

## THE IMPACT OF INSECURITY ON AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF BENUE STATE (2011-2023)

---

**DOMINIC AONDOWASE IORYUE**

Department of Political Science and Defence Studies  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
Nigerian Defence Academy Kaduna, Kaduna State-Nigeria  
dominicioryue04@gmail.com

**JIMOH, OLALEKAN IDOWU**

Department of Political Science and Defence Studies  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
Nigerian Defence Academy Kaduna, Kaduna State-Nigeria  
jimohojoseph@gmail.com

**EJEH LOVETH**

Department of Political Science and Defence Studies  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
Nigerian Defence Academy Kaduna, Kaduna State-Nigeria  
Josephloveth2@gmail.com

### Abstract

*This study investigates the impact of insecurity on agricultural development in Nigeria from 2011 to 2023, with Benue State as its focus. Nigeria's agricultural sector is critical to its economy, providing employment and food security for a significant portion of the population. However, persistent insecurity, driven by factors such as Boko Haram insurgency, herder-farmer conflicts, banditry, and kidnappings, has severely disrupted agricultural activities. Insecurity has led to restricted access to farmlands, displacement of farming communities, and disruption of supply chains, exacerbating food insecurity and poverty. Additionally, the study examines the government's response and policy interventions aimed at mitigating the impact of insecurity on agriculture. Despite various initiatives, the effectiveness of these measures remains limited due to ongoing violence and inadequate implementation. The study adopts the Human Security Framework as its theoretical framework. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data analysis of agricultural output, economic reports, and security incidents with qualitative interviews of affected farmers, agricultural experts, and policymakers. The findings reveal a significant decline in agricultural productivity, marked by reduced crop yields, livestock losses, and abandoned farmlands. This study underscores the urgent need for comprehensive security reforms and sustainable agricultural policies to restore and enhance agricultural productivity in Nigeria. The findings of the study contribute to a deeper understanding of the nexus between security and agriculture, offering policy recommendations to address the challenges and foster a resilient agricultural sector.*

**Keywords:** Insecurity, Agricultural development, Food security, Policy interventions and Nigeria

## Introduction

Nigeria's agricultural sector is a vital component of its economy, providing employment for approximately 70% of the population and contributing significantly to the nation's GDP (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). Nigeria's agricultural sector is pivotal to its socio-economic development, serving as a major source of livelihood and a critical component of its economy. The sector encompasses a wide range of activities including crop production, livestock farming, fisheries, and forestry. It is a key driver of rural development and poverty alleviation, contributing about 22% to Nigeria's GDP as of 2021 (World Bank, 2022).

The sector is characterized by a diversity of crops, with major staples including rice, maize, cassava, and yams. Livestock farming, particularly cattle, goats, and poultry, also plays a significant role. Nigeria's varied Agro-ecological zones support a wide range of agricultural activities, from arable farming in the savannah regions to horticulture in the rainforest zones (FAO, 2020).

Despite its potential, Nigeria's agricultural sector faces numerous challenges. These include inadequate infrastructure, limited access to finance, poor agricultural practices,

and the impact of climate change. According to Ioryue (2024);

Climate change-induced environmental shifts, particularly extreme weather events, have emerged as catalysts for forced migration, leading to a growing population of displaced individuals in one of Nigeria's agriculturally rich regions. Benue State, located in the central part of Nigeria, has experienced a series of climate-related challenges, including erratic rainfall patterns, prolonged droughts and unpredictable floods. These environmental stressors have profoundly impacted the livelihoods of communities heavily reliant on agriculture, exacerbating pre-existing vulnerabilities. As a consequence, a significant number of residents in Benue State have been displaced from their homes, giving rise to a burgeoning IDP crisis.

However, one of the most pressing issues is insecurity. In recent years (2009 to date), the escalation of violence and insecurity has had devastating effects on agricultural productivity. The herder-farmer conflicts, particularly in the Middle Belt region, have resulted in significant

loss of lives, displacement of farmers, and destruction of farmlands (Ibrahim, 2019).

Benue State, often referred to as the "Food Basket of the Nation," is particularly renowned for its agricultural productivity, contributing substantially to Nigeria's food security through the cultivation of crops such as yam, cassava, rice, and soybeans (Odeh, 2019). However, the state's agricultural potential has been severely undermined by persistent insecurity.

Insecurity in Nigeria, particularly in the Middle Belt region where Benue State is located, has been driven by a complex interplay of factors including Boko Haram insurgency, herder-farmer conflicts, banditry, and kidnappings (Audu, 2021). These security challenges have led to the displacement of farming communities, restricted access to farmlands, and disrupted supply chains, resulting in significant economic losses and exacerbating food insecurity and poverty (Aghedo & Osumah, 2019).

The significance of this study lies in its focus on understanding the intricate relationship between insecurity and agricultural development in Benue State over the period from 2011 to 2023. This study focuses on Benue State, a major agricultural region in Nigeria, over the period from 2011 to 2023. It

examines the impact of various forms of insecurity, including herder-farmer conflicts, banditry, and kidnappings, on agricultural activities. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data analysis of agricultural output, economic reports, and security incidents with qualitative interviews of affected farmers, agricultural experts, and policymakers. The findings aim to provide comprehensive insights into the nexus between security and agriculture and to offer practical policy recommendations.

## **Literature Review**

### **Conceptual Review**

#### **The concept of Insecurity**

Insecurity is a pervasive issue affecting various sectors in Nigeria, including education, healthcare, and, significantly, agriculture. Insecurity can be understood as the state of being unsafe, which often results from threats like terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, herder-farmer conflicts, and other forms of violence. These threats disrupt daily life and economic activities, affecting both the productivity and well-being of communities.

In Nigeria, the escalation of insecurity has profound implications. The northern regions, for instance, have faced Boko Haram insurgencies for over a decade, leading to

displacement and loss of lives. Similarly, herder-farmer clashes, particularly in Middle Belt states like Benue, have resulted in land disputes, property destruction, and food insecurity (Aliyu & Adebayo, 2021). These conflicts have severely impacted agriculture and food supply, as insecurity deters farmers from planting or harvesting, leading to reduced crop production and higher food prices.

Moreover, insecurity creates an environment that discourages investment and infrastructure development, which are essential for growth. Fear of attacks forces schools, businesses, and healthcare facilities to close or limit their operations. For example, educational institutions often shut down in conflict-prone areas, affecting the academic continuity of students (Oni & Ibitoye, 2022). The psychological impact of insecurity on communities, such as heightened stress and trauma, further exacerbates the challenges to economic stability and development.

### **The Concept of Development**

Development refers to the process by which a society advances economically, socially, and culturally, aiming to improve the quality of life for its citizens. Development is often viewed as a multidimensional process involving the transformation of economic structures, enhancement of human capabilities, and

improvement in living standards. In agriculture, development encompasses increased productivity, modernization of farming techniques, and improved infrastructure to support agricultural value chains, which are essential for food security and economic stability.

