

Implications of Livestock Rustling Enterprise on Families in Nyakach and Sigowet Sub Counties, Western Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Traditionally, theft of livestock was practiced by some communities for purposes of restocking or a sign of maturity for admission to a particular masculine category. However, the contemporary livestock rustling is emerging as an entrepreneurial criminal activity that is fully organized and whose real beneficiaries are business people who pick stolen stock, transport it to major towns for profit making purely as an enterprise. The purpose of this study was to explore the characteristics and strategies used by livestock rustling enterprises and the social and economic effects the crime has on families living in Nyakach and Sigowet sub-counties in Western Kenya. Interviews were conducted with 15 offenders (ex-convicts), 8 documented cases were analysed and additional interviews conducted with village elders from both areas. Semi structured questionnaire was administered on a sample of 385 victims. Routine Activities Theory which postulates existence of intersection or meeting up of a motivated offender with an attractive target under conditions that the offender perceives as opportunistic guided the study. The findings of this study revealed that livestock theft perpetrators come from diverse backgrounds regarding age, qualification, status and socio-economic class. Their crimes were of an organised syndicate comprising local youths, police, transporters and urban meat traders alongside public health officers. Livestock theft in this area has resulted into inter-ethnic clashes leading to injuries and deaths, as well as closure of schools and markets on the border. Economically, destruction of property was rampant, while victims of livestock theft lose their source of livelihood in terms of milk and ghee, beef and other livestock products. The study recommends that the government should strictly monitor sources of meat sold by butcheries, have measures to protect social places like schools and open-air markets from invaders and provide indemnities for financial losses arising from conflicts occasioned by cattle rustling.

Key words: Cattle Rustling; Economic Effects; Livestock Farmers; Livestock Theft Perpetrators; Social Effects; Stock Theft Entrepreneurs

INTRODUCTION

The role of animal husbandry in agriculture has always been exceptional. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2002), livestock accounts for 40% of the world's agricultural value and provides livelihoods as well as food and nutritional security for nearly 1.3 billion people (World Bank, 2020). At the same time, for some countries and regions of the planet, the role of livestock in the agricultural sector can be vital. It should be noted that approximately 70% of people found in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) depend on agriculture for food, income, and employment (Manganyi, Maluleke & Shandu, 2018). Livestock, such as cattle, are of fundamental value since they are not only a source of food, but also crucial for social capital, which is essential for distinct negotiations as well as social investment in various rural communities (Maluleke, Tshabalala & Tolla, 2021). Livestock farming significantly contributes to the livelihoods of people residing in the rural areas of developing countries (Maluleke, 2020). However, researchers, academics, and scholars within the field of social development have given less attention to organised stock theft with linked syndicate to urban meat businessmen, relegating it to rural property-related

crime only (Cheserek, Omondi & Odenyo, 2012; Maluleke, 2018, Manganyi, Maluleke & Shandu, 2018).

Amongst the global issues that urgently need attention are organised rural crimes committed in the agricultural sector with strong links to urban business enterprises. Lack of attention to rural crimes such as livestock theft within academia for decades has raised concerns to social scientists (Clack, 2013; Clack & Minnaar, 2018).

Traditionally, some communities in rural settings have practiced cattle raids with neighbouring communities, using crude weapons such as; sticks, spears, bows, arrows and clubs (Cheserek et al, 2012). These raids were practiced as means of reciprocity, for poor families to acquire livestock and restock particularly after droughts or epidemics (Okoli & Okpaleke, 2014). Cattle rustling refers to a violent activity by pastoral communities stealing livestock from each other (Mulugeta & Hagmann, 2017). According to Gumba, Alusala and Kimani (2019), cattle rustling is an activity carried out by a group of individuals, often not from the same community, who plan, organize and forcefully steal livestock from another person, community or entity or from the grazing field or kraal for the purpose of social, political or economic gain. The main resource being livestock, ownership depends on one's strength to protect what one has and to increase the number by constantly invading other communities using all available means to own the animals (Anyango, Muhingi, Okuku, Mutavi & Mulwa, 2017). Anyango et al (2017) documents that cattle rustling has adverse and context-based effects on levels of community development in that it affects engagement and actualization of development incentives that provide avenues for individuals to advance their lives.

Researchers have found that stock theft in the rural area is the result of mainly poverty and drought conditions, with the latter resulting in low yields (Bunei, McElwee & Smith, 2016). The authors further note that the rural farmer is today often perceived to be the victim of organised livestock theft crime with the perpetrators primarily being what Smith and McElwee (2015) refer to as urban-based-business people. In reality, such crimes cannot occur without the collusion of those of the rural and urban cartels (Smith and McElwee, 2013). Stock theft or cattle rustling have been documented across the globe, with more attention being given to developing countries.

Farm crimes including theft of produce, tools and livestock form a big issue in emerging criminology in Europe and other developing nations which researchers have continued to show a lack of interest. Smith and Byrne (2017) explored the attitudes of farmers towards farm crime such as theft of livestock and farm produce, crime prevention, the police, and potential predictors of farm victimization in England and Wales. An online survey was completed by 71 farmers; a further 55 farmers partially completed the survey providing important additional data. An analysis of the survey results shows low levels of confidence in and reporting to the police, low levels of crime prevention usage, and varying potential predictors of victimisation. In Australia, one of the criminal areas causing alarms is farm crime in rural areas (Donnermeyer, 2017). The author observes that while prices of everything associated with producing food has increased, the ability to properly guard or secure the farm operation has not kept pace. The number of offenders and their motives for targeting farms, ranging from merely making money to terrorizing through brutal attacks on farmers has increased as well.

