



The Socio-Economic and Environmental Impact of Herdsmen Strike on Agriculture in Selected Local Government Areas in Benue ,Ebonyi ,Delta ,Kogi and Plateau State of Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This research looks at the socio-economic and environmental impact of herdsmen strikes on agriculture in selected local government areas of Benue, Delta, Ebonyi, Kogi and Plateau States in Nigeria. The research used both primary and secondary data to compile its population, which consists of the entire population of the selected local government areas of Agatu, Makurdi, Ughelli North, Aniocha North, Ebonyi, Ohaukwu, Omala, Dekina, Mangu and Bokkos making a total of 2,007,038. A sample size of 400 was achieved by using the Taro Yamane formula. With the use of a purposive sampling methodology, 400 questionnaires were circulated and 291 were collected. Using a mean criterion of 3.0, the questionnaire was evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale. The study recommended that the state and federal government of Nigeria should engage peace and conflict resolution experts in dealing with issues concerning herdsmen-farmer crises, adoption of community policing to forestall peace in the rural areas, designate some areas as grazing fields for the nomadic herdsmen and also adopt the use of PIGOVIAN TAX on the activities of herdsmen etc. The study concluded that agricultural activities will experience more employment, sales, revenue, profitability, and productivity in the absence of herdsmen attacks which in return will lead to economic growth and development of the LGS's, state and nation as a whole.

INTRODUCTION

Today, the production of all goods in the world is obtained directly or indirectly from agricultural products, which means that no country in the world can survive without agricultural products, which makes agriculture important for all countries of the world. Nigeria's population has grown from 33 million in 1950 to approximately 200 million today. The United Nations recently predicted that the population will continue to grow over the next few years, reaching 364 million in 2030 and 480 million in 2050. The alarming increase in population is causing serious pressure on the land and water used by farmers and livestock. In particular, population growth leads to the expansion of cultivated areas and the reduction of crops available to land managers competing for dwindling resources. In the far north, the effects of desertification and the energy crisis are destroying forests, along with an uncertain climate and low rainfall, making it difficult to support crowds, forcing many farmers and herders to move south with their animals. This has been happening slowly over the last few decades and has increased over the last few years, increasing the soil and water levels in central and southern Nigeria.

One of the consequences of this process is the closure of nomadic routes and the loss of pastures due to the development of agriculture, and the migration of shepherds to the south due to conflicts with local communities. Several conflicts have been witness in south-south, South-east and middle belt geopolitical zones in Nigeria between Herdsmen and Farmers (host communities' /land owners) such as: (Delta state) 2 March, 14 May 2016, 9 Jan, 6, 28 March, 12 May, 19 June 2017, 28 April 2018, and 4 April 2024, south east (Ebonyi state) on 12 March 2018, 30 May 2021 and the middle belt (Plateau state) in September 9 October 2017, 16, 27 October, 24 January 2018, 10 February, 8 March 2018, 21, 23, 25 June 2018, (Kogi state) 19 March 2018, (Niger state) 12 July 2016, January 2017, (Nasarawa state) 1 January 2016, 6 February, 14 April 2018, 5 June 2018, (Benue state) 2, 7, 24, 28 February, 7 March Sunday, 8, 13, 17, 20 April, 2, 15 May, June 2016, 17 July, 11 July, 25, 24 January, 8, 11, 20, 27 March, 8, 13 May, 13 November, 31 December, 1 January 2017, 10, 12 February, 5 March, April 2018, (Taraba State) January 17, 10 April, May 6, December 17, 2016, May 5, 2017, March 3, April 12, 2018, May 25, (Adamawa State) January 23 and June 25, August 1-3 and 13, 2016, February 27, 2018 (Federal Capital Territory) 6 April 2024 (John Peter Okoro, 2018). The conflicts are generally local but often involve Fulani herdsmen and local farming communities. The Nigerian government is weak in rural areas and has neglected agriculture since oil revenues began to dominate the economy in the 1970s.

