

Causes of Herders and Farmers Conflicts on Economic Activities in Nasarawa State, Nigeria

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Abstract: This research investigated the causes of the incessant conflict between the pastoralists and the crop producers in Nasarawa state. There is no doubt that for centuries, both have lived in peace and harmony and have greatly contributed to the progress of the society. However, recent happenings between the two groups show a high degree of bitterness to the extent of carrying arms against each other, which has led to the loss of lives and properties. It is against this background that this research seeks to unravel the causes of conflict between these animal farmers and crop farmers. In achieving this, a mixed method of research technique was adopted employing both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The research adopted Eco-violence theory developed by Homer-Dixon in 1999 as its theoretical framework. The theory view conflicts as a product of environmental resources and the competition over their usage by their users in a society, it assumed that competition over scarce ecological resources engenders violent conflict. The study is guided by one research objective, one research hypothesis and one research question. The findings of the study show that there is a significant difference between the responses of herders and farmers on the causes of their conflict in Nasarawa state. In lieu of the above, the study concluded that there is considerable difference between the position of the herders and the farmers as to the causes of the conflict. Based on the findings of the study, the researchers therefore recommend that the government of Nasarawa state in conjunction with the Federal Government and other relevant authorities should put in place necessary mechanisms that will forestall the recurrence of these incessant conflicts.

Keyword: Herders, Crop Producers, Eco-Violence, Conflict, Nasarawa State.

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the years Nigeria has been experiencing a number of violent conflicts of grave danger between animal farmers known as herders and crop producers known as farmers in different communities across the states of the federation. These conflicts have been branded differently by various scholars. In some cases, they are called herders-farmers conflicts, some refer to these conflicts' as herdsmen attacks on local communities who are mostly farmers, while others called them reprisal attacks by herders who have either been attacked before or their cattle rustled by host communities.

What stands clear is the fact that the herders are always moving from one place to another searching for better graze land, water and conducive environment for their animals. This indeed is among reasons why they are commonly found in rural communities across Nigeria. Herders and farmers have for long co-existed peacefully and amicably and have even

engaged in inter-marriage despite their ethnic and religious divides in the host communities.

It is important to note that one cannot deny the fact that minor skirmishes take place on an irregular interval similar to what is obtainable in any pluralistic and cosmopolitan society; such threats to peace and disputes were amicably resolved by traditional leaders from both sides. In rural communities, herders' major occupation is pastoralism, while crop farmers engage in farming activities, yet it was nearly impossible for either the farmers or herders to maximize their production without the contribution of the other.

It is also common for the herders to provide organic fertilizer to the farmers and the farmers in return allow the herders to graze their cattle and other animals on the shaft of the crops after harvest. In those good days also, it was common to see them visiting each other, sharing food and gifts, especially during festive periods. Consequently, the problem of herders and farmers conflicts were less pronounced as the conflict prevention, resolution and management mechanisms and processes were less cumbersome and yielded the needed results to the benefits of both the farmers, herders and the larger community.

In the recent past, Nigeria has witnessed series of violent clashes arising from the activities of the herders who move about on daily basis with their cattle in search of water and greener pastures mostly in rural communities where farming is the main source of livelihood of the rural settlers and communities. With urbanization that sprung along with the democracy of the fourth republic across many states of Nigeria, access to water and grazing land have become more competitive leading farmers and pastoralists into arguments on a regular basis.

Oyetade, (2007) rightly asserted that this is a worrisome trend because both have co-existed interdependently for centuries, sharing the same fields for farming and grazing with high rate and level of tolerance and accommodation. Besides, improved human health has increased overall population and thus pressure on arable land. Ajibefun, (2017) asserted that the attacks by Fulani herdsmen is on the increase, with most attacks in February 2018 happening in Benue State, Taraba State, Nasarawa State and few cases of attacks in other states of the federation.

The implication of this is that States like Nasarawa have had a share of this ugly trend of conflicts between herders and

farmers as natural resources users. In his submission, Adisa, (2012) attributed the incessant violent conflicts between these natural resources users to inequitable access to land, diminishing land resources, antagonistic values among user groups, policy contradictions, and non-recognition of rights of indigenous people. Abass (2012) argued that the major source of tensions between pastoralists and farmers is economic, with land related issues accounting for the majority of the conflicts.

In the views of Solagberu (2012) he stated that herders and farmers conflicts can be situated within the broader context of the political economy of land struggle, traceable to a burgeoning demography in which there is fierce competition for fixed space to meet the demands of the growing population. Thus, regardless of the causes and issues at stake, the frequent conflicts between herders and farmers lately considering their sophisticated nature portends great danger for the economy of the state and Nigeria at large.

