

THE IMPACT OF RICE FARMING POLICY ON NIGERIAN ECONOMY: A STUDY OF SOME SELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN KANO STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of rice farming policy on Nigerian economy with a focus on Kura and Bunkure Local Government Areas of Kano State. The methods adopted for obtaining data for the study were both primary and secondary. The objective of the research is to assess the impact of rice farming policy on the provision of employment, to examine the impact on how the policy helps boost the income of the farmers and to investigate how rice farming improved food productions in the areas of the study. It was found amongst others that; the Nigerian government has over the years formulated good rice farming policies meant to encourage and improve food production, provision of employment, as income to Nigerians youth and other economic benefits to enhance economic development but such policies have been found to be inefficient and ineffective. Some evidence was established from the research findings to illustrate that the creation of rice farming policies frequently does not include a critical review of the social, economic, physical/environmental, and political influence on the target intended beneficiaries. On the other hand, rice farming policy execution is affected by implementation issues, one of which is implementation leakage. Equally, findings shows that poor funding affects the policies implementation at Kura and Bunkure. It recommends that; deliberate attempts must be made by government in terms of rice farming policy to improve its agricultural base particularly on food production, provision of employment and income enhancement

Keywords: Rice Farming, Rice Farming Policy, Nigerian Economy.

Introduction

The population of Nigeria is estimated at 215,568,025 people, with a 2.54% annual growth rate (NPC, 2022). The country has enormous mineral and natural resources, as well as large area that has been determined to be the most fertile and appropriate for agriculture. Rice is in great demand and consumption among its people, regardless of their geography or culture. Nigeria's rice sector has been one of the most significant agricultural advances in recent decades. Nigerians consume the most of this basic food. In Nigeria, there is a mismatch between the amount of rice produced and the amount consumed. Only about 57% of the 6.7 million metric tonnes of rice consumed in Nigeria annually is locally produced, leading to a supply deficit of about 3 million metric tonnes (KPMG Global, 2022). The inference is that rice must be imported to match the high demand for its use, and these have been on the high side and inelastic. Given this, Frederic (2003) observes that, with rice now constituting a structural component of the Nigerian diet and rice imports accounting for a huge proportion of Nigeria's agricultural imports, there is enormous political interest in expanding local rice consumption. Rice has become a highly politicized commodity as a result of this. According to Akpokodje (2001), the rice industry in Nigeria in general, and rice production, processing, and consumption in particular, lacks a comprehensive and up-to-date depiction. It is evident that, despite its agricultural potentials, Nigeria has yet to fully exploit its huge land resources appropriate for agriculture, not only to enhance its rice exports, but also to meet domestic demand, which will invariably ensure adequate food security. This is proven by the fact that rice consumption in Nigeria has risen at alarming rates over the years.

Previously, Nigeria spends about a billion Naira daily for importing rice, a development which, according to Adesina (2012) the Minister of agriculture and rural development is helping to put farmers to work in countries like USA, India, and Thailand; (countries where Nigeria mostly imports rice); while putting farmers out of work in Nigeria. The Nigerian government has declared a policy decision to totally ban rice imports by 2015.

The question is, how equipped is the Nigerian government to see that these policy goals are carried out? According to the United States Department of Agriculture, Nigeria's rice imports from 2012 to 2013 totaled around 3 million tons. This is due to the fact that the projected increase in rice production from 2012 to 2013 will fall short of demand.

Domestic demand for rice has been growing at a high rate in so many African countries, according to Nwanze (2006), due to changing consumer preferences, rising incomes, and growing urban populations. Nigeria is no exception, with rice gaining in importance. According to Akinbile (2007), **as cited in Johnson, Takeshima, and GyimahBrempong (2013)**, Nigeria has a long history of rice cultivation and consumption, with indigenous rice species (local rice) being farmed for over 300 years. Rice has evolved into a major staple crop in the Nigerian diet over time, according to Akinbile (2007), with a demand profile that spans all regions and socioeconomic classes.

Nigeria imported over 2.1 million metric tonnes of rice in 2012, according to the UN Comtrade database (UN, 2012). Nigeria is the greatest rice producer in West Africa, yet it is also a significant net rice importer globally. Rice cultivation in Nigeria is mostly carried out by small-scale farmers, and productivity is low due to inefficient production practices and the country's aging farming population. As a result, local rice production has not been able to keep up with the country's expanding demand for the commodity.

Despite the risk to the economy and the increased exposure of Nigerians to the problem of food insecurity, this disparity has resulted in a growing reliance on rice imports.

