



FLUCTUATIONS IN MARKET PRICES OF FOOD PRODUCTS PROMPTED BY THE ACTIVITIES OF BOKO HARAM INSURGENTS IN MAIDUGURI, BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

In the North-eastern part of the Nigeria, the Boko Haram insurgency has not only consumed an estimated 32 thousand people, mostly from the agrarian communities in Borno State but has also neutralized the 420,000 tons wheat production capacity of the state which is 30% of annual national consumption. In Borno, food crops are majorly produced by smallholder rural farmers, who faces challenges of capital, adequate knowledge and skills, security and infrastructure to sustained production of basic food crops. These challenges were compounded in Maiduguri by the emergence of Boko Haram insurgents that started since 2009. This has led to the increase of some market prices of food products and poor nutritional status of the residents of Maiduguri and its environs. The insurgents after sent out of Maiduguri in 2009, dwelled in neighbouring rural areas and displaced the rural settlements whose major occupation was farming. This study explored the impact of insurgency on market prices of food products in Maiduguri metropolis. Multistage and purposive sampling techniques were used to select the respondents for the study. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected using questionnaire and FGD. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency count and percentage. Whereas, the qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis. The study reveals a fold increase in some market prices of food products like maize, rice, millets among other and a decrease in prices in crops like wheat, cowpea among others. However, these fluctuations are attributed to only insurgency but other intervening variables like availability and consumption preferences of consumers, transportation cost, road infrastructure and proximity to the markets. The study recommends support and improved security for rural farming populace, subsidy by the government on some basic food crops like maize, rice, millets among others

Keywords: Insurgency; Food Prices; Market; profits and Maiduguri

INTRODUCTION

Food is a basic human right. It stands first among all basic necessities of man. Food is the most important requirements for the sustenance of human life, optimal nutrition and fitness (Abdulwaliyu *et al.*, 2023b). Adequate food intake both in quantity and quality (food security) ensures human security (Abdulwaliyu *et al.*, 2023). In Nigeria, foods are majorly produced by rural farmers who often lack capital, adequate knowledge, skills, energy etc. to produce enough on a sustainable basis. In addition to these challenges, Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast poses even greater challenge to rural farmers. This was evident in a descriptive cross-sectional survey (Musab and Otovwe, 2021). The survey which was conducted among 391 respondents showed that, Boko Haram insurgency in the zone (Northeast) continues to pose serious challenge on food production. This has led to increase of market price of food products and poor nutritional status among the residents from the affected areas (Musab and Otovwe, 2021). Eze (2020) examines the market prices of food products and its implications for food security in Nigeria. Data for the study were analyzed using histogram and Laspyres

index. The study show that food price inflation is caused by frequent hike in the prices of petroleum products coupled with poor performance of the agricultural sector. The study further revealed that it is the poverty syndrome occasioned by a lack of purchasing power coupled with food price inflation that renders the populace vulnerable to food insecurity.

(Ajiboye *et el.* 2024) shown that insurgency has resulted in high cost of farm products, decreased supply of farm products, decrease in demand, reduced profit from sales of products and low patronage due to affordability. Majority of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that insurgency has negatively affected their ability to market their farm products. The high cost of farm products is as a result of the high cost and unavailability of farm inputs such as labour, improved seeds, fertilizers and herbicides as well as high cost of transportation of farm products to the market. These are all difficulties and challenges brought about by the state of insecurity in the area. Farmers are therefore forced to increase the price of their commodities so as to realise some profits or at least recover cost of production while the supply of

farm products has also fallen due to the low productivity brought about by the insurgency. Also, due to the mass exodus of residents for insurgency prone areas, the level of patronage of the farm products have reduced as fewer people live within the community and demand for the products. These findings also collaborated the previous findings of Sani *et al.* (2022), Ajiboye, (2023), (Mahmud and Salihu, 2024, Madueke *et al.* 2024).

