Absence of Good Governance and its Implication on Farmers/Herdsmen Conflict in Zamfara State

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Abstract

The increasing conflict between farmers and herders in Nigeria has attracted global attention. The continue reoccurrence of the conflict in nearly every community is a threat to the peaceful co-existence of the Nigeria State, in relations to security and national development. The study examined the consequences of these Conflicts on Sustainable Livelihood in Dansadau Local Government Area, of Zanfara State. The study employed a survey method, and 204 respondents were purposefully selected from the fifteen wards in the three villages wherein recent period have frequently experience the attack in Zamfara State. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The frustration-aggression theory was used to explain the study. Findings revealed that the neglect and absences of good governance concerning poor law implementations had led people in the area taking laws into their hands. This is to prevent the destruction of crops, farmlands, stray of cattle, burning of villages, internally displacing people, kidnapping and general lawlessness in the area. The study concluded that, the recurrent conflict between the two groups on land resource deserved attention by all authorities concerned. Rehabilitation of neglected ranches, renovations, the building of security posts to provide the presence of governance in the areas is a necessity. Lastly, the Government should enact laws specifying the year for farming and harvest; select months for animal gracing within the same year period. The need to obey law and order is paramount to strengthening existing weak institutions involve in managing the conflict.

***Keywords**: Governance, Conflict, farmers, herdsmen.*

Introduction

The right to use of natural resources is desirable for the livelihood production for all humans, particularly land use for the rural dwellers who are directly involved in farming activities. In recent time, farming activities in Northern Nigeria is threatened by conflicts between herdsmen and farmers. These conflicts are said to have commenced in the last three decades, the intensification of this particular conflict and high rate of its spread across the entire country has resulted to communities displaced, prevention of humans from the use of natural resources as farming productions become the worst affected, billions of naira worth of crops and livestock are also lost due to the conflicts, properties are destroyed,

kidnapping and thousands live loss. The trivial impact of these conflicts has consequently threatened the livelihoods and very survival of the most affected communities and the stability of Northern Nigeria and country at larger.

The security implication, in particular, has attracted attention by national and international governments and organizations, as scholars have written a lot, with general daily information available on herdsmen and farmer conflict as reported by the media (print and electronic). It is, however, unfortunate that the report by the prints media have a depressing view because abundant of the given information is one-sided and in many cases, ambiguous. This information has further pointed to disarray mistrust and negative actions to political instability in the country. More so, does not give an accurate account of the origin and nature of the conflict.

Conflict impact on people in multiple ways, but the vulnerable is worst wedged. The rural dwellers heavily rely on the use of land resources for their daily survival, mostly for cultivations, animal feeding. As a source for income, thus, denial of access to the use of natural resources by the conflict of any sought upon which they build livelihood strategies becomes a disaster for them and their dependents (Pasteur, 2011). The impact of conflict tragedy on natural resources may not only affect their immediate users, their families but can extend to communities who depend on their farm produce for survival. The Sustainability of natural resources use could ensure sustainable livelihoods according to scholars' likes (Rennie & Singh, 1996 in Fasona, Fabusoro, Sodiya, Adedayo, Olorunfemi, Elias, Oyedafo & Oloukoi, 2016). Emphasizing availability subsistence in farming and pastoralists depend on the availability of stable land use and pasture for livelihoods survival. On the other hand, farmer -herdsmen conflict will not only have reduced full potential benefit of all land resource use but could create considerable unrest among communities, the vices happening in recent times result of this nature of conflict include - the killing of farmers, kidnapping for ransom, burning of villages, displacements of people among many other issues in African states.

In Africa, many aspects of rural livelihoods have continued to be at conflicts as livelihoods style for survival is poorly unspoken to and not address. The question of ownership and right of access to natural resources has become more critical in densely settled rural landscapes, where banditries are gradually taken them over, because of lack of good governance in the areas. Also, the increase in population

has obstructed on the movement of people to land reserved areas intended for pastoralist, which has influence farmer herdsman's conflict, people knowingly or unknowing encroach on farms of others or build on reserved grazing areas.
The study is an attempt to highlight the lack of government impact and intervention in the conflict between herdsmen and farmers in Zamfara State.

Review of Related Literature.