In the Nigerian context, development has unique challenges due to structural issues, political instability, and insecurity, particularly in agricultural areas (Akinbile et al., 2019). The country's agricultural development has seen some improvements in recent decades, such as government initiatives and programs to enhance productivity. However, insecurity has heavily hindered progress, especially in regions like Benue State, where farming activities are frequently disrupted by conflicts and insecurity (Eze et al., 2020). Effective development in Nigeria's agricultural sector thus requires addressing these security issues to create an enabling environment for sustainable growth and the stability needed for economic resilience.

### **Agricultural Development**

Agricultural development involves advancing agricultural practices, infrastructure, and resources to enhance productivity, sustainability, and food security within a community or nation. This development

encompasses modernizing farming techniques, improving access to agricultural inputs, and fostering innovation in crop and livestock management. Additionally, it includes the implementation of policies that facilitate market access, financial support, and technical education for farmers, enabling them to optimize yields and contribute to economic growth (World Bank, 2021).

In Nigeria, agricultural development has the potential to drive economic transformation, given the country's vast arable land and favorable climatic conditions for diverse crops. However, challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited access to credit, and insecurity, particularly in regions heavily dependent on agriculture, hinder progress (FAO, 2020). Developing the sector requires addressing these barriers while promoting efficient practices and encouraging investment in rural infrastructure, such as irrigation and transportation networks, to support agricultural productivity and reduce post-harvest losses.

### **Insecurity and Agricultural Development in Nigeria**

The interconnection between insecurity and agricultural development in Nigeria, particularly in Benue State, has posed significant challenges to the sector's growth, directly impacting both local communities and

the broader national economy. Insecurity in Nigeria has predominantly been characterized by activities such as armed banditry, communal conflicts, cattle rustling, and terrorism, which have not only threatened lives but have also hindered agricultural productivity and discouraged investments in rural areas (Aliyu & Adebayo, 2021). The instability caused by these factors disrupts farming schedules, prevents access to farmlands, and leads to the displacement of communities that rely on agriculture for their livelihood (Oni & Ibitoye, 2022).

Benue State, known as the "food basket of the nation" due to its fertile land and extensive agricultural output, has faced significant insecurity, notably from clashes between herders and farmers. This conflict has led to reduced farming activities, displacement of rural communities, and loss of agricultural assets, contributing to a decline in crop yields and overall food production (Okeke & Nwankwo, 2020). The frequent destruction of farms, theft of livestock, and loss of investments in agriculture have had long-term effects, decreased food availability and increasing prices, which exacerbate food insecurity (Usman & Musa, 2023).

Moreover, insecurity has discouraged both local and foreign investments in agriculture

within Benue State, as potential investors consider the region too risky (World Bank, 2022). This lack of investment limits technological advancement in farming practices, curbing agricultural efficiency and growth. Additionally, as farmers relocate due to fear of attacks, the agricultural labour force diminishes, creating gaps in the supply chain that affect the entire agricultural ecosystem, from production to distribution (FAO, 2021).

Several studies have highlighted the detrimental effects of farmer-herder conflicts on agricultural productivity. Adetula (2016) notes that these conflicts have led to the displacement of farmers, destruction of crops, and loss of livestock, resulting in decreased agricultural output. Similarly, Bello (2013) argues that the fear of attacks has prevented farmers from accessing their farmlands, leading to reduced cultivation and harvests. The cyclical nature of these conflicts exacerbates food insecurity and economic instability in the region.

The Boko Haram insurgency in Northern Nigeria has also had far-reaching impacts on agriculture. According to Okeke (2014), the insurgency has disrupted farming activities through the displacement of farmers, destruction of farmlands, and the imposition of curfews and movement restrictions. These

disruptions have led to a significant decline in agricultural productivity and contributed to food shortages and increased prices.

Banditry and kidnapping have also emerged as significant threats to agricultural development in Nigeria. Olaniyan and Yahaya (2016) discuss how these criminal activities have caused widespread fear among rural communities, leading to abandonment of farms and rural-urban migration. This shift not only reduces the agricultural workforce but also strains urban resources and infrastructure.

Insecurity has a direct impact on food security in Nigeria. Madu (2016) emphasizes that the displacement of farmers and disruption of agricultural activities lead to reduced food production and supply. This situation results in higher food prices and increased hunger and malnutrition, particularly among vulnerable populations. The World Food Programme (WFP, 2019) reports that persistent insecurity in Nigeria has exacerbated food insecurity, with millions of people requiring food assistance.

The economic implications of insecurity on agriculture are profound. Eze (2018) highlights that agriculture is a significant contributor to Nigeria's GDP and a major source of employment. Insecurity-induced disruptions in agriculture, therefore, have far-reaching economic consequences, including reduced

income for farmers, loss of livelihoods, and decreased foreign exchange earnings from agricultural exports.

However, various responses to address the impact of insecurity on agriculture have been documented. The Nigerian government has implemented several initiatives aimed at enhancing security and supporting affected farmers. For instance, the National Agricultural Resilience Framework (NARF) seeks to build resilience among farmers through improved security measures and support for alternative livelihoods (Federal Ministry of Agriculture, 2017). Community-based interventions, such as local peacebuilding efforts and collaborative security arrangements, have also been explored as ways to mitigate the impact of insecurity on agriculture (Omole, 2017).

While existing literature provides valuable insights into the impact of insecurity on agriculture in Nigeria, several gaps remain. There is a need for more localized studies that examine the specific impacts of insecurity in different states, including Benue. Additionally, there is a lack of longitudinal studies that track the long-term effects of insecurity on agricultural development. Furthermore, more research is needed on the effectiveness of various government and community responses to insecurity.

## **Theoretical framework**

### **Human Security Framework**

The Human Security Framework was first articulated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its 1994 Human Development Report. Mahbub ul Haq, a prominent Pakistani economist, and Amartya Sen, an Indian economist and philosopher, are key proponents who have significantly contributed to its conceptual development. The framework was designed to broaden the traditional understanding of security to include threats to individuals' well-being and dignity.

### **Basic Assumptions of the Theory**

The Human Security Framework is built on the premise that the security of individuals should be the primary focus of security policies, rather than the security of states alone. The framework identifies seven dimensions of human security: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security (UNDP, 1994). The key assumptions of the theory include:

- i. **Broadening the Concept of Security:** Traditional security paradigms focus primarily on state security and military threats. The Human Security Framework shifts the focus to the

- security of individuals and communities, emphasizing non-military threats.
- ii. **Seven Dimensions of Human Security:** The framework identifies seven key areas of human security: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political security (UNDP, 1994).
  - iii. **Interconnectedness of Security Threats:** Threats to human security are interconnected. For instance, economic insecurity can lead to food insecurity, which can further lead to health and personal insecurity.
  - iv. **Preventive Measures:** Emphasis is placed on addressing root causes of insecurity through preventive measures, rather than reactive responses.
  - v. **Human-Centric Approach:** Security policies should prioritize the protection and empowerment of individuals, ensuring their basic needs and rights are met.

