



Integrating Urban Agriculture into the Nigerian Urban Planning System for Sustainable Food Security

Vincent Abimbola Uwala¹ & Adeyemi Farotimi²

^{1&2}Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro, Nigeria

*Corresponding author email: vincent.uwala@federalpolyilaro.edu.ng¹

Introduction

One of the most significant challenges confronting the world at large, and sub-Saharan Africa in particular, is food insecurity. Approximately 2.33 billion people faced food insecurity in 2023. Similarly, more than 864 million of this population experienced severe food insecurity. It has also been predicted that if bold investment and policies are not put in place, 950 million people will be at risk of facing severe food security by 2030, a prediction that contradicts the Sustainable Development Goals. Thus, this study assesses the potential of urban agriculture in achieving sustainable food security and the role of urban planning.

Materials and method

This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to assess the potential of urban agriculture for enhancing food security in Nigeria and the role of urban planning. The SLR was achieved using the Search, Appraisal, Synthesis, and Analysis (SALSA) framework.

Results and discussion

Findings from the study revealed that urban agriculture has the potential to contribute to food security, as it has been demonstrated in both developed and developing countries. The study also showed that space limitations, financial constraints, zoning policies, lack of policy and institutional support, land tenure insecurity, and infrastructure are significant barriers to urban agriculture. The study also brought to the fore that most of the countries where urban agriculture has contributed significantly to food security enjoyed government support in various forms. Some of these include establishing dedicated urban agricultural departments, integrating urban farming into the urban planning framework and promulgating urban agriculture ordinances. Nigeria is also on the right path with introducing a National Urban Agricultural Programme, which is expected to commence in 2025. However, urban agriculture has not been integrated into the urban planning framework as central urban planning regulation in the country focuses on plan preparation and administration, development control, rehabilitation and renewal, with urban agriculture not explicitly recognised. Similarly, the few urban areas with master plans in the country focus on physical infrastructure with little or no provision for urban agriculture

Conclusion

This study has attempted to assess the potential of urban agriculture to combat food insecurity in Nigeria, emphasizing the role of urban planning. It assesses the potential opportunities associated with urban agriculture, identifies the challenges militating against it, and the importance of urban planning in overcoming them. The study concludes that most of the challenges militating against urban agriculture fall squarely within the domain of urban planning. It therefore recommends the adoption of urban planning institutions and technical tools to support rather than restrict urban agriculture in the country.

Keywords: Food Security, Urban Agriculture, Urban Planning, Nigeria