This points out that, the different tendencies and trends of cattle rustling operate differently from one locality to another in terms of degree and motivation. According to McIntyre, Prine and Knowles (2017), most agricultural crimes in rural areas of Georgia and parts of North America such as cattle rustling were cowboys who engaged in dubious practices of acquiring a few cows, then registered a branding device and begun branding syndicates. The cowboys knew the cattle ranches and engaged in altering of brands, instead of the stamp iron used by most cattlemen, the rustler used his own branding equipment to claim ownership of the branded cattle by having his brand symbol. When discovered, cowboys sometimes used a piece of heavy wire that they could bend into any shape and carried it in their pocket. These revelations bring into foreground methods employed by cattle rustlers in North America; however, it does not compare with African context especially Kenyan case where cattle raid mostly involve violent confrontations.

In Italy, Sergi and Lavorgna (2012) document that the expansion of the Mafia into rural crimes such as the theft of farm machinery and tools; the theft of livestock; and into unregulated butchery practices points at the danger that serious and organised crime groups pose to rural areas when they seek to expand their criminal

activities in the current economic recession. Viajar (2013) posits that cattle rustling in Philippines stems from the presence of conflict caused by the breakdown of governance, high poverty and proliferation of light

firearms. The persistence of cattle-rustling in Philippines is attributed to political incitements. For example, intense political rivalries sometimes result into cattle rustling after elections, whereby cattle raids are directed against the communities of winning political leaders to show ineffective governance and control of the area.

Among the Central Asian countries, Aiyzhy et al (2021) reports a subjective portrait of a Tuvan livestock thief grazing as one of the factors of stock theft that he studied. On the other hand, Maluleke, Tshabalala and Tolla (2021) documents that in South Africa, lack of appropriate preventative measures has led to rise of stock theft, it was, therefore, discovered that both the affected livestock farmers and members of the community lost confidence toward the police. Besides, the perspectives on stock theft prevention reflect a greater challenge, with inadequate solutions present, since the current preventive measures are ineffective. Cattle rustling has been a perennial problem in Nigeria. In Northern Nigeria where cattle rearing constitutes a dominant occupation, the problem has been complicated by the rising incidence of farmer/herder conflicts as well as the Boko Haram insurgency (Okoli and Okpaleke, 2014).

One country that has witnessed violent scenes orchestrated by cattle rustling perhaps more than many countries is Kenya. Researchers (Cheserek et al, 2012; Bunei, McElwee & Smith, 2016; Migowe et al, 2020) have reported diverse factors related to causes and socio-economic impacts of inter-ethnic clashes occasioned by cattle rustling. Cattle rustling in areas like Nyakach-Sigowet border have taken ugly direction such that the raiders are well organised and bold enough to launch attacks when livestock owners are awake. In the year 2013, for instance, an unknown number of attackers raided Nyakach MP Aduma Owuor's rural home in Kabete, Upper Nyakach and killed his parents in a revenge mission following the MP's past operations to flush out criminals that even led to the lynching of some suspected rustlers (Angira, 2013). Whereas the rustling activities seem to be organised and well-coordinated enterprise, researchers have not explored the operations of the entrepreneurs in the livestock theft organizations. Similarly, socio economic implications of cattle rustling have been reported to be context specific hence a closer look at situations at Nyakach-Sigowet was equally important.

1.1 Problem Statement

Cattle rustling across the globe has been reported to have deprived families keeping livestock of their main livelihood source. In developing countries such as Kenya, most inter-ethnic conflicts have been directly and indirectly associated with issues such as livestock theft. In Western Kenya at the border of Nyakach and Sigowet sub-counties, cattle rustling has continued to exist despite being a peri-urban settlement with several police posts. Literature documents that cattle rustling is an age-old activity which has been carried out as a traditional practice for restocking and an evidence for masculine transition qualification. Whereas livestock rustling has been associated with crimes in the rural areas, the involvement of syndicate enterprise involving various players in rural and urban areas remains understudied. Similarly, the implications that cattle rustling has had on both social and economic factors among families involved seem to be context specific, thus it calls for a deeper exploration especially at the border of Nyakach and Sigowet sub-counties.

1.2 Study Purpose

The purpose of this paper was to explore the implications of livestock rustling enterprise on families in Nyakach and Sigowet sub-counties, western Kenya. Specific objectives were to:

- i. Determine operators and their strategies in the cattle rustling organisations or enterprises in Nyakach-Sigowet border of Western Kenya.
- ii. Assess the social implications of cattle rustling on families living in Nyakach-Sigowet border of Western Kenya
- iii. Explore the economic implications of cattle rustling on families living in Nyakach-Sigowet border of

Western Kenya.

THEORETICAL AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

The study was guided by Routine Activity Theory (RAT) initially developed by Lawrence Cohen and Marcus Felson in 1979 (Donnermeyer, 2017). Routine Activity Theory is very relevant for understanding farm crime in a variety of societies and more localized contexts (Lilly, Cullen & Ball 2015). There are excellent applications of it by Bunei and Barasa (2017) and Clack (2015). The theory is simple in concept and unlike many other criminological theories, generates propositions that are testable and applicable to real world situations. Routine Activities theory begins with the straightforward idea that there must be an intersection or meeting up of a motivated offender with an attractive target under conditions that the offender perceives as opportunistic. The target may be a person or an object, the offender can be any member of society who has the desire to commit a crime, and the opportunity under which a crime is committed can vary greatly, depending on circumstances. It is opportunity, in the author's opinion, and consideration of opportunity's diversity across a large range of ecological/environmental conditions that makes it relevant for an understanding of farm crime and for the comparison of results across studies conducted around the world.

