

FARMERS-HERDSMEN CONFLICT AND ITS IMPLICATION ON FOOD SECURITY IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The reoccurring conflict between herdsman and farmers has been a major challenge to food security in Nigeria. This study examined the implications of farmers-herdsmen conflict on food production in Kwara State. The specific objectives of the paper were to identify and analyse the causes of conflict between herdsman and farmers in Kwara State; examine the impacts of the conflict on food production in the state; assess the implications of the conflict on food security in the state; and suggest some recommendations for improved productivity in the state. The study adopted a mixed method as it relied on primary and secondary data. The research sample consisted of twelve famers and six herdsman, selected in the three LGAs of Kwara State using a snowball sampling technique. The findings from the paper revealed that land resources, mischiefs, grazing animals by under-aged children, influx of foreign herdsman are the major causes of conflict between farmers and herdsman in Kwara State. Based on the information gathered, persistent attacks on farmlands are among the reasons for low productivity of farm produce. The implications are low financial income and increase in price of food items and socio-economic development. This situation if not addressed, could result into hunger and poverty for average households and low revenue generation for the State Government. The study recommended among other things that regular workshop programme on peaceful coexistence and tolerance should be organized for farmers and herdsman in all the LGAs in the State. Government should consolidate on the advocacy talk organised by the Department of Livestock, in the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Keywords: Farmers, Herdsmen, Food security, Conflict, Development, Resources

Introduction

Farmer-herdsmen conflict is a major challenge to food security in Africa and most especially West Africa region. Nyong and Fiki (2005) pointed out that resource related conflicts are responsible for over 12 percent decline in per capital food production in Sub-Saharan Africa. Herdsmen have maintained symbiotic relationship with local farmers for many years but in recent times, the relationship has turned sour resulting in killing and destruction of property (Yahaya, 2013).

Competition over land resources has become common occurrence between farmers and herdsman in every part of Nigeria. The conflict which is raging in the Middle Belt region has spread to other parts of the country. There have been attacks in Rivers, Enugu, Ekiti, Oyo, Ogun, Edo and Ondo State in the South-West (Adetula, 2016; Amaza, 2016). In Kwara State, the Fulani herdsman and farmers have been cohabiting together from time immemorial but recently, they have been having the issue of cattles destroying crops in the farm. Farmlands

have been under severe attack by the activities of herdsman. The incidence has occurred virtually in all the Local Government Areas of the State. There have been cases of cattle killing, rustling and destruction of farmlands in places like Alapa in Asa LGA, Oro Ago in Ifelodun LGA, Motokun in Patigi LGA, Obbo Aiyegunle in Ekiti LGA, Isin LGA and Odo-Owa in Oke-Ero LGA. All these attacks have cast a dark shadow on the harmonious relationship of farmers and herdsman in the State.

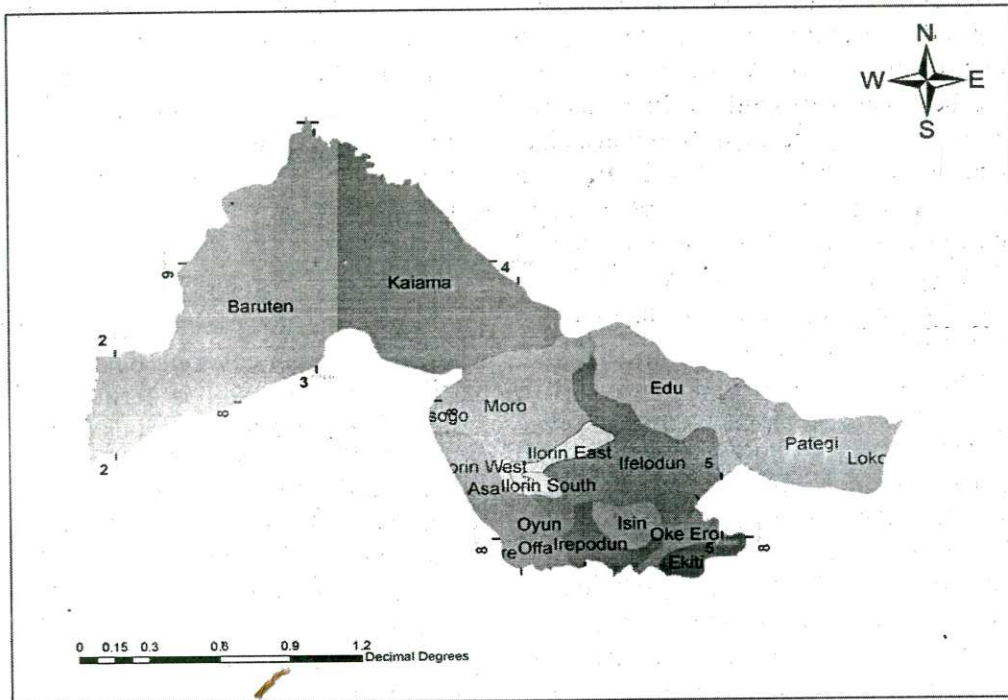
The continuous attack on farmlands posed a serious threat to food security for the people of Kwara State, given that the vast majority of them are rural dwellers who rely on agriculture as a means of survival. Balogun (2017) argues that food security is one of the core components of human security. By extension, if one component is affected, it affects other components. The Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations identifies four pillars of food security as availability, access, utilisation, and stability (FAO, 2009). This study seeks to investigate the impact of farmers-herdsmen conflict on food production and the implications on food security in Kwara State, aiming at the following objectives:

