



Food Security and Nutrition Management: Challenges and Strategies for Sustainable Development

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ABSTRACT

Food security and nutrition management are essential components of sustainable development and human well-being. Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs for an active and healthy life. Nutrition management involves the planning, implementation, and monitoring of dietary practices to ensure optimal health outcomes. Despite advances in agricultural production and food systems, millions of people worldwide continue to experience hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity. This paper examines the concept of food security and nutrition management, identifies the factors affecting food security, explores strategies for improving nutritional outcomes, and highlights the role of governments, communities, and individuals in ensuring sustainable food systems. The study adopts a descriptive research approach based on secondary data from scholarly publications, reports, and policy documents. Findings indicate that effective nutrition management and sustainable agricultural practices are critical to achieving food security and improving public health.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received: May, 2026

Received in revised form: June, 2026

Accepted: August, 2026

Published online: September, 2026

KEYWORDS

Food Security, Nutrition Management, Sustainable Agriculture, Malnutrition, Food Systems, Public Health.

INTRODUCTION

Food security and nutrition management are key components of sustainable development and human wellbeing. When everyone has physical, social, and financial access to enough safe, nourishing food that satisfies their dietary requirements and food preferences for an active and healthy life, there is food security (FAO, 2023). Food availability, accessibility, use, and stability are its four main components. These factors are interconnected and necessary to guarantee proper nutrition and a higher standard of living.

Nutrition management and food security are essential to human welfare and sustainable development. When everyone has physical, social, and financial access to enough safe,

nourishing food that satisfies their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life, there is food security (FAO, 2023). Food availability, accessibility, use, and stability are its four main facets. In order to guarantee proper nutrition and an enhanced quality of life, these will make people have access to adequate of food but also proper healthcare, sanitation and care practices necessary for a healthy and active life.

Malnutrition and food insecurity continue to be major global issues despite tremendous advancements in agricultural production and food systems globally. According to the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World Report (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, & WHO, 2023), poverty, climate change, conflicts, economic instability, and rising food costs

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continue to cause millions of people to suffer from hunger and lack access to healthy meals.

Low agricultural production, postharvest losses, inadequate storage facilities, poor infrastructure, population expansion, and restricted access to nutrition education further hinder food security and nutrition management in developing nations like Nigeria. Food production and availability are also threatened by climate related phenomena including droughts, floods, and desertification, which have an impact on household food security and nutritional status. Sustainable Development Goal 2 (Zero Hunger), which aims to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030, is hampered by these obstacles.

Adopting climate smart agriculture, encouraging sustainable farming methods, bolstering food supply chains, lowering postharvest losses, nutrition education, food fortification, social protection programs, and funding agricultural research and development are just a few of the strategies that have been put forth to address these issues. These strategies can raise the resilience of food systems for sustainable development, increase food availability, and improve dietary quality. Therefore, ensuring food security and effective nutrition management is essential for improving public health, reducing poverty, enhancing economic productivity, and achieving sustainable development. This study examines the challenges affecting food security and nutrition management and explores strategies that can promote sustainable development and improve the well-being of present and future generations. Proper use of food through adequate nutrition, sanitation, and healthcare. Stability ensures that food remains available and accessible over time.

The goal of nutrition management is to make sure people eat balanced meals that include the vital nutrients required for a healthy lifestyle. Good nutrition management promotes general wellbeing, increased productivity, and the avoidance of disease. As a result, nutrition management and food security are intimately related and essential to both national development

and poverty alleviation. Malnutrition and food insecurity are still major issues, especially in developing nations, despite increases in food production worldwide. Poverty, unemployment, inflation, conflicts, and environmental degradation make it difficult for many households to obtain enough nourishing food.

Furthermore, a number of health issues, such as undernutrition, obesity, micronutrient deficiencies, and diet related illnesses, are linked to poor nutrition practices. The availability and sustainability of food are further threatened by the growing effects of climate change on agricultural productivity. In order to support healthy populations and sustainable development, a thorough analysis of food security and nutrition management techniques is required due to the persistence of these issues.