Agriculture and animal production have developed little due to the dependence on oil revenues, which are not reinvested in the production of industrial products. The state's response in the context of ongoing conflicts between farmers and herders has been both ad hoc and reactive, without coordination and management of stability and peace, rather than referring to security measures or the establishment of strategic dialogues. An important way here is for the state to be more responsive by creating infrastructure and

security systems at the local and state levels. Thousands of people were killed, communities and farms were destroyed, and many farmers and animals lost their lives and property. This killing and destruction was not just for earning a living but also affected the unity of the country. We see more revenge killings every day, making peace even more difficult. Rural refugees in Nigeria's hinterland resorted to violence and turned to violent crime. The result is an ever-increasing loss of animal and human life, with victims on all sides (farmers, commercial farmers, and inspectors). As violence between herders and farmers continues to evolve into violence and rural violence, popular narratives persist, creating meaning, context, and misunderstanding. The rural people's narrative was captured in the media and popular discourse became one of the driving forces in the spread of the conflict in the country. The heroes of this epic are the nomadic Fulani herders, mostly Muslims, and several other farming communities living in the society, who are often, but not always, non-Muslim. These two different groups of people are often described as perpetrators and victims, respectively. The social, religious and ethnic views of these rural communities are embedded in an overall message that inspires and encourages curiosity and skepticism. The result is racial and religious discrimination as well as negativity between the "one" and the "other", which leads to the process of discrimination, which ultimately leads to exclusion, lest there be further attacks or exchanges of revenge between different groups. The contraction of agriculture in affected communities and countries is causing shortages of agricultural products that depend on food/crops from agricultural countries to other countries. Nigeria urgently needs to find a way out of the crisis and examination of the Curse will enable this. This study therefore focuses on the socio-economic and environmental impact of herdsman strike on agriculture in selected local government areas in Benue, Delta, Ebonyi, Kogi and Plateau States in Nigeria.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Conceptual Clarification

Herdsman

Herdsman or pastoralists are nomadic or semi nomadic person especially a man who watches over a herd of cows, sheep etc. It's also seen as a person who breeds, rears, or cares for cattle or (rarely) other livestock in the herd. The primary occupation is raising livestock in Nigeria, Fulani herders often engage in random and organized nomadic activities. Fulani herdsman, who are completely nomadic, usually move randomly, while semi-nomadic herdsman move according to plan. One of the main reasons why herders migrate is to reach areas where there is more food and water for their cattle (Iro 1994).

Agricultural Activities

Agriculture is the processing of agricultural lands for the production of plant products, fruits, vegetables, ornamental and flowering plants and the use of agricultural lands for the cultivation of dairy products, livestock, poultry and all kinds of agricultural products having a domestic or foreign production

capacity. It also refers to all work related to growing crops and raising animals for food, fiber, medicinal plants, and other life-sustaining products.

Frustration Aggression Theory

Frustration Aggression Theory, also known as "frustration-attack-displacement theory", is a theory of attack and was developed in 1939 by John Dollard, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, Orval Mower and Robert Sears. The idea of Neal Miller in 1941 and Leonard Berkowitz in 1961. This theory was first put forward by saying that stress always leads to violence and violence is the result of stress. But two years later, Miller and Sears came up with this theory and suggested that some form of violence was possible when depression creates a need to respond. Therefore, the modified theory states that stress causes behavior that may or may not result in aggression, but all aggression results from stress, causing stress is not sufficient but necessary for aggression (Zillmann, 1979). He tried to explain the reason for the violence. Anxiety is "a state that occurs when the target response is interfered with," while aggression is defined as "behavior in which the target response causes physical harm (or alters the body). The theory is that stress leads to violence, but when the source of the stress cannot be challenged, the violence is directed at an innocent target (the scapegoat). The theory is also used to explain resistance and resilience, both of which are thought to come from the poor and the underprivileged, who are capable of expressing frustration and anger through violence. The origins of the shepherds' violence can be traced back to the desert; This can lead to reduced food consumption or animal shortages, affecting their health in the long run. If a shepherd loses his flock due to drought and thirst, he will be in trouble because he will lose his life. Based on this reality, he may have malicious intent, and since he cannot take it to nature, in the long run it will lead him to a person or group of people who prevent him from moving to a safe area. Farmers and communities in Nigeria are also frustrated by livestock attacking and eating their crops. They also resort to violence because they are anxious and they take out their violence on herdsmen and cows. Therefore, conflict and confrontation are things that cannot be avoided.