Conceptual Definition of Farmers and Herdsmen

Herdsmen are Fulbe (Fulani) they represent the largest pastoralists communities within the Savannah ecology of Northern Nigeria. Fulani uses Savannah to provide for their families and animal livestock. Their primary occupation is raising livestock for different purposes, one of which is selling and as a means of livelihood. Though, inappropriate land use of activities and ecological shifts have negatively impacted their sources of livelihood. The challenge of the ecosystem deterioration in land productivity and scarcity of water has contributed to the intensity of land competition amongst farmers and herdsmen in many societies in Africa and Nigeria inclusive. For example, the system of grazing, which involves the movement of large cattle herds to water points and in search of pasture, has intensified conflict between herdsmen and farmers in Nigeria in recent. Private ownership of land has restricted movements of pastoralist, and the impact has been disastrous on both the farmers and headmen in many societies (Bujra, 2000 in Adam, Emmanuel and Atelhe, 2017).

The herdsmen are found in countries like Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Guinea, Mauritania, Mali, Chad, Burkina Faso, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroun etc. (Adam, Emmanuel and Atelhe, 2017). They move along all routes for a long and short period to allows their animals good graze; they settle along roads that are usually reserve routes for animal grazing in all region they are authorized as a pathway.

Farmer is a person who cultivates the land for crop productions. Farmers are a group of people in the society that engages in the cultivation of land for crop production and raising living animals for food or raw materials. The term usually denotes people who do some combination of growing field crops, orchards, vineyard, poultry, and other livestock.

Nigeria rural dwellers are mostly peasant farmers, whose pre-occupation is to cultivate a small piece of land to provide food for their immediate families and

short sales. Some other reasonable percentage Nigerians engage in large scale farming. However, all farming activities are negatively affected by the actions of herdsmen in any part of the countries.

As acknowledge by Fasona and Omojala, 2005, he emphasized that land resources have remained an overwhelming source of conflict among various user groups in Nigeria mainly due to intensification of production activities that are necessitated by increasing human population.

Conflict is defined in many perspectives by different scholars, according to Ekong (2003), conflict is that form of social interaction in which the actors seek to obtain a scarce reward by eliminating or weakening their contenders. Folger, Pooled and Stutman (2009) define conflict as the interaction of interdependent people who perceive incompatible goals and interference from each other in achieving those goals. In all societies interactions occur between one culture and the other, business in this sense has to do with imposing one's view on another base on interest, the ability to set ones' view over others could result to conflict. Therefore, interactions often go with conflict and conflict resolution, concurring with the definition of politics as conflict and conflict resolution. The sharing of resources in the society be it amenities, land, natural or any other resources often also could lead to conflict one because the help is limited, scares and man by nature is unsatisfied and with weak governance, if not supervised under an organized law, can result to the survival of the fittest or conflict.

Land resource use has been argued to be a source of conflict from time immemorial and a fundamental struggle for different capacities of social groups to meet their needs (Ellias, Jackson & Cavan, 2014), the battle is essential to gain access to land resources, which is a fundamental obligation to sustain and develop one's skill for livelihood in a global competitive system to earn a better quality of life for all individuals.

Farmers - herdsmen a Source to Human Sustainability

The importance of farm products as a source of livelihood and animal products to human sustainability cannot be overemphasized. The sole reason why humans are alive, according to Schama (1996) in Fasona and Omojala, (2005) is the availability of factors of production and other natural resources ordain to humans. The threat to any of the factors production threatens assets or means of livelihood; others could be a source of not having a peaceful co-existence among the people and conflict across societies. People in conflict lack physical, social and economic

access to sufficient nutritional needs, to enable them to produce, stay healthy and lack of income which creates insecurity. The lack of income result to severe social, psychological and behavioural consequences, the non-income earners may manifest to feelings of disaffection, hopelessness, stress, reduce productivity and create food insecurity, this has direct effects on economic development of societies. Herdsmen-farmer conflict aside from the destruction of farmland and crops, it reduces the land use and sustainability of land and other factors of production, there are also physical destruction and displacement of people. The social economic and political tension result of emotional exhaustion, trauma and social psychological effects are evidence of instability.

History of Land Resource uses in Zamfara State.

