

FOOD CRISIS AND INCOME MANAGEMENT AMONG WORKING MOTHERS IN SELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

The recent increase in food prices have drastically reduced access to food for many people especially working mothers who spent 50-80 % percent of personal income on food. The consequence of this is that families are facing immediate hunger needs. This paper aims to examine food crisis and income management among working mothers in Anambra State Nigeria. The purposes of the study were to identify income management level of working mothers, examine the factors that influence income management and food crisis, examine the causes of food crisis, assess the problems of income management and food crisis and identify ways of enhancing income management and eradicate food crisis. The study was a descriptive survey design. A sample of 30 working mothers was drawn from five Local Government Areas of Anambra State using systematic sampling techniques. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The data was analyzed using mean and standard deviation statistics also t-test was used to analyze the hypothesis stated. The findings revealed that increase in prices of food, income level, government instability etc. were factors that influence food crisis because they had mean of 3.33, 2.177 and 3.3 respectively. Based on the findings some recommendation were made as encouraging/ engaging in farm work by working mother and mothers should engage in craft production and other things that could help generate additional income to them rather than depending solely of their salaries.

Keywords: Food crisis, Working mother's food

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Background to the Study

Food crisis had its origin in the rising world market prices of food commodities, particularly rice, maize, wheat, soya etc. resulting in an increase in the cost of food imports and in the percentage of household budgets devoted to food. The rising prices of foodstuffs had repercussions on local markets and fueled unprecedented increase in number of hunger people. (Golay, 2010). Individuals/families work to earn money. When goods and services are delivered money is expected. As one is paid for services rendered, income is received and its further spent to acquired needs and wants. When it is not properly spent one problem or the other sets in. therefore, income could be defined as money an individual receives in exchange for goods and services or through investing capital. Income is consumed to take care of daily expenditures. People receive income from as salary or wages earned from jobs, investments, pension etc. But the major sources of income for mothers who work in most Local Government Areas of Anambra State are salaries. Working mothers spend this money on necessities like food housing transportation, etc. to achieve these needs calls for sufficient utilization and proper management of the income for families to live a full-rounded life. Especially in food consumption which is a basic need for the family.

Therefore, income management is a tool in supporting individuals and families to make adequate and proper utilization of earning more especially working mother in Local government Areas in Anambra State. The workings are those that depend mainly on their salaries for feeding the family. There are no other sources of income for these mothers. These mother are those who work as administrative staff such as cleaners, clerical officers, heads of units etc. From the Local Government pay roll statistics these women are the least paid (LGP Register, 2016). Since food is major basic need for the family these women must face their families thus, must spend so much on food.

Food is one of the primary needs of the individuals and families because of the individuals and families because of its basic necessities to life. Due to food's centrality to human existence it remains the most important of all the needs. Therefore, when there is not enough food available hunger, death sets in (David's 2009). Food crisis is a combination of decline in stocks of primary or staple food produce (essentially grains and cereals) and escalating prices of food products. (Ajani, 2008). As a result of escalation of food prices in Nigeria especially on working mother who spend 50-80 percent of their income on food the consumption of food in these families has reduced and hunger has increased. This has also caused increase in high food insecurity and wild spread of threat to most families. Food crisis could be attributed to on availability of food, poor access to and food inadequately unavailability is all about the improper supply of food which mean that food is not sufficient both in quality and quantity (Nwaniki, 2007). This is to say that food security is in tandem with the United Nation (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) of reducing population of hungry people by half of 2015 (Eme, Onyishi, Okala, Uche, 2014). Food crisis has directly undermines one of the most fundamental human rights the right to be free from hunger and malnutrition, recognized under the international covenant of Economic, Social and cultural rights and the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition. Except if this is addressed urgently, the recent crisis will hamper the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The reduced availability and affordability of food compromises health, education, material and

child well-being and many other social indicators as the capacity to earn a living. A food shortage is most likely to influence heavily on women who are mostly responsible for feeding the family members and who often fed last in poor household. Hence is the need for the study food crisis and income management of working mothers in some selected Local Government Areas in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to examine food crisis and income management of working mothers in selected Local Government Areas of Anambra State and specifically to:

1. To identify income management level of working mothers.
2. Examine the factors that influence income management and food crisis.
3. Examine the causes of food crisis
4. Assess the problems of income management and food crisis.
5. Identify ways of enhancing income management and eradicate food crisis.