The Nigerian government has introduced such as Anchor Borrowers Programme (ABP), Presidential Fertilizer Initiative (PFI), Youth Farm Lab (YFL), Presidential Economic Diversification Initiative (PEDI), and Food Security Council) under its Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) to solve the challenges surrounding domestic rice production in response to the perceived concerns of import dependency. Through a nucleus and out-grower farming approach, the Nigerian government expects that this development will considerably enhance small-holder rice production. The program's pilot sites are rural rice-growing villages that would benefit from Dangote's provision of agro-inputs, training, and marketing connections to increase community farming. The significant investment would also generate employment possibilities for at least 8,000 Nigerians.

The Nigerian government's policy initiative aims at promoting the overall performance of the domestic rice sector comprises of two key strategies. The first has to do with the use of import barriers/tariffs in order to enhance the competitiveness (in terms of relative price) of domestic rice. The second has to do with the expansion of paddy production and the processing of premium-quality rice, with the long-run objective of replacing rice imports with domestic production. These strategies are embedded in the government's rice transformation agenda (RTA). The final goal of the RTA is to reduce the country's rice import bill and make Nigeria self-sufficient within a 5-year timeframe. It is also expected that the RTA will promote inclusive wealth creation and employment generation in the country. Of course, an improvement in the local rice quality will be needed to make the local product a viable alternative to current imports.

The foregoing description of the rice policy environment gives the impression of a policy with great potential to succeed. However, looking back in time, a number of previous similar initiatives by Nigeria to become self-sufficient in rice production were not very successful. The 2015 Presidential Initiative on Rice and the 2001 National Program for Food Security are recent examples of such initiatives. These initiatives included import barrier policies and other incentives to stimulate local production and achieve self-sufficiency in rice production. However, the initiatives clearly failed to achieve their defined goals, as Nigeria remains heavily dependent on rice imports for its consumption needs.

It is against this backdrop that this study examines the impact of rice farming policy (2015) on Nigerian economy. It is interesting to note that this area of study has generated a lot of research, particularly as oil

has taken sole control of Nigeria economy. This paper is structured into five sections; introduction, literature review, research methodology, discussion of major findings, conclusion/recommendations.

Literature Review

Concept of Agricultural Policy

The definition of public policy is germane in understanding agricultural policy. Public discourse today is saturated with the advocacy or criticism of various policies. It is common to hear of foreign policy, defence policy, economic policy, educational policy and policies in almost every area of government activity. We also hear of policy intension and the commitment of millions of naira to the implementation of certain policies (Ikelegbe, 1996).

The concept therefore is central to government or public sector. Public policy is simply actions taken or to be taken and actions not taken or not to be taken by government (Ikelegbe, 1996). It is a statement of what the government wants to do, what is doing, what it is not doing and what would not be done. In the same sense, agricultural policy is the statement of what the government wants to do, what it is doing and what it is not doing and what would not be done as regards to agricultural activities in Nigeria. Nigeria's agricultural policy is the synthesis of the framework and action plans of Government designed to achieve overall agricultural growth and development (Ministry of Agriculture Policy Guide 2004). The policy aims at the attainment of self-sustaining growth in all the sub-sector of agriculture and the structural transformation necessary for the overall socio-economic development of the country as well as the improvement in the quality of life of Nigerians (Ministry of Agriculture, 2007).

Nigerian Rice Supply

Rice can be cultivated in all the ecological zones of Nigeria, although with varying prospects from one location to the other. According to FAOSTAT, paddy rice production has been growing at a very slow rate relative to consumption in Nigeria within the last five years. The low growth rate of paddy production can be attributed to a combination of factors namely unimproved seed varieties, poor agronomic and postharvest handling practices, The demand-supply gap has often been filled with imported rice from Asia. Instability of government policies has also made some rice farmers to switch to other crops with similar ecological requirements, especially the decision to import foreign rice into Nigeria, which depresses domestic price. Nigeria is currently the highest rice producer in West Africa. It is also the highest consuming nation because of the large population of Nigeria. Majority of the rice producers are smallholders with an average farm size of less than 2 hectares and can be found grown in mixture on farmers' farms. These factors coupled with the use of low external inputs have been responsible for the low yields and productivity. As the population increases, farmers must produce even more food than before in order to stem the rising rice import bills and become less dependent on rice importation. With the population increases today, people are being pushed to new lands and many into marginal lands. One of the enormous challenges in the drive to increase food to feed the growing population will be to raise productivity and efficiency in the agricultural sector. More so that Nigeria's rapid population growth has outstripped the nation's capacity to grow food. From 1980-1990, Nigeria's population grew by 3.1% a year, while agricultural production lagged far behind by growing at just 2.5% a year. This fact coupled with the inequitable income distribution has been responsible for the worsening poverty in Nigeria. The biggest constraint to feeding the Nigerian people now and in the future will depend entirely on agricultural productivity and this is related to food security. Food security, at the household level, is defined in its most basic form as access by all people at all times to the food needed for a healthy life. Therefore, there is need to increase agriculture growth for such growth is the most efficient means of alleviating poverty, protecting the environment, and generating broad-based economic growth, achieving food security therefore, requires that resources be used efficiently, with more attention paid to eliminating waste. With the rising income and population and consequent rising food demand, only efficient use of production resources will ensure food security. Achieving sustainable economic development in Africa will confront three central challenges: alleviating wide spread poverty, meeting current and future food needs, and efficiently using the natural resource base to ensure sustainability. There are only two main ways to increase natural food availability - increase the land area planted; and increase the yield per unit of production resource (land, labour and capital). If food production is doubled by doubling the number of hectares of land under cultivation, or other production resources, this would create massive environmental damage - such as large-scale destruction of forests, and with them,

