

Fighting Hunger and Poverty for Child’s Sustainability: A Case Study of Ibadan, Metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria.

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Abstract: *This study examined the issue of fighting hunger and poverty in order to ensure child’s sustainable development. Children, should be given the best of care by fighting hunger and poverty so as to be able to grow holistically to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future. The study made use of descriptive research design of the survey type. The population consisted of all residents of Ibadan, Oyo state Nigeria. The sample consisted of 153 respondents drawn from civil servants, market people and artisans and children between the ages of 10 and 15. A self designed questionnaire was used for data collection for the study. Three hypotheses were generated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed that children in Ibadan, Oyo state Nigeria are denied rights to education, good health care, adequate nutrition and safe water among others due to poverty and for sustainable growth to be encouraged all aspects of children’s lives such as health, child protection, nutrition as well as social inclusion should be taken care of. The study recommended that the government should put in place effective policies capable of ending poverty and promoting sustainable growth and the government should make policies that would enhance food security .*

Key Words: *hunger, poverty, sustainable growth, food security and food insecurity, development.*

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I. Introduction

Children, the Bible says are heritage from the Lord .This means they are gifts to any household where they are found and so proper care must be given them especially by fighting poverty and hunger on their behalf to ensure their proper growth. The issue of food insecurity is therefore of great importance in fighting poverty and hunger to make for child sustainability. Food insecurity is the main cause of poverty of which the end result is hunger . Food security is a global issue but its extent varies from countries to countries and how the issue is tackled also varies from countries to countries. Food insecurity is however more vividly observed in developing countries of the world like Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Latin America than in the advanced countries of the world.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) (2018) sees food insecurity as a state in which there is no consistent access to adequate food, either due to lack of money or other resources. Food insecurity leads to food inadequacy due to poverty and of which hunger is the end result. Food insecurity in the USDA document is used to describe outright hunger which may be due to acute food shortage or the resources to purchase needed basic items. The implication is that any family faced with food insecurity is not likely to determine the source of the next meal.

Vishwambhar (2015) opines that when food security is high, poverty is low but that when food security is low, poverty is very high. He states that many developing nations are faced with food insecurity hence the level of poverty and hunger which is reflected in stunted growth and ill health. This is reflected in the study area where children roam the street begging for money and engaging in pick-pocketing due to hunger.

Food security is dependent on production procurement and distribution of food items and the pillars upon which food security rests to Vishwambhar are availability, accessibility, stability of food production and utilization of food. These pillars regulate food security and where these pillars are put to use , poverty and hunger are likely to be less. In Nigeria, before the discovery of crude oil, food could be said to be adequate as people’s main occupation was farming but with the new found economy, rural dwellers were no longer contented with life in villages hence, crazy desires for city life even when aspirated desires could not be met. The sustainability of these people drifting to urban centres was questionable as they could not make enough money to satisfy their basic needs of life let alone of being able to satisfy their children’s needs.

The drift to cities coupled with increase in population and decrease in cropped labour had a resultant effect on food security leading to poverty and hunger not only in the adults but among children and many able bodied persons taking to streets to begging and also being involved in other vices. When there is food security,

there is enough food and ,therefore, a reduction in malnutrition, vigor is restored and health is improved resulting in general improvement in the standard of living of the people.

Food insecurity can, thus, be summed up in the following:

- It is inconsistent access to food which might be due to lack of money ,inadequate production or lack of other resources.
- It implies struggling to avoid hunger
- It ends in outright hunger
- It tends to be episodic and cyclical

Food insecurity is the main cause of poverty and hunger both in children and adults. Food security on the other hand means access by all people at all times to enough food for an active healthy life (USDA 2017). Food security is dependent upon production, procurement and distribution of food items. Therefore, food security is to be dealt with at household level and not only at the state and national levels. Dealing with it at household level means making people have real access to enough food which will enable every family member to live healthy and be productive (Sahn,1998).