- (i.) Identify and examine the causes of farmers and herdsman conflict in Kwara State.
- (ii.) Asses the impacts of the conflict on food production.

- (iii.) Examine the implications of this conflict on food security in Kwara State.
- (iv.) Suggest possible ways to tackle the conflict to ensure food security.

The Study Area

Kwara State comprises of rainforest in the southern part with wooded savannah covering the larger part of the State. The soil is fertile and the State is well watered by various tributaries of Niger River which runs through Hills and Valleys, none of which rises to any great height. The State is a summer rainfall area, with all annual rainfall range of 1000mm to 1,500mm. The months of December and January coincide with the cold and dry harmattan period. The average maximum temperatures vary between 30 degree centigrade and 35 degree centigrade (Kwara State Ministry of Information, 2017). Known as "the State of Harmony" on account of peaceful relations that exist among its multi-cultural and diverse population of about 2.5 million people, it is a home to the Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, Nupe, Batonun, among others. The state is also known for its agricultural resourcefulness because majority of the population engage in farming. Apart from the agricultural resourcefulness, Kwara State is blessed with abundant animal resources comprising of about 2.9 million cattle, 3. 6 million sheep and goat; more than 75% of cattle population, 60% of the sheep and goats are owned by herdsman who are primarily nomadic in nature.

Figure 1: Map of Kwara State showing the study area.

Source: Kwara State office of the Surveyor General, 2013.

There are some lands designated as grazing reserves in seventeen locations with some identified linking stock routes for herdsmen throughout the state. In 1976, the State Government acquired these lands for the purpose of providing suitable grazing land for the settlement of nomadic cattle rearers, with a view of putting an end to incessant clashes between them and crop farmers.

Figure 2: Table showing designated grazing reserves in Kwara State

S/N	Name of Grazing Reserve	Location	Hacterage	Status
1	GidanMagajia	Baruten	21,156	Partially developed and in use
2	Lata	Patigi/Edu	20,232	Partially developed and in use
3	Weri	Baruten	9,065	Not Develop yet
4	Kinikini	Kaiama	16,449	✓
5	Oroli	Baruten	19,353.7	✓
6	Woro	Kaiama	18,583	✓
7	Olodan	Ifelodun	3, 626	✓

8	Okuta	Baruten	6,451. 6	✓
9	Alapa	Asa	3,626	✓
10	Babanla	Ifelodun	4,420	✓
11	Chita	Edu	4,250	✓
12	Igbaja	Ifelodun	3,626	✓
13	Oro	Irepodun	13,000	✓
14	Tsaragi	Edu	6,800	✓
15	Shao	Moro	3,629	✓
16	Kaiama	Kaiama	3, 620	✓
17	Livestock Service Centre	Isin	1,000	✓

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Kwara State.