It is therefore obvious from literature that conflicts between herders and farmers are not new, they have been noticeable features when traced back to history but what is new is the nature and dimension of the conflicts, particularly its violent nature that have remained unresolved. This depicts the position of Okoli and Atelhe (2014) that the economic impact of the conflict situation between herders and farmers could be measured in terms of losses associated with destruction of homes, farmlands, community assets, and household properties.

When conflicts occur between herders and farmers, it leads to destruction of farmlands and decrease in the output of farm crops and produce and low productivity in the harvest season. It is against this background that this study examines the causes of herders and farmers conflicts in Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem/Justification

The history of Nigeria cannot be complete without mentioning the long-term relationship that natural resources users like herders and farmers have had over time. The peaceful co-existence in the past was based on the fact that land resources were never seen as the basis for hatred, but as means for unity. Quantifying the damages incurred due to these conflicts therefore, Kwaja and Ademola-Adelehin (2018) opined that in Nigeria, the consequences have been severe. It was approximated that about six thousand (6,000) people were allegedly killed or consumed whereas over sixty-two thousand (62,000) people were alleged to have been displaced in the North-Central states of Benue, Nasarawa, Plateau and Kaduna from North-West alone.

Conflicts between herders and farmers in Nasarawa State have become visible features of the State. One would think that with the setting of commissions of inquiry as well as interventions by critical stakeholders, the menace of violent conflicts between herders and farmers in Nasarawa State should have been a thing of the past. Despite these efforts, the increasing spread of attacks and killings in rural areas in the

State, due to competition over the scarce land resources among herders and farmers, coupled with the increasing population of internally displaced persons (IDP's) in Lafia, the State capital and in most Local Government headquarters remains a great challenge.

Unfortunately, while these conflicts persist over the years, the paucity of studies on the effect of these conflicts on economic activities in the State have attracted the attention of researchers, yet, their divergent views and findings calls for further studies. Olayoku (2014) asserted that from a methodological point of view, conflict between farmers and herders is not well reported and there is need for further studies. In lieu of the above contribution and suggestion, this paper's contribution is anchored on the following subject area.

Aim of the Study

This study is aimed at determining the causes of herders-farmers conflicts in Nasarawa State.

Objective of the study:

To assess the causes of protracted violent conflicts between herders and farmers in Nasarawa State.

Research Question.

What are the causes of the protracted violent conflicts between herders and farmers in Nasarawa State?

HO1: There would be no significant difference between the responses of herders and farmers on the causes of their conflicts in Nasarawa State

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Conflicts

Conflict as a concept portrays the existence of negative peace. Swanstrom and Weissmann (2005) defined conflict as perceived differences in issue position between two or more parties at the same moment in time contend that perception should be central to the definition of conflict as a concept because the occurrence of conflict is not entirely based on attitudes and behaviours, but often provoked and sustained by the subjective perceptions of opposing parties.

Conflicts is a disagreement between two or more people, communities or nations based on certain factors which may be social, ethnic, cultural, economic, political, and religious or a combination of two or more factors. That is whenever the disagreement is not properly managed, it could degenerate into violent or armed conflict, which is physical war that involves the use of weapons like guns, spears, daggers, bows and arrows, as well as other sophisticated weapons (Dabit and Gwom, 2017). Herders and farmers conflicts deducing from literature is a situation where there is negative peace between herders and farmers partly due to competition over scarce natural resources such as land and water resources that are supposed to be beneficial to both of them. In the context of this work therefore, conflicts between farmers and herders is basically a state where there is lack of cordial relationship and

understanding between two or more parties to the extent that lives are lost and properties are destroyed.

In a conflict situation, one or all the parties involved bear the consequences, which may be visible in the short or long term as the case may be. Olabode and Ajibade (2010) reported that intrusion into crop farms is common during the dry season as a result of lack of pasture and water for the cattle. It is opined that the need for constant mobility among cattle herders for opportunistic resource use to bring them into contact with the landed settled farmers, and cause competition and conflicts (Abubakar, 2012).

Bukari (2017) has argued that most lands acquired by Fulanis for their activities are through informal means and their failure to register the lands to formalize the process after the acquisition is part of causes of land conflict between farmers and herders. Crop damage, attacks on cattle, and cattle theft/rustling are major conflict triggers, that initiate violence between the two groups, which often leads to cycles of revenge attacks (Kwaja & Ademola-Adelehin, 2018).