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

A study done in Italy by Sergi and Lavorgna (2012) explored the trade secrets employed by the Italian Mafia to expand its business to rural and farmland areas. They found that the Mafia had expanded their activities through webs of syndicate into rural crimes such as the theft of farm machinery and tools; the theft of livestock; and into unregulated butchery practices. The authors argued that these activities point at the danger that serious and organised crime groups pose to rural areas when they seek to expand their criminal activities in the current economic recession. Equally, Smith and Byrne (2017) explored the attitudes of farmers towards farm crime such as theft of livestock and farm produce, crime prevention, the police, and potential predictors of farm victimization in England and Wales. An online survey was completed by 71 farmers; a further 55 farmers partially completed the survey providing important additional data. An analysis of the survey results shows low levels of confidence in and reporting to the police, low levels of crime prevention usage, and varying potential predictors of victimisation. In Central Asia, Aiyzhy et al (2021) analysed the problems of livestock theft in Tuva from the mid-nineteenth century to the current state, as well as structure and dynamics of livestock theft. The main reasons for livestock theft and its reduced detection were analysed. On the basis of the conducted research, the authors have revealed a subjective portrait of a Tuvan livestock thief grazing as one of the factors of stock theft that was studied.

In Africa, Maluleke et al (2021) explores the extent of cattle rustling crime in the selected areas in South Africa, considering contributory factors, determining the relationship between the South African Police Service Stock Theft Units (SAPS STUs) and other relevant stakeholders, as well as looking at existing strategies (and their failures and successes) in responding to this crime effectively. A qualitative research approach was adopted in this study. Findings showed that lack of appropriate preventative measures has led to rise of stock theft, it was, therefore, discovered that both the affected livestock farmers and members of the community lost confidence on the police. Besides, the perspectives on stock theft prevention in the area reflect a greater challenge, with inadequate solutions present, since the current preventative measures are ineffective. In Nigeria, Okoli and Okpaleke (2014) examined the phenomenon of cattle rustling in northern Nigeria with a view to underscoring its strategic implications for national security. By way of qualitative discourse, predicated on secondary sources, the authors observed that cattle rustling represent a veritable threat to public safety and security in Nigeria. This is in view of the dire impacts and repercussions of the phenomenon which negates national security of the country. Another recent study done in Nigeria by Bello and Abdullahi (2021) examined the influence of farmers–herdsmen conflicts on cattle rustling and banditry, and vice versa. The findings revealed that farmers–herdsmen conflict precipitates the acts of cattle rustling and banditry. It also revealed that conversely cattle rustling and banditry contributed to the farmers–herdsmen conflict in the local government area of Zamfara State. The study discovered that the synthesis of farmers–herdsmen conflicts, cattle rustling, and banditry pose serious threat to the safety and security of the people.

Kenya has also had significant documentation regarding effects of cattle rustling activities. For instance, Anyango et al (2017) sought to determine the socio-economic effects of cattle rustling in Borabu sub-county. Qualitative and quantitative data was collected concurrently, analyzed, interpreted and the findings were in tandem with the study's objectives. The study targeted 90 youths, 97 cattle herders, 13 county education directors and school heads and 50 community members including elders and religious leaders. The study revealed that cattle rustling in Borabu sub-county was propagated by traditional practices, economic gains, illiteracy, marginalization and poor governance tendencies. In another study, Cheserek et al (2012) conducted a research in two districts in Kenya; Baringo East and Marakwet East in the Kerio Valley region to investigate the causes and socio-economic effects of cattle rustling on the Pokot and Marakwet communities. The research utilised both primary and secondary data collection methods. The results showed cattle rustling has numerous causes that include; the availability of guns, commercialization of cattle raids, political incitement, poverty, traditional values and illiteracy. Some socio-economic impacts of cattle rustling included; migration, change of livelihoods styles, eroded cultural values and adoption of education and farming. Bunei, McElwee and Smith (2016) sought to provide an analysis of the changing practices of cattle rustling in Kenya from a relatively small isolated and opportunistic activity to a much more planned and systematic entrepreneurial business involving collusion and corruption. Results revealed significant differences in how rustling is perceived and valorized. Rustling in Kenya is now an entrepreneurial crime with the involvement of rural organized criminal gangs, who are operating in food supply chains throughout Kenya and the African continent

A recent study conducted in the same locality by Migowe et al (2020) analysed the influence of socio-economic factors on conflicts. The authors found that politics only helps to accelerate ongoing conflicts. They also revealed that ethnicity was directly connected with the eruption of conflicts in Nyakach area due to cultural and economic factors. Conflicts erupted in Nyakach area when the Kipsigis community embarked on the cattle raiding missions for cultural purposes. In another study done in the same area, Juma, Iteyo and Simiyu (2018) investigated the nexus between the socio-economic environment and recurrence of inter-ethnic conflicts in Nyakach and Sigowet sub-counties of Western Kenya. The results of the study therefore, showed the connection between following socio-economic factors and conflicts; the socio-economic activities, distribution of economic resources and opportunities, politicization of ethnicity and political exclusion, socio-cultural perceptions and stereotypes, and the socio-economic drivers of conflicts including poverty, youth unemployment, ethnic mistrust and land and boundary issues.