Research Questions

The following research question guided the study

1. What are the income management level of working mothers?
2. What are the factors that influence income management and food crisis?
3. What are the causes of food crisis?
4. What are the problems of income management and food crisis?
5. What are ways of enhancing income management and eradicate food crisis?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was formulated to guide the research

Ho₁; there is no significance difference income management level and food crisis of mothers in selected Local Government Areas of Anambra State.

Ho₂; There is a significance difference in relationship between factors that affect income management and food crisis among working mothers.

Literature Review

Income management and food crisis is the cancer worn that eats up families and individuals especially at this period of economic recession in Nigeria. (Wolf and Baumann, 2008). Working mothers especially those that work with Administrative unit income for the smooth running of the families face hunger and poverty because of crop fails, the prices of foods are soar because of storage coupled with poor salary scale and poor management of the little earned. (Oxfam, 2009).

In recent times not just that food production is down, but people's opportunity to earn income to buy food is also badly affected. These are pressures that many communities and countries face climate change. The food crisis has sparked an unprecedented rise in the number a hungry, people around the world Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO, 2009). However, the effect of rising food process on the ability of households, rich or poor, to feed & vary from one family to another due to income management levels of the households. Secondly, rising food prices on the world market would not have been in a large increase in the number of hungry people if the

countries concerned had not been dependent on food imports. While people would have invested heavily in rural development and local agriculture which would have accommodated these working mothers in Local governments whose incomes are small to feed their families adequately.

Therefore, instead of having to ride out rising food prices as consumers rather than producers, small farmers would have access to the market for selling any surplus and benefits from rising prices in local markets (Oxfom, 2009), also be inculcated into them as to help them in the management of whatever that is generated from them. When these income are not properly managed and the prices of food are very high could have a tremendous influence on the family particularly children.

The immediate influence are there is lack of food to be eaten, this could lead to individuals low resistance to do with the person's lack of access to enough food and it affects health. These children suffer from malnutrition (United nations Children's Fund, UNICEF, 1998 & Golay, 2009). Increasing food prices make it more difficult for poor people to meet food needs. Adequate income management could help solve these problems. If employed by working mothers.

Income Management and Working Mothers

Working mothers – women access to work may be a political issue. In recent times due to tough economic climate, working is now a necessity for most mothers irrespective of the place rural or urban women. As a result of the bulkiness of family needs and wants, families can no longer afford to live on one wage, despite women's greater involvement in the domestic chores. This entails that most working mothers are also responsible for housework, feeding and looking after the children (better health.vic.gov.au).

These women experience income difficulties especially at this time of economic recession, financial crisis coupled with food crisis. This is caused by the low income earned by these women. Since these women are working child care, and feeding cost could eat up much of the mother income, exposing the family to hunger. These could be taken care of through proper income management. Income management helps people manage their welfare payments and ensure that the basic essential needs such as food, housing and clothing are achieved. Through this, financial stresses are eased helping to manage by budgeting and stabilize their lives. Thus, realizing better care for families and themselves. This could be achieved by working mothers through some combined support services as financial counseling, money management education. Income management seeks to encourage more socially responsible behavior and to protect vulnerable families. Mothers could allow income management work by directing income managed funds towards meeting basic needs as food, clothing, housing and utilities.

Objectives of Income Management

The mechanism of if income management will work has not been explained but to some extent it could be inferred government stated objectives for the priority such as:

1. Reduce immediate hardship and deprivation by directing welfare payments to the priority needs recipients, partner, children and any other recipient.

