
FUNDING THE AGRICULTURAL PROMOTION POLICY AND FOOD SECURITY IN NIGERIA, 2016-2021

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ABSTRACT

Agriculture is an important sector of every state's economy with high potentials for employment generation, food security and poverty alleviation. Nigeria's landmass is about 923,763 square kilometer, out of which 37.33 percent is arable and has favourable weather for farming. This presents a clear potential for self-sufficiency in food production and export. However, in reality, Nigeria faces huge food security challenges that exacerbate hunger and poverty. This study investigated the impacts of inadequate budgetary allocation within the framework of the Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP) on food sufficiency in Nigeria. The study which was anchored on the Rentier State Theory argues that the Nigerian State is not food secured because government's continuous dependence on oil is highly disincentive to the agricultural sector. Documentary method of data collection and the qualitative descriptive method of data analysis were employed for the investigation. The study finds that the inadequate budgetary allocation within the framework of the APP undermines food sufficiency in Nigeria. Hence the study recommends among others a demonstrable political will for diversification, incentivization of agricultural technology and evolution of robust micro-credit framework for farmers.

Keyword: Agriculture, Food Security, Agricultural Promotion Policy, Budgetary Allocation, Rentier State Theory.

1. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is an important sector of every state's economy with high potentials for employment generation, food security and poverty alleviation. In Nigeria, the sector was reputed as the mainstay of the economy in the early 1960's (Nweze, 2018). It is seen as the key driver for growth and development. Hence, to further buttress the pivotal role the sector plays in the Nigerian economy, Kamil, Ugural and Festus (2017), noted that the agricultural sector is part of the Millennium Development Goals Program for poverty reduction in Nigeria. Thus, it is a proven path to prosperity for every state. This implies that agricultural production must be seen as the critical component of every program that seeks to attain food security.

Food security refers to the situation 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 (Food and Agricultural Organization, 2010). According

to the Global Hunger Index (2019), Nigeria ranked **103rd** out of 119 qualifying countries. With a score of **31.1**, Nigeria suffers from a level of hunger that is **serious**. An estimated 70 percent of Nigerians live on less than US\$1.25 per day (Global Hunger Index, 2019). Nigeria was ranked 40th out of 79 on the 2012 GHI and 156th out of 187 on the 2011 United Nations Development Program's human development index.

Poverty is especially widespread in rural areas, where 80 percent of the population lives below the poverty line (International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2012). Nigeria is the world's largest producer of cassava, yam, and cowpea; yet it is a food-deficit nation and depends on imports of grains, livestock products, and fish (IFAD 2012). Food security of a state can be viewed in terms of availability, accessibility and affordability. Hence, food security connotes physical and economic access to adequate food for all household members, without undue risk of losing the access (World Bank, 2001). Hence, food security is dependent on agricultural production, food imports and donations, employment opportunities and income earnings, intra-household decision-making and resource allocation, health care utilization and caring practices.

The agricultural sector has however significantly underperformed its potential. This is evidenced by the high rate of malnutrition especially in children and the high food prices all over the nation. According to FAO (2011), households' food insecurity, under nutrition and micro nutrient deficiencies are found throughout Nigeria. Since the discovery of oil in Nigeria, the agriculture sector became less important to the government as it cannot withstand the economic sagacity of the oil industry. Thus, Nigeria became heavily dependent on importation of food (Adeagbo, 2012). The rural areas have become even more vulnerable to malnutrition, erratic supply of food items, unaffordable food costs, low quality foods and sometimes complete lack of food. This situation is more prevalent in many parts of the northern region of Nigeria (Akinyele, 2009).

To be sure, successive administrations in Nigeria have made different policies for the development of the agricultural sector. In the year 1973, the Federal Government introduced the National Food Operation Programme and the Nigerian Agriculture and Cooperative Bank was established to fund agriculture and assist farmers. This was followed by Operation Feed the Nation in 1976, which was aimed at revolutionizing the agricultural sector of Nigerian economy, which hitherto was derailing from its normal contribution to the growth of the economy. Other agricultural programmes initiated before now included: National Food Production Programme (1973), Agricultural Development Project (1975), Agricultural Credit and Guarantee Scheme (1977), The Green Revolution Programme (1979-1980), National Accelerated Food Production Project (1985-1999), National Special Programmes for Food Security (2003), National Fadama Development Project (2004), Community-Based Natural Resource Management Programmes (2001) and Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) (2011) (Nwaobiala, 2015).

Overall, these programmes were aimed at the attainment of self-reliance and self-sufficiency in the production of basic food requirements, increased production of food, promotion of forward and backward linkage between agriculture and other sectors of the economy and equitable distribution of income among food producers. Others were the maintenance of good nutritional standard and revamping of the agricultural sector so as to generate employment opportunities for

the teaming unemployed populace. Despite the laudable objectives of these aforementioned agricultural programmes, most of them were not successful because they were poorly conceived and implemented. In addition, most were duplicates of already existing programmes and organizations (Fasoranti, 2006).

According to Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe (2012), 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, without any deliberate effort to address deficits in existing programmes to make them effective and impactful.

It was in view of these failures that the Federal Government under the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari in August 2016, formulated a new policy known as the Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP) as part of government's effort to revamp the agricultural sector to ensure food security, job creation, diversification of the economy and enhancement of foreign exchange earnings (FMARD, 2016). According to the FMARD, 2016 in the APP (2016-2020), Nigeria is facing two key gaps in the agricultural sector: inability to meet domestic food requirements and inability to export at quality levels required for market success. The first problem is a productivity challenge driven by an input system and farming model that is largely inefficient. As a result, aging populations of farmers do not have enough seeds, fertilizers, irrigation, crop protection and related support to be successful (FMARD, 2016 in APP).

The second challenge is driven by an equally inefficient system for setting and enforcing food quality standards, as well as poor knowledge of target markets. Insufficient food testing facilities, a weak inspectorate system in FMARD, and poor coordination among relevant federal agencies serve to compound early stage problems such as poor knowledge of permissible contaminant levels. Furthermore, FMARD (2016) stated that putting Nigeria's agricultural sector on a path to growth will require actions to solve these two gaps: produce enough fresh, high quality foods for the Nigerian market; and serve the export market successfully and earn foreign exchange. The APP is a strategy that focuses on solving the core issues at the heart of limited food production and delivery of quality standards. As productivity improves domestically and standards are raised for all Nigerian food production, export markets will also benefit impacting positively on Nigeria's balance of payments. Given limited resources and the importance of delivering sustainable results, the FMARD in consultation with partners has identified an initial pool of crops and related activities that will be Nigeria's path to tackling the aforementioned gaps.