The implication of this is that the activities of both herders and farmers have been identified as some of the causes of herders and farmers conflicts in different parts of the country. Incessant conflicts between herders and farmers in Nigeria have paved way for the emergence of some many internally displaced camps besides the destruction of wealth yielding assets as well as human lives. Ofem and Inyang (2014) observed that herdsmen-farmers conflict led to reduction in income, savings and crops output.

Herders and Farmers Conflicts in Nigeria dimension

Conflicts between herders and farmers globally are not a new challenge, yet its intensity and dimension in some States in Nigeria lately has attracted the attention of the global community and researchers in particular. Violent confrontations between farmers and herders are prevalent and pervasive in Central and West Africa. From Mali to South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo to Nigeria, climate variability, environmental degradation, and socio-political upheaval have shifted pastoralist migratory patterns and increased tensions between farmers and herders (Kwaja & Ademola-Adelehin, 2018). The authors further observed that conflicts between farmers and herders exist on a large scale, both within Nigeria and the greater Lake Chad Basin and Sudan-Sahel region;

However, states within Nigeria's north central have witnessed an increase in casualties as a consequence of the fractured relationship. In Nigeria, the North-Central states of Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau have witnessed series of incessant conflicts between herders and farmers. Similarly, states like Kaduna, Taraba and Zamfara states among others have also witnessed protracted conflicts between herders and farmers. This therefore implies that there has been no region in the country that has not been affected by the challenge of conflicts between herders and farmers.

Adetula (2016) rightly asserted that previously the herdsmen were known to wreak havoc in certain communities in Nigeria, but now the rate at which they are committing these crimes has increased exponentially. Ofuoku and Isife (2009) conducted a research in Delta State and found that a cow once strayed and destroyed farm products and as a result, the offended party slaughtered it. This resulted in conflicts between the host farming communities and the nomads. They further observed that the contamination of streams that the host communities rely on and the rape of community girls by the nomads also cause and aggravated the conflict.

The history of herders and farmers conflicts in Nasarawa State is not a new phenomenon because these conflicts have remained a recurring challenge even with the advent of democratic rule. Adogi (2013) pointed out that the conflicts between the farmers and herders in Nasarawa State have been on the rise since the 1990s because Nigeria in general and Nasarawa state in particular has experienced resource-related communal clashes often misrepresented or misinterpreted as ethnic, political and religious clashes since the beginning of the 1990s.

The farmers fear that Fulani herders will destroy their farmlands. Nchi (2013) opined that the herder/farmer conflicts in Nasarawa State have copious economic undertones. The author argued that to explain this conflict simply in terms of 'clash of economic interests' is reductionist. According to the scholar, the issue of economic interests should be treated as secondary symptom rather than cause in trying to come to terms with the real essence and substance of the conflict.

Ugwu and Enna (2015) observed bloody clashes erupted between Igbira and Bassa in Toto LGA. This was followed by another violent conflict between the Tiv and other ethnic groups in Awe, Keana, and Obi LGAs. The conflict led to the gruesome beheading of the Sarkin Azara, Musa Ibrahim (who was a Muslim) on the 12 June 2001. This led to reprisal attacks on the basis of religion. The authors further asserted that in 2013, there was another violent clash that claimed many lives and properties and the Judicial Commission of Inquiry puts the number of people killed at 667 while properties worth over ₦2.3bn, were destroyed.

Okoli and Atelhe (2014) linked the herders and farmers violent conflicts in Nasarawa State to environmental degradation, desertification, loss of wetlands and droughts. These factors according to the scholars have fueled violent clashes in Akpanaja, Ondori and Rukubi in Doma LGA of Nasarawa State in November 2011. The conflicts between herders and farmers in Awe and Obi that led to the displacement of majorly the farming communities of Tiv who were left with no option than to take refuge in places like Bukan Kwato, Marraban Akunza and Lafia town in 2017 and 2018 may have affected the economy of the State as well.

Causes of Herders and Farmers Conflicts

It is no longer news that globally, conflict itself is an essential feature of human existence. Adogi (2013) pointed out that the

conflicts between the farmers and herders in Nasarawa State have been on the rise since the 1990s and Nigeria in general. The farmers fear that Fulani herders will destroy their farmlands. Nchi (2013) opined that to explain the herders and farmers conflicts in Nasarawa state simply in terms of 'clash of economic interests' is reductionist.

Nasarawa State for instance shares these attributes as the state has a large population of herders and farmers and while majority of the herders are Muslims, majority of the farmers also are Christians. Because of this stratification of the occupational distribution of herders and farmers in the area along religious divides, minor dispute between two or few farmers in their local communities often times lead to full blown violence conflicts coined as herders and farmers conflicts by their perpetrators to gain cheap popularity.

