

ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON FOOD SECURITY, NUTRITION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

By:

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Abstract:

Islam places food in a very complex and detailed discussion in the Glorious Qur'an; including its sources, classifications into *halal* (food and drinks allowed to be consumed) and *haram* (forbidden food and drinks). Food is one of the major reasons for human existence on the earth and its absence or shortages would lead humanity to a threat of starvation. Food insecurity affects almost all the developed and developing countries of the world as this situation has become a major area of concern to government at all levels. Therefore, for Nigeria to attain the United Nation (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on zero hunger by 2030; there must be equal access to nutritious food at all times. This paper discusses the fundamentals of food security and nutrition, determinants of food security, and implications of coronavirus disease well known as **COVID-19** on the food security in Nigeria. Various classes of food nutrients viz: carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals etc, Islamic perspectives and view point on food security, concept of *halal* and *haram* food from the Qur'an and *Sunnah* were reviewed. The paper addresses issues such as insufficient food production, corruption, insecurity in northern states, natural calamities and lack of technology for food storage that cause food insecurity in Nigeria. Meanwhile, some important strategic measures (socio-economic, environmental, scientific, technology etc.) were highlighted to serve as a way forward for achieving the food security in Nigeria. The authors recommend the establishment of Islamic guide on agricultural resources in Muslim communities and provision of modern storage facilities.

Keywords: *Food security, Food nutrition, COVID-19, Islamic perspective, Nutrients, Strategies.*

1.0 Introduction:

The global food and energy calamity is trouncing with shocking speed and force, taxing both developed and developing economies prompting public/private agencies coupled with other international organizations to react with strategic and long term approaches. Food and energy are the

two most trending global calamities that are currently bedeviling the world's populations mostly in Africa where poverty, malnutrition and death from hunger are widespread (Ilaboya *et al.*, 2012). Despite the fact that world food production has doubled during the past three decades, the numbers of malnourished people are

soaring above nine hundred 900 million around the world (Food and Agriculture Organization, FAO2009 & 2010). For instance, in 2015 to 2016, the number of undernourished people in the world increased from seven hundred and seventy-seven million (777 million) to eight hundred and fifteen million (815 million) respectively. This sobering news comes in a time when famine was declared in South Sudan and the situation that brought about concept of food shortages known as food insecurity (FAO, 2017). Food security is an important matter of concern for both the developed and developing countries; but the situation in developing countries is more terrible (Muhammad *et al.*, 2012).

Food security is a flexible concept defined in some myriad ways by many research scholars and policy makers. The origin of the concept of food security can be traced back to some 50 years ago, at a time of global food crises in the early 1970s. The present well known and comprehensive definition of food security came from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) annual report on food security as a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (FAO, 2002). The definition was reviewed in (2009) during World Summit on Food Security which added a fourth dimension – stability – as the short-term time indicator of the ability of food systems to withstand shocks, whether natural or man-made (Peng and Berry, 2019). Therefore,

food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. This definition introduces four main dimensions of food security: Physical availability of food; economic and physical access to food; Food utilization and stability of the other three dimensions over time (FAO, 2008).

From an Islamic point of view, food security is extended to mean any substance that safeguards food, nutrition which includes flesh of animal as source of livelihood for human beings. The Glorious Qur'an says.

“O ye who believe! Eat of the good things where with we have provided you, and render thanks to Allah if it is (indeed) he whom ye worship. Q2:172.

Similarly, the Qur'an clearly states food security and nutrition with the particularly reference to animals as source of meat where it says.

“O ye who believe! Fulfill your undertakings. The beast of cattle's is made lawful unto you (for good) except that which is announced unto you (here in), game being unlawful when ye are on pilgrimage. Lo! Allah ordained that which pleaseth Him. Q5:1.

The Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS) defines food as "Any substance, whether processed, semi-processed or raw, which is intended for human consumption" while explaining food security as "A condition when all people, at all times,

have physical, social, economic and financial access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (IOFS cited in Muhammad, 2013). Sustainable development as a concept is considered as a development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Concept of sustainable development aims to maintain economic development and progress while protecting the long-term significance of the environment; it "provides a framework for the incorporation of environment policies and development strategies" (Rachel, 2015). The Qur'anic declaration of earth's capability to afford maximum food for humanity is preeminently reassuring.

Allah says:

'He placed therein firm mountains rising above its surface, and blessed it with abundance, and provided therein its food in proper measure in four days – alike for all seekers' (The Holy Qur'an, 41:11).

