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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 2 (SDG 2): ZERO HUNGER AND FOOD INSECURITY IN AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF NIGERIA.

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study examined SDG Zero Hunger and food insecurity in Africa with a focus on Nigeria. This study was motivated by the persistent rise in hunger, malnutrition, and inadequate access to nutritious food despite global and national efforts towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal Two (SDG 2), which aims to end hunger and achieve food security by 2030. The objectives of the study were to verify whether food insecurity in Nigeria. The study adopted Amartya Sen's Entitlement Theory as its theoretical framework. A qualitative descriptive analysis (QDA) method was used, while secondary data were obtained from academic journals, government publications, and reports from organizations such as Food and Agriculture Organization, World Bank, and United Nations Children's Fund. Findings revealed that food insecurity still persists in Nigeria further found that economic factors such as poverty and inflation, environmental factors such as climate change and flooding, and political factors such as corruption and insecurity significantly contribute to food insecurity in Nigeria. Based on these findings, the study recommended that the Nigerian government should strengthen agricultural development and food security policies through increased investment in modern farming techniques, rural infrastructure, irrigation systems, storage facilities, and climate-resilient agricultural practices while ensuring transparency and effective implementation of food security programs. The study also recommended that the government and relevant stakeholders should address economic and political factors contributing to food insecurity through inflation reduction, job creation, improved social protection programs, strengthened security, and climate change adaptation strategies.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Food is a basic human need that is necessary for growth, development, and survival. A major global issue, particularly in developing nations, is the availability of enough food that is safe and nourishing. The United Nations created the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 to address this crisis, ongoing hunger, and malnutrition. Goal 2 (Zero Hunger) aims to end hunger and achieve food security. Better nutrition and the advancement of sustainable agriculture by 2030 (United Nations, 2015). In many African nations and regions, including Nigeria, the situation has not improved despite an international declaration and an international effort to end food insecurity.

The inability to regularly obtain sufficient, reasonably priced, and nutrient-dense food is known as food insecurity (Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 2021). In Sub-Saharan Africa, hunger has increased recently. Numerous economic, environmental, and sociopolitical factors are connected to this intricate and widespread issue. Due to population growth, climate change, and economic instability, the number of undernourished people in Africa has rapidly increased over time (FAO, 2021). The region most directly impacted by hunger worldwide is still Sub-Saharan Africa, which is concerning because SDG 2 appears to be unachievable within the allotted time.

The most populous nation in Africa, Nigeria, serves as a case study for the continent's food insecurity. Nigeria still has significant problems with food insecurity despite having a wealth of natural and human resources. As of 2026, Nigeria had a population of about 220 million, making it the largest country in Africa. The nation produces staple crops like cassava, yams, and grains because agriculture makes up a sizable portion of the economy. The nation has the capacity to feed both itself and a large portion of Western Africa, according to theory and research. However, in reality, the nation's farming industry still faces a number of difficulties, such as a lack of government support, restricted access to contemporary technology, disputes and tensions (farmers and herders clash), and so forth.

The problems of food insecurity that Nigerians and other Africans face have been greatly exacerbated by these. A considerable percentage of Nigerians experience moderate to severe food insecurity, according to the FAO (2022). The situation has been made worse by inadequate storage facilities, insecure farming areas, poor infrastructure, and volatile food prices. Nigeria's food insecurity issue is exacerbated by these different factors. Internal and external factors are the two categories into which they fall. The efficiency of food production and distribution systems has been diminished by poverty, unemployment, bad agricultural policies, and corruption (Akinyele, 2009). Additionally, farming operations have been disrupted, rural populations have been displaced, and the food supply has decreased due to insecurity, particularly in areas most affected by insurgency and conflict (FAO, 2021).

Climate change has exacerbated the problem with unpredictable

rainfall patterns, flooding, and desertification. All of these factors have a negative impact on agricultural output (IPCC, 2019).Externally, Nigeria's integration into the global economy and market has impacted its food security situation. The country's reliance on food imports, fluctuating global food prices, and trade policies make it susceptible to external shocks and changes (World Bank, 2020). While global integration creates opportunities and solutions for economic growth. It has exposed Nigeria's agricultural sector to competition that it is frequently ill-prepared to face. As a result, local food production has not kept up with population growth, increasing reliance on imports and exacerbated food insecurity.

Efforts have been made by the Nigerian government and international organizations to help address food insecurity and achieve SDG Zero Hunger. On the part of the Nigerian government, we have various policies, such as:Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP) or most commonly known as the Green Alternative, Anchor Borrowers' Programme (ABP), and so many others are been used by the Nigerian Government to help curb food insecurity.The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP), and numerous other international organizations have now helped to reduce the problems associated with food insecurity. These initiatives have been implemented with the goals of increasing agricultural output, enhancing rural infrastructure, and assisting smallholder farmers. However, due to a number of obstacles, including funding limitations and inconsistent policy, progress toward accomplishing SDG 2 is still sluggish. As a result, hunger and malnutrition continue to be serious problems, raising questions about Nigeria's ability to achieve the Zero Hunger goal by 2030.

The issue of food insecurity and SDG Zero Hunger requires critical examination in light of these facts and the importance of food security in national development. Achieving sustainable food security requires an understanding of the root causes, obstacles, and potential solutions of food insecurity. Thus, the purpose of this study is to assess Nigeria's food insecurity situation in light of SDG 2, examining the contributing factors and the extent to which the country is making progress toward ending hunger.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite global commitments and contributions under the SDGs, particularly SDG2 to achieve Zero Hunger by 2030, food insecurity remains a persistent and growing problem in Nigeria. This is contradictory, particularly in light of the nation's enormous agricultural potential, numerous regions with ideal climates, and a sizable labor force capable of producing food for the nation. Nonetheless, a sizable portion of Nigerians are still undernourished, hungry, and have limited access to wholesome food.

To address food security, the Nigerian government and other international organizations like the World Bank and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have previously implemented a number of policies and initiatives. These haven't, however, resulted in notable and long-lasting advancements. On the other hand, the combination of structural, economic, and environmental problems has made food insecurity more severe and acute. The efficacy of the current approaches and Nigeria's ability to attain Zero Hunger within the allotted time frame are seriously threatened by this. One of the main problems the nation is facing is the agricultural sector, and

agricultural productivity is dropping. These smallholder farmers face a number of difficulties, such as the lack of modern farming inputs, inadequate infrastructure, restricted access to credit facilities, conflict and tension, and little government assistance. All of these variables have an impact on food production and post-harvest losses, which lower the amount of food available.

With all these interrelated issues, it is clear that there is no single cause of food insecurity, but rather it is a result of synergy between various internal and external factors. This issue has not yet been resolved, even with a number of interventions, highlighting the need for a broader and critical assessment of the issue in the context of SDG Zero Hunger.

Thus the objective of this study is to study the nature and causes of food insecurity in Nigeria, the assessment of the existing initiatives towards food security and the identification of practical measures to enhance food security in Nigeria.

1.3 Research Questions

Arising from the statement of the problem outlined above, this study is guided by the following:

1. How has food insecurity persisted in Nigeria despite efforts towards achieving SDG Zero Hunger?
2. How has economic, environmental, and political factors contributed to food insecurity in Nigeria?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study has both a broad and specific objectives. The broad objective being "SDG Zero Hunger and Food Insecurity in Africa: A Case Study of Nigeria,"

while the specific objectives are:

1. To verify whether food insecurity persisted in Nigeria despite efforts towards achieving SDG Zero Hunger.
2. To examine whether economic, environmental, and political factors contributed to food insecurity in Nigeria.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is valuable in terms of its empirical content because it focuses on the novel, and theoretically it is significant because it investigates a novel idea. Ideally, it broadens our understanding of Nigeria's sustainable development and food security. It contains information about the challenges facing the SDG of Zero Hunger as well as suggestions that can be applied to the formulation of policy.

Policymakers, researchers, development organizations, and other agricultural stakeholders will find the empirical results useful. Additionally, it will be a resource for upcoming research on sustainable development and food security in Nigeria and other developing nations.

1.6 Scope of the study

The study will focus on Nigerian food insecurity within the framework of SDG Zero Hunger. It will examine the causes of food insecurity and evaluate the measures implemented to address the issue. The study spans the years from 2015 (the year the SDGs were adopted) to the present and uses Nigeria as a case study.

1.7 Operational Definitions of Terms

Here are operational definitions of key terms relevant to the study:

Food Insecurity: In the context of this study, "food insecurity" refers to the state in which Nigerian individuals or households do not consistently have physical, social, or financial access to the adequate, safe, and nourishing food needed for an active and healthy life.

Zero Hunger (SDG 2): In this study, "Zero Hunger" refers to the second Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 2), which is to eradicate hunger, attain food security, enhance nutrition, and advance sustainable agriculture by 2030. Indicators like the prevalence of undernourishment, child malnutrition rates, and agricultural productivity levels are used to measure it (United Nations, 2015).

Malnutrition: Deficits, excesses, or imbalances in an individual's energy and nutrient intake are referred to as malnutrition. Indicators like stunting, wasting, and underweight prevalence in children, along with micro-nutrient deficiencies, are used in this study (World Health Organization WHO, 2021).

Poverty: The incapacity of individuals or households to provide for their basic needs, such as clothing, food, and shelter, is referred to as poverty. Income levels, purchasing power, and access to basic services—particularly in relation to food access—are used in this study (World Bank, 2020).

Climate Change: Climate change refers to long-term alterations in temperature and weather patterns, largely due to human activities. In this study, it is measured through its impact on agricultural output, including droughts, floods, and changing rainfall patterns affecting food production in Nigeria (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change IPCC, 2021).