Bello (2013) stated that among many others that crop damage by cattle is among the causes of herder-farmer conflict. The failure of the state, for example to resolve the settler/ indigene identity and the inherent struggles over resources can be adduced to have brought dangerous dimensions of economic and political elements in the Fulani cattle herders and farmers conflicts (Abbas, 2009). Yahaya (2008) observed that the cattle herders often left a large number of cattle in the care of children who do not care about the consequences in the event of destruction of farm produce. The conflicts, through provocative claims over access rights to farmland and cattle routes, have become ubiquitous and seem to have defied solutions (Abbas, 2009).

In many places, herders have clashed with farmers and their host communities over cattle destruction of crops; farmers' encroachment on grazing reserves and indiscriminate bush burning by nomads which normally leads to loss of crops (Adeoye, 2017). The lack of political will is a contributing factor responsible for the incessant conflicts between herders and farmers in Nigeria, Ndubuisi (2018) stated that despite the continuous attacks of local farmers by the herders in different parts of Nigeria, no serious arrest has been made and the Fulani come back at intervals to attack farmers and villagers on their farms.

Thus, the inability of government in most cases to respond quickly to distress calls and early warning signs is an issue that promotes conflict. Mwamfupe (2015) stated that it has become apparent that the use of excessive force by police and military personnel tasked to solve the conflict rather deepens the hatred and struggles between the two actors. Ofem and Inyang (2014) opined that other causes of these perennial conflicts between herders and farmers in Nigeria, including Nasarawa State are indiscriminate bush burning, sexual harassment of women by nomads, harassment of nomads by youths of the host communities, theft of cattle and indiscriminate defecation by cattle along the road.

Garba (2016) conducted a study on socio-economic assessment of resource use conflict between crop farmers and cattle herders in Misau Local Government Area, Bauchi State.

The study revealed that crop damage, blockage of watering points, and lawlessness were the major sources of conflict. The findings identified the effects of such conflicts to include loss of expected yield, lost cattle, displacement of people and loss of human lives and recommended that the religious, traditional and nomad leaders should give more efforts in preaching the implications of the conflict on their people and the community in general.

Similarly, Adeoye (2017) carried out a study on land use conflict between farmers and herdsmen in parts of Kano, Yobe and Borno States of Nigeria: Nomads' viewpoints found that intrusion on the grazing reserves and encroachment on waterholes for cattle were farmers' actions that caused skirmishes while deliberate grazing of cattle on crops and herder's indiscriminate bush burning often infuriated the farmers.

Conflict Resolution Management

In a bid to offer long-lasting suggestions to the herders and farmers conflicts in Nigeria, Mohammed & Abdul (2020) proposed a document illustrating a pragmatic way on how to go about achieving the task ahead. This is contained in the research titled " Solutions to Herders-Farmers Conflict in Nigeria: The Academic Perspectives and Business Implications". A scientific-based approach from an academic perspective was adopted to avoid the tendency of allowing emotional and sentimental infractions into the research due to the sensitivity of the subject matter. Twenty-eight journal articles were sourced and analysed using content analysis. Subsequently, the study confirmed that most of the recommendations offered by the academic articles regarding how to sustain long-lasting peace and harmony between herders and farmers conflict revolt on mass orientation on conflict management and the development of ranches as the apparent solutions in avoiding the conflict. However, based on the foregoing, the study recommends the adoption of the Federal Government ranches program to some selected states as a pilot scheme to assess its applicability on a nationwide scale.

According to Ofuoku (2011), farmers-nomadic herders' conflict can best be managed only if a local Development Plan that will streamline clear targets is implemented. This will go a long way to bring the much-desired peace. This is contained in the study conducted in Delta state to unravel the causes of the perennial crisis ravaging the local communities titled "Causes, Effects, and Resolutions of Farmers-Nomadic Cattle Herders Conflict in Delta State, Nigeria". The study adopted a simple random and purposeful sampling technique to select 80 farmers and 20 nomads across 8 communities at which data were sourced by the use of a structured questionnaire. The constant contamination of stream water, destruction of farmlands, harassment of women and herdsmen by the locals are some of the causes of the conflicts as revealed by the study. However, community based Local Development Plans (LDPs) was suggested by the study. The LDP document shall be structured in such a way that it defines responsibilities to

the various stakeholders aimed at finding lasting peace in the communities. Such document is expected among other things to streamline all agreements to natural resources and to ensure conformity to all prescribed roles.