1.1 Types of Food Insecurity

The absence of food security is food insecurity; food insecurity on the other hand represents lack of access to enough food and can either be chronic or temporary (Akinyetun, 2018). The following are the types of food insecurity:

1. **Short-Term or Temporary Food Insecurity:** In this type of food insecurity, there is a sudden drop in the ability to produce or access

enough food to maintain a good nutritional status. It results from short-term shocks and fluctuations in food availability and food access, including year-to-year variations in domestic food production, food prices and household incomes (FAO, 2008 and Akinyetun, 2018).

2. **Long-Term or Chronic Food Insecurity:** In this type of food insecurity, people are unable to meet their minimum food requirements over a sustained period of time. It is characterized by extended periods of poverty, lack of assets and inadequate access to productive or financial resources (FAO, 2008 and Akinyetun, 2018).

1.2 Food Security Determinants

One of the ways Islam addresses challenges of food security is through encouraging scientific research into agriculture. This is deducible from the following Qur'anic imperative:

'Now let man look at his food: how we pour down water in abundance, then We cleave the earth – a proper cleaving – then We cause to grow therein grain, and grapes and vegetables, and the olive and the date-palm, and walled gardens thickly planted, and fruits and herbage provision for you and your cattle.' (The Holy Qur'an, 80:25-33)

Food security is connected with Shari'ah objectives and agricultural resources utilization in early Muslim communities; notably, agricultural sowing of seeds and planting of trees. According to a narration of Anas bin

Malik, the Prophet Mohammed said: “There is none amongst the Muslims who plants a tree or sow’s seeds, and then a bird, or a person or an animal eats from it, but is regarded as a charitable gift from him.” (Khan, 1996) Prophet Mohammed was equitable in contracting food and the means of food production (Khan, 1996). Some Ahadith showed that while the Prophet was believed to have preferred the giving of land outright, he approved share-cropping provided that such arrangements were not speculative and yields were divided equitably (Khan, 1996). As narrated by Abdullah bin Omar: The Prophet concluded a contract with the people of Khaibar to utilize the land on the condition that half the products of fruits or vegetation would be their share” (Khan, 1996).

Similarly, the Qur’an clearly stated food security and nutrition with a particular reference to animals as source of meat where it says:

“O ye who believe! Fulfill your undertakings. The beast of cattle’s is made lawful unto you (for good) except that which is announced unto you (here in), game being unlawful when ye are on pilgrimage. Lo! Allah ordained that which pleaseth Him. Q5:1.

Moreover, the Glorious Qur’an elaborated the good things that are made lawful through a direct message in form of revelation the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W saying

“They ask thee (O Muhammad) what is made lawful for them. Say all good things are made lawful for you. And those beast

and birds of prey which ye have trained as hounds are trained, ye teach them that which Allah taught you, so eat of that which they catch for you and mention Allah name upon it, and observe your duty to Allah. Lo! Allah is swift to take account. Q5:4.

Fortunately, the food security in an Islamic way entails the pronouncement of the beautiful names of Allah (*Bismillah*) that is why Allah says:

And eat not of that where on Allah’s name hath not been mentioned Lo! The devils do inspire their minions to dispute with you. But if ye obey them, ye will be in truth idolaters Q 6:121.

Sunnah of the Prophet also comments on the Islamic food security and nutrition where the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) is reported to have said;

“On the authority of Abu Yaala Shaddad bin Aus, the messenger of Allah said verily Allah has prescribed proficiency in all things, thus, if you kill, kill well, let each one of you sharpen in blade and let him spare suffering to the animal he slaughtered Muslim.....

These Islamic perspectives of food security and nutrition in a holistic approach is the overview of the sustainable development in Nigeria since it tries to distinguish between lawful *Halal* food substances as well as *Haram* unlawful substances of food which a good Muslim can simply identify them and use them for reward

or punishment for attaining Allah *Jannah* paradise or otherwise.

Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (FAO, 2008). According to FAO, (2008) the following are the four main determinants of food security:

1. **Physical Availability of Food:** Food availability addresses the supply side of food security and is determined by the level of food production, stock levels and net trade.
2. **Economic and Physical Access to Food:** An adequate supply of food at the national or international level does not in itself guarantee household level food security. Concerns about insufficient food access have resulted in a greater policy focus on incomes, expenditure, markets and prices in achieving food security objectives.
3. **Food utilization:** Utilization is commonly understood as the way the body makes the most of various nutrients in the food. Sufficient energy and nutrient intake by individuals is the result of good care and feeding practices, food preparation, and diversity of the diet and intra-household distribution of food. Combined with good biological utilization of food consumed, this determines the nutritional status of individuals.
4. **Stability of the other three dimensions over time:** Even if your food intake is adequate

today, you are still considered to be food insecure if you have inadequate access to food on a periodic basis, risking a deterioration of your nutritional status. Adverse weather conditions, political instability, or economic factors (unemployment, rising food prices) may have an impact on your food security status.