FAO (2003)states that about 850 million people are malnourished and chronically hungry and out of which 830 million are from the developing countries and living in rural areas (FAO, 2008). World bank 2007, reported that about 80% of the hungry live in developing countries with 50% being small holders.

Sati (2009) refers to poverty as lack of enough money or food to carry out living requirements. Sinnathurai (2013) in his study on nexus of poverty, GDP growth, Dependency Ratio and Employment in Developing countries came up with the fact that poverty ,poor and unstable growth of GDP, unemployment and high dependency ratio are common issue in developing countries such as Asia, Africa and Latin America. OgwMike (1998)states that virtually all countries in West Africa, (Nigeria inclusive) are classified as low income countries and suffer human poverty by about half their population. He also states that all African countries are in poverty and that African people experienced very poor living conditions and vast majority wallow in abject poverty.

World Bank in Sati (2009) says in its report on poverty that a lot of people lack enough money and live below poverty line. The report shows that about 80% of the extreme poor lived in South Asia (399million) and Sub-Saharan Africa(415million)and that 161 million population of East Africa and Pacific region live below poverty line.

Osinubi (2005) is of the opinion that even when the Nigeria official statistics show that there is economic growth, it is not always accompanied by decrease in unemployment . This implies that poverty and lack still ravage the country. He is of the opinion that unstable economy, population rate, lack of education, severe unemployment, low paid wage and refusal of social and political freedom are responsible for chronic poverty being transmitted from one generation to the other.

Idoko, Ibrahim and Emmanuel(2015) see poverty and hunger as being endemic and a chronic disease that affect the progress and economic development of nations because an aggregate poverty and hunger of individuals in the society is regarded as the aggregate poverty in the nation. To Oladunmi (1991) poverty is an undesirable state of affairs and poverty is described as a situation where a population or section of a population is only able to meet its bare subsistence essentials of food , clothing, and shelter in order to maintain minimum standard of living.

Ajegi (2002) explains poverty as a state of deprivation of basic necessities of life which are germane to meaningful existence. He reiterates that being in poverty inflicts pain both physical and psychological. To prove the endemic nature of poverty, an Organization termed 'Bread For Israel' is in the habit of distributing 100,000 loaves every month to hungry children throughout Israel. (Bread for Israel 2018). Mopaingo (2012)carried out his study in Burundi, one of the poorest countries of the world. His study was on whether foreign aid could alleviate poverty but found out that effectiveness of aid was inconclusive for extreme poverty. He found that though aid matters for Burundi's economy and human development growth but that the government should develop an efficient and effective means of managing aid allocation. He concludes his study by suggesting that poverty will be overcome if government is able to improve the economic conditions of the country. This implies that relying on foreign aid is not a solid and final solution to poverty alleviation in any country.

Anderson (1990) perceives hunger as the physical expression of too little nourishment. With little nourishment, good health and well being cannot be maintained thus, children sustainability cannot be guaranteed. UNICEF (2017) states the Global Goals for sustainable development should include the following among others:

1. No poverty
2. Zero Hunger
3. Good health and well being
4. Quality Education
5. Gender equality and many more.

The importance of the need to fight poverty and hunger is seen in the numbering. Absence of poverty will leave hunger on a zero level and this will pave way for good health and well being. Poverty on the other hand brings hunger, and low standard of living. This explains what Pfeiffer, Ritter and Hirsland (2011) refer to as circumstantial evidence 1. That many people are likely to be short of money to spend on food, thus, having lower buying power and because of this, people depend on food banks as an essential source of nutrition which makes it difficult to achieve healthy diet and because of adequate money to feed and so the quality of food is lowered despite the risks involved. Some of the aims of Global Goals for sustainable development are to:

- Eradicate extreme poverty by 2030
- Reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions. Living in extreme poverty means struggling for the most basic needs.(Goal1:NoPoverty2017)

Unless poverty is tackled, achieving child's sustainability may become nothing but chasing a shadow. Fighting poverty demands responding to its causes and its impacts on people's lives. Fighting poverty to Oxfam International (2017) demands empowering people to claim their basic rights by speaking out against injustices to ascertain their rights. There had been several efforts being made world over to fight poverty. The main global policy to reduce hunger and poverty are the recently approved sustainable goals. Goal 2 Zero hunger sets globally agreed targets to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promotes sustainable agriculture (Wikipedia.org 2018).