### **Relevance of the Theory to the Study**

The Human Security Framework is particularly relevant to the study of the impact of insecurity on agricultural development in Benue State for several reasons, some of which are:

- i. **Holistic Understanding of Security:** By encompassing various dimensions of security, the framework allows for a comprehensive analysis of how insecurity affects different aspects of agricultural development, from economic stability to community well-being.
- ii. **Focus on Individuals and Communities:** The framework's emphasis on individual and community security aligns with the need to understand the direct impact of insecurity on farmers and rural populations in Benue State.
- iii. **Interconnected Threats:** The interconnected nature of human security threats provides a useful lens for examining how issues like farmer-herder conflicts, banditry, and displacement collectively affect agricultural productivity and food security in the region.
- iv. **Preventive Measures:** The focus on preventive measures supports the identification and implementation of strategies to mitigate the impact of insecurity on agriculture, such as improving community resilience and enhancing local conflict resolution mechanisms.



## Critique of the Theory

Despite its strengths, the Human Security Framework has faced several criticisms, such as:

- i. **Vagueness and Ambiguity:** Critics argue that the broad and inclusive nature of human security makes it a vague and ambiguous concept, which can be challenging to operationalize and implement effectively in policy and practice (Paris, 2001).
- ii. **Lack of Clear Prioritization:** The framework does not provide clear guidance on how to prioritize among the various dimensions of human security, leading to potential difficulties in resource allocation and policy formulation.
- iii. **Overemphasis on Individual Security:** While the framework emphasizes individual security, some argue that it may downplay the importance of state security and the role of state institutions in providing comprehensive security (Newman, 2010).
- iv. **Implementation Challenges:** The comprehensive approach of human

security requires extensive coordination and cooperation among various sectors and levels of government, which can be difficult to achieve, especially in regions with weak governance structures.

## Methodology

The paper employs a mixed method where data was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. For the primary data, some affected farmers, agricultural experts, policymakers, and academicians were orally interviewed and E-Questionnaire was administered. While the secondary data were drawn from existing literature such as journal articles, textbooks, internet sources, and NGOs database. Data collected from the field through interviews were presented thematically. While the data that were obtained through questionnaire were presented statistically using charts and tables.

## Data Presentation and Analysis

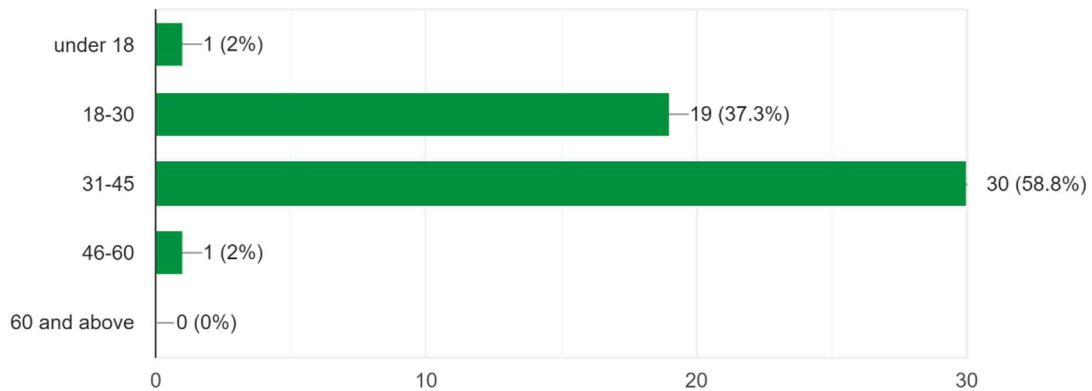
E-questionnaires were administered to the participants. A total of fifty-one (51) responses were recorded, and were thus used for this presentation and analysis.

## Section A: Socio-demographic Data of Respondents

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents based on age.**

### 1. Age:

51 responses



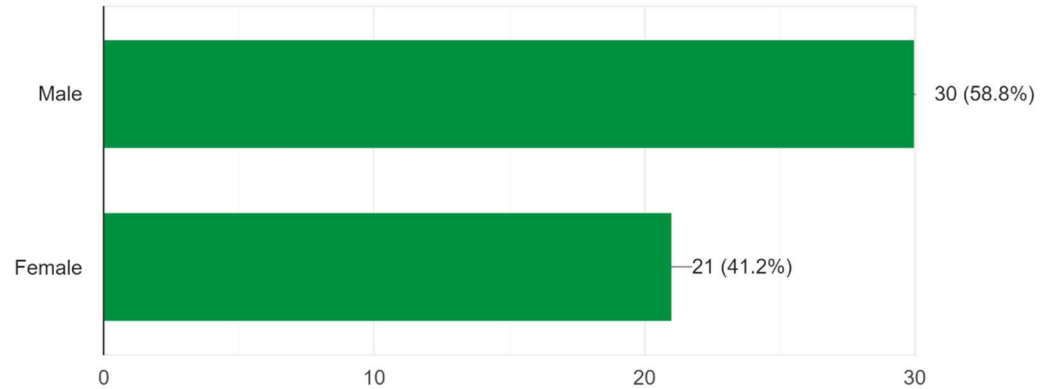
**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

The age of the respondents as showed in the above table indicated that those under 18 years were 1, representing 2%, those between the age of 18-30 years were 19, representing 37.3%; 31-45 years were 30, representing 58.8%; 46-60 years were 1, representing 2%; 60 years and above were 0, representing 0.0%.

An examination of the data from table 1 clearly shows that people from age 31-45 years have participated more in the exercise, with the total of 30 (58.8%). This was because of the fact that, the problem under study required an active age (the youths) and therefore, more young people were sampled.