wild life habitat and biodiversity. Efficiency of resource use, which can be defined as the ability to derive maximum output per unit of resource, is the key to effectively addressing the challenges of achieving food security. Raising productivity in agriculture will certainly lead to availability of food and reduce the real price of food. Increased food production will have to come from increased yield.

Nigeria Rice Economy

The average rice consumer in Nigeria prefers parboiled rice, which can be either imported or locally produced. Nigeria has the largest market for parboiled rice in West Africa; other West African countries demonstrate a preference for regular milled white rice (USDA, 2010). Overall, imported rice is preferred to locally grown rice, due to the imported product's superior quality (Diagne, 2011). Domestic rice is normally semi-milled brown rice that is de-hulled and not polished; it has great color variation and can contain different varieties in the same bag. In general, there is limited investment in the processing of local rice in Nigeria, specifically in packaging and in improved technology for cleaning and de-stoning paddy (USAID, 2009). Alternatively, imported rice is generally processed milled rice. Domestic rice is normally 20-30 percent less expensive than imported rice. The main determinants of this price difference include the appearance, cleanliness, swelling capacity, taste, and homogeneity of imported rice (Ogadinma 2009). However, despite the price and quality differential, there is still an overall acknowledgment of higher organoleptic properties of local rice (Lançon et al, 2003). In general, the marketing segment of high-quality imported rice consumers, mostly in urban areas, is mainly concerned with quality and is less sensitive to price changes, while consumers of local rice are normally more price sensitive (USAID 2009). According to Ogazi (2009), self-sufficiency in rice production has remained one of the Nigerian government's political-economic goals to end hunger, reduce poverty, and ameliorate the country's food security. It is also a developmental strategy aimed to reduce foreign exchange disequilibrium arising from rice imports. However, Johnson, Takeshima, and Gyimah-Brempong (2013) argue that while meeting the demand for higher quality premium rice in the short term is only feasible through the use of large-scale millers (which the government is already promoting), this will not lead to job creation and wealth in rural areas nor will it help poorer consumers who have to spend a higher proportion of their income on food. They also provide evidence that rice now ranks first among all staple food items in Nigeria in terms of expenditures and second only to cassava in terms of quantity consumed.

In terms of performance of the policy measures to boost local rice production in Nigeria, Misari and Idowu (1996) report that the 1986 ban on rice importation led to increased rice production, from 0.94 million tons in 1986 to 2.54 million tons in 1994. The ban on rice was for the period 1986-1995. During the ban on rice period, it was prohibited to import rice into the country though illegal importation through the country's porous borders increased (Ogazi, 2009). As a consequence, Nigeria's rice import bills remained heavy. According to Abdullahi (2002), of the N250 billion spent yearly to import agricultural products, N60 billion is devoted to rice. FAO data suggest an estimated 500 percent rise in the foreign exchange expenditure on rice imports over the eleven-year period between 1990 and 2001. The values rose from 224,000 metric tons of rice, valued at US 60 million dollars, in 1990 to 345,000 metric tons in 1996, with a value of US130 million dollars. Nigeria's rice imports increased to 1.51 million metric tons, valued at US288.1 million dollars, by 2001 (FAO, 1994). Nigeria has suitable ecologies and a potential land area for rice production, and the country's potential rice yield has not been fully realized (Akande, 2002). Bello (2004) argues that Nigeria has the potential to produce enough rice for its domestic needs, and even to export a surplus. It is important to note here, however, that government policies alone may not be effective in stimulating local rice production of the desired quantity and quality. A good understanding of the factors driving rice demand in the country, as well as accurate timing of policies, also matter. Moreover, private economic agents engaged in rice production activities are very sensitive to government policies and must be included in the policymaking process. Inconsistencies and a lack of continuity in agricultural policies have been blamed in the literature as an impediment to domestic rice production and a constraint on poor rice farmers' welfare. (Daramola, 2005). Making Nigerian rice more competitive in terms of price and quality therefore requires a combination of factors, including appropriate policy measures.