Over the years, not much has been achieved in terms of provision of facilities that can make the herdsmen and their animals to settle within the acquired places conveniently. Today, only two of the 17 grazing reserve location are gazette (Kwara State Gazette No 6 Vol. 21 of July 1987 and No. 6 vol. 25 of 11th September 1991 respectively). The other fifteen are un-surveyed and un-gazetted. In 1997, the National Livestock Development Project intervened at Gidan Magajiya grazing reserve in Okuta District of Baruten Local Government by providing bore holes, five earth dams, accessible roads, division of the reserve into five administrative blocks, erection of a livestock service centre and six room labour lines. The development greatly encouraged the herdsmen to settle within the reserve. However, the grazing reserve is being encroached by crop farmers. The sector has suffered setback due to lack of fund to maintain the project (Kwara State Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, 2017).

Conceptual Clarification

Food Security

Food is an essential commodity to man, without food man is said to be incomplete. According to Balogun (2017), food has certain values which make it important to man. There are biological, social, economic and political values of food to man. At the 1974 world food conference the term "food security" was defined with an emphasis on supply. Food security is the "availability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic foodstuff to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices" (United Nations, 2013). Later definitions added demand and access issues. The final report of the 1996 World Food Summit states that food security "exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (United Nations, 2015). Food security is defined as a condition in which all have access to sufficient food to live healthy and productive lives (World Bank, 1986). According to Food and Agriculture

Organisation (FAO), food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau for Africa, (1986:12) defined food security as a situation "When all people at all times have physical, social and economic access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs for a productive and healthy life" (Okechukwu, 2014). The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations identified the four pillars of food security as availability, access, utilisation, and stability (FAO, 2009). The United Nations (UN) recognised the Right to Food in the Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, (United Nations, 2015) and has since noted that it is vital for the enjoyment of all other rights (United Nations, 2015).

The opposite of food security is food insecurity. FAO (2013) defined food insecurity as a situation when people lack secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life. It may be caused by the unavailability of food, insufficient purchasing power, inappropriate distribution or inadequate use of food at the household level. Food insecurity, poor conditions of health and sanitation and inappropriate care and feeding practices are the major causes of poor nutritional status. Food insecurity may be chronic, seasonal or transitory. Balogun (2017) defined food insecurity as a condition when people lack sustainable physical or economic access to enough

safe, nutritious and socially acceptable food for a healthy and productive life. According to (FAO), the root causes of food insecurity include war, civil conflict, corruption, national policies that do not promote equal access to food for all, environmental degradation, insufficient agricultural development and crop pests and diseases.

Herdsmen

The herdsmen raise domestic animals such as cattle, sheep, goat and fowl etc. They are otherwise known as "cattle breeders," or "cattle rustlers" and they usually live a nomadic lifestyle with sticks and cutlasses in their hands in search of grazing lands for their animals. The Fulani are believed to be the largest semi-nomadic group in the world and are found across West and Central Africa, from Senegal to the Central African Republic (Mikailu, 2016). In Nigeria, some of them live as semi-nomadic herders, while others have settled in the cities. Nwosu (2017) noted that the Fulani are often grouped together with the Hausa ethnic group (hence the identifier, Hausa-Fulani), though both ethnicities are distinct. Many of the Fulani in Nigeria are nomadic herdsmen, though a number of them live in settled communities. The nature of their occupation makes them leave their base in northern Nigeria in search of vegetation for their cattle down the southern territory. As noted by Aluko (2017), the interaction of widely dispersed Fulani with other groups has produced a variety of socio-economic pattern. Yahaya (2013) identified names of different clans of 'Fulbe' as presented in the below table.

Figure 3: Shows different name of Fulbe Clans

Gamanko'en	Butanko'en	Rahaji	Foreji'en	Sisilbe	Dubbanko'en
Toranko'en	Wuntanko'en	Jauranko'en	Lamanko'en	Manganko'en	Siwalbe'en
Boggoyanlo	Jallanko'en	Badumanko'en	Daneji'en	Gereuji'en	Jawabbe'en
Natirbbe'en	Bolarbe'en	Ba'en	Woddabe'en	Bawanko'en	Kesu'en
Kacecere'en	Walarbe'en	Koranko'en	Dindimako'en	Dagamako'	Danaguji'en
Degge'en	Katsinanko	Sullubanko'en	Kofoji'en	Kargiji	Modibboji
Gayaji'en	Ansunanko	Bornanko'en	Bokoloji	Bororo	Gadanko'en
Weeti'en	Bawanko'en	Tukanko'en	Karwanko'en	Gonanko'en	Leyyi'en