2. Help recipient budget to achieve or meet to their priority needs.
3. Reduce the amount of discretionary income available things that do not mother much to the family as alcohol, gambling, tobacco etc. encourage socially responsible behaviour, particular in the care, food and education of children. (Buckmaster, Ey&Klapdor, 2012). This means that restriction on expenditure could be seen as a way of creating stability in the lives of individuals, families and communities. It is a necessary basis for overcoming social problems and social disadvantage in general especially among working mothers.

Causes of Food Crisis

The rise in prices of food has drastically reduced access to food for many families especially working mothers. The cause of this crisis has been a confluence factors. These factors could be grouped into two: Natural causes and acquired or induced causes.

a. The Natural causes of Food Crisis are

1. **Natural Disaster and Global warning** – these can cause massive crop lose, loss of stored foods, damaged infrastructure and consequently increase food prices.
2. **Climate change** – Degradation and decline productivity of agricultural soils which are serious threat to agriculture such as flooding, drought, land slide, erosion etc.
3. **Biofuels** – this have forced global food prices up to 75% for more than previously estimated (World Bank).

b. Acquired/Induced Causes

These are the ones caused by consumers/people living within the environment.

1. Population growth
2. Economic situation – high rate of foreign currencies for international trading of exporting and importing of foods affects food security.
3. Lack of attention on food by food policy maker
4. Poor production and processing of food – local engineers are not encouraged towards affiliating equipment for small and medium scale food processing. This could lead to large consumption of harvest without story for the future. It needs adequate food processing technologies to avoid wastage.
5. Poor storage of food – inadequate storage of foods like cereals, yam, beans, fruit leas to wastages and brings about hunger.
6. Poor food supply

If these causes are controlled adequately/ checked there will be food security. But the issue could be the possibilities of checking or controlling these causes especially in the developing country like Nigeria. As long as the causes of food crisis continues to exist the consumers/people are faced with so many challenges especially for the people who are directly involved in the provision of food for the family such as the mother especially working mothers depend solely on their monthly salary for the family up keep.

Challenges of Food Crisis

This involves demanding situations. This has eaten deep into most Nigerian families in recent time especially on the families of the working mothers who are of low – income. Some of those challenges are:

1. **Food insecurity** – unavailability/ or unaffordability of food.
2. **Hunger/poverty** – very high population are currently living below the national poverty line (illboya, Akikpo, Omofuna&Asek, 2012), and hunger is seriously dealing with people.
3. **Starvation**, Malnutrition/undernourishment, Sickness, diseases and death, Poor production on the working sector

Methodology

The study was a descriptive survey design.

Population – the population of the study was on all the working mothers who are the administrative office in Anambra State. The numbers of the women administrative staff are. Hundred and fifty (150) women. These groups of people are mainly clerical officers, massagers, unit heads.

Sampling and Sampling Techniques

Working mothers in five (5) local government headquarters out of seventeen (17) local government headquarters were sampled. Six (6) working mothers were selected from the five headquarters making it a total of thirty (30) working mothers. This was done through systematic sampling techniques. The names and the numbers of the local government headquarters and the number of working mothers chosen is represented in the table below.

S/N	Name Of LGHQ	No Working Mothers Chosen
1.	Orumba South	6
2.	Orumba North	6
3.	Aguata	6
4.	Awka South	6
5.	Njikaoka	6
	Total	30

Instrumentation – the instrument used for collection of data to the study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided in two sections of A and B. Section A was on the demographic information of the working mothers. Section of the working mothers. Section B elicited information based on the purposes of the study. The instrument used a four – point scale in rating the scores of the respondents. Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 2, Undecided (UND) = 1.

Validity of the Study

The instrument was validated by four experts in Home Economics department of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike. The instrument was subjected to content validity.

Method of Data Analysis – the data collected was analyzed by calculating the mean and standard deviation of the total responses to each of the questionnaire items while t-test was used to analyze hypothesis 1 and 2.

