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A study of the participation of the ministries of agriculture, Northcentral zone in the planning and implementation of the2014 national security strategyon food security in Nigeria

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Abstract

The need to secure participations of all stakeholders in the formulations of national security strategy for States cannot be overemphasized. It was against this background that this study adopted Stakeholder Model of Implementation Theory to interrogate whether the Ministries of Agriculture in the North Central Zone, Nigeria participated in the planning and implementation of the 2014 National Security Strategy (NSS) on food security. The study adopted the survey research design where all the Ministries of Agriculture were selected and questionnaire administered to them. Analyses of the collated responses were through descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and ANOVA using the IBM SPSS 26. Based on the test results that emanated from this study, the study concluded that the Ministries of Agriculture in the North Central Zone were not involved in the planning and implementation of the 2014 NSS. The study recommended that the involvement of relevant stakeholders at both the federal and state levelswill be very beneficial and in line with modern trends of collective participation.

Keywords: Participation; Planning; Stakeholder Model of Implementation Theory; Implementation

1   Introduction

In November, 2014, the first National Security Strategy of Nigeria was launched by then President Goodluck Jonathan. In the Foreword to the *National Security Strategy* (NSS), 2014, the President stated, unambiguously, that "National Security is a collective responsibility and process of which every citizen is a part and to which they must continue to subscribe for maximum protection and common good" (NNS, 2014, p.ii). The president's statement which seemed to prioritise 'protection' appeared to have inadvertently tilted to the widely held but contentious assumption that national security has to do with 'protection', which function the military, intelligence and law enforcement agencies have appropriated as theirs.

Such submission holds reference to "common good" that should have been prioritised as it is more all-embracing. Security, from which national security is derived, should be the welfare and well-being of citizens on the basis of which governments are established. In the case of Nigeria, the existence of local, state and federal governments is to provide and ensure the welfare and well-being of their citizen as stated in the 1999 Constitution (as amended) that the security and welfare of the citizen should be the primary purpose of government (Section 14(2)(b). It is essentially the failures in this key responsibility that have led to the existence and continuing escalation of criminalities in the form of kidnapping, banditry, armed robbery and separatist agitations. Unfortunately, efforts of governments are overly concentrated on using the military, intelligence and law enforcement agencies to deal with criminalities while ignoring or paying scant attention to reasons which have given rise to these criminalities (Ashinze et al., 2023), such as lack of

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employment, lack of good medical care and housing, poor educational infrastructure coupled with over 20 million out-of-school children.

Of the thirty themes in the *NSS*, 2014, food security comes as the number eight theme. It is noteworthy that the first two themes prioritised national defence and counter-terrorism which are the province of the armed forces while food which is at the heart of the welfare of the people came as the eight. Adama et al. (2022) in submission opine that failure of government to securitise infrastructural deficit endangers food security across boards and pushes the nation extensively into food insecurity basket. Thus the need to prioritised food and other sectors above national defence and counter terrorism as projected by the National Security Strategy cannot be overemphasized

On food security, there was recognition that apart from about 170 million citizens, Nigeria has a productive physical environment for agriculture which should make the country a leading producer of agricultural products. However, according to the *NSS* (2014), the country was producing less than its capacity owing to different challenges which it set out to reduce through investment in irrigation infrastructure facilities and raw materials for agro-allied industries. The *Strategy* equally, aimed to reduce the risk and uncertainty associated with seasonal rain-fed agriculture which was predominant in the country. However, the specific ways on which the goals will be achieved were not indicated.

The *NSS* 2014 food security strategy implied that a situation analysis was conducted to determine the current state of food and agricultural raw materials production after which the envisioned future and how to get there were determined. A part of situational analysis involves discussions and participation of critical stakeholders. According to Schmidt et al. (2009) and Beynon (2017) to engage with stakeholders from the early stage of strategic planning is very advisable not only to get their views but to obtain buy-in.

The thirty themes with defined security strategies in the *NSS* 2014 will imply that there were various stakeholders who will be interested in one or more of the themes. In regard to strategies on food security, farmers, households, agricultural processors, input supplies, ministries of agriculture and legislators are some of the stakeholders.

In this study, attention focused on States' Ministries of Agriculture in the North Central Zone, where experts in agriculture who are involved in the planning and execution of agricultural policies for all year round farming in various states are active. The main objective of this study is to ascertain the involvement of Ministries of Agriculture in the Northcentral Zone in the planning and implementation of the food strategy aspect of the *NSS 2014.* The Zone comprises six states of Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa, Niger, Kogi and Kwara.

