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Insecurity and Agricultural Development in Nigeria

BY

Kareem, A.O¹; Morakinyo, D.A². and Anahum, U.P³

¹Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Federal University Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria.

^{2,3}Department of Business Administration, Osun State University, Olanlan Campus, Osun State, Nigeria.



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Corresponding author

Kareem, A.O

Abstract

Insecurity, encompassing political, economic, and environmental dimensions, significantly impacts agricultural development. This relationship is complex, with insecurity both hindering and, in some cases, driving agricultural growth. On one hand, insecurity can lead to reduced investment, decreased productivity, and disrupted supply chains. On the other hand, insecurity can also spur innovation, diversification, and resilience in agricultural systems. This study highlights the need for a nuance and understanding of the insecurity-agriculture development nexus, considering context-specific dynamics and the interplay between different forms of insecurity. Effective strategies to address insecurity and promote sustainable agricultural development must be tailored to specific contexts, balancing short-term needs with long-term sustainability.

Keywords: Insecurity, Agricultural Development, Food Security, Peace Building, Climate Change, Rural Development.

- Decreased investment in agriculture
- Increased food security and malnutrition
- Migration and displacement of rural communities
- Exacerbated poverty and inequality.

This paper aims to explore the dynamics of insecurity and agricultural development, examining the impacts, responses, and opportunities for sustainable agricultural growth in the face of insecurity.

Conceptual Overview Agricultural Development

The Longman Dictionary Contemporary of English (2008) defined development as the process of gradually becoming bigger, better, stronger, or more advanced. It goes further to define economic development as the process of increasing business, trade, and industrial activity. Therefore, agricultural development is a process that aims to improve the agricultural sector's productivity, sustainability, and equitability, focusing on rural development and poverty reduction (Cordelia, 2021; Alex, Ashola, & Joaquine, 2022). Ayinde, Sakiru, and Oluwasegun, (2020) identified the key aspects of agricultural development to include:

INTRODUCTION

Agricultural development is a critical components of economic growth, food security, and human well-being, but it is increasingly threatened by various forms of insecurity. Insecurity encompassing political instability, conflict, terrorism, environment degradation, and economic volatility, can have devastating impacts on agricultural productivity, rural livelihoods, and food systems (Alexis, Ashok & Joaquine, 2022; Ayinde, Olutosin & Sakiru, 2020). As the global population projected to reach 9.7 billion by 2050, ensuring food security and sustainable agricultural development is more urgent than ever (Akintunde, 2022).

However, the prevalence of insecurity in many regions undermines efforts to achieve these goals. Understanding the complex relationship between insecurity and agricultural development is essential for developing effective strategies to address these challenges and promote resilient agricultural systems. According to Muiyiwa, Adegboyega & Egbogu (2018) the consequences of insecurity in agriculture are far-reaching, leading to:

- Reduced crop yields and livestock productivity
- Disrupted supply chains and market access



- Enhancing agricultural productivity and efficiency.
- Promoting rural development and reducing poverty.
- Improving food security and nutrition
- Supporting smallholder farmers and marginalized groups.
- Encouraging sustainable agricultural practices.
- Strengthening agrifood value chains and market access
- Addressing gender inequality and empowering women
- Building resilience to climate change and conflicts

Achieving agricultural development requires a multi-faceted approach that involves various stakeholders, strategies, and technologies (Muyiwa, Adegboyega, Babatunde, Egbogu, 2018). Some ways to achieve agricultural development include:

Sustainable Farming Practice: Promote conservation agriculture to enhance soil health, biodiversity, and ecosystem services.

Irrigation and Water Management: Implement efficient irrigation systems and water harvesting techniques to optimize water use and reduce waste.

Crop Improvement: Develop and disseminate high-yielding, disease-resistant, and climate-resilient crop varieties.

Mechanization and Technology: Introduce appropriate farm machinery, precision agriculture, and digital tools to enhance efficiency and productivity.

Capacity Building and Training: Educate farmers, extension agents, and agricultural professionals on best practices, entrepreneurship, and business management.