About 7.1 million people in Nigeria are facing acute food insecurity and in need of urgent lifesaving and livelihood protection (FAO, 2017). The genesis of food crisis in Nigeria has mostly been associated with the collapse of the agricultural sector in the mid-1970s. As the oil industry developed, the Nigerian government's attention moved away from the agricultural sector to the petroleum sector. As a result of the 1970s oil boom and the availability of petro dollar the nation resorted to food import in place of its usual domestic production. Food crisis set in at the end of the oil boom when the oil price crashed and the petro dollar ran out (Nwalie, 2017). The rural areas have become even more vulnerable to malnutrition, poor supply of food items, unaffordable food costs, low quality foods and sometimes complete lack of food. This situation is more prevalent in

many parts of the northern region of Nigeria (Akinyele, 2009)

The APP was formulated as part of government's effort to revamp the agricultural sector and ensure food security, job creation, diversification of the economy and enhancement of foreign exchange earnings. However, despite the implementation of the programme, the level of food insecurity in Nigeria has not declined. The claim that Nigeria has become the poverty capital of the world suggests a country plagued by food insecurity (CNN, 2018; Agostini, 2018). Extreme levels of poverty and acute food insecurity no doubt pose serious challenges to stability and development in Nigeria.

Scholars like Ojong and Anam (2018), noted that the APP as a strategy focuses on raising overall productivity and quality standards of food production in Nigeria. However, Odunze (2018) stated that the APP is a refreshed strategy established to put Nigeria in a direction aimed at increasing food production and income. Abdulrahman (2013), is of the opinion that, the amount of statutory allocation given to the sector is too small for the sector to achieve its primary objective. Eze, Ikenna, Ugwu and Chima (2010), noted that access to credit is a problem for all farmers and is particularly acute for poor farmers. Most of the farmers in rural areas have little or no access to credit and loans without which it is unlikely that they will invest heavily in productivity. The beneficiaries of these agricultural policies are mainly people who are outside agricultural occupation. The government's insensitivity to the needs of the rural areas and lack of infrastructural development and incentives, through loans for farmers, invariably results in rural-urban migration (Albert and Isife, 2009). The ability to have access to food depends on two major conditions: - Economic access and physical access. Economic access depends on one's income, the price of food and the purchasing power of the people. Physical access depends on the availability and quality of infrastructure needed for the production and distribution of food (Metu, Okeyika and Maduka, 2016). Experts have argued that significant food and nutrition problems exist in Nigeria (Ahungwa *et al*, 2013). Recent estimates put the number of hungry people in Nigeria at over 53 million of the country's total population and that 52 per cent of the populace lives below the poverty line (Azubike, 2012). These scholars examined the implementation of APP but were not able to establish the nexus between the market focus of the policy, inadequate funding of programmes pursuant to the implementation of the Agricultural Promotion Policy, the neo liberal under pinning of the APP and food security in Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that this study is poised to examine the impact of poor funding of the APP on food security in Nigeria between 2016-2021. The rationale for the periodization 2016-2020 is because it is the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari that conceived and is also implementing the APP that is under review in this study.

Theoretical Framework

There are several theoretical frameworks that can be used to explain the issues of agricultural policy implementation and food security in Nigeria. These theories include but are not limited to, rentier state theory, household theory, utilization theory, urban rift theory, elite theory, systems theory, etc. However, this study adopts the rentier state theory. This theory was first postulated by Hossein Mahdavy in 1970. The theory of the rentier state is a complex of associated ideas concerning the patterns of development and the nature of states in economies dominated by external rent, particularly oil rent (Yates, 1996). The idea of the rentier state assumed new importance in the decades following Mahdavy's work. His ideas experienced a kind of renaissance in the 1980s in the literature of scholars like Beblawi and Luciani (1987) who were interested in

the impact of oil windfall on the nature of Arab States. Accordingly, Beblawi (1990, p.87), aptly captures the rentier mentality as:

A psychological condition with profound consequences for productivity where contracts are given as an expression of gratitude rather than as a reflection of economic rationale, civil servants see their principal duty as being available in their offices during work hours, businessmen abandon industry...the best and brightest abandon business and seek out lucrative government employment; manual labour and other work considered demeaning by the rentier is farmed out to foreign workers whose remittance flood out of the rentier economy. According to this theory, four characteristics must be present in order for a state to be classified as rentier. First, the rentier economy of which the state is a subset must be one where rent situations predominate. Second, the origin of the rent must be external to the economy. In other words, the rent must come from foreign sources. Domestic rent, even if it were substantial enough to predominate is not sufficient to characterize such economy as rentier. Third, in a rentier state, only the few are engaged in the generations of rents, while majority are involved in the distribution and consumption. Therefore, an open economy with high levels of foreign trade is not rentier, even if it depends predominantly on rent (e.g. agriculture), because majority of the society is actively involved in the creation of wealth. Finally, the government must be the principal recipient of the external rent in the economy.

Consequent from the above, the external rents liberate the state from the need to extract income from the domestic economy. Thus, unlike a 'production state' that relies on taxation of the domestic economy for its income, Nigeria does not depend on domestic sources of revenue but rather is the primary source of revenue itself in the domestic economy. The theory of the rentier state postulates that there is a lackluster attitude prevalent among rentier states to their conditions of socio-economic and technological backwardness (Yates, 1996). This arise from the ability of the rentier state to use their huge foreign earnings to purchase 'welfare and prosperity' from outside. Thus, in Nigeria, instead of attending to the task of expediting the basic socio-economic transformations, the rentier elites' ability to embark on massive spending and consumption preempts some of the urgency for change and rapid growth. Hence, Nigeria's government response to the issue of food insecurity is one that favours massive importation of food.

The economic behavior of a rentier is distinguished from conventional economic behavior in that it embodies a break in the work-reward causation (Beblawi and Lucian, 1987). As noted by Yates (1996), rewards of income and wealth for the rentier do not come as the result of work, but rather are the result of chance or situation. That is, income and wealth are seen as situational or accidental rather than as the end result of a long process of systematic and organized production. Under this situation, there is a high tendency for people to seek employment only in businesses associated with the booming oil sector; hence, people seek out lucrative government employment since it is government that controls most of the oil wealth of the state which has little or no linkage with other sectors. This has a serious implication on the effort of achieving food security in Nigeria since the agrarian sector which has a strong rural base is undermined by massive rural-urban migration as more able-bodied people migrate to areas where they can have access to 'white collar jobs associated with the booming oil sector. One consequence of the large amount of external rent available in a rentier economy is that the state tends to relax constraint on foreign exchange. Thus, the availability of foreign currency in such relative abundance means that the rentier state can acquire foreign goods without the usurious costs of exchange (Yates, 1996). This also implies that

imported goods have the tendency to replace domestically produced goods, particularly in agriculture and manufacturing, which often cannot compete with foreign goods produced under economies of scale. The state purchases foodstuffs, which then compete with domestically produced foodstuffs in the local markets. This affects domestic agricultural production and domestic industries may become net consumers rather than net producers of the national income.

The core argument of rentierism is that when governments gain most of their revenues from external sources, such as resource rents or foreign assistance, they are freed from the need to levy domestic taxes and as a result become less accountable to the societies they govern (Collier 2003). That as the state becomes deeply involved in the economy the ruling elite can spend the rents for their own privileges, for reinforcing their own position of power and access to the rents, and for shortsighted public expenditure. As a result, state institutions are weakened and the rents are not utilized to guarantee long-term, sustainable socio-economic development including in huge investment on Agriculture (Beck, 2007).