As part of the efforts to mitigate the impact and the spillovers of the Covid-19 pandemic, ‘inspiration economy’ initiative was regarded as a modern civilizational concept for establishing self-sufficiency through the establishment of food security (Al Dulaijan, 2020)

Almighty says:

“O children of Adam, take your adornment [i.e., wear your clothing] at every masjid, [366] and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess.” [Al-A'raf: 31].

1.3 Causes of Food Insecurity

Generally, food insecurity is caused by undernourishment which is predicated upon remoteness and inaccessibility to food. Food insecurity is associated with people who consume food with low energy components and those who show physical weakness as a result of nutritional deficiency due to intake of unbalanced diet or from the body’s inability to use food effectively because of infection or disease (Akinyetun, 2018).

The causes of food insecurity have been identified by many researchers and published in numerous journals and articles; but Ilaboya *et al.*, (2012) and FAO, (2017) considered the following to be the major ones in Nigeria and indeed in Africa:

1. **Insufficient Productions:** The major challenge to food security in Africa is its underdeveloped agricultural sector that is characterized by over-reliance on primary agriculture, low fertility soils, minimal use of external farm inputs, environmental degradation, significant food crop loss both pre- and post-harvest, minimal value addition and product differentiation and inadequate food storage and preservation that result in significant commodity price fluctuation. Ninety-five percent of the food in Sub-Saharan Africa is grown under rain fed agriculture. Hence food production is vulnerable to adverse weather conditions.
2. **Lack of Adequate Storage Facilities:** Lack of adequate storage facilities for food items such as cereals, yam, beans etc automatically leads to wastage thereby plunging the people into acute hunger.
3. **Inadequate Food Processing:** The conversion of agricultural products such as citrus, pineapple, mangos and banana from their original form into another form for the purpose of consumption, sales or proper storage processing prevents food from becoming waste. It enables such food to be converted into another form that can easily be preserved. A very good example is the transformation or conversion of mangos, citrus and pineapple into fruit juice which can easily be preserved. Security of food requires that little or no wastage be allowed. Adequate processing becomes very important if sustainable food security is to be achieved.
4. **Climate Change and Natural Disasters:** Natural disasters and climate variability are major sources of vulnerability to food insecurity. They particularly affect those in countries that largely depend on rain fed farming and those highly dependent on agriculture. Examples of such natural disaster include drought and land slide. Poor people are also less able to cope with the impacts of climate shocks and variability. These events can result in massive crop losses, loss of stored food and damage to infrastructure and consequent increases in food prices. Degradation and declining productivity of agricultural soils are a serious threat to agriculture in many areas. Frequent climate changes leading to shortage of rainfall and persist drought in Northern part of the country and excessive rainfall and flood in southern and middle belt regions of the country contributed immensely to low food production in Nigeria.
5. **Poor policies and Corruption:** Poor policies have greatly affected food security in many countries and particularly in Africa. The problem arises when the focus on policies, structures and institutions is put above that of the people

themselves. Frequent policy changes and poor performance of agencies assigned to implement food and agriculture policies have serious setback on food production and distribution. Each time a new government comes to power, the previous agricultural policies and programmes are abandoned and new ones are put in place. This creates no room for stability and progress in food production.

6. **Gender Inequality:** Gender inequality is a major cause of hunger and poverty in Nigeria or in Africa in general. Food security can be a major concern for people who are incapable of or denied access to participation in labour (formal, informal or agricultural). Women are generally responsible for food selection and preparation and for the care and feeding of children. Therefore, when women have income, substantial evidence indicates that the income is more likely to be spent on food and children's needs.
7. **Poverty and Hunger:** Poverty and hunger prevent people from working hard to increase productivity; food and agricultural productivity is both capital and labour intensive. Unfortunately, it is the poor peasant farmers that produce the bulk of food needs in Nigeria, due to their level of poverty, they find it very difficult to learn, work and care for themselves and their family members, let alone getting the necessary inputs and energy to produce for others.
8. **Conflicts:** The ethnic or religious conflicts have devastating effects on the economic activities

especially on food productions in the areas under threat of Boko Haram, herdsmen and banditry in Northeast, Northwest and North central Nigeria. Conflicts here do not necessarily mean physical fighting of wars; but country region or society that is experiencing structural violence without official declaration of war such as pervasive poverty, oppression of the poor by the rich, police brutality, intimidation of ordinary people by those in power, oppression of women and children and monopolization of resources and power by some sections of the society.