The foregoing literature illustrates that cattle rustling or livestock theft is a crime that is experienced all over the world. Whereas the literature has demonstrated that cattle rustling has caused diverse forms of conflict, it has only been shown that such farm based crime is common in rural areas (in Africa) or countryside (in Europe and America). However, there are some evidence that the large demand for meat in urban places has some connections with incessant cattle rustling crime in nearby rural places. Similarly, for the stolen cattle to reach urban places without being intercepted by relevant authorities and for the meat to reach the designated butcheries as genuine purchase, there must be an organised syndicate involving a web of well-connected entities. This however has remained understudied in spite of the disturbing nature of cattle rustling.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

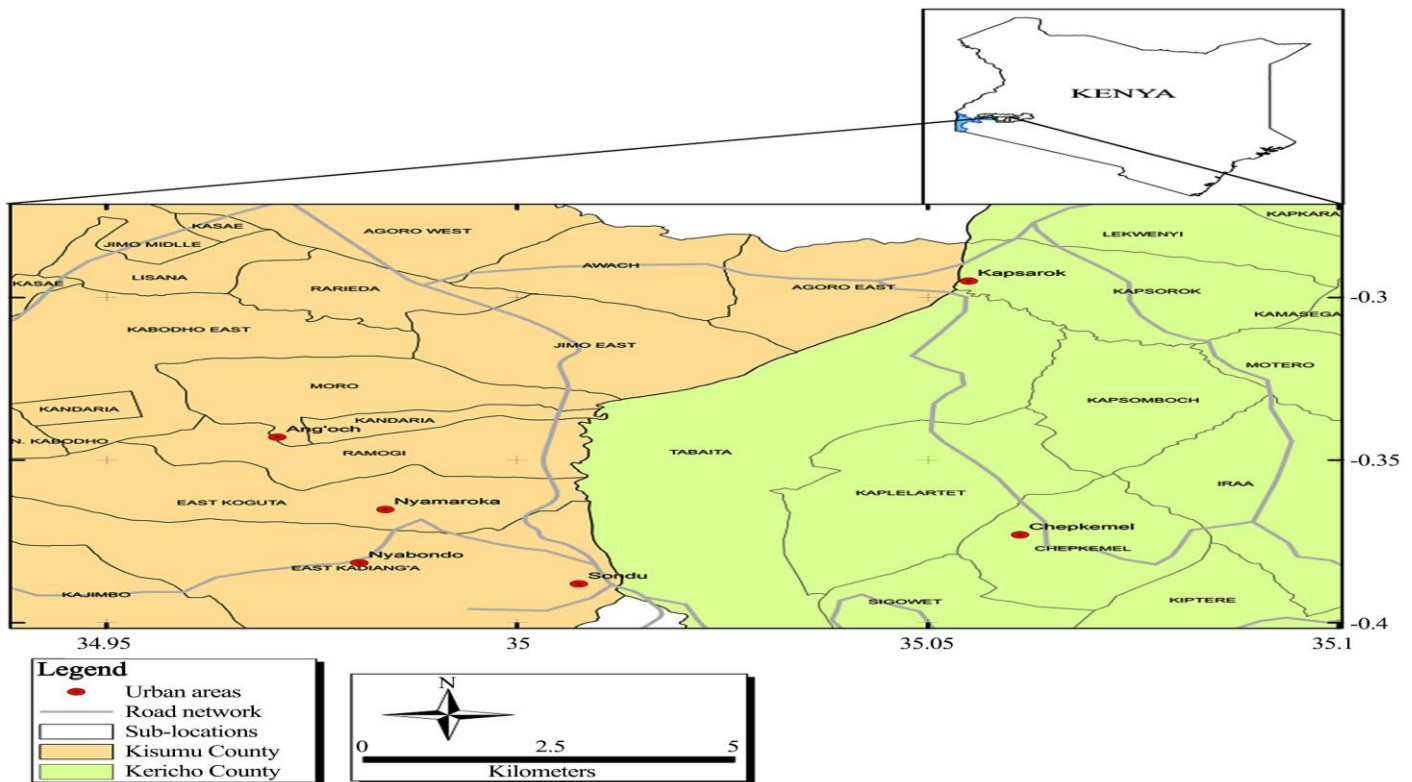
3.1 Study Design

The study was done through descriptive survey design with mixed-methods approach. Mixed methods involve utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis (Poth & Munce, 2020). This approach offers a bridge by using quantitative methods to measure diverse aspects of the phenomenon under study, hence provides for complementarity (Dawadi, Shrestha and Giri, 2021). The design was appropriate because it aided the study in gaining from the concept of concurrent triangulation.

3.2 Study Area

The study was done in Nyakach and Sigowet sub-counties. Nyakach sub-county is dominated by Luo ethnic community which predominantly practices small scale farming, fishing, and small-scale business activities. The Luo community often keeps small herds of cattle for milk, ghee, and to sort out family expenses such as

school fee and other arising expenses like medical costs. On the other hand, Sigowet is dominated by Kipsigis ethnic community which keeps large herds of cattle and do medium to large scale farming. The Kipsigis have a tradition of cattle rustling basically for restocking their herds and a rite of passage requirement for youths into adulthood. Figure 1 presents a map of the study area.



