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AN OVERVIEW OF NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON COMBATING POVERTY AND FOOD INSECURITY IN NORTH-EAST – NIGERIA

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Abstract

Poverty and food insecurity are closely linked and it forms a vicious circle and need a wide range of discourse and expositions. The concepts which have significant influence on the low-income groups in the society especially in terms of conflicts, national phenomena such as floods, storms, draught, insurgency, and banditry as witnessed in the North-East sub-region of Nigeria in states such as Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states. Federal, states and Non-Governmental Organizations have engaged in series of humanitarian assistance, especially in areas of food security, poverty eradication, and accommodation for vulnerable citizens in Nigeria's North-East in particular. Poverty and hunger have been identified as an endemic and can affect individual progress and nation's development. Therefore, this study attempt to examine an overview of Nigeria Government Policies in Combating Poverty and Food Insecurity focusing in BAY states (Borno, Adamawa and Yobe) in North-East Nigeria. In this regards, government and NGOs have adopted explicit agricultural, social and economic policies and programmes meant to combat poverty and hunger in Nigeria. The research adopts a qualitative method of data collection or Secondary sources of data and personal observation. The paper also identified that North-East is one of the regions suffering from food insecurity and poverty amidst the fuel hike, high rate of inflation increases in prices of goods and services and depreciation of Naira. The study recommends among others that, there are need to provide an enabling environment for farmers and create job opportunities through agricultural support, skill acquisitions and emergency food assistance and ensure stable Exchange rate of the national currency, the naira should be strengthened and stabilized. Finally, Nigeria government must start producing the fuel it consumes domestically, support indigenous refineries and effective coordination of various stakeholders for achieving maximum results.

Keywords: Poverty, Food Insecurity, Policies, Nigeria Government, North-East

Introduction

To discuss poverty and food insecurity it needs a wide discourse and expositions. The concept of poverty and food insecurity was defined differently by different scholars depending on their field of endeavour. Therefore, this work will be tailored towards the major policies and theories adopted by federal, state and Non-Governmental Organization in making sure poverty and food insecurity is reduced to the barest minimal. Guidian (1995) sees Poverty as multi-faceted and characterised by lack of purchasing power or exposure to risk insufficient access to social and

economic services and few opportunities for income generations.

FAO (1996) described food security as a situation that exists when all people at all times have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preference for an active and healthy life. While food insecurity is limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food. Some studies revealed that food insecurity is much more complex than a low-income dependent household who live below poverty line, though not all households living below poverty

line are food insecure. Okpala et al (2021) describes that, the level of food insecurity and poverty is a threat to human population, it is complex multi-dimensional, multi-faceted and is a challenge on economic, social, political and environmental aspect of human livelihood. Poverty and food insecurity reflect the inability of individuals or communities to afford or meet the needs that are classified as reasonable human requirements based on the nature of the society that they find themselves in. Poverty is thus influenced with a wider range of factors including lack of secure income, productive resources that would underpin sustainable livelihood or essential social services such as health care, education and accommodation; which varies across regions and rural-urban areas in Nigeria.

According to the 2018/2019 households survey, North-East and North-West regions have the most acute levels of food insecurity, this is confirmed by data from recent Cadre Harmonized Survey. The household survey also found large differences in food insecurity estimated at 18% in urban areas and 52% in rural areas. This view is also supported by Mekonnen et al (2021). According to Oladunmi C.B.I (1991) poverty is an undesirable state of affairs, it is an absolute term as a situation where a population or section of a population is able to meet only its bare subsistence essentials of food, clothing and shelter in order to maintain standard of living. Hornby (2001) also opined that poverty is simply a state of being poor or a state of social, economic and political inferiority. Poverty can be seen in terms of individual or family insufficiency of assets, income and public service (Miller 1977). He went further to state that poverty is also lack of certain capabilities, such as being able to participate with dignity in the society. The issue of poverty and food insecurity is an important topic to discuss today in Nigeria. Nigeria needs a concrete plan and policies to mitigate the negative impact of poverty and food insecurity. So as to help government, policy makers to design and evaluate an everlasting planned programme meant to eradicate poverty and food insecurity in Nigeria Particularly in North-East Nigeria.

