

<https://doi.org/10.59298/NIJCIAM/2024/4.1.323913>

Democratic Leadership and Sustainable Development Goal Two (Zero Hunger) in Enugu State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated democratic leadership and sustainable development goal two of zero hunger in Nigeria. The study is limited in scope to examining the impact of democratic leadership on sustainable development goal two (zero hunger) in Uzo Uwani, Nkanu West and Agwu Local Government Areas of Enugu State from 1999 to 2023. The specific objectives of the study included to; examine the impact of democratic leadership on food security in Uzo Uwani, Nkanu West and Agwu Local Government Areas of Enugu State, ascertain the impact of democratic leadership on food availability and determine the factors militating against sustainable development goal two in Uzo Uwani, Nkanu West and Agwu Local Government Areas of Enugu State. Two thousand seven hundred and thirty (2730) residents from the three selected local government areas in Enugu State served as the population of the study. A stratified proportion sampling was employed to obtain a suitable unit representative of the population. A questionnaire developed by the researcher served as the instrument for data collection. Data elicited from the respondents was analyzed using simple percentages, while the chi-square was used for testing of hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance, the findings of the study revealed that; democratic leadership has significant effect on food security and production in Uzo Uwani, Nkanu West and Agwu Local Government Areas of Enugu State, the factors militating against sustainable development goal two (zero hunger) in Uzo Uwani, Nkanu West and Agwu Local Government Areas of Enugu State include; corruption, bad governance, inadequate capital for food production, and none adaptation of mechanized farming. Based on the findings; the following recommendations were made; government should endeavor to make adequate fund available for the acquisition of fertilizers, improved farm implements, improved technology by farmers, farmers should from time to time be educated on the use of improved seedlings and adoption of mechanized farming, government should make loans easily accessible for production of food across the country.

Keywords: Democratic leadership, Food Security, Food Production and Food Availability

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development Goals (SDGs), otherwise known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity, and enable people to realize their full potential, building self-confidence, dignity and fulfillment [1]. It should equally liberate people from the ills of want, ignorance, deprivation and exploitation; and correct existing imbalances and injustices in the society [2]. This people-driven approach of development involves the judicious as well as full utilization of all available resources and the full participation of the people in community development. Sustainable development is also known as the Agenda 2030, which were agreed in 2015 by the UN General Assembly [3]. Sustainable development goals were adopted by all UN Member States, while 2030 was set as the deadline for achieving them. Unlike other Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which they succeed, the SDGs cover more ground, with wider ambitions to address inequalities, climate change, economic growth, decent jobs, cities, industrialization, oceans, ecosystems, energy, sustainable consumption and production, peace, and justice [4]. The SDGs are also universal, and applying to all countries, whereas the MDGs had only been intended for action in developing countries. Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future [5]. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are urgent calls for action by all countries - developed and