Empirical Review

Chukwu et al (2022) examine the effect of Fulani Herdsmen and Farmers clashes on agricultural development in Nigeria. The main objective of this study is to determine the impact of conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers on agriculture in the Ukpabi-Nimbo community in Enugu State, Nigeria. The specific objective is to: determine the causes of conflict between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Ukpabi-Nimbo, Enugu State, investigate the social impact of the Fulani herdsmen menace in Ukpabi-Nimbo, Enugu State, and investigate bankruptcy. The research adopted a descriptive research design. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size of 399 respondents in Ukpabi-Nimbo, Uzo-Uwani Local Government. The researcher obtained the data from primary and secondary sources. Primary data includes classification of questions and secondary data includes books, guides, online articles, etc. Contains. The data collected was analyzed using simple tables and

percentage analysis. There are significant differences in perception - Livestock Herders-Farmers conflict in Ukpabi-Nimbo, Enugu State Fulani-Herdsmen have huge impact on farmers in Ukpabi-Nimbo, Enugu State, Fulani-Herdsmen menace in Ukpabi, Enugu State -It has a significant impact in Nimbo Farmers in Nimbo have a significant economic impact, reaching a significance level of 0.013, 0.020, 0.046 < 0.05 according to the significance level (p value). It is therefore recommended that the federal and state governments appoint experts on peace and resolution to resolve issues related to farmers' disputes. This will support the early warning system while also leading to good discussions, negotiations and of course win-win solutions.

Adetunji and Ukhurebor (2020) examined the impact of conflict between Fulani herdsman and farmers on food security in Nigeria. The study, conducted using qualitative research, noted that some of the benefits of animal husbandry include income, production of raw materials and cultivation of organic fertilizers, especially for farmers in the region. Fertilizers cause environmental and health problems. Moreover, the study revealed that the surveillance of Fulani herdsman has led to many challenges such as food production, environmental impact, destruction of natural resources, change in the number of farmers and damage to agricultural lands.

Awotokun, Nwozor, and Olanrewaju (2020) examine conflicts and the retrogression of sustainable development: the political economy of herders-farmers' conflicts in Nigeria. This study produced primary and secondary data to assess the social and political impacts of conflict-affected farmers in Nigeria. Primary data was generated through key information interviews (KIIs), while secondary data was obtained from archival records and other media. Studies have shown that conflicts between herders and farmers cause serious damage to the Nigerian economy and human losses. The report also found that these conflicts are undermining hopes of achieving the global goal of eradicating poverty and zero hunger. The study also found that the government lacked a strong strategy to prevent conflict, underpinned by uncertainty and reluctance to prosecute conflict organizers and perpetrators.

Ibenekwu et al (2019) investigated Fulani herdsman-farmers conflict, agricultural production and welfare in Dekina local government area of Kogi State. This study investigates the conflict between farmers and herders in Dekina L.G.A. and how this affects food production. The researcher used the research method and used the survey as the data collection tool. Repeated questions were analyzed and explained using simple statistical methods such as simple variance. The investigation revealed that the victims abandoned agricultural products, decreased production and income of farmers and livestock, and used agriculture and tools without agricultural products, causing violence between Fulani herdsman and farmers. This study recommends that the state government support the dissemination of information through radio and other local media and focus on differences between communities rather than working groups. Support agriculture and improve pastures to raise cattle for the health of all parties. Reviewing the above evidence, Chukwu et al. (2022), Adetunji and Ukhurebor, (2020), Awotokun, Nwozor and Olanrewaju

(2020) and Ibenekwu et al, (2019) have all looked at conflict between pastoralists and farmers in Nigeria and its implications for agriculture. This study, unlike other studies, adopted survey method, 5 Likert scale and SPSS to analyze the socio-economic and environmental impact of herdsmen strike on agriculture in local government areas of Benue, Delta, Ebonyi, Kogi and Plateau States in Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a research study designed to examine the socio-economic and environmental impact of herdsmen strike on agriculture in local government areas of Benue, Delta, Ebonyi, Kogi and Plateau States in Nigeria. Primary data (participants' responses to the survey) and secondary data (time records) were used in this study. The population for this study only includes Benue State (Agatu and Makurdi), Delta State (Ughelli North and Aniocha North), Ebonyi State (Ebonyi and Ohaukwu), Kogi State (Omala and Dekina) and Plateau State (Mangu and Bakkos). According to the 2006 census, the population of the local governments is as follows: Agatu (115,597), Makurdi (300,377), Ughelli North (321,028), Aniocha North (104,711), Ebonyi (127,226), Ohaukwu (196,000), Omala (108,402), Dekina (260,312), Mangu (294,931) and Bokkos (178,454). The total population of ten (10) local governments is 2,007,038 people according to the 2006 census. With the implementation of Taro Yamane, the population size was reduced to 400 people and divided equally to each of the ten (10) LGAs and forty (40) people selected from the five (5) states of the study. It allows researchers to access important information for research. Data are presented using descriptive tools such as words, percentages, and averages. The research questions were analyzed using 5 Linkert mean and standard deviation in Social Sciences Statistical Software (SPSS). The research questions were analyzed using an average score of 3.0; Total scores below 3.0 indicate that the participant disagrees with the research question, while total scores above 3.0 indicate that the participant agrees with the research question. To clarify, out of the five (5) states selected for this study, ten (10) local governments were selected as the model for this study, and four (40) Questionnaires were evenly distributed among all local governments. This study chose to use purposive sampling because it provides a non-probability sample based on a specific population and characteristics common to all studies. It can also help researchers identify stereotypes that exist in each group. Based on purposive sampling technique, two local governments were selected from each of the five (5) states and a total of ten (10) local governments were selected as follows: Agatu, Makurdi, Ughelli North, Aniocha North, Ebonyi, Ohaukwu, Omala, Dekina, Mangu and Bokkos. The distribution of states and their selection criteria are as follows:

