

# Challenges of Agricultural land Lease Market and its Implications for Food Security in Ishangev Community, Konshisha Local Government Area, Benue State Nigeria

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## **Abstract**

*There has been an increasing agricultural land leasing especially in the rural Tiv communities due to increased agricultural activities occasioned by increased population and demand for food. This study was set to investigate the patterns of involvement in land leasing and its implications on food security in Ishangev Community of Konshisha Local Government Area of Benue State Nigeria. The objectives of the study include; to examine the land tenure system practiced in the study area, to assess the pattern of land lease market in the area, to investigate the challenges of land lease market in the study area, to examine the implications of the challenges of land lease market on food production and food security. The population of the study was the land owners and landless farmers in the study area. A purposive sample technique was used to sample 75 land owners and 75 landless farmers from Ishangev-tiev community. Data were collected using structured interview, in-depth interview and non-participant observation. It was discovered that traditional land tenure system which is hereditary was practiced in the study areas, terms of land leasing were cash, flief and crop sharing varying from one family to the other, the challenges of land lease market includes cost of land, undue demands from tenants and uninformed dismissal of tenants among others. The implication of these was seen to be increase in cost of food production, prices of food and food insecurity among others. It was recommended among other things that, conditions guiding land lease market be clearly spelt out by traditional rulers and the local government administration for both parties to follow so that land will be made available for cultivation, while farm lands are released into the hands of landless farmers to cultivate enough food to ensure food security.*

**Keywords:** Land Leasing, Land Tenure, Land lease Market, Food Security.

## **Introduction**

Land is a very important basic resource or facility for any group of persons. It is a very significant factor in production since all economic activities like industrial production, farming, and mining take place with the use of land. Land is also used for other purposes like building of shelter, burying of the dead, animal reserve etc. However land is fixed and not evenly distributed such

that, while some individuals have access to land others don't. Since it is not possible to carry out production without the use of land, those who don't have land resolve to purchasing same from land owners, those who can't afford to buy, embark on leasing for production. Land tenure system therefore becomes essential in agricultural production since it describes the ownership of land for certain purposes including utilization, lease or even sale.

Nyamibo (2010) described ownership of land in Nigeria to have involved community ownership, corporate ownership and individual ownership. Under community ownership of land, the head of the community has rights to land and can only allocate pieces of land to community members to farm. This practice is obtainable among the Hausas. Under corporate ownership of land, people of same descent own land shared to its members who have the right to cultivate but not to transfer to any other person outside the group. This practice is obtainable in some places within Ibo society. Individual ownership of land is however strange in Nigeria since it was brought about at the time of colonialism when people began to purchase land in town due to growth in urbanisation. Among Tiv however, land is owned according to family lineage through inheritance, children claim the pieces of land used by their mothers for farming such that, those whose mothers cultivate many crops, acquire much land while those with small farms are left with small pieces of land.

According to Eze, et-al (2011) land is the basic resource that distinguishes agriculture from most other types of businesses because it is required for the production of crops and livestock. Land is the most valuable asset on the balance sheet of most farmers. How much land you need and how you acquire it are two of the most important decisions for a farm operator. Not having enough land can limit the efficiency of the other resources you use on the farm and may severely limit your ability to expand your business in the future. Having too much land may limit your ability to manage it effectively and may cause cash flow problems that limit your ability to make other investments. To De Zoysa (2013) therefore acquisition of land should be thought of in terms of control. Control can be in the form of ownership or leasing. Most farmers find that a combination of both ownership and leasing is desirable, especially when capital is limited.

For many farmers, especially in areas where land is quite expensive, leasing land is often the best option. Some farmers choose to own only their home and a limited amount of land for barns, crop storage, machinery sheds, livestock facilities, and other real estate improvements. They then lease the bulk of their land for crop production, allowing them flexibility to adjust their farm size as conditions warrant. With this arrangement landless famers depend on either buying of agricultural land or land lease market as a means of accessing land for agricultural production, while land owners make their income by leasing out land to those who need such for cultivation.

Alarima (2012) described a lease as a legally enforceable contract which allows the owner of a property, equipment, and/or livestock to convey the right to use that property to another person in exchange for rent. The lease defines the rights between the landlord and the tenant, and defines how the landlord/tenant relationship will operate. He then enumerates elements of an effective lease to include the following.

