



Prevalence and Consequences of Insecurity on Livelihood of Rural Households in Enugu State: Implication for e-Extension in Nigeria

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Conflict of interest

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Author contribution

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IGE: (25%) supervised the entire research process

AG: (20%) Supervised fieldwork

SH: (20%) Contributed in the editorial work of the manuscript

Abstract

The study investigated the prevalence and consequences of insecurity on livelihoods of rural households in Enugu State, Nigeria. A three-stage random sampling technique was used to select a total of 108 respondents from nine communities for the study. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed with mean and percentages. The study revealed that looting of farm produce (54.6%), communal fights (76.9%), armed robbery (51.9%), rape (50.7%), kidnapping (58.3%) and cultism (65.7%) were the forms of insecurity prevalent in the study area. The result further reveals that poor road network ($\bar{x} = 3.3$), corruption ($\bar{x} = 3.2$), poor security system ($\bar{x} = 3.2$), absence of basic infrastructural facilities ($\bar{x} = 3.2$), feeling of marginalization ($\bar{x} = 3.1$), grazing on arable cropland ($\bar{x} = 3.1$), rural poverty ($\bar{x} = 3.1$)

and high level of rural unemployment ($\bar{x} = 3.1$) were perceived to be immediate causes of rural insecurity. Loss of livelihoods/income ($\bar{x} = 3.5$), loss of lives ($\bar{x} = 3.4$), disruption of supply and distribution of agricultural inputs and outputs ($\bar{x} = 3.4$), destruction of crops ($\bar{x} = 3.3$), displacement of households ($\bar{x} = 3.2$), prevention of farming activities ($\bar{x} = 3.1$) and decline in patronage of commercial riders ($\bar{x} = 3.1$) were the major consequences of rural insecurity. Insecurity had negative consequences on the rural livelihoods in Enugu State, and thus, efforts should be made by security agencies in reduction or curbing occurrences of insecurities in the State.

Introduction

The spate of insecurity in Nigeria is rising over the years. According to Abdullahi (2019), crime against persons, including murder, rape, abduction, cultism, theft, car snatching, robbery of farms, homes and offices, waylaying of travelers (high-way robbery) have become the forms of insecurity threatening the fabric of society, causing a breakdown of the social order. Many Nigerians have recently found themselves in dilemma on how to find solutions to the incessant killings, kidnappings, abductions, destruction of properties by criminal gangs and insurgents.

While most rural households are involved in agricultural activities such as livestock, crop or fish production as their main source of livelihood, majority, also engage in other income-generating activities to augment their main source of income. The alarming level of insecurity in Nigeria has often resulted in unpalatable consequences on the livelihoods of many rural households whose extension need can be satisfied using the e-extension system.

According to Tengli, (2018), e-extension can be seen as using the power of online networks, computer communications & digital interactive multi-media to facilitate dissemination of Agricultural technology. It plays a crucial role in promoting agricultural productivity, increasing food security, improving rural livelihoods, and promoting agriculture as an engine of pro-poor economic growth.

Electronic means of extending information to farmers is becoming a fast way of disseminating information in the developing world (including Nigeria). This is because young farmers have access to mobile phones, therefore making it easy for the extension workers to pass new innovation to farmers (Yahaya, 2018). However, the slow acceptance of the e-extension as an alternative means of communication can be attributed to incessant insecurity activities in the rural areas.

Rural insecurity and other forms of conflict have recently come to constitute a subject of great concern in Nigeria. According to Premium times (2020) 1,416 lives were reported to have been lost to insecurity in the first quarter of 2020 in Nigeria. Sources of this violent death range from attacks from insurgency, banditry, cult clashes, herdsmen attack, communal clashes, mob action and rape. In the first quarter of 2014 alone, 262 persons lost their lives in 15 separate attacks in Benue State, and the clashes have continued overtime. In one instance, bandits brazenly attacked the State Governors' convoy. Similarly, 16 separate attacks were reported in Plateau and Kaduna States in the same period. They led to the loss of 139 lives, with scores of people injured.