Zamfara State is a state in northwestern Nigeria which witness conflict between farmers-herdsman, the conflict intensified in 2011 with the several attacks; the extreme violence caused thousands displacement of people, loss of lives and properties.

The military was first deployed to the area in2014 because of the intensity of the conflict. The history of the conflict was identified base on two reasons, first was said to be base on the conflict between the two groups on land resources use while the second was tied to the gold mining in the area. The conflict which has prolonged for several years have negative consequences on the socio-economic, political development, impacted on crop production in Zamfara state and Nigeria as a nation.

Farming is the dominant agricultural activity in Dansadau area of Zamfara state, probably employing over 80% of the population, within and outside the state. The site is reputed as a prominent centre for the production and marketing of grains notably guinea corn, millet, maize as well as other crops such as groundnuts and soya beans including spices. As a significant economic activity, agriculture is linked to much of the commerce of the area and the operations of markets in the Dan Gulbi, Magami, Dansadau, and Dankurmi, which serve as powerful platforms for economic and social intergroup relations among the various communities in the area. Agriculture and commerce generate important sources of huge incomes to farmers in the area, leading to the rise of very rich and well to do farmer merchants. While herdsmen or cattle rearing is activity is taking as a means of livelihood by mostly Fulani people in the area. It is the second-largest and most important economic activity next to agriculture in Dansadau area. There

are an estimated 3000- 5000 settlements of pastoral Fulani scattered over the space of varying population densities. The heavily-forested areas have been favoured areas of settlement for the religious groups because of the existence of water sources and pasture almost all year round. A study on the history of the evolution of human settlements and inter-group relations in the Rima Basin area shows that as early as the 15th century, the religious groups had already assumed an essential place in the social and economic life of the site (CEDDERT, 2018). While the agricultural farming communities may keep any number of cattle, the routine of their daily work and livelihood did not necessarily revolve around the animals. Whereas the headman is not merely engaged in animal husbandry as an auxiliary economic activity, on the contrary, they depend on it as their sole means of livelihood; their livestock is the only means of their income serving at the same time as a means of engaging in economic and social relations, with other occupational, social and ethnic groups. Animal rearing is the second significant economic activity in the Dansadau area that provides excellent economic power in the form of personal wealth and high social mobility to several pastoralists in the area. The insecurity by animal banditry and farmer –herdsmen conflict has lasted for over thirty years in the Local Government.

The intense threat of banditry led to the lunch of military presence in the area by the current Nigeria president in July 2016, during Nigerian Army Day Celebration and continued conflict called for a prolong military stay in the study area still date, the security threat has resulted not only in a clash of the two groups but stealing, kidnapping, burning and displacement of villagers has become the order of the day and means of livelihood distorted.

The Nature of Farmers-and headsmen Conflict in Zamfara State

The herder/farmer conflicts in Zamfara State have numerous economic undertones. These are financial conflicts and not sectarian in any way as reported by some media prints. This is because the conflict between these two groups is primarily about resource use by damage to crop blocking of trench corridors, farming along the valleys and stream/river bank and uncomplimentary agricultural policies by Government. The new cattle rustling is a result of the availability of dangerous weapons, intra-pastoralist conflict, greedy elements, and hazardous drugs users add to a dangerous dimension to the conflict. According to a recent study, the causes of these conflict have been traced to three broad but related factors.

Firstly, the drying up of the natural sources of water over the past 50years in Sahel belt, as evidenced by the shrinking of Lake Chad by over 60percent has forced headmen to move into the Savannah and tropical rain forest zones in search of water and pasture for animal graze. Also, the failure by governments on policy implementation concerning grazing reserves has led to encroachment of land reserved areas for animal grazing. Some of the reserved lands are misappropriated by government officials, creating a shortage of land for pasture and grazing. A study in 2003, noted that government response to header farmer conflict is discouraging; it argued that little attention is given to the structural features of the conflict. Thus, no effort is made to try and rethink policies. This study looks into the gap of replacing security with vigilante groups and armed them with weapons. The inadequate security personnel for over a long period or absences of governance consequently has led to both sitting farmers and headsmen in the affected areas to resort to vigilantism and then violence, as small arms became more visible in the area (Chidi Anselm Odinkalu Mohammed Bello, Tukur 2016).