Sustainable Agriculture: Sustainable agriculture in this study refers to farming practices that meet current food needs without compromising the

ability of future generations to meet theirs. It is measured through practices such as efficient resources use, environmental conservation, and resilience to climate change (United Nations, 2015).

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews relevant literature on SDG Zero Hunger and food insecurity in Africa, with Nigeria as the case study. This chapter will examine the key concepts, the theoretical foundation for the study, empirical studies on food insecurity in Nigeria, and the gap that this study seeks to fill.

2.1 Conceptual Review

In order the understand the SDG Zero Hunger goal, its benefits and works, we must first explore and understand food insecurity in Africa, using Nigeria as a case study. Essentially, this chapter discusses major causes and themes of food insecurity and SDG Zero Hunger in Africa, using Nigeria as a case study.

2.1.1 Food Security

When everyone has physical and financial access to enough safe, nourishing food that satisfies their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life, this is referred to as food security (World Food Summit, 1996). According to FAO, food availability, access, utilization, and stability are the four pillars that are typically used to understand security (FAO, 2006). According to FAO (2006), availability refers to the availability of sufficient amounts of food of suitable quality; food access refers to the ability of individuals to obtain said adequate resources; utilization refers to the body's ability to use the food appropriately through good nutrition and health; and stability refers to the maintenance of these conditions over time. To put it

another way, food security encompasses not only the production of food but also the ability of households to consistently obtain and benefit from food.

This definition of food security is particularly crucial in the Nigerian context because, despite the availability of food in markets and on farms, many households lack access to or cannot afford enough nutrient-dense food. For this reason, food security is increasingly treated in Nigerian literature as a multifaceted issue rather than a straightforward agricultural output issue. According to Ogundari's research, there are certain micro-level indicators of food security. Per capita food expenditure, food consumption score, food insecurity access scale, and per capital food consumption (such as per capital nutrient intakes of calories, protein, and fat) are a few of these metrics (Ogundari, 2017).

However, Ogundari pointed out in his research that there is no single indicator of food security that can incorporate all dimensions of food security, because a combination of measures and indicators are needed to fully understand the "complex" reality of food insecurity within any given context (Carletto et al, 2013). Within the same context, Habicht and Pelletier (1990) argued that there is no "best" indicator because the characterization of an indicator in a generic sense as "best" depends ultimately on whether or not it is the most appropriate for the decisions to be made. All these boils down to one thing; the concept of food security is highly relevant to SDG 2, which is concerned with not only ending hunger, but also with improving the quality and stability of food access.

Food Security Indicators

The four pillars of food security—availability, access, utilization, and

stability—are measured by indicators of food security, which are merely metrics. The concept of food security is too broad and multifaceted to be measured by a single variable (Ogundari, 2017). Rather, it necessitates a set of indicators that capture various facets of household conditions and food systems. The Food and Agriculture Organization states that an ideal food security indicator should capture elements like food quality, safety, and preferences in addition to reflecting the four fundamental dimensions of food security (FAO, 1996; FAO, 2021; HAUG, 2018).

Numerous indicators at various levels, including national, household, and individual levels, have been developed as a result of the complexity of food security. Food production, food imports, calorie supply, and other factors are indicators of food availability at the national level. At the household level, indicators such as income, food expenditure, and dietary diversity are used to gauge food access. Individual food consumption is evaluated using metrics such as body mass index (BMI), micro-nutrient intake, and nutritional status indicators (FAO, 1996; FAO, 2002). Because food security at one level cannot be assumed to be food security at another, these multi-level approaches are important.

The most used food security indicators framework is the four pillars of food security framework. Food availability is measured by indicators like domestic food production, food stocks levels and net food imports and is the first pillar. These indicators can be used to assess the availability of adequate food in a country or a region (World Bank, 2023). A country may have sufficient food supplies in the country, but not necessarily all households have access to food. Availability indicators are therefore more about the

supply side of food systems (agricultural productivity, supply chains, etc.).

The second component, food access, is sometimes regarded as the most important part of food security. It is the capability of the individual and household to acquire food through economic or physical resources. Household income, food prices, market access, and food purchasing power are indicators of food access in the context of food security (Haug., 2018). Research has demonstrated that in developing countries, food availability is frequently limited by access as, for example, food may be accessible in markets, but not affordable for significant portions of the population. This is especially applicable in Nigeria, where inflation and poverty greatly restrict access to sufficient food.

The third pillar is about food utilization or how food and nutrients are metabolized in the body. Not only the way food is eaten but the diversity of what people eat, how it is prepared, sanitation as well as health conditions. Utilisation indicators are used to assess rates of malnutrition, stunting, wasting and micro-nutrient deficiencies (WHO, 2024). This aspect emphasizes the importance of food security not only as a matter of quantity but also with regard to food quality as well as how people absorbed nutrients from the food.

The fourth pillar, food stability, is a dimension of food security that is related to the stability of food availability, food access, and food utilization over time. While a household has access to food today, this does not mean that they have met their food security needs if they are at risk of being denied access to food in the future. Volatility in food prices, climate variability, conflict, and shocks to the economy are considered to be indicators of instability (FAO, 1996). In Nigeria, the region is heavily affected by food

systems disruptions caused by seasonal changes, insecurity, and economic fluctuations, which is why stability is particularly important.

Although there are several indicators available it is still difficult to measure food security. Evidence indicates that indicators relating to access to food are typically well represented, whereas others like utilization and stability are less well represented (Calloway et all, 2023). This imbalance can give rise to inadequate analyses on food security and can underestimate the problem. Thus, researchers have suggested that integrated measures should be employed that combine multiple measures along each domain of food security.

The indicators of food security supply an invaluable framework for comprehending and quantifying food insecurity. They enable the identification of vulnerable groups, tracking of trends and yardstick to assess interventions to secure SDG Zero Hunger results. Food security however is a multidimensional phenomenon and it is crucial to rely on a series of food security indicators, which encompass food availability, access to food, and utilization and food security stability. The study takes a multidimensional perspective on food security indicators, in an attempt to give a more comprehensive picture of the food security status of Nigeria.

2.1.2 Food Insecurity

In developing parts of the world like Africa, food insecurity is one of the most dire development challenges and is especially prevalent. It is the lack of consistent access on a physical, social and economic level to an adequate, safe and nutritious food system for a healthy and active life (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2021). It's the purposeful lack of food and as well

as the hunger for a poor quality diet and food insecurity.

There are two thresholds of food insecurity – moderate and severe as described by the Food and Agriculture Organization. Moderate food insecurity refers to less food intake in terms of quality and quantity that frequently leads people in the households to sacrifice on the nutritional value and variety of food. The worst is severe food insecurity which refers to extreme hunger, not eating for an entire day or going without eating a meal (FAO, 2021). This classification matters especially because sometimes people do not starve as a result of food insecurity, but are malnourished and do not receive food regularly.

The entitlement approach (expounded among others by Amartya Sen, 1981), which apparently rejects the hypothesis that hunger is a consequence of the lack of food availability, contributes to the understanding of food insecurity. This view is particularly relevant for Nigeria where people can be poor, jobless and do not have economic inequalities.

Additionally, food security is tightly tied to aspects of the broader socio-economic, political and environmental conditions. It exacerbates and is a result of poverty, poor health and underdevelopment. Food insecurity means that households are at higher risk of malnutrition and less able to work and protect themselves from disease (World Health Organization 2024). This then reinforces a vicious circle between food insecurity and a reduction in development outcomes, which in turn affects poverty. So, the solution to food insecurity must be multi-dimensional, combining the approach of agriculture, economic policy, social protection and environmental management.

Addressing the Food insecurity on a development need is a challenge in

Africa.

African food insecurity is recognized as a development challenge that hinders economic expansion, social stability and well-being. In spite of its vast agricultural resources, its level of hunger and malnutrition remains high, as a result of fertile soil but also because of the size of the labour force. The Food and Agriculture Organization (2024) estimates that Africa has the highest prevalence of undernourishment in the world, with millions of people not having enough food. This paradox reflects broad structural problems in food systems on the continent.

A major issue contributing to food insecurity in Africa is that most of the population rely on rain-fed farming, leaving them very susceptible to the effects of climate variability. Also, low mechanization, access to agricultural inputs are also weak as well as rural poor infrastructure limits productivity (World Bank 2020). This has led to many African nations experiencing food insecurity due to their increasing populations.

There is also a number of conflict and political instability which has a significant impact for food insecurity in Africa. Conflict or insurgency can have impacts in the form of disruption of farming activities, displacement of people and disruption in food distribution in war and conflict areas. According to World Food Programme (WFP,2025), one of the principle causes of hunger today, especially in the fragile states of Africa, is conflict. This is evident in parts of Nigeria where insecurity has brought down agricultural production significantly.

In addition, the economic issues and poverty, unemployment, food price hikes increase food insecurity throughout the continent. Even in the face of

having enough food available in the market, many households have inadequate finances. This indicates that Africa's food insecurity is failing not just in terms of production but access and affordability as well. This makes food insecurity a significant constraint to achieving sustainable development and poverty alleviation in Africa.

Economic Factors and Food Insecurity

Economics is one of the important determinants of food security in Nigeria as it is in other countries. Poverty lies at the heart of the problem because it directly impacts people's and household's access to food. On the low end of the income spectrum, households, instead, find themselves constrained to eat cheaper and less nutritious foods, resulting in poor food products and malnutrition (World Bank, 2024). The food insecurity continues as a result of inflation, particularly food inflation. Over the past few years, as a result of currency instability, high transportation costs and supply chain disruptions, there have been a huge increase in Nigeria's food prices. As food prices increases, housholds' purchasing power declines, making it difficult for them to afford adequate food. That is, even if available food is present. It might not be available for many people.