Ojukwu, Osuchukwu & Enemuoh (2020) took a legal dimension in addressing the conflict of herders and farmers in Nigeria. In a qualitative research tagged "Farmers-Herders Conflicts and Ranches Establishment Law in Nigeria: A Study of Benue State" an in-depth review of the Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law, 2017 vis-a-vis the clash between herders and farmers and the nature of the relationship after the enactment of the law was conducted. Secondary sources of data were used while analysis of the data was done through content analysis. The study revealed that despite the strong apprehension in some quarters regarding the general acceptance and workability of the Open grazing prohibition law the relationship between the two has ever since the establishment of the law been peaceful.

Similarly, Sylvester (2007) evaluated the Anti-Grazing Policy and Conflict Resolution between Fulani Herdsmen and Farmers in Ekiti State with the primary objective of establishing whether the Anti Grazing Policy has succeeded in resolving the incessant conflict between the two groups. This study is contained in a document titled "Anti-Grazing Policy and Conflict Resolution between Fulani Herdsmen and Farmers in Ekiti State". It is a qualitative research that adopted the subjective expression and contextual meaning in making conclusions of the research. Data were sourced from both primary and secondary sources at which the Purposive sampling technique was used to draw 22 samples for interview purposes. The study shows that the Anti-grazing bill (2016) proscribed by the Ekiti state government to primary curb the perpetual crisis between Fulani herdsmen and farmers has successfully minimized the various conflicts to the minimum level ever experienced in the state. However, for a lasting peaceful coexistence to be achieved between herders and farmers nationwide the federal government is advised to engage with the various state governments that implemented the anti-grazing bill to see how possible to replicate such policy nationwide. It also recommended among others the creation of grazing zones and private ownership of ranches.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the Eco-violence theory developed by Homer-Dixon in 1999. The theory view conflicts as a product of environmental resources and the competition over their usage by their users in a society. The theory assumes that competition over scarce ecological resources engenders violent conflict. The theory therefore holds that a decrease in the quality and quantity of renewable resources, population growth, and resource access act as triggers of violent conflicts.

The theory states that with scarcity of resources such as land, water and forests have the tendency of reducing economic productivity both for the local groups experiencing the scarcity and for the national economies. The affected people

may migrate or be expelled to new lands. Migrating groups often trigger ethnic conflicts when they move to new areas, while decreases in wealth can cause deprivation conflicts (Homer-Dixon, 1999).

IV. METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This study will use descriptive research design as its methodology. The choice of this design is justified by the fact that it will be nearly and practically impossible for the researchers to collect data from each of the respondents.

Participants /Population of the Study

This study will consider a total population of 1,869,377 residents of the State as the target population for the study. The study sample however comprised of mainly herders and farmers disaggregated into Public Servants, Politicians, Religious ministers, Traditional Rulers and Vigilante as respondents. Majority of the inhabitants of Nasarawa state have farming or rearing animals as their primary occupation while others are having either of the two or both as an added means of livelihood. Each of these groups of people may have been affected by the crisis one way or the other and may also have a different perception of the conflict and in addition to the ethnic and religious coloration attached to it. Therefore, the need to have a rich and all-inclusive database necessitates the decision to have an expanded class of respondents. The study used a sample size of 400 respondents (200 herders and 200 farmers) as the study respondents. The study sample will be drawn from ten (10) randomly selected local Government Areas in the State.

Sampling Technique

This study used three sampling techniques namely simple random sampling for the selection of the local government areas, convenient sampling for the selection of only herders and farmers and multi-stage sampling technique. Multi-stage sampling will be considered appropriate because sample selection was done in stages, thereby giving the researcher the opportunity to use more than one technique of sample selection. At the first stage of sample selection, LGAs were selected conveniently based on the senatorial zones of the State so as to ensure that every zone or district is represented in the final sample to be use.

The second stage was the selection of respondents from the selected local government areas to form the sample size for the study. The sample size was be statistically determined using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula which is expressed as follows: $n = N/(1+N(e^2))$ where: n is the sample size to be selected, N is the target population under investigation, 1 is a constant and e is the level of significance(0.05 or 5% respectively).

