Farmers–Herdsmen Conflict, Cattle Rustling, and Banditry: The Dialectics of Insecurity in Anka and Maradun Local Government Area of Zamfara State, Nigeria

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Abstract
The study examined farmers–herdsmen conflict, cattle rustling, and banditry in Anka and Maradun local government area of Zamfara State, Nigeria. The study examined the influence of farmers–herdsmen conflicts on cattle rustling and banditry, and vice versa. Exploratory research was employed; focus group discussion (FGD) and key informant interview (KII) were used to collect primary data from the respondents. The data generated were transcribed and recorded verbatim (word-for-word account of verbal interview) and they were converted into written form. Data were enumerated and thematic analysis and categorization were provided. Secondary data were sourced from internet and relevant books. This study adopted the environmental resources scarcity and frustration-aggression theory. The findings of the study 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. The researchers recommended that there should be an introduction of grazing reserves equipped with adequate social amenities and that there should be policies capable of enhancing herders’ transformation from traditional to the modern method of animal husbandry. They also suggested that various factors responsible for farmers–herdsmen conflict, cattle rustling, and banditry should be properly managed by traditional and religious leaders. The findings corroborate the gaps which the researchers intended to fill.

Keywords
farmers, herdsmen, conflict, cattle rustling, banditry

Introduction
The conflicts between farmers and herders have been in existence since the pre-colonial period; however, the conflicts were well managed and controlled such that their impact was not felt on the internal security and agriculture of Nigeria in general as it is today (Benjaminsen & Ba, 2009). There is a long history of herders migrating to West as a result of which they have relationships with sedentary farmers and co-exist and cooperate with shared available resources (Cabot, 2017). Historical record of precolonial farmers’ and herders’ conflicts is scanty; however, it has been argued that between 12th and 13th century, there was competition and symbiotic relation between the two groups (A. G. Adebayo, 1991). The social structure was also designed to accommodate “Ruga.” The purpose of creating “Ruga” was to regulate grazing activities and to resolve any conflict between and within the farmers and Fulani group (Ellwood, 1995).

The colonial farmers and herders conflict marked the beginning of modifications in the physical and social landscapes. This reduced the farmers’ and herders’ compatibility and reduced the informal land tenure and resource use that had been in place. The colonialists brought the systems of conflict management which is alien to locals and served the purposes of colonial masters. (Davidheiser & Luna, 2008). This reduced indigenous land ownership and eventual resource scarcity, and increased environmental degradation (Adeoye, 2017).

Nigeria has witnessed and is still witnessing a series of farmers–herdsmen conflict since the advent of the Democratic...
government in 1999. The majority of this conflict is within Northern Nigeria, which is predominantly agrarian (farmers and herdsmen), and in some parts of the southern part of the country (Hassan et al., 2018). In many of these conflicts, lives and properties have been lost, farm products were destroyed, people were displaced, and governments at various levels (local, state, and federal) have spent so much money on setting up either committees for resolutions or resettlement camps for the displaced persons. Finances that ought to be used in the development of other sectors are used in addressing farmers–herdsmen conflict. The implications of these conflicts are seriously felt on the national economy—in terms of the resources invested on the resolutions as well as the manifestation on the unemployment it aggravated (Odoh & Chigozie, 2012).

International and local media reports have confirmed the death of so many lives, which is the consequence of the farmers–herdsmen clash (Erondu & Nwakanma, 2018). The clashes have resulted in population displacement, low agricultural output, and subsequently increase in the level of unemployment (Odoh & Chilaka, 2012). Agricultural sectors which largely accommodate productive youths and adults have become strained and volatile. Farmers–herdsmen conflicts have attributed to the prevailing migration of people from rural centers (local government), which causes the urban centers to compete for the available opportunities (Odoh & Chilaka, 2012). Agricultural sector’s contribution to the growth and development of the Nigeria economy cannot be overemphasized (Olaoye, 2014). As such, inadequate supplies of agricultural products will consequently lead to worries, unrest, dearth of food securities, and adverse effects on national economy and security. Conversely, availability of agricultural products will result in vibrant health, stable mental and physical development of the citizens, and national productivity (Kugelman, 2012). It is a known fact that agricultural practices (farming and cattle rearing) remain the most dominant occupation of the people living in the entire Zamfara State, which included the Tsafe and Zurmi local government area. It therefore implies that any challenge that affected farming certainly would have an adverse effect on the livelihood of the people.