Food insecurity stems from unemployment and underemployment too. Many Nigerian families do not have regular incomes and can't afford to access food on a regular basis. The income from work in the informal sector is weak, especially for those in the sector, who lack stability and low income.

Besides this, Nigeria's reliance on food imports makes it sensitive to fluctuations in world markets. Changes in international food prices, exchange rates, and trade policies can directly impact local food availability and

affordability. This dependency renders the country vulnerable to stocks sourced from the outside. Further deepening food insecurity.

Ecological Factors and Food insecurity

Food security in Nigeria is highly influenced by environmental factors, which have a profound influences brought on by climate change. Ancillary impacts such as changes in weather patterns have impacted agriculture production severely with irregular rainfall, faces of droughts, floodings etc.., (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2021). Affected by these environmental challenges, the yields of crops are affected and food supply is also impacted.

One of the greatest environmental challenges confronting Nigerian Agriculture is flooding. Major floods have ruined crops, driven farmers away from their farms, and resulted in disruptions in food production. Likewise, the rate of desertification in Northern Nigeria will cause the reduction of the available land to farm on, thereby limiting capacity for food production. Climate change impact on livestock production, fisheries and other components of the food system. Climate change and altered ecosystems decrease the supply of natural resources for food production. This imposes extra burden on already weak food system.

In addition, degradation of the environment and natural resources, including soil erosion and deforestation, also limit agricultural productivity. Intensification of farming and landed to the extent that soil fertility is depleted, making it hard to make an enduring gain in food production. The environmental threats emphasize the importance of developing climate-smart agriculture and sustainable resources management.

Political Dimension and Food Security.

The contribution also takes the shape of political factors which are often a key and central determinants of outcomes of food security, especially in the developing world such as Nigeria. Agricultural and economic conditions are widely recognized as major drivers of food insecurity, but stronger governance, more political stability, more effective institutions and policy decisions are also having a major influence on whether populations have access to enough and nutritious food (World Bank, 2024; FAO, 2024). Most of the time, being food insecure is not simply "not having" food, but more a problem of "not having enough" in order to be able to produce, distribute, and access food.

Poor governance and institutional capacity is one of the major political determinants of food insecurity in Nigeria. Governance is required to better design policies for agricultural development, agricultural policy regulation and just resource distribution. But in Nigeria, the institutions are weak, policies are not well implemented and affairs are not coordinated between the various government agencies, nor are the resources used efficiently. Ibrahim and Ya'u (2025) noted that governance failures such as inefficiency and accountability lack within the governments have hindered the effectiveness of food security programmes in Nigeria. Consequently, even good policies are ineffective and too many people are unable to access nutritious food.

Corruption, which may be considered an issue of weak governance and its detrimental effects on food security efforts, are closely related to this issue. The embezzlement of public money for agricultural development, rural infrastructure and food programmes end up in the pockets of the corrupt.

This puts a constrain on food production and food distribution systems improvement. Further, poverty-driven corruption results in poor use of agricultural inputs like fertilizer and seed stock; as well as credit facilities, so that most smallholder farmers cannot access them, hindering food production production (Transparency International, 2023). This, therefore, has been affecting the productivity of agriculture and the food security situation has been continuing in the country.

One obvious political factors insecurity and conflict that has direct impact on food system. Nigeria has seen different types of conflicts, ranging from conflict of farmers and herdsmen in his middle belt to the insurgency in the northeast, and banditry in the northwest. These conflicts have significant consequences for food security. Reduced levels of agricultural production occur when there is fear of violence among farmers, and farmers else have no choice other than to leave their land. Moreover, forced displacement impacts livelihoods and makes people more vulnerable to humanitarian assistance. Conflict is undoubtedly one of the main drivers of food insecurity as shown by the World Food Programme (2025) analysis of the global factors that contribute to the problem and Nigeria has been a good example of this. In situations of conflict, the food system collapses, markets are disrupted and food access is highly limited.

In addition, the inconsistency of food policy and non-continuity of government programmes have been a major obstacle to progress in the long-term alleviation of food insecurity. Agricultural and food security policies in Nigeria are frequently switched by every government, resulting in a lack of policy continuity and sustainability. Bogged down programs, or programs that

don't mature, don't have a meaningful impact. For example the Agriculture Promotion Policy (2016-2020) was designed to increase agricultural productivity and decrease food imports; however, its timeliness and implementation challenges affected its effectiveness, limiting its impact beyond its scope (Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2016). A series of short-term policy cycles undermines the food security system as a whole.

In addition, land governance and land tenure systems play a crucial political role in food security. Access to land is critical for agriculture but in Nigeria, many farmers lack formal land ownership. Poor land tenure structures make agricultural-investment less appealing and farmers are less likely to invest in land that is not theirs to keep. Evidence indicate that the benefits of secure land rights are large for increasing agricultural productivity and food security outcomes (Adeyemo and Adeagbo, 2024). But land conflicts, confusing land ownership, and the grabbing of land resources by the elite are still constraining agricultural development in Nigeria.

Food insecurity is connected with failure of the Government to pay attention to agriculture. In the past, Nigeria's attention has been directed towards the oil industry instead of agriculture, causing less investment to be made within the agricultural sector, in rural infrastructure, or in farming research and development. In a consequence, low productivity, cannot save the crop properly and the ineffective transportation network have been the result of this negligence. The agricultural sector with a lack of commitment and investment from the political party as a result fails to achieve food security.

Furthermore, the tendency of policy-makers to be urban-oriented

which has led to inequity in food security in rural areas where food production happens the most. There are government policies which are more interested in urban development and industrial development than in rural agriculture development. Poor rural infrastructure, limited access of farmers to markets and inadequate support of farmers emerge as outcomes. As a result, rural populations (even though they are the main food producers) are among the most vulnerable to food insecurity. International political and economic factors are another key element. Global trade policy, international financial institutions (IFIs), and multinational companies (MNCs) influence Nigerian's food system. At times, the Structural adjustment programs and trade liberalization policies have made local agriculture less competitive by jeopardizing the output by the local farmers through production competition with imported food (World Bank, 2020). All these factors have exposed Nigeria's food system to shocks from the outside world and the shortcomings of domestic policy.

Lastly, the lack of effective social protection systems is an indicator of political priorities and has significant effects on food security. Support through social protection initiatives like food security measures, cash transfers, and school feeding can support vulnerable people's food availability. However, these programs in Nigeria, are usually constrained in coverage, low on targeting and poorly executed. This means that a lot of households, especially those vulnerable to food insecurity, are not protected.

To conclude, politics is intricately linked to food security in Nigeria. Hunger persists due to weak governance, corruption, insecurity, inconsistent policies, weak land management provisions and inadequate social protection

measures. All these attest to the fact that the attainment of SDG Zero hunger is not a mere agricultural or economic problem, but a political one in Nigeria. Good governance, political will and ongoing commitment are thus needed in dealing with food insecurity.

2.1.3 Malnutrition

Malnutrition is a significant and important concept in food insecurity and sustainable development especially under SDG Zero Hunger. It is the lack or excess or imbalance in one's consumption of energy and nutrients (World Health Organization, 2024). Hunger is not the only form of malnutrition and can also be over-nutrition. Under-nutrition includes conditions like stunting (low height-for-age), wasting (low weight-for-height) and underweight while over-nutrition is overweight and overweight. Yet, food insecurity and under-nutrition remains the greatest issue in developing countries, such as Nigeria.

There is a close link between malnutrition and food insecurity because lack of access to food, in terms of quantity and quality, directly influences the food intakes of the population. Without the ability and/or affordability of diverse foods, households tend to stick to their lower-quality diets that are calorie-dense but lower in nutrients. This results in the deficiency of critical micro-nutrients or what is called 'hidden hunger' (Global Nutrition Report, 2023). This type of malnutrition is common in Nigeria, seriously affecting children and women of reproductive age, and is a public health problem.

Malnutrition's impact is broad and extends beyond the individual impact to the impact on national development. Malnutrition is harmful for children and can affect their cognitive growth, cause weakened immunity to diseases,

and stunt their physical growth. The United Nations Children's Fund (2023) indicates that Nigeria has one of the highest malnutrition prevalence in the world with high levels of child stunting and wasting. Very long lasting consequences, such as affecting educational attainment and productivity in adulthood. People who suffer from malnutrition also become less productive at work, have more health risks, and die more often than those who don't suffer from malnutrition.

There are other factors which also determine malnutrition beside food availability. Poor nutrient absorption and utilization is caused by health conditions, poor sanitation, lack of clean water and health care services (WHO, 2024). The body can still not adequately utilize nutrients, however, even when they are being consumed if the presence of repeated infections or improper hygiene prevents the body from doing so. This emphasizes the multi-dimensional nature of malnutrition in relation to health, environment and socio-economic conditions.

In Nigeria, there is a further level of complexity to address malnutrition as people living in different regions are affected differently. Under-nutrition rates are generally higher among people in the northern regions – these regions have high prevalence rates of poverty, conflict and poor access to health-care services. Insecurity-induced displacement also renders affected people vulnerable to malnutrition, with their reliance on limited humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, the feeding habits might be affected by cultural factors and nutritional habits which may be different for infants and young children.

Malnutrition is a central theme to achieving SDG Zero Hunger, as the

aim in addition to Zero Hunger is to improve nutrition. Nigeria has enacted interventions including school feeding programmes, maternal/child nutrition programmes, FOOD fortification and public health campaigns. Improvements, however, are slow due to poor implementation, funding constraints and structural obstacles. The malnutrition challenge, in turn, calls for a holistic and multisectoral response which combines food security, health care, education and social protection measures.