Source: Adapted from Yahaya (2013), Fulani Herdsmen and the Local Communities: Ensuring Peaceful Relationship

Farmers

A farmer is someone who cultivates the land or raises livestock for food and raw materials (Wikipedia, 2017). There are different types of farmer: crop farmer, poultry farmer, stock breeders etc. Although, crop farmers and Fulani herders practice farming as an occupation, a crop farmer could also be referred to as stock breeders. There are those that engage in mixed farming among the Fulani herdsmen. This shows the links between farming and herding as profession in agriculture. Communities in North Central and Southern region form the bulk of farmers in Nigeria. Farmers cultivate wide range of food crops such as yams, rice, maize, guinea-corn, millet, soya beans, cassava, groundnut, cotton, Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, onions, cabbage, carrot among others (IPCR, 2012).

Conflict

Conflict is popularly defined as a disagreement between two or more people

over incompatible goals. It is part of human social relationship and an integral element of social life. It occurs between individuals, social units and groups. Adisa (2010) asserts that conflict is a permanent feature in human social relationship. In other word, conflict is inescapable in human social interaction as a result of perceived to be inadequate resources among people in a community. Wright (1990) cited in Albert (2001) defines conflict as an opposition among social entities directed against one another. Kriesberg (1973) cited in Albert (2001) contends that conflict is a relationship between two or more parties that perceive to have incompatible goals. Albert (2001) sees conflict as a situation where there is too little or no cooperation between social entities. Conflict could be personal or interpersonal, intra group or inter group etc. The focus of this study is on intergroup conflict between farmers and herdsmen.

Theoretical Framework

Farmers and herdsmen have cohabited and lived peacefully for centuries. According to Bagu and Smith (2017), farmers and herdsmen have lived in relative harmony, benefiting from symbiotic partnerships in order to keep cropland fertile and cattle well-nourished. Farmers and herders both benefitted in the exchange of grain for dairy and crop residue for manure. Recently, the symbiotic relationship has been replaced with mistrust, hatred and the likes. The conflict has degenerated into killings, destruction of crops and animals. The recurring issue of clashes between herdsmen and farmers in some parts of Nigeria remains one of the major threats to food security in the country. These cases border on encroachment into farms by cattle and farmers' misuse of cattle routes. Herdsmen persistently engage farmers in feuds that often result in serious casualties on both sides. While farmers accuse the herdsmen of farm land encroachment, the herdsmen blame farmers and members of their communities for rustling their cattle (Premium News, 2015). Recent studies conducted by Basil (2015) and Ekpeyemi (2016) have shown that serious conflict erupt between Fulani herdsmen and farmers leading to loss of lives, valuable properties and destruction of vast expanse of arable agricultural farmlands thereby posing serious threat to food security since farmers could no longer go to the farm to harvest their crops due to fear of attack.

However, herdsmen and agriculturalists conflicts are not the only challenges affecting crop outputs and the provision of food security in the country. Other factors include environmental

degradation in form of soil erosion and overgrazing, climate change (which has caused shifting weather patterns is increasingly viewed as a current and future cause of hunger and poverty because it leads to increasing drought), flooding, and changing climatic patterns requiring a shift in crops and farming practices that may not be easily accomplished (Premium Times, 2015).

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation estimates that about 805 million people of the 7.3 billion people in the world, representing a ratio one in nine, suffered from chronic undernourishment in 2012-2014. Among all the hungry people, 791 million live in developing countries, representing 13.5 percent, or one in eight, of the population of developing countries (Premium News, 2015). According to United Nations Agriculture Agency report (2017), despite strong global food supply, localised drought, flooding and protracted conflicts have intensified and perpetuated food insecurity. According to FAO report,

Ongoing conflicts continue to be a key driver of severe food insecurity, having triggered near-famine conditions in Northern Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen, as well as widespread hunger in Afghanistan, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Syria.