The menaces of cattle rustling and banditry activities have become a serious threat to the safety and lives of the entire people of Zamfara State (including Anka and Maradun local government area). These have led to loss of so many lives and destruction of properties. Cattle rustling has been described as the act of stealing cattle primarily for economic gain (Abdullahi & Madappalli, 2017). It has been described as an act that resulted from the failure of leaders to curb the menaces of social and economic upheavals (Mohammed & Ibrahim, 2015). It has also been conceived as a criminal act of taking cow for economic purposes (Okoli & Okpaleke, 2014). Banditry, on the contrary, has been described as the act of robbery or violent crime especially in an area where the rule of law has broken down. It mostly involved the use of coercion and threat to rob, rape, and kill (Okoli & Okpaleke, 2014).

Cattle rustling and banditry have been facilitated and made sophisticated by the proliferation of arms and dagger (Funteh, 2019). It has developed to become an organized crime that goes beyond national to transnational (Okoli & Okpaleke, 2014). Statistics have shown that so many cattle have been stolen as a result of these organized crimes (Ibrahim et al., 2016). These vices have also resulted in various reprisal killings, raiding of villages, and raping and kidnapping of men and women. As a result, many (both farmers and herdsmen) have decided to migrate to avoid the level of uncertainty and threat to security and safety which have prevailed in the community. The implication of the migration can largely be seen in the economy of the entire Zamfara State and Nigeria in general.

**Objectives of the Study**

The study examined causes of farmers–herdsmen conflicts, cattle rustling, and banditry; it examined the influence of farmers–herdsmen conflicts on cattle rustling and banditry, and vice versa, and it examined the influence of farmers–herdsmen conflicts, cattle rustling, and banditry on insecurities permeating the Anka and Maradun local government area of Zamfara state.

**Conceptual Clarification**

*Farmers:* refers to persons or people who own or manage a farm. This implies those who work primarily on the farm for the purpose of subsistence, sustaining, and maintaining their life.

*Herdsmen:* refers to persons or people who own or keep herd of domesticated animals.

*Conflict:* refers to the inability of people to sustain and maintain peaceful and harmonious coexistence during social interactions.

*Cattle Rustling:* refers to the act of stealing cattle.

*Insecurity:* refers to the uncertainty, threat, lack of protection, and killings.

*Banditry:* refers to the act of robbery, killing, and violence especially in areas where there are breakdown of law.

**Literature Review**

The literature review has been classified into causes of farmers–herdsmen conflict and causes of cattle rustling and banditry (this has also been subdivided into influence of farmers–herdsmen conflict on cattle rustling and banditry and vice versa, and influence of farmers–herdsmen conflicts, cattle rustling, and banditry on insecurities).

**Causes of Farmers–Herdsmen Conflict**

The prevailing clashes between farmers and herdsmen in many parts of Nigeria have been attributed to the destruction of
farmlands by the cattle which are mostly owned by the herdsmen. The herdsmen are mostly migrants who transit especially in dry season to seek for greener pasture for their droves. These movements are mostly precipitated by the rate of deforestation and desertification (Udemezue & Kanu, 2019). The cattle are controlled by human beings, but human beings may not be able to control them in totality. The movements have therefore been characterized by cattle entering the farmers’ land and sometimes causing serious damage, which eventually leads to terrific conflicts between herdsmen and farmers (Solomon & Chinwe, 2015).

In a related literature, Ofem and Inyang (2014) identified some causes of conflicts between farmers and herdsmen. They described the causes of conflicts between farmers and herdsmen in Cross River State of Nigeria by asserting that the continuous conflicts between farmers and herdsmen are mostly as a result of the destruction of farmland by the cattle. They further stated that the contamination of water by the cattle, overgrazing by the cattle, and indiscriminate defecation by the cattle have not in any way helped to resolve the problem. They also pointed to the hydra headed causes of the conflict by noting that on the part of the herdsmen, they have disregard for the traditional authority of their host communities. On the part of host community, they stated that the host communities usually harassed the herdsmen and their women. These according to them have been responsible for the various conflicts between farmers and herdsmen. They, therefore, suggested that there is urgent need for intervention through what they described as Local Development Plans (LDP). This according to them would be an initiative process that can go a long way to reduce tension on how farmers and herdsmen can effectively use land and how they can participate in decision-making.