1.4 Consequences of Food Insecurity

There is growing awareness and acknowledgment in the health care community that health outcomes and disparities, more often than not, are driven by social determinants of health than by medical care. Social determinants of health include social, economic, physical, or other conditions where people live, learn, work, and play that influence their health. Poverty and food insecurity are social determinants of health, and are associated with some of the most serious and costly health problems (Food Research and Action Centre, FRAC, 2017).

2.1 Food Nutrition

Food is any substance normally eaten or drunk by living things; this definition includes liquid drinks (World of Molecule, 2019). Food is the main source of energy and nutrition for animals and is usually of animal or plant origin. The foods we eat contain nutrients. Nutrients are

substances required by the body to perform its basic functions. Nutrients must be obtained from diet, since the human body does not synthesize them. Nutrients are used to produce energy, detect and respond to environmental surroundings, move, excrete wastes, respire (breathe), grow, and reproduce. There are six classes of nutrients required for the body to function and maintain overall health. These are carbohydrates, lipids, proteins, water, vitamins, and minerals (Maureen and Beth, 2012). Nutrition is the sum of all processes of how organisms obtain nutrients, metabolize them, and use them to support all of life's processes (Maureen and Beth, 2012). Nutritional well-being depends upon four main factors: food, care, health, and environment. Food and nutrient security means access by all people of all ages, in all seasons, to the food, diet and nutrients they need for a healthy (World Health Organization WHO, 2000).

2.2 Classes of Food Nutrients

Generally, nutrients are classified as either macro- or micronutrients depending on the amounts body required from the diet. These are Macronutrients and Micronutrients (Sian and Paul, 2016). Macronutrients are needed in larger quantities (in gram range); they normally include water, carbohydrates (e.g grains, maize, yam etc., fat (e.g groundnut oil) and protein (such as meat) known as energy-providing nutrients. However, micronutrients include minerals and vitamins required in very minute quantities. Therefore, the two are extremely important for the normal functioning of the body. Their

main function is to enable the many chemical reactions to occur in the body. Micronutrients do not function for the provision of energy (Sian and Paul, 2016).

3.0 Implications of Covid-19 on Food Security in Nigeria

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is defined as a disease that is caused by a novel coronavirus now called Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2; formerly called 2019-nCoV), which was first identified amid an outbreak of respiratory illness cases in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. It was officially reported to the WHO on December 31, 2019 and was declared a global health emergency on January 30, 2020. However, due to fast spread and its fatal nature, WHO also declared it global pandemic on March 11, 2020 (Cennimo, 2020, WHO, 2020). The diseases caused by SARS-CoV-2 were recently termed COVID-19 by the WHO, the new acronym derived from "coronavirus disease 2019." The name was chosen to avoid stigmatizing the virus's origins in terms of populations, geography, or animal associations (Cennimo, 2020).

The negative implications imposed by the outbreak of novel COVID-19 virus most especially on deterioration in food productions, dramatic changes to economic, healthcare, transportation, and education systems around the world (Hall, 2020). No less important is the potential for COVID-19 to impact local and global food systems and their ability to provide safe, affordable, and nutritious food as well as sufficient incomes for people

working in food and agriculture sectors (WHO, 2020; Hall, 2020). As the COVID-19 pandemic is still evolving, it is difficult to know the geographic reach and degree of impact we can expect to see across food production and distribution systems. The COVID-19 pandemic is already affecting food systems directly through impacts on food supply and demand and indirectly through decreases in purchasing power and in the capacity to produce and distribute food. This therefore resulted to a great impact on food security system and will strongly affect the poor and vulnerable. Potential risk for global food availability and food prices will depend on the duration of the outbreak and the severity of containment measures needed. Isolated country-level policies are likely to amplify the effects of the crisis on food security and nutrition at the global level, especially for developing and food-insecure countries (Committee on Food Security CFS, 2020).