Theoretical Framework

Frustration and Aggression Theory

The Frustration and Aggression theory is connected to the publication of Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer and Sears (1939) and Zillmann (1979). They came up with the view on the frustration-aggression hypothesis (F-A). The central argument of Frustration and Aggression theory is that aggression is always a function of frustration and the occurrences of aggressive behaviour, always presuppose the existence of frustration.

They further argued that aggression is any behaviour which is intended to injure, cause harm, pain to the individual to whom it is directed. According to Zillmann (1979), the fundamental principles of the theory are frustration initiates behaviour that may or may not be hostile or aggressive. And any hostile or aggressive behaviour that occurs is caused by frustration. The theoretical significance of this theory is to this study is its ability to concisely explain the reasons for violent conflict between any two aggrieved; in this case, the farmers and herdsmen.

Conflict of herdsmen from this theoretical view is a product of frustration as a result of the severe ecosystem, increase in population, the encroachment of reserved areas for grazing and contact harassment by armed banditry and ongoing

attacks in their homeland with the resultant effects such as the death of human and cattle which are their most treasured possession, makes the herdsmen put on aggressive behaviour which is a derivative of the previous frustration and then conflicts. Over time cattle rustling within the state was only possible with self-defence and acquisition of small arms increase with migration. On the other hand, scarcity of environmental resources and security threats on farmers' attacks, destruction of farm crops, properties, houses and a massive death toll that is continually reported by the media daily are the product of aggression that evolves from frustration and sense of profound loss on the side of the farmers. The theory best explains this study because it attempts to explain the reason for conflict between the farmers and headsmen in the absence of good governance as the case in Zamfara State.

The effect of Conflicts Between Farmers and Herdsmen in Nigeria

The Conflicts between herdsmen and farmers is becoming a daily occurrence in many states in most northern Nigeria, as reported daily by the media. It is a tough challenge to economic development, threat to food security and sustainable livelihood of both the herdsmen and farming communities in the areas of conflicts. The herder-farmer conflict has a direct impact on the lives and livelihoods of sites involved, they also disrupt and threaten the sustainability of agricultural and pastoral production in West Africa (Moritz, 2010) and invariably the sustainability of livelihoods of rural communities. According to Good hand (2001), one of the most devastating effects of conflict is a scarcity of food. In the case of the farmer – headman's conflict, cultivation of crops become impossible; thus, in prices of food commodities, increase in hunger, joblessness rises, causing frustrations among the populace. Destructive behaviour such as robbery, kidnapping, fear and situation of unrest becomes the order of the day as states legitimacy becomes threaten. Social insecurity is a common manifestation in a conflict situation, especially when it is a violent one. People develop a fear of being attacked unnecessarily, which also negatively affect their ability to carry out their farming activities and consequently lead to a sharp decrease in agricultural productivity (Blench, 2004). Other economic impacts include: impeding trade practices, reduction in crop yield, displacement of farmers, loss of lives and properties, among other vices as explained the study by Eyekpimi (Eyekpimi, 2016).

Furthermore, Adebayo and Olaniyi, (2008) noted the worrisome reduced standard and levels of education in conflict areas, the same situation is seen in areas where

violent conflicts between herders and farmers occur. Children will be out of school for a long time, as their parents are displaced. Resource conflict, is a significant output of poor resource governance, is a formidable threat to both natural resources and human security. It is also detrimental to rural livelihoods, food security, and social co-existence (Fasona & Omojola, 2005; Adekunle & Adisa, 2010).Chukwuma and Atelhe (2014). The absence of security and governance in the case of herders -farmer's conflict in Zamfara state, shows the associated security crises and a threat to people lives, the collective fear in the subsistence of the affected population, cannot be overemphasized. Government is forced to spend a considerable amount of money on areas not planned for, during the conflict, all of which do not benefit society and national sustainability as the case situation.

Methodology

The study adopts a survey method and purposive sampling technique in selecting the respondents for the study. A total of 204 respondents were selected from the fifteen (15) purposively selected wards in the area based on the frequency of occurrence of conflicts in the wards. The selected wards are DanJiya, RuwanTofa and DanGulbi.Specifically, 142 crop farmers and 62 herdsmen were selected. A total of 204 questionnaires were administered and retrieved for analysis. Data were presented using frequency distribution table and percentages as well as t-test to analyze the results.