**Table 2: Distribution of respondents based on gender.****2. Gender:**

51 responses

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

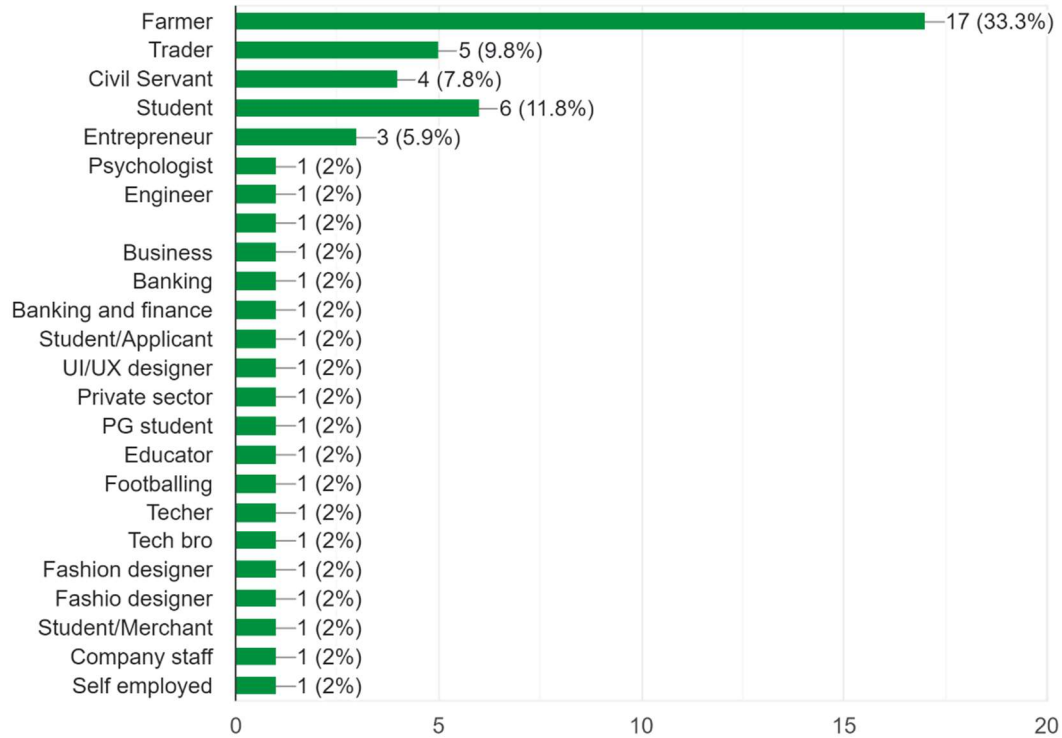
The category of persons that participated in the response to questionnaires were males and females in terms of sex status or gender. Thus, it was gathered that the males were 30 in number, out of 51 responses, representing 58.8% and the females were 21 in number representing 41.2%.

A critical look at the above table, one will discover that the percentage of male who participated in the exercise was more than that of the female gender, 30 (58.8%) and 21 (41.2%). This was so because women were practically uncooperative in the whole process because unapproachable and men tend to respond more and better through the entire

process, hence the above result displayed in the chart.

### 3. Occupation:

51 responses



**Table 3: Distribution of respondents based on occupation.**

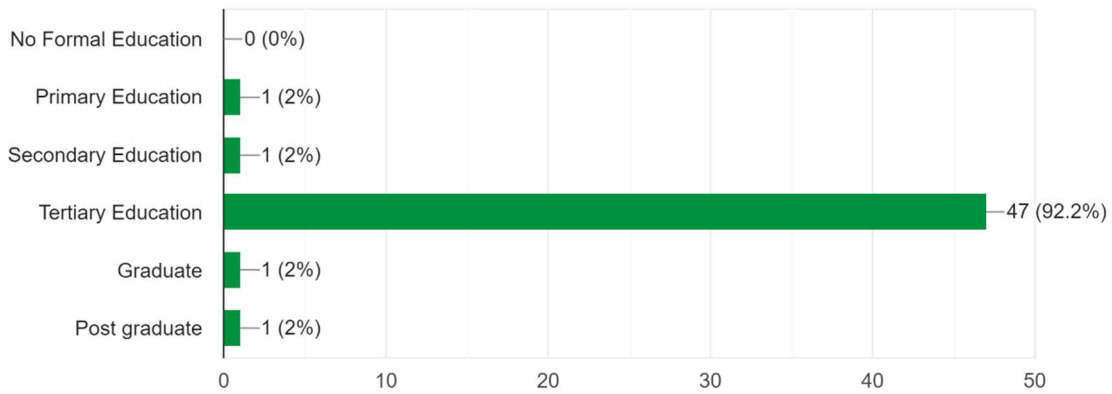
**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

From the presentation above, it showed that Farmers were 17, representing 33.3%; Traders were 5, representing 9.8%; Civil Servant were 4, representing 7.8%; students were 6, representing 11.8%; entrepreneurs were 3,

representing 5.9%; while others such as Psychologists, engineers, bankers, self-employed, etc, were 1 each, representing 2% each.

**Table 4: Distribution of respondents based on Educational Qualification.****4. Educational Level:**

51 responses

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

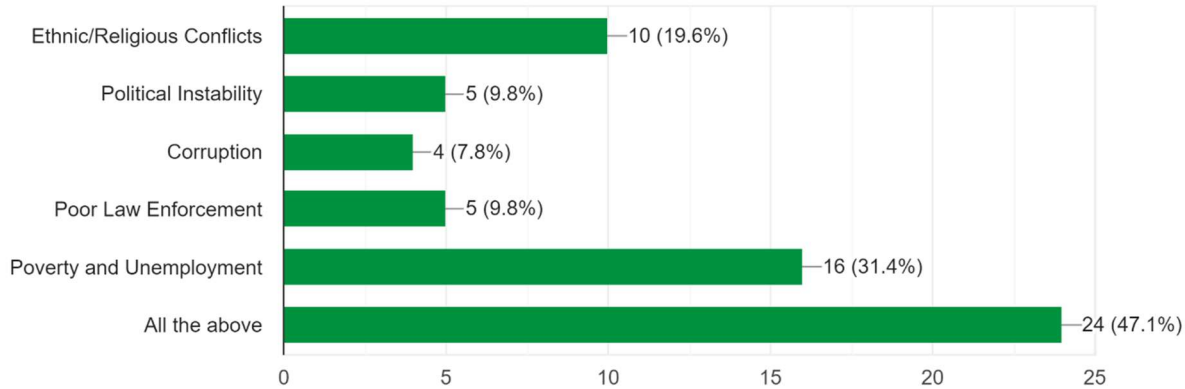
Educational qualification of the respondents was taken into account as the chart above shows. A breakdown of data of the respondents showed that those with no formal education were 0, representing 0.0%; those with First Leaving Certificates (FLC) (Primary education) were 1, representing 2%; secondary education was 1 person, representing 2%; those with

tertiary education were 47, representing 92.2%; Graduate was 1, representing 2%; and those with postgraduate was 1, representing 2% respectively. From the above data, it became clear that those with tertiary education participated more in the exercise.