The determination of the sample size is shown below;

$$n = N/(1+N(e^2))$$

$$n = 1,869,377/1+1,869,377(0.05)^2$$

$n = 1,869,377/4674.4425$

$n = 399.91$

n= 400 (approximately)

Study Area

Nasarawa State is in the North-central Zone of Nigeria. The 2006 National population census put the population of Nasarawa State at 1, 869, 377. The State is made up of 13 Local Government Areas, namely Akwanga, Awe, Doma, Karu, Keana, Keffi, Kokona, Lafia, Nasarawa, Nasarawa-Eggon, Obi, Toto and Wamba LGAs respectively. The study covered ten (10) local government areas of the State as they are the prone areas of the conflict. Nasarawa State shares common boundaries with Benue State to the south, Kogi State to the west, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja to the north-west, Kaduna and Plateau States to the north-east, and Taraba State to the south-east (Abdulkarkindo & Alupse, 2016)

The State has over 30 ethnic groups the major ethnic groups are Alago, Eggon, Gbagyi, Gwandara, Egbira, Migili, Kantana, Rindere, Fulani, Hausa, Kanuri, Tiv, Afo, Gade, Nyanpka, Jukun, Mada, Ninzam, Nankere, Bassa, Agatu and Kuler among others. Local government Areas that have experienced herders and farmers conflicts in the state will be selected conveniently so as to have a better understanding of the research problem.

Instruments

The study adopted a structured questionnaire as the instrument for data gathering. The structured questionnaire is called Effects of Herders and Farmers of economic activities questionnaire (EHAFCEAQ). The instrument consists of two sections, namely section A and B. Section A comprises of the demographic characteristics of the respondents such as their gender, status, age, local government Area and employment status respectively. Section B of the instrument comprises of items developed based on each of the research objectives on the basis of the 5-point Likert scale rating as follows: to a large very extent (TVLE= 5), to a large extent (TLE= 4), to some extent (TSE=3), to a little extent (LT=2) and to a very little extent (VLE=1) respectively.

The instrument was validated by experts in measurement and evaluation as well as those in the field of conflict management at Nasarawa State University, Keffi. The essence of determining the validity of the instrument is to be sure that only items that are relevant to the variables under investigation are included in the questionnaire. This study therefore considered both face and construct validity in the development of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was subjected to factor analysis to determine their factor loading based on each construct.

Similarly, the reliability of this questionnaire was determined using Cronbach Alpha technique. This was based on the fact that the items were non-dichotomously scored. To obtain the

reliability coefficient of the questionnaire, a pilot study was carried out of 100 respondents that share similar characteristics with those under investigation and in a community that shares the same characteristics with the selected sampled areas also. The pilot study for this study was carried out in Plateau State which is a state in the same zone with Nasarawa State that has also experienced protracted herders and farmers conflicts.

Method of Data Collection/Procedure

The data for this study was collected using the structured questionnaire by the researchers and trained research assistants. The researchers ensured that two research assistants who are members of the selected communities (One herder and one farmer) were selected and trained in each of the selected area. Before the administration of the questionnaire, the researchers first collected an introductory letter from the management of the Polytechnic introducing the researchers and the motive for the research. The researcher then visited the sample communities to interface with their community leaders, where the reason for the study was explained and the role research assistants and respondents in data collection.

Method of Data Analysis

The research work used both descriptive and inferential tools of statistics to analyze the data collected. Specifically, frequency tables, simple percentages, charts, mean and standard deviation were used as descriptive tools for analyzing the objective and research questions. The hypothesis was tested using t-test statistics and ordinal logistic regression respectively. The statistical computations were carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0 for the purpose of accuracy and reliability.

V. EXPECTED OUTPUTS/RESULTS

The protracted conflicts between herders and farmers in Nasarawa State have been a threat to the economy of the State in General. The expected outcomes of this study therefore will include the following:

- i. The study will provide empirical evidence of the causes of such conflicts over the years.
- ii. The study will provide implantable recommendations and effective strategies for curbing and preventing the challenge of herders and farmers conflicts and its effects on economic activities in the State.

This section of the study presents the quantitative results of the research. It is the analysis of some application of models described in methodology as found appropriate in achieving the objectives of the study. At each stage, results were presented, analyzed and discussed. Therefore, in this section descriptive statistics, linear probability modeling such as multinomial logistic regression, binary ordered probit, chi-square and marginal effect after probit were presented and analyzed in line with our stated objectives. Also, the results

including the data used in the study were presented as appendix.

Data Presentation

The total copies of questionnaire administered were 400 while the total copies of questionnaire returned were 373. This gives a response of 373 out of 400 representing 93% response rate. Also, the non-responses were 27 out of 400, representing 7% non-response rate. This shows that the responses are robust enough for the study.