3.3 Target Population and Sample Size

3.3.1 Target Population

Target population comprised of households who have been affected by cattle rustling conflicts between 2010 and 2020 (Sigowet = 4, 402; Nyakach = 6, 070).

3.3.2 Sample Size

A sample size of 385 households was obtained using Taro Yamane’s formula (Israel, 2013). Table 2 presents the distribution of target population and sample size of the study. The study also conducted interviews with persons who have been previously convicted for livestock theft in the study area, alongside police officers in charge of anti-stock theft in the area.

Table 1: Distribution of Study Population and Sample Size

Sub County	Location	Sub Location	Total Households	Sampled Households
Sigowet	Sigowet	Sigowet	981	36
		Kiptere	1313	48
	Kapelelartet	Tabaita	1879	69
		Kapelelartet	229	8
Nyakach	North Nyakach	Agoro East	728	26
		Jimo East	913	33

	South East Nyakach	Kandaria	351	12
		East Kadiang'a	4078	149
Total			10, 472	385

3.4 Instrumentation

The study used two data collection instruments to collect data from households on one hand, and offenders plus village elders. Semi structured (open and closed ended questionnaire) was used to collect data from households which have been affected by rustling over the last 10 years while interview schedule was used on ex-convicts for livestock theft and village elders. According to Taherdoost (2016), questionnaire is suitable in collecting data from a large population. The interview schedule was appropriate for the study as it provided in-depth information and a detailed understanding of the issue under research.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Content validity index (CVI) was used by the researcher to test validity. According to Yusoff (2019), content validity is the degree of relevance of expected constructs for a particular purpose of assessment. Expert judgment was used to analyse content validity. In this vein, judgments of five experts were rated on a scale of 1 to 4 as: 1 = Relevance; 2 = Clarity; 3 = Simplicity and 4 = Ambiguity. A calculated rating of 0.96 (96%) was obtained. This was considered as high validity hence viewed as satisfactorily meeting the required level for measuring the expected constructs (Ozair et al, 2017; Lau et al, 2018).

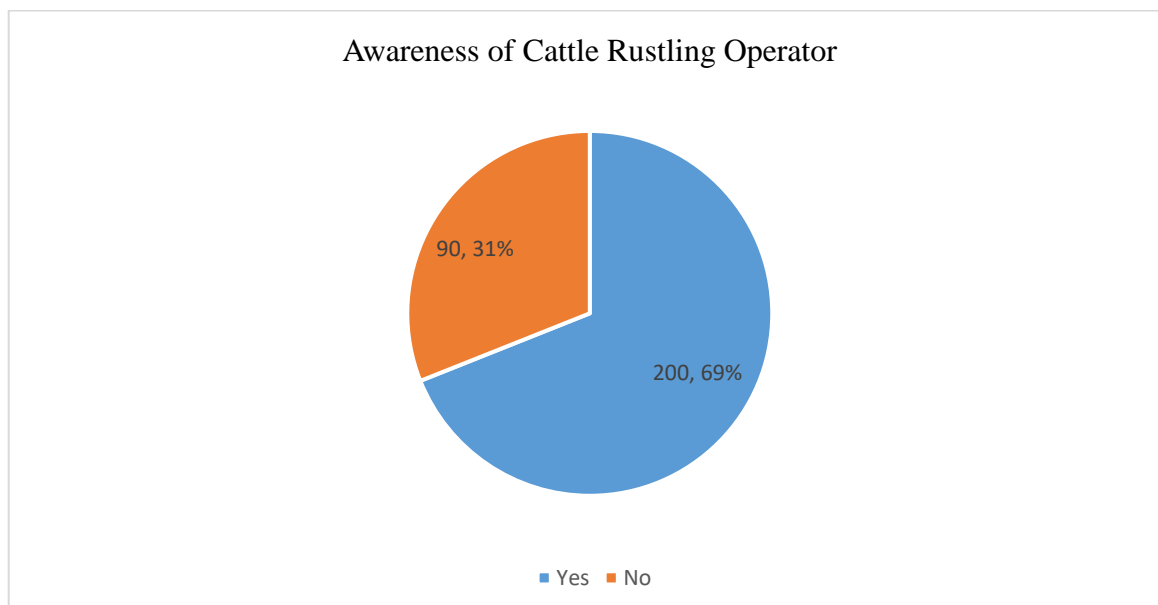
Reliability of study instrument was measured through split-half method using data obtained during pilot study involving 38 respondents randomly selected from study population and who were eventually excluded from the final data collection exercise. Using data collected from the pilot study, a correlation coefficient of 0.849 was calculated using SPSS software as a measure of reliability. This was considered suitable since this was greater than the threshold of 0.7 as articulated by Taherdoost (2016).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Operators in the cattle rustling organisations or enterprises

The researchers first asked the respondents to indicate whether they were aware of persons or groups running cattle rustling activities in the area and the responses were presented in Figure 2.