## Section B: Research Question

5. What do you believe are the primary factors contributing to insecurity in Nigeria?

51 responses



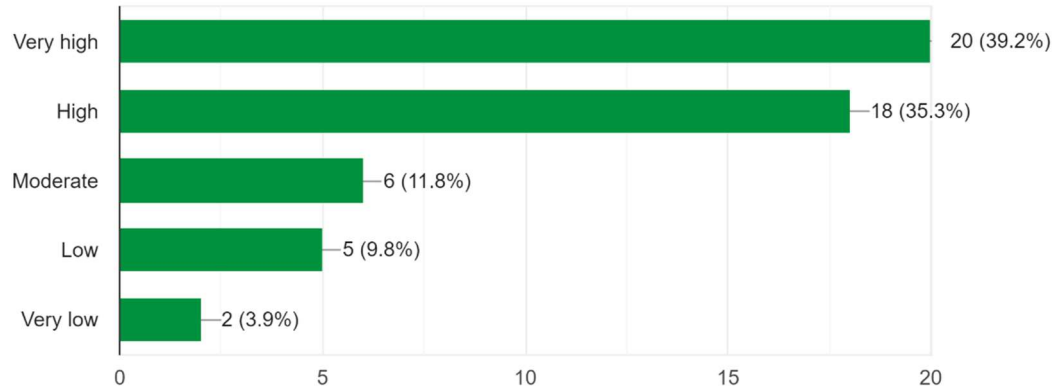
**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

The chart above shows that 10 persons, representing 19.6% were those whom agreed that ethnic and religious conflicts are primary factors contributing to insecurity in Nigeria. While 5, representing 9.8% were of the opinion that political instability is the reason for insecurity in the country. 4 individuals, representing 7.8% agreed that corruption is the factor fueling insecurity in the country. As if that was enough, 5 persons, representing 9.8%

strongly believe that poor law enforcement agency is that core reason for the security challenges the country is experiencing. Interestingly, 16 individuals, representing 31.4% agreed that poverty and unemployment are the reasons for insecurity in Nigeria. While 24 persons who represented 47.1% believe that all the factors listed above contribute in one way or the other in fueling insecurity in the country.

## 6. To what extent do you think ethnic conflicts contribute to insecurity in Benue State?

51 responses



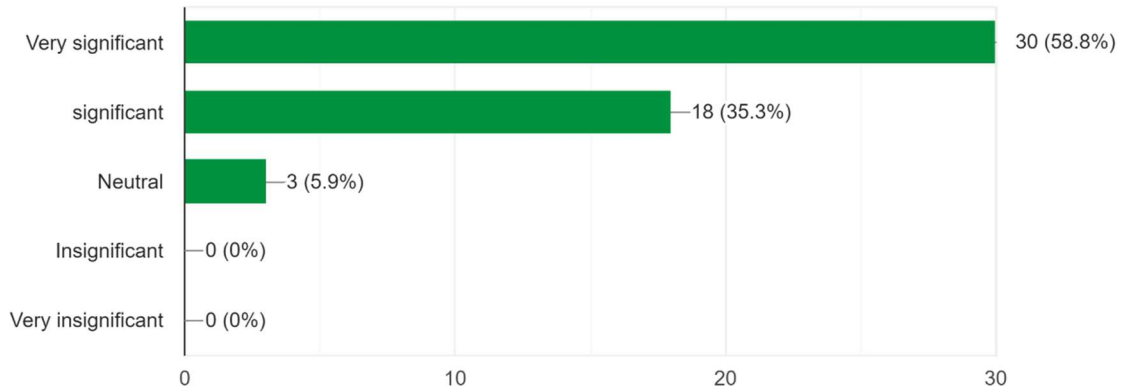
**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

The chart above shows that 20 persons, representing 39.2% were those whom agreed that ethnic conflicts are primary factors contributing to insecurity in Benue State. While 18 people, representing 35.3% were of the opinion that ethnic conflicts are primary factors contributing to insecurity in Benue State. 6

individuals, representing 11.8% agreed with the above notion. While, 5 persons, representing 9.8% agreed with the assertion. Lastly, 2 individuals, representing 3.9% agreed that ethnic conflicts are the reasons for insecurity in Benue State.

### 7. How significant is the role of poverty and unemployment in exacerbating insecurity in Benue State?

51 responses



**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

The presentation from the chart above showed that persons who strongly agreed poverty and unemployment play a very significant role in exacerbating insecurity in Benue State were 30, representing 58.8% and 18 people, representing 35.3% asserted that poverty and unemployment play a significant role in exacerbating insecurity in Benue State. 3 individuals, representing 5.9% were neutral. While no one went for insignificant and very insignificant.

### 8. What other factors do you think contribute to insecurity in Benue State

To respond to the above question, an interview was conducted. As such, in an interview conducted with farmers, agricultural experts,

and security personnel, the following were revealed:

The factors that contribute to insecurity in Benue State are numerous and vary for different instances and situations. Some of the most compelling ones are; community crisis, unemployment, farmer-herder clashes, lack of understanding between and among security forces, and civilians. Inadequate security presence; insufficient security personnel and resources make it difficult to maintain law and order, particularly in rural areas, such as in Benue



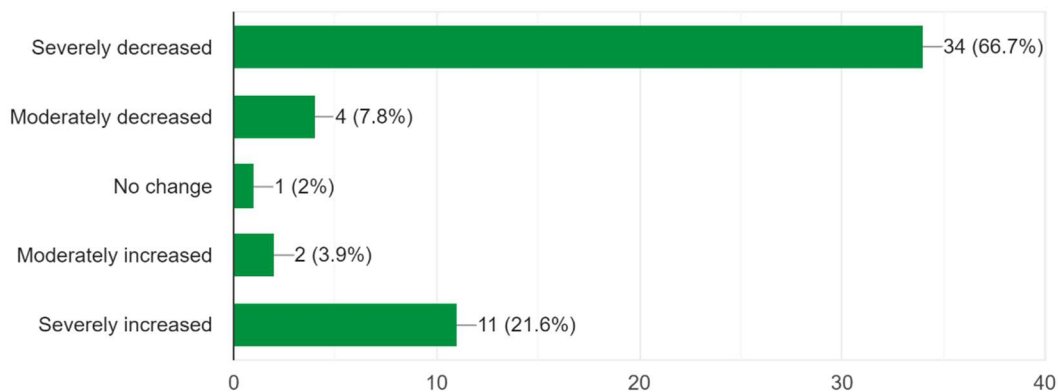
communities. Therefore, in response to the insufficient or inadequate security presence, some communities in Benue State form vigilante groups, however, activities of these groups can sometimes lead to human rights abuses and further violence. Traditional practices were stated to be another factor for insecurity in the state. They stated that some cultural practices and traditional methods of dispute resolution does not effectively address modern conflicts, leading to unresolved tensions. Changes in

climate patterns, such as increased droughts and desertification, also exacerbate competition for arable land and water resources, leading to conflicts. Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) was another factor fueling insecurity in Benue State. The easy availability of SALWs escalates conflicts and make them more deadly from what used to be in the past, thereby increasing security vulnerability in the state (Oral interview, 12th/08/2024).