The report added that conflict impedes productive activities, hinders access to food and significantly intensifies the number of internally displaced people. The FAO report also revealed that over three million in Northern Nigeria are urgently in need of food assistance. The

report points out that despite local negative trends, global food production is booming. In addition, production gains are being recorded in many low-income food deficit countries, where the aggregate cereal output is forecast to grow by two percent in year 2017. Indeed, the conflict is capable of causing food insecurity in Nigeria.

This paper relies on Enemy System Theory (EST) which was developed in the late 1980s as a model to explain the complexities of group behaviour, particularly with regard to antagonistic group relationships. The theory argues that humans have a deep rooted psychological need to dichotomize and to establish enemies and allies. Cunningham (1998) noted that this phenomenon happens on individual and group levels. This was developed to explain how the masses within each group perceive themselves and their relationships with groups that they are associated with, which helps to determine whether their relationship will be based on cooperation, competition, or conflict. This is also determined by historic relations between these groups. This theory offers theoretical explanation on communal clash between farmers and herdsmen. The herdsmen perceive farmers as enemy blocking their means of livelihood whereas farmers perceive herdsmen as enemy that prevent them from reaching their potential. The struggle for land resources often results to conflict between farmers and herdsmen.

Methodology

Kwara State is significant for food production in Nigeria because of its rich soil and favourable weather that supports

the cultivation of many crops. Currently, the State has sixteen Local Government Areas. Majority of the sixteen Local Government Areas have experienced conflict between farmers and herdsmen. Three LGAs (Asa, Isin and Oke-Ero) were strategically selected because of their agricultural resourcefulness and the people dependent on farming in the area. In each of the local Government, two farming communities and one herdsmen settlement were purposively selected. From each of the selected communities, two farmers and one herdsman respectively were selected using snowball sampling technique. In all, twelve farmers and six herdsmen were interviewed. An interview guide was used to collect primary data from the respondents. Each interview was audio-recorded and transcribed in a text format to be interpreted in the light of research objectives.

Discussion

Based on a field study in the three selected Local Government Areas of Kwara State, the following causes were identified as the key causes of farmers-herdsmen conflicts.

Land resources:

A study of the major causes of conflict between farmers and herdsmen shows that access to farmland and grazing land are the principal cause of the conflict in the three selected L.G.A of Kwara State. A farmer from Alapa in Asa Local Government identified land as the main cause of conflict between herdsmen and in the area. According to him, land is an important factor because there are so

many resources on land, e.g cash crop and mineral resources. Farmers need land to cultivate their crops likewise the herdsmen need land for grazing their animals. Conflict ensues when there is misunderstanding over access to land. According to a farmer from Isanlu-Isin in Isin L.G.A.,

The herdsman will be in the position that he want his cattle to be well fed, in the process he will have to go into farm of a farmer that all his life that is what he has been doing waiting for the day those things will be ripe for harvest. At that stage that is when the herdsmen will put their cow for it to be destroyed.

A farmer from Oke-Onigbin in Isin local Government Area said that farmers, especially those who obtain loan from the bank to farm, feel devastated whenever they see their farm destroyed by cattle of the herdsmen. He narrated an incidence that happened on his farm in year 2014, when about fifteen hectares of cassava was eaten by the cattle. As he puts it:

In 2014, I was given some cassava species from Federal Ministry of Agriculture that we should plant. I did every necessary thing to ensure the plant grow well. After planting the cassava, the herdsmen came during dry season and feasted on all the cassava plants. That made me not to grow cassava again.

In similar reaction, a farmer from Oke-Onigbin in Odo-Owa revealed that the cows visit their farm from time to time and destroy anything they find in the farm.

He identified the Fulani close to his farm as those responsible for the destruction.

According to the Jouro of Fulani in Afon District, land is a major cause of the conflict. He mentioned that the populations of people are increasing everyday but the land does not increase:

Most of the routes of cattles traditionally known as cattle routes before have been blocked as a result of developmen, construction of roads, bridges, railway line, etc. Some farmers during dry season plant crops along the river bank where cattle traditionally graze and drink water. A Farmer will insist on protecting his land, likewise a herdsman will be eager to feed his cattle at all cost. Unless there is demarcation between grazing zone and farmland, there will always be conflict between farmers and herdsmen.