developing - in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth [6]. To achieve Sustainable Development there is a need to have zealous and democratic leaders that are determined to bring development. Leadership is the process whereby one individual influences other group members toward the attainment of defined group, or organizational goals. Leadership is a one way process, in which followers passively respond to what a leader does, or what a leader is, which tend to over simplify the processes at work [7]. Democratic leadership is a system of governance where every adult has equal chances of voting and being voted for without being intimidated or dissuaded by the pecuniary power of his opponents. Therefore democracy is based on the principles of government by the people, where people govern themselves, participate in making the crucial decisions that structure their lives and determine the faith of their society [8]. Though this participation takes a number of forms but the most common form of democratic participation is the act of voting [9]. The true nature of democratic leadership was spelt out by Abraham Lincoln as cited in [6] as government of the people, by the people and for the people. This informed us that democratic leadership links government to the people and this link can be forged in a number of ways; government of, by and for the people. In this case, democratic leadership could mean the strict application of the principle of majority rule. Democratic leadership in essence “says no to inequality, injustice, coercions, dictatorship and above all, all practices that reduce the happiness and well-being of the masses of the populace [6]. Other major features of modern democracy include individual freedom which entitled citizens to the liberty and responsibility of shaping their own career and conducting their own affairs and education. Hence the growth of sustainable development requires a number of indispensable leadership factors as posited by [3], such as patriotism, enlightenment, free and fair elections, responsive and accountable governance and respect for human dignity, justice and freedom. Therefore Nigeria should strive to enthrone efficient and effective democratic leadership on permanent basis in order to ensure the attainment of sustainable development goal in Nigeria as Nigeria was among the 193 countries of the UN General Assembly that adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September, 2015, following the expiration of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, the major course of Nigeria’s underdevelopment is basically attributed to poor leadership and bad governance, which posits as a challenge in achieving sustainable development goal in Nigeria [8]. On the other hand, past and present government in Nigeria had made tremendous effort towards the achievement of sustainable development goal two of zero hunger, and this is evident in the government initiation of programs such as operation feed the nation, and numerous others, yet the country’s own domestic food production is far from being able to meet her demand for food with the increasing population [7]. It is based on this foregoing background that the researcher wishes to conduct an empirical study on democratic leadership and sustainable development goal two in Nigeria. The overall objective of the study is to examine democratic leadership and sustainable goal two (zero hunger) in Enugu State. Specifically the objectives of the study include to; examine the impact of democratic leadership on food security in the three selected local government areas in Enugu State and to evaluate the effect of democratic leadership on food availability in the three selected local government areas; Uzo Uwani, Nkanu West and Agwu Local Government Area of Enugu State in Enugu State. The study is limited in scope to examining the impact of democratic leadership on sustainable development goal two (zero hunger) in Uzo Uwani, Nkanu West and Agwu Local Government Area of Enugu State from 1999 to 2023. The study covers, the impact of democratic leadership on food security in Uzo uwani local government of Enugu State, the impact of democratic leadership on food availability in Uzo uwani local government area of Enugu State.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria is blessed with rich fertile land suitable for cultivation of both cash and food crops. She has rich vegetation cover which should provide feeds for rearing of farm animals. In an ideal situation agricultural produce should be surplus in the country and readily available to the end consumers. However, a critical examination of the area reveals scarcity of food as most agricultural products found in the country are still imported from other countries, notwithstanding the federal government’s efforts to have sufficient food production. This is an indication from all ramifications that there is low production of food in the area. Nigeria is seriously threatened by food insecurity and this is evident on the scarcity of some essential food commodities, high cost of food commodity. Food production in Nigeria has not met the demand with the increasing population, irrespective of government efforts to boost food production in the country. Frequent occurrence of crisis witnessed in Nigeria in recent times, has worsen the situation as this had left adverse effects on food security and socio economic development of the people. Most families in Nigeria still found it difficult to meet up with the essential needs of feeding, clothing and shelter. It is based on these observable problems confronting the achievement of sustainable development goal two of zero hunger in Nigeria and most especially in Enugu State that rose the researcher interest to examine democratic leadership and sustainable development goal (zero hunger) in Enugu Stat from 1999 to 2023.

LITERATURE REVIEW Sustainable Development Goal

The **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** or **Global Goals** are a collection of seventeen interlinked objectives designed to serve as a "shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future." (Isnaeni, et al, 2022) The short titles of the 17 SDGs are: No poverty (SDG 1), Zero hunger (SDG 2), Good health and well-being (SDG 3), Quality education (SDG 4), Gender equality (SDG 5), Clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), Affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), Industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9), Reduced inequalities (SDG 10), Sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), Climate action (SDG 13), Life below water (SDG 14), Life on land (SDG 15), Peace, justice, and strong institutions (SDG 16), and Partnerships for the goals (SDG 17). The SDGs emphasize the interconnected environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainable development by putting sustainability at their center [8]. In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) created the SDGs as part of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. This agenda sought to design a new global development framework, replacing the Millennium Development Goals, which were completed that same year [8]. These goals were formally articulated and adopted in a UNGA resolution known as the **2030 Agenda**, often informally referred to as **Agenda 2030** [6]. On 6 July 2017, the SDGs were made more actionable by a UNGA resolution that identifies specific targets for each goal and provides indicators to measure progress. Most targets are to be achieved by 2030, although some have no end date. There are cross-cutting issues and synergies between the different goals; for example, for SDG 13 on climate action, the IPCC sees robust synergies with SDGs 3 (health), 7 (clean energy), 11 (cities and communities), 12 (responsible consumption and production) and 14 (oceans). On the other hand, critics and observers have also identified trade-offs between the goals, such as between ending hunger and promoting environmental sustainability [9]. Furthermore, concerns have arisen over the high number of goals (compared to the eight Millennium Development Goals), leading to compounded trade-offs, a weak emphasis on environmental sustainability, and difficulties tracking qualitative indicators. The SDGs are monitored by the UN (United Nations) High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), an annual forum held under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Council. However, the HLPF comes with its own set of problems due to a lack of political leadership and divergent national interests. To facilitate monitoring of progress on SDG implementation, the online SDG Tracker was launched in June 2018 to present all available data across all indicators. The COVID-19 pandemic had serious negative impacts on all 17 SDGs in 2020. A scientific assessment of the political impacts of the SDGs found in 2022 that the SDGs have only had limited *transformative political impact* thus far. At the very least, they have affected the way actors understand and communicate about sustainable development.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Two (Zero Hunger)

Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2 or Global Goal 2) aims to achieve "zero hunger". It is one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations in 2015. The official wording is: "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture". (United Nation, 2015) SDG 2 highlights the "complex inter-linkages between food security, nutrition, rural transformation and sustainable agriculture" [6]. According to the United Nations, there are around 690 million people who are hungry, which accounts for slightly less than 10 percent of the world population. One in every nine people goes to bed hungry each night, including 20 million people currently at risk of famine in South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen and Nigeria. SDG 2 has eight targets and 14 indicators to measure progress [7]. The five *outcome targets* are: ending hunger and improving access to food; ending all forms of malnutrition; agricultural productivity; sustainable food production systems and resilient agricultural practices; and genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals; investments, research and technology. The three *means of implementation targets* [7], include: addressing trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets and food commodity markets and their derivatives. Under-nutrition has been on the rise since 2015, after falling for decades. This majorly results from the various stresses in food systems that include; climate shocks, the locust crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. Those threats indirectly reduce the purchasing power and the capacity to produce and distribute food, which affects the most vulnerable populations and furthermore has reduced their accessibility to food [5]. The world is not on track to achieve Zero Hunger by 2030. "The signs of increasing hunger and food insecurity are a warning that there is considerable work to be done to make sure the world "leaves no one behind" on the road towards a world with zero hunger. It is unlikely there will be an end to malnutrition in Africa by 2030. Data from 2019 showed that "globally, 1 in 9 people are undernourished, the vast majority of whom live in developing countries. Under nutrition causes wasting or severe wasting of 52 million children worldwide

Concept of food security

In the early 1970s, a time of global food crises, the concept of food security initially focused on ensuring food availability and the price stability of basic foods, which was due to the extreme volatility of agricultural commodity

prices and turbulence in the currency and energy markets at that time [8]. The occurrence of famine, hunger and food crises required a definition of food security which recognized the critical needs and behavior of potentially vulnerable and affected people [4]. The concept of food security was defined then at the World Food Conference in 1974 as “the availability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices” [8]. This definition stressed understandably the need for increased production since protein-energy deficiency in 1970 was believed to affect more than 25% of the global population.

Democratic leadership and food security and availability

Food security is a subcategory of human rights. Thus, in studying food security, it is crucial to understand what human rights are and what they entail. Concern for human rights and recognition of the importance to protect people’s human rights emerged in 1948 with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Declaration states that *all* people regardless of race, gender, economic status, and location have the natural, God-given right to freedom, equality, and other such rights [5]. Specific rights are outlined in the articles of the

Declaration. Most significant to this study is Article 25, which highlights the right to food—and therefore food security—as a human right that should be attainable for all people. Article 25 is as follows:

Article 25.