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

#### 9. How has Insecurity affected agricultural productivity in Benue State over the past decade?

51 responses



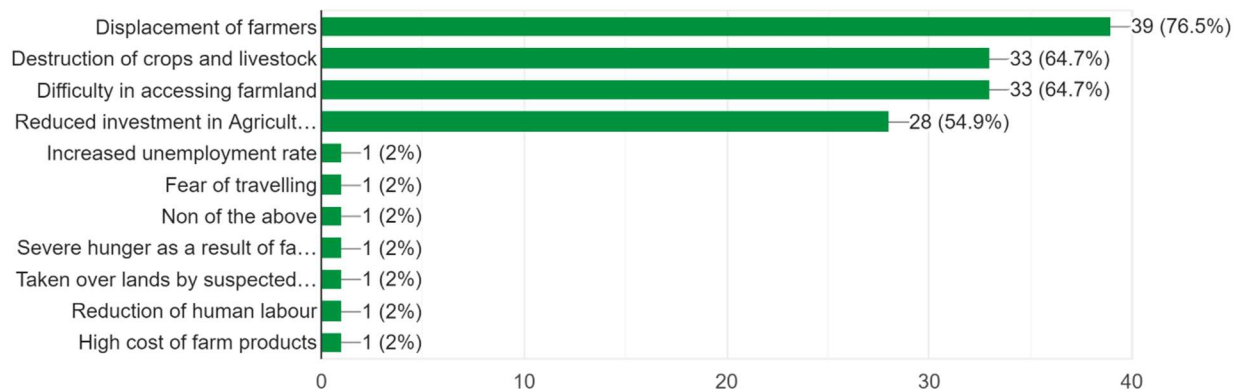
The presentation from the chart above showed that 34 people, representing 66.7% agreed that insecurity severely decreased agricultural

productivity in Benue State over the past decades. 4 individuals, representing 7.8% stated that the situation was moderate. 1 person,

representing 2% said there was no changes in agricultural productivity in Benue State because of insecurity. 2 people, representing 3.9% said agricultural productivity in Benue State was moderately increased. While 11 persons who represented 21.6% agreed that agricultural productivity in Benue State was severely increased in the past decades.

#### 10. In what ways has insecurity impacted agricultural activities in Benue State? [Tick all that apply]

51 responses



**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

The data presented in the chart above showed that 39 persons, representing 76.5% strongly agreed insecurity in Benue State has impacted agricultural activities by displacing farming communities. 33 individuals, representing 64.7% agreed that it led to the destruction of crops and livestock. Meanwhile 33 individuals, representing 64.7% agreed that the situation has

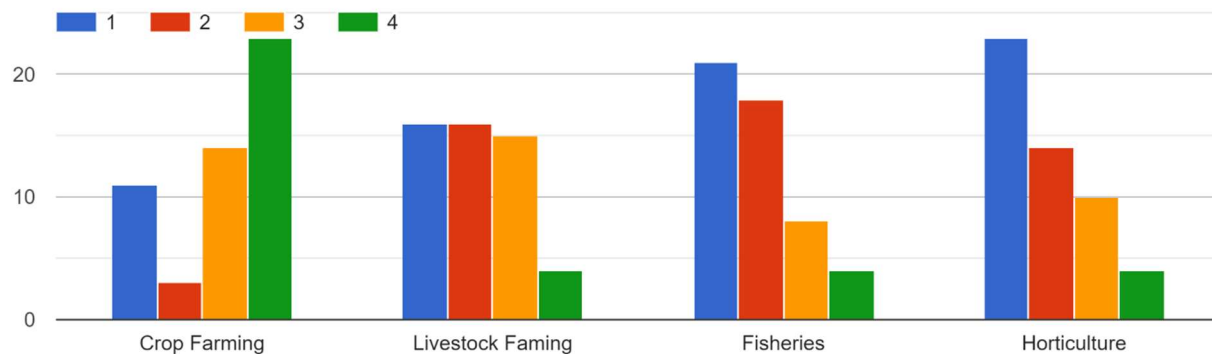
made it very difficult in accessing farmlands. However, 28 persons representing 54.9% agreed insecurity in Benue State has reduced investment in agriculture, while others were increased unemployment rates, fear of travelling, severe hunger, reduction in human labour, etc, with 1(2%) each.

Looking at the above data within the framework of human security, which was designed to broaden the traditional understanding of security to include threats to individuals' well-being and dignity, one is convinced to say without a doubt that, the security of the Benue people is threatened by the occasion of this attacks on their means of livelihood, which is the agriculture.

horticulture which was indicated by the blue bar. Following horticulture is fisheries being indicated with an orange bar. Livestock farming from the above chart was the least affected, indicated with a yellow bar.

Deducing from the analysis and interpretations of data in this chart, the implications are that if decisive and urgent steps are not being taken, Benue State and indeed the Nigerian government will continue to suffer stress from continued and sustained threat of insecurity on people's livelihood, since almost every sector

11. What are the most affected agricultural sectors due to insecurity in Benue State? [Rank in order of severity] for example; if CROP FARMING is the most affected, tick box 4



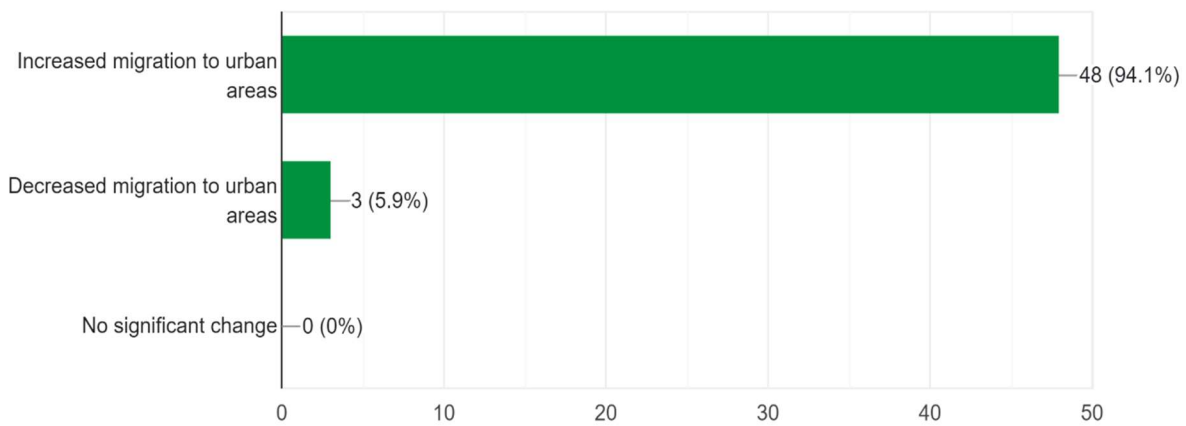
**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

The chart above shows the ranking category of the most affected areas of agricultural sector in Benue State by insecurity. The most affected area from the chart was crop farming, which is indicated by the green bar. Next to it was

of agriculture which happens to be the means of sustenance is impacted by insecurity.

