

Decentralization as a Tool for Promoting Agricultural Transformation and Food Security at the Local Level in Nigeria.

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Introduction

Decentralization is very important in monitoring and solving many complicated agricultural and food security issues in Nigeria. The local government is the closest to the people and is the best position to address the needs of farmers in rural communities of a nation. The central government in Nigeria has often been linked to inefficient process management and resource distribution, which has impeded the growth of agriculture in Nigeria. In a decentralized system, ideas and insights are generated, allowing for decision-making at all levels of government, ensuring that effective actions are taken in response to various issues. It promotes and enables local participation in policy-making process and the introduction of new agricultural technologies. This paper explores the challenges, potential and feasible solutions of decentralization in strengthening agricultural transformation and enhancing food security by local governments in Nigeria.

Materials and methods

Qualitative method of research is adopted to examine the role of decentralized governance structures in promoting agricultural transformation and food security at the local level in Nigeria. The study captures both theoretical and practical dimensions of decentralization and its impact on agriculture and food security. Existing literatures, government policy documents, local government agricultural plans and reports from international organizations serve as a tool for this research work.

Results and Discussion

The study revealed that improved and adequate infrastructure enhances farmer's access to markets and reduces losses after harvests, which improves food security and earnings potential. Also, decentralized governance system has increased local farmer's influence and participation in decision-making. It is also revealed that through the establishment of farmer's committee, farmers participate in decisions concerning agricultural policies and resource allocation. This type of empowerment has been a tool for improving accountability and community ownership of agricultural operations. It has been shown that participatory approach makes farmers motivated to invest in agriculture thereby improving food security.

Conclusions

Decentralized governance system has promised to be a means of improved agricultural reform and food security in Nigeria. Despite numerous advancements in agriculture, solving current issues is very important in optimizing the benefits of decentralization in Nigeria. Decentralization may be used to build a resilient agricultural economy and improve food security for the people by promoting and encouraging a more participatory and inclusive approach. There is also a need for capacity building, sustainable funding mechanisms, strengthening local institutions and proper monitoring and evaluation of agricultural policies.

Keywords: Decentralization, Agricultural transformation, Food Security, Local government.