The following hypotheses were tested:

- H_{a1}**:** The Ministries of Agriculture in the Northcentral were involved in the planning and   implementation of the 2014 *National Security Strategy*
- H_{01}:The Ministries of Agriculture in the Northcentral Zone were not involved in the planning and implementation of the 2014 *National Security Strategy*

2   Literature Review

2.1   Conceptual Clarification

2.1.1   *Participation*

Participation presents a sense of involvement in a process, programme or project. Such involvement creates a buy-in which will be an essential success factor. According to Buchy et al. (2000), participation is a move that provides for a bottom-up approach as distinct from the top-down strategies which were prominent in early development initiatives. To White (1981), participation is the involvement of local people in making decisions on development projects or in their implementation. Equally, participation is a process which affords those with a legitimate interest in a project with the opportunity to influence decisions which affect them (Eyben&Ladbury, 1995). In this study, participation is seen as the involvement of relevant stakeholders in the design and implementation of projects and programmes in which they are policy initiators, advisors, implementers or beneficiaries.

2.2   Planning

In the view of Obaji and Saganuwan (2018), planning is one of the basic functions of management that bridges the gap from where an organisation is and where it wants to be through drawing out a future course of actions for attainment

of pre-determined goals. They added that planning is typically classified into strategic planning, tactical planning and operational planning. Strategic planning is handled by management, tactical planning by middle level managers and operational planning by those in the frontline with responsibility for actual execution. At the level of the *NSS* 2014 on food security, for instance, the ministries of agriculture in the six states in North Central Zone and their staff should belong to the tactical planning level.

Planning is defined in this study as a set of deliberate actions undertaken in the design of a clear pathway to the realisation of an objective, a goal, programme or project in a stated future date.

2.3 Implementation

According to May (2013) implementation should be understood as a process, a continuous and interactive accomplishment, rather than as a final outcome. To May et al. (2007) implementation can be seen as a deliberately initiated process, where agents aspire to bring into operation new or modified practices which have been institutionally sanctioned and are performed by themselves and other agents. When the legislature passes a law or a policy is approved by the executive, it becomes the responsibility of relevant government agencies to implement the law or policy.

In this study, implementation is situated as the process of carrying into effect a plan. It involves the execution of a plan. Those actions which are carried out to achieve the goals or objectives of a plan constitute the implementation of the plan.

2.4 Literature review

2.4.1 Participation

In the view of Storey (1999) participation represents a movement from top-down strategies which dominated in early development initiatives to more locally sensitive methodologies. The importance of participation grew out of recognition that everyone needs to be involved in development decisions, implementation and benefits if the world's poor are to stop suffering (Holcombe, 1995). A top-down approach rarely seeks or obtains the buy-in of even those who are to implement a plan or a policy.

Participation is "the involvement of intended beneficiaries in the planning, design, implementation and subsequent maintenance of the development intervention. It means that people are mobilized, manage resources and make decisions that affect their lives" (Price & Mylius (1991). This is not the typical top-down approach. Rather beneficiaries are involved right from conception to delivery and maintenance. Additionally, while involvement of beneficiaries is very important, the government agencies responsible for delivering the public good have to be equally involved all through the stages of conception to delivery.

Consultation differs from participation. According to Coakes (1999), a common misinterpretation results when there is a failure to differentiate between consultation and participation. Sarkissian et al. (1997) explained that community participation shows an active role, involving significant control over decision while consultation is seen as sharing information and not necessarily power. Claridge (2004) in discussing participation reviewed its evolution, various definitions, seeming misapplication and importance. However, the discussion on participation is seen from the prism of a community which is to benefit from a development project. This approach can be appropriate in a one-tier governance system unlike in Nigeria with a three-tier system of federal, state and local government. Where the federal government (which is the central government) wishes to implement a project in a locality, it will be more beneficial to allow the participation of relevant agencies of government at the state and local government levels.

Brodie et al. (2009) in their review of literature on understanding participation takes participation as taking part in social and civic activities. They looked at public, social and individual participation. By public participation they looked at the involvement of individuals with structures and institutions of government while social participation meant collective activities which individuals are involved in their everyday lives. The choices and actions of individuals as part of their daily life which indicate the type of society they prefer to live in are seen as individual participation. Obviously, the authors were concerned with participation of individuals in their communities. The authors did not examine participation of relevant state government officials in the planning and execution of projects being spear-headed by the federal authorities.