The theory is relevant in explaining agricultural policy implementation issues and food security. This is because from the relevant foregoing literatures seen, the problem bedeviling Nigeria is structural. The structure of the Nigerian economy is highly disincentive to the agricultural sector given that huge priority is given to the oil sector because of the rent it accrues to the ruling elite. Therefore a theory that can help explain the structural underpinning of the Nigerian economy and its consequences for policy implementation becomes more than fecund. Since the problem is structural, this theory has clearly explained the structural underpinning of the Nigerian economy and more importantly raised the policy implications for such. One of the policy implications is the tendency for the ruling elite to overlook other productive sectors of the economy like agriculture etc.

Furthermore, two critical measures that can show that a state is still far from prioritizing a sector are as follows; either the state is not listening or paying attention to the problem by way of evident political will to match all that the policy has presented or that the state is not channeling enough resources to that sector in order for the problem to be addressed in tandem with all that have been envisaged in the policy. Hence, the agricultural sector of Nigeria is yet to receive adequate prioritization from the government because the political will and enough resources are still channeled towards oil. However, until the aforementioned priority given to oil is given to Agriculture, this policy and other subsequent agricultural policies are bound to fail.

2. METHODOLOGY

Documentary and observation methods were deployed in gathering data for the study. These methods help the researchers to glean information and data from already documented sources and ongoing activities in the agricultural sector in Nigeria. The justification for these methods is that they are very appropriate for contextual analysis and useful when the task is to glean, illuminate, interpret and extract valuable information in order to draw inference from the available evidence. Above all these methods were considered most appropriate given that secondary data constitute the bulk of the data used in the analysis. Besides, opinions of experts and critical stakeholders in the sector as expressed in the leading print and electronic media were equally elicited to validate and support data generated from documentary and observation methods. Therefore, we essentially relied on articles in journals and Nigerian newspapers, official publications of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Federal Ministry of Finance , Budget and National

Planning, Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations such as African Union, Food and Agricultural Organization among others on the subject matter. The merits of secondary sources of data is that of economy and the fact that gathering of information does not require the co-operation of the concerned subjects of research (in this case stakeholders in Nigerian Government and other stakeholders in agricultural sector) about whom information are being sought.

Content analysis based on logical deduction was applied in the analysis of data generated in the study. It is the technique for making inference by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of message (Stone 1966). The application of this technique involves examination of documents in order to generate information or inference based on the canons of scientific research. The justification of this method is that it enables the political inquirer to scrutinize the content of a document in order to understand its underlying structure, ideas and concepts and to quantify the message it relates (White 1983). Besides, content analysis can be used to delineate the characteristics of the communication itself, the causes or circumstances of the communication, and the effects of the communication on the audience. Moreover, content analysis is descriptive, dialectical, interactive, and multi-dimensional and falls within the intersection of the quantitative and qualitative continuum, and hence is most appropriate for the analysis of documentary evidence.

An Overview of the New Agricultural Promotion Policy in Nigeria

The APP was developed in 2016 by the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari. It was built on eleven guiding principles which were carried over from the ATA policy. The guiding principles reflect a strong desire for policy stability but have new elements added to reflect the lessons learnt from the ATA. According to the FMARD (2016, p.12-13), these guiding principles are:

Table One: Guiding Principles of the APP

CORE PRINCIPLES	THEMATIC FOCUS
Agriculture as a Business	Focus on a government-enabled, private sector-led engagement as the main growth driver of the sector. This essential principle was established in the ATA and will remain a cardinal design principle of Nigeria's agriculture policies going forward.
Agriculture as key to long-term economic growth and security	Promotes the commercialization of agriculture includes technologies, financial services, inputs supply chains, and market linkages that directly engage rural poor farmers because rural economic growth will play a critical role in the country's successful job creation, economic diversity, improved security and sustainable economic growth.
Food as a human right	Focus on the social responsibility of government with respect to food security, social security and equity in the Nigerian

	society; and compelling the government to recognize, protect and fulfill the irreducible minimum degree of freedom of the people from hunger and malnutrition.
Value chain approach	Emphasis on enterprise development across successive stages of the commodity value chains for the development of crop, livestock and fisheries sub-sectors, namely input supply, production, storage, processing/utilization, marketing and consumption. Building complex linkages between value chain stages will be an important part of the ecosystem that will drive sustained prosperity for all Nigerians.
Prioritizing crops	Priorities improved domestic food security and boosting export earnings requires a measure of prioritization. Therefore, for domestic crops, the initial focus in 2016 – 2018 will be expanding the production of rice, wheat, maize, soya beans and tomatoes. For export crops, the initial focus will be on cocoa, cassava, oil palm, sesame and gum Arabic. In 2018 onwards, the export focus will add on bananas, avocado, mango, fish and cashew nuts. Investments in closing infrastructure gaps to accelerate productivity and investment in these crops will also be sequenced to reflect capital availability and management attention.
Market orientation	Focusing on stimulating agricultural production on a sustainable basis, and stimulating supply and demand for agricultural produce by facilitating linkages between producers and off takers, while stabilizing prices or reducing price volatility for agricultural produce through market-led price stabilization mechanisms (commodity exchanges, negotiated off-take agreements, extended farm-gate price under value chains coordination mechanisms, agricultural insurance, etc.)
Factoring climate change and environmental sustainability	Focusing policy instruments on the sustainability of the use of natural resources (land and soil, water and ecosystems) with the future generation in mind while increasing agricultural production, marketing and other

	human activities in the agricultural sector.
Participation and inclusiveness	Focusing on measures to maximize the full participation of stakeholders including farmer’s associations, cooperatives and other groups, as well as NGOs, CBOs, CSOs, development partners and the private sector. This places a premium on the role of these organizations or groups as agents of economic change in general and agricultural economy in particular, thereby drawing benefits from their policy advocacy roles as partners to and watchdog of government.
Policy integrity	Focusing policy instruments on measures for sanitizing the business environment for agriculture, in terms of accountability, transparency and due process of law, ensuring efficient allocation and use of public funding and fighting corruption on all programmes involving public resources. This also applies to compliance with international commitments, protocols and conventions that Nigeria is a signatory to.
Nutrition sensitive agriculture	Emphasis on addressing the issues of stunting, wasting, underweight and other manifestations of hunger and malnutrition with particular reference to the vulnerable groups, which include children under 5, nursing mothers and persons with chronic illness and disabilities
Agriculture’s linkages with Other Sectors	Focusing on the connected relationship between agriculture and other sectors at federal and state levels, particularly industry, environment, power, energy, works and water sectors.

Source: Researchers’ Compilation from APP (2016, p.12-13).

In making sure these guiding principles are upheld, the APP identified matrices of constraints limiting the productivity of the sector and proposed policy interventions that can be used to manage and reduce these constraints. According to Odunze (2019), the APP broadly grouped the intervening strategies into three organizing themes; productivity enhancements; crowding in private funding and institutional realignment. Each of the policy matrix themes is further broken down into levers. The levers all have identified constraints they intend to address, intended policy reforms and enabling programs.