- i. It must be a bond between two or more individuals with respect to the property to be leased.
- ii. There should be a payment agreement with regards to amount and terms of payment.
- iii. This must also involve transfer of the right to use, possess and control the property in question to the tenant.
- iv. There must be indication of intent to and specified period in which the right to possess, use and control the property can be transferred back to the landlord in specified conditions when lease terminates.

A lease may be written or oral. However, a written lease does provide a record of the terms agreed to in the lease. In developing countries like Nigeria, land can be acquired through various ways ranging from inheritance, lease and purchase. Inheritance which is an aspect of customary

land tenure system is related to family ties and is based on the concept of group ownership of absolute rights to land, with individuals acquiring statutory rights. Customary land rights establish the basis for access to land resources and the opportunity to use the land for productive purposes (Onyido 2011). Under this system, each individual member of land holding family is entitled to a portion of land enough to feed himself and members of his family.

Bezabih, & Holden, (2006), observed that in recent times land has become scarce due to the impact of population growth and agricultural commercialization which brought about increase in demand for land. With this development, rights to land is increasingly individualized along two dimensions, namely the range of rights held and the extent of autonomy afforded by the landholder in exercising these rights. Individual family members who are given the right to use specified portions of land also extend same to planting of trees and other land development processes. Isong (2021) explains further that, the right to transfer ownership through sale of land came in and the right to rent, which became seriously circumscribed by the requirement that land ought to remain within the family or lineage. At first, sales were sanctioned only among members of the group of common descent or residence, later to outsiders which therefore become recognised as a proper pattern of accessing and distributing land for productive use.

Incidentally, markets are the key economic mechanisms for efficient resource allocation and economic growth and so is the land lease market. Under institutional settings where imperfections exist in markets for credit and insurance, transfers of land use rights usually take place through land rental market. Odoemelam, Alamba, Lekan-Akomolafe. (2014) asserts that, for sustainable land use, it becomes desirable for land to be transferred from less productive to more productive producers. Equalizing the marginal product of land across producers with different land-labour endowments is essentially for efficient and equitable land allocation and for productivity growth in agriculture.

According to Isaac et al (2021) at least 9.4 million Nigerians are undernourished indicating that they do not have access to the required quantity and quality of food necessary for their wellbeing. This condition cannot be properly addressed without considering measures of accessing agricultural land. Nigeria with over 2 million people cannot successfully attain food security without proper distribution of agricultural land which leads to easy access to land by farmers. This asserts that food security and poverty reduction cannot be achieved unless issues of access to land, security of tenure and the capacity to use land productively and in a sustainable manner are addressed. It is therefore assumed that enhancing access to land, security of tenure or sustainability of land resource use will ultimately enhance welfare, including food security.

The development of land lease market enhances allocative efficiency and crop productivity because it bridges the gap between the land owners and landless farmers and hence improve land investment or improvement for better agricultural growth and development. Land lease market is regarded as an efficient way to bring about efficient resource allocation (Oliolu 2011& Oluyede et-al 2014). Land use issues are crucial in Nigeria's current development for several reasons: the increasing scarcity of land and escalating herder-farmer conflicts; the rising activities towards economic diversification and restructuring away from crude oil to agriculture. The pattern of land leasing in Benue state is such that, land rental arrangements are generally informal, short term and between households living in the same village or among friends or among total strangers even non-tribes residing in towns. Rented lands are therefore subject to tenure insecurity, which may discourage land investment and reduce agricultural productivity.

In Tiv land in particular land use has become a crucial matter since there is increasing scarcity of land because of increasing number of people who return to agricultural production due to unemployment. Many landowners from Guma, Kwande, Gwer, Gwer-West, Makurdi, Logo, Katisna-Ala, Ukum and Buruku Local Government Areas have been driven away from their ancestral land through herdsmen attack which makes them to become landless farmers depending on other people to access farmlands. With increased pressure on the remaining seemingly safe land free from herdsmen attack it is then obvious that it can't be enough to cultivate the required food to feed the entire population thereby bringing pressure on the land lease market. (Kyernum N, Aga S. 2014)

The emergence of land lease market came in to grant access to land for farmers who are less endowed with the land resource. Though, there are many constraints limiting the potentiality of land lease market as noted by Chikaire , Anyoha, Ani, & Atoma. (2014). Land lease market is severely restricted where kinship ties are strong and such land market is largely unregistered. However as unofficial as the land market is, it still gives access to agricultural land. It therefore becomes necessary to investigate into the challenges faced by the land lease market in the study area and how such challenges can affect food security if not properly handled.