Results

Research Question 1 - What are the income management level of working mothers

Table I. Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) values of responses on the income level of working mothers.

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Working mothers salary levels are low	30	3.33	0.02	
2.	The working mothers salaries are below N50,000 monthly	30	3.17	0.08	
3.	There are no other sources of income for these mothers	30	3.2	0.02	
4	The salaries are not regular	30	18	0.87	Rejected
5.	They are paid low because they are not educated	30	3.3	0.04	Accepted

Table 2. What are the factors that Influence income Management and Food Crisis

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	The salaries are low	30	3.33	0.2	Agree
2.	There is no other source of income	30	3.87	0.09	Agree
3.	Inadequate Agricultural product	30	2.2	0.30	Rejected
4.	Financial crisis	30	1.63	0.13	Rejected
5.	High cost of food stuffs	30	1.73	0.005	Rejected
6.	Poor knowledge of budgeting	30	18	0.87	Rejected

Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) values of Responses on the causes of food Crisis among Working Women.

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Food crisis are caused by natural disasters like flood, drought, land slide that affects land for Agricultural produce.	30	2.8	0.31	Accepted
2.	Food crisis are caused by inadequate storage facilities that could make food be available at all times.	30	3.3	0.04	Accepted
3.	Food crisis are caused by high dollar rate and other foreign currencies	30	18	0.87	Rejected
4.	When a country is over populated its causes food crisis	30	3.2	0.02	Accepted
5	Poor supply that will cause food to be enough for consumers	30	30.33	0.02	Accepted
6	Poor production and processing of food	30	3.17	0.08	Accepted

Table 4. Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on the ways of Eradicating Food Crisis

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Working mothers should be allowed to embark on farming	30	3.3	0.04	Accepted
2.	They should device other sources of making money for the family	30	3.2	0.02	Agreed
3.	There should be adequate storage of foods to avoid wastage.	30	2.8	0.31	Agreed
4.	The salaried of working mother should be increased to suit demands	30	2.87	0.09	Agreed

H0₁, t-test Value of Working Mothers Responses on income Management level and Food Crisis.

Items	N	t-test	d4	Table t-value	Remark
Income management level	30	7.3	28	2.05	Sig
Food crisis	30	4.44	28		Sig

H0₂; t-test value of Workingbetween factors that affect income Management and Food Crisis among Working Mothers

Items	N	t-test	d4	Table t-value	Remark
Income management	30	17.3	28	23.3	Sig
Food crisis	30	19.5	28		Sig

Findings and Discussion

From table 1, it was found out that natural disaster over population etc. were causes of food crisis because all the item in that table had mean of 3.17, 3.3, 2.8. Respectively. This was in line with (Emeetal, 2014), suggested as the causes of food crisis. Also Table 2, indicated the challenges of food crisis. The challenges of food crisis but rather items 4 and 5 were rejected because they had mean of 1.63 and 1.73 respectively. These were below the accepted level which means that even though mothers accepted some of the challenges, the children are not malnourished and they are not suffering from poverty but just that the economic status of the country is not quite pleasing to everybody. Finally Table III suggested ways accepted the measures to be used in eradicating food crisis among working mothers in Anambra State.

The table above should that is a difference between income management level and food crisis. The calculated t-value however should that the two items were significant (P <0.5 income management 7.3 and food crisis 4.44). The calculated t-valued however indicated that there was significant difference between income management level and food crisis.

Conclusion

The surge in process of food has reduced the purchasing power of people. The food insecurity in many countries and Nigeria in particular is directly correlated with poverty. Not just to

eradicate poverty it is also necessary to create wealth for the populace. This is because there is need for the world to recognize the right to food as a universal human right.

Recommendation

The following recommendations were made.

1. Agricultural production should be increased to make food always available
2. Science and technology should be enhanced for better food production and processing
3. There should be adequate food storage to make food available for all seasons and at all times
4. There should be good governance to avoid financial crisis

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