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, *including food* [my emphasis], clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948)

Similarly, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1966, states that all of mankind should have equal rights to economic, social, and cultural rights. The ICESCR is broken into five parts consisting of 31 articles. The Covenant and its articles emphasize the importance of equal human rights for all people and states that “human rights” includes self-determination, work and just working conditions, adequate living conditions, physical and mental health, and education. Most applicable to this study is Article 11 of Part III. Article 11 proclaims that all people should have the right to an adequate standard of living (discussed in more depth in “Food Security” below). To date, 160 countries and territories have signed and ratified the Covenant. Nigeria is one of these countries (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966). Spanning both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the ICESCR, the right to adequate food is emphasized as being a requirement to achieving adequate health, which every democratic nation must safeguard.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Uzo Uwani Local Government Area, Nkanu West Local Government Area and Agwu Local Government Area of Enugu State. The research design adopted for the study is descriptive survey research design, while two thousand seven hundred and thirty residents from the three selected Local Government Area in Enugu State served as the population for the study. A stratified sampling techniques was employed to obtain a suitable representative of the population as follows; Uzo Uwani Local Government Area (89) respondents, Nkanu West Local Government Area (97) respondents, and Agwu Local Government area (87) respondents. A questionnaire developed by the researcher served as the instrument for data collection. Data elicited from the respondents were analyzed using simple percentage, while chi-square was used for testing of hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This is the statistical presentation of the respondents' view to the research question.

Research Question 1

Table 1: Impact of democratic leadership on food security in Uwani, Nkanu West and Agwu local government areas of Enugu State

Democratic leadership and food security in Enugu State	Frequency	Percent
Democratic leadership ensures the availability of fund for production of food crops	69	25.27
Democratic leadership ensures the protection of baby industries	61	22.34
Democratic leadership discourages the importation of food crops	77	28.20
Democratic leadership encourage the exporting of agricultural produce	66	24.17
Total	273	100.0

Source: Researcher, 2024

From the finding of table 1, 25.27% of the respondents were of the opinion that democratic leadership ensures the availability of fund for production of food crops, 22.34% of the respondents were of the opinion that democratic leadership ensures the protection of baby industries, 28.20% of the respondents concurred that democratic leadership discourages the importation of food crops, while 24.17% of the respondents agreed that democratic leadership encourage the exportation of agricultural produce. The findings of the table therefore revealed that democratic leadership had significant effect on food security in the study areas.

Research Question 2

Table 2: Impact of democratic leadership on food availability in Uwani, Nkanu West and Agwu local government areas of Enugu State

Impact of democratic leadership on food availability in the study areas	Frequency	Percent
Democratic leadership ensures that agricultural surplus are bought from the farmers to resell to the general public at a subsidized rate during scarcity	50	18.31%
Democratic leadership setup agencies that train farmers on modern storage techniques which helps make food readily available	61	22.34%
Democratic leadership makes loans readily available to farmers, thus make food readily available	84	30.76%
Democratic leadership sponsor entrepreneurship acquisition skills which are beneficial to farmers	78	28.57%
Total	273	100.0

Source: Researcher, 2024

From the findings of table 2, 18.31% of the respondents were of the opinion that democratic leadership ensures that agricultural surplus are bought from the farmers to resell to the general public at a subsidized rate during scarcity, 22.34% of the respondents were of the opinion that democratic leadership setup agencies that train farmers on modern storage techniques which helps make food readily available, 30.76% of the respondents concurred that democratic leadership makes loans readily available to farmers, thus making food readily available, and finally 28.57% of the respondents agreed that democratic leadership sponsor entrepreneurship skills acquisition which are beneficial to farmers. The findings of the table therefore revealed that democratic leadership has significant impact on food availability in the study areas.

Test of Hypotheses

The hypotheses were tested using the chi-square statistical tool

Hypothesis I

H0: There is no significant relationship between democratic leadership and food security in the study areas?

Table 3: testing hypothesis I

Fulani activities and food production in Enugu State	Frequency	Percent
Democratic leadership ensures the availability of fund for production of food crops	69	25.27
Democratic leadership ensures the protection of baby industries	61	22.34
Democratic leadership discourages the importation of food crops	77	28.20
Democratic leadership encourage the exporting of agricultural produce	66	24.17
Total	273	100.0

Source: Researcher, 2023

Table 4: Chi Square table

O	E	(O-e)	(O-e)²	(O-e)² E
69	54.6	14.4	207.36	3.79
61	54.6	6.4	40.96	0.75
77	54.6	22.4	501.76	9.19
66	54.6	11.4	129.96	2.38
273				16.11

Table value = 5.991, calculated value = 5.66

Decision: Since the calculated value (16.11) is greater than the table value (5.99), the H₀ (null hypothesis) is rejected. This implies that democratic leadership has significant impact on food in the study areas.