Rice Sector Development in Nigeria

The Nigerian government is not left out as it has pursued and implemented various agricultural policies at the State and Federal levels on the rice transformation agenda to boost Nigeria's rice production over the

years. Among these is the Agricultural transformation agenda (ATA) with the success recorded in local rice production of 4.8 million tons per annum (FAO, 2016). Harold and Tabo (2015) further noted that similar rice-sector promotion programs have been embarked upon in other African countries like Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. These align with the ECOWAS Agricultural Policy-ECOWAP (Olayiwo, 2015). Given the rise in food consumption (rice inclusive), some have argued that the production of rice in large quantities (that is, large-scale) should be considered as one of the major ways of ensuring food security for the teeming population in Nigeria (Herrmann, Jumbe, Bruentrup and Osabuohien, 2017; Osabuohien, Osabuohien & Urhie, 2017). Others hold contrary view, stressing the need to empower small-holder farmers. Against that backdrop, Juliano (2016) stated the importance of rice over other crops, in terms of its total production in the developing countries and the number of consumers that are dependent on it as a staple food. This has also been stressed by Gyimah Brempong, Johnson and Takeshima (2016). While Umeh, Joshi and Ukwungwu (1992) discussed that a holistic, broadly based, multidisciplinary pest-management research approach is required due to the immense benefits that integrated pest management (IPM) can provide.

Adewumi, Olayanju and Adewuyi (2007) observed that rice production and processing are profitable ventures in Nigeria and what is required is to encourage investment in rice processing activities. Aside the nutritional value of rice and high inclination of people towards its consumption, the by-product of rice could serve as a source of energy generation for domestic purposes. This could serve as a source of biofuel for cooking especially in rural settings where most of the rural dwellers could not readily afford the cost of kerosene or gas for cooking and heating purposes. Yan, Ngadi and Kok (2016) in their study stressed that rice generates large amount of by-products that could be used to produce energy and reduce the amount of firewood required to meet the daily cooking needs. This is crucial in Nigeria where rural dwellers use local means of cooking such as firewood and charcoal. The connotation of the above is that modern processing of rice at the milling centres could help in preserving the rice hub which servers as firewood to the locality thereby reducing the cost of buying kerosene for cooking. For optimum output to be attained in rice production, it is necessary that ecological consideration be factored in the production process, especially in the choice of land as well as the typological components of the area. In this respect, the method of land preparation plays a significant role in the rice production process. In relation to this, Ambula and Ahluwalia (2016) observed that zero tillage in rice-wheat cropping system could have major benefits, such as: improved water usage efficiency, reduced investment cost, higher yield, reduced weed population and a positive environmental effect. In production system with no-tillage or conservation tillage, the crop residues are buried in the soil and thus, the release of *allele chemicals* from both the growing plants and residue decomposition might act synergistically. This is because rice fields have versatile *ecotones* that comprise aquatic habitats as well as dry lands and a large group of biodiversity. Other significant factors that affect rice production include: weeds and pests and diseases infestations. Thus, the control method employed in the rice farm and the timing of the weeding is of essence to prevent its devastating effects in the rice farm development.

The Impact of Rice Production, Consumption and Importation in Nigeria

The policies that were introduced in the past on rice importation in Nigeria by the government in 1995 as engineered by the World Bank and IMF brought a great down fall on rice production in Nigeria, when the ban on rice importation was lifted. "Between the periods, there was ban on the importation of rice in the country which made it illegal for one to import rice into the country" Emodi and Madukwe (2008). This brought about so much dependence on rice importation into the country rather than concentrating on domestic production which will yield more result for the economy of the country in relation to its foreign income and food security. Emodi and Dimelu (2011) observed that, "there will be an encouragement of the local producers of rice when a ban is put in place on the importation of rice in Nigeria. In as much as there are other challenges on the production of rice in Nigeria, looking up for adequate solutions for this purpose requires majors' steps to be taken by the government to ban the importation of rice and rather create an avenue for the foreign investors to come and invest in Nigeria where rice can be produced locally". Among other things, destoner mills should be established as well as provision of technology which will do the drying and milling of the local rice.

Kebbeh and Oikeh (2003) relates a decline in rice production in Nigeria, to the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), that bedeviled the Sub-Saharan African countries where subsidies were eliminated. The subsidies were known as key support to the farmers. With the aid of the subsidies, the farmers were enabled to acquire the needed support through provision of fertilizers at low costs as well as

other inputs for the purpose of domestic rice production. In the area of irrigated rice production which is majorly practiced in the northern part of the country, it became very difficult to purchase the needed inputs since this type of farming requires much money to start the farming system known as irrigation. The problem of irrigated rice production is largely faced by the poor farmers who are in the production sector. This is because access to credit facilities becomes difficult and therefore, there arises a need for the government through a functional system that is decentralized as a mechanism for the purpose of obtaining credit facilities Kebbeh and Oikeh (2003).