Market Access and Value Chains: Strengthen market linkages, promote value addition, and support smallholder farmers' access to markets.

Rural Infrastructure Development: Invest in roads, storage facilities, and other infrastructure to facilitate agricultural production and marketing.

Policy Support and Governance: Enact and implement policies that favour agricultural development, and ensure effective governance and regulation.

Research and Development: Continuously fund and conduct research to address emerging challenges and opportunities in agriculture.

- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Foster collaborations between government, private sector, and civil society to leverage resources, expertise, and funding.
- **Climate-Smart Agriculture:** Implement practices and technologies that help agriculture adapt to climate change, mitigate emissions, and enhance resilience.
- **Gender Equity and Empowerment:** Promote gender equality in access to resources, services, and decision-making processes in agriculture.

Olomola and Nwafor (2018), Adeyemi, Emmanuel, Adebayo & Kehinde (2017), Olakunle, (2013) identified the major obstacles to achievement of agricultural development. These include:

- **Limited Access to Finance:** Insufficient funding for farmers, especially smallholders, to invest in inputs, technology, and marketing.
- **Poor Infrastructure:** Inadequate roads, storage facilities, and irrigation systems hinder efficient production and marketing.
- **Climate Change and Variability:** Rising temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, and increased frequency of extreme weather events impact crop yields and stability.
- **Soil Degradation and Erosion:** Decline in soil fertility and structure due to unsustainable farming practices, leading to reduced productivity
- **Water Scarcity and Mismanagement:** Insufficient water supply, inefficient use, and poor water management practices.
- **Low Adoption of Technology:** Slow uptake of improved seeds, fertilizers, and farming practices due to factors like cost, knowledge, and cultural barriers.
- **Limited Access to Markets:** Smallholder farmers difficulty in reaching profitable markets, due to lack of information, infrastructure, and market competition.
- **Gender Inequality and Discrimination:** Women farmers face restrictions on land ownership, credit, and decision-making, limiting their potential.
- **Conflict and Political Instability:** Wars, conflicts, and political instability disrupt agricultural production, markets, and investments.
- **Pest and Diseases:** Outbreaks of crop pests and diseases, such as locusts and fungal infections can significantly reduce yields.
- **Limited Extension Services:** Inadequate advisory services, training, and support for farmers to improve their skills and knowledge.
- **Corruption and Governance Issues:** Corruption, bureaucratic hurdles, and ineffective governance hinder the development of the agricultural sector.

Addressing these obstacles requires a comprehensive approach that involves governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector (Odoh, Sennuga, Bamidele & Ameh, 2024).

Solutions to Overcome Challenges of Agricultural Development

According to Anja, David & Kai-Mauseh (2019), Romanus *et al.* (2019) solutions to overcome challenges of agricultural development include:

- **Invest in Irrigation Infrastructure:** Improve water management and efficiency.
- **Provide Climate-Resilient Agriculture:** Support climate-smart practices and crops.

- **Enhance Access to Finance:** Provide affordable credit, insurance, and grants.
- **Improve Market Access:** Develop rural infrastructure, markets, and value chain.
- **Support Smallholder Farmers:** Provide training, inputs and technology.
- **Encourage Sustainable Agriculture Practices:** Promote conservation agriculture, organic farming, and agroforestry.
- **Develop Disease and Pest Management Strategies:** Implore surveillance, monitoring, and control measures.
- **Invest in Agricultural Research and Development:** Develop new technologies and crop varieties.
- **Enhance Extension Services:** Provide advisory services, training, and capacity building.
- **Address Gender Inequality:** Promote gender equality in access to resources, services, and decision-making.
- **Foster Partnerships and Collaborations:** Encourage public-private partnerships and international cooperation.
- **Improve Governance and Policy Support:** Develop and implement policies that support agricultural development.
- **Invest in Rural Development:** Improve rural infrastructure, energy access, and social services.
- **Promote Digital Agriculture:** Leverage technology, data, and digital platforms to enhance agriculture.
- **Support Agriculture Value Chain Development:** Encourage processing, storage, and transportation infrastructure development.