The country is endowed with immense agricultural resources and over 81 million arable land largely fertile hectares with maize, cassava, guinea corn, yam, millet, rice being the major crop. Despite rising domestic production of foods, the global increase in food prices is adversely affecting food security conditions in Nigeria. However, the households now eat less preferable/qualitative food which is reduced from the usual three-square meal. This is because lack of affordable food due to poverty calculated at the households' level suffering from deprivation in the five essential needs of food, health, education, shelter and safety. The biggest challenges that affect every household in the North East today is poverty and food insecurity. This is true amidst the inflation trend since 2022-2024. It has eaten deep into socio-economic wellbeing of the people. Many scholars and public commentators view poverty and food insecurity as problematic and endemic as it affects the health and livelihood of individuals. This paper focuses on examining an overview of Nigerian government's efforts in combating poverty and food insecurity in Nigeria particularly in North –East region focusing in BAY states (Borno, Adamawa and Yobe). In their efforts to combat food insecurity and poverty they have adopted explicit agricultural, social and economic policies. The policies and programmes introduced by Government and Non-governmental Organizations meant to improve the socio-economic conditions of the citizens, ensure adequate healthy and qualitative food supply and then provide job opportunities for vulnerable people with the aim of eradicating poverty in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe is commendable if fully implemented. In this regards it has been recommended that, the country need to produce most fuel it consumes domestically and support Dangote refinery and other modular refineries to strengthen production to make the nation self-sufficient in energy production. Government should stick on implementing the good policies to reduce poverty and food insecurity to the populace. Exchange rate of the national currency must be regulated to strengthen and stabilize the naira. And provide an enabling environment for farmers in terms of safety, skill acquisitions and emergency food assistance.

Conceptual Underpinnings

Food insecurity is a situation of limited or uncertain availability of nutrition, adequate and safe food limited or uncertain ability to require acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (Harvey 2019). Food insecurity incorporate a measure of unavailability of critical food supply due to various risk factors including drought, shipping disruptions, fuel shortages, economic instability and wars. The International Center for Trade and Sustainable Development (1996) observed that food should not be used as an instrument for political and economic pressure but should be used as agricultural market production.

According to (FAO 2014) at the World Food summit in 1996 food insecurity is "a situation that exist when people lack secured access to sufficient amount of safety and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active healthy life". Hence attention has been drawn towards the use of suitable indicators that will cover all the food insecurity dimensions such as availability, accessibility, utilization and stability. Economic growth is one of the biggest variables to measure the economy and can be closely connected to food security raising the cost of food prices an indicator leading to food insecurity (Hertel et Al 2010, Smith et al 2017). According to Almas et al 1998, Bartified J and Dunifon R. 2003 Food insecurity is an increasing policy concern in Nigeria. Food insecurity and poverty are closely related and it form a vicious cycle. World Bank (1986) defined food security as access of all people all times to enough food for an active healthy life.

Poverty and Food Insecurity

The persistent crises in Northeast Nigeria have resulted in increased humanitarian challenges, resulting in the displacement, increase in food insecurity and limited opportunities to livelihood recovery. In September and October 2022, the region was adversely affected by widespread flooding which destroyed farms and critical infrastructure which affected the availability of food in 2023. (Lean season bulletin 2023). Since the first quarter of 2024, access

to affordable food became a quagmire due to high levels of inflation, increased prices of goods and services which are believed to have been caused by the removal of petrol subsidy and new exchange rate policy and currency swap in early 2023.

Other studies show that 43% of households in Northeast Nigeria have inadequate food consumption in May 2023 which was 2% higher compared to the previous year. IDPs and returnees show significantly higher level of inadequate food consumption, poverty and insufficient food at stocks as reported by (Lean season bulletin 2023). Consequently, the situation has impact on every household in North East where inadequate food consumption and poverty became a threat to the people's livelihood and food security expectation especially with high cost of petrol prices and unstable exchange rate which resulted in the increases of goods and services.