Hypothesis II

H₀: democratic leadership has no significant impact on food availability in the study areas

Table 5: Testing hypothesis II

Impact of democratic leadership on food availability in the study area	Frequency	Percent
Democratic leadership ensures that agricultural surplus are bought from the farmers to resell to the general public at a subsidized rate during scarcity	50	18.31%
Democratic leadership setup agencies that train farmers on modern storage techniques which helps make food readily available	61	22.34%
Democratic leadership makes loans readily available to farmers, thus make food readily available	84	30.76%
Democratic leadership sponsor entrepreneurship acquisition skills which are beneficial to farmers	78	28.57%
Total	273	100.0

Source: Researcher, 2023

Table 6: Chi Square table

O	E	(O-e)	(O-e)²	(O-e)² E
50	54.6	4.6	21.16	0.38
61	54.6	6.4	40.96	0.75
84	54.6	29.4	864.36	15.83
78	54.6	23.4	547.56	10
273				25.85

Table value = 5.991, calculated value = 0.47

Decision: Since the calculated value (25.84) is greater than the table value (5.99), the H_0 (null hypothesis) is rejected. This means that democratic leadership has significant negative effect on food availability in the study areas.

Summary of the findings

1. Democratic leadership has significant impact on food security in the study area
2. Democratic leadership has significant impact on food availability in the study areas

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the finding of table 1, 25.27% of the respondents were of the opinion that democratic leadership ensures the availability of fund for production of food crops, 22.34% of the respondents were of the opinion that democratic leadership ensures the protection of baby industries, 28.20% of the respondents concurred that democratic leadership discourages the importation of food crops, while 24.17% of the respondents agreed that democratic leadership encourage the exportation of agricultural produce. The findings of the table therefore revealed that democratic leadership had significant effect on food security in the study areas. From the findings of table 2, 18.31% of the respondents were of the opinion that democratic leadership ensures that agricultural surplus are bought from the farmers to resell to the general public at a subsidized rate during scarcity, 22.34% of the respondents were of the opinion that democratic leadership setup agencies that train farmers on modern storage techniques which helps make food readily available, 30.76% of the respondents concurred that democratic leadership makes loans readily available to farmers, thus making food readily available, and finally 28.57% of the respondents agreed that democratic leadership sponsor entrepreneurship skills acquisition which are beneficial to farmers. The findings of the table therefore revealed that democratic leadership has significant impact on food availability in the study areas.

CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study; the study draws the following conclusions democratic leadership has significant effect on food security in Enugu State, this therefore implies that to ensure food security, the government needs to be responsible and responsive to the people and only a democratic leadership that will be responsible and responsible for its citizenry. Also recent crisis witnessed in Nigeria poses a great threat to food security and sustainable development goal two of zero hunger in Nigeria. All hands must therefore, be on desk to realize sustainable development goal two of zero hunger in Nigeria, because a society bedeviled with crisis will always result to loss of lives, property and destruction of farm and stored crops. This in most cases has caused scarcity and high cost of food items, as farmers are afraid to go back to their farm. If nothing is done to address the situation it will lead to severe famine and none realization of sustainable development goal two of zero hunger in Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion draw, the following recommendations are therefore made;

1. government should endeavor to make adequate fund available for the acquisition of fertilizers, improved farm implements, improved technology by farmers,
2. farmers should from time to time be educated on the use of improved seedling and adoption of mechanized farming,
3. government should provide adequate and efficient security to checkmate the ugly incidence of crisis, insecurities and insurgencies which pose as threat to food security and national development

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CITE AS: Anikeze Nnaemeka Hillary and Nkiruka Celestina Udentia (2024). Democratic Leadership and Sustainable Development Goal Two (Zero Hunger) in Enugu State, Nigeria. NEWPORT INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CURRENT ISSUES IN ARTS AND MANAGEMENT, 4(1): 32-39. <https://doi.org/10.59298/NIJCIAM/2024/4.1.323913>