A Fulani herdsman from Ayedun in Oke-Ero Local government identified the cause of the conflict as encroachment into cattle routes. The cattle route which the animals are known to pass for ages have been encroached by farmers unknowingly to the herdsmen. Conflict ensues whenever they are prevented from gaining access to the land.

Mischief

Respondents identified assault on human lives as another cause of the conflict in Kwara State. According to a report released by All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN), the untold hardship caused by herdsmen is quite devastating. The havoc committed

by herdsmen ranges from mischief by cattle of herdsmen, crop destruction, sexual harassment of rural women, maiming of innocent lives either when challenged for causing mischief or involvement in robbery operation. The secretary of AFAN asserts that:

Since the beginning of the crisis in Kwara State, so many lives and hectares of farmlands have been destroyed with their nefarious activities". He mentioned that the herdsmen had exhibited such devastating acts at the villages and nearby towns with such bitter pills to swallow by the villagers.

A pathetic story of a school boy whose two eyes were cruelly removed by the cattle breeders from his fathers' farm in 2004 was shared by the secretary. According to him,

The boy was in his father's farm to harvest the year maize when a cattle breeder accosted him to enquire the whereabouts of their cattle, but the boy explained that unknowing to him, the cow breeders had evil intension. He responded that he couldn't have known the whereabouts of their missing cows. He ignored them and continued his business on the farm. He recalled that all of a sudden the cow breeders grappled him from behind and fell him down. In a twinkling of an eye, they have performed the crude operation on his two eyes and ran away after removing his eyes.

In a contrary opinion to farmers' claims, a Fulani herdsman from Odo-Owa contends that they don't aim to destroy farmer's crops but animals sometimes stray into people's farm by mistake. Out of anger, the farmers retaliate by attacking any herder found around his farm without making necessary enquiry about who carried out the destruction. The herdsmen alleged that sometimes "Farmers go as far as poisoning the water so that when cattle go there to quench their thirst, the whole herds of cattle will die immediately after drinking the water."

In an interview with the secretary of Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association in Kwara State (MACBAN) it was revealed that the herdsmen had been constantly attacked by farmers and sometimes had their cattle killed whenever animal strayed into farmland. He mentioned that some farmers intentionally poisoned the crops and killed their cattle. According him, "Some farmers take law into their own hand whenever cattle stray into the farm. In retaliation, the farmers attack their cattle and kill them". A Fulani herder from Oke-Ero Local Government attests to the fact that most times the cattle of the herdsmen stray into people's farm, destroy or eat up the crops. He said the farmers most times take law into their hands. Instead of being patient with them to fish out the offenders, they retaliate quickly by either attacking a group of herdsmen found around the farm or kill their cows.

Grazing animals being tendered by under-aged children

In a field study, respondents identified grazing cattle by under-aged children as a cause of the conflict.

According to respondents, these children are too small to control herds of cattle during grazing. A farmer from Afon in Asa L.G.A identified the use of small children to control large number of cattle can trigger conflict between farmers and herdsman. According to him, "whenever the animals are under the control of these children, it becomes easier for cattle stray into farm". He mentioned that these children are too small to control herds of cattle. The adult herdsman often seat at home while the children who are of tender age are allowed to herd cattle. Because of the large number of cattle, there is no way a cow will not stray into farmland to destroy crops. In similar view, a farmer in Isin Local Government Area submits that "the herdsman using underage children to control a large number of cattle also contribute to farm destruction being witnessed in the State. He stated that most times the animal stray into farmland because the children of the herdsman could not control the animal during grazing activities".

Influx of foreign herdsman

In an interview with the AFAN State secretary, it was observed that the influx of foreign herdsman into the state accounts for most of the destruction on farmlands: "The influx of herdsman from the Northern part of Nigeria and neighbouring country has increased the population of herdsman in the State, pushing farmers and herdsman into competition over land. The number of herdsman present in the State has increased more than what they can cope with".