Reliability test

Result of the reliability test using Pre-test and Post-test Pearson Lemma’s mode is presented in table 1 below. For the instrument to be reliable, the value of the Pearson Lemma’s mode must be equal to or greater than 0.6

. alpha alg frac ap base ige bearing dist prob cal vol log set var wp std stf

Test scale = mean(standardized items)
Reversed items: frac ap log var std stf

Average interitem covariance: .0326149
Number of items in the scale: 16
Scale reliability coefficient: 0.7334

The table revealed that the value of the Pre-test and Post-test Pearson Lemma’s mode is 0.73 or 73%. The implication of this is that the instrument is highly reliable for analysis and conclusion and recommendation advanced from it can be relied upon for policy implementations and actions

Table 1: The Demographic Characteristic of the Respondents

	QUESTION	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	18-25	94	26
		26-35	84	24
		36-45	100	28
		46 -55	71	20
		56 -65	7	2
		66 and Above	2	1
	Total		358	100
2	Marital status	Single	113	68
		Married	250	31
		Dedicated	1	0.3
		Widowed	5	2
		Total	369	100
3	Religion	Christianity	200	54
		Islam	159	43
		African Trad. Religion	8	2
		Others	3	1
		Total	370	100
		4	Education	Non formal education
Islamic education	28			8
Primary education	6			2
Secondary education	25			7
Tertiary	241			66
Total	366			100
5	Occupation	Crop farmer	96	26
		Herders man	27	
		Trader	65	
		Artisan	10	
		Public servant	99	

		Politician	33	
		Religion minister		
		Traditional ruler	23	
		Vigilante		
		Others	14	
		Total	367	100
6	Indigeneship	Native	242	66
		Settler	49	13
		Migrant	72	21
		Total	364	100
7	Social position	Vigilante leader	6	2
		Youth leader	76	22
		Community leader	40	12
		Market leader	40	12
		Religious leader	43	13
		Farmer’s leader	11	3
		Herder’s leader		
		Members/ Others	131	38
		Total	347	100

Source: Authors’ computation from field survey, 2020

Table 1: shows that for the age of the 358 respondents, 94 were between 18-25 years, 84 between 26-35 years, 100 between 36-45 years, 71 were 46 – 55, 7 were between 56 – 65 and 2 were between 66 and above. The implication of this age structure to the study is that majority of the respondents are youth and if nothing is done to mitigate this conflict, there is always the tendency of reprisal attack. According to marital status, 250 were married and 113 were single, 1 was dedicated and 5 were widowed.

This means that the bulk of the respondents are bread winners and therefore, the survival of their agricultural or herds’ activities should be of concern to the state. Among the respondents, 200 are Christian, 159 are Moslem, 8 practices African Traditional Religion while 1 professed other faith. This implies that mainly two religions (Christian and Moslem) are involved in the conflict. On ethnic affiliations, 49 are Hausas, 31 are Fulanis, 88 are Tivs, 109 are the Eggons, 28 are Alagos, 45 are Migilis and others is 1. The implication of this is that the worst hit ethnic groups in the state are the Eggons and Tivs. Since these tribes are mainly agrarian, it has serious implications on national food security.

Among the respondents, 68 have no formal education, 28 have Islamic education, 6 primary school education, 25 have secondary education and 241 have tertiary education. This implies that majority of the respondents are educated and with their exposure to certain skill, if this conflict is not mitigated, it can easily degenerate to militancy. On occupation, 97 are crop farmers, 27 are herds men, 65 are traders, 10 are Artisan, 99 are public servant, 33 are politicians 8 are traditional rulers and 14 are others. The implication of this to the study is that crop farmers are the worst hit by the conflict. On the indigeneship, 242 are native, 49 are settlers while 72 are migrants. This implies that the conflict is mainly between the native and migrants. Among the respondents, 1 is a vigilante leader, 76 are youth leaders, 40 are community leader, 40 market leaders, 43 are religion leader, 11 are farmer’s leader while 131 are members.

To examine the historical trend and incidence of farmers – herders’ conflict in Nasarawa state, descriptive statistics was employed. The results are shown in table below.

