific areas where interventions are needed to improve food security.
4. **Conflict Theory:** Conflict theory examines how power dynamics and resource competition lead to social conflicts (Tuholske *et al.*, 2024). In the context of agricultural development, conflicts over land and water resources between farmers and herders are a significant issue in Abia State. This theory helps explain the root causes of these conflicts and the resulting impact on agricultural productivity.
5. **Sustainable Livelihoods Framework:** The sustainable livelihoods framework considers the assets (human, social, natural, physical, and financial) that individuals and communities need to sustain their livelihoods (Truelove *et al.*, 2023). Insecurity can erode these assets, making it difficult for farmers to maintain their agricultural activities. For example, the destruction of infrastructure (physical assets) and the displacement of communities (social assets) can severely impact agricultural productivity.

Application of Theoretical Framework

1. Impact on Agricultural Productivity

- **Rational Choice Theory:** Farmers may choose to reduce their agricultural activities or switch to less risky crops due to the perceived threat of insecurity.
- **Human Security Framework:** Insecurity affects various aspects of human security, leading to reduced agricultural productivity. For instance, health insecurity due to violence can reduce the labor force available for farming.

2. Impact on Food Security

- **Food Security Framework:** Insecurity disrupts the availability, access, utilization, and stability of food. For example, communal conflicts can destroy crops (availability), while economic instability can reduce purchasing power (access).
- **Conflict Theory:** Conflicts over resources can lead to the destruction of crops and livestock, further exacerbating food insecurity.

3. Impact on Economic Development

- **Sustainable Livelihoods Framework:** Insecurity erodes the assets needed for sustainable livelihoods, leading to reduced agricultural productivity and economic development. For example, the destruction of infrastructure (physical assets) and the displacement of communities (social assets) can severely impact agricultural productivity.

Methodology

The study was carried out in North-Western Nigeria. The North West states include Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, and Zamfara. The region features diverse landscapes, including the Sahel savanna and fertile plains. It has a tropical savanna climate with a rainy season from May to September and dry harmattan winds. It is the native homeland of the Hausa people, with the second largest tribe being the Fulani. With Islam as the primary religion. The people who are farmers include those in crop and livestock. Secondary data were used in this study. Data were generated from the Morgan SB report 2024 and UNHCR (2023).

Results and Discussion

Trend of insecurity and the number of displaced Nigerians between 2014- 2023

The trend of insecurity and the number of displaced Nigerians (Northern region) from 2014-2023 is presented in Table 1. Table 1 shows an increasing trend of insecurity especially in the rural areas in the northern region. The Table shows a percentage increase of 113 in 2015 in insecurity over what was recorded in 2014. More so, insecurity rose to about 152% in 2016, indicating a percentage difference of 39% over insecurity cases recorded in 2015. This situation, according to UNHCR, Government refugee data, 2023, has also left large-scale destruction of livelihoods, properties, and communities, thereby forcing people to flee from their homes. Furthermore, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), Government Refugee Data (2023) reported that 3,167,581 people are internally displaced in the northeast as of June 2023, and a total of 336,862 persons are refugees in neighboring Niger, Cameroon, and Chad. Furthermore, the insecurity in the nation, especially in northern Nigeria, has deterred foreign direct investment in the country. Nigeria is currently considered one of the countries affected by terrorism (Nwokwu, 2021). Tochukwu (2013) noted that since Boko Haram resumed operations in 2010, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Nigeria has significantly decreased. However, the result also shows a decreasing trend from 113% to 1.4% on the number of displaced Nigerians. This could be due to the efforts of the governments at combating insecurity.

Impact of insecurity on food prices in northern Nigeria

The impact of insecurity on the prices of some selected food items in the north of Nigeria is presented in Table 2. Table 2 shows that the price of beans increased from ₦ 33500 to ₦ 53500 (60% increase) and local rice from 2022 to 2023. In addition, the prices of yams and maize increased with 50% and 66% for the periods under review. Furthermore, guinea corn and millet had price increases of 32% and 24%, respectively. These increases in food prices were a result of the insecurity. According to Morgan (2024) stated that insecurity has spiked the cost of living in the region as food prices in the Northwest experienced a panic surge, worsening the challenge of food affordability in the region. Finally, the study also discovered that there is a significant difference in the prices of agricultural produce between 2022 and 2023, indicating that insecurity has a role in the rising prices of food crops. This therefore means that government at the different northern states should make every effort to curb the activities of bandits and their activities.

Table 3 shows the impact of insecurity on some selected food items in markets in the neighbouring Niger Republic. The result shows that the price of 50 kg was sold for ₦ 70350, representing 87% of the price of one bag of local rice in the Nigerian market. More so, maize is sold for ₦ 70350 which is almost twice the price of what it is sold in the neighboring market in Nigeria. The price of Guinea corn in Nigeria was ₦ 37500, while the price in Niger Republic was ₦ 64320. The price difference represents about 72% increase in price. Also, the price of millet was ₦ 60300 in Niger Republic, while in Nigeria, the same commodity goes for ₦ 34500. This represents a price difference of ₦ 29820, representing 75% increase in price. The implication of the level of insecurity in Nigeria hurts the prices of these commodities in our neighboring nations.