Results and Discussions of the Study

Causes of Conflict

The causes of conflict together with their corresponding frequencies, percentages and ranks are shown in the table.`

Table 1: Causes of conflicts among farmers and Herdsmen

Reasons for Conflicts n = 204	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**	**Rank**
Destruction of crops	27	13,24	1st
Encroachment into cattle route	28	13.73	2nd
Land degradation	17	8.33	3rd
Absence of security personals	35	17.16	4th
Population pressure	26	12.75	5th
Stray cattle	18	8.82	7th
Lawlessness in society/sexual harassment	22	10.78	6th
Cattle theft	21	10.29	8th
Contamination of stream by cattle	10	4.90	9th
Total	204	100	

Source: Compilation by author, (2019).

Results from Table 1 show the causes of conflicts together with their frequencies, percentages and ranks in the study area. The reason for conflicts in the regions are the destruction of crops, encroachment into cattle route, lawlessness, land degradation, contamination of streams by the cattle and population pressure. This has agreed with the findings of Moritz (2010) who enumerates several structural factors that contribute to the increasing incidence of conflicts between herders and farmers, namely, resource scarcity, decreasing interdependence of pastoral and agricultural economies, institutional failure to resolve disputes, the larger political context and historical context or cultural differences between herder and farmers. The absence of security in the area is very high that results in the prolonged headman farmer conflict,

Effect of Conflict on Sustainable livelihood

The effect of conflict on sustainable livelihood is shown in Table 2

Table 2: Results of t-test on the Effect of Land Use Conflicts between Farmers and Herdsmen

Effect	Farmers	Herdsmen	t-value (p≤ 0.5)
Destruction of crops	2.86	2.19	2.45**
Loss of lives	2.55	2.05	2.13**
Loss of properties	2.75	2.15	2.18**
Reduction in the food quality/quantity	2.85	2.58	1.51
Interrupted dependent education	2.40	2.25	2.01**
Increased poverty	2.75	2.64	0.91
Social insecurity	2.95	2.50	2.10**
Reduction in health care provision	2.45	1.85	1.05**
Displacement	2.35	2.15	0.93
Sleeplessness night	2.38	1.05	0.12

Source: Compilation author, 2019.

Table 2 revealed that both farmers and herdsmen hard no gain in conflict situations. However, farmers are worst affected than the herdsmen, even though some school of thought have argued that herdsmen have no access to media; thus, most of their ordeals are not reported. The significant effect of land use conflict on sustainable livelihood is the destruction of crops, loss of properties, loss of lives, social insecurity and interrupted dependable education with the t- the value of 2.45, 2.18, 2.13, 2.10 and 2.01 respectively. This is inconsonant with the findings of Eyekpimi (2016) that the maximum impact of conflict is a reduction in crop yield, displacement of farmers, loss of lives and properties, loss of products in storage and destruction of a public and private building. The security problems are dreadful to the sustainability of human livelihood in all areas of conflict.

Conclusion

The conflict between farmers and herdsmen over the use of land resources is still prevalent in northern Nigeria and threatens consequences for rural sustainability and development. It has established the potential to affect all aspects of human lives in the affected and the community at large. The conflicts had far-reaching socio-economic, political and psychological effects on the households of most respondents in Conflictgroups mainly spins on livelihood issues. The livelihood structure, food security and wellbeing of the two groups of resource users are threatened, and this contributes to poverty, food and nutrition insecurity and poor

health of farming, creation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and all the problems created with IDPs and further escalation of conflicts.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this paper, the recommendations proffered include the following:

- There is need for presences of Government in all areas, mainly rural villages and communities and a sincere commitment in resolving the conflict through taking actions and convicting the wrongdoers.
- There is a need for improvement in government institutional presences, particularly security outlet in the rural area because presences of security serve as a caution for any lawbreaker.
- Local institutions such as the traditional leaders, farmers' association and leaders of miyyeti Allah, socio-cultural organizations to be involved in resolving and management of conflicts.

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