Policy Matrix 1: Productivity Enhancements; Strategies developed here are intended to promote productivity while reducing post-harvest losses and to improve access to markets. The outcomes targeted under this matrix are increase in farm productivity per base year, increase in the share of

agricultural inputs used by consumer goods companies in Nigeria and increase in the share of Nigerian fresh food sold informal markets. This policy matrix has 8 policy levers;

Table Two: Policy Matrix 1 of APP

Policy lever	Policy objectives	Policy reforms
Access to land	To attract private investments by farmers and processors irrespective of the scale of operations by ensuring conducive access to land	Assist collateralization through formal recognition of land ownership, incentivizing farmers to invest in their lands by developing land rights, reducing gender bias in land ownership, developing rental markets for land and policies that allow farmer migration to more viable areas and developing a web-based digital verification system for land ownership.
Soil fertility	To enhance and maintain the fertility of the soil and promote control of erosion causing practices.	Increase access to fertilizers and expand production of fertilizers specifically adapted to agro-ecological zones and crops.
Access to information and knowledge	To enhance obtainability, convenience, and timeliness of relevant information and knowledge required by the various stakeholders .	Develop an ICT /KM framework, streamline the messaging and dissemination of knowledge generated under FMARD programs and come up with new strategies for the delivery of extension services through a partnership with NGOs and the private sector.
Access to inputs	To ensure the appropriate access to high quality and price competitive inputs by stakeholders at the right time in a way that increases the productivity of the sector.	Push for the approval of the fertilizer act; stimulate domestic production of high-quality fertilizers; review the seed policy; promote the penetration of private agro-dealers for fertilizers and seeds in rural markets; gradually withdraw from the subsidy system.
Production management	To promote sustainable use of	Use tax concessions in

	water resources; reduce incidences of pest and disease in the sector, promote safe and effective use of agrochemicals; promote the availability of relevant equipment for farmers and processors.	importation of irrigation equipment to stimulate private sector involvement in the provision of irrigation services; review the Water Bill Act and push for it to be passed by the Senate; promote leasing as an option to financing of irrigation equipment; promote the safe use of agrochemicals and fertilizers; and stimulate local production of equipment and targeted imports; promote the use of bank funded leasing as an optional means of accessing agricultural equipment.
Storage	To enhance the availability of small medium and large storage facilities and promote safe and effective storage.	Enforcement of standards in terms of minimum moisture content on stored products, and safe use of pesticides and chemicals and alternative options to pesticides.
Processing	To increase the quantity and quality of food processing in Nigeria	Drive the provision of infrastructures in high agricultural production areas, partner with states and MDAs on water access and power supply, review policies on food quality and enforce quality standards and food safety

Marketing and trade	To enhance access to domestic and international markets by agricultural producers.	Improve infrastructure especially in rural area, privatize the Abuja Commodity Exchange and liberalize the market to allow for competition by private players through setting up a licensing regime in partnership with and supervision from the Securities Exchange Commission. Partner with the Ministry of Health to finalize and submit the Food Safety Bill in part.
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Source: Researchers' Compilation from APP (2016, p.15-24).

Policy Matrix 2: Crowding in Private Sector Investment

The FMARD (2017) divided this policy matrix into two levers; access to finance and agribusiness investment development. The target outcomes for the policy matrix are to lower financing cost and promote the availability of finances in the sector.

Table Three: Policy Matrix 2 of APP

Policy lever	Policy objective	Policy reforms
Access to finance	To enhance credit availability at reasonable conditions for farmers and agribusinesses	Legalize and enable alternative mechanisms of financing the sector; incentivize both commercial and microfinance banks target rural farmers inclusive of women and youth with appropriate financial products; improve the inclusiveness of the sector in a way that enables small-holder access to finances, technology and other inputs; reform the agricultural insurance sector through the development of new products, promoting private players participation and eliminating the monopoly of the Nigerian Agricultural

		Insurance company (NAIC) on government insurance contract
Agribusiness investment development	To promote the growth of the agribusiness sector in a way that drives an increase in productivity, growth and job creation in Nigeria.	Restructure the management of the commodity Marketing Corporations, intensify private sector partnership, establish a committee on Private Investment Monitoring, engage in dialogue with partners such as Nigeria Agribusiness Group (NABG) and GROW AFRICA and explore domestication of Principles of Responsible Investments from the World Food Security Committee.

Source: Researchers’ Compilation from APP (2016, p.25-27).

Policy Matrix 3: FMARD’s Institutional Realignment

The levers under this matrix intend to increase regulation of the sector by improving the ministry’s capacity and that of its key partners, involve stakeholders previously omitted, initiate policy dialogue and broker the needed treaties to improve the ease of undertaking business in Nigeria’s agriculture space. This policy matrix has five levers and the target outcome is an agribusiness market space that is more engaged, as measured by ease of doing business in the sector.

Table Four: Policy Matrix 3 of APP

Policy lever	Policy objectives	Policy reforms
Institutional setting and roles	Enable all stakeholders; FMARD, the private sector, agribusiness investors, states, LGAs, and development partners fulfill their roles optimally and in partnership with each other.	Improve states’ accountability for growth in agribusiness; remove rural barriers through direct engagement with the Association of Local Government of Nigeria (ALGON) to drive the competitiveness of the sector.
Youth and women	Foster full inclusion of youth and women in the agricultural sector.	Review the policy document on gender and shift key behaviors at the institutional level through implementation of related activities; Promote a merit-based entrepreneurial ecosystem designed to enable

		migration of women and youth into service provision roles; Reduce drift to urban areas through the transformation of rural areas.
Infrastructure	Provide rural infrastructure by ensuring that all stakeholders play their individual roles.	Expand the pool of rural infrastructure through the provision of incentives to private players and state governments; Promote economic activities in the rural areas; Create an enabling environment to attract investments; Streamline conflicting policies and synergies; Encourage competitiveness at state and local government level by publishing data on production and cost structure.
Research and innovation	Strengthen research and innovation on urgent and important areas and broadcast outputs.	Enhance efficiency and effectiveness of the agricultural research system; restructure the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARCN) and strengthen the agency's delivery of its mandate.
Food security	Improve national and household food and nutrition security by guaranteeing adequate availability of safe and nutritious food at affordable prices for the citizens.	Promote sustainable agricultural production and fresh and safe food systems; set standards for nutrition to control increasing cases of diabetes and obesity; promote management of the grain reserve silos by private players.

Source: Researchers' Compilation from APP (2016, p.27-32).

Budgetary Provisions for the Agricultural Sector and Food Importation in Nigeria

Agriculture remains important in the history of economic development in Nigeria. It generates employment for both skilled and unskilled labour, and contributes enormously to national and state gross domestic products. Agriculture helps to provide raw materials to the country's industrial sector and foreign agro allied industry, and enhances both national and state food security. However, there has been a systematic neglect of the sector at both national and state levels since

the discovery of crude oil in the country in the 1960s (IFAD, 2013). The level of public spending on agriculture remains low regardless of the indicator used. Budgetary allocation to agriculture compared with other key sectors is also low despite the sector’s role in the fight against poverty, hunger, unemployment and in the pursuit of economic development. Table five shows the trend of agricultural allocation from the Federal Government of Nigeria.