### **The problem**

There is an increase in population that has necessitated more production of crops to cater for the food needs of the increased population, this has brought about high demand for land such that, those who don't have access to land in addition to owners of land have need of using land for agricultural production. Incidentally, the emergence of land lease market which is supposed to grant access to land for farmers who are less endowed with the land resource seems to be confronted with a lot of constraints limiting the potentiality of land lease market. With this situation it seems those who own agricultural land have gained opportunity over those seeking to utilise the land since there is a rush to acquire land for agricultural production. The problem addressed in this work is that with increased constraints in land lease market what implication does this have on access to farm land, crop production and food security in the study area. This has become very crucial in the face of growing, high demand for food and decreasing availability of arable land among Tiv.

### **Objectives**

On a wide range this study was set to examine the challenges facing land lease market and its implication on food security in the study area. Specifically therefore the study pursued certain objectives to:

- i. Examine the land tenure system practiced in the study area.
- ii. Assess the pattern of land lease market obtainable in Ishangev-tiev Community.
- iii. Investigate into the challenges of land lease market in Ishangev-tiev Community
- iv. Examine the implications of land lease market challenges on food production and food security in the study area and proffer solutions.

### **Justification of the Study.**

A study of this nature which centres on land lease markets and crop production is expected to impact positively on the government who has the responsibility to control land reforms in order to make land more accessible and productive for rural poor farmers who are less endowed with the land resource. Due to their poor financial status as well as inability to acquire land through purchase, land lease becomes a major, and for many, the sole means of gaining access to land for crop production. We expect the contents of this paper to be useful to federal and state public institutions with land-related mandates in the on-going efforts towards land reforms through the land use act, to ensure more equitable distribution of the land resource, cognizant of the critical role of land in agricultural production. Researchers and students will benefit from this study because it stimulates interest in many directions for further enquiries.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The Conflict model was applied as a foundation and a basis to anchor the propositions and submissions of this research work for enhanced explanations and critical analysis.

### **The Conflict Model**

Conflict model looked at society as a system of competing groups struggling to obtain resources for human survival. The reason for this struggle is the changing population and division of labour system. The model was developed by some thinkers like Karl Marx, Robert Park Vilfredo Pareto and Thorstein Veblen. While some of the thinkers are radical in their approach to the

explanation to this model, others are more comfortable with the conservative approach. The systemic approach to this model however appears more suitable to the explanation of issues in this work. This approach maintain that, social conflict in the society emanate from economic factors. Karl Marx as one of those who propounded this approach was concerned about the relationship between the society's economic substructure and the society's normative superstructure on an ongoing and changing basis through society's historical development. Marx therefore based his analysis of conflict on the nature of corruption of the natural man and the alienated man through industrialisation and capitalist exploitation. The model has some assumptions as below:

- i. The material aspect of one's life determine his consciousness.
- ii. Economic change brings about changes in norms and values of the society
- iii. Society represents an evolutionary balance in which relationship and social consciousness are defined by its primary mode of material production.
- iv. The pattern of interrelationship between the superstructure and the substructure leads the society towards a number of development stages.

To Marx therefore, the material condition of the society determines the operation and changes that occur in all the other aspects of society like religion, education, politics and others. This model is relevant in explaining the nature of agricultural land lease patterns in rural societies in the sense that, while owners of land lease out their lands as a means of earning income to solve their economic problems, landless farmers needs the agricultural lands as a factor of production which enable them access both food and income. Competition therefore become inevitable since landowners seek to maximise their income while the tenants are more interested in minimising their cost of production to maximise their gain. This nature of interaction is capable of bringing in conflict. The conflict model therefore explains the nature of agricultural land lease market and its social relations.