On July 20th 2023 President Tinubu declared state of emergency on food insecurity to tackle the increase in food prices. The President is mindful of the rising cost of food and how it affects the citizens in the country said the spokesman for the presidency, Dele Alake. Food prices continue rising and the situation deteriorated due to the impact of government policy of removal of fuel subsidy. In addition, the spokesman Dele Alake in a press briefing in Abuja emphasized that all matters pertaining to food and water availability and affordability are essential livelihood items to be included within the purview of the national security council. The government outlines some immediate intervention strategies for Agricultural sector that would support farmers including; security, fertilizer, Central Bank of Nigeria's funding, provision of land and irrigation, energy among others. One of the major positive outcomes of these interventions; include; boosting employment opportunities and job creation. Agriculture already counted for about 35.21 percent of employment in Nigeria. As at 2021, the target was to double the percentage to about 70% in the long term. (Premium Times July 23, 2023)

Nigerian Government Policies

In an attempt to tackle the menace of poverty and food insecurity, high levels of prices of goods and services, unavailability of food as well as cushion the impact of subsidy removal in Nigeria, various policies by federal, states and NGOs have adopted explicit agricultural, social and economic programmes to reduce the hardship, diversify the economy and boost domestic production. Following the inception of oil boom in Nigeria in 1970s - 80s during the military regimes, government has embarked on a series of reforms to eradicate poverty. National Poverty Eradication Programme 2001, Women and Youth Empowerment Scheme (W-Yes). The establishment of these programmes at federal, state and local levels, International Organizations has also contributed immensely in improving the services. The programmes and policies introduced by government in partnership with NGOs were aimed at helping in changing the life of the poor in Nigeria. In 2002 Obasanjo launched the National Special Program on Food Security and National Empowerment Strategy (2004) to reduce the overall dependence on oil to agriculture and other non-oil activities to promote food security. In 2008 a Root and Tuber Expansion Program (RTEP) was launched to stimulate demand for cheaper staple food such as cassava, garri, yam and potatoes. It empowered small scale farmers with less than two hectares of land in commercial root and tuber agriculture and was extremely successful in raising productivity of these foods. Transformation agenda 2011-2015 was also launched, the Agricultural Promotion Policy (2016-2020), the Economic Recovery Growth Plan (2017-2020) and National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Policy (2022-2027). A new program built around special agro-industrial processing zones was introduced and is projected to run through 2027. The program aims to establish new economic zones located in rural areas and fully supported by infrastructure (power, water, roads, digital infrastructure and logistics). In February 2024 President Tinubu in his effort to recover and boost the economy, he constituted a tripartite economic advisory committee made up of federal government representatives, selected state

governors and the organised private sector to look for a better alternatives. As noted by some members of the committee, the government faces daunting economic challenges, because of the hasty removal of fuel subsidy and the over floating of Naira. These twin policies instantly aggravated the harsh economic condition of the country. A tripartite committee on Minimum wages was also constituted to review for the adjustment of the current thirty thousand minimum wages.

Presently inflation rate is 29.90% and 35.41% in January and February respectively. Similarly, the Naira is taking an exchange at nearly N2000 per \$1 dollar, though it went down below N1,500 at end of February. This has defied all efforts by government to boost its currency value with Nigeria depending on imported fuels, medicine and food. (PUNCH NEWSPAPER 2024 February)

However, federal government constituted a tripartite committee on national minimum wage. The committee has scheduled public hearings in the six geopolitical zones of the country. The committee aim was to consult all stakeholders on the national minimum wages and consider it in a context of the dynamics of national economy and also recommend a realistic and practical national minimum wage to the government. The wages will assist the civil servant especially at the current inflations and increase in price of goods and services. Consequently, the policies made by successive administration to mitigate the menace of poverty and food insecurity through humanitarian assistance, agricultural support and empowerment programmes were aimed to combat poverty in Nigeria.