Consequent from the available figures in table four, it shows that Nigeria reduced its budgetary allocation to the agricultural sector from ₦ 203 billion in 2018 to ₦ 138 billion in 2019 despite government efforts to attain food security. These amounts allocated to agriculture may seem big to a common eye, but its percentage from the total annual budget as evident in table six is a mere fraction that is inadequate for the sector. This in turn affects the sectors contribution to Nigeria’s GDP as evident in figure one.

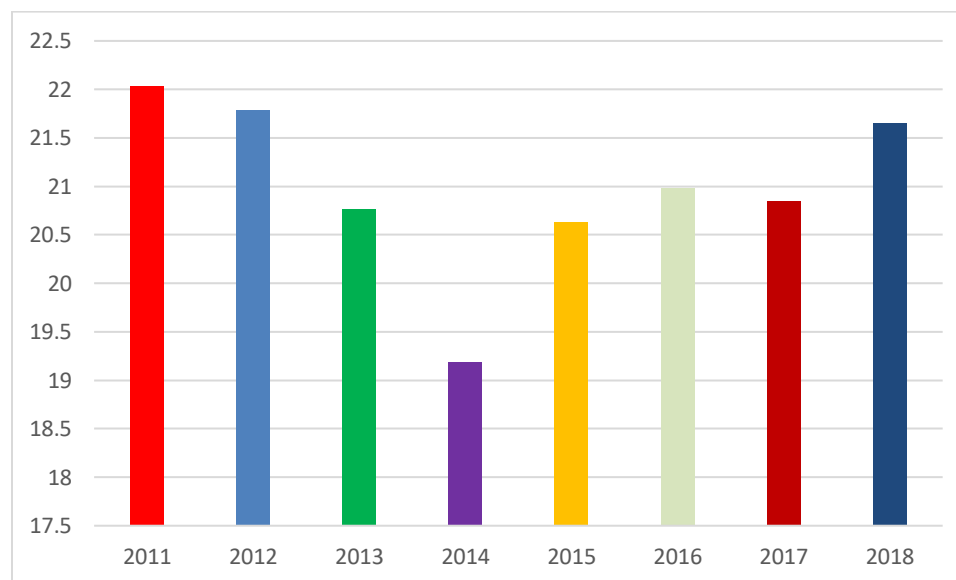
Table Five : Allocation to the Agricultural Sector in Nigeria’s Annual Budget, 2011-2019

Year	National Budget (trillion in ₦)	Allocation to Agriculture (billions in ₦)	Agriculture Contribution to GDP Percentage	Percentage of Allocation to Agriculture
2011	4.07	81.2	22.03	1.81
2012	4.69	7.89	21.79	1.66
2013	4.92	81.4	20.76	1.77
2014	4.67	66.6	19.19	1.48
2015	4.49	39.1	20.63	0.9
2016	6.07	76.7	20.98	1.25
2017	7.4	135	20.85	1.8
2018	9.12	203	21.65	3.2
2019	8.8	138		1.56

Source: Researchers’ Compilation from CBN (2011), Oyakhilomen (2013), Guardian (2018), Punch (2018), Business Day (2019), Punch (2019).

Figure one empirically shows that there has not been steady growth from agriculture’s contribution to Nigeria’s GDP annually. This therefore suggests there is a crucial need for government to improve on the pattern of funding to the agricultural sector in order to achieve APP’s goal of food security for Nigerians.

Figure One: Annual Contribution of Agriculture to GDP in Nigeria



Source: Adapted by Researchers from table five

It is also evident that the percentage of allocation accruable to Nigeria’s agricultural sector is below the 20% minimum of the international standard as recommended by the FAO for the agricultural sector. Furthermore, Nigeria is a signatory to the Maputo and Malabo declarations in 2003 and 2014 respectively. According to Ibiroga (2018), during the second ordinary assembly of the African Union in July 2003 in Maputo, Mozambique, African Heads of State and Government endorsed the “Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa.” The declaration contained several important decisions regarding agriculture, but prominent among them was the commitment to the allocation of at least 10 per cent of the member states national budgetary resources to agriculture and rural development policy implementation within five years. Fifteen years after the declaration, Nigeria is yet to measure up in term of commitment of resources to the sector, as indicated in the 2018 budget of 3.2 per cent (Ibiroga, 2018).

Eke (2019) observed that the trend of budget allocation for the agricultural sector over the last few years shows that the allocation to agriculture, as a percentage of the overall sectors, increased from 1.25% in 2016 to 1.82% in 2017 and to 3.2% in 2018. However, the allocation to agriculture as a percentage of the overall annual budget to all sectors in the 2019 dropped at 1.56% at a time the government is planning to diversify the economy away from crude oil and into critical sectors like agriculture, there should be no explanation for a decrease in the percentage allocation to agriculture. Such a decrease suggests that agriculture has dropped in the pecking order of priority sectors of the government for the 2019 budget year and this is unacceptable to concerned stakeholders (Eke, 2019).

A report from the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (2016), Nigeria’s agricultural productivity fell at one of the fastest rates in the continent. Since 2014, productivity

declined by 20%, compared with growth of 4% and 2% in Rwanda and Ethiopia respectively. In Nigeria, 25% of the population lack stable access to sufficient amounts of food. In 2016, over 14 million people or 7% of the population were reported to be undernourished—a 33% increase since 2011. If this trend continues, the number of malnourished people in Nigeria will reach 31 million by 2050, equivalent to the population of Ghana (CAADP, 2016). However, Ibrahim (2018) noted that Nigeria has 190 million citizens but a mere 2% of the Federal Government budget goes to the Agriculture Sector, this is less than ₦1, 000 or about US \$2.50 per person annually. In Rwanda and Ethiopia, where agriculture is booming, governments spend more than 7% of their budgets on the sector. Rwanda spent 7.5% of its budget on agriculture in 2017, whilst Ethiopia spent 16.8% (Ibrahim, 2018).

Experts in the agric sector say that the ₦138 billion which comprises of both recurrent and capital expenditure for the sector in 2019 cannot at the barest minimum, address issues relating to mechanization, rehabilitation of irrigation facilities and dams, extension services, insurance, fertilizer subsidy, research and development, among others as enshrined in the APP. The experts say that the proposed allocation is an indication that the government is not ready to address the lingering issues limiting players in the agric sector (Okojie, 2019). Accordingly, Aguiyi (2019) averred that in the last few years, the Nigerian agricultural sector has not received adequate funding to catalyze a transformative growth in the sector. Recently, the amount to the sector as a percentage of the total budget revolves around 3 percent and less. Meanwhile, it has been widely noted that public spending in the agricultural sector is a recipe for growth and development of the sector and critical to achieving the objective of food security and job creation in the country. It has been severally stated that the agricultural sector is the key driver of the Nigerian economy contributing between 22% to 26% to GDP and employing over 40% of the population and almost 90% in rural areas. In this regard, fresh demands have been placed on agriculture as part of the government's vision of diversifying the economy away from oil (Aguiyi, 2019).