### **Methodology**

Survey research design was used for this study to warrant the sampling of respondents within the study population and the result used as a representation of the entire population. Ishagev community is a rural community located within Konshisha Local government Area and it is one of the Districts that form the local Government Area. The District has four Council wards which are, Iyuar-Anyam, Mbaikyase, Mbagusa-Mbatsegh, Ikyrav-Mbatwer. The community is primarily an agrarian one with agriculture as the major economic activity. Major crops produced includes yams, rice, soybeans and groundnuts, though there exist other activities like carpentry, motor mechanics, traders and civil servant. All of these categories of workers still engage in farming as if that is the major income earning venture. While many of the people within the community are Tiv, there exist few people from Igede tribe of Benue State and the Ibos who are from the South East of Nigeria.

### **The Study Population**

The population of the study was mainly agricultural land owners and tenants currently farming within the community. This comprised adults male and female who engaged in agricultural land lease market either as tenants or land owners. Only part of this population was studied therefore sampling techniques were adopted to select respondents. Stratified and Purposive sampling techniques were used to select 150 respondents 75 agricultural land owners and 75 landless farmers who were agricultural land tenants. This technique was more suitable since it helped in selecting the relevant respondents with the needed information for the study. While land owners formed one strata, the landless farmers formed the other one therefore equal number of respondents (75) were selected from each stratum.

### **Techniques of Data collection**

Structured interview and key informant interview techniques were applied to collect data from

the respondents. Structured questions were administered to landless farmers who engaged in land leasing and agricultural land owners who leased their land within the study area. Key informant interview was also granted to six specific individuals who have participated in the land lease market for at least ten years and had full knowledge of its operations in the study area, three from the landowners and three from the tenants. These were selected from the 150 respondents already interviewed. Guided questions for Key informant interview were constructed to give the interview a direction, however they were allowed enough time to express themselves to enable the researcher pick out the needed and relevant information.

### Techniques of Data analysis

Information gathered in this study were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively such that, some categories of the data were tabulated for clear analysis and understanding while others were analysed using the descriptive interpretative analysis. Therefore data collected by the use of structured interview were analysed quantitatively with the use of tables and percentages while that collected through key informant interview were analysed qualitatively to compliment the quantitative information.

### Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Data collected for this study is presented with respect to the demographic information of the respondents, land tenure system adopted in the study area, nature of land lease practices in the study area, factors influencing lease of land, challenges of land lease market, effects of land lease markets on food production and ways of resolving land lease issues for improved food production.

### Demographic Data of the Respondents.

Information regarding the background of the respondents in this study area is presented here with respect to age, sex, level of income and farm size.

**Table 1: Demographics Data of the Respondents**

	Respondents	Frequency	Percentages
Age	18-30yrs	22	15
	31-42yrs	47	31
	43-54yrs	63	42
	55yrs and above	18	12
Sex	Male	70	47
	Female	80	53
Income	Less than 100 thousand naira per year	30	20
	100 -500 thousand naira per year	69	46
	600,000- 1000,000 naira	31	21
	Above 1000,000 naira per year	20	13
Farm size.	Less than a hectare	20	13
	1- 5 hectares	40	65
	6- above	15	2
	No farm land	75	50

### Field Survey 2022

Data on table one shows that, 42% (63) of the respondents were between the ages of 43 to 54years. This was consciously selected to ensure that only adults qualified to engage in land lease market were used for the study. The least in number were those from 55yrs and above 12%. The number of female 53% (80) was more than the number of males 47%(70) indicating the active involvement of women in agricultural production. Majority of the respondents had yearly income ranging between 1 to 5 hundred thousand naira while the highest income per year was above 1million naira. With respect to farm size, 50% 75 respondents had no farm

land but were purely tenants, 2% (15) of them had up to 6 hectares of land while 13% (20) respondents had land less than a hectare. This explains the category of respondents used in the study area.

### Land Tenure System Practiced in the Study Area

Ownership to land in the study area was on two perspectives, while majority of the people owned land communally which was traditionally inherited from their forefathers, few people owned private lands through purchase while others were landless farmers as shown on the table below.