Levies imposed, levies paid, and its implications

The amount of levies imposed, levies paid, and their implications on agricultural activities in Northern Nigeria are presented in Table 4. Table 4 shows that a total of 225million was imposed on the farming communities in northern Nigeria. However, a total sum of 139.5 million naira was paid, leaving a balance of 85.5 million naira. The implications of not paying the levies charged by the bandits on any individual or communities is basically non-access to the farmland either for farming/ harvesting activities, killing, raping, or looting of the farmers' produce. However, when the levies charged are paid, the bandits give farmers access to their farms. Furthermore, the activities of these bandits can deter investment and disrupt economic activities, leading to economic stagnation, especially at the community level. Also, the threat of payment and non-payment of these levies can have a psychological impact on the farming population by leading to fear and anxiety. More so, the farmers are assessed by two indicators as identified by Morgan (2024). The indicators are as follows: I) volume of harvest and ii) types of crops to be harvested. Table 4 shows the different types of harvested food crops and the amount charged by these bandits. Table 5 shows that the bandits placed more charges/ levies on farmers producing the local rice (₦ 120,000), followed by beans (₦ 100,000) and millet (₦ 80,000). However, Maize (₦ 70,000) and guinea corn (₦ 50,000) were the crops that had moderate charges. The reason for the different charges on the food crops could be due to the multiplicity of uses and international demand.

Mitigation strategies

Mitigation strategies for reducing the level of insecurity in the farming communities of Nigeria are presented as follows:

1. *Security Initiatives:* Nigeria and different State Governments should launch various security initiatives that will see to the decline or elimination of insecurity in the farming communities. This includes the establishment of local vigilante groups and collaboration with the federal security agencies. The result of these initiatives would positively yield the required fruits.
2. *Youth Empowerment Programs:* The different State governments and the National Government should roll out programs to provide youth employment and skills training. These would help to reduce the lure of criminal activities among the youths and help the youth become self-reliant and to create wealth, especially at the rural level.
3. *Community Policing:* The State Government, experiencing security threats, can advocate and encourage community involvement in security matters. This situation is witnessed in the continuous support of homeland security activities, and the establishment of synergies between state-combined security outfits and Police Community relations committees. These collaborative efforts would help identify and address local security threats.
4. *Promoting Economic Development:* Northern states' governments should invest in the Sustainable Livelihoods framework, such as in infrastructure, education, and healthcare, that can enhance the assets needed for sustainable livelihoods, thereby reducing the impact of insecurity on agriculture.
5. *Improving Governance and Reducing Corruption:* The different northern states' governments should endeavor to improve governance and make frantic efforts at reducing corruption. This measure would create a more stable environment that will encourage farmers to invest in agriculture. In addition, the different state governments of the northern region can also improve governance through the enhancement of the various aspects of human security. These measures would increase agricultural productivity

Conclusion and Recommendations

Insecurity significantly threatens Nigeria's agricultural sector, affecting productivity, food security, and economic stability. A theoretical framework provides a structured approach to understanding the complex relationship between insecurity and agricultural development. By integrating various theories and concepts,

this framework helps identify the underlying causes of insecurity and its impacts on agriculture, as well as potential solutions. Addressing this issue requires a multi-faceted approach, including improving governance, promoting economic development, improving security measures, supporting affected farmers, and other policies aimed at enhancing agricultural resilience. By tackling the root causes of insecurity and implementing effective solutions, Nigeria can ensure a more stable and prosperous agroenterprise sector.

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Appendix

Table 1: Trend of insecurity on the number of displaced Nigerians between 2014- 2023

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
37,388	79,552	200,168	209,685	232,465	279,328	304,562	327,313	332,219	336,862
-	112.77	151.62	4.75	10.86	20.159	9.033	7.47	1.498	1.397

Source: Adapted from UNHCR, Government refugee data, 2023

Table 2: impact of insecurity on prices of some selected food items in Northern Nigeria

Year	Beans (100kg) (₦)	Local rice (100kg) (₦)	Yam (10 mini tubers) (₦)	Maize (100kg) (₦)	Guinea corn (100kg) (₦)	Millet (100kg) (₦)
2022	33500	50500	7500	22500	28500	27875
2023	53500	81000	11250	37375	37500	34500
% price increase	59.7	60.4	50	66.1	31.6	23.8
T-test	13.587***	10.241***	4.239**	6.107***	9.000***	20.333***

Source: Compiled from Morgan (2024) Note: *** 1%, **5%

Table 3: impact of insecurity on prices of some selected food items in markets in the neighboring country (Niger Republic)

Year	Local rice /50kg (₦)	Maize/100kg(₦)	Guinea corn/100kg (₦)	Millet /100kg (₦)
2024	70350 (87%)	70350 (88%)	64320 (72%)	60300 (75%)
Nigerian prices in 2024	81000	37375	37500	34500
Difference	10650	32975	26820	25800
Amount in CFA@exchange rate of ₦2010	35000	35000	32000	30000

Compiled from Morgan (2024)

Table 4: Amount of levies imposed, levies paid, and their implications on agricultural activities in Northern Nigeria

Levies	Amount (Naira)	Implications	How levies are fixed
Levies imposed	224.92m	Restricted access to farmland (either to plant or harvest)	i. By volume of harvest ii. Types of crop harvested
Levies paid	139.45m	improved access to farmland (either to plant or harvest)	
Difference	85.47m	Attack on farmers, rape/killing/looting Threat to limit access to farmland	

Source: Compiled from Morgan (2024)

Table 5: Different types of harvested food crops and the amount charged by bandits

Types of crop harvested	Levies charged in naira	Ranking
Beans	100,000	2 nd
Rice	120,000	1 st
Maize	70,000	4 th
millet	80,000	3 rd
Guinea corn	50,000	5 th

Compiled from Morgan (2024)