Similarly, Blench (2010) in his assessment of farmers–herdsmen conflict made reference to the conflict between Mambila farmers and herdsmen in 1923. He asserted that the cattle belonging to the herdsmen pulverized the farmers’ crops, and this resulted in Mambila farmers halting the herdsmen movement with their cattle around the valleys. The situation never went down well with the herdsmen and subsequently conflicts erupted. The reference he made shows that the friction was a result of the reaction of both parties to their means of economic livelihood. Closely to the assessment of Blench (2010), Braukamper (2000) in his analysis of the farmers–herdsmen conflict stated that both herdsmen and farmers usually make their living within the same socio-cultural, political, and geographical location. They are subjected to the same condition (availability and nonavailability) of resources. There is, therefore, every tendency that there would be conflict between the two (herders and farmers).

In another argument by De Haan (2002), he attributed the herders and farmers conflicts to the way both parties handle situations in their disposal. He stressed that the rate at which the cattle cause destruction on the farmers’ crop and some other properties such as infrastructural facilities like irrigation equipment should be seen as negligence on the part of herdsmen. On the contrary, bush burning and blockage of cattle routes and water points should be attributed to the farmers.

In a research conducted by O. O. Adebayo and Olaniyi (2008), they attributed the destruction or what they refer to as intentional grazing on farm crops as the basic cause of conflict between farmers and herdsmen. Similarly, Musa et al. (2014) in an empirical study established that there are problems on both sides (farmers and herdsmen). They argued that the act of overgrazing of cattle on farm crops by the herdsmen and the act of encroaching grazing reserves, water holes, and cattle paths by the farmers are the major cause of conflict between farmers and herdsmen. In another empirical research conducted by Adelakun et al. (2015), they found that the responses of the farmers and those of the herdsmen in Oyo State of Nigeria pointed that farm crop destructions and encroachment of the cattle path are the major causes of conflict between the farmers and herdsmen.

Similarly, Moritz (2010) in his own argument was of the view that structural factors such as scarcity of resources, reduction in the interdependence of pastoral and agricultural economies, and the lack of commitment on the part of the government to resolve the differences between herdsmen and farmers were the causes of the conflict. In another close observation, Bassett (1998) in a literature argued that scarcity of resources which basically emanated from situation like drought remained a major problem responsible for the farmers and herdsmen conflict. This implies that inadequate resources result in the scrambling for the partition of the available resources, which are vital for both farmers and herdsmen. Closely to the previous observation, Olaniyan et al. (2015) were also of the view that climatic conditions should be seen as responsible for the lingering conflicts between farmers and herdsmen. They attributed these to the rate at which deserts are encroaching the Sahel regions that provide the source of livelihood for the cattle. The encroachment in their own observation has been consequently responsible for the migration of herdsmen searching for their means of survival for themselves and their cattle. The consequence is that herdsmen seek how they have to sustain along with their cattle.

Similarly, Audu (2013) argued that the consequences of climate change which has led to scarcity of water in the semi and region in sub-Saharan Africa can be seen as responsible for the farmers–herdsmen conflict. Water, which is an essential resource and vitally required for agriculture production, has been very scarce due to climate change and therefore is responsible for the farmers and herdsmen conflict. Both the farmers and herdsmen always need water for sustaining their vocations. Consequently, therefore, scarcity of water which technically has been responsible for insufficient grazing of land has led to violent conflicts among farmers and herdsmen.

In another argument different from the previous assertions, Ofem and Inyang (2014) identified sexual harassment
of women as another factor responsible for the prevalent farmers–herdsmen conflicts. They argued that among the farmers, youth are mostly involved in immoral acts such as raping and harassment of the herdsmen’s women. In addition to these acts, they steal and cart away herdsmen cattle, although herdsmen should also be blamed for allowing their cattle to indiscriminately defecate on the road (Ofem & Inyang, 2014). In another argument by Burton (2016), he argued that negligence on the relationship that exists between farmers and herdsmen remained one of the major factors responsible for the farmers and herdsmen conflict. Complementing the argument, one can make reference to Ofuoku and Isife (2009) who identified the negligence on the need for increased grazing space and Ofem and Inyang (2014) who also identified the negligence on the disrespect of traditional authorities and the negligence of lack of payment of levies for local crop and livestock.