In view of the above, this study therefore, examine food security and nutrition management and their importance in promoting health and sustainable development. Specifically, identify concept and dimension of food security, identify factors affecting food security and nutritional status, assess the importance of nutrition management in public health, explore strategies for improving food security and nutrition outcomes, and recommend measures for sustainable food and nutrition management. For this study secondary sources of information were used, data were collected from academic journals, textbooks, government publications, international organization reports, and relevant policy documents on food security and nutrition management. The collected information was analyzed through content analysis to identify key themes, challenges, and solutions related to food security and nutrition.

Concept and dimension of Food Security

The study found that food security is achieved when people have consistent access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food. The four pillars of food security include:

1. Food Availability
2. Adequate food production and supply.
3. Food Accessibility



4. Economic and physical access to food, Food Utilization.

Food insecurity may result from a failure in any of these pillars. When everyone has physical, social, and financial access to enough safe, nourishing food that satisfies their dietary needs and food choices for an active and healthy life, it is referred to as food security. The Food and Agriculture Organization (2024) When people consistently have access to enough food in terms of quantity, quality, and nutritional content, there is food security. However, human existence, health, and sustainable development all depend on food security. It occurs when everyone has physical, social, and financial access to enough safe, nourishing food that satisfies their dietary requirements and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Food security encompasses more than just the availability of food; it also refers to people's capacity to obtain, use, and sustain food over time. The Food and Agriculture Organization (2024).

Dimensions of Food Security

1. Food availability. The physical presence of enough amount of food in a nation, neighbourhood, or home is referred to as food availability. Local agricultural output, imports, food assistance, fisheries, and food reserves are all sources of food. Availability depends on factors such as agricultural output, climate conditions, technology adoption, and efficient food supply chains. Food availability is put at risk when food production decreases as a result of conflict, flooding, or drought.
2. Food access, The ability of people and households to get enough food to eat is referred to as food access. Because of poverty, unemployment, poor income, or high food prices, people may not be able to access food even when it is accessible at marketplaces. Purchasing power determines economic access, whereas infrastructure, market proximity, and transit determine physical access.
3. Food usage: The way the body uses food to attain nutritional wellbeing is referred to as food as age. A balanced diet, safe drinking water, proper sanitation, food preparation techniques, and healthcare services are all necessary for proper use. Malnutrition and vitamin shortages can still affect people who eat enough food but don't have a varied diet.
4. Food stability: When food is regularly available, accessible and used over time, it is said to be stable. Economic downturns, seasonal shortage natural disasters, climate change, or civil unrest shouldn't put households at risk of losing access to food. Food security and nutritional well-being are guaranteed by stability. FAO (2024, referenced in Ahmed & Bello, 2025).

Factors Affecting Food Security

Food security is influenced by various factors, such as poverty and low earnings, Degradation of the environment and climate change Population expansion, political unrest and conflicts, insufficient agricultural technology, Food prices fluctuate, and transportation and infrastructure are inadequate. These elements may limit access to nutrient-dense foods and lower food production. Food security in homes and communities is influenced by a number of factors.

1. The notion and aspects of food security are comparable numerous social, economic, environmental, and political issues affect food security. Food production, availability, use, and stability can all be impacted by these variables. Food insecurity is still largely caused by poverty, conflict, and shocks related to climate change, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (2024). Additional elements influencing food
2. One of the main causes of food insecurity is poverty. Poor households frequently don't have enough money to buy enough wholesome meals. Low-income families are more susceptible to hunger and malnutrition as food prices rise.
3. Droughts, floods, deserts, erratic rainfall, and rising temperatures are some of the ways that climate change impacts



- agricultural productivity. Food supply is decreased by these environmental issues, which also degrade farms, lower agricultural yields, and jeopardize livestock output.
4. Population Growth: As the population grows quickly, there is a greater need for food. Food shortages and increased costs may arise if food production cannot keep up with population expansion.
 5. Insecurity and Conflict: Farming operations and food distribution networks are disrupted by conflicts, insurgencies, banditry, and intercommunal disputes. Insecurity may cause farmers to leave their farms, which would decrease food production and increase hunger.
 6. Unemployment lowers purchasing power and restricts household income. Families that don't have steady sources of income frequently find it difficult to buy enough food.
 6. Inadequate Agricultural Infrastructure: Particularly in rural areas, inadequate roads, storage facilities, irrigation systems, and processing facilities limit food delivery and increase post-harvest losses.
 7. Low Agricultural Productivity: Farm productivity and food output are decreased by limited access to modern equipment, improved seeds, fertilizers, and extension services.
 8. Government Policies: Weak food distribution programs, insufficient investment in agriculture, and poor agricultural policies can all have a detrimental impact on food security.