There has also been several efforts made at fighting hunger and poverty. Such include the 2013 Caritas International whose aim is to end systemic hunger by 2025, another is the 'One Human Family Food for All' which focuses on raising awareness, improving the impact of Caritas programmes and advocating the implementation of the right to food (Wikipedia.org). There is also the online communication campaign aimed at raising awareness of the hunger problem through celebrities. This has the tendency to be effective as many people are in love with celebrities and their activities all over the world.

Nigeria is not left out of the effort to end hunger. Salisu (2017), states that prior to Nigerian civil war and immediately after, hunger was unheard of because the country was self sufficient in food production because of her fertile land. He states that with the government of Buhari, agriculture has become an arrow head and engine for economic recovery, growth and diversification. With this, there is hope to ending hunger. However, past governments before Buhari had introduced several programmes and policies to stem the tide of poverty and hunger before now. Such programmes include, Farm Settlement Schemes (FSS), Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs), Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) and Green Revolution (GR) among others.

Despite all these programmes, Nigeria still depends very much on importation of basic things which has not made food security a reality. The problem caused by hunger and poverty has led to many vices in the country such as child trafficking, prostitution, armed robbery and corruption of various types and dimensions among others. These efforts are suggestive of the fact that hunger is preventable but every hand must be on deck to stop its pang (World Food Aid 2017).

Sustainable development is that development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generation to meet their own needs. Child sustainability, therefore, implies giving children the right to have continuous access to basic services and resources such as safe water, sanitation, adequate nutrition, good health, quality education, clean air and energy. Children are denied of all these due to various conflicts and natural and manmade disasters, increase in population, urbanization as well as climate change. Children sustainability include all the above as well as social inclusion and child protection. Sustaining children for now and the future would mean building them up in such a way that they would be able to contribute positively to themselves, their family, the community and the nation at large. When they are well sustained their voices would be heard and they would contribute meaningfully to their society.

To enhance sustainable development, therefore, poverty and hunger must be pulled down and the government of all nations must be ready to put in place adequate policies and programmes, structures and institutions that would tackle poverty and hunger. Overcoming poverty and hunger would create better living standard and higher level of development especially in children as they grow up (ifad.org).

Statement of the problem

It is a known fact from the above review that poverty brings hunger and this is evident not only in Nigeria but the world over. Hunger brings children into vices, many have run away from home to seek survival in streets, carrying loads for people as early as seven years old, many are involved in pick pocketing and living on marijuana and hot drinks. This study was therefore carried out to examine whether if those in authority and individuals engage in vigorous fight against hunger and poverty, lives could be better for children and one could begin to talk of child sustainability. The main question therefore is 'Will the eradication of poverty and hunger lead to child sustainability?'

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to :

- Examine whether it is possible to achieve the Global Goals for sustainable living 1.: No poverty and 2. Zero hunger if poverty is tackled.

Hypotheses

Three hypotheses were formulated for the study and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between food security and poverty.
2. There is no significant relationship between poverty and child sustainability .
3. Efforts made at fighting and hunger will not be significantly related to child sustainability.

Research Method

The study adopted a descriptive research of the survey type in an attempt to describe and analyse the effect of poverty and hunger on child sustainability.

The population consisted of people in Ibadan Metropolis while purposive random sampling was used to select 153 respondents basing the choice on age, occupation type and the choice included children between the ages of 10 and 15. A self designed instrument titled ‘Questionnaire for child sustainability’ was used to elicit responses from the respondents. Validity of the instrument was ascertained by the Tests and Measurement experts of the Ekiti State University , Ado-Ekiti. The corrections and suggestions made were input into the final draft of the questionnaire. Test –retest method was used to ascertain the reliability at an interval of two weeks. A reliability coefficient of 0.82 was obtained which shows that the instrument was reliable.