Oluwadamiloa and Siyaka (2021) in their assessment of the institutionalisation of what the then Dr. Mimiko as governor of Ondo state called Infrastructure, Institution and Industry (3'I's) Initiatives which were geared towards the rural development of the state, found that people were given the opportunity to participate in governance and the

development process. People participated through identifying their peculiar development needs and priorities without imposition. They opined that such an initiative enabled citizens to be active participants rather than mere passive recipients in the development process. In concluding, the authors stated that rural dwellers should participate in all stages of development planning in order to ensure proper integration of projects to the needs of the communities. The study captures participation at the state and local communities' level but not participation on projects initiated from the federal government.

Mela and Bello (2023) were very much interested in community participation. They opined that when a community participates in development projects in their area, they will assist in identifying major issues which need to be considered to assist in making the project a success. The authors reviewed different approaches to participation, different ways in which communities can participate, efforts made by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) towards community participation, challenges to, and benefits of, community participation. The authors concluded that even with the birth of democratic governments, communities should continue to organise themselves for development projects as non-participation has a way of undermining community development. They therefore recommended that a bottom-up approach to development planning and execution will be effective for community participatory development. Participation by state level officials in federal government initiated projects was not examined.

This equally applies to Omoruyi (2016) and Brown and Wocha (2017). The focus was on community participation in development programmes. We agree with the bottom-up approach to development planning and execution as recommended by Mela and Bello (2023) and the 3'I's initiative of Governor Mimiko which allowed citizens to participate through the identification of their development needs and priorities. These align with our conception of participation as involving relevant stakeholders in the design and implementation of projects and programmes as policy initiators, advisors, implementers or beneficiaries.

2.4.2 Planning

Planning is a future-oriented activity. According to Elliot (2018) it is a process for setting goals, finding and assessing options and developing strategies to achieve desired outcomes. According to him, the goals of planning are to improve the efficiency of outcomes, enhance social welfare, widen the range of choice and enrich civic engagement and governance. It is in the fourth goal that participation finds a justification. Similarly, Forester (1989) argued that a most important fact in determining whether a plan will be successful is the extent to which it is supported by the people who will be affected by it. Arnstein, (1969) stated that the most effective plans are those that are developed with the full participation of all stakeholders.

According to the management guru, Drucker (1954), the planning process involves five steps which are defining the objective, analyzing the situation, developing alternative courses of action, selecting the best course of action and implementing the plan. To Porter (1980) planning entails three steps which are defining the industry, analyzing the competitive forces and developing a competitive strategy. To Adedeji (2013), strategic planning is essential for public sector in Nigeria in order to achieve their objectives and goals. Omole (2012) states that public participation in planning in Nigeria is still at a low level due to a number of challenges such as lack of awareness, trust and capacity all of which need to be addressed.

Kaplan and Norton (1996) developed the Balanced Scorecard (BSC), a framework for strategic planning and performance management. The main themes of the BSC are a balanced framework that measures performance from four perspectives of financial, customer, internal business processes and learning and growth which ensures that focus is not limited to financial performance; alignment of activities of an organisation around its vision and strategy; a communication tool that helps to communicate an organisation's strategy to all employees; and a continuous improvement framework that aids in learning and growth through regular review of the BSC.

Planning for Nigeria is a complex endeavour as a result of the three-tier administrative structure of the country of federal, states and local governments. At the federal level, the management should be the President, as the chief executive officer of the country, working with his cabinet and advisers with responsibility to carry out strategic plans. The top echelons of federal ministries, departments and agencies should be responsible for tactical planning while the middle and lower level cadres will handle operational plans, being in the frontline. With a strategic plan for the whole country, the state governor, as chief executive of the state, his cabinet and advisers, will be responsible to develop a tactical plan, flowing from the national strategic plan, while the state ministries, departments and agencies will develop operational plans as are relevant to them. Similarly, at the local government level, the executive chairman and his supervisory councilors should prepare the tactical plan, drawing from the national strategic plan, while their various

departments will have responsibility to develop their relevant operational plans. Unfortunately, requests for interaction with the Office of National Security Adviser were not obliged.

2.4.3 Implementation

Implementation is the process of turning a plan into action or reality. In reference to strategic planning, implementation is the process of putting a strategic plan into action. This will entail making available necessary resources, assigning responsibilities, involving and communicating with stakeholders and tracking progress. A government, for instance, implements a new policy by passing new laws, creating new regulations and institutions and providing resources for new programmes.

Kaplan and Norton (1996) initially developed the balanced scorecard (BSC) as a performance management system to assist organisations to translate their vision and strategy into action. Apart from providing a balanced approach to performance management, the BSC facilitates the cascading of strategy down to all levels of the organisation, uses performance measures to track progress towards achieving the organisation's goals and helps to provide feedback on how the organisation is performing against its goals. The 2014 *National Security Strategy* neither provided how the selected sector strategies would be operationalised nor those to be held responsible for execution. Equally there were no performance measures with which to track progress or provide feedback.