## 12. How has the insecurity influenced the migration patterns of farmers in Benue State?

51 responses



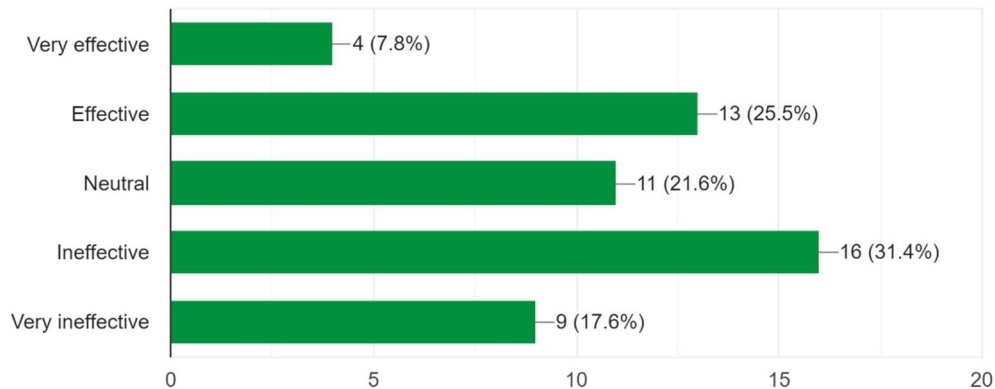
**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

The category of people that strongly agreed that insecurity has influenced the migration patterns

people, representing 5.9% said that it has decreased migration to urban areas. Nobody

## 13. How effective have government responses been in addressing the issues of insecurity in Benue State?

51 responses



in Benue State by increased rural to urban migration were 48, representing 94.1%; while 3

went for the option of nom significant change.

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

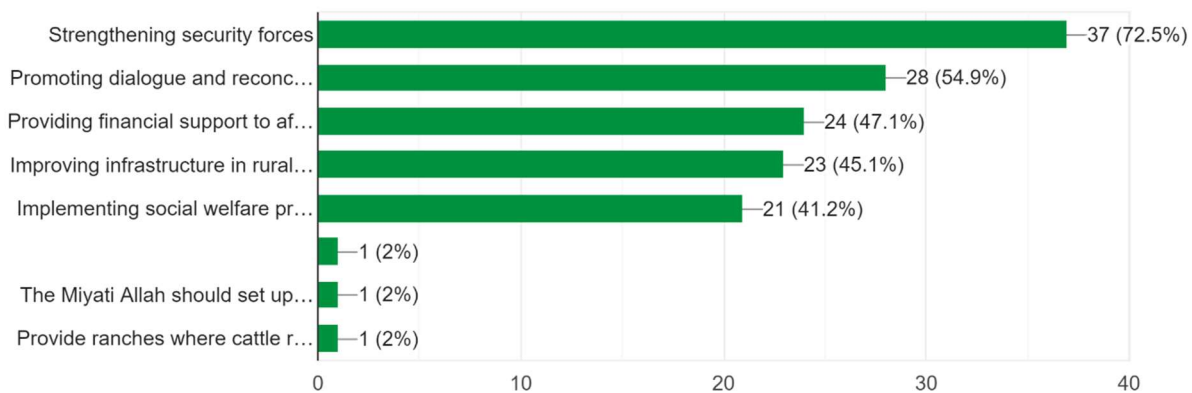
From the above chart, 4 people who represented 7.8% said that government responses in

addressing insecurity in Benue State has been very effective. 13 individuals that represented 25.5% agreed that government responses in addressing insecurity in Benue State has been effective. 11 persons that represented 21.6% were neutral, and 16 people representing 31.4%

said that government responses in addressing insecurity in Benue State has been ineffective at best. While 9 persons, representing 17.6% said that government responses in addressing insecurity in Benue State has been very ineffective.

14. Which policy interventions do you think are most critical in mitigating the impact of insecurity on agriculture in Benue State? (Tick all that apply)

51 responses



**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

The presentation from the chart above showed that 37 persons, representing 72.5% were those who strongly agreed that strengthening security forces is the best policy intervention in mitigating the impact of insecurity on agriculture in Benue State. While 28, representing 54.9% were those who strongly agreed that promoting dialogue and reconciliation are the best policy intervention in mitigating the impact of insecurity on

agriculture in Benue State. And those who agreed that providing financial support to affected communities are the best policy intervention in mitigating the impact of insecurity on agriculture in Benue State were 24, representing 47.1%; those that strongly agreed that improving infrastructure in rural communities are the best policy intervention in mitigating the impact of insecurity on agriculture in Benue State were 23,

representing 45.1% and 21 persons, representing 41.2% said that implementing social welfare practices are the best policy intervention in mitigating the impact of insecurity on agriculture in Benue State. While 3 persons who represented 6% were others.

### Discussion of Findings

Deducing from the above presentation and analysis, the following findings were made:

- i. The study found out that the major factors responsible for insecurity in Nigeria are ethnic and religious conflicts, political instability, corruption, poor law enforcement agency, poverty and unemployment. Others are traditional practices. Some cultural practices and traditional methods of dispute resolution does not effectively address modern conflicts, leading to unresolved tensions. Changes in climate patterns, such as increased droughts and desertification, also exacerbate competition for arable land and water resources, leading to conflicts. Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) is another factor fueling insecurity in Benue State. The easy availability of SALWs escalates conflicts and make them more deadly from what used to be in the past,

thereby increasing security vulnerability in the state.

- ii. It was found that insecurity severely decreased agricultural productivity in Benue State over the past decades, as security challenges such as farmer-herder conflict have displaced farming communities, thereby reducing agricultural productivity.
- iii. The study has also revealed that insecurity has influenced the migration patterns in Benue State by increased rural to urban migration. It is observed that high incidences of insecurity in rural communities in Benue State have forced residents to relocate to urban centres thereby making urban centres densely populated, hence increased crime rates.
- iv. The study has revealed that government responses in addressing insecurity in Benue State has been ineffective at best, because of lack of political will and commitment.
- v. The study has also revealed that strengthening security forces, promoting dialogue and reconciliation among communities and groups, providing financial support to affected communities, improving infrastructure in rural communities, and implementing

social welfare packages are the best policy interventions in mitigating the impact of insecurity on agriculture in Benue State.

## Conclusion

Insecurity has profoundly impacted agricultural development in Benue State from 2011 to 2023, disrupting farming activities and threatening food security. The prevalence of farmer-herder conflicts, banditry, and kidnapping has led to significant losses in crop production, displacement of farmers, and reduced access to farmlands. These challenges have not only undermined the state's agricultural productivity but also exacerbated economic instability and poverty among rural communities. The Human Security Framework provides a comprehensive lens for understanding these impacts, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach that prioritizes the safety and well-being of individuals. Addressing the root causes of insecurity through preventive measures, community-based interventions, and effective policy implementation is crucial for restoring stability and promoting sustainable agricultural development in Benue State. Future research and policy efforts must focus on building resilience among farmers and enhancing security to ensure the long-term viability of agriculture in the state.