2.1.4 Sustainable Agriculture

Sustainable agriculture is considered to be a fundamental concept in striving for food security and the last mile in realizing SDG Zero Hunger. It is the means by which the agriculture sector supplies the present generation with sufficient nutritious food while retaining the potential of the future generation to supply nutritious food as well (United Nations, 2015). Sustainable agriculture not only focuses on resource efficiency and environmental protection but also on adapting to climate change, ensuring a reliable food supply for future generations.

Sustainable agriculture, on its basic level, aims to achieve a balance of three goals: economic sustainability, environmental compatibility and social equity. On the economic aspect, it wants to help the farmers to generate stable income and result in productive livelihood. Environmentally, it aims to manage the natural resources, which include soil, water, and biodiversity. Socially, it aims to engage people equitably and provide better access for rural people, thereby ensuring food availability for everyone. All three pillars are interdependent and critical to attain sustainable food systems.

Sustainable agriculture is very critical especially in Nigeria because of

its high dependence on agriculture for food production and livelihood. Small old farming is used by a significant part of the populace in Nigeria, it mostly lacks agro-inputs, technology, and the ability to cope with environmental shocks including diseases and unfavourable climate (World Bank, 2024). These challenges make it difficult to achieve consistent food production, thereby contributing to food insecurity.

Climate change is one of the critical challenges to sustainable agriculture in Nigeria. Agricultural yields were greatly impacted by altered rainfall, more droughts and floods, and warmer temperatures (IPCC 2021). If excess water inundates the crops, it damages crops and farmlands, if no water, it causes drought which causes low production due to lack of water in the soil. These environmental hurdles point to the need for sustainable responses to climate change in agriculture.

Implementing better agricultural practices and technologies is another aspect of sustainable agriculture. Productivity can be increased while minimizing impacts on the environment through such techniques as crop rotation, irrigation, adoption of improved seed varieties, and soil conservation. But financial, infrastructural and limited government investment are a problem for many farmers in Nigeria that gives them no access to these technologies. This gap between knowledge and practice remains a major obstacles to achieving sustainable agriculture.

The access to land and resources is also an important issue in sustainable agriculture. The secure-ownership of farmers strongly influences long term agronomic practices like soil improvement and irrigation system (Adeagbo and Adeyemo 2024). Insecure tenure on land, on the other

hand, leads to decreased productivity and investment. Thus, land reform policies will play a significant role in supporting sustainable agriculture in Nigeria.

Moreover, there needs to be robust institutional support and the effective implementation of policies for sustainable farming. Ideal productivity depends strongly on government policies toward supporting farmers, improving rural infrastructure and agricultural research. However, some of the factors which affect the effectiveness of these programmes in Nigeria include the issue of corruption, inconsistent policy and funding.

Moreover, sustainable agriculture is intrinsically related to food other than production systems. It encompasses market access, transportation, processing and storage. FAO estimates that reducing post harvest losses, such as due to inadequate storage, can help increase food availability by 10 percent. Likewise, inadequate transportation facilities restricts farmers' access to the market, both in terms of income and food distribution.

Finally, sustainable farming is crucial to guarantee long-term food security and decrease hunger in Nigeria. It is one way of enhancing food production, the environment and livelihoods. But, sustainable agriculture can only come about through concerted action of public policies, technological innovation, environmental management and support for smallholder farmers.

2.2 Contextual Review

Food Insecurity and the pursuit of SDG Zero Hunger in Africa

Despite decades of national policies, foreign aid and economic adjustments, food insecurity continues to be one of the development

challenges of the continent of Africa. African countries have vast potential for agricultural production that comprises almost 60% of the world's untapped arable land and available sources of freshwater resources (FAO 2024). However, at the same time there are some of the highest levels of hunger and malnutrition in the world on the continent! Africa's food insecurity isn't a new problem. In the past, most of the societies in Africa were predominantly agricultural, subsistence farming, animal husbandry, fishing, and local trade were their means of obtaining food (Iliffe, 1987). Droughts and famine did sometimes happen but a system of sharing within the communities and the native agricultural practices made communities able to cope with food shortages. But the "colonial period" dramatically changed African food systems. Colonial governments rather than people oriented to food production fostered cultivation of cash crops for export, like cocoa, cotton, coffee and groundnuts, than to food crops which could be eaten by local people (Rodney, 1972). This driving-away of weak aboriginal food production systems in the colony.

After independence, many African nations inherited weak agricultural systems with weak infrastructure, limited mechanization and reliance upon commodity exports. The rapid population growth after independence further exacerbated the food demand, whilst agricultural growth did not accompany these developments (Mkandawire & Soludo, 1999). As a result, in many African states food imports and external assistance have gained in importance as a means for domestic food needs to be met. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) strengthen the current commitment of all people at global level to eradicate hunger and attain food security in 2015. SDG 2 aims to take

action on hunger, ensure food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030 (United Nations, 2015). The objective acknowledges the key role of access to sufficient food in the enjoyment of the right to life, economic development and social stability.

However, progress towards achieving SDG Zero Hunger in Africa has been slow and uneven. The Food and Agriculture Organization (2024) estimates that in 2023, nearly one in five Africans was undernourished (298 million). Unavailability of basic foods due to undernourishment is the most prevalent form of food insecurity on Earth, in Africa (FAO et al., 2024). Sub-Saharan Africa is particularly vulnerable. Despite improvements in agricultural technology and more aid provided by the international community for development (United Nations, 2023), the region experiences a disproportionately large share of global hunger. There are a number of reasons for this ongoing food insecurity.

Firstly, the problem of poverty is so prevalent in the continent. According to the World Bank (2024), poverty is a pressing issue impacting many people in sub-Saharan Africa. Households' purchasing power is constrained by poverty and they also lack access to nutritious food. While there may be some food available in markets, millions of people do not have the money to purchase the food.

Secondly, climate change has emerged as one of the biggest food security challenges in Africa. African nations are noted among the world's most susceptible to climate-related disasters, such as temperature increases, desertification, droughts and floods, by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2021). These environmental impacts decrease the

productivity of agriculture, exacerbate food price increases and destroy livelihoods. This is a case example in the Horn of Africa. Suriname and others have experienced failed crops and livestock losses that have put millions of people at risk of hunger in countries like Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya (World Food Programme, 2024).

Third, conflict and political instability persists, affects food security in Africa and continues to be a problem. Agricultural production has been impacted by protracted conflicts and linked to high population movements in several countries such as Sudan, South South, Democratic Republic of Congo and Central African republic (FAO, 2024). Farmers are tempted to leave the fields and market systems are disrupted because of conflict, which also causes infrastructure damage.

The second is that of fast-growing populations. By 2050, the population of Africa is projected to double by then, which will strain the land, water resources and food systems. (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2022). Feeding this growing population will become more and more difficult without significant improvement in agricultural productivity and food distribution system. Malnutrition is another problem that illustrates the food insecurity felt in Africa. UNICEF (2023) reports that millions of African children are stunted, wasted and micro-nutrient deficient. Malnutrition negatively affects learning, health and working capacity.

To address these challenges, African governments and international organizations have adopted a range of initiatives to address food security challenges. This involves the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural

Growth and Transformation and a number of climate adaptation measures (African Union 2014).

Though such efforts have taken place, implementation issues including lack of financial resources, weak institutions, corruption, and lack of infrastructure have hindered implementation progress. African countries are thus falling behind in their attempts to reach SDG Zero Hunger by 2030 (United Nations, 2023). Food insecurity on the African continent is not just about food -- it has a wider impact. Inadequate access to food adds to poverty, migration, social unrest and political instability. It also impacts sustainable development overall, in terms such as health, education, gender equality and economic growth.

Thus, food insecurity in Africa is a multi-dimensional developmental problem with people-centric and multi-sectoral solutions that must be implemented in conjunction with each other.

2.2.2 Nigeria and Food Insecurity/Zero Hunger

To date, some of the starkest contradictions exist in Nigeria with respect to very high agricultural capacity and unexplained chronic food insecurity. With an estimated estimated of 70 million hectares of land fit for farming, favorable climatic conditions, and a large number of laborers (Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2022), the country has all the necessary factors to become one of the world's leading food producers. However, food insecurity is a significant development challenge, notwithstanding all these benefits.

Agriculture was the main economic activity in Nigeria before the discovery of oil. In its early period of development, Nigeria became one of the

largest producers of cocoa, palm oil and groundnuts in the world during the 1950s and the early 1960s (Ake, 1981). Agricultural production was besides an important food security source a source for export earnings and employment. Casual discovery of crude oil in commercial quantities however diverted the government attention from agriculture. Depression in investment in agricultural infrastructure and rural development between the 1970s and 1990s led to an oil boom. (Falola & Heaton, 2008). This resulted in declining food production to cater for growing population and they feared the need for more food imports in Nigeria.

Nigeria bears rampant food insecurity, which is signified by various indicators. Nigeria's level of hunger is serious, and it ranks among those nations with major food security issues according to the Global hunger Index (2024). Likewise, World Food Programme (2024) puts the number of acute food insecure Nigerians at over 31 million.

Poverty continues to be one of the major causes of food insecurity in Nigeria. The World Bank (2024) estimates the national poverty rate to be 46 per cent in Nigeria. Households living in poverty have less purchasing power and ability to access nutritious foods. The situation has worsened further due to food inflation. High transportation costs, insecurity, and disruption of food supply, as well as fluctuations in the exchange rate are driving up food prices, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (2024). With the increased food prices, many households have to limit the quantity of food intake and change the nutritious foods with cheaper ones.