According to Chiemelie (2021), the growing security threats in Nigeria's South-east region gives cause for concern. But it was not always so. Until recently, the South-east region was arguably the most peaceful part of the country, but now, it has evolved into a hotbed of violence targeting state security institutions by armed men popularly referred to as unknown gunmen.

In fact, between January and April 19, 2021, over 17 police stations, in addition to a correctional facility, have been targeted by the gunmen, leaving in their trail dead officers, charred police stations, freed prison inmates, and empty armoury (Chiemelie, 2021).

In the last five months, 55 attacks were recorded in the South-east, ranging from communal clashes to farmer herders conflict. The attacks have led to the death of over 155 persons. The new wave of insecurity indicates that the Nigeria Police Force expected to maintain law and order are as vulnerable as citizens. The increased deployment of soldiers to the region rather than quell violence has led to human rights violations and growing violence. Chiemelie (2021) lamented that attacks on police formations have continued unabated in the South-east.

The invasion of the Nimbo community in Enugu State by suspected Fulani herdsmen had sparked national and international outrage, even as the police leadership in the state was found glaringly wanting in averting and responding to the incident (Vanguard (2021)). Considering the high death toll, what happened in Nimbo was considered in many quarters as a massacre, a situation which raised serious security issues not just in the state but nationally.

In recent times, there has been reported cases of sporadic shootings at Topland Amechi-Awkunanaw, snatching and burning of a Toyota Sienna vehicle and a tricycle at Umueze and Agbani axis of Nkanu West LGA of Enugu State by miscreants alleged to be enforcing illegal sit-at-home order, which caused panic within Enugu metropolis (Vanguard, 2021).

Regrettably, previous and present governments have failed to address the issue of insecurity. The inability of government to provide a secure and safe environment for lives, properties and the conduct of business and economic activities has led to resentment and disaffection among ethnic groups. This has resulted in ethnic violence, communal clashes, and religious violence in different parts of the country that has destroyed lives and properties, disrupted businesses and economic activities, and retarded economic growth and development.

It is expected that prevalence of insecurity would have negative consequences on the livelihoods of household in Enugu State. However, the extent this has happened is not yet known. This work was, therefore, conceptualized to investigate the prevalence and consequences of insecurity on rural household's livelihood in Enugu State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- i. ascertain the forms of prevalent insecurity;
- ii. ascertain the perceived causes of insecurity; and
- iii. determine its consequences on the livelihoods of rural households.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Enugu State of Nigeria. Enugu State lies in South-eastern geopolitical zone of Nigeria. It is located between latitude 6° 27' N and 9° 37'N and

Longitude 7° 30'E and 10° 56'E. Enugu State consists of 17 local government areas with an estimated population of 4,444,258 persons based on the proposed 3% annual population growth (NPC, 2021). The annual rainfall ranges between 1000mm and 1500mm.

A Multistage sampling, involving purposive and random sampling techniques, was used to select a sample size of 108 respondents for the study. The first stage involved a random sampling of three (3) local government areas out of the 17 LGAs, namely Isi-Uzo, Agwu and Uzo-uwani. The second stage involved a purposive sampling of three (3) communities each from the sampled Local Government Areas (Ehamufu, Neke, Umeri; Awgu, Adogba, Omokwe; and Adani, Adaba, Akpugo) based on incessant reports of insecurity activities, to give a total of nine communities. The final stage involved a random sampling of twelve (12) respondents from each community to give a total of one hundred and eight (108) respondents which constitutes the sample size for the study.

In ascertaining the causes of insecurity in the study area and, a 5-point Likert-type scale was used to derive the mean scores. The rating scores were assigned as follows: strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, undecided = 3, disagree = 2 and strongly disagree = 1. Respondents' mean scores were computed for each of the statements by adding the weight 5+4+3+2+1=15 and dividing by 5 to give a mid-point of 3.0. Mean score greater than or equal to 3.0 implied immediate cause and otherwise remote cause.