Jare and Bunu (2021) studied the effects of Boko Haram insurgency on the production of crops in Adamawa state, Nigeria. The study sought to determine the difference between the pre-insurgency and post-insurgency levels of crop production in the study area. The study adopted a multi stage random sampling method in selecting 278 respondents for the study. Questionnaires and interview were utilised as instruments for data collection while frequency and percentage were adopted for data analysis. The study revealed that since the insurgency began, the level of farm output has fallen drastically. Greater number of farmers now produce fewer kilograms of crops resulting in low output. Before the insurgency, farmers obtained outputs ranging between 1100kg to 2000kg per acre on crops such as maize, groundnut, sorghum, cowpea and rice while postinsurgency, the output fell within the range of 100 to 1000kg. The result showed that insurgency affected the level of production and output of crops in the study area. It was therefore recommended that government should sensitize farmers on the importance of security consciousness while providing financial assistance to farmers affected by insurgency in order to improve productivity. Despite all these the researches on armed banditry and insurgency across the nation there are fewer specific works that look at the effects of insurgency on agricultural product distribution, transportation and marketing in Niger State. Major markets in Borno have become ghosts' area due to insurgency. It is on record that among the six geo-political zones in Nigeria, the North-east and North-west are the poorest zones and these are the zones where Boko Haram originated from and very active. In the North-eastern part of the country, the Boko Haram insurgency has not only consumed an estimated 32 thousand people, mostly from the agrarian communities in Borno State but has also neutralized the 420,000 tons wheat production capacity of the state which is 30% of annual national consumption (Illesanmi and Odefadehan, 2022). Poor agricultural productivity in Nigeria as a result of rising insecurity has set a thick cloud around the smooth growth of the Nigerian economy. Hence, agriculture in general and food sub-sector in particular are meant to pay dearly by the burden of insecurity in the country. Rising food price inflation which has perennially become the driver of overall inflation in Nigeria especially in Borno State (Illesanmi and Odefadehan, 2022) is believed to be a strong consequence of low agricultural production due to rising insecurity. Prices

of important staple food items and vegetables have been seen to rise from 124% to 254% between the year 2020 and 2022. The crisis in Borno State has had far-reaching effects beyond immediate agricultural losses. The conflict has disrupted food supply chains, affecting the availability of staple crops such as cereals, vegetables, beans, yams, groundnuts, and onions in southern Nigeria (Maisule *et al.*, 2025). The impact of the insurgency is multifaceted, affecting agricultural production, increasing vulnerability to food shortages, and deteriorating household resilience. Without urgent intervention to restore security and enhance agricultural productivity, the food crisis in Borno State is likely to persist, further threatening livelihoods and economic stability in the region.

In the light of the above, it was deemed necessary to have a holistic study of how insurgency has affected the marketing of food products, with regard to sources and distribution channels of food products, trend of how insurgency affected such areas in distribution and marketing, the impact of insurgency on the trade of food products. Thus, this study was designed to investigate the effect of insurgency on market price of food products in Maiduguri Metropolis.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In Nigeria, the rate of food price inflation has been on the increase for over half a decade. Food price inflation hit 23.12 per cent in August of 2022 from 22.02 percent in July, 2022. This is as result of increases in prices of Bread, Cereals, Milk, Cheese, Eggs, Fish, Soft drinks, Coffee, Tea, Fruits, Meat, Oils and fats, and Vegetables (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). Factors that have contributed to hike in food prices in Nigeria ranged from increase in fuel price, transportation costs to insecurity in the country (Alfa and Alexander, 2024).

The rising cases of insecurity in Nigeria are alarming (Alfa and Alexander, 2024). There are many records of death of farmers at the hands of armed herdsmen, unknown gunmen and other militia groups. This situation scared farmers away from their farms, leading not only to reduction in the quantity of staple foods but also in the total output of the agricultural sector in the country (Alfa and Alexander, 2024).