Furthermore, Aguiyi (2019), observed that in the 2019 agriculture budget, the capital expenditure 80.3 billion equals to 58% of the budget while the recurrent expenditure 57.7 billion is 42%. In as much as this looks like a plus as capital is higher than recurrent, and based on the assumption that more capital spending translates to higher contribution to the economy in terms of jobs and product output, most of the capital line items are ongoing projects related to surfacing of some kilometers of roads and the development of various crop value chain. However, some of the line items will need further explanation for citizens to understand. For instance, the line item ERGP30105281, titled Green Alternative Implementation which is an ongoing project of ₦155, 182,587 will need further explanation and rationality for the amount. This is because the Green Alternative is the same as the APP, which is being implemented and every activity in the sector is geared towards achieving the APP, so what is the rationale for spending funds to implement the APP except if it has a different meaning (Aguiyi, 2019).

On the whole, a lingering problem of agriculture in Nigeria is a lack of investment and institutional corruption. The government budget for agriculture is not enough to meet the challenges. International aid groups have supplemented the funding of the government, but most of the funds don't reach the local farmer due to corrupt practices experienced by the diversion of such funds for other purposes. While there is an advocacy for increased budgetary allocation in the agricultural sector as well as private sector partnership, corruption must be checked by all means (Ojong, 2018).

Due to the deficit accounted by the trend of budgetary allocation given to Nigeria's agricultural sector, the level of food production for domestic consumption has been inadequate making it difficult to sustain the population of Nigeria. Hence, importation becomes inevitable. For instance, Falayi (2019) stated that Nigeria does produce the basic food commodities such as sugar, wheat flour, fish, milk, palm oil, pork, beef and poultry but up to now domestic farmers have not been able to satisfy demand of the country's 200 million people, hence the need for imports. Furthermore, FAO (2016) observed that Nigeria is the continent's leading consumer of rice, one of the largest producers of rice in Africa and simultaneously one of the largest rice importers in the world.

Rice production increased from an annual average of 7.1 million tonnes between 2013 and 2017 to 8.9 million tonnes in 2018. However, there are also reports that rice smuggling had increased as customs officials continued to seize large quantities of the grain at the borders. This suggests that Nigerian rice farmers are still not producing enough (FAO, 2018).

It is evident from available statistics in table seven, that Nigeria imports most of her food to feed her citizens while it exports less food. As at 2016 Nigeria exports rate was 2.0 percent of food but in 2017 the percentage dropped to 1.6 thereby leading to high import of food. In 2017, Food imports for Nigeria was 16.3%. The same trend goes for 2018 and 2019 where export value stood at 2.0 and 2.3 respectively with the import value pegged at 10.9 and 25.81. As seen in table 2, year 2011 and 2019 accounted for the highest recorded import trend in Nigeria. Figure two further illustrates the pattern and trend of import and export

Table Seven: Food Import and Export Value in Nigeria

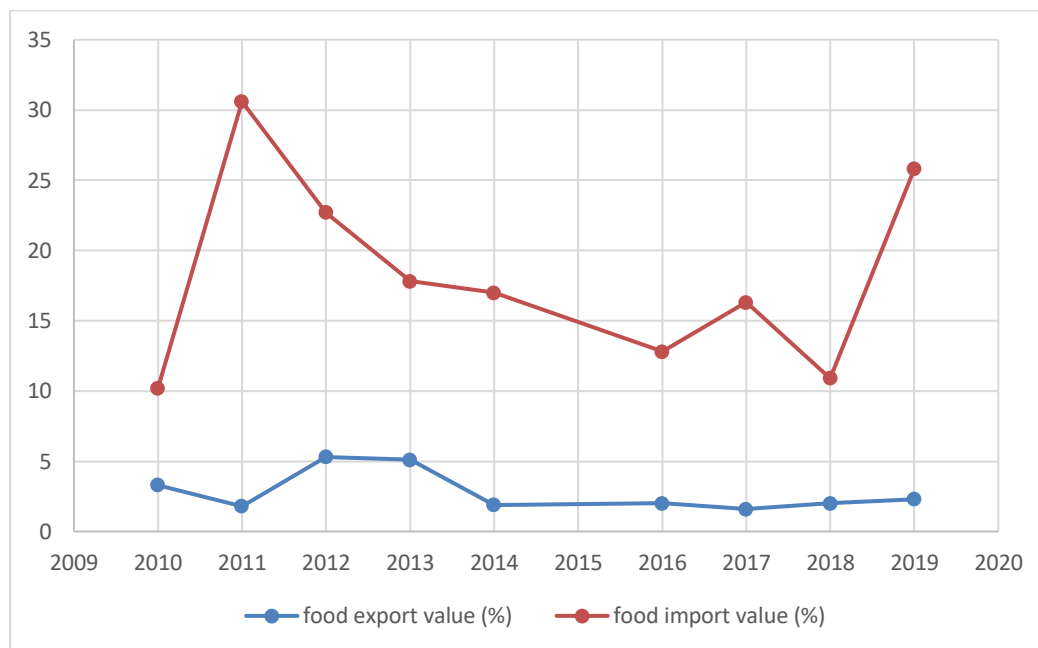
Year	Food Export Value Percentage	Food Import Value Percentage
2010	3.3	10.2
2011	1.8	30.6
2012	5.3	22.7
2013	5.1	17.8
2014	1.9	17.0
2016	2.0	12.8
2017	1.6	16.3
2018	2.0	10.9
2019	2.3	25.81

Source: Researchers' Compilation from Punch (2016), ThisDay (2017), NBS (2018), Punch (2019).

Figure two shows that Nigeria imports were higher than what she exports thereby creating a trade deficit that is unfathomable. This deficit in trade evidently suggests that food production in Nigeria

does not satisfy domestic consumption; hence, creating room for importation in order to augment the domestic lapses.