In the second quarter of 2023 to the first quarter of 2024 immediately after the unexpected decision and pronouncement made by President Bola Tinubu for the removal of fuel subsidy and devaluation of Naira in May 2023. The policy directly affects almost every household in Nigeria because of the high inflation and rise in prices of goods and services and unavailability or unaffordable food stock and high cost of petrol and diesel used for the transportation of goods leading to increases in the prices of food stuff. This policies and

programs introduced by federal and state governments, especially in North-East would help in reducing hardship.

Problem Statement

The North-East Nigeria has faced with a lot of problems that requires careful attention ranging from insecurity, poverty, food insecurity, climate change etc. The decline soil fertility, limited farm inputs, low investments and poor or absence of infrastructure have brought serious setback to agricultural productivity and development in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states leading to poverty and unsustainable food supply. Hunger and poverty have been identified as endemic and chronic problems that affect the progress and economic development of any nation; they are undesirable state of affairs due to their negative influence on national development. According to Idoko C. et al (2015) the aggregate poverty and hunger of individuals in the society is regarded as the aggregate poverty of nations. Extreme poverty according to Ajayi (2002) affects individuals and nations economy negatively. This is because extreme poverty can thwart a nation's economic planning and lead to bad economic and social policies which can render the majority of people neglected, dejected and hopeless. Extreme poverty and food insecurity on individuals and nations at large according to Balogun (1999) can cause the following; Distortion on individual and the economy as a whole, deviant behaviors, lack of peaceful co-existence, limited capacities, and accessibility of good livelihood.

Furthermore, food insecurity is closely linked to hunger and malnutrition whereas malnutrition is the most serious consequences of food insecurity. The nature and extent of hunger and food insecurity in Nigeria are of public health concern. Available data showed that total average households' expenditure on food for the period between 2009 2010 was about 65% (NBS 2012) and Nigeria was ranked the 38th out of 76% on the 2014 Global Hunger Index (IFPRI, 2014).

Going by the above expositions, the biggest challenges that affect every household in the North-East today is poverty and food insecurity. This is true amidst the

inflation trend since 2022-2024. It has also eaten deep into the socio-economic wellbeing of the people in the region with a growing number of food insecurity, unemployment, poverty and hunger which continue to increase. It has now been worsened by the high inflation and inaccessibility to affordable food (Ali Kole et al 2023). Poverty and food situation has been caused especially by violent conflict including insurgency in the North East, perennial farmers herders' conflicts. Other factors include rising inflation, unemployment, engendering cost of living crisis, inability to access food while natural disaster such as frequent floods, climate change continue to affect food production, availability and affordability of food.

Theoretical Framework

This research adopts the rational comprehensive model of decision making. It is an approach used by scientists to study and understand the public policies. The theory was propounded by Gary Becker 1992 who was first to apply the rational actor models comprehensively. It was applied in other disciplines, such as; sociology, political science, and anthropology. The rational comprehensive model or rational choice theory also explains how decision makers adopt individual based models of political decision by electorates' bureaucrat, politicians and interest group members. Therefore, the central idea of the theory is the decision makers who are interested in making pure decisions that affect every member of the society.

The Nigeria government's removal of fuel subsidy is aimed at achieving long term sustainable economic growth, but the immediate effect is harsh particularly for low-income individuals. Rational comprehensive model assumes that decision makers have complete knowledge of the alternatives for dealing with problems and that it is possible to predict the consequences with complete accuracy. Government is made up of a complete set of bureaucratic setting which connotes the decision makers and representative of people who make decision that affects every member of the society. In light of the government's concern for poverty reduction and ensure food

security, numerous policies and programmes have been designed at one time or the other to meet the desired need of the poor.

Therefore, states in the North-East Nigeria engaged in series of programmes which includes; distribution of food items, conditional cash transfer, and provision of transports services as well as palliative to civil servants, increased minimum wages, distribution of fertilizers and grains to the farmers. They also provide job opportunities through agricultural support and skill acquisitions for youths. Hence, what is expected is the everlasting state of the program to continue combating the menace of poverty and food insecurity destroying the good livelihoods of the citizens.