In a different view from those scholars who stated that farmers–herdsmen conflicts are as a result of either climate condition or encroachment of the herdsmen with their cattle on the farmers’ land, overgrazing, and inadequate water, Oli et al. (2018) were of the view that farmers–herdsmen conflicts mostly occur as a form of reprisals. This implies that both farmers and herdsmen use reprisal attack as a form of revenge and means to provide defense for their farm and livestock, respectively.

In a related research, some scholars have also noted that there is what could be described as “Long-Standing Disagreements” between the farmers and the herdsmen. The “Long-Standing Disagreements” mostly arise from the scrambling for the available scarce resources.

Table 1. Some of the Farmers–Herdsmen Conflict in the Anka and Maradun Local Government Area of Zamfara State, Nigeria, Between January 2016 and May 2019 and Between January 2019 and May 2021.

| S/No. | Place | Date       | Cause(s)                        | Degree of destruction/death tolls/casualties                  |
|-------|-------|------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| A     |       |            |                                 |                                                              |
| 1     | Anka  | January 6  | Fight between herdsmen and farmers | 12–38 people were killed and many wounded                     |
| 2     | Maradun | January 17 | Fight between herdsmen and farmers | 3 people were killed                                          |
| 3     | Anka  | January 23 | Fight between herdsmen and farmers | 25 person were killed and many properties destroyed           |
| 4     | Maradun | February 7 | Fight between herdsmen and farmers | 10 person were killed and many properties destroyed           |
| 5     | Anka  | March 18   | More than 15 people were wounded and many were left internally displaced |                                                              |
| B     |       |            |                                 |                                                              |
| 1     | Maradun | November 19, 2017 | Fight between herdsmen and farmers | Many people were killed and 5 injured                      |
| 2     | Anka  | February 10 | Fight between herdsmen and farmers | 8 people were killed                                          |
| C     |       |            |                                 |                                                              |
| 1     | Maradun | June 2018 | Clashes between farmers and Fulani cattle herders | More than 24 people were allegedly killed and houses burnt |
| 2     | Anka  | October 2018 | Fight between herdsmen and farmers | 19 people were killed and many kidnapped                     |
| 3     | Maradun | December 2018 | Fulani Herdsmen allegedly attacked | Many people were killed and some got injured                |
| 4     | Anka  | February 2019 | Attack by suspected Fulani gunmen |                                                              |
| D     |       |            |                                 |                                                              |
| 1     | Maradun | January 24 | Clash between herdsmen and host communities | 3 people were killed and 5 injured.          |
| 2     | Anka  | February 10 | Clash between herdsmen and host communities | 8 people were killed                                          |

Source. Amnesty International (2018) and Nigeria Dailies.
The farmers and herdsmen conflict did not only have implications on the livelihood of the two parties involved but also distorts and browbeats the agricultural and pastoral production in Nigeria in general and Zamfara State in particular. Records have emerged on the number of lives that have been lost to the farmers and herdsmen conflicts in various parts of Nigeria. The following are some of the farmers and herdsmen conflicts:

The farmers–herdsmen conflict has led to many abandoning agricultural activities. This is because the conflict has been responsible for the destructions of livestock and crops on the farmland. Some of the communities that produce for both commercial and subsistence purposes eventually depend on relief aids. This has been responsible for the reduction in the quantity of farm production (agricultural output) and subsequently increasing unemployment rate.

### Cattle Rustling and Banditry

**Influence of Farmers–Herdsmen Conflict on Cattle Rustling and Banditry, and Vice Versa**

The conflicts between farmers and herdsmen have always been characterized by the two parties blaming each other for the crime against another (Bashir, 2017). Banditry and cattle rustling have been described as a critical aspect of farmers and herdsmen conflict (Adekunle & Solagberu, 2010). In the acts of cattle rustling and banditry, cattle and other valuable items belonging to either the herdsmen or farmers are raided. The acts also involved killing, raping, and raiding either the herdsmen or farmers.