Emodi and Madukwe (2008) focused on the needed initiatives in rice innovation system, rice production, and the identified gaps that exist in rice policies. However, their studies failed to identify the impact of such policies and innovation on rice consumption and rice importation as it relates to Nigeria's political and economic development. The gap this paper covered. Emodi and Dimelu (2011) also, in their paper focuses on the strategies that will enhance rice innovation system but made limited contribution regarding the rice consumption and rice importation which this will focus on. Akaeze (2010) maintained that, Nigeria is the highest consumer of rice within the West African sub-region. He further argued that, the quality of production of rice which is mostly imported in Nigeria is far better than the locally produced rice. That its consumption to some individuals is a habit; while to others is quality preference over the locally produced rice. The Nigerian population is by far greater than the rest of the West African countries; most homes depend on rice consumption and having it as an everyday meal.

According to Akpokodje et al. (2001) there are many consumers of rice in Nigeria. Demands are made from many quarters ranging from universities, the military, colleges, polytechnics, hospitals, hostels, and individuals as well as from families. In 1976, the government established an agency with the responsibility of importing rice and other foods, distributing and selling them at equal price to consumers, wholesale and retailers, known as the Nigerian National Supply Company (NNSC). In 1986, there was a ban on rice importation by the government of Nigeria. This does not significantly improve the local production. The ban was later lifted. It is in this line that, Rahji and Adewumi (2008) assert that, in 1995 the ban on rice importation was lifted even though during the period of the ban, there was still imported rice in the country due to Nigeria's porous borders.

Gaps in Rice Policies, Acts and Initiatives in Nigeria

Imported policy concepts: Most policies relating to rice failed to recognize the problems of the stakeholders. They are detached and foreign to the tradition and cultural practices of the stakeholders. The situation existed because the Nigerian government failed to provide the necessary financial support to rice innovation system. The non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), National agricultural research Station (NARS), Green River Project (GRP), Shell Petroleum development Company (SPDC)), self-funded by their parent body or foreign donors controlled the mandates and pace of rice performance.

Lack of incentives: There was lack of economic incentives for wide and massive adoption, due to poor technology transfer and delivery system, especially for seed; and inappropriate agricultural policies: though policies are needed to encourage competitiveness of domestic rice production against heavily subsidized imports, but overriding problem is the decline in the regions self- sufficiency in rice production and increasing dependency on imports (FAO, 2004).

Weak provision of Market Information Services: Lack of market information creates unequal playing fields between middlemen and farmers. This negatively affects the terms of trade for small holder farmers and raises market transaction costs which lead to poor integration of markets across space and time. Market failure is the major reason for both the low productivity and uncompetitive market for domestic rice. When markets fail, capacity of smallholder farmers to use available prospective technologies is undermined.

Absence of coordinated infrastructure: Existing initiative did not coordinate the timely and effective provision of the necessary infrastructure for rice innovation system. Some of the major rice producing areas had poor access road. Again, some areas were constrained by inadequate and inappropriate processing equipment, especially at the farm or village level. The inability to provide and use improved technologies

in rice processing has led to the production of poor quality of domestic rice that is not competitively marketable.

Poor provision for learning and technological capacity building: Overtime, the succeeding initiatives showed poor provisions for the development of the needed capability to drive the rice innovation system. Similarly, they were evidence of poor learning as some of the weaknesses were transferred from preceding initiatives. There was lack of solid support for science to address most of the problems facing rice production such as drought, soil fertility depletion, diseases and pests.

Theoretical Framework

In the study, the theory used to explain the impact of agricultural rice policies and Nigerian economy is the Eastonian approach of the “system theory” propounded by David Easton in 1953. The idea of systems implies the interdependence of parts and subparts for the effective performance of the whole system Das and Choudhury (1997:21). Going by the Eastonian approach, the economy of any nation is like a system with many parts and sub-parts, it is difficult to understand one part without the other. The central assumption is that all social, economic and political phenomena are interrelated. They affect each other for survival of the whole system. Easton therefore argues that, it is not possible to understand one part of the society in isolation from the other parts which affect its operation.

To explicate on the working of the system theory, David Easton identifies three properties: comprehensiveness, interdependence and the existence of boundaries. By interdependence it means that a change in one subset of interactions produces change in all other subsets due to the mutual coexistence among the different units. The property of comprehensiveness refers to that all the interactions found in the system Ayatse and Akuva (2009). The property of existence of boundaries in a political system means, that there are points where the other systems end their functions and the other beings from where the other stops.