Nigeria's food insecurity has also been greatly attributed to environmental factors. Precipitation has become more variable and extreme

heat events like floods and dry periods have become more vulnerable due to climate change (IPCC, 2021). In 2022, thousands of hectares of farmland were lost and food production in several states was adversely impacted by devastating floods. Security is another context issue. Since the early 2014 outbreak of a sentient Boko Haram insurgency, banditry, and farmer/herder violence have forced millions out of their homes and affected crop cultivation activities (World Food Programme, 2024). Many farmers have abandoned their farmsteads on the grounds that they were threatened of attacks in many communities.

Malnutrition continues to be a significant issue. According to UNICEF (2023), Nigeria ranks amongst the nation having the most stunted children in the world. Child malnutrition is associated with child cognitive underdevelopment, productivity loss and mortality risk. To tackle food insecurity situations, the Nigerian government has taken up several initiatives such as National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Policy (Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2022), the Agricultural Promotion Policy and the Anchor Borrowers' Programme. There have also been attempts to implement social intervention programmes, such as the national home-grown school feeding programme.

However, despite all these progress to attain SDG – Zero Hunger is still low because of less effectiveness of policies, allocation of insufficient budget, weak institutions, corruption, and less effective implementation (Ibrahim & Ya'u, 2025). It is easy to observe from the Nigerian experience that, food insecurity is multidimensional, economic, environmental and political in nature. Thus, SDG Zero Hunger demands creating systemic shifts towards

agricultural and poverty reduction, climate resilience, governance and social protection measures.

2.3 Empirical Review

Empirical research in Nigeria shows that food insecurity is quite pervasive, persistent and multidimensional. Different methods have been employed in the analysis of the causes and patterns of food insecurity, such as household surveys; econometric modelling and systematic review. Although there are varying approaches to the study, the majority of studies indicate that food insecurity in Nigeria is high, yet linked by a host of economic, environmental and political factors.

Food insecurity is difficult to measure with a single indicator, one of the most comprehensive studies being carried out by Otekunrin and Mukaila (2023) which explored various data sets and research findings on food insecurity. The authors pointed out that food security is not just about the access to food and its quantity, but also its quality, diversity and availability. According to their findings, there has been a considerable level of food insecurity in Nigerian households both in the past and at the present level of interventions, which can be classified as moderate or severe household food insecurity.

Likewise, Ogundari (2017) categorized the Nigerian households using the national representative household data. Multiple indicators (food expenditure and dietary diversity) were used, with the proportion of households food secure being significantly lower when more comprehensive measures were used in the study. This implies that there have been underestimations of the extent of food insecurity in Nigeria. Education,

income level and household size were also identified as factors determining food security in the study.

One of the other empirical studies of interest is Owoo (2021), which looked at the link between household size and the food security situation in the framework of the Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS) by the World Bank. Even the results showed that there is a positive correlation between level of food insecurity and family size, especially in urban areas. The study found larger households leading to lower consumption per capita of food resources as they are distributed over a larger number of mouths. This clearly shows the importance of demographic factors in distributing food security results amongst Nigeria's population.

Oderinde, Ilesanmi and Afolabi (2023) reported their study of the problem of food insecurity amongst households with under-fives in Slum areas in Ibadan. The study also revealed a high prevalence level of food insecurity estimated at almost 81% by using cross-sectional survey data. The researchers also discovered a strong linkage between food insecurity and child malnutrition, especially wasting. The connection between food access and nutrition outcomes is emphasized, demonstrating that food insecurity affects short- and long-term nutrition.

In terms of economic factors, several empirical studies have shown the relationship between poverty (and related income) and food security. Inflation and a weakened economy in Nigeria have lowered residents' purchasing power to a level that has become more difficult to afford food as per the World Bank (2024) report. Likewise, research has found a correlation between low wages and food insecurity: Households that have a low income

are at a disadvantage to obtaining enough food. The study confirms the concept that food insecurity in Nigeria is a problem of economic access besides food access.

Environmental factors also have been extensively investigated. Climate change impacts on food production in Nigeria has been demonstrated through research based on climate data and agricultural output which has been substantially changed by climate change (IPCC, 2021). In the past, for instance, floods and droughts have caused yields to crops and farming activities. Empirical evidence suggests that as a result of desertification and the shifting nature of climatic conditions in northern Nigeria, less food has been produced, causing food insecurity. The studies underscore the weaknesses of Nigeria's food system to environmental shocks.

Politically, Ibrahim and Ya'u (2025) studied the governance-food security nexus in Nigeria. They showed that in their study poor policy implementation, weak institutions and corruption are some of the primary causes of food insecurity. But the authors have suggested that public sector resources spent on agriculture do not deliver optimal results, even at optimal usage, due to mismanagement and a lack of accountability. This finding is in line with the previous studies showing that food insecurity in Uganda is associated with governance failure.

Other literature on conflict confirms the effect of political violence on food insecurity. Insecurity in the north of Nigeria has displaced farmers and resulted in the disruption of farming activities, making people in the affected areas more hungry (World Food Programme, 2025). Empirical evidence indicates that households in conflict zones are more vulnerable to acute food

insecurity as they suffer livelihood losses and lack market access. This is an example of political instability and access.

Adeyemo and Adeagbo (2024) reviewed the effect of land titling on food security of Nigeria farmers in the context of policies interventions.The results of the study showed that secure land ownership is associated with better agriculture and household food consumption through econometric analysis. Farmers with land certificates were more likely to invest in their farmers and so apply improved technologies which resulted in improved food security outcomes. It implies that change in institutions can be very significant in strengthening food security.

Ogunyemi and Olubiyi (2023) conducted another study on the potential of the Plant Variety Protection act in advancing Agricultural production in Nigeria. The authors maintained that the protection of plant varieties could stimulate innovation and boost crop production and hence food security. But they added that it must be implemented effectively to take advantage of these advantages.

There are also some lessons from studies on humanitarian interventions. The study by Apoghelie et al (2024) looked into the contribution of the WFP towards mitigating food insecurity challenges in the country's northern region.The study revealed that although emergency food assistance has been effective in the short term in alleviating immediate food insecurity, it has lacked effectiveness in bringing about structural change. This indicates the need of investments in agriculture,infrastructure and governance to ensure a long-term solution.

As a whole, empirical literature verifies that food insecurity in Nigeria

is a multi-facet phenomenon of a persistent characteristic. It is influenced by economic factors, socioeconomic pressure and inflation, environmental factors like climate change, and political factors like conflict and governance. Several interventions have been undertaken, but underpinned by poor structural arrangements and policy implementation these have not been impactful.

Notably, most empirical literatures tend to look at food security in specific dimensions, instead of addressing the food security in an extensive way in the SDG Zero Hunger frames of reference. This leaves a gap in the literature because there is a lack of research that directly considers the economic, environmental and political impacts at the same time. This study aims to address this gap through a more comprehensive research on food insecurity in Nigeria.

2.5 Theoretical Review

This project deals mainly with the concept of entitlement theory.

2.5.1 Entitlement Theory

Amartya Sen's theory of 'entitlement' claims that hunger and famine are primarily due to constraints on individual access to food rather than deprivation of food. Driven by the theory of Amartya Sen, the following theory offers a robust explanation of how food security is caused by de-emphasizing food availability and expanding to food accessibility. In his book Poverty and Famines (1981), Sen showed that the problem does not lie necessarily with the lack of food, it lies with the lack of means of obtaining food. This was an idea that set out the frameworks previously held for naming

famine with food shortages alone.

This theory is on the assumption of entitlements (entitled resources and opportunities) that one has to use to obtain food. Amartya distinguished four forms: production-based entitlement (production of food), trade-based entitlement (exchanging or obtaining food via trade), labour-based entitlement (wages) and transfer entitlement (aid or support) (Sen 1981). When these entitlements are not fulfilled, food insecurity happens. This means that no individuals can obtain food by any of these means!

One aspect of the theory of entitlement that has proved particularly useful is its ability to explain why hunger is possible, despite the presence of food in markets. This is especially pertinent in Nigeria where food is available, but its availability for many households is impaired by poverty, unemployment, and high food prices (World Bank, 2024). However, in this setting, there is no food scarcity problem but rather a problem stemming from a lack of purchasing power; this is an economic entitlement failure.

It also emphasizes the importance of social and political factors in determining food access. Limitation of the entitlements are possible due to inequality, weak governance and poor policy implementation. For example, in Nigeria, low access to resources and social protection programs is driven by corruption and weak social protection systems, leading to increased vulnerability to food insecurity (Ibrahim and Ya'u, 2025). Likewise, agricultural and livelihood losses, including land grabs and migration, may require a reconfiguration of entitlement structures.Likewise, conflict and displacement may create problems for agriculture, trade and jobs resulting in a breakdown of entitlement structures.

It has encountered some criticism that it is not comprehensive enough in its consideration of food production problems, yet Entitlement Theory is very relevant. It builds on other frameworks by articulating the reasons for why increase in food insecurity is not occurring despite having available food. In the context of Nigeria and SDG Zero Hunger, theory mapping can be used in several ways and serves as a tool to demonstrate how a possible solution to hunger is achieved, which involves greater food production alongside better income and governance and resource access.

To conclude, Entitlement Theory interpretation of food insecurity highlights issues of access not availability, and that economic capacity, social frameworks and political circumstances all play a part in food insecurity. It can lay a solid ground to the understanding of the reasons behind the existence of hunger in Nigeria, despite the efforts to eliminate it.