In determining insecurity consequences on the livelihoods of a rural household, data were analyzed using mean scores derived from a 5-point Likert-type scale. The rating scores were assigned as follows: very high = 5, high = 4, moderate = 3, low = 2 and very low = 1. Respondents' mean scores were computed for each of the statements by adding the weight 5+4+3+2+1=15 and dividing by 5 to give a mid-point of 3.0. For, the purpose of decision-making, the means obtained were summed with and subtracted from the standard deviation to get the upper limit and lower limit respectively ($\bar{x} \pm S.D = \text{Upper limit/Lower limit}$). Values higher than the upper limit were classified as high, values within mean \pm S.D range were classified as moderate, while values lower than the range were classified as low. The re-categorization is as follows: High = 3.34-5.00, moderate = 1.67-3.33 and low = 0.01-1.66.

Data for the study were collected by means of a structured questionnaire. Data on forms of prevailing insecurity were analyzed using percentages, while data for perceived causes of insecurity and consequences on the livelihoods of rural households were analyzed using mean scores.

Results and Discussion

Forms of Insecurity Prevalent in the Study Area

Table 1 reveal that money laundering (67.6%), cultism (65.7%), kidnapping (58.3%), bribery (57.4%), communal clash (54.6%), destruction of crops (54.6%), murder (52.8%), and armed robbery (51.9%) were the forms of insecurity prevalent in Enugu State. The prevalence of rural insecurity has far reaching implications for communities, government, security agencies and the citizens which include; atmosphere of political insecurity and instability including declining confidence in the political leadership and apprehension about the system, governance deficit as a result of security agencies

inefficiency and corruption, loss of the productivity of persons permanently injured and killed, the loss of productive capacity, reduction of physical capital, reduction in GDP and the loss of growth and unfriendly investment environment as investors shy away due to compromised safety and weak national security.

This finding is similar to that of Nwokafor, Cletus and Ejinwa (2020) that banditry, land encroachment, clashes over ancestral lands, dispute between family members, and boundary disputes between communities and nations were major forms of insecurity prevalent in the Southern part of Nigeria.

According to Nwokafor, Cletus and Ejinwa (2020), the South-East and South-South political zones are often confronted with communal violent land disputes. Land encroachment has been a major cause of communal and inter-ethnic conflicts leading to loss of lives and livelihoods in Nigeria. Communal fights in the study area could be traced to the struggle for scarce resources such as farmlands due to the rapid growth in population which causes rural dwellers to struggle for farmlands.

Table 1: Forms of insecurity prevalent in the study area

Forms	Percentage (n=108)
Kidnapping	58
Rape	41
Theft	39
Drug trafficking	44
Money laundering	68
Human trafficking	37
Armed robbery	52
Murder	53
Cyber Fraud	43
Cultism	66
Bribery	57
Intimidation/bullying	37
Communal fight	55
Land grabbing	25
Cattle rustling	32
Destruction of crops	55
Vandalization of public properties	19

Source: Field survey, 2021

Perceived Causes of Rural Insecurity

Table 2 reveals that poor road network ($\bar{x} = 3.3$), corruption ($\bar{x} = 3.2$), poor security system ($\bar{x} = 3.2$), absence of basic infrastructural facilities ($\bar{x} = 3.2$), feeling of marginalization ($\bar{x} = 3.1$), grazing on arable crop land ($\bar{x} = 3.1$), rural poverty ($\bar{x} = 3.1$) and high level of rural unemployment ($\bar{x} = 3.1$) were perceived to be immediate causes of rural insecurity in the study area because they had mean ratings above the benchmark mean score of 3.0. Unemployment has a severe negative implication on security and national development in Nigeria as most of its productive force is unemployed. As a result of the high level of unemployment and poverty among Nigerians, the youths are adversely attracted to violent crime. More so, the growing awareness of

inequalities, and disparities in life chances leads to violent reactions by a large number of people.