From the foregoing, the major assumptions of the Eastonian approach of the system theory could be used to explain the relationship between rice policies and the Nigerian economy. This is because the systems theory has so many justifications with the subject matter of this study. The Nigerian economy is made up of different sectors and sub-sectors which David Easton calls the system and sub-systems. The system here represents the Nigerian whole economic set up while the subsystems are the different economic sectors like agriculture, petroleum, energy, mine, education, health, the manufacturing etc. By interdependence, it means that change in one sector of the economy lead to change in the other sector of the same economy, it implies that no sector of the economy on its own, without interacting with the other can be successful nor lead to the advancement of the whole economic set up. Rice policies cannot be successful no matter how good they are if other sectors of the economy like energy, education backing sector and the manufacturing/industrial sectors are malfunctioning. The absence of or poor social infrastructures like roads, water, electricity, health, education etc. can truncate the success of rice policies. The energy sector needs to provide electricity for industries to be established so that agricultural produce can feed the industries.

The absence of interaction among the various sectors of the economy has made it difficult to experience comprehensiveness in the Nigerian economic set up. The much revenue generated from the oil has not been used to effectively impact on the agricultural projects not even to put in place social infrastructures. The banks are not willing to assist poor farmers with loans, even when the facility is there the conditions are stringent. The disconnection among the various sectors of the economy is what Claude Ake calls “economies hardly advance. From the above argument, is clear that, though agriculture has the impacted positively on the Nigerian economy, on its own it can do nothing without getting the necessary functional support from other sectors of the economy. The poor economic sectoral relationship in the Nigerian economy is purely responsible for the failure of rice and agricultural policies in Nigeria.

Research Methodology

The research design used for the study is the descriptive research design. Descriptive study designed to investigate into the topic; assessing the impact of rice farming policy on Nigerian Economy using Kura and Bunkure as case study. The data for this research was gathered from both primary and secondary sources. The study is focused on the present government rice farming policies in Nigeria introduced by Buhari administration in order to have a holistic assessment of the subject matter.

The population of this study was drawn from the Federal and State Ministry of Agriculture and Kura and Bunkure local government areas of Kano State

The sampling technique or procedure for the study was a simple Random Sampling in selecting the respondents that answers the questionnaires. In applying simple random sampling, the research randomly selected the respondents to give equal opportunity to all the staff of the ministry sampled out for the study. In this regard, the researchers selected 110 respondents from the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Kano State Ministry of Agriculture and another 110 from the beneficiary of the rice farming policy. This apparently brought our sample size to 220 respondents.

Discussion of Findings

Demographic data of the respondents

Demographic data of the respondents

Table 1: Educational Qualifications of respondents?

Education	Frequency	Percent
Primary	60	19%
Secondary	70	51.2%
Tertiary	42	29.5%
Total	220	100%

Source: Research survey, January 2023

Table 1 shows educational qualification of the respondents. 60 respondents representing 19.3% have primary qualification, 70 respondents representing 51.2% have secondary qualification and 42 respondents representing 29.5% have tertiary qualification. Therefore, majority have secondary qualification.

Table 2: Occupation of respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Civil servant	65	30%
Farmer	150	68%
Politician	5	2%
Total	220	100%

Source: Research survey, January 2023

Table 2 shows occupation classification o in table above shows that majority are farmers. This is represented civil servant 65(30%), 150 (68%) were farmers, while 5(2%) were politicians.

TABLE 3: Respondents' opinions on whether government rice policy has made significant impact on the provision of employment in Nigeria

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	75	34.1
Agree	137	62.2
Undecided	0	0.0
Disagree	5	2.3
Strongly Disagree	3	1.4
TOTAL	220	100

Source: Research survey, January 2023

Table 3 above, presented the respondents' opinions on Government rice policy has made significant impact on the provision of employment in Nigeria. From the above table, 75 respondents or 34.1% strongly agreed, 137 respondents or 62.2% agreed, none of the respondent answered undecided, 5 respondents or 2.3% disagreed while 3 respondents or 1.4% strongly disagreed. The researcher endeavored to obtain more information from the respondents in order to know why some respondents accepted and others did not accept that Government rice policy has made significant impact on the provision of employment in Nigeria.

The oral interview conducted to the respondents revealed that Nigeria has good rice farming policy when compared with some other countries.