**Table 2 Types of land tenure systems obtainable in the study area**

Land tenure system	Frequency	Percentages
Traditional ownership of land	72	48
Private ownership of land	3	2
Landless farmers	75	50
	150	100

### Fields survey 2022

Traditional land tenure system was practiced by many 48% (72) of the respondents in the study area where by land belongs to the community in principle and to members of families in practice. This is because Individual families had family lands which was inherited and could be cultivated, leased or even sold but with the consent of the extended members of the family few 2% (3) respondents had private lands within the study area which were purchased from the land owners. However, 50% (75) of the respondents were land less farmers. Basically the traditional land tenure system was predominant in the study area with only few people who owned land through purchase. One sixty-eight (68) years old man from Iyar-nyam council ward revealed that, " In this community land simply become yours once your father have land and your mother engages in cultivating it, all the portions of land used by your mother for farming become traditionally seen as yours and you have the right to claim such as your farm lands. Only indigenes within the community who do not have land for inheritance and visitors that purchase or hire land from those willing to engage in such transactions" This became clear that, traditional land tenure system was predominant in the study area. One of the key informants in Mbaikyase council ward however added that, some people within the community obtained their lands through gift from caring relations who allocates some plots of land to them as gifts on permanent basis. Therefore to have access to land in the study area, one needs to either possess one or lease from owners.

### Factors leading to land lease market in the study area

Land lease market in the study area was influenced by different factors. Availability of land desire to make money, desire to access land for cultivation and many others as presented on table 3. The data is continuous since both land owners and farmers repeated several information as seen on the table presented.

**Table 3: Factors leading to land lease market in the study Area**

Factors determining land lease market	Frequency
Desire of the Landowners to get money	135
The only option to access land by landless farmers.	72
Lack of strength and capital to use land by some the owners	40
Pressure from landless farmers to get farmland	90
Availability of uncultivated land	120
In ability to purchase agricultural land	13

### Field survey 2022

Most of the respondents (135) were of the view that the desire to get money by landowners pushed them to lease. Seventy two (72) of the respondents said that leasing of land is the only option for landless farmers. Forty (40) of the respondents felt that landowners who were not capable of cultivating the land decide to lease it out. Ninety (90) respondents were of the view that pressure from landless farmers to access agricultural land for cultivation of crops is usually what necessitates the operation of land lease market, while one- hundred and twenty (120) of the respondents argued that, it was the availability of uncultivated land within the study area that motivates land owners to lease land out. Thirteen (13) respondents felt that since many of landless farmers did not have money to purchase land, leasing out land becomes the only option for them to engage in agricultural production. During key informant interview, one 75yrs old woman from Ikurav-Mbatwer council ward who was a land owner laments that “as an elderly widow without anybody to dig the heaps for my farm I find it easier to lease the land out and get money to buy my food in order to survive” This expression indicates that, while some landless farmers desperately need farm lands as a means of survival, other land owners also need the rent from such famers to survive.

#### **Nature of agricultural land lease market in the study area**

Data was presented showing the nature of land lease market carried out in the study area. It was discovered that this was carried out in an informal way and not following any laid down principles such that each land owner from a particular family or community demands what he wants arbitrarily and this changes from one farming season to the other. However prominent among the categories of land lease patterns were cash lease, fief lease and crops lease as presented below.

**Table 4 Categories of Agricultural land leases in the study Area**

Categories	Frequency	Percentages
Cash lease	134	89
Flex lease	10	7
Crops share lease	6	4

#### **Field Survey**

Information from table four (4) indicates that majority (89%) of the respondents within the study area practiced cash lease by which the landless farmers pay a stipulated amount of money in cash to access a specified piece of land per farming season. 7% of the respondents practiced flex lease under which land owners collect a certain agreed quantity of either the produce of the tenant or its monetary value per farming season irrespective of the yields per season. It was realised that the practice of this type of lease was limited within family relations. Few (4%) respondents practiced crop share lease in which a particular crop produced by a tenant is shared in an agreed proportion with the landowner in exchange to use of the land. In some cases, the land owner will be required to also supply agrochemicals or other inputs for the production of such crops, this was also practiced primarily among family members and acquaintances within the community. It then shows that cash lease was the most common type of lease practiced within the study area. A 47yrs old landless farmer from the study area explained that, landowners negotiate different type of rates in the land lease market since in our community issues of land are not official in nature, while some land owners request for money, others ask for crops according to the amount of yields per harvesting season, while others request for a specified quantity of crops irrespective of the total yield per year.