Table 2: Historical trend and incidence of farmers – herders’ conflict in the State

QUESTION	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Period of the conflict	1970- 1979	27	7
	1980-1989	10	3
	1990-1999	18	5
	2000-2009	173	47
	2010-2019	98	26
	2020 to Date	46	12
	Total	372	100
Perception on the incidence	High	159	43
	Low	30	8
	Alarming	183	49
	Total	372	100
Parties involved in the conflict	Migrant and Native	12	3
	Indigene and Settlers	39	11
	Crop farmers and Herdsmen	264	71
	Christian and Moslem	5	1
	Fulani and other communal group	13	4
	Others	38	10
	Total	371	100

The results in table 2 show that the farmers’ – herders’ conflict became a perennial problem in 1990s following the return to democracy and the climatic change effect on Lake Chad and Atlantic Ocean drying up pastures forcing herdsmen to migrate. However, majority of the respondents perceived the conflict to be high and alarming with crop farmers and herds men being the major parties involved in the conflict.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis (SYMMETRIC MEASURE)

	Value	Assmp.std error	Approx. T ^b	Approx. sig
Ordinal by ordinal spearman’s tau b N. of valid cases	0.73 368	0.31	.886	.612

Source: Authors’ Computation from the field survey, 2020

Table Cross Tabulation Result (CASE PROCESSING SUMMARY)

N 4 Positive link* N1 Negative link*N6	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
	368	92%	32	8%	100	100%

Source: Source: Authors’ Computation from the field survey, 2020

On the causes of the conflict, the causes were ranked based on their dynamic, manifestation and intensity and therefore was analyzed using correlation and cross tabulation. The hypothesis was tested using Chi square. The results are presented in table.

Table Chi-square result

	VALUE	DF	ASSMP.SIG (2-SIDED)
Pearson chi-square	177.774	36	.000
Likelihood Ratio	133.193	36	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.004	2	
N. of valid cases	368		

Source: Source: Authors’ Computation from the field survey, 2020

The result in table 4 revealed the signs of the Spearman correlation to be positive. This implies that growth in livelihood struggle will heighten the herders – farmers’ conflict. The results further suggest that the degree of the positive relationship between the two variables under investigation captured by Spearman correlation is significant. This is so as 73% of the causes of herders – farmers’ conflict is as a result of livelihood struggles with religious affiliation and ethnic dimensions accounting for only 27%.

To further validate this, the study conducted cross tabulation analysis. The cross-tabulation result of percentages within the growth of livelihood and herders – farmers’ conflict of 92% validates our findings. To test the hypothesis, X² analysis was conducted. Based on the X² decision rule, the calculated X² was compared with the critical X² values at 0.05 (X², 95) level of significance. Based on X² decision rule, since the calculated X² (118) is greater than the critical X² (16.09) at 33 degree of freedom (33 df) we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant difference between the responses of herders and farmers on the causes of their conflict in Nasarawa state. The findings here is not in isolation as it confirms with the findings of Olabode and Ajibade (2010) and Abubakar (2012) who in their various study found that livelihood struggle is the cause of the conflict.

VI. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study is aimed at determining the causes of herders-farmers conflicts on economic activities in Nasarawa State. Historical trend and incidence of farmers – herders’ conflict in the State show that the farmers’ – herders’ conflict became a perennial problem in 2000s following the return to democracy and the climatic change effect on Lake Chad and Atlantic Ocean drying up pastures, forcing herdsmen to migrate. The Spearman correlation result showed to be positive.

This implies that growth in livelihood struggle will heighten the herders – farmers’ conflict. The results further revealed that the degree of the positive relationship between the two variables under investigation captured by Spearman correlation is significant. This is so as 73% of the causes of herders – farmers’ conflict is as a result of livelihood struggles with religious affiliation and ethnic dimensions accounting for only 27%. The study concluded that farmers-herders conflicts

have significant negative impacts on economic activities and agricultural activities in the state.

Based on the conclusion drawn from the findings of this study, the following have been recommended among others:

- i. The Nasarawa State Government in conjunction with necessary Federal Government agencies like NEMA, Ministry for Humanitarian Affairs should ensure that those affected by herders and farmers conflicts in the state are provided with basic needs as temporal measures, while making efforts to ensure that their affected houses and other assets are reconstructed for their safe return to their initial home.
- ii. The Nasarawa state and the Federal Government should organize dialogue and peace building programs for herders and farmers in conjunction with their leaders so as to promote peace in the state. The meetings should carefully consider all the underlying causes of the conflicts and risks involved so as to ensure sustainable peace which is crucial in fighting challenges to livelihood security and providing a lasting solution to the problem.
- iii. There should be a strong collaboration between the State and local government authorities to ensure that the killings are prevented while crimes committed are speedily investigated and tried in a competent court of law. This will help in building confidence among the parties in conflicts and hence promote socio-economic activities that can enhance livelihood, security and reduced poverty incidences.
- iv. There is also a need for government to provide enough securities to fight against farmers and herders' conflicts in the state.
- v. A proper internal security measure should be put in place in the state to reduce the complicated herders' farmers' conflicts, like community policing and good network of the existing vigilante groups.

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