TABLE 4: Respondents' opinions on provision of employment has brought growth and development to the economy of the study areas

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	95	43.2
Agree	66	30.0
Undecided	0	0.0
Disagree	42	19.1
Strongly Disagree	17	7.7
TOTAL	220	100

Source: Research survey, January 2023

As depicted from the table above, 95 respondents or 43.2% strongly agreed, while 66 respondents or 30.0% agreed that provision of employment has brought growth and development to the agricultural sector on Nigerian Economy. On the other, hand, none of the respondent indicated on the option undecided, 42 respondents or 19.1% indicated disagree while 17 respondents or 7.7% indicated strongly disagree. Respondents' opinions showed that an appreciative improvement has been achieved but much still need to done. It is therefore difficulty to admit affirmatively that government rice farming policies have drastically provide employment, growth and development to the agricultural sector in Nigeria.

TABLE 5: Respondents' opinions on whether there is fairness in the distribution of employment to Nigerian's into the agricultural sector

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	85	38.6
Agree	70	31.8
Undecided	0	0.0
Disagree	40	18.2
Strongly Disagree	25	11.4
TOTAL	220	100

Source: Research survey, January 2023

Table 5 above investigates on whether there is fairness in the distribution of employment to Nigerians into the agricultural sector. From the table, 85 respondents or 38.6% indicated strongly agree while another 70 respondents or 31.8% indicated agree in support of the question that there is fairness in the distribution of employment to Nigerians into the agricultural ministries/sectors. The researcher endeavored to ascertain further information from the respondents on their acceptance that rice farming policies are making significance impact in the distribution of employment to Nigerians into the agricultural sector. On the other hand, 40 respondents or 18.2% disagreed while 25 respondents or 11.4% strongly disagreed that there is fairness in the distribution of employment to Nigerians into the agricultural ministries/sectors.

TABLE 6: Respondents' Opinions on area that Government rice farming polices have improved food productions in Nigeria

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	45	20.5
Agree	38	17.2
Undecided	9	4.1
Disagree	70	31.8
Strongly Disagree	58	26.4
TOTAL	220	100

Source: Research survey, January 2023

Table 6 examines whether government rice farming policies have improved food productions in Nigeria. Analysis of data in the table showed that 45 respondents or 20.5% strongly agreed while 38 respondents or 17.2% agreed that government rice farming polices have improved food productions in Nigeria. On the other hand, 9 respondents or 4.1% chose undecided, 70 respondents or 31.8% indicated disagree while 58 respondents or 26.4 indicated strongly disagree. Observations from the oral interview conducted by the researcher in this aspect showed that government rice farming polices have improved food productions in Nigerians.

TABLE 7: Respondents' Opinions on whether Rice farming policies has made significance impact on the income of Nigeria teeming youth

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	30	13.6
Agree	25	11.4
Undecided	5	2.3
Disagree	98	44.4
Strongly Disagree	62	28.2
TOTAL	220	100

Sources: Research survey, January 2023

Table 7 examines whether rice farming policies has made significance impact on the income of Nigeria teeming youth. Presentation from the table above shows that 30 respondents or 13.6% strongly agreed while 25 respondents or 11.4% agreed that there is sufficient funding of agricultural policies in Nigeria. On the other hand, 5 respondent or 2.3% indicated undecided, 98 respondents or 44.4% disagreed while 62 respondents or 28.2% strongly disagreed to the question.

TABLE 8: Respondents' Opinions on whether income generation of rice policy have strengthened economic development and enhancing agricultural productivity

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	27	12.3
Agree	40	18.2
Undecided	4	1.8
Disagree	62	28.1
Strongly Disagree	87	39.5
TOTAL	220	100

Source: Research survey, January 2023

The above table 8 shows the respondents' opinions on whether Income generation of rice policy have strengthened economic development and enhancing agricultural productivity. The data presented above shows that 27 respondents or 12.3% strongly agreed while 40 respondents or 18.2% agreed that income generation of rice policy have Strengthen economic development and enhance agricultural productivity. On the other hand, 62 respondents or 28.1% disagreed while 87 respondents or 39.5% strongly disagreed that income generation of rice policy have Strengthen economic development and enhance agricultural productivity.

TABLE 9: Respondents' Opinions on whether income generation of rice policy have increased the funding of rice farming in Nigeria

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	20	9.1
Agree	50	22.7
Undecided	5	2.7
Disagree	80	36.4
Strongly Disagree	65	29.5
TOTAL	220	100

Source: Research survey, January 2023

Table 9 assesses the respondents' opinions on whether income generation of rice policy has increased the funding of rice farming in Nigeria. From the table, 20 respondents' or 9.1% strongly agreed while 50 respondents' or 22.7% agreed. In another view, 80 respondents' or 36.4% disagreed while 65 respondents' or 29.5% strongly disagreed to the question. 5 respondents' or 2.7 answered undecided. Finding shown that majority of the respondents were of the opinions that income generation of rice policy have not increase the funding of rice farming in Nigeria. Observation from the respondents' opinions showed that rice policies are designed to boost agricultural (farming) activities in Nigeria, but usually during the implementation stage may deviate from the original policy guide.