The respondents were further asked to indicate the people they were aware to be running cattle rustling activities in the area. The results were summarised in Figure 3

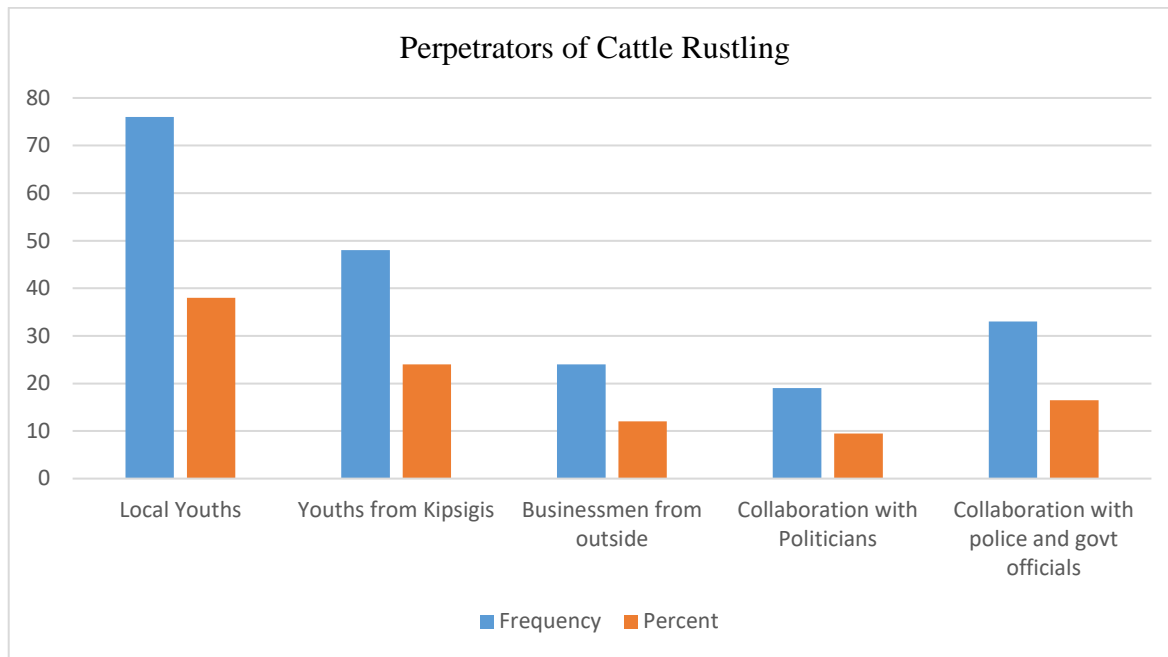


Figure 3: Perpetrators of Cattle Rustling

Further, the researcher enquired from the previously convicted cattle rustlers their education level whereby the obtained results were summarised in Figure 4.

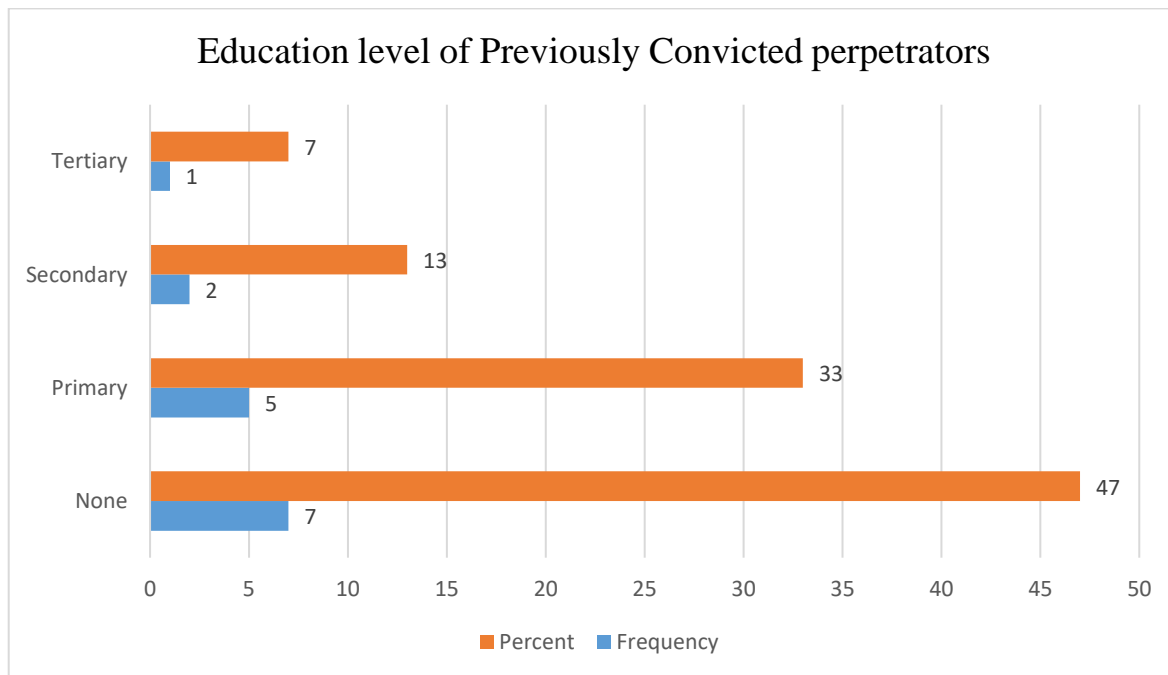


Figure 4: Education Levels of Previously Convicted Perpetrators

4.1.2 Social implications of cattle rustling

The researcher involved household heads and anti-stock theft officers on issues concerning social implications of cattle rustling and it clearly emerged that cattle rustling had significantly hindered school attendance, church attendance as well as business operations in the nearby markets.