#### **Socio-economic challenges of land lease market in the study area**

Data collected revealed that, despite the land lease market that has given room for landless farmers to access agricultural land, many challenges are faced in the conduct of the market including: payment of undue taxes to youths in the farming environment, demand for exorbitant



burial contributions whenever the family of the land lord is bereaved, undue demands for gifts during festivities, desire to share into the yields during harvesting season, undue cost of agricultural land, sudden dismissal from farm lands without prior notice, inadequate security for the farm proceeds. The data is continuous since many points were repeated by several respondents as it is on table 5

**Table 5 Socio-economic Challenges facing land lease market in the Study Area**

<b>Challenges of Land lease Market</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
High cost of agricultural land leasing	73
Leasing of same piece of land to different farmers at the same time	38
Sexual harassment of females tenants	43
Undue taxes from the community youths and leaders	67
Charges for burial, projects and festivity contributions by landowners	56
Request for farmers crops by landowners at harvesting season	63
Unexpected dismissal farmers from cultivating the land	70
Inadequate security for the farm products	45
Undue demand for credits by land owners which usually become bad debts	32
Delay in payment of the lease land lease money	27
Population of land owners compounds by landless farmers	62

### **Field survey 2022**

Data presented on table revealed that, farmers encounter a lot of challenges in the land lease market within the study area ranging from high cost of land to unfair treatment by land owners and other members of the host communities. 73 of the respondents lamented that, the cost of renting agricultural land is high compared to their output since other expenses are enquired in the course of crop production. 38 respondents mentioned the fact that sometimes one piece of land is leased to several farmers leading to crises and loss of money by those who come late to cultivate the land. 43 respondents complained that landowners sometimes harass female tenants sexually and may turn to increase rent arbitrary when such demand are turned down. 67 of the respondents said that youths from host communities demand and collect undue taxes from tenants who come from other communities to farm. 56 respondents complained that, most landowners expect huge contributions in cash and kind at festive periods and burial ceremonies which when not given often leads to either increase in lease rate or any of such. 63 respondents were of the view that, land owners always desire that tenants should dash some of their crops to them willingly as appreciation for accessing their lands which when not done, generates some misunderstandings.

70 respondents complained that some landowners usually send farmers out of their lands without prior notice making it difficult for them to arrange and get agricultural land elsewhere to continual with their farming. 45 respondents had challenges of insecurity of their farms these said that, sometimes their crops are stolen either from the farm or at landowner's residents after the crops are been harvested and kept at home. 32 of the respondents mentioned collection of debts from tenants which always turn up as bad debts since tenants become scared to ask for the payment of such debts with the fear that they may be asked to leave the land. One of the land less farmers even said " I can't forget how I was pushed out of the farm land I leased and asked to remove my cassava prematurely, my crime was simply because, I complained of not having money when asked to contribute the sum of five thousand naira to bury their relation." This shows maltreatment of tenants by landowners in the study area.

On the part of land owners 27 of them said that sometimes landless farmers delay in giving money for the leased lands and that makes them collect money from other farmers who seems to be ready, 62 of them were of the view that, landless farmers who come to lease land for farming usually expand their compounds since they build huts and reside with them in order

to cultivate such lands and to store the cultivated crops. By this they have a challenge of accommodating different people with diverse characters among their family members. A 70yrs old land owner from Mbagusa-Mbatsegh council wards even lamented during the interview saying "There is no more space in my compound any longer since many farmers have constructed huts all round where they stay to farm and to keep their crops" Since land cannot be leased and taken away for use at a separate place, it brings about all these conditions and experiences which makes land lease market cumbersome affecting output, income and profit of the landless farmers and increasing their cost of production.

It is then clear from table five that, the major challenges faced by the land lease market in - tiev community come from the undue demands and expectations of land owners from their tenants outside of the rent charged for land, which over burden the landless farmers. Landowners on the other hand become aggrieved with such tenants who find it difficult to cope with their undue demands. With this situation, there is always conflict between the two parties, capable of affecting the use of land and agricultural production in the study area.

#### **Implications of land lease market challenges on food scarcity in the study area.**

Data collected revealed that, land lease market in the study area has encountered a lot of challenges with varying implication, on agricultural production and food security. This include: increase in cost of production, low agricultural productivity, withdrawal of some landless farmers from agricultural production, increase in prices of food, inadequate food supply as presented on the table following. Information is continuous since several responses were repeated by different respondents.