TABLE 10: Respondents' Opinions on whether poor income generation contributes to failure in achieving the goals of rice policy in Nigeria

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	38	17.3
Agree	51	23.2
Undecided	4	1.8
Disagree	77	35.0
Strongly Disagree	50	22.7
TOTAL	220	100

Source: Research survey, January 2023

Table 10 investigates the respondents' assessment on whether poor income generation contributes to failure in achieving the goals of rice policy in Nigeria. As presented in the table above, 38 respondents' or 17.3% strongly agreed while 51 respondents' or 23.2% agreed. On the other hand, 77 respondents or 35.0% disagreed while 50 respondents' or 22.7% strongly disagreed to the question. Findings from the responses revealed that poor income generation contributes to failure in achieving the goals of rice policies in the study area (Dan Hassan, Karfi, Kosawa and Kura in Kura local government area and Barkum, Gafan, Gurjiya and Bunkure in Bunkure local government area) considering the areas of progress identified by the respondents. However, dominant views from our literature review showed that the results of rice farming policies in Nigeria have achieved little considering their set objectives and government financial investments in the sector. In other words, we do not hold on to the opinions of the respondents to an extreme.

Discussion on Major Findings

This section of the research **presents** the findings on the subject matter. The interpretations and observations based on the data presented shows that rice farming policy is essential part of public policies in Nigeria as well as integral part Nigeria's political economy. From the findings, it was revealed that over the years, rice policy on economy of the study area which is Kura and Bunkure local government areas (Dan Hassan, Karfi, Kosawa and Kura in Kura local government area and Barkum, Gafan, Gurjiya and Bunkure in Bunkure local government area) have made significant impact on the provision of employment, has brought growth/development, fairness in the distribution of employment to the agricultural sector, but have achieved lesser results than expected in food production, foreign earning, lesser impact on the income of Nigeria's teeming youth and poor income generation has caused the failure in achieving the goals of rice farming policies in Nigeria. In this regards, the respondents' opinions and the observation from the literature review showed that the formulation of rice farming policies often show less attention to the impact analysis of such policies on the social, economic, environmental/physical and political influences and activities of the people.

The truth with the Nigerian society is that most social, economic and political problems are ambiguous and complex. Often, they do not possess clear answers and solutions. Sometimes, such problems have not been analyzed and studied to provide known, experimented and tested solutions. The knowledge base on how to resolve certain social problems is poor. This tends to stem from the socio-cultural diversities of the Nigerian society. Therefore, the formulation of rice farming policies often witnesses inadequate data regarding the socio-cultural problems which may constrain the successful implementation and achievements of desired results.

Equally, our findings showed that the implementation of rice policies may lack effective implementation strategies following factors such as human induced inefficiency, mismanagement of resources, poor funding of implementation, corruption on the side of the implementing agencies. Based on

the above, rice policies impact poorly on Nigeria economy following the constraints that affect their successful implementation. In other words, if deeply assessed may contribute to poor benefit of farmers from agricultural programmes in Nigeria and weak the marketing of agricultural products both at local and international markets.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The Nigerian government has over the years formulated good rice farming policy is not exclusive from this point. The policies are meant to encourage/improve food production, provision of employment, as income to Nigerians youth and other economic benefits to enhance economic development but such policies have been found inefficient and ineffective since the intended results were not realized. From the research findings, some evidences were established to show that the formulation of the rice farming policies often does not take critical analysis of the social, economic, physical/environmental and political impact on the target intended beneficiaries. On the other hand, the implementation of rice farming policy is characterized with implementation problems one of which is implementation leakages.

Based on the findings of the study and taking cognizance of the importance of the subject matter under review, the researcher is inclined to make the following recommendations:

Formulation stage of public policies involves identification of problems. Therefore, formulation of rice farming policy should endeavor first to identify the problems of Nigeria's agricultural sector in areas of social, economic, environmental/physical and political problems that affect the outcome of rice policy in Nigeria. Also, adequate assessment on social economic and environmental impact analysis of rice policy should be carried out before formulation. This will help in providing pragmatic solutions to the problems, The implementation of agricultural policies should be well monitored by both government and non-governmental agencies. This is because implementation is the most sensitive stage of the success or failure of rice farming policy. And from our research findings, there were evidence that rice farming policy record implementation leakages. This tends to create a scenario, where by unintended beneficiaries hijack the benefits of rice farming policy and programs.

Finally, there is need to strengthen the administrative capacities of the implementing agencies in order to effectively discharge their duties. Also, government should ensure motivation of staff of the implementing agencies by providing incentives to them and urge them to pursue vigorously the goals and objectives of rice farming policy. One aspects of the motivation of staff of the implementing agencies should including staff training and re-training.

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