2.5.2 The food security framework theory (Four pillars of food security)

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) formulated and popularized the Food Security/Contextualized Framework Theory (the Four Pillars of Food Security) after the World Food Summit in Rome, 1996. The frame has been conceived to give a completed vision of the state of food security at country level and to direct national and worldwide policies on the battle against hunger and malnutrition (FAO, 1996).

According to the theory, food security occurs when everyone at all times can obtain sufficient access to safe and nutritious food in adequate quantities for an active healthy life through physical, social, and economic means of meeting food and water requirements. (FAO, 1996). It is one of the most universally agreed definitions of food security and the basis of many

policies and development programmes that exist all around the world.

The Food Security Framework does not appraise hunger as just a food production issue as the earlier perceptions did, instead of this the Food Security is multidimensional. The food security is dependent on four intertwined pillars: Food availability, Food access, Food utilization, and Food stability (FAO, 1996; FAO, 2008).

Food Availability

Food availability, which is a component of food security, is the absolute amount (or volume) of food available, whether in the form of consumption, imports, or bio-fortified supplies. It emphasizes the supply-side of food security and considers domestic food production, food imports and food aid, and food stocks (FAO, 2008). Improvements in food availability can be achieved through increased productivity, better storage, and better food distribution systems in a country.

News on food availability has remained a concern in Nigeria despite the its great potential for agricultural production. Due to food unavailability caused by various challenges including low productivity in agricultural production, loss of food during post-harvest processing stages, poor infrastructure, insecurity and others, many sections of the country are experiencing scarcity of food (Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2022).

Food Access

Food accessibility indicates people's access to adequate and nutritious food. It encompasses both economic access and physical access. Economic access is defined in terms of income, employment, and purchasing power, and

physical access in terms of transportation systems, markets and infrastructure (FAO, 2008). This pillar is of great concern in Nigeria as there is access to food in the markets but most of the households are poor and unable to pay for it amid the inflation. According to World Bank (2024), the surge in food prices and purchasing power has greatly contributed to food insecurity facing Nigerian households.

Food Utilization

The utilization of food is how well the body uses and derives the needed nutrients to achieve healthy living. It comprises of various food quality criteria, such as food preparation, sanitation, clean water and access to health services (FAO, 2008). This pillar puts in place the food security of not only eating food but eating healthy food that will lead to good health. Even with good food coverage, malnutrition can be caused by poor sanitation and inadequate health care, as well as feeding practices. This is especially true in Nigeria where stunting among children and micro-nutrient deficiencies are a major public health problem in the country (UNICEF, 2023).

Food Stability

Food stability is defined as the capacity of people and families to get enough food regularly, in the long-term. Uncertainty in accessing food for the future, whether in the context of economic crisis, climatic shocks, conflicts, or seasonal scarcity, can result in a person being food insecure despite having access to food now (FAO, 2008). Food stability in Nigeria has been threatened with inflation, insecurity from flooding and agricultural production instability. With recurring occurrences of displacement, caused by insurgency and banditry, the food production systems, and long-term food

security were negatively impacted (World Food Programme, 2024).

This study could be relevant to the Food Security Framework Theory since it gives full dressing of food insecurity in Nigeria transpired in several dimensions. The theory suggests that food insecurity is not necessarily caused by food production, it also can be attributed to issues such as access, utilization and food security instability. The framework also relates to the SDG Zero Hunger goal which aims to end hunger and to make nutrition and sustainable agriculture (United Nations, 2015). The theory can be related to Nigeria's food insecurity, even after many government initiatives and agricultural programmes through the four pillars.

Moreover, the theory serves as a convenient has to investigate economic, environmental and political determinants of food insecurity in Nigeria. Poverty, inflation and insecurity have consequences for food access; climate change has consequences for food availability and food stability; whereas food governance challenges have consequence for all the four pillars of food security. The theory for this is alongside Entitlement Theory. The Fairness theory on food entitlements (also known as Entitlement Theory) is concerned with the capacity shift that causes individuals to lose access to food while the dwindling food security framework theory (also known as the Food Security Framework Theory) focuses on the various approaches through which a loss of access to a food becomes a food security problem.

2.6 Gap in Literature

There is a rich body of literature available that addresses the issue of food insecurity in Nigeria; however, there are some areas where there is a lack of effective literature. First, many studies focus on one dimension only,

such as household demographics, land tenure, slum conditions, or one policy reform, rather than assessing persistence under SDG Zero Hunger as a whole. Second, while the economic, environmental, and political drivers if food insecurity are well documented, few studies integrate all three within a single Nigeria-focused SDG 2 framework. Third, much of the literature stops at diagnosis and does not fully connect policy effort to their actual outcomes over time.

A second gap is methodological. Ogundari's work shows that food insecurity is multidimensional and that single indicators can misclassify households, yet many empirical studies still rely on limited indicators or narrow samples. There is also a need for more studies that connect national SDG 2 commitments with actual household experiences, especially in the current context of inflation, conflict, and climate shocks. This study fills that gap by assessing whether food insecurity has persisted in Nigeria despite effort towards Zero Hunger and by examining the economic, environmental, and political factors combine to sustain the problem.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the entitlement theory developed by Amartya Sen, in 1981. The theory provides a fundamental explanation of food insecurity by shifting attention from food availability to food access. In Poverty and Famines (1981), Senn argues that hunger does not necessarily arise from a shortage of food, but from individual inability to command food through availability economic and social means.

According to the theory, individuals obtain food through different "entitlements," which include production-based entitlement (growing food), trade-based entitlement (buying or exchanging goods), labour-based entitlement (earning income to purchase food), and transfer entitlement (receiving aid or support). If such entitlement systems are weakened or fail, people fall prey to what is available in the economy.

The importance of this theory is that it can account for situations in the real world where food is available in markets, but still people are hungry. It highlights Income, Inequality and institutional factors as factors affecting food access. In many developing nations like Nigeria, where poverty, inflation and unemployment abound. While agriculture and policy initiatives have been working toward improving food security, Entitlement Theory offers a robust perspective on why these gains have been slow to materialize.Despite the continuous efforts in agriculture and policy, food insecurity persists, and this is where Entitlement Theory proves valuable in

understanding the issue.

The assumptions of the Entitlement Theory.

The Entitlement Theory was formulated by Amartya Sen in his book Poverty and Famines (1981) and is based on some basic assumptions about the drivers of hunger and food insecurity. Instead of hunger simply being caused by the shortage of food, as traditional theories suggest, the Entitlement Theory maintains that the core problem lies in people's access to food because of problems in their entitlement systems. The major assumptions of the theory are discussed below.

Hunger and food insecurity are largely related to access to food, not its availability.

The first assumption of Entitlement Theory is that hunger does not always occur due to food scarcity in a country or region, but because of the lack of people or groups' ability to access food (Sen, 1981). The theory states that a country can have plenty of food but still have hunger when the people lack the economic or social capacity to access food. Therefore, food insecurity is a problem of lack of entitlement, not of food scarcity.

It is particularly relevant in Nigeria, where food is available in urban and rural markets, but millions of people are unable to access sufficient and nutritious food as a result of poverty and low purchasing power (World Bank, 2024).

People's methods of getting food are different.

Yet another assumption of the theory is related to an individual getting food through various entitlement systems. Individuals do not rely on a single source in acquiring food, as noted by Sen (1981). The theory: People

can access food by means of:

- Producing their own food;
- Selling goods or services;
- Working and earning wages;
- Receiving support from family, government, or aid organizations.

Since people rely in different means of acquiring food, any disruption in one or more of these entitlement systems can expose them to food insecurity. For instance, farmers will have less access to food when their crops are washed away, or when they are unemployed or are finding it harder to afford food due to inflation.

Economics plays a key role in food security.

The concept of Entitlement Theory assumes that the key determinant of access to food is economic conditions. A person's right to food is directly related to income, employment, market prices and inflation (Dreze & Sen, 1989). The theory suggests that a loss of income, a decrease in income and/or an increase in food cost will reduce the food available to people.

It is assumed in Nigeria where the inflation crisis and the high unemployment rate has severely curtailed the purchasing power of the households, leading to the high level of food insecurity among households in the country (National Bureau of Statistics, 2024).

Hunger is a major problem caused by poverty.

The theory proposes that poverty is one of the major factors contributing to food insecurity. Hunger tends to be experienced by individuals who have less than adequate income, resources, or assets. The low-income groups are more susceptible to entitlement failure as they have less resource

to deal with the economic and environmental shocks according to Sen (1981).

This assumption is especially relevant in developing nations and the majority of the population living in these countries lives in poverty making millions of families food insecure.

Social and political structures affect access to food.

According to Entitlement Theory, social, economic and political institutions determine access to food. The ability of individuals to access food is a function of government policy, property rights, market systems and social inequalities (Dreze & Sen, 1989). It can be undermined by poor governance, corruption, conflict, discriminatory practices, etc., which can reduce food security and affect entitlement systems.

This is one of the reasons behind the fact that the hunger situation in countries with similar food production levels can vary.

Food security is closely related to human capabilities.

The theory assumes that food is a crucial enabler of human capabilities and well-being. In the spirit of Sen's much broader notion of the Capability Approach, it is clear that providing people with sufficient nutrition helps them to lead productive and meaningful lives (Sen, 1999). Without food, people's health suffers, productivity suffers, and opportunities for development become more limited.

Food insecurity is thus considered not just as a nutritional issue but a lack of human freedom and capacities.

Application of the theory to the research

In this study, the Entitlement Theory is directly applied to explain the endurance of food insecurity in Nigeria in the context of SDG Zero Hunger. It

is theorized that food insecurity is linked to low income levels, high food prices, etc., which reduce an individual's purchasing power, and therefore their access to food.