The respondent also claimed that the destruction was usually prevalent during

dry season due to insufficient grass to feed their cattle. In a similar observation by the Jouro of Fulani in Afon district, the migration of the Bororo herdsman into the State has increased the tempo of the conflict. The Jouro in his remark said that:

The issue of animal straying into farmland is mostly caused by the 'Bororos'. They herd their cattle any time of the day and night. The native Fulani who herd cattle know where the farmlands are, because they are familiar with the environment. Unlike the Bororo herdsman who are not familiar with the environment. They are the one that usually destroy people's farm, and once they commit any havoc in the area, they relocate to another area.

Other respondents identified additional causes such as language barrier, geometric rise in population, cattle rustling, and lack of earth dams as sources of the conflict. Based on the above discussion, it was discovered that the causes of farmers-herdsman conflict identified in this study were similar to the findings of the existing scholars in the field. The study by Basil (2015) and Ekpeyemi (2016) have shown that "conflicts between Fulani herdsman and farmers have led to loss of lives, valuable properties and destruction of vast expanse of arable agricultural farmlands thereby posing serious threat to food security since farmers for fear of attack could no longer go to farm and harvest their farm produce.

The Impacts of Farmers-Herdsman Conflict on Food Production

Insufficient food for consumption

Low productivity

A study survey in the three Local Government Areas selected shows that persistent attacks on farms contribute largely to the decline of food production in the State. It was estimated that the conflict had led to the destruction of crops running to millions of naira in the State. According to the AFAN secretary, so many hectares of farmlands have been destroyed:

I considered the conflict between farmers and herdsman as an agricultural war as it affects crop production in the State. Majority of our members have been groaning of the menace of herdsman attack on their crops. Most of the farmers in the State have witnessed heavy destruction of their crops in the last few years.

He mentioned that the destruction of crops by cattle occurs every year in the State. The secretary pointed out that a lot of destructions have been done to farmers' crops to an extent that some farmers have abandoned farming for other businesses in town. According to him, "some farmers relied on loan obtained from banks to farm and at the end of the day, had their crop destroyed by the cattle of herdsman". He noted that some of the destructions were intentional and they usually occurred in the night when farmers would have returned home.

A field study in three Local Government Areas revealed that the conflicts have negative impact on household feeding. According to a farmer from Isanlu-Isin in Isin Local Government, "some farmers have already abandoned farming when they couldn't cope with the loss. Only few have their farm untouched by the cattle of herdsman. Some have employed guardsmen to protect the farm from being attacked. According to him, "the attack occurs both in raining season and dry season but mostly during dry season when leaves are dry and the herdsman begin to look for greener leaves to feed their cattle."

The State secretary of AFAN mentioned that "they lost some of their members to the attacks, while others have sustained permanent injury. He stated that if the situation continues like this, it means people will have to suffer. There won't be enough to cater for their family, not to talk of the State as a whole. Most of them are peasant farmers and they do not have any other means for sustenance apart from farming. A field study in the affected community revealed that farmlands with cassava, maize, and yam tuber were still lying destroyed. A farmer in one of the communities visited mentioned that the bags of fertilizer distributed by government have been sold out because of herdsman's attack on their farmlands. Below is the table showing food production output in Kwara State from 2010 to 2016.

Figure 4: Shows Agriculture Production Survey Results (Aps) 2010- 2016 Crop (Tons), (Ha) Cultivated And Yield ('000).

S/NO	CROP	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
1	MAIZE							
	TON	196.556	210.70	222.5	228.82	236.7	181.27	216.0
	HA	133.267	141.16	4	143.91	2	140.85	1
2	SORGHUM							
	TON	137.960	146.00	148.1	243.26	205.1	176.10	183.7
	HA	87.317	96.26	4	62.93	6	62.08	3
3	RICE							
	TON	480.804	384.44	310.3	348.55	377.7	369.39	358.0
	HA	147.125	128.75	1	117.88	7	120.46	9
4	MILLET							
	TON	20.504	26.01	27.66	25.44	20.76	18.40	23.65
	HA	17.087	19.26	19.33	17.09	11.35	11.01	15.61
5	COWPEA							
	TON	3.271	3.58	4.21	4.70	4.62	4.08	4.24
	HA	5.544	5.91	6.37	6.68	6.59	6.24	6.38
6	MELON							
	TON	8.015	9.12	-	11.74	11.95	10.16	10.20
	HA	18.467	19.69	-	16.99	17.05	16.70	17.78
7	SOYA BEAN							
	TON	32.546	34.38	35.10	35.78	36.86	34.93	35.41
	HA	21.272	21.09	20.46	21.31	21.30	21.09	21.05
8	YAM							
	TON	1,054.52	1,189.5	1,258	1,348.9	1,443	1,259.0	1,299
	HA	4	1	.62	2	.47	6	.97
	YEILD/HA	84.147	90.49	91.01	93.35	94.58	90.72	92.03
		12.53	13.14	13.14	14.45	15.26	13.84	14.10