Table 1. Sectorial Distributions of the Questionnaires

Names of State	No. of L.G.A	No. of L.G.A Selected	Names of Selected L.G.A	No. of Questionnaires Distributed and No. Returned
Benue	23	2	Agatu	40/32

			Makurdi	40/35
Delta	23	2	Ughelli North Aniocha North	40/28 40/31
Ebonyi	13	2	Ebonyi Ohaukwu	40/31 40/33
Kogi	21	2	Omala Dekina	40/21 40/29
Plateau	17	2	Mangu Bokkos	40/27 40/24

Source: authors compilation (2024)

RESULTS

Presentation of Data

The data analysis is based on research objectives. Primary and secondary data were reviewed. In the main analyses, participants were identified according to demographic characteristics. Age, gender, marital status and all other demographic variables are calculated as percentages. In secondary analysis we use standard deviations and mean for descriptive statistics.

Table 2. Respondents Socio-demographic characteristics

Socio-Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	157	53.9
Female	134	46.1
Total	291	100
Marital Status		
Single	132	45.4
Married	159	54.6
Total	291	100
Age Range		
20-25 years	56	19.
26-35 years	79	27.2
36-45 years	65	22.3
46 years and above	91	31.3
Total	291	100
Highest Educational Qualification		
FSLC/WAEC	123	42.3
NCE/ND	78	26.8
HND/BSC	56	19.2
MSC/PHD	34	11.7
Total	291	100

Total 291 100

Source: Authors Survey, 2024

In table 2 we can see the details of the population. Among the 291 respondents, the majority of married men and women accounted for 54.6% of the total. The gender distribution is 134 females (46.1% of the total) and 157 males (53.9% of the total). In terms of age, most respondents are over 46 years of age; Similarly, when asked about their educational status among 91 (31.3%) respondents, the highest respondents have FSLC/WAEC and the lowest respondents have more than MSC/PHD.

Data Analysis

In order to determine the appropriateness of the research questions, the data of this study are presented and analyzed below using standard deviation and SPSS software.

Research Question

What are the socio-economic and environmental impact of herdsmen strike on agriculture in local government areas of Benue, Delta, Ebonyi, Kogi and Plateau States in Nigeria?

Table 3. Participants' Views on the Socio-economic and Environmental Impact of Herdsmen Strike on Agriculture in Local Government Areas of Benue, Delta, Ebonyi, Kogi and Plateau States in Nigeria

S/N	Factors	Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision
1	Herdsmen attack brings about loss of human life.	4.8	4.3	Agreed
2	It lead to displacement of farmers.	4.3	4.1	Agreed
3	The attack lead to distrust between herdsmen and farmers.	3.9	3.6	Agreed
4	Herdsmen attack brings about destruction of properties.	4.8	4.2	Agreed
5	Increase in food insecurity.	4.1	3.7	Agreed
6	It leads to unemployment.	3.3	3.2	Agreed
7	It obstruct farming activities.	4.0	3.6	Agreed
8	Herdsmen attack reduce the output and revenue of farmers.	3.5	3.7	Agreed
9	Loss of produce in storage.	4.0	3.6	Agreed
10	Scarcity in agricultural products.	3.5	3.3	Agreed
11	Herdsmen attack damage infrastructural facilities.	4.1	3.7	Agreed
12	It causes sexual harassment of human life.	4.4	4.0	Agreed
13	Reduction in the quality of social relationship among groups.	3.8	3.4	Agreed
14	It brings about reduction in social support.	3.4	3.3	Agreed
15	Herdsmen attack lead to destruction of	4.2	4.1	Agreed

farmlands and crops.				
16	Obstruction in farming festival.	3.6	3.4	Agreed
17	Herdsman attack also obstruct apprentice in farming occupation.	3.0	2.8	Disagree
Aggregate Mean		3.9	3.6	Agreed