These solutions require a coordinated effort from governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector to address the complex challenges facing agricultural development (Romanus, Evans & Ese, 2017).

What is Insecurity?

Insecurity refers to a state of uncertainty, vulnerability, or instability that threatens an individual's or groups well-being, safety on property (Bello & Jamiu, 2017; IGC, 2020; Caleb, 2021.). It can manifest in various forms, including:

- **Physical insecurity:** Fear of violence, crime, or harm to one's person or property.
- **Economic insecurity:** Uncertainty about one's financial situation, employment, or access to resources.
- **Emotional insecurity:** Feeling of anxiety, low self-esteem, or instability in relationships.
- **Food insecurity:** Lack of access to reliable sources of nutritious food.
- **Energy insecurity:** Uncertainty about access to reliable energy sources.
- **Political insecurity:** Instability or uncertainty in governance, policy, or political violence.
- **Environment insecurity:** Threats to natural resources, climate change, or ecological degradation.

Insecurity is also perceived by Caleb (2003) as threats or danger to an individual or a nation. It is the inability to protect and defend oneself, be it individual or a nation, its cherished values and legitimate interests, and the enhancement of well-being. Caleb further classified insecurity as human insecurity and national insecurity. Therefore, the word insecurity means danger or threats to one's freedom, anxiety, and fear, a situation that shows that a country is exposed to internal sabotage or external attack. In a broad sense, insecurity is seen as the threat to secure the basic necessities of life such as food, fuel, medicine, and shelter.

Insecurity can have far-reaching consequences including:

- Stress and mental health issues
- Decreased productivity and economic growth
- Social unrest and conflict
- Poor health outcomes
- Limited access to education and opportunities
- Increased migration and displacement
- Erosion of trust in institutions.

Addressing insecurity requires a comprehensive approach that involves governments, international organizations, civil society, and individuals working together to create a more stable and secure environment (Balogun, 1988; Arinze, 2010; Ahmed, 2021).

Relationships Between Insecurity and Agricultural Development

Insecurity and agricultural development are closely linked (Olomola and Nwafor, 2018; Odoh, Sennuga, Bamidele & Ameh, 2024) Insecurity can:

- **Disrupt agricultural production:** Conflict, violence, and instability can lead to crop destruction, livestock loss, and infrastructure damage.
- **Limit access to resources:** Farmers may struggle to access land, water, credits, and markets due to insecurity.
- **Increased food prices:** insecurity can lead to food shortages, price volatility, and inflation.
- **Force migration:** Farmers may abandon their lands and livelihoods due to insecurity, leading to displacement and loss of agriculture, knowledge.
- **Hinder investment:** Insecurity can deter investment in agriculture, hindering the sector's growth and development.
- **Impact rural development:** Insecurity can undermine rural development efforts, exacerbating poverty and inequality.
- **Affect food security:** Insecurity can compromise food insecurity and malnutrition.

On the other hand, according to (Aho, 1994: Arendt, 1965; Ugwoke, 2011) agricultural development can also contribute to insecurity if not managed sustainably, leading to:

- ✓ Land conflict
- ✓ Water scarcity
- ✓ Environmental degradation

- ✓ Displacement of communities
- ✓ Unethical labour practices

According to (Axelrod, 1964, Okohi & Okpaleke, 2014), addressing insecurity is crucial for achieving agricultural development and food security. Conversely, sustainable agricultural development can also help reduce insecurity by promoting stability, livelihoods, and economic growth (Adeyemi, Emmanuel, Adebayo, & Kehinde, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

Several theories help explain the relationship between insecurity and agricultural development (James and David, 2024; Renee and David, 2021). This study is anchored to political economy and conflict theories. Political economy is an interdisciplinary branch of the social sciences. It focuses on the interrelationships of individuals, governments; and public policy. Political economists study how economic theories such as capitalism, socialism, and state explain a range of phenomenon including economic system, institutions, governance, growth, distribution, inequality, and trade (Kareem, Ameh, and Adah, 2020; Alex *et al.*, 2022). The main concerns of political economy are the relationship between governments and individuals, and how public policy affect society. These are determined through the study of sociology, politics, and economics.