## Recommendations

Deducing from the above findings, this study made the following recommendations:

- i. **Enhancing Security Measures:** State and local governments should increase the presence of security forces in rural areas, deploying police and community policing initiatives that involve local vigilante groups and traditional leaders. The Nigeria Police Force, local government authorities, and community organizations should collaborate to improve trust and collaboration between communities and law enforcement agencies.
- ii. **Conflict Resolution Mechanisms:** State governments should facilitate dialogue initiatives between farmers and herders, establishing mediation committees to resolve disputes peacefully. The Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, alongside local conflict resolution bodies, should develop and enforce land use policies to minimize resource-based conflicts.
- iii. **Support for Affected Farmers:** The federal and state governments should provide compensation to farmers impacted by insecurity, and implement rehabilitation programs for displaced farmers. The National Emergency

- Management Agency (NEMA) and the Ministry of Agriculture should enhance agricultural extension services to support affected farmers with resources and training.
- iv. **Economic and Livelihood Diversification:** Local governments should promote alternative livelihood options in rural communities. The Bank of Agriculture and relevant microfinance institutions should enhance access to credit facilities for farmers.
  - v. **Infrastructure Development:** State and federal governments should invest in rural infrastructure, focusing on roads, storage facilities, and irrigation systems. The Ministry of Works and Housing, along with local government authorities, should ensure improved access to education and healthcare services in rural areas.
  - vi. **Policy and Institutional Reforms:** The federal government should develop an integrated rural development policy that addresses insecurity and agricultural challenges. Relevant institutions, including agricultural agencies and local government authorities, should be strengthened to implement and monitor these initiatives effectively.

- vii. **Research and Data Collection:** The government should establish a continuous monitoring and data collection system to assess insecurity's impact on agriculture. Academic institutions and non-governmental organizations should collaborate with government agencies to conduct research and inform policy decisions.

## References

- Adetula, V. A. (2016). Farmer-Herder Conflicts and the Quest for Food Security in Nigeria. *African Development*, 41(3), 1-20.
- Aghedo, I., & Osumah, O. (2019). Insurgency in Nigeria: A comparative study of Boko Haram and the Niger Delta militants. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 54(1), 65-80.
- Akinbile, L., Adeniyi, O., & Odebode, S. (2019). "Agricultural Development in Nigeria: A Historical and Policy Review." *Journal of Agriculture and Rural Development Studies*, 7(1), 15-29.
- Aliyu, M. & Adebayo, T. (2021). "Insecurity and Agricultural Productivity in Northern Nigeria." *Journal of Economic and Social Development Studies*, 9(2), 112-130.



- Audu, S. D. (2021). The dynamics of herder-farmer conflicts in North-Central Nigeria. *African Security Review*, 30(2), 1-19.
- Bello, A. (2013). Herdsmen and Farmers Conflicts in North-Eastern Nigeria: Causes, Repercussions and Resolutions. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 2(5), 129-139.
- Eze, O. (2018). Economic Implications of Insecurity on Agriculture in Nigeria. *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, 9(18), 45-52.
- Eze, O., Chukwu, J., & Amaefule, D. (2020). "Insecurity and its Impact on Agricultural Development in Nigeria." *African Journal of Policy and Development Studies*, 12(2), 68-84.
- FAO. (2020). Nigeria at a glance. Food and Agriculture Organization. Retrieved from [FAO](<http://www.fao.org/nigeria/fao-in-nigeria/nigeria-at-a-glance/en/>)
- FAO. (2020). The State of Food and Agriculture: Challenges and Opportunities.
- Federal Ministry of Agriculture. (2017). National Agricultural Resilience Framework. Abuja: Federal Government of Nigeria.
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). (2021). "Impact of Insecurity on Agriculture in Africa." FAO Report. Retrieved from [<https://www.fao.org/>] (<https://www.fao.org/>)
- Ibrahim, J. (2019). Herdsmen and farmers conflict in Nigeria: Pastoralism, land rights, and the politics of ethno-religious violence. *African Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 2(1), 11-27.
- Ioryue, A.D. (2024). Climate Change and Refugee Crisis in Nigeria: A Case Study of Internally Displaced Persons in Benue State (2010 – 2023). *Jigawa Journal of Politics (JJP)*, Volume 4, Number 1, 113-135.
- Madu, I. A. (2016). Rurality and the Incidence of Poverty in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Agriculture, Food and Environment*, 12(1), 12-19.
- National Bureau of Statistics. (2022). Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report. Retrieved from [NBS](<https://nigerianstat.gov.ng/>)
- Newman, E. (2010). "Critical Human Security Studies." *Review of International Studies*, 36(1), 77-94.
- Odeh, L. E. (2019). The impact of insecurity on agricultural development in Benue State. *Nigerian Journal of Rural Sociology*, 19(2), 44-57.

- Okeke, E., & Nwankwo, C. (2020). "The Impact of Security Challenges on Food Security in Benue State." *Journal of Agricultural Economics and Development*, 12(4), 29-41.
- Okeke, R. C. (2014). The Impact of Boko Haram Insurgency on Nigerian National Security. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 8(7), 131-142.
- Olaniyan, A., & Yahaya, A. (2016). Banditry and Insecurity in Nigeria: The Nexus. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 12(1), 59-69.
- Omole, F. (2017). Community-Based Approaches to Conflict Resolution in Nigeria. *Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 22(2), 85-103.
- Oni, A., & Ibitoye, F. (2022). "Effects of Herders-Farmers Conflict on Agriculture in Benue State." *African Journal of Rural Studies*, 14(3), 58-74.
- Paris, R. (2001). "Human Security: Paradigm Shift or Hot Air?" *International Security*, 26(2), 87-102.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (1994). *Human Development Report 1994*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Usman, H., & Musa, K. (2023). "Displacement and Food Production in Nigeria's Food Basket: A Case Study of Benue State." *Global Journal of Agricultural Policy*, 7(1), 99-113.
- World Bank. (2021). *Transforming Nigerian Agriculture*. Retrieved from [World Bank website] (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/agriculture>).
- World Bank. (2022). "Conflict and Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa." World Bank Publications. Retrieved from [<https://www.worldbank.org/>] (<https://www.worldbank.org/>).
- World Bank. (2022). *Agriculture, forestry, and fishing, value added (% of GDP) - Nigeria*. Retrieved from [World Bank] (<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.ZS?locations=NG>).
- World Food Programme (WFP). (2019). *Food Security and Nutrition in Nigeria*. Rome: WFP.