According to Oriazowanlan and Erah (2019), insecurity could be referred to being susceptible to imminent danger which affects individual interest and society core values, that is; lack of peace, safety and protection as well as exposure to danger in an environment or society due to economic, political, socio-cultural, ethno-religious conflict, inequitable distribution of natural resources, poverty and unemployment, porous borders and weak security system among others.

Table 2: Perceived causes of rural insecurity in the study area

Perceived causes of rural insecurity	Enugu \bar{x}
Rural poverty	3.1*
High level of rural unemployment	3.1*
Absence of basic infrastructural facilities	3.2*
Low level of education	2.6**
Grazing on arable crop land	3.1*
Greed	2.7**
Corruption	3.2*
Poor security system	3.2*
Feeling of marginalization	3.1*
Poor road network	3.3*
Land dispute	2.9**
Unfavourable government policies	2.6**
Betrayal/breach of trust	2.4**
Lopsided government appointment	2.7**
Religious fanaticism/extremism	2.5**
Grand mean score	3.0*

* = immediate, ** = remote; Source: Field survey, 2021

Perceived Consequences of Rural Insecurity on Households Livelihoods

Table 3 reveals that loss of wealth ($\bar{x} = 3.5$), loss of livelihoods/income ($\bar{x} = 3.5$), loss of lives ($\bar{x} = 3.4$), disruption of supply and distribution of agricultural inputs and outputs ($\bar{x} = 3.4$), destruction of crops ($\bar{x} = 3.4$), prevention of farming activities ($\bar{x} = 3.4$), loss of land ($\bar{x} = 3.4$) and increased rural poverty ($\bar{x} = 3.4$) were significant consequences of rural insecurity on respondents' livelihood in the study area. This implies that there would be shortage of food supply leading to hunger and starvation, hike in prices and deactivation of most household livelihood as a result of negative consequences of insecurity.

This finding is in line with that of Shehu, et al (2017) that cattle rustling and banditry had been a veritable threat to public safety and security in North-west Nigeria leading to loss of lives, human injury, population displacements, as well as loss of cattle in their numbers.

Chikaire, Ogueri, Echetama and Onoh (2018) posited that in South-east Nigeria, poor households bear the heaviest burdens of rural insecurity for the simple reason that their daily needs and livelihoods are directly tied to their farming activities.

According to Ariya, Omale and Ezeala (2016), the issue of insecurity and terrorism has become a major challenge in Nigeria for the past few years, thereby causing serious havoc and monumental loss of lives, destruction of properties and economic backwardness to the country.

Table 3: Perceived consequences of rural insecurity on household's livelihood

Consequences of rural insecurity	Enugu \bar{x}
Loss of lives	3.4*
Destruction of crops	3.4*
Individuals suffer from injuries	2.9**
It prevents farming activities	3.4*
It prevents livestock rearing	2.8**
Hinders hunting	2.6**
Loss of livelihoods/income	3.5*
Lowers standard of living	2.9**
Displacement of households	3.2**
Loss of land	3.4*
Individuals lives in perpetual fear	2.9**
Sickness and ill health	2.9**
Loss of wealth	3.5*
Disrupts supply and distribution of agricultural inputs and outputs	3.4*
Creates price shock	2.6**
Massive displacement of labour.	3.0**
It prevents students from attending schools	2.7**
Decline in patronage of commercial riders	3.1**
Increases rural poverty	3.4*
Grand mean score	3.1**

Source: Field survey, 2021

Note: \bar{x} = Mean responses; ** = moderate, * = high

Conclusion and Recommendations

Rural insecurity had negative consequences on livelihoods of households in Enugu State. These negative consequences were reflected in loss of lives, disruption of supply and distribution of agricultural inputs and outputs, destruction of crops, displacement of households, prevention of farming activities, decline in patronage of commercial riders, and loss of livelihoods/income of respondents.

Destruction of crops, communal fights, armed robbery, rape and cultism were the forms of insecurity prevalent in the areas covered.

Security agents at all levels should through modern methods of intelligence gathering, and sharing, training, logistics, motivation, and deploying advanced technology, manage security challenges.

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