One of the respondents in the interview session stated,

Teachers, for instance, have on numerous occasions complained to me about how community fights as a result of cattle rustling have distorted the learning process to the extent that the teachers feel demotivated to continue teaching.

Some of the cattle rustlers had threatened teachers from a neighboring community that they would be killed if they dared come teach in the schools situated in the opposing community. This resonates with a number of studies done elsewhere to demonstrate the socio-economic implications of cattle theft, for example, Sergi and Lavorgna (2012) explored the trade secrets employed by the Italian Mafia to expand its business to rural and farmland areas in Italy. These authors established that these activities posed danger to rural areas by criminals. In the same vein, Smith and Byrne (2017) sought to determine the attitudes of farmers towards farm crime such as theft of livestock and farm produce, crime prevention, the police, and potential predictors of farm victimization in England and Wales and revealed low levels of confidence in and reporting to the police, low levels of crime prevention usage, and varying potential predictors of victimization in Central Asia.

From closed ended questions presented to household heads, the respondents indicated that closure of schools and disruptions of education programs form the most significant implication of cattle rustling in the study area. Figure 5 summarises this finding.

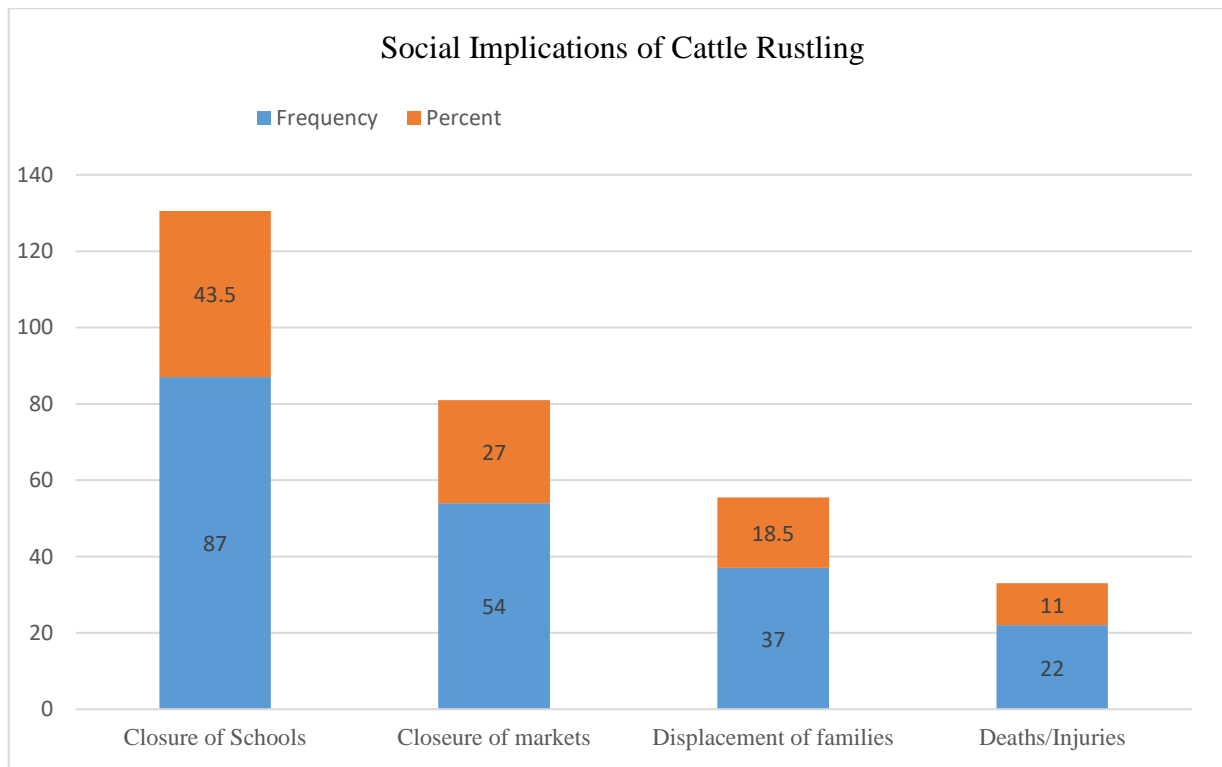


Figure 5: Social Implications of Cattle Rustling

4.1.3 Economic implications of cattle rustling

The last part of the research instrument analysed the economic implications of organised livestock theft among families living in Nyakach-Sigowet sub-counties in Western Kenya. Emerging statements from interviews with village elders as well as open ended questions answered by respondents suggested that families from the two sub-counties have lost their sources of livelihood due to livestock theft. One of the outstanding statements obtained from families in Nyakach sub-county was: Most of the families have relied on cattle for milk and other by products such as ghee and manure. In some extreme circumstances, families often sell one or two cows to offset school fee or meet medical expenses among others. Theft of cattle in the villages has left families in poverty and wanton deprivation.

The aforementioned interview finding signifies the implications of livestock theft on families living in Nyakach sub-county. The researcher additionally found that families in Sigowet sub-county have lost

household goods as well as destruction of business enterprises as a result of retaliatory attacks from neighbouring Nyakach sub-county. An outstanding statement noted was: Raiders often come from the neighbouring Nyakach sub-county purportedly in pursuit of their stolen cattle. In this endeavor, the raiders would destroy our crops, burn our business enterprises, destroy our homes and even steal our business and household goods. In the Sondu Market business centre, our shops would be burnt and our stocks stolen or destroyed. Kenya has also had significant documentation regarding effects of cattle rustling activities.