Political economy theory can be applied to insecurity and agricultural development in several ways:

- **Conflict over resources:** Political economic theory can help analyze how competition for resources like land, water, and minerals can lead to conflict and insecurity, impact on agricultural development.
- **Power dynamics:** Political economy theory can illuminate how power imbalances among stakeholders, including governments, corporations, and small-scale farmers, influence agricultural policies and investments, contributing to insecurity.
- **Institutional frameworks:** Political economic theory can assess the effectiveness of institution governing agriculture, property rights, and conflict resolution, and how they impact insecurity and agricultural development.
- **Rent-seeking behavior:** The theory can help understand how corrupt practices and rent-seeking behavior among elites can undermine agricultural development and exacerbate insecurity.
- **International trade and investment:** Political economic theory can analyze how global trade agreements, investment treaties, and geopolitical interests, shape agricultural policies, influencing insecurity and development outcomes.
- **Food security and political stability:** The theory can explore how food insecurity and political instability are interconnected, and how addressing agricultural development can contribute to greater political stability.

By applying political economy theory, researchers and policy makers can better comprehend the complex relationships between insecurity and agricultural development, enabling more effective strategies to address the challenges (Akintunde, 2022; Ayinde et al, 2020; cordelia, 2021).

Conflict Theory

Conflict theory, also known as conflict sociology, is a theoretical framework in sociology that views society as being shaped by conflict and competition for resources, power, and status (Ferrante, 2011; Freeman, 1990; Durowaye, 2018). The perspective argues that social relationships are characterized by inequality, domination, and resistance and that conflict is a fundamental aspect of social change (Kareem, 2016; Fajana, *et al.*, 2019). Conflicts theory was developed by sociologists such as Karl Marx, Max Weber, and George Simmel, and is rooted in the idea that society is divided into different groups with competing interests (Axelrod, 1964; Aho, 1994; Arendt, 1965; Ahmed, 2021). The main idea of conflict theory include:

- **Power dynamics:** Conflict theory emphasizes the role of power in shaping social relationships and institutions.
- **Inequality and domination:** The theory highlights how social, economic, and political inequalities lead to domination and exploitation.
- **Conflicts and resistance:** Conflict is seen as national response to inequality and domination, leading to social change.
- **Group interests:** Different groups have competing interests, leading to conflicts and competitions.

Conflict theory is often contrasted with structural functionalism, which views society as being held together by shared values, and social cohesion (David, 2018). While structural functionalism sees society as a harmonious system, conflict theory sees it as a system of conflict and competition (Kareem, 2016; Kareem, *et al.*, 2020). The conflict theory can be applied to insecurity and agricultural development in several ways (Aho, 1994; Arendt, 1965; Axelrod, 1964).

- **Land conflicts:** Competition for land between small-scale farmers, large-scale agricultural investors, and the state can lead to conflict and insecurity.
- **Resource Competition:** Farmers, herders, and other stakeholders may clash over access to water, pasture, and other resources, exacerbating insecurity.
- **Power dynamics:** The state, corporations, and elite groups may use their power to exploit small-scale farmers, leading to inequality and conflict.
- **Resistance and protest:** Farmers and communities may resist policies and projects that threaten their livelihoods, leading to conflict and insecurity.
- **Inequality and marginalization:** Marginalized groups, such as women and indigenous peoples, may face exclusion from resources, decision-making, and benefits, leading to conflict and insecurity.

- **Food security and political instability:** Conflict over resources and power can impact food security leading to political instability and insecurity.
- **Elite capture:** Powerful elites may capture agricultural policies and programs, perpetuating the interests at the expense of small-scale farmers and marginalized groups.
- **Historical legacies:** Historical conflicts over land, resources, and power can continue to shape contemporary conflicts and insecurity in agricultural development.

- **Policy support:** Develop and implement policies that support agricultural development, trade, and investment in the agricultural sector.
- **Addressing gender inequality:** Promote gender equality in access to resources, services, and decision-making processes in agriculture.
- **Building resilience:** Support farmers and communities to build resilience to climate change, conflict, and other shocks.