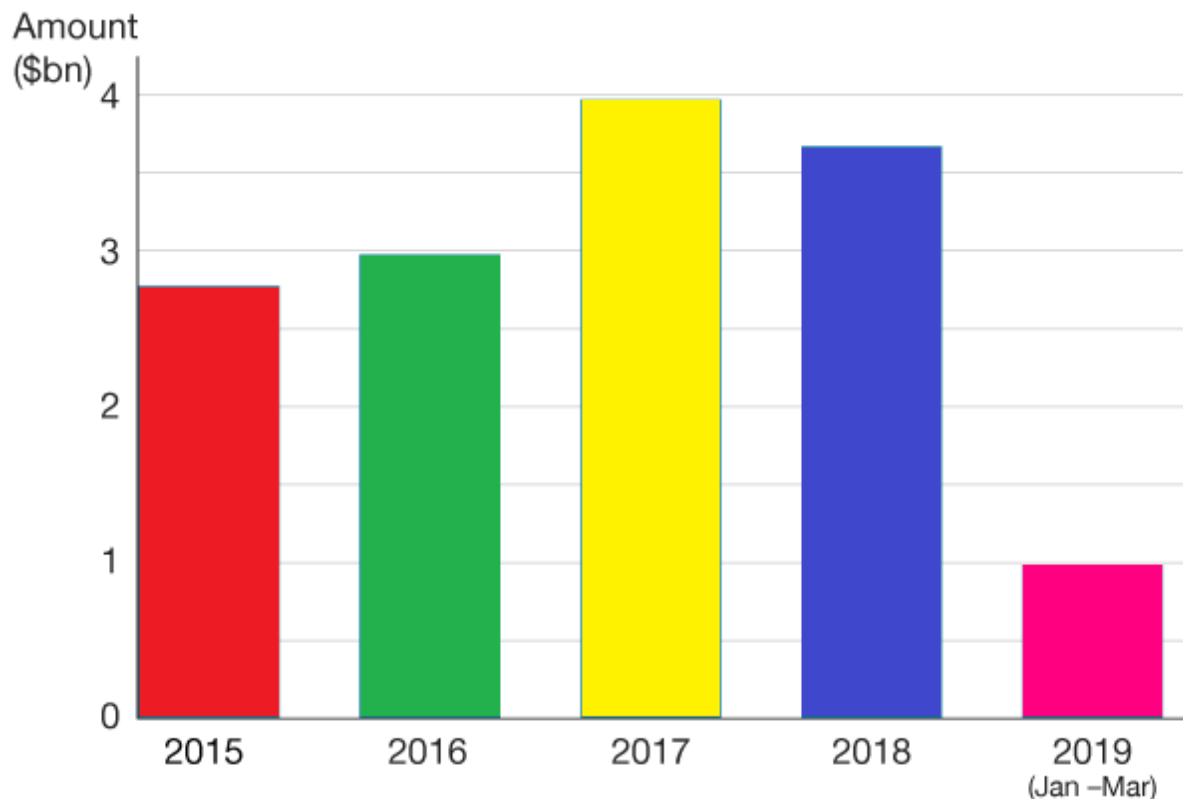
Figure Two: Trends of Food Imports and Exports, 2010-2019



Source: Adapted by Researchers from table seven.

As evident in figure three, the amount of money the country has been spending on importing food and drink increased from 2015 to 2017, dipped in 2018. Hence NBS (2019) reiterated that if the trend from the first quarter of 2019 continues, the import bill will go up again for this year. Overall available data show the amount of money Nigeria has spent and currently spends on the importation of food and drinks annually. Evidently it runs in billions of dollars which has been a source of deficit in Nigeria’s trade when calculated with the poor trend of export in Nigeria.

Figure Three: Nigeria’s Food and Drink Import Bill 2015-2019



Source: Adapted by Researchers from NBS, (2019).

Nigeria’s 2017 [Economic Recovery and Growth Plan](#) were aimed to deepen investments in agriculture and increase the sector’s contribution to economic growth from 5% in 2017 to 8.4% by 2020. The idea is to revive domestic farming and save resources spent on food imports (over \$22 billion a year). It is this national plan that precipitated the current border closure in Nigeria. The government wants to protect domestic farmers from cheap imported foodstuff. However, while Nigerian rice farmers are happy about their government’s actions, there are concerns about whether domestic food production can meet domestic demand. In 2017, demand for rice in Nigeria reached [6.7 million tons](#), almost double the 3.7 million tons produced domestically (Tahiru, 2019).

More so, there has been a recent closure of Nigeria’s border restricting the importation, smuggling and passage of food items in Nigeria. According to Falayi (2019), President Muhammadu Buhari directed the Central Bank of Nigeria to block food importers’ requests for foreign currency in a bid to boost local agriculture in Africa’s most populous country. It is a continuation of a policy that the president began after coming to office in 2015, when he banned the use of foreign exchange to import dozens of items including the staple food, rice. Since then, domestic rice production has increased, but the policy has been criticized for not taking the low capacity of local farmers into consideration. The policy has also coincided with a rise in food prices, which has been blamed on

insecurity in some of the country's main food producing areas (Falayi, 2019). Many experts believe that the policy of restricting food imports does have some merits, but the policy cannot be introduced in isolation. For instance, Agricultural economist Idris Ayinde argues that restricting food imports should be a gradual process since the country cannot yet meet domestic demand for most food commodities, and the policy risks increasing food price inflation further (Falayi, 2019).

Fiscal Appropriation for Agriculture Promotion Policy by Governments and Dependence on Foreign Technology for Food Processing

There are three tiers of government in Nigeria, namely the federal, state, and local governments. These three levels of government share the authority and responsibility for the provision of agricultural services. The federal government is mainly responsible for regulating and funding agricultural research and development activities. It also provides subsidized inputs (fertilizer) and credit, and shares the responsibility for some agricultural services with the state governments. The State governments share the costs of agricultural subsidies with the federal government, and some of them provide additional fertilizer subsidies. The states are also responsible for providing agricultural extension services. Finally, the local governments are mainly responsible for the actual delivery of various agricultural services. Although the Federal Government provides subsidized credit, the state and local governments also play important roles in channeling these resources to their constituencies (FMARD, 2001).

The poor monetary commitment to agriculture as evident in the budgetary allocation of the Federal Government is also replicated in the other tiers of government in Nigeria. Hence, Downie (2017) noted that lack of sustained financial commitment to agriculture is mirrored at both national and the sub-national level, where few of Nigeria's 36 states have prioritized the sector. There is a weak fiscal coordination between governments of Nigeria. This has led to various structural lapses that have over time hindered the improvement of Nigeria's agricultural sector and other sectors. For instance, Downie (2017, p.2) observed that;

The structural impediments that damage other sectors of Nigeria's economy and make it uncompetitive in global markets are particularly harmful to agribusiness. They include an unreliable power supply, dilapidated irrigation systems, overcrowded ports, and poor roads. For example, it takes an average of 6–8 days to move a truckload of tomatoes along the country's main transport corridor, from Jibiya in the far north to Lagos in the southwest. Unless the cargo is refrigerated—and invariably it is not it will perish before reaching Lagos port. On top of these infrastructure deficits are governance shortfalls an abundance of bureaucracy, corruption, overlapping responsibilities and poor fiscal coordination between the three tiers of government, and unclear policies.

Given the weak fiscal coordination of governments, farmers access to credit facilities especially in the rural areas have been poor. For instance, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (2018) observed that, the weak fiscal coordination amongst the levels of governments in Nigeria towards the agricultural sector has affected the rural farmers. For long, rural infrastructure in Nigeria has been neglected because the biggest share of infrastructural development fund has been concentrated towards the urban centers. As a result, the population became extremely food insecure (IFAD, 2018).

Agriculture is mainly a local activity, conducted within defined geological borders, and so local governments should be the primary points of contact between government, finance and farmers. Currently this is not the case. Local government authorities or LGA's in Nigeria have been turned into financial knapsacks of state governors who appoint council chairmen, decide on local councilors and more or less do whatever they will with local administration. This has had the impact of removing local governments from the effective supervision of the agricultural sectors in their states, making it increasingly difficult for the small holder farmer to get the support they would have preferred if LGAs were more functional (Otti, 2018). Many farmers in Nigeria are poor because they produce very little output and hence sell very small amounts which in turn cannot help them to expand their farms and increase production. This is as a result of their inability to access adequate funds as Sanusi (2011) argued, that about 90 percent of Nigeria's food requirements are produced by small scale farmers who constitute the majority of the nation's poor. This majority of farmers are unable to access finance. However, the basic key to unlocking the closed access to [finance](#) and the resultant inability to invest in basic farming inputs such as seedlings, fertilizers, implements and irrigation rests on the proper fiscal coordination by governments at all levels (Sanusi, 2011).