Contributing to this discourse, Anyango et al (2017) sought to determine the socio-economic effects of cattle rustling in Borabu sub-county and the study revealed that cattle rustling in Borabu sub-county was propagated by traditional practices, economic gains, illiteracy, marginalization and poor governance tendencies. In a related study, Cheserek et al (2012) conducted aresearch in two districts in Kenya; Baringo East and Marakwet East in the Kerio Valley region to investigate the causes and socio-economic effects of cattle rustling on the Pokot and Marakwet communities. The results of the study showed that cattle rustling has numerous causes that include; the availability of guns, commercialization of cattle raids, political incitement, poverty, traditional values and illiteracy. Bunei, McElwee and Smith (2016) sought to provide an analysis of the changing practices of cattle rustling in Kenya from a relatively small isolated and opportunistic activity to a much more planned and systematic entrepreneurial business involving collusion and corruption.

In another study done in the same area, Juma, Iteyo and Simiyu (2018) investigated the nexus between the socio-economic environment and recurrence of inter-ethnic conflicts in Nyakach and Sigowet sub-counties of Western Kenya. The results of the study showed factors such as the socio-economic activities, distribution of economic resources and opportunities, politicization of ethnicity and political exclusion, socio-cultural perceptions and stereotypes, and the socio-economic drivers of conflicts including poverty, youth unemployment, ethnic mistrust and land and boundary issues.

Families from Sigowet, based on the foregoing findings have lost farm produce and business stock from conflicts arising from cattle rustling. Further, the researcher requested the respondents to estimate in monetary terms the implications that livestock theft has had on them between 2010 and 2020.

Table 2: Estimated amounts of losses incurred due to cattle rustling in Nyakach-Sigowet

Sub County	Location	Sub Location	Nature of losses	Estimated Amounts (Shs)
Sigowet	Sigowet	Sigowet	Destroyed crops	2, 360,000
		Kiptere	Stolen business stock	4, 500,000
	Kaplelartet	Tabaita	Burnt shops	5, 000,000
		Kaplelartet	Burnt houses	1, 500,000
Total				11, 236,000
Nyakach	North Nyakach	Agoro East	Stolen cattle	5, 500, 000
		Jimo East	Stolen cattle	7, 000,000
	South East Nyakach	Kandaria	Stolen cattle	4, 100, 000
		East Kadiang'a	Cattle rustling	15, 000,000
Total				31,600,000
Total				42, 836,000

Table 2 illustrates economic losses in financial terms as estimated by families from both Nyakach and Sigowet sub-counties over the last 10 years. For families whose daily income is less than USD 1, such losses have high magnitude and extreme implications.

4.2 Discussions

The study findings have demonstrated the devastating implications that both victims and perceived perpetrators of livestock rustling go through. The findings have showed that cattle rustling has caused closure of schools, churches, and market places. Similarly, cattle rustling has resulted into conflicts which in turn have caused injuries and even deaths to both perceived perpetrators and victims. These findings concur with earlier studies by Migowe et al (2020) as well as Juma et al (2018). In both studies, families from the two areas have been shown to suffer diverse consequences due to cattle rustling. However, the former noted that cattle rustling has had a very devastating effect on the Luo community in Nyakach area. During such raids, the families of Luos lost not only cattle and livestock but also had their houses and other properties destroyed. In some cases, many lives were also lost on both sides of the communities. The conflict was found to have a very devastating effect on the households both socially and economically. The current study also found that livestock theft in the study area is carried out through an organised syndicate that extends to business persons in urban area, and involves a web of cartels including local unemployed youths, transporters, police officers and politicians. Perhaps this is the reason why the crime cannot be easily eliminated. Similar observation had earlier been made in Europe, where a survey by Smith and Byrne (2017) among countryside farmers in England and Wales showed that there are low levels of confidence in reporting to the police, low levels of crime prevention usage, and varying potential predictors of victimisation. Being clandestine and organised syndicate, no one might be willing to report knowledge of the livestock theft criminals for fear of victimization.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the study findings and the existence of relevant supporting literature, it is concluded that livestock theft in Nyakach-Sigowet sub-counties is not a rural only crime: it transcends to business persons in urban places as key sponsors. The perceived perpetrators are not fully benefitting from the crime. The study also concludes that families in Nyakach-Sigowet sub counties suffer diverse social losses such as closure of schools, market places, churches, and other social amenities. The families also suffer physical injuries among their members, and at times, death. The study additionally concludes that families in Nyakach-Sigowet sub-counties, due to incessant cattle rustling often suffer losses to properties such as burnt business enterprises, crops, and the theft of livestock upon which they derive their livelihoods. These measure into millions of shillings for families whose daily incomes are less than one US dollar a day

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that the government should strictly monitor sources of meat sold by butcheries in urban places within the vicinities of cattle rustling hotspots. Similarly, standard measures should be put in place to protect social places like schools and open-air markets from invaders during conflicts occasioned by cattle rustling. In addition, the government should put in place indemnities to provide cover from financial losses arising from conflicts occasioned by cattle rustling in all areas experiencing similar farm related atrocities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher is thankful to all the households in the study area which provided invaluable information towards this study. The researcher is also grateful to the village elders, the anti-stock theft police unit and the ex-convicts for the data which helped in fulfilling the desire of the study. Without such information, the analysis and report produced in this paper could not have been a success.

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