The current global outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) has disrupted food systems around the world. Food environments are where people meet the food system which has been wounded by the covid-19 pandemic (United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition UNSCN, 2020a). The food environments are external on dimension-food availability, prices and vendors and personal dimension-geographical access, affordability, convenience and desirability. These rapid food environments changes are influencing the consumers' dietary practices and can lead to deterioration

in both individual and country level. Sustainable healthy diets that contain sufficient fruits and vegetables are crucial in protecting people's immunity; particularly for those at risk or suffering from food insecurity and those with pre-existing non-communicable diseases who are at a heightened risk of becoming severely ill with the virus (UNSCN, 2020a).

The current global pandemic of Coronavirus (COVID-19), and measures taken to reduce its spread have disrupted food environments around the world. Never has a larger spotlight been placed on the ways people meet the food systems for getting the nutrition they and their family need. Disarrangements in day-to-day food supply mechanisms and disturbances in various components of food systems are increasingly felt on an individual level. As the pandemic spreads, the interaction between people and the food system is changing at an unimaginable speed and taking on greater importance in everyday life (WHO, 2020). With strict rules placed on people's personal movement to limit the spread of COVID-19, shopping for food is one of the only points of contact with what people knew as normal life. Even so, supermarkets, grocers and markets have become a confronting barometer of the scale of the pandemic. Social distancing measures are implemented, marketplaces are shut down, vendors are banned from selling, limits are imposed on the number of shoppers, long queues are encountered at points of food purchase and empty shelves serve as a sign of the coping mechanism many are adopting (WHO, 2020).

Unhealthy diets are the leading cause of ill-health. Without dedicated action on nutrition, all forms of malnutrition are likely to increase as a result of the pandemic's impact on food environments. Financial hardships, reduced physical activity, and altered purchasing patterns favouring products with longer shelf life and often poorer nutrition profiles can lead to higher levels of food insecurity, under-nutrition, and overweight/obesity (UNSCN, 2020b). In general, it is difficult to predict the full economic impact of the outbreak. Too much depends on what is not known — how long the outbreak lasts, how many countries it affects, and the type of policies put in place to respond to the crisis (World Food Programme WFP, 2020).

However, as it is known, covid-19 is a global health emergency that could be a food security emergency when proper measures are not seriously put in order. This necessitates the need to minimize the harm to both people and the economy. Thus, it is important in line with WFP, (2020) to:

- i. Contain economic harm by ensuring the smooth flow of global trade as this will help secure food supply. Protectionist policies will exacerbate disruptions to global value chains and amplify already elevated levels of uncertainty.
- ii. Monitor food prices and markets and make sure that information is transparently disseminated to all actors. This will help strengthen government policies and prevent people from panicking.

- iii. Provide support to the most vulnerable countries and populations. Countries which lack the health-related infrastructure necessary to contain the epidemic will need international assistance in case of an outbreak. Vulnerable populations in affected countries will not only need free medical care but also assistance through shock-responsive safety nets.

4.1 Islamic Perception on Food Security

Food is necessary for every living creature to sustain and enjoy his life, which is why food security becomes a matter of concern in human society and the eradication of hunger, a collective war of the comity of nations. Allah (S.W.T) is the Creator of all reality. He created humans, their need for food and also the means and resources, such as plants, animals, etc, to satisfy their hunger (Khalifah, 2008). Therefore, only Allah (S.W.T) is qualified to design a system that will ensure the food security of humanity. The Qur'an, being the statute of Islam has declared a very stringent war against hunger in order to ensure sustainable development of human beings as individuals and communities through various exhortations, legislations and institutions.

It is mentioned in Glorious Qur'an that *Man is created in the best of moulds* (Qur'an 95:4) which implies a perfect state of spiritual, mental and physical health. It is his duty to preserve this pattern on which Allah (S.W.T) has made him. One of the ways to maintain this pattern is the satisfaction of his hunger and thirst

through eating and drinking of moderate, clean and lawful foods and drinks. This is why any discussion on development must first address the issue of food security; because once that is guaranteed, the physical development of any society is readily achievable and sustainable (Tanko, 2018).

4.2 Halal and Haram Food from the Qur'an and Sunnah

Halal is a term exclusively used in Islam; derived from Arabic language which literally means something is permitted or lawful allowable to do, eat or drink while *Haram* is opposite to *halal*. There are no parties which can claim the food is *halal* or *haram* without complying with Islamic Law. *Halal* covers all spectrums of Muslim lives and not limited to foods and drinks only, but also for safety, animal welfare, social justice and sustainable environment. *Halal* and *Tayyiban* combined means clean which portray the symbol of intolerance to hygiene, safety and quality of food that Muslims consumed (Baharuddin *et al.*, 2015). Islamic view of *halal* and *haram* is very simple and clear. *Halal* is defined as that which is permitted, with respect to which no restriction exists while *haram* is defined as that which the law Giver has prohibited (Al-Qardawi, 1960).