Borno State

Borno is one of the states in North-East besieged by armed banditry which resulted in food crisis, poverty, displacement of farming communities. The state government and other Non-Governmental Organisations have engaged in humanitarian assistance especially provision of foods, security and accommodations. To mitigate the persistent food crises and to eradicate poverty in the North-East sub-region; the states, federal and international organizations came up with several policies and programmes, such as; The Borno state ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Food and Agricultural Organization of UN (FAO), World Food Program (WFP), INGOs, donors and stakeholders as part of the Food Security Sectors (FSS), they engaged in the services of consultant to support the review of updating of the Borno state food security strategy with focus on both emerging food assistance and agricultural livelihoods in Borno state from 2024 – 2026. The new policy strategy of food security sector whose major aims was to address the food insecurity challenges and the need of the populations affected by the conflicts in Borno state closely aligns with the FGN National Development Plan NDP 2021 – 2025; a medium-term blueprint whose objectives is to unlock the country's potentials in all sectors of the economy for a sustainable, holistic and inclusive national development by the different facet of the private sector, sub-national government

civil society organization (CSO) and facilitated by the federal government of Nigeria. The vision of the NDP 2021 – 2025 further aligns with the need to pursue socio-economic transformation for the country and as envisioned in the long - term aspiration of Nigeria and articulated in the Nigeria 2050 agenda (NDP 2021).

However, the new FSS strategy closely further aligns with the federal ministry of agriculture and rural development policies and were specifically, the National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Policy (NATIP 2022 – 2027) whose objectives is to modernize agricultural sector in line with the changing global food systems and supply chains and also ensure reliance, recovery and growth. (NFSS 2024 - 2026)

Adamawa State

Adamawa state ministry of agriculture and other organizations, stakeholders were engaged as part of the food security sector strategy in the state (FSS) who sought to engage the services of a consultant to support the review and updating the Adamawa food security sector strategy with a focus on emergency food assistance and agricultural livelihood in Adamawa state. The new FSS strategy has the same objectives with that of Borno and Yobe states. The strategy is further in line with the federal ministry of agriculture and rural development policies especially National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Policy (NATIP 2022 - 2027). The policy further focuses on approaches to ensure resilience, recovery and growth at a global level with the need to develop a new FSS strategy which is in line with Nigeria's commitments towards attaining of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which aim at combating poverty and hunger or food insecurity (NFSS 2024 - 2026).

Though in Adamawa state communities have relatively better access to farmland, they have limited access to farm inputs and agricultural livelihood support especially in the face of the increasing costs of goods and services in Nigeria. Although Adamawa state is known in cultivating a wide range of food crops, such as; legumes, cereals, groundnuts, cowpeas, sweet potatoes, yam, cassava, maize, sorghum, millet and

rice, the herder-farmers clashes and the increasing incidents of flooding has affected the production of these products leading to food scarcity and food shortages, coupled with increasing poverty, unemployment high inflation and rising prices of goods and services.

Despite these challenges; One State One Product (OSOP 2022) policy introduced by the Adamawa state planning commission, that gave priority on groundnut production as a major cash crop in the state had given the farmers the opportunity to benefit from these value chains including cottage industries for oil processing and peanut butter extraction to help raise and diversify their incomes. Social protection policy is another policy strategy proposed by Adamawa state government through its planning commission in 2023. The policy is part of the post-insurgency recovery and sustainability to support and enhance the livelihood of poor and vulnerable citizens to reduce poverty in the state. This vision was in line with the state development plan 2020 – 2025 as well as the five objectives of the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The goal is to reduce impacts of social and economic risk and vulnerability and alleviate poverty and deprivation in order to achieve and sustain improved livelihood for the citizens.

