

THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL RULERS IN COMBATING FOOD SCARCITY IN RURAL NIGERIA

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Abstract

Food scarcity remains a pressing socio-economic challenge in Nigeria, despite various government interventions aimed at boosting agricultural productivity. Many rural communities continue to suffer from inadequate food supply due to flooding, insecurity, limited access to farm inputs, and rural-urban migration. This study examines how traditional rulers, such as chiefs, emirs, and village heads, can play an active role in combating food scarcity within their jurisdictions. Although they are not part of the formal government structure, traditional rulers possess deep-rooted authority, moral influence, and local knowledge, positioning them as key actors in community mobilization and food security initiatives. The study explores their contributions in areas such as land allocation, conflict resolution, youth mobilization, and promotion of traditional food storage methods. Findings reveal that the active involvement of traditional rulers enhances peace, cooperation, and participation in farming activities, leading to increased food production and reduced rural conflicts. The study concludes that integrating traditional institutions into state and local agricultural policies can strengthen food security efforts and foster sustainable rural development.