By applying the conflict theory researchers and policymakers can better understand the complex power dynamics and conflicts that shape agricultural development and insecurity and development strategies to address these issues (David, 2018).

How to Achieve Effective Agricultural Development in the Midst of Insecurity

Achieving effective agricultural development in the midst of insecurity requires comprehensive strategies that address the underlying challenges. These strategies can help achieve effective agricultural development even in the midst of insecurity, by addressing specific challenges and needs of the context, some strategies include:

- **Conflict-sensitive programming:** Design agricultural programs that consider local context, conflict dynamics, and needs by vulnerable groups.
- **Community-based initiatives:** Support community-led agricultural projects that promote social cohesion, trust, and ownership.
- **Sustainable agriculture practices:** Encourage climate-resilient agriculture, conservation agriculture, and agro-forestry to improve productivity and reduce environmental degradation.
- **Agricultural value chain development:** Support value addition, market access, and job creation to enhance livelihoods and economic growth.
- **Capacity building and training:** Provide farmers, extension agents, and agricultural professionals with skills and knowledge to adapt to changing conditions.
- **Infrastructural development:** Invest in rural infrastructure, including irrigation systems, storage facilities, and roads, to improve agricultural productivity and market access.
- **Social protection programs:** Implements programs like cash transfers, vouchers, and food assistance to support vulnerable households.
- **Partnerships and collaborations:** Foster partnerships among governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector to leverage resources and expertise.
- **Technology and innovation:** Leverage digital agriculture, precision agriculture, and climate-smart agriculture to improve efficiency and productivity.

Conclusion

Insecurity and agricultural development are intricately linked with far-reaching implications for food security, economic growth, and human well-being. The prevalence of insecurity in many regions undermines efforts to achieve sustainable agricultural development, exacerbating poverty, inequality, and food insecurity. To address these challenges, it is essential to adopt a comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes of insecurity, improves governance and rule of law, supports small-scale farmers promotes climate-resilient agriculture, and fosters regional and international-corporation. By prioritizing agricultural development and addressing insecurity, we can create a more food-secure, prosperous, and peaceful world for future generations. The time to act is now.

Therefore, there is need to consider:

- The importance of considering the specific context and nuances of each region or community.
- The need for a multifaceted approach that addresses the interlinked dimensions of insecurity and agricultural development.
- The role of technology, innovation, and research in addressing these challenges.
- The importance of inclusive and equitable decision-making processes that involve farmers, communities, and other stakeholders.
- The need for sustained committed and investment from governments, international organizations, and the private sector.

Recommendations

Here are some possible recommendations to address the issue of insecurity and agricultural development:

- **Improve governance and rule of law:** Strengthen institutions, promote transparency, and ensure accountability to create a secure environment for agricultural investment and growth.
- **Conflict resolution and peacebuilding:** Implement sustainable peacebuilding initiatives to address root causes of conflicts and promote dialogue between farmers, herders, and other stakeholders.
- **Invest in rural development:** Provide infrastructure, credit, and technology to rural areas to enhance agricultural productivity and livelihoods.

- **Support small-scale farmers:** Provide training, inputs, and market access to small-scale farmers, particularly women and youth, to improve their resilience and productivity.
- **Promote climate-resilient agriculture:** encourage practices like agroforestry, conservation agriculture, and climate-smart agriculture to enhance agriculture resilience to climate change.
- **Enhance agriculture value chains:** Improve market access, storage, and processing facilities to reduce post-harvest losses and increase farmer's incomes.
- **Address environmental degradation:** Implement sustainable land management Practices, reforestation, and soil conservation to mitigate environmental degradation.
- **Foster regional and international cooperation:** Collaborate with neighboring countries and international organizations to share best practices, technologies, and resources.
- **Invest in agricultural research and development:** Develop and disseminate climate-resilient crop and animal varieties, and improve agriculture extension services.
- **Support humanitarian and development aid:** Provide timely and targeted aid to address humanitarian needs and support long-term agricultural development.

These recommendations require a coordinated effort from governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector to address the complex relationships between insecurity and agricultural development.

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