Importance of Nutrition Management

Nutrition management, according to the World Health Organization (2024), is the process of organizing, choosing, preparing, consuming, and keeping an eye on food in order to satisfy the dietary needs of people and families. Maintaining health, preventing illness, and fostering general wellbeing all depend on effective nutrition management. It supports healthy growth and development, boosts immunity, lowers the risk of chronic illnesses, increases productivity and cognitive function, supports mother and child health, and improves overall quality of life.

Effective nutrition management guarantees that people get the nutrients required for the best possible physical and mental health. Additionally,

1. Encourages Healthy Growth and Development: Adequate nutrition supplies vital nutrients required for tissue repair, mental development, and physical growth, particularly in children and teenagers.
2. Improves Cognitive Performance: A healthy diet enhances focus, memory, learning capacity, and academic success. Pupils who eat a healthy diet typically do better academically than those who are undernourished.
3. Strengthens the Immune System: A healthy diet helps the body's immune system. Lowers Disease Risk: Eating a healthy diet lowers the chance of developing chronic conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and some types of cancer.
4. Prevents Malnutrition: By guaranteeing a balanced dietary intake, nutrition management helps avoid undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight, and obesity.
5. Lowers Disease Risk: Eating a healthy diet lowers the chance of developing chronic conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and some types of cancer.
6. Increases Productivity: People who eat well tend to be more active and productive.
7. Improves Quality of Life: A healthy diet fosters mental, emotional, and physical well-being, which increases lifespan and quality of life.

Strategies for Improving Food Security and Nutrition

The study found a number of methods for improving nutrition management and food security: encouraging sustainable farming methods, enhancing food distribution and storage infrastructure, providing cutting-edge technologies to small-scale farmers, Putting nutrition education initiatives into action, Promoting a variety of diets



and wholesome eating practices, bolstering food aid and social protection initiatives, putting money into climate-smart farming. These actions can improve nutritional results and boost food availability. Governments, communities, educational institutions, and development groups must work together to achieve food security and adequate nutrition.

1. Promotion of sustainable agriculture: To enhance food production in sustainable manner, farmers should implement climate smart agricultural techniques such crop as crop rotation, irrigated farming, agroforestry and better seed types.
2. Nutrition Education Programs: Public awareness campaigns should inform households about healthy lives, nursing habits, balanced diets, and food preparation and preservation techniques.
3. Poverty Reduction and Employment Creation: Governments should put in place initiatives that raise household incomes, expand access to food, and generate jobs.
4. Enhancement of Agricultural Infrastructure: Food distribution can be improved and post-harvest losses can be decreased by investing in highways, storage facilities, irrigation systems, and processing enterprises.
5. School Feeding Programs: School feeding programs raise attendance, boost academic achievement, and improve children's nutritional status.
6. Women's Empowerment: Improving household food security and nutrition can be achieved by giving women access to education, financing facilities, agricultural inputs, and decision-making possibilities.
7. Food Fortification and Supplementation: Adding vital vitamins and minerals to foods helps lower nutrient shortages and enhance public health.
8. Improving Agricultural Extension Services: Extension agents should educate farmers on contemporary farming methods, pest control, and climate adaption tactics.
9. Government Policy Support: Governments should create and carry out policies that

promote rural development, agriculture, food production, and nutrition programs.

10. Research and Innovation: Crop yields, food processing techniques, and food preservation can all be enhanced by investments in agricultural research and technology. In order to achieve sustained food security and nutrition outcomes, FAO and WHO (2024) assert that integrated approaches including agriculture, nutrition, education, and social protection are crucial.