It also provides insight into how political factors influence food access. Issues such as corruption,weak governance, and poor policy implementation reduce the effectiveness of food security programs and limit access to resources. In addition, conflict and insecurity disrupt agricultural activities and markets, leading to a breakdown of production and labour-based entitlements (Ibrahim and Ya'u, 2025).

Furthermore, environmental factors such as climate change, flooding, and drought affect agricultural productivity, thereby weakening production-based entitlements (IPCC, 2021). By integrating these dimensions, the theory allows this study to examine food insecurity in Nigeria as a multidimensional issues shaped by economic, political, and environmental forces.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive research design. A descriptive design is appropriate because it allows the researcher to systematically describe and analyze the nature, causes, and effects of food insecurity in Nigeria. The design focuses in examining existing conditions and relationships between variables without manipulating them. It is suitable for this study because the research seeks to understand how food insecurity persists and the factors contributing to it within the context of SDG Zero Hunger. Descriptive research has been widely used in food security studies because it allows for the use of secondary data and provides a clear understanding of trends and

patterns (Otekunrin et al., 2023).

3.3 Method of Data Collection

This study adopts a qualitative method of data collection, relying primarily on secondary data. The qualitative data collection is the collection of non-numerical data like report, text, document, etc. that is used to explore patterns, experiences and underlying causes of a phenomenon. This study uses data that is already available, published and collected by reputable sources (secondary data), rather than primary data which is data collected first-hand from respondents.

Secondary data are information collected from the sources that are already available like academic journals, government publications, reports from international organizations, etc. The data used in this study were obtained from various sources such as the Food and Agriculture Organization, World Bank, and United Nations. These sources offer trusted information regarding food insecurity, poverty, agricultural production and progress toward SDG in Nigeria.

Qualitative secondary data is used when it is suitable, such as in this case where the results, trends and interpretation from experts of food insecurity are used to conduct a comprehensive analysis. It also provides access to large scale and credible data that would be difficult to access through primary research in the scope of this study.

3.4 Research Hypotheses

The study has two (2) research hypotheses namely:

1. Despite efforts towards achieving SDG Zero Hunger, food insecurity

has remained a challenge in Nigeria.

2. Food insecurity in Nigeria is highly influenced by economic, environmental and political factors.

3.5 Method of Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis method is used in this study. Content analysis is used for analyzing the information obtained from secondary sources. Content analysis is a systematic process of reading and understanding content of documents, reports, and literature for patterns, relationships, and themes. This method is suitable because the study focuses in understanding the causes and persistence of food insecurity rather than numerical measurement.

The analysis is guided by the study objectives and theoretical framework, allowing for a comprehensive interpretation of economic, environmental, and political factors influencing food insecurity in Nigeria.

Research Questions	Hypotheses	Major Variables	Empirical Indicator	Method of Data Collection	Sources of Data	M D A
1. How has food insecurity persisted in Nigeria despite efforts towards achieving SDG Zero Hunger?	Food insecurity has persisted in Nigeria despite efforts towards achieving SDG Zero Hunger.	X Food insecurity in Nigeria Y SDG Zero Hunger	Hunger prevalence, malnutrition rates, food access levels	Qualitative method of data collection based on documentary evidence	Secondary sources of data, including FAO reports, World Bank data, UN SDG reports, peer-reviewed journals, IPCC data, academic studies, international organizations, articles and publications.	C a b c e n

	Research Questions	Hypotheses	Major Variables	Empirical Indicator	Method of Data Collection	Sources of Data	M D A
2. How has economic, environmental, and political factors contributed to food insecurity in Nigeria?	Economic, environmental, and political factors significantly contribute to food insecurity in Nigeria.	X Economic, environmental, and political factors. Y Food insecurity.	Poverty rate, inflation, climate impact, conflict levels	Qualitative method of data collection based on documentary evidence	Secondary sources of data, including FAO reports, World Bank data, UN SDG reports, peer-reviewed journals, IPCC data, academic studies, international organizations, articles and publications.	Content analysis based on content evaluation.	

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Analysis and interpretation of findings according to the objective and hypotheses of the study is presented in this chapter. It focused on the issue of the persistence of food insecurity despite the target of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Zero Hunger, and saw how economic, environmental and political factors affect food insecurity in Nigeria.

Qualitative Descriptive Analysis (QDA) is the main analysis chosen by the chapter. In QDA, the systematic analysis or interpretation of textual and documentary evidence from a logical and systematic process and analysis of information derived from secondary sources like academic journals articles, policy documents, government publications, statistical databases, and documentation from international organizations. This approach will help the researcher to gather recurring themes, relationships, and patterns on food security, hunger, malnutrition, and poverty, Nigeria's governance, environmental degradation and sustainable development (Otekunrin et al., 2023; Maxwell, 1996; FAO, 2024).

The chapter is structured either around the two research hypotheses that formed the basis of the study or reference to the findings of the assessments. Peer-reviewed literature, empirical data, theoretical perspectives, and institutional reports are all combined together in the analysis to get a comprehensive picture of the challenge of food insecurity in Nigeria.

4.1 Despite progress towards SDG Zero Hunger, food insecurity remains in

Nigeria.

This first hypothesis is geared to make a determination of whether food security has remained prevalent in Nigeria even in the face of national and international endeavours to eradicate hunger through SDG 2.This first hypothesis focuses on determining if food security has still been a problem in Nigeria despite local and international initiatives to tackle SDG Zero Hunger. This idea is strongly supported by the literature and evidences reviewed, as well as the experiences of the respondents, indicating food insecurity continues to be a threat in Nigeria, albeit not necessarily as severe as previously thought.

Recognizing the global need to reduce hunger and create access to safe, nutritious and adequate food for all nations by 2030, the Sustainable Development Goals were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 (United Nations, 2015). SDG Two targets the achievement of hunger eradication, improved nutrition and clean agriculture innovations. But, notwithstanding these obligations, a high hunger and malnutrition situation prevails in Nigeria. Food insecurity has worsened in Nigeria in the last decade largely owing to structural challenges in its agricultural sector, climate change and insecurity and economic instability (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2024). The 2024 State Food Security and Nutrition in the World report shows that many Nigerians continue to lack the funds to attain access to adequate nutrition which has been impeded by high food prices and weak purchasing power. The report also provides elaboration on the sub-Saharan region being the highest prevalent area of undernourishment around the world, Nigeria being a country with high prevalence (FAO et al., 2023).

Further, empirical findings from peer-reviewed research studies also attest to the continued food insecurity crisis in Nigeria. The authors of the study (Otekunrin et al., 2023) believe that the food insecurity situation in Nigeria has grown complex, and that not only is the amount of food inadequate, but access to food is also inadequate, along with a lack of dietary diversity and nutritional deficiencies. Likewise, Ogundari (2017) reported that a significant number of Nigerian households were still food insecure despite the activities of the government towards food production and poverty eradication.

The increasing hunger rate and deteriorating malnutrition indicators in Nigeria also provide evidence for food insecurity. Nigeria have one of the world's most malnourished child populations, especially in northern Nigeria, where conflict and poverty hit hard, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (2023). Chronic food insecurity, characterized by stunted, wasted and underweight children, affects millions of children (WHO, 2024; UNICEF, 2023). The Global Nutrition Report (2023) also indicates that inappropriate diet intake and poor access to nutritious food continue to play significant role in Nigeria's nutrition situation.

Increasing household food unaffordability is also a major indicator of a heightened level of food insecurity. According to data from the World Bank (2024), the depreciation of the Nigerian Naira, due to economic uncertainty and increasing transportation expenses among other factors, has caused food price inflation to stay at its highest level. The rise in food prices has been steep in comparison to household incomes, thus affecting household purchasing power and vulnerability to access hunger (World Bank, 2024;

Reuters, 2024). The result is similar to Amartya Sen's Entitlement Theory in which he states that hunger is not because food is actually scarce, but rather as a result of a lack of economic opportunities (Sen, 1981).

Though Nigeria has high agricultural potential, agricultural productivity is comparatively poor. There is the opinion of some scholars who state that the output abilities in food production are still hampered by poor infrastructure, inefficient storage facilities, access limitation to credit facilities and a low technological development (Adeyemo & Adeagbo, 2024; Owoo, 2021). High post harvest loses remain as inadequate transportation systems, insufficient preservation facilities allow food to be lost.

That food insecurity is still a reality also indicates the weak impact of government interventions. The Nigerian government has launched a number of food security and agricultural development programmes in recent years such as the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme, the Anchor Borrowers Programme and the Agricultural Transformation Agenda and poverty reduction policies. However, research indicates that they have been only partially successful, owing to various reasons, such as allegations of corruption, inadequate implementation, ineffective monitoring, and inconsistent policy implementation (Ibrahim & Ya'u, 2025; Ecker, 2018).

To promote school attendance and child nutrition improvement, the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme was established, for instance. The program had some achievements in certain states, but it was found that lack of funding, corruption, and organizational difficulties reduced the impact of the program (UNDP, 2022). In a similar manner, the Failures of the Anchor Borrowers Programme for smallholder farmers and

there were no good loan recovery systems and no good targeting mechanisms.

In addition, conflict and insecurity are an exacerbating factor of food insecurity in Nigeria. Insurgents in NE Nigeria, farmer-herder conflicts in Middle Belt and Banditry in Northwestern States have caused millions of Nigerians to be displaced and impacted agricultural productivity (WFP 2025; ICG 2023). Unsecured farmers often leave their farms in conflict areas because they fear insecurity, which creates a negative consequence on the pressure of food production and hunger levels. According to World Food Programme (WFP, 2025), Nigeria has an estimated one million of people with acute food insecurity, particularly in conflict affected areas. Displacement also has an impact on household income and food access as well as nutrition, leading to both hunger and poverty.