Data Analysis

The data collected were subjected to descriptive analysis and chi-square statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance.

II. Results and Findings

Hypothesis 1. There is no significant relationship between food insecurity and poverty

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis of Relationship between Food Insecurity and Poverty

S/N	ITEMS	A	%	D	%
1.	Food insecurity is inconsistent access to food	149	97.4	4	2.6
2.	Food insecurity affects everyone in a household	130	85.0	23	15.0
3	Food insecurity means lacking financial backing and other resources to make life meaningful	135	88.2	18	11.8
4.	Food insecurity leads to hunger	129	84.3	24	15.7
5	Hunger is the result of poverty	140	91.5	13	8.5
6.	With food security there is improved living	139	90.8	14	9.2
7.	Zero hunger global goal can be achieved with food security	141	92.2	12	7.8
8.	Poverty manifests in hunger and limited access to essentials of life	150	98.0	3	2.0

Table 1 shows 149(97.4%) agreed that lack of access to food amounts to food insecurity, 130(85.0%) agreed that food insecurity affects everyone in a household and 135(88.2%) agreed that food insecurity makes life unbearable for people. 129(84.3%) responded that food insecurity leads to hunger; 140(91.5%) responded that hunger is the result of poverty while 130(90.8%)agreed that food security brings about improved living. 141(92.2%) agreed that zero hunger can be achieved with food security and 150(98.0%)agreed that poverty manifests in hunger and limited access to essentials of life.

Table 2: Chi square Analysis showing the result of the Relationship between Food Security and Poverty.

X ² Cal	DF	X ² tab	P
430.477	8	15.5	0.000

The above table shows that the calculated value of (X² cal =430.47> X² tab =15.5 at p<.05)revealed that there is a significant relationship between food security and poverty.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between poverty and child sustainability

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of Relationship Between Poverty and Child Sustainability

S/N	ITEMS	A	%	D	%
1.	Poverty does not enhance sustainable development	149	97.4	04	2.6
2.	Fighting poverty demands responding to its causes	150	98.0	03	2.0
3	Poverty is lack of enough money or food to carry out life requirements				

4.	Leaders should make adequate preparations for the growth of children	149	97.4	04	2.6
5.	Children sustainability cannot be achieved in a poverty ridden environment	138	90.2	15	9.8

Table 3 shows 149(97.4%)responding in the affirmative to the first item while 150(98.0%) also agreed positively to the second item.131(85.5%)agreed that fighting poverty demand getting to its causes. 149(97.4%)agreed that leaders should make adequate preparation for child's growth ,138(90.2%)were of a strong opinion that child sustainability cannot be achieved in a poverty ridden environment.

Table 4: Chi-Square Analysis of Relationship Between Poverty and Child Sustainability.

X ² Cal	DF	X ² tab	P
114.251	4	9.49	0.000

Table 4 shows that X² 114.251> 9.49 X² tab at 0.05 level of significance. This establishes that there is a relationship between poverty and child sustainability.

Hypothesis 3: Efforts at fighting poverty and hunger will not be significantly related to Child sustainability

Table 5: Descriptive Analysis of Efforts at Fighting Poverty/hunger on child Sustainability

S/N	ITEMS	A	%	D	%
1.	Efforts are being made to halt hunger/ poverty by encouraging food security	109	71.2	44	28.8
2.	Unstable economy and increase in population are among the causes of poverty	149	97.4	04	2.6
3.	Awareness should be raised about hunger problem and people should be empowered to overcome poverty	145	94.8	08	5.2
4.	Government should increase its efforts at ending poverty and hunger	141	92.2	12	57.8
5	Sustainable agriculture should be promoted	138	90.2	15	9.8

Table 5 shows that109(71.2%)agreed that efforts are being made to halt hunger and poverty; 149 (97.4%)agreed that unstable economy and population increase are among the causes of poverty,145 (94.8%)agreed that awareness should be raised about poverty and hunger and that people should be empowered to overcome poverty. 141(92.2%) agreed that government should increase its efforts at fighting poverty while 138(90.2%) respondents agreed that sustainable agriculture should be promoted in a bid to fight poverty and hunger.