Porter (1996) describes how organisations can improve performance through focusing on their strategy. He emphasises that organisations with a clear strategy are more likely to succeed than those that do not have and that organisations whose structure, processes and culture are aligned with their strategy are more likely to be successful than those that do not. Porter (1996) also opines that implementation is the key to success as the best strategy will not be successful if it is not effectively executed through having the right people in place, providing them with the right resources and creating a culture that supports execution. The 2014 *National Security Strategy* did not contain an explicit implementation strategy.

Bossidy and Charan (2002) provide a framework for improving execution of plans. They argue that execution is the key to success in business; that organisations should have a clear and concise strategy derived from their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in their environment and that is understood by everyone in the organisation. The authors equally emphasised on the need to have people who are talented, motivated and aligned with the organisations' goals to execute their strategy while ensuring that a culture of rewarding performance is in existence. Further insights provided by the authors are that execution is not just about doing things right but also about doing the right things; execution is a team work that requires the involvement of everyone in the organisation and execution is a continuous process. In our view, where security is conceptualised as welfare and well-being of the people, the execution of strategies intended to achieve it will very likely have an easy buy-in by most of the people.

Idoko (2010) examines the challenges and prospects of plan implementation in Nigeria. In his view, the main challenges to plan implementation in Nigeria are political instability, corruption and lack of resources while the prospects for plan implementation include increasing availability of data and the growing number of skilled professionals. Idoko (2010) opines that there is a need for a more holistic approach to plan implementation taking into account the political, economic and social context of the country. Importantly, he views the involvement of stakeholders in both the planning process and plan implementation as essential to success. Idoko (2010) equally recommends strengthening of political will, reducing corruption, providing better coordination and monitoring of plan implementation and making resources available. Though the nature of stakeholders was not indicated, involving government officials in all tiers of federal, state and local government is essential for the success of federally sponsored or initiated plans.

Okpanachi (2013) did a case study on the implementation of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) and stated that though it was a well-designed plan but it was ineffectively implemented. The study identified some of the causes of the poor implementation to include lack of a clear implementation plan, lack of coordination between government agencies and the lack of monitoring and evaluation. He equally mentioned the lack of clear commitment from political leaders to implementing the plan. The lack of coordination between government agencies may have resulted from their non-involvement in the development of the plan and the failure to clearly indicate their responsibilities in the plan implementation.

Inegbedion (2014) in his examination of issues with plan implementation in Nigeria, argues that lack of coordination, lack of accountability and lack of transparency inhibit successful plan implementation. He equally opined that plan implementation is equally challenged by the large size of the country and the diverse population. In our view if any plan is unsuccessfully delivered, it might not be attributable to the diverse population of the country. After all, China and

India, with diverse populations of 1.4billion each (World Population Review, 2023) have compelling records of excellence in plan implementations.

3 Theoretical Framework

3.1 Stakeholder Model of Implementation Theory

The stakeholder model of implementation theory is a conceptual framework that emphasises the importance of involving and considering various stakeholders in the process of implementing a particular policy, programme, or organisational change. The model emphasises that stakeholders are a key success factor in plan implementation. Stakeholder refers to "any person, group, or organisation that can place a claim on the organisation's attention, resources or output, or is affected by that output" (Bryson, 1995). To Freeman (1984), a stakeholder is "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives". Bryson (2004) argues that stakeholder participation is key for effective implementation as it provides expertise, reconciles conflicting interests, and builds support.

The stakeholder approach is more or less synonymous with a bottom-up approach as against the top-down approach. According to deLeon&deLeon (2002) scholars like Lipsky (1971 and 1980) and Hjern (1982; Hjern and Hull 1983) opined "that street level bureaucrats were the key to successful implementation". These scholars offered that implementation succeeded when those primarily affected were actively engaged in the planning and execution of these programmes. Herian et al. (2012) found higher public participation enhanced evaluations of procedural fairness in local governance while Yang (2007) empirically demonstrated the value of stakeholder empowerment in project implementation.

This study adopted the stakeholder model of implementation as it is an enhancer of successful implementation through addressing potential barriers, generating support and ensuring the relevance and sustainability of the implemented plans, programmes and policies.

4 Methodology

The study was carried out through a field survey using questionnaires with four points Likert Scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The questionnaires were administered to the Ministries of Agriculture in the six states of North Central Zone of Nigeria. The data collected were analyzed and findings discussed.

