

Food Insecurity and Its Implication for Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria

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Abstract : Food security concentrates on the collective efforts of all nations to produce enough food to feed their people. Recently, though the emphasis shifted from food availability to accessibility constraints, which entails the difficulties undernourished people face in gaining access to food even when it is available. Broadly speaking, access to food depends on an individual's access to resources, markets and food transfers. The opportunities to obtain food through these channels are entitlements, which when denied constitute food insecurity. Evidence shows that a significant percentage of Nigerians are undernourished with adverse implications for the fight against poverty. The greatest danger or consequence of food insecurity is malnutrition. Food insecurity as both an agent and consequence of poverty also increases the economic, political and social tensions in the country. The undernourished in Nigeria are marginalised in several ways to the extent that they are often ill; and because of illness, their work capacity is reduced with attendant reduction in their income. Without adequate income, they cannot save nor invest enough resources to take care of their basic needs. In this paper therefore, we used the political economy approach and statistical analysis to demonstrate that poverty alleviation in Nigeria would be a mirage if food security problems are not adequately resolved.

Keywords : alleviation, demographic, food insecurity, undernourished

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