Source: Kwara State Agriculture Development Project, Ilorin KWADP, PME, APS 2016

The above table indicates that food production is not increasing progressively as expected. The decline is attributed to frequent attacks on farmlands despite mechanization, fertilizers and farm

seedlings produced by both Federal and the State Governments. Although, farmers-herdsmen conflict is not the only factors responsible for the decline in food production in Kwara State, respondents

identified other factors like attack by pests, climate and host of others which are easily controlled by pesticides and irrigation projects in the State. But the upsurge of the conflicts has graving consequences on both the lives of farmers and farm produce.

The Implications of Farmers-Herdsmen Conflict on Food Security

There is no doubt that farmers-herdsmen conflict has contributed largely to low food production in Kwara State. The implications on Food Security include:

Low financial income

According to the respondents, farmers have incurred debt running into millions of naira, leaving them impoverished. The conflict is responsible for the increase in food items making food unaffordable for people to purchase. Many could not afford enough food that could cater for the needs of their family. Farmers are not happy seeing their livelihood destroyed by the activities of migrant herdsmen. The upsurge of the conflict in the state has reduced the financial strength of farmers who couldn't afford to send their children to school and attend to the needs of their family. The conflict has greatly increased the price of food commodities. Some household does not have the purchasing power to buy food in the market. Some eat only what they could only afford in the market, and this affect the well-being of common man in the street. Some crops like maize, yam tuber, cassava etc., are now selling for prize beyond the reach of common man in market.

Household feeding

The field study conducted shows that there is insufficient food to meet the daily needs of household members in the study area. Some peasants could not afford to feed their family well. It was also revealed that many could not eat three times a day. Food items are becoming inaccessible for common man as a result of incessant attack on farmland. Some families lack purchasing power to get some of the food items to feed their family well. And this could result in the under-nourishment of children.

Socio-economic development

The continuous attacks on farmlands have hindered socio-economic development of the State. Some farmers have abandoned farm for the fear of attack by herdsmen. Some women in the villages find it difficult to attend market day because of these undesirable herdsmen attack. The economic profile of the State has been reduced due to low output of food production because people have lost interest in farming. This by implication means that government will rely more on food importation against exportation of food items that could have boasted the internally generated revenue of the State.

Conclusion

Food is an important aspect of man's life because it helps to support the growth and well-being of man. The farmers-herdsmen conflict remains a major food security threat especially in Nigeria with a growing population estimated around 170 millions. The findings of this study have shown that

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- farmers-herdsmen conflicts account for decline in food production. According to UN Agriculture Agency (2017), "Despite strong global food supply, localized drought, flooding and protracted conflicts have intensified and perpetuated food insecurity." This argument is further supported by data from the Agriculture Production Survey Results (Figure 4) which have revealed that food production is fluctuating rather than increasing as forecasted by United Nations Agricultural Agency. In the light of these findings, the study corroborates the United Nations Agriculture Agency report that states that "protracted conflicts (Farmers-herdsmen conflict) along with drought, flooding have intensified and perpetuated food insecurity." It's better to curb it now than later when the implications of the conflict could lead to severe food insecurity. The study therefore recommends that there should be regular workshop programme on peaceful coexistence and tolerance for farmers and herdsman in all the LGAs in the State. This will create awareness in farmers and herdsman to see themselves as brother in agricultural business. Government should consolidate on the advocacy talk organised by the Department of Livestock, in the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Based on the information gathered, some achievements have been recorded in this regard but more action need to be taken to improve on food security through funding and support of the government. These steps will reduce the conflict drastically and salvage the State from food insecurity.
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