Table 6: Chi-Square Analysis of Efforts at Fighting Poverty/hunger on child Sustainability.

X ² Cal	DF	X ² tab	P
257.63	4	9.49	0.000

Table 6 shows that X² cal of 257.63> X² tab =9.49 at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis that efforts at fighting poverty/hunger will not significantly affect child sustainability is thus rejected. This means that efforts at fighting hunger and poverty will enhance child sustainability.

III. Discussion

The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between food insecurity and poverty. This is supported by the earlier submission of the United states Department of Agriculture (USDA)(2017)that describes food insecurity as struggling to avoid hunger and that it is episodic and cyclical. Also Vishwambhar (2015)states that when food security is high, the level of poverty is low and that enhancing food security is based on four pillars namely, availability, accessibility, stability of food production and utilization of food.

The study also shows that poverty has effect on child sustainability. This finding is in line with the document of Help Tackle Hunger (2017)that it is important to improve the lives of people being ravaged by hunger and poverty around the world by focusing on the supply of life basics such as food, water, health and education. Without putting these in place there can be no child sustainability. Meeting the needs of child now and in the future means removing all obstacles that will deny children access to basics of life. Such obstacles as stated by UNICEF (2017) include conflicts, disasters, increasing population and urbanization among others.. Global Goals(2017) in line with this finding states that sustaining child would mean investing in them so that they will be able to carry on in the future. Mopaingo (2012) in his own study concludes that poverty could only be eradicated to give way for sustainable development if government is able to improve the economic conditions of each country. Poverty is described as an undesirable state of affairs (Oladunmi,1991) while Ajegi (2002) sees it as a state of deprivation which inflicts pains on people. Vishwambhar (2015) concludes his study by submitting that food insecurity and poverty are the growing issues faced by developing countries as food

insecurity gives way to rise in poverty which leads to hunger resulting in malnutrition and poor health condition which ends in high mortality rate. The above earlier submissions reveal that poverty would not allow sustainability of children to thrive.

The study also reveals that efforts at fighting poverty and hunger will have great impact on child sustainability. Wikipedia (2017) in its document titled 'Poverty Reduction' reveals that fighting poverty means putting in place a set of measures which are economic and humanitarian in nature and with the conscious intention of lifting people above poverty level. Oxfam International(2017) states that fighting poverty would demand responding to its root causes and its impact on people and that people should be empowered to claim their basic rights thereby helping them to escape poverty. Salisu (2017) stated the various efforts of varying Nigerian government at curtailing poverty such as Operation feed the Nation and Green Revolution among many others. The success of these efforts are, however, questionable in the achievement of relegating poverty and hunger to the background. These efforts are suggestive of the existence of poverty and hunger in the country. There is, therefore, the need to wage war against poverty and hunger for child sustainability to become a reality.

IV. Conclusion

The study was based on fighting poverty and hunger in order to attain child sustainability. The various literature reviewed show that poverty and hunger are obstacles to child sustainability. The study conducted also reveal that for any child to be sustained now and for the future, the root of poverty must be dealt with and hunger must pave way for adequate nutrition which maintains good health condition and which not only impact the development of the child but also of the nation(Arora,2009).

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations made:

- The government of Nigeria should promote sustainable agriculture to ensure food security
- Every factor that would not enhance child sustainability such as increase in population, age dependency and unemployment should be reduced to the barest minimum
- The structures, institutions and programmes put in place should be well monitored and supervised effectively to yield the expected results and such programmes should be backed by adequate legislation and policies so that subsequent government would not abandon such programmes
- The government and individuals should ensure that children are not robbed of basic life opportunities like good nutrition, good and quality education and child protection
- Every individual should be involved in child sustainability by helping to change their minds in a positive direction and building them up in such a way that they will be able to contribute to the development of the nation.

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