According to Muhammad (2013), *halal* may be defined as an act, or conduct over which the individual has freedom of choice and its exercise does not carry either a reward or a punishment while *haram* (also known as *mahzoor*) may be defined as “all that which the Lawgiver (*Al-Shari'a*) has prohibited in definitive terms, and

its perpetrator is liable to a punishment in this world or the Hereafter”.

The Islamic criteria on *halal* and *haram* are embodied in the following two Qur'anic verses:

“Say who has forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has brought forth for His servants, and the good things of His providing? Say: they are, on the day of Resurrection, exclusively for those who believe during the life of this world. Thus do we explain the signs for those who know. Say: what my Lord indeed prohibited are shameful deeds, whether open or secret, and sins and rebellion without just cause, and that you associate with Allah that for which He has sent down no authority, and that you say concerning Allah that about which you do not know” (Al-A'raf, 32-33).

In general, every food is allowed for Muslims except what is prohibited either by the Glorious Quran or *Hadith*. These rules of *Shari'ah* (Islamic law) bring freedom of choice for people to eat and drink anything they like as long as it is not *haram* (prohibited).

“He hath forbidden you only carrion, and blood, and swine flesh, and that which hath been immolated to (the name of) any other than Allah...” (Quran 2:173)

“Forbidden unto you (for food) are carrion and blood and swine flesh, and that which hath

been dedicated unto any other than Allah, and the strangled, and the dead through beating, and the dead through falling from a height, and that which hath been killed by (the goring of) horns, and the devoured of wild beasts saving that which ye make lawful (by the death stroke) and that which hath been immolated unto idols. And (forbidden is it) that ye swear by the divining arrows. This is an abomination....., (Quran 5: 3) (Jabar et al., 2011).

5.0 Strategies for Achieving Food Security in Nigeria

The Nigerian economy prior to independence and the discovery of oil was largely agrarian and dictated the rapidity of Nigeria's economy from this period to post-independence. In spite of fluctuations in world prices, agriculture remained the foundation of the economy and contributed about 45 per cent of GDP, represented almost 70 per cent of total exports and provided the foreign exchange that was applied in importing raw materials and capital goods. The agriculture sector actively employed about two-thirds of the country's total labour force and provided employment for about 90 per cent of the rural population. Nigeria, the world's largest producer of cassava, yam and cowpea – all staple foods in sub-Saharan Africa was also a major producer of fish. The peasant farmers produced enough to feed the entire population. The various Marketing Boards generated much revenue, the excess of which was used by government to develop the basic infrastructure needed for long term

development. The policy was hinged on maximizing the profits of the export-led development scheme. Thus, raw materials, which basically comprised minerals and agricultural produce, were exported to industrialized nations (Akinyetun, 2018).

According to Akinyetun (2018), earlier consultations in FAO identified the following nine policy priorities as possible building blocks for the new global food development agenda. Most of these form the very basis of strategic initiatives known as systems strengthening approach; the outlined policies are as follows:

1. Prioritizing equitable development - especially the empowerment of women
2. Ensuring access to nutritious food through comprehensive approaches to food and nutrition security.
3. Recognizing the key role of agriculture and rural development in eliminating poverty, hunger and malnutrition.
4. Making agricultural and food systems sustainable and climate sensitive.
5. Focusing on food security and waste along value chains.
6. Ensuring responsible investment in agriculture and food systems.
7. Reinforcing resilience to natural and man-made disasters:
8. Science and Technology
9. Diplomacy

Conclusion

In this paper, food security and its dimension, causes and consequences of food insecurity were discussed. Moreover, the concept of food nutrition, Islamic perception on food

security, the concept of *halal* and *haram* in Qur'an and *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) together with the strategies of achieving food security in Nigeria were extensively discussed and addressed. Base on the available literature, the concept of food security and nutrition are clearly addressed by Almighty Allah in the Glorious Qur'an and explained by Prophet in Several Hadith. Thus, the authors suggested the establishment of Islamic guide on agricultural resources in Muslim communities and incorporation of science and technology in food production, processing, storage and marketing in order to ensure food security, access to nutritious food for all and equitable development.

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