As important as understating the dynamics of food price inflation is, especially in informing monetary policy decisions, not much academic research has been devoted to the subject with respect to insecurity (Alfa and Alexander, 2024). Odunsi-Oyewole (2022) assessed the impact of insurgency on Nigeria's agricultural sector using an ex-post facto research design. Secondary data on rate of kidnapping, death rate of Boko Haram as well as the contribution of agriculture to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was collected from the Council on Foreign Relations Website as well as the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Statistical Data for the time period of 2014 to 2020. Purposive sampling technique was adopted for the study while the Tado and Yamamoto VAR was used for data analysis. The study revealed

that there was a causal link between insurgency and the agricultural sector. According to the study, insurgency was a major factor that can determine the level of agricultural output in an economy or determine the future trend in agriculture. The study recommended that job opportunities be provided by government in order to stimulate the economy and reduce the level of vulnerability of unemployed individuals to acts of kidnapping and terrorism.

The challenges of insecurity have also directly and indirectly contributed to the increasing poverty level in such a way that residents now find it difficult to afford basic needs. In cases where farm products are available, there is poor demand due to high cost, unaffordability and reduced population. It can therefore be summarised that the insurgency had negatively affected not just the production and distribution of farm products but has also affected the marketing of farm products (Ajiboye *et al.*, 2024).

Agricultural production in Nigeria according to FAO (2022) is largely in the hand of poor farmers predisposing them to low productivity. The critical issues in Nigerian Agriculture are low productivity likewise the problem of declining crop productivity in Nigeria, most especially in the northern Nigeria and particularly northeastern part is compounded by insurgency (Rabiu *et al.*, 2022).

Moreover, Northern Nigeria, especially Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe States, hosts the highest number of internally displaced persons due to conflict and terrorism. The Nigerian food poverty situation remains dire despite numerous interventions aimed at addressing the crisis (Maisule *et al.*, 2025). Given that the region supplies a significant portion of Nigeria's cereal crops, food security has become a major concern for both local communities and the country at large. The persistent insurgency has not only disrupted agricultural activities but has also created longterm economic and social instability, further deepening the food security crisis. However, Borno State's agrarian economy heavily depends on farming. Yet, ongoing violence has not only displaced farmers but also led to the destruction of farmland, loss of livestock, and restricted access to markets and agricultural inputs. These disruptions have significantly reduced food production, worsening food insecurity and malnutrition (Maisule *et al.*, 2025). Reports indicate that millions of people in Borno are experiencing acute food insecurity, with many households unable to meet their basic nutritional needs (Ikemefuna, 2022).

Additionally, the breakdown of community support structures has further weakened farmers' resilience, impacting mental health and social cohesion. Despite food production in southern states, they cannot always meet the nation's food demands, exacerbating national food insecurity. Since the Boko Haram insurgency began in 2009, food insecurity in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, has intensified (Maisule *et al.*, 2025). Maiduguri, previously a key commercial hub

for agricultural trade with neighboring countries, has suffered major economic setbacks due to the ongoing crisis. The review provides the existing state of knowledge explored by researchers, experts and professionals in relation to the research problem.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study Area

The study area, Maiduguri metropolis, located in North East Nigeria, shares international borders with Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, as well as domestic boundaries with Adamawa, Gombe, and Yobe States. Maiduguri Metropolis consist of two local government areas, Maiduguri and Jere Local Government Areas. Where some parts of Konduga and Mafa local government falls into the metropolis. Maiduguri is located between latitudes $11^{\circ} 42' \text{ N}$ and $12^{\circ} 00' \text{ N}$ and longitudes $12^{\circ} 54' \text{ E}$ and $13^{\circ} 14' \text{ E}$, and it covers an area of 543km^2 . The city is bounded in the north-west by Magumeri and Nganzai Local Government Areas, in the south-east by Konduga and Mafa Local Government Areas. While the Jere Local Government Area is located between latitudes $11^{\circ} 40' \text{ N}$ and $12^{\circ} 05' \text{ N}$ and longitudes $13^{\circ} 50' \text{ E}$ and $12^{\circ} 20' \text{ E}$, and it covers an area of 868km^2 (Maisule *et al.*, 2025). The state has a population of approximately 4.17 million, accounting for about 3% of Nigeria's total population. Its vegetation is predominantly Sudan savanna, with a section of Sahel savanna in the north, supporting various trees such as acacia, baobab, locust bean, and shea butter. Agriculture and livestock farming have traditionally been the backbone of Borno's rural economy, with Maiduguri serving as a major trade and service hub. The climate of the area is characterized by dry and hot season, minimum temperature ranging from $15\text{-}20^{\circ}\text{C}$ with mean annual maximum temperature of 34.8 with mean temperature ranging between 30 and 40°C . The months of March and April are usually the hottest months, while November and January are the cold and dry periods of harmattan. The city receives rainfall from June to September. However, in rainy years, the city records rainfall earlier than June and later than September (Maisule *et al.*, 2025).