**Table 6 Implications of land lease challenges on food security in the study area**

<b>Implications of land lease challenges</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Increase in farmers cost of production	75
Decrease in farmers profit and income	73
Crises between landless farmers and owners of land	120
Withdrawer of some landless farmers from land lease market	56
Decrease in agricultural production	75
Decrease in food supply	63
Increase in prices of food	135
Food insecurity	140

#### **Field survey 2022**

From the table above, all the 75 landless farmers interviewed complained of high cost of agricultural land and additional expenses one needs to incur apart from the rent before accessing land to farm, It was also gathered from 56 respondents that, the inconveniences in the land lease market within the study area is capable of making some landless farmers abandon farming for other ventures. 75 respondents had it that, there will be a decrease in agricultural production in the area since there is a tendency for many landless farmers who have been cultivating the land to pack out due to frustration .63 respondents were of the view that, if the cultivation of land is left in the hands of owners of land alone, there will be a decrease in agricultural production, the consequences is decrease in food supply, 135 respondents felt that the situation of inadequate food supply can lead to increase in prices of food. 140 of the respondents had it that food crises set in if landless farmers who form part of food producers withdraw from agricultural production. Consequently the amount of food produced will not be enough to sustain the increasing population in the society leading to food insecurity. Challenges in land lease market are therefore capable of discouraging the two parties from involving into it thereby hindering agricultural productivity.

### Discussion of Findings

This study has considered land lease market practiced in Ishangev-tiev Community of Konshisha local Government. It was discovered that traditional land tenure system was dominant in the study area while private ownership of land was practiced by few individuals through purchase. Land lease market was widely practiced in Ishangev-tiev Community by majority of those who had arable land. Landless farmers from within and without the community flock in to lease farm lands mainly for crops production. Land lease market flourished due to the fact that Ishangev-tiev community had arable land more than the capacity of the inhabitants to cultivate.

However, the study reveals that, a lot of challenges limit the benefits of land lease market as land owners were discovered to have abused this transaction. It was discovered that, many landowners see their tenants as being vulnerable since they depend on the land lease market for their upkeep, with this mentality, landowners change the rent at will and even drive tenants away unduly. Land owners were also accused of charging very high, making undue demands aside the rent paid for leasing land. For example many informal expenses like burial and festivity contributions were expected to be paid by tenants, others demand crops during harvest, some land owners receive credits from tenants without paying while youths in such areas also demand for exorbitant taxes from the farmers. In most cases these additional expenses incurred by the farmers increased their cost of production, reduced profit therefore discouraging landless farmers from the land lease market. Other tenants even complained about demand for immoral relationship by landowners to their female family members which usually make many tenants to quit the community.

Since food and agricultural production must be carried out on land, the effectiveness of land lease market becomes very necessary. The socio-economic challenges faced in this market therefore had implications of disrupting the land lease market which is the only means through which the teaming landless farmers can put to use the much uncultivated land laying waste in the tiev community. With the land lease challenges therefore agricultural production will be limited as well as food production. This will bring about decrease in food supply leading to increase in prices of food and food insecurity in the community and state in general. Since landless farmers who are the main players in the land lease market lack funds to meet up with the undue demands from land owners, there must be an intervention to ease the land lease market from its challenge such that agricultural production can be increased to ensure food security.

### Conclusion

The importance of land lease market in agricultural production cannot be overemphasised since it makes land available for landless farmers to cultivate crops. It also makes it possible for arable land laying waste to be put to productive use. This is meant to expand agricultural production and increase food security. However where the lease market experience challenges, crop production becomes affected and food security threatened. The study has established the fact that, the land lease market in the study area exist between landowners and tenants who were landless farmers. While the owners of land seek to maximise their income by demanding much for rent and other benefits, landless farmers were out to minimise cost of production in order to maximise their income. However the landless farmers were disadvantaged in the lease market since there were so much at the receiving end finding it difficult to survive without land. These farmers suffer increase in cost of production and decrease in output. Therefore, something has to be done to address land lease market challenges in order to increase food production and food security in the community and the state in general.

### Recommendations

- i. Conditions guiding land lease market to be clearly spelt out by traditional rulers and the local government administration for both parties to follow.
- ii. The local government to select representatives in agricultural extension to watch over the conduct of the land lease market.

- iii. Land owners to minimise unnecessary demand from their tenants
- iv. All unused land per farming season should be shared to landless farmers for production while the land owners are paid by the government,
- v. Community members should minimise demanding extra money or resources from tenants.
- vi. Land owners to ensure the security of farmers in their area or arrest the perpetrators

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