The second key issue is the urbanization of food insecurity. The notion of 'rural hunger' had been the dominant theme of early research, but current research suggests a significant rise in urban food insecurity in the modern era, mainly as a result of unemployment, inflation and rising living costs (Maxwell, 1996; Owoo, 2021). The real incomes of urban households are falling, creating a challenge to sustain their food consumption.

The findings, therefore, indicate that food insecurity in Nigeria has obviously not been eradicated by the SDG Zero Hunger Programmes and national actions. The structural determinants of food insecurity, such as poverty, inequality, insecurity, institutional weakness and environmental challenges, have not received adequate attention in existing programmes. Therefore, the first hypothesis of the study is accepted.

4.2 Food insecurity is greatly influenced by economic, environmental and

political conditions in Nigeria

The second hypothesis looks at the role of economic, environmental and political factors in food insecurity in Nigeria. The reviewed literature and institutional reports point to the conclusion that these factors all contribute significantly to the overall food insecurity situation in the country.

Economic factors was one of the most significant factors that affected food insecurity in Nigeria. Households' food access is severely impacted by poverty, unemployment, inflation, and low wages, among other factors (World Bank, 2024; FAO, 2024). With Nigeria's massive human and natural resources, poverty is still prevalent in the country. The World Bank (2024) reported that millions of Nigerians are living in poverty, more so in the rural areas. Poverty has a direct impact on food access because poor households have low incomes which in turn means they cannot afford sufficient and nutritious diets.

One of the most critical economic problems that has impacted Nigeria's food security is food inflation. The report indicates that the depreciation of the currency, the removal of the subsidy on petrol/diesel, transportation costs and reliance on imports have led to a significant increase in food prices over the past few years (Reuters, 2024; FAO, 2025). Households are compelled to cut back on food consumption, both in terms of quantity and quality, which significantly contributes to malnutrition and hunger as food prices rise.

Household food security is also undermined by unemployment and under-employment. Nigerians particularly youths are not earning a stable income to buy food on a regular basis (Owoo 2021). Those involved in the informal sector are especially vulnerable, as their livelihoods are not stable and are

severely impacted by economic shocks. Food importation is another factor of vulnerability for Nigeria. Volatile exchange rates and food market instability abroad raise the price of imported foods, which contributes to the high level of food inflation in the country (World Bank, 2024). This is an example of how local food insecurity can be exacerbated by international economic pressures.

Food inequality is also driven by economic inequality. In times of crisis, wealthy households may keep their households' food secure, whereas poor households suffer from severe deprivation. It is a reflection of Sen's argument that food security is primarily a problem of failure of entitlement and not food availability per se (Sen, 1981).

Food insecurity in Nigeria is also highly attributed to environmental factors. Agricultural production and food systems remain vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, flooding, drought, desertification and land degradation (IPCC, 2021; UNEP, 2023). Flooding has increasingly ravaged Nigeria. In 2024, severe floods resulted in significant reduction in crop production, displacement of farming communities and destruction of farmlands (FAO, 2024). Rice, maize and sorghum were major staple crops, which were greatly impacted, thereby contributing to food shortages and higher market prices.

Desertification is a major problem in Northern Nigeria and is making available farm land and agricultural production less. The impact of drought and irregular rainfall also on planting seasons and crops performance (IPCC, 2021). These conditions have increasingly made farming unpredictable and limited the food production capacity. Food systems are further weakened by environmental degradation due to unsustainable farming and deforestation

and erosion. In many farming communities, soil fertility is still decreasing, which ultimately is affecting agricultural production over time (UNEP, 2023). Climate change is an indirect cause of conflict and displacement, too. In several areas of Nigeria, farmers and herders had reached a point of conflict over the shrinking land and water resources which have hampered food production and distribution systems.

Political issues continue to play a significant role in the food insecurity situation in Nigeria. Current instability, insecurity, corruption and policy inconsistencies are continuing to hinder food security programmes and agricultural development (Ibrahim & Ya'u, 2025; Ecker, 2018). Agricultural and poverty alleviation schemes are less effective because of corruption. Food security interventions are often poorly managed and monitoring is inadequate.

There are also policy inconsistencies that hinder progress towards SDG Zero Hunger. Agricultural policies and policy changes are not consistent, which leads to a decrease in long-term planning and investment in the agriculture sector. One of the most troubling political issues of food insecurity is insecurity. Millions of Nigerians have been displaced due to the Boko Haram insurgency, banditry, farmer-herder conflicts and affected by disruptions in farming activities (International Crisis Group, 2023; WFP, 2025). The fear of attack prevents some farmers from growing crops, and markets and roads are often closed. This will decrease food production and food distribution.

There is also weak institutional capacity that is a factor in poor food governance. There is a lack of coordination and resources in government

agencies for effective implementation of food security. That makes it difficult to reach the most vulnerable populations, which makes interventions often not effective.

Thematic Interpretation of Findings 4.3

The results show that food insecurity in Nigeria is multidimensional and interlinked with economic, environmental and political factors. Hunger in Nigeria is not just a result of underproduction, but is an indicator of structural inequalities and institutional problems. The study also validates the pertinence of Entitlement Theory in the understanding of food insecurity in Nigeria. In the face of rising inflation, unemployment, conflict and environmental degradation, people's food access is undermined, which creates entitlement failures.

The results also indicate that Nigeria cannot be addressed in the fight for Zero Hunger if it is not accompanied by other interventions, besides agriculture. In order to achieve sustainable progress, there must be progress in governance, reduction of poverty, the strengthening of institutions, climate change response and political stability.

Overall, the study illustrates the failure of the structural drivers of food insecurity to be sufficiently dealt with under current policies and SDG goals.

4.4 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study reveal that food insecurity remains a major development challenge in Nigeria despite national and international efforts toward achieving SDG Zero Hunger. The study confirms that hunger, malnutrition, and inadequate access to nutritious food persist across

different parts of the country.

The findings also reveal that food insecurity in Nigeria is multidimensional. Economic hardship, inflation, poverty, climate change, flooding, insecurity, and poor governance all contribute significantly to the persistence of hunger. This supports the arguments of Amartya Sen's Entitlement Theory, which explains that hunger results not merely from lack of food availability but from failures in people's ability to access food.

The study further reveals that existing government interventions and SDG-related policies have not adequately addressed the structural causes of food insecurity. Weak institutions, corruption, insecurity, and poor implementation continue to undermine progress toward achieving Zero Hunger in Nigeria.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that achieving SDG Zero Hunger in Nigeria requires comprehensive and sustainable strategies that address economic inequality, environmental challenges, governance failures, and agricultural productivity simultaneous.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

The study looked at the issue of SDG Zero hunger and food insecurity in Africa, highlighting Nigeria. The study was inspired by high levels of hunger, malnutrition and access to food that despite the efforts of achieving SDG Two (United Nations, 2015), continue to rise. The research utilized the

Entitlement Theory (ET) as put forward by Amartya Sen, which paves the way on analyzing food insecurity as a lack of access to food instead of food availability. To establish this, the researcher adopted a qualitative descriptive analysis (QDA) and secondary data retrieved from journal, government and organizations like Food and Agriculture Organization, World Bank and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) information was used to find that food insecurity is still facing Nigeria even with efforts being made. It emerged that the poverty, inflation, joblessness, conflicts, poor governance and environmental issues still impede the availability of sufficient and nutritious food. Another key finding of the study has been that Nigeria's economic, environmental, and political concerns, including climate change, flooding, corruption, and insecurity, play a significant role in the country's food insecurity. The overall findings of the study showed that food insecurity in Nigeria is multidimensional, and has connections with general structural and developmental problems.

5.2 CONCLUSION

As the nation and the world strive for SDG Zero Hunger, Nigeria's food insecurity is still one of the most serious developmental challenges faced. The results of the study confirmed that the general level of hunger in Nigeria is not just because of low food production but results in the context of poverty, economic hardship, less governance, insecurity and environmental degradation. The perseverance of food insecurity is a sign of the failure of the current policies and interventions to meet the structural causes of food insecurity or to reverse the situation.

The study also reinforces that for Nigeria to realize the SDG Zero

Hunger goal, there is a need to adopt a holistic and sustainable intervention strategy. The critical issues to tackle food insecurity are related to better governance, good policy implementation, economic stability, enhanced investments in agriculture, adaptation to climate change and better support institutional mechanisms. Unless Nigeria's structural problems are tackled, it could still be a hunger-filled country with its huge potential in agriculture and humans.

5.3 FINDINGS

1. The study found that even in Nigeria's attempt to attain the "Zero Hunger" target of SDG Goals, there is still food insecurity. Inadequate implementation of food security policies, poverty, insecurity and economic instability continue to cause hunger, malnutrition and low food availability access to nutritious food.

2. The study also found that the socio-economic, environmental and political issues are relevant direct factors contributing to food insecurity in Nigeria. Food production, access, food household security is negatively impacted by rising inflation, weak governance, conflict, corruption, flooding and climate change.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are in follow-up with the results of the investigation:

1. Nigeria should greatly strengthen the policies in agricultural development and food security through improved investment in modern farming techniques, rural infrastructure, irrigation facilities, storage facilities, and climate-smart farming practices. Efforts should also be made

to ensure transparency, accountability, and effective implementation of food security programs.

2. The government must tackle the economic and political determinants of food insecurity through measures such as curbing inflation, generating jobs, enhancing social protection policies, and enhancing security in conflict-prone zones. More focus also needs to be placed on adaptation/adjustment to climate change and environmental sustainability to enhance long-term food production and food access.

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