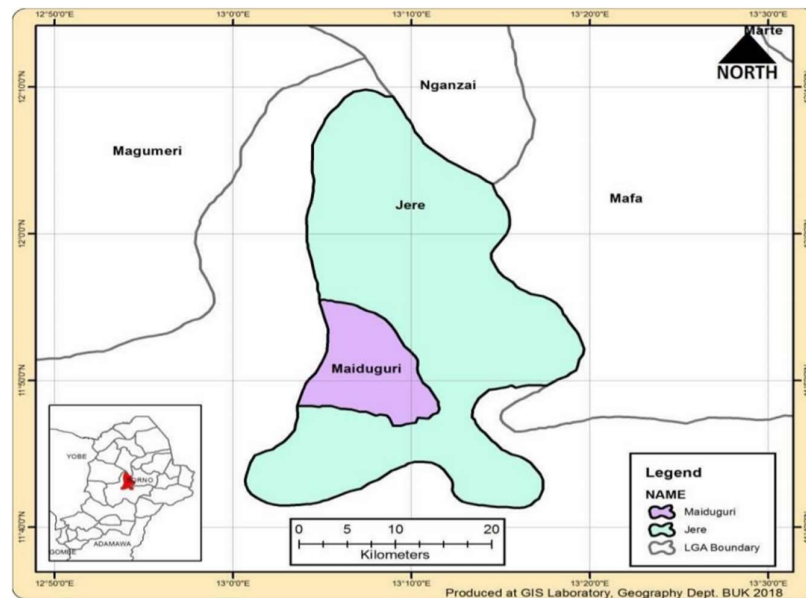


Figure 1: Maiduguri Metropolis and Neighboring LGAs in Borno State
Source; Produced at GIS laboratory, Geography Department.buk 2019

METHODOLOGY

The study employed mixed methods approach, that is qualitative and quantitative techniques, qualitative data were source from focus group discussion that involved ten number of participants where each group consist of five participants, each has different questions to respond to (FGD), Questions were asked related to their business "how has insurgency affected food price in this area? Questions also asked "has the effects of insurgency affected the transportation channels where you usually obtained food commodities from? Responses obtained from the respondent was extracted and analyse through content analysis, while the quantitative data sources from the respondents through unstructured questionnaire administered to them were analyse using frequency distribution tables and percentages. These also to determine the level and magnitude posed by the insurgency on food price. Multistage sampling procedure was also adopted to select respondents for this study. In the first stage, six markets were purposively selected (Muna Garage market, Gamburu Market and Custom market in Jere, and selection of Gambo Lawan plaza Market, Baga road cereal market, and Bulunkutu market) were purposively selected from Maiduguri Metropolitan council (MMC), and Jere Local Government Areas,

this is to reflect the surplus of food items affected by the insurgency in the area. The second stage involved the random selection of the types of food products in each of the market. The third stage involved the random selection of five (5) food dealers in each of the selected markets and the fourth stage was the selection of 10 market heads (*Sarkin Kasuwa*). The final stage involved the random selection of 50 food traders in each market selected. Therefore, six markets were selected, this makes a sampling size was 300 food dealers in Table 1 below.

Market leaders in each of the six markets were targeted for Focus Group Discussion (FGD). This was because they are in best position to provide the needed information about food trade with respect to their market, two different grouped were form because of the security challenge. The quantitative data were obtained from unstructured questionnaire. The purpose of using unstructured questionnaire for this study was to allow the respondent to express their opinions without restrictions. To complement data collected for the study, coordinates of the markets in Maiduguri Metropolis was collected so as to determine the spatial distribution of the markets.

