



Smallholder Farming and Food Security in Ogun State, Nigeria: Strategies and Challenges

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Introduction

Smallholder farmers play an essential role in global food production, producing approximately 80% of the world's food. The study examined smallholder farming and food security in Ogun State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the strategies used by smallholder farmers to ensure food security and assessed the challenges faced by the smallholder farmers in achieving food security.

Methodology

The population of the study comprised smallholder farmers in Ogun State, Nigeria. The sample size was derived using a multi-stage sampling technique. At the first stage, stratified sampling technique was used to select one (Ogun West) district out of the three districts in Ogun State. At the second stage, six wards which includes Ilaro I, Iwoye, Idogo, Owode I, Ilobi and Ajilete were randomly chosen out of 10 wards in Yewa South LG. At the third stage, random selection of twenty (20) smallholder farmers in each of the six selected wards were chosen, making a total of 120 respondents. Primary data were gathered using a structured interview guide. The qualitative data gathered were analysed using content analysis.

Results and discussion

The outcomes of the study showed that the strategies put in place by most of the smallholder farmers to ensure food security are improved storage systems, crop diversification and sustainable agricultural practices. The findings also revealed that the major challenges facing smallholder farmers in achieving food security are inadequate credit and capital, poor infrastructure, unpredictable weather and climate change.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the study highlighted the strategies employed by smallholder farmers in the selected wards which demonstrate the resilience of smallholder farming in addressing food insecurity in Nigeria. However, the study identified several barriers that impeded their efforts. Based on the findings, the study recommended that more advanced storage systems should be made available to the smallholder farmers to prevent post-harvest losses; policies that encourage quick and easy access to credit and capital, improve agricultural infrastructure, and promote climate-resilient agricultural techniques should be put in place. Lastly, public-private partnerships should be encouraged in ensuring sustainable agricultural development in Nigeria.

Keywords

Sustainable Agriculture, Subsistence Farmer, Technology, Adoption, Smallholder Farmer, Food Security