Discussion on Sustainable Food Security and Nutritional Management

In order to achieve sustainable development and raise the standard of living for both individuals and communities, food security and nutrition management are crucial. According to the study, having access to enough food that is safe, nourishing, and sufficient greatly enhances economic growth, productivity, and health. This is consistent with the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO, 2023) assertion that food security is attained when everyone has constant physical, social, and financial access to enough wholesome food.

One of the main issues affecting food security and nutrition management is poverty. Many households lack the funds necessary to buy sufficient and nourishing food, especially in developing nations. Families are consequently frequently at risk for malnutrition, hunger, and poor health effects. This is in line with the FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO report from 2023, which stated that poverty is a significant global cause of food insecurity and malnutrition.

Postharvest losses, inadequate storage facilities, and inadequate agricultural infrastructure all play a major role in food insecurity. Inadequate transportation and preservation methods frequently result in losses for farmers, which lowers food availability and raises food costs. This is consistent with the findings of Fanzo et al. (2021), who highlighted the necessity of more robust food systems and better agricultural investments in order to lower food losses and improve food security. The study by Ruel and Alderman (2013) supports the idea that



nutrition-sensitive interventions and education programs are required for improving nutritional outcomes.

Additionally, poor nutrition education and a lack of awareness regarding healthy dietary practices contribute to malnutrition among many households. Many people consume diets that are deficient in essential nutrients, leading to health problems like stunting, wasting, micronutrient deficiencies, and obesity. The amount of food that is accessible is under growing pressure due to population increase and fast urbanization. The need for food increases as populations grow, making it more challenging to provide food security for everyone. In order to meet the increasing demand for food around the world, the United Nations (2023) emphasized the need for sustainable food production systems. In terms of sustainable development initiatives, food security and nutrition management can be greatly enhanced by climate smart agriculture, better farming practices, food fortification, nutrition education, social protection programs, and more funding for agricultural research. These tactics boost food production, make nutrient dense foods more accessible, and make food systems more resilient to shocks from the climate and the economy.

Food supply and accessibility can be improved by the efficient application of agricultural policy, the provision of financial facilities to farmers, investments in rural infrastructure, and the encouragement of sustainable agricultural practices. This is in line with FAO (2023), which highlighted how crucial it is for governments, international organizations, and communities to work together to achieve food and nutrition security.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings demonstrated that food security and nutrition management remain major concerns globally due to challenges such as poverty, climate change, inadequate agricultural infrastructure, population growth, and poor nutrition awareness. However, the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices, nutrition education, policy support, and investment

in food systems can effectively address these challenges and contribute to sustainable development. Food security and nutrition management are critical for achieving sustainable development, reducing poverty, and improving public health. Ensuring access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food requires coordinated efforts across multiple sectors. Effective nutrition management promotes healthy living, enhances productivity, and reduces disease burden. Addressing challenges such as poverty, climate change, and inadequate agricultural systems will significantly contribute to food security and better nutritional outcomes. Sustainable policies and practices are therefore essential for building healthier and more resilient societies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were suggested based on the findings of the study

1. Government should strengthen agricultural support programs through the provision of improved seeds, fertilizers, irrigation facilities, and extension services to farmers. This will increase food production, reduce food shortages, and improve household food security.
2. Nutrition education programs should be intensified through schools, health centres, and community organizations to increase awareness of balanced diets, healthy feeding practices, and proper food utilization among households.
3. Policies aimed at reducing poverty, unemployment, and income inequality should be strengthened. Economic empowerment programs, especially for women and youth, should be promoted to improve household purchasing power and access to nutritious foods.
4. Stakeholders in agriculture, health, education, and community development should collaborate to implement integrated food security and nutrition programs, including school feeding



initiatives, home gardening projects, and food preservation training.

5. Sustainable agricultural practices such as climate-smart agriculture, crop diversification, organic farming, and efficient water management should be encouraged. Governments and development agencies should invest in research, innovation, and rural infrastructure to ensure long-term food security and nutritional well-being.

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