Table 1: Samples Selection Planed

Markets	Food Types Products	Number of food dealers Selected in the Market	Number of selected food traders
Muna Garage	Millet/Wheat	5	50
Gambaru	Cowpea/Onion	5	50
Custom	Fish carton	5	50
Gambo Lawan	Groundnut	5	50
Baga Road	Maize/Rice	5	50
Bulunkutu	Irish and Sweet Potato	5	50
Total		30	300

Source: Fieldwork (2019).

Also, areas where the foods are transported to Maiduguri Metropolis were used to determine the pattern of food product flow into Maiduguri. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages and mean scores were used to analyze and rank major type of food products traded in the area. the respondents. The statistical tool used in carrying out the analysis for the study was Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS).

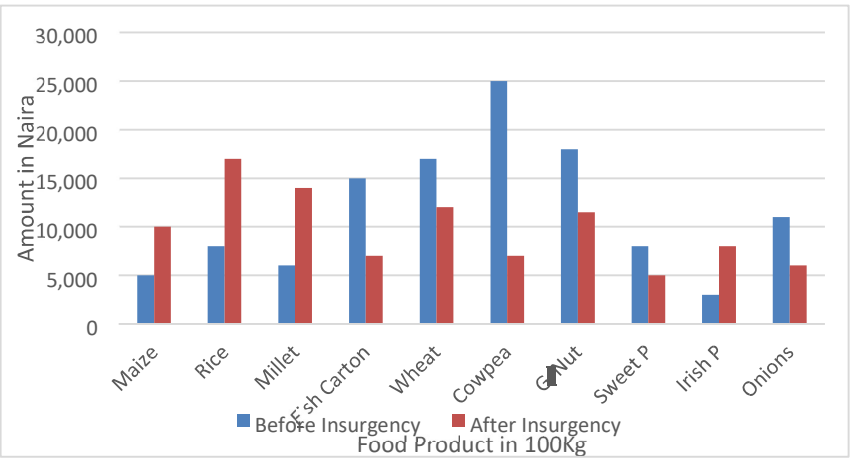
RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Effect of Market Prices on Food Products

Trend of food prices varies before and after insurgency with some increasing in price and decreasing in price as shown in Figure 1. Hundred kilograms of Maize, rice, millet and Irish Potato were found to be sold twice or more than twice its price as result of insurgency. Food products like fish, cowpea, g/nut and sweet potatoes were sold at higher prices than after insurgency. In addition, a participant in the FGD stated that “the market attracts people from different parts of the states, because they are the major markets in the study area where the customers met their demand”. This indicates that insurgency influences the dietary preference of consumers in Maiduguri which result in less patronage

Cost and return analysis were used to achieve the effects of insurgency on food products in Maiduguri metropolis. To ascertain the efforts made to cope with impacts of insurgency on agricultural food products of the respondents, frequency counts and percentages was used to analyze opinion of and lower prices for food products like fish and sweet potatoes. Since interest of consumers shifted to food like maize, it drives the prices up.

Ajiboye *et al.* (2024) shown that insurgency has resulted in high cost of farm products, decreased supply of farm products, decrease in demand, reduced profit from sales of products and low patronage due to affordability. Majority of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that insurgency has negatively affected their ability to market their farm products. The high cost of farm products is as a result of the high cost and unavailability of farm inputs such as labour, improved seeds, fertilizers and herbicides as well as high cost of transportation of farm products to the market. Also due to the mass exodus of residents for insurgency prone areas, the level of patronage of the farm products have reduced as fewer people live within the community and demand for the products. These findings also collaborated the previous findings of Sani *et al.* (2022), Ajiboye, (2023), Mahmud and Salihu, (2024), Madueke *et al.* (2024).