The United States Department of Agriculture (2013) noted that Nigeria's food processing sector remains underdeveloped despite large market potential. The country depends on imports to meet its demand for quality processed foods. Industry sources indicate that activities in the sector had more than doubled within the last decade, with the sector growing to nearly \$20 billion in sales in 2012. Despite high-cost production and poor infrastructure, there is increasing need for local food processors to differentiate their products in order to meet the growing tastes of the young and high-income consumers. Demand is high for imported intermediate foods and ingredients such as beverage bases and additives. Large multinational food processors such as Nestle, PZ Cussons, Olam, Tiger brands, OK Foods, etc, have continued to increase investment (especially through mergers and acquisitions) to exploit the opportunities in this sector. Nigeria's food processing sector is underdeveloped largely on account of high costs of local food processing activities and poor infrastructure across the country. Many bulk, intermediate and processed inputs utilized by local food processors are imported (USDA, 2013).

The use of modern technologies in the production and distribution of agricultural products is very low in Nigeria. Hence, the sector depended more on manual labour for farm activities. This is because of lack of innovation in local technology, particularly as it relates to mechanization of agriculture to improve productivity. Additionally, local farmers can hardly afford imported technologies and lack maintenance capacity (Nwajiuba, 2013). Furthermore, Ilaboye, et'al (2012) reiterated that lack of facilities to preserve food items such as cereals, yam, beans, etc. can result in wastage thereby further deepening the insecurity level of food. Also, lack of food processing apparatus sometimes leave farmers with no choice than to consume significant fraction of their harvest within short period. Food processing is an important aspect of agriculture that prevents wastage of food items that cannot be easily stored in their original form by transforming them into other form that can enable their preservation. For an instance, mangos, citrus and pineapple can easily be preserved when converted into fruit juice. To achieve a sustainable food security, effort must be made to avert any wastage (Ilaboye, et'al, 2012).

Agricultural mechanization for the multitude of smallholder farmers in Nigeria has been a

neglected issue for too long. The application of farm power to appropriate tools, implements and machines – “farm mechanization” – is an essential agricultural input with the potential to transform rural families’ livelihoods by facilitating increased input of higher value products while eliminating the drudgery associated with human muscle-powered agricultural production and also reducing the high cost of food price. According to Breuer et al, (2015), the importance of agricultural mechanization is summarized in table eight below:

Table Eight: Importance of Agricultural Mechanization

Production	Post Harvest/Storage	Processing	Marketing
Crop establishment	Drying	Chopping	Packaging
Weeding	Grading	Milling	Transport
Fertilization	Winnowing		Grinding
Irrigation	Cleaning		pressing
C r o p p r o t e c t i o n			S t o r a g e
H a r v e s t i n g			

Researcher’s compilation as adapted from Breuer et al, (2015).

The contribution of farm mechanization is therefore an invaluable and essential aspect of agriculture. FAO (2014b) summarizes the main reasons for changing the power source for crop production from muscles (human or animal) to tractors and they include the following:

- i. Potential to expand the area under cultivation.
- ii. Ability to perform operations at the right time to maximize production potential.
- iii. Multi-functionality – tractors can be used, not only for crop production, but also for transportation, stationary power applications and infrastructure improvement (drainage and irrigation canals and road works).
- iv. Compensation for seasonal labour shortages (or, indeed, release of labour for more productive work).

Despite various efforts and measures, mechanized farming in Nigeria is still at a low Level. Corporate Nigeria (2011) asserted that, much of Nigeria’s agriculture is carried out according to traditional methods, with mechanization relatively rare. It is therefore, sad to note that, self-sufficiency in food is still a mirage as agriculture is still practiced largely at a subsistence level. However, there are challenges associated with agricultural mechanization and they include management of land resources, capital, labour, water resources, agricultural power and machinery. Others include management of storage facilities, livestock manure, inputs and many others. The above are challenges faced by the agricultural sector in Nigeria which need to be addressed by agricultural mechanization.

Food processing issues also affects the prospects of APP in Nigeria. It is estimated that about 20-40% of the yearly harvest is lost during processing. The primary cause is the lack of efficient harvesting techniques. Most rural farmers harvest crops by hand, instead of using machines. Also, storage methods are not generally up to standards. Most of the crops are lost to physical damage caused by insects, bacteria, or fungus. Nigeria must adopt modern technology in food storage and rural farmers must be trained accordingly (Ojong, 2018).

Modern agriculture has become so highly industrialized and dependent on energy. Mechanized farmers are very reliant on consistent power supply which has eluded us and has become a mirage for successive government to achieve. Now, much of the agricultural products we consume are produced in farms located far away and processed in another distant location before being imported via air, water or land. The whole of these processes requires a lot of power and fuel to keep food price low and affordable for the common man. However, with escalating prices of petroleum products, there have been calls for diversification to increased energy efficiency. One key alternative is biofuel and other agriculture-based energy production. This alternative will create more energy for food production particularly in developing nation and depending on how the process is managed may increase food insecurity (Matemilola and Elegbede, 2017).

3. CONCLUSION

The study interrogated the impact of inadequate funding of the agricultural promotion policy on food security in Nigeria under the present admonition. Evidence shown by this study indicates that a lot still has to be done in the agricultural sector in Nigeria. The financial commitment from government towards the agricultural sector is poor and inadequate making it difficult to achieve stipulated goals of agriculture in Nigeria. The structure of the Nigerian economy is highly disincentive to the agricultural sector given that huge priority is given to the oil sector because of the rent it accrues to the ruling elite. Even though the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari preaches diversification from oil to other sectors such as agriculture, there are still lapses in the implementation process. This is evident in the trend of national budgetary allocation to the sector. This has brought about shortfalls in the area of food production, processing and distribution in Nigeria. The farmers lack the wherewithal to produce enough food for domestic consumption. This has accounted for the rate at which food commodities are smuggled and imported into Nigeria. Therefore, if this shortfall is not checked, importation will always be a way out for Nigeria's teeming population to eat. The recent border closure will amount to nothing in Nigeria's economy if the local farmers still cannot access various agricultural technologies that will aid food production that will satisfy domestic consumption in Nigeria.

Two critical signs that demonstrate when a state is far from prioritizing a sector are: either the state is not listening or paying attention to the problem by way of evident political will to match all that the policy has presented or that the state is not channeling enough resources to that sector in order for the problem to be addressed in tandem with all that have been envisaged in the policy. Hence, the agricultural sector of Nigeria is yet to receive adequate prioritization from the government because the political will and enough resources are still channeled towards oil. However, until the aforementioned priority given to oil is given to agriculture, this policy and other subsequent agricultural policies are bound to fail. From the forgoing, the study recommends massive investment in the agricultural sector which will cover prioritization of rural infrastructure, incentivisation of agricultural technology, evolution of robust micro credit framework, adoption of targeted rural farmers financing policy and finally a demonstrable political will for diversification.

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