Table 1 Ministries of Agriculture

STATES	Ministry of Agriculture
Kogi	1
Kwara	1
Nasarawa	1
Niger	1
Benue	1
Plateau	1
TOTAL	6

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2023

4.1 Reliability and Validity Tests

The Cronbach's (1951) Coefficient Alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the several items summed in the total score. According to Nunnally & Bernstein (1994), and Francis (2001) a rule of thumb level of higher than 0.70, with a level as low as 0.60 being acceptable for new scales. The Cronbach's level of 1.00 obtained from the questions on involvement of States' Ministries of Agriculture in the planning and implementation of the 2014 *NSS* was deemed very good to determine the reliability of the measurements in this study. Content validity was tested through the exposure of the draft survey questionnaire to two academics and the study supervisor whose views were taken into consideration

in the final questionnaire. External validity was through the administration of the questionnaire to a purposive sample of the Ministries of Agriculture.

Table 2 Summary of Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach Alpha	Number of items
Involvement of States Ministries of Agriculture	1.0	2

Source: Extracted from SPSS Output, 2023

5 Results

A total of six (6) questionnaires were distributed to the ministries of agriculture in the six states of the North Central zone. All the questionnaires were retrieved, representing 100% response rate. The descriptive statistics in relation to the variable, involvement of states' ministries of agriculture, in the six states are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Descriptive statistics for Involvement of States Ministries of Agriculture (ISMA)

Involvement of States Ministries of Agriculture								
4= Strongly Agree (SA); 3 =Agree (A); 2= Disagree (D); 1= Strongly Disagree (SD)								
S/N	QUESTION	SA	A	D	SD	Std. Dev.	Mean	Total
1.	The Ministry of Agriculture was involved in the formulation of the 2014 National Security Strategy on food security (SMAF)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (50%)	3 (50%)	0.548	1.50	6
2.	The Ministry of Agriculture was involved in the implementation of the 2014 National Security Strategy on food security (SMAI)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (50%)	3 (50%)	0.548	1.50	6

Source: Extracted from SPSS Output, 2023

Respondents were asked questions on involvement of states' ministries of agriculture on a four-point Likert scale of agreement. 100% of the respondents disagreed that the ministries of agriculture were involved in the planning and implementation of the 2014 *National Security Strategy*. Equal mean of 1.50 attests to the high degree of disagreement of their involvement in the planning and implementation of the strategy.

In Table 4, we present results of correlations among variables in the study using the Pearson Correlations.

Table 4 Pearson Correlation

		TMAF	TMAI
TMAF	Peaerson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	6	
TMAI	Pearson Correlation	1.000**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	6	6
**. Correlation is very significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source: Extracted from SPSS Output, 2023

The Pearson correlation measured the strength of the linear relationship between the variables. With a value of 1.000, there existsa strong positive linear relationship on the variables.

5.1 Test of Hypothesis

The result of the Analyses of Variances using ANOVA showed that there is no variance within groups. This is as a result of the fact that both means are equal to 1.50.

5.2 Interpretation

There is no statistical difference between the means of State Ministries of Agriculture that were not involved in the formulation and those not involved in the implementation of the 2014 National Security Strategy on food security. Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis that State Ministries of Agriculture were not involved in the planning and implementation of the 2014 National Security Strategy on food security.

6 Discussion of Findings

The study's main objective was to ascertain the involvement of Ministries of Agriculture in the North Central Zone in the planning and implementation of the food security strategy of the 2014 *NSS*. From the outcome of the analyses of data and the test, the null hypothesis that the Ministries were not involved in the planning and implementation of the food security strategy of the 2014 NNS was accepted. Consequently, our result does not support the alternate hypothesisthat Ministries of Agriculture in the North Central Zone were involved in the planning and implementation of the food security strategy of the 2014 *NSS*.

7 Conclusions

The study concluded that Ministries of Agriculture in the North Central Zone were not involved in the planning and implementation of the 2014 *NSS* on food security strategy. The result does not cohere with the views of Bryson (2004) that stakeholder participation is key for effective implementation of a plan as it reconciles conflicting interests and builds support. The result is also not in sync with the views of scholars like Lipsky (1971 and 1980) and Hjern (1982; Hjernand Hull 1983) who opined, according to deLeon&dLeon (2002, 470), "that street level bureaucrats were the key to successful implementation".

Recommendations

It is recommended that going forward the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) should involve major stakeholders in the planning, formulation and implementation of sector specific security strategies. In the specific case of food security strategies, it makes a lot of sense to involve the Federal Ministry of Agriculture along with all the states Ministries of Agriculture. Such stakeholder involvement and collaboration will assist a great deal in the formulation and implementation of beneficial strategies.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

There is no conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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