Figure 1: Effects of insurgency on marketing price of food products



Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Effects of Insurgency on Trade of Food Products

The views of marketers are divided as to how insurgency has affected their trading of food products. Over 10% of the respondents complained on the increase in cost of transportation, cost of the purchase of food products, insurgency attack, decrease in the number of producers, increase in the selling of products, lack of access to market, poor communication channel as how insurgency has affected food distribution and marketing in Maiduguri. Others identified problems include

unavailability of food product and lack of insurgency on food trade is multidimensional, what aspect of the insurgency that affects food trades differs among the marketers. On a similar note, Alfa and Alexander (2024) reported that there are some actors that have contributed to hike in food prices in Nigeria ranged from increase in fuel price, transportation costs to insecurity in the country. For these reasons, many of the marketers are unable to export their goods to Nigeria, leaving them to stockpile large quantities of produce.

Table 2: Factors affecting market price of food products as a result of insurgency in the Study Area

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Increase in cost of transportation	26	12.4
Unavailability of the food product	19	9
Increase in the cost of purchase of the food products	26	12.4
Insurgency attack	25	11.9
Decrease in the number of producers	27	12.9
Continuous increase in the selling price of products	26	12.4
Lack of access to market	25	11.9
Poor communication channel	27	12.9
No access road	9	4.3
Total	210	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Table 3 Major Commodities Supply Affected by Insurgency in Maiduguri Metropolis

Variables	Ranks	Locations
Soybeans	1	Kano/Katsina
Sesame	2	Kano/Yobe
Tomatoes	3	Gombe
Red pepper	4	Gombe/Yobe
Sweet potatoes	5	Kano/Bauchi

Source; Fieldwork, 2019

The market survey carried out also indicate that soyabeans is the common cereal items sold in all the major markets of Maiduguri, thus it was ranked the highest in Table 3 below. The second most needed items is sesame, followed by tomatoes, red pepper and sweet potatoes.

A marketer explained that the nature of marketing the perishable goods (they purchase for sale from Kano, Yobe, Bauchi and Katsina). Soyabeans being bigger in size is sold in piece while sweet potato, pepper, tomatoes and sesame are sometimes sold with bags, basket or a container as means of measurement. Due to the intense activity of insurgency in area has greatly impacted the price.

FGD, How has insurgency affected food prices in this area?

Insurgency has greatly impacted food availability in this area because most of the food commodities, particularly raw materials such as groundnut, cowpea, soybean, sorghum, maize, and even tamarind which we usually use for porridge during the fasting period (Ramadan kunu) have now become a serious concern.

FGD, Has the insurgency affected the transportation channels through which you usually obtain food commodities? *Yes, of course. As we told you earlier, most of these food products come from the rural areas. Urban centers cannot survive without the rural areas because almost everything you see here comes from them, except for a few commodities that are supplied from other states such as Kano, Yobe, Bauchi, Katsina, and Gombe, especially perishable goods.*

FGD, How does the effect of food price due insurgency activities affected your earning? *High food prices consume a larger share of household income, leaving less money for other essential needs like education for our children, healthcare, and paying for housing rent. As a results of this, it pushes more people below the poverty line, because low-income households struggle to afford basic food items, which gradually leads to hunger, malnutrition among children and elderly persons.*

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that, the price of some food products increased after insurgency such as maize, rice, millet, groundnut, soybeans, cowpea among others while, some other food product their prices decreased such as wheat, cowpea, groundnut, onions among others. The variation in the prices were occurred due to the presents of some factors that were identified such as decrease in the number of producers, poor communication channel, increase in cost of transportation, increase in the cost of purchase of the food products among others

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Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were suggested

- i. Support for improving food marketing in urban Maiduguri could be designed to benefit the major food product marketed and distributed in the area
- ii. There is need to conduct comparative advantage assessment of food sources to determine best sources that marketers should patronise
- iii. Provision of alternative or subsidy to commodities that their prices are affected by insurgency by state or federal government could go a long way in ascertaining inhabitants of Maiduguri have access to their food needs.

There is need to enrol marketers into federal insurance schemes so as to ensure that they are not affected by the impact of insurgency.

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