Poverty Alleviation and Wealth Creation Agency (PAWECA March, 2024) is another policy designed by Adamawa State Government under the Ministry of Entrepreneurship Development. This was to empower men and women through skill acquisition and cash grant to the youths men and women for small scale enterprises. The objective was empower youth to be self-dependence and minimize the level of poverty.

Yobe State

In April 2016, Yobe state were facing difficulties from accessing food which have been directly affected by conflict, to access the food security and nutrition of IDPs and host populations. In the most vulnerable local government, the food security sector lead along with National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and other food security agencies jointly

conducted an assessment (WFP 2016). The overall prevalence of food insecurity was worse than the 2016 WFP report. Therefore, the state implemented various poverty alleviation programmes from 2000 – 2024 which was aimed at alleviating poverty among its people and cushion the suffering from subsidy removal through skill acquisition and easy access to capital for establishing small business, loans and emergency food assistance. The empowerment programmes; include the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Micro Credit Scheme (You Win), Sure – P and N-Power programme (Ibrahim et al, 2023). Unfortunately, majority of the people faces daunting challenges as result of impact subsidy removal and high rate of inflation, exchange rate and increase in price of goods and services, inaccessibility to affordable food. This is a consequence to the food insecurity in Nigeria North-East in particular where conflict of insurgency bedeviled the region for long period of time coupled with inability to access farm lands, insecurity, and unemployment which became a threat to food security.

According to WFP July 2023 “from what is known about the cause and drivers of food and nutrition insecurity, it is clear that achievement of three key goals and outcomes are central to reversing the current situation”. These are:

- a) ensuring adequate supply of food (that is production and availability)
- b) enabling physical and economic access to food (that is location and the resources to access food)
- c) making sure that the food is nutritious and safe for consumption (that is the quality and safety of the food).

In this regards, Yobe state government has recently been engaged in the distribution of food items to the vulnerable citizens to cushion current hardship, poverty and hunger in the state. This development is in line with President Initiatives of providing palliatives to reduce the menace of subsidy removal which has

caused significant rise in petrol hike with consequent in the increases price of goods and services.

Methodology

The main objectives of this study were to examine an overview of Nigeria government policies in combating poverty and food Insecurity in North-East Nigeria. The study adopted qualitative research method based on the existing study using different secondary sources of data through articles, research papers, government reports, bulletins, and other official websites. Qualitative research is used to gain in-depth understanding of human behaviour, experiences, attitudes, intentions, and motivations on the basis of observation and interpretation, to find out the way people think and feel. It is a form of research in which the researcher gives more weight to the views of the participants Ahmad S. et,al (2019). Furthermore the study employed a systematic review research method. Haggins et,al (2008) a systematic review is a literature review that identifies, critically evaluates and integrate available research findings of sufficient quality concerning a specific research question or subject, with ultimate aim of providing information and evidences based insights Begum S. (2023)

However, the study was carried out in North East region of Nigeria, North East region includes; Adamawa, Borno, Bauchi, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe states in Nigeria and the target population of the study was Borno Adamawa and Yobe states to explore the major policies of government in combating poverty and food insecurity. The region shared boundries with Niger to the North and Cameroun to the south and Chad Republics to the East while to the west it shared boarder with Benue, Jigawa, Nassarawa, Plateau and Kano states. Therefore, the study is basically anchored on qualitative method of data collection and empirical review of relevant published materials on poverty and food insecurity. Several documents in relation to policies and programme of poverty eradication and food security by government and Non-governmental organizations was also examined and used in this paper. The study also declined the use of statistical data and analysis throughout the work due to the

methodology adopted to minimize the bulkiness of the work.

Data and Sources

The research adopted qualitative research method based on the existing literature using different secondary sources of data, these already available data in records in most cases published for official consumption, these includes; published and unpublished reports, local and international magazines and newspapers. The internets and various websites were also viewed and used but with some measures of care and verification on the competence, the study was also utilized data from relevant published journals articles, gazzette, bulletins documentaries to fetch out data on poverty and food insecurity especially in North-East Nigeria particularly BAY states (Borno Adamawa and Yobe). The material were useful in the study, they helped strengthen the work.

