

Limited Empirical Literature that Assesses the Effect of Resilience on Food and Nutrition Insecurity

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Received date: August 05, 2022, Manuscript No. IPMCR-22-14789; **Editor assigned date:** August 08, 2022, PreQC No. IPMCR-22-14789(PQ);

Reviewed date: August 17, 2022, QC No IPMCR-22-14789; **Revised date:** August 25, 2022, Manuscript No. IPMCR-22-14789(R); **Published date:** September 06, 2022, DOI: 10.36648/2471-299X.8.9.4

Citation: Haile D (2022) Limited Empirical Literature that Assesses the Effect of Resilience on Food and Nutrition Insecurity. Med Clin Rev Vol. 8 Iss No.9:004.

Description

Resilience analysis framed on a twin-track approach of harmonizing humanitarian and development interventions is a nascent paradigm to food and nutrition security. This study contributes to the limited empirical literature that assesses the effect of resilience on food and nutrition insecurity modeled as separate variables for policy uptake in Ethiopia. The panel data comes from the Ethiopian Socioeconomic Survey. We estimated the resilience capacity index by combining factor analysis and structural equation modeling. The study employed kilocalories, food poverty, dietary diversity, food consumption, and multidimensional food security perspectives. Assets ownership, access to social services, and adaptive capacity are the core elements of resilience. We evidenced that resilience capacity enhanced food and nutrition security outcomes. Alternative food and nutrition insecurity measures complement but could not serve as a proxy to each other. The regression results revealed that resilience reduces household food and nutrition insecurity. Nevertheless, the food insecure possesses fewer resources, attributes, and farm assets face extreme poverty and thus benefit less from resilience. Complimentary food and nutrition insecurity measures give a more nuanced description and improve the targeting efficiency of interventions. Farming is no longer the merely or even the principal source of subsistence for many rural households.

Policies to Reinforce Resilience Capacities in Ensuring Food and Nutrition Security

Issues that require more attention in policies to reinforce resilience capacities in ensuring food and nutrition security include fostering the rural non-farm economy, human capital formation, access to productive assets, and commercialization. Besides, the role of broader agri-food systems change is of utmost importance. Policy measures that enhance growth from below would also go a long way in building resilience for food and nutrition security and break the deeply entrenched cycle of subsistence and vulnerability of smallholder farming. Notwithstanding a continuing economic growth, Ethiopia's food

and nutrition insecurity is an ever-growing challenge. The country began with food deficiency in the early 1970s. Exclusive of the regular safety nets beneficiaries, an average of 10% of the people annually need emergency food assistance. Recently, 3.3 million extra people were in an urgent situation or worse. On the other hand, more than 30% of the households consume below the minimum daily nutritional requirements. One out of four is also food poor, signifying that they failed to cover the cost of the recommended daily calorie requirements. The prevalence of child malnutrition is also persistently high. Nearly 6 million children under five years of age are stunted. Malnutrition impaired cognitive potential and drives enormously to perpetuate the vicious cycle of poverty and underdevelopment. The problem is more salient in rural areas.

Physical and Economic Dimensions to Food Insecurity

Conceptions and complex causes, on the one hand, the dynamics and the irrelevance of national strategies, on the other hand, make food and nutrition security arduous goals in Ethiopia. The concept of food insecurity has witnessed a clear evolution. The earlier supply-side view is synonymous with food availability decline. It reflects insufficient dietary energy intake. However, the approach is criticized for its inability to explain entitlement failure. The entitlement approach adds physical and economic dimensions to food insecurity. The demand side scrutiny is closely related to food poverty. Entitlement to food, hitherto, fails to guarantee a nutritionally sound diet. Thus, food utilization emphasized micronutrient deficiencies, food safety, and socio-cultural acceptability added as a new dimension. Food security also requires stability in that neither shock nor cyclical events disrupt availability, access, and utilization. A nuanced meaning is given at the 1996 World Food Summit " a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life." Researchers' inclination toward different measures constrained the efficiency of the design and delivery of food security policies.