Source: Authors survey, 2024

See data in Table 3, 1-17. The table aims to discuss the impact of herdsman strikes on agriculture in local governments in Benue, Ebonyi, Delta, Kogi and Plateau States in Nigeria and its socio-economic and environmental impact as well. As shown in the table above, the average grade for this project is well above the standard average of 3.0. Additionally, based on all responses, the standard deviation is 3.6 and the total mean is 3.9. According to the findings, anonymous respondents agreed that herdsman attacks are a major problem in agriculture in all constituencies of Benue, Ebonyi, Delta, Kogi and Plateau States in Nigeria.

DISCUSSION

Responses to the research questions revealed the impact of herdsman strike on agriculture in Benue, Ebonyi, Delta, Kogi and Plateau States in Nigeria as well as its socio-economic and environmental impact. Farming activities in Agatu, Makurdi, Ughelli North, Aniocha North, Ebonyi, Ohaukwu, Omala, Dekina, Mangu and Bokkos LGA's have all experienced loss of human life, displacement of farmers, distrust between herdsman and farmers, destruction of properties, food insecurity, unemployment, obstruction of farming activities, reduction in output and revenue of farmers, loss of produce in storage, scarcity in agricultural products, damage of infrastructural facilities, sexual harassment of human life, reduction in the quality of social relationship among groups, reduction in social support, destruction of farmlands and crops, obstruction in farming festival as seen in table 3. The result of this study is in line with the findings of Chukwu et al (2022) that Herdsman menace has significant social and economic effect on farmers, Adetunji and Ukhurebor (2020) that herdsman threat constituted several challenges on the issue of food production, environmental consequences, and destruction of natural resources, massive displacement of farmers and dilapidation of agricultural soil, Awotokun, Nwozor and Olanrewaju (2020) that herders-farmers' conflicts have inflicted serious costs on the Nigerian economy in terms of loss of resources and human lives. The study is also in line with that of Ibenekwu et al, (2019) that Herdsman attack lead to loss of human lives, farm produce in storage, reduction in output and income of farmers/herdsman, scarcity of agricultural products and properties exacerbated the crisis between herdsman and farmers. Consequently, through the findings of the research question and the associated empirical literatures evidence, this study has been able to highlight the socio-economic and environmental effects of herdsman attack on farming activities in selected local government areas in Benue, Ebonyi, Delta, Kogi and Plateau state of Nigeria which is the objective of the study.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study's significance lies in its examination of the socio-economic and environmental impact of herdsmen attack on agriculture, specifically how these effects brings about loss of human life, displacement of farmers, distrust between herdsmen and farmers, destruction of properties, food insecurity, unemployment, obstruction of farming activities, reduction in output and revenue of farmers, loss of produce in storage, scarcity in agricultural products, damage of infrastructural facilities, sexual harassment of human life, reduction in the quality of social relationship among groups, reduction in social support, destruction of farmlands and crops in Agatu, Makurdi, Ughelli North, Aniocha North, Ebonyi, Ohaukwu, Omala, Dekina, Mangu and Bokkos LGA's of Benue, Ebonyi, Delta, Kogi and Plateau state of Nigeria respectively. The study found that without the herdsmen's attack, agriculture would have had more employment, sales, income, profitability and productivity, leading to economy growth and development in local, state and national governments.

Recommendations

This study makes the following recommendations based on the findings:

1. The Nigerian government should employ experts on peace and resolution to resolve issues related to the herdsmen crisis. This, while supporting the early warning system, will lead to good debate, negotiation and of course a win-win for resolution.
2. The state and federal government should adopt a community policing model to maintain peace in rural areas as this will enable police and community members to recognize when herdsmen enter the community to kill residents. Community policing aims to effectively engage the community in solving policing problems and build partnerships to keep the community safe.
3. Government at all levels should establish a policy to prohibit open food and encourage herders to establish farms to raise cattle.
4. The state government should designate specific agricultural areas for livestock breeders and impose PIVOGIAN TAX to protect livestock breeders from activities that have a negative impact on farmers' field crops and the environment. This means that taxes should be imposed on animals that damage crops, properties and the environment during their herdsmen economic activities.
5. All herdsmen working in local government are required to be registered to help government agencies monitor their work and cooperation

FURTHER STUDY

This research still has limitations so it is still necessary to carry out further research on the topic "The Socio-Economic and Environmental Impact of Herdsmen Strike on Agriculture in Selected Local Government Areas."

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