Recommendations

- i. There are needs to implement the objective of NATIP of 2022 – 2027¹⁸ which is aimed at increasing food security through improved availability of food and access to a variety of foods as well as increased incomes of rural farm households through increased agricultural productivity diversification and sustainable use of natural resources.
- ii. Government should stick on implementing the good policies to reduce the poverty and food insecurity to its citizens. Exchange rate of the national currency should be strengthened and stabilized as well.
- iii. Good programmes aimed at reducing poverty, hunger and food insecurity should be implemented, harmonized and effectively at both federal, states and local government giving more priority to the most vulnerable groups.
- i. There should be effective coordination between various stakeholders (federal, states, Local Government and NGOs to achieve maximum results.
- ii. The petrol subsidy removal has led to the high cost of transportation thereby leading to high cost of

commodities and agricultural inputs, there is need to encouraged and support farmers to improve food production and get quality and affordable agricultural inputs.

Conclusion

This study intent to examine the policies and programmes aimed at eradicating poverty and food insecurity in North-East Nigeria. Hence government embarked on several policies and programme since the time immemorial just to combat poverty and food insecurity to improve the livelihood of its citizens especially in recent times when government removed petrol subsidy. Poverty eradication and food security are among the main drivers of humanitarian needs in North East particularly Borno Adamaw and Yobe states; access to farmland is still limited in many areas because of the insecurity. The findings also revealed that the situation has been deteriorated by the removal of petrol subsidy, leading to increase in transportation costs and higher rate of inflation, naira floating that led to the depreciation of currency. In this regard governments adopted the United Nations Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000 to address various developmental challenges includes environmental, social, economic challenges manifested in inequality, poverty, unemployment and lack sustainability that threatened humanity (Sianes et al 2022). Therefore, various levels governments, employed different mechanisms and programmes to eradicate poverty and hunger in the North East subregion. The program included; Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES) the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), National Poverty Eradication programme (NAPEP), Micro-Credit Scheme (You-win), Sure-P, N-Power, Cash Transfer to SMEs, Skill Acquisitions, Agricultural Support, Food Security Sector strategy 24/26 and provision of palliatives to civil servants, and transport services, education, health, employment and increased minimum wages respectively. In July 2023 federal government declared food insecurity a national emergency and ordered the immediate releases of fertilizer and grains to farmers and households to mitigate the effects of fuel subsidy removal it serves as measure to combat poverty and

food insecurity. Adamawa state also launched Poverty Alleviation and wealth Creation Agency (PAWECA) to reduce the menace of poverty in the state, Borno state created Borno State Poverty Alleviation Programmes and ministry of poverty, youth and support development under the presidential initiative, Borno state distributed palliative to 100,000 less privileged in addition to 300,000 households that will benefited from the state palliatives. Yobe state also launched similar programmes as well as engaged in food distribution to vulnerable households in various local governments in the state.

Limitations

This study is based on the qualitative research method, which limited the research work and there was limited time constraints for the study to cover the wider geographical area of the North-East. Hence, the study focused only on examining the major policies and programmes on combating poverty and food insecurity within the context of Nigeria's North-East sub-region which was also limited to three states; Borno, Adamawa and Yobe. There are also limited studies related to poverty eradication programmes by the governments which hinder the researchers from accessing relevant literatures related to the study. The study also declined the use of statistical data and analysis throughout the work due to the methodology adopted to minimize the bulkness of the work and save time.

Future researchers can conduct quantitative research method in order to cover the gaps of this study by expanding the scope to the whole North-East sub-region and identify the Socio-Economic and Psychological implications of poverty and food insecurity on the people. In addition focus group discussions and in-depth interviews can also be conducted on poverty and food insecurity in order to identify some government's measures on combating poverty and hunger in North-East Sub-region. Future studies can also be conducted considering all aspects and dimensions of the overall government policies and programmes to eradicate poverty and food insecurity and highlight more recommendations.

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