Cattle rustling and banditry are on the increase primarily because they have economic and commercial benefits (Mohammed & Ibrahim, 2015) that imply that those involved in those acts are actually doing it as a means of livelihood. Although there might be other factors responsible for the menaces of cattle rustling and banditry, the continuous farmers and herdsmen conflicts have made the youth readily available to carry out cattle rustling and banditry. This is because many of the farmers and the herdsmen have lost their land and cattle, respectively, to the conflict. The act of cattle rustling and banditry has further escalated the much heated polity between the farmers and herdsmen, leading to continuous struggles for control of resources between herdsmen and farmers and subsequently the needs for arms and dagger to consolidate their respective position. The acts have negatively affected the entire nation (African Union, 2013). Cattle rustling and banditry have been increasing since 2010, and it has been described as what further affected the relationship between farmers and herdsmen (Blench, 2010). It has been attributed to the reason why many people lost their lives and properties (Abbass, 2012).

However, some scholars’ arguments have been that the original factors responsible for the acts of cattle rustling and banditry remain the farmers and herdsmen conflict. These may be seen in the fact that many of the youth from the farmers and the youth from the herdsmen have nothing left to survive from. They have no option than to take up either the cattle rustling or banditry employment.

Closely related to the above assertions, Bashir (2017) in his empirical study established that there are relationships between banditry and cattle rustling. He asserted that factors responsible for cattle rustling and banditry have to do with the competition between farmers and herdsmen. He established that there are relationships between cattle rustling, rural banditry, and unemployment. He stated the consequences of both acts have serious implications on the lives of both farmers and herdsmen. In a similar research conducted by Abdulazeez et al. (2018), they were of the view that banditry and cattle rustling have been contributing factors to the pervasive farmers and herdsmen conflict, and vice versa. They stated further that those conflicts further deepen the poverty level of both farmers and herdsmen. They also noted that those conflicts inhibit farmers’ and herdsmen’s abilities to excel positively in their field of endeavor. Both farmers and herdsmen have been curtailed because of the insecurity situation which is propelled by the prevailing banditry (Muggah & Batchelor 2002, p. 26).

**Influence of Farmers–Herdsmen Conflicts, Cattle Rustling, and Banditry on Insecurities**

Farmers and herdsmen conflict, cattle rustling, and banditry have influence on the current insecurities of the local governments (Anka and Maradun). Farmers and herdsmen conflict, cattle rustling, and banditry have apparently enhanced the proliferation of arms. In a bid to protect one another against reprisal attack, respective groups have gotten fire arms for themselves. However, the availability of the arms has encouraged crimes in all ramifications. It has made possible various crimes through intimidation of victims they intend to attack. The acts of farmers and herdsmen conflict, cattle rustling, and banditry, as well as the proliferation of arms have affected the peaceful coexistence that has been enjoyed by those in the communities. In a research conducted by Okoli and Okpaleke (2014), they were of the view that on many occasions security agencies have been intercepting illegal arms trafficking within and across the borders. They further asserted that sophisticated Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) are being seized almost every day by security operatives. This is mostly at the ports, highways, borders, and crime and conflict scenes. The proliferation of modern weapon has further permitted the act and operation of cattle rustling and banditry. They also observed that recent developments have implicated cattle rustling and banditry as the cause of increasing violence in northern Nigeria. In another finding by Muggah and Batchelor (2002) who argued in a study that because of the prevailing farmers and herdsmen conflict, banditry, and cattle rustling which have led to serious insecurity...
situation, both farmers and herdsmen are curtailed from achieving their potentials. Similarly, Adeniyi (2016) in a study was of the view that farmers and herdsmen conflict, banditry, and cattle rustling are responsible for why many people lose their lives and properties. Closely, Bashir (2017) was also of the view that the consequences of farmers and herdsmen conflict, banditry, and cattle rustling are the eventual loss of lives among those living in the communities (both farmers and herdsmen). In another study undertaken by Mohammed and Ibrahim (2015), they were of the notion that continuous increases in banditry and cattle rustling should be attributed to economic and commercial advantages in them. They stressed that banditry and cattle rustling affected the security of a community because it involved the use of weapons and other arms to intimidate and confiscate other people’s livestock and as a result of that making life unbearable for the particular households and by extension the entire communities. In another similar view from Olaniyi and Yahaya (2016), they stated that banditry and cattle rustling have contributed seriously to the insecurities of the communities as well as the entire nation. They pointed out further that proliferation of arms for the purpose of banditry and cattle rustling has largely enhanced the Boko Haram to have easy delivery of small arms from the rebels who are either from Libya or from Mali.

Justification for the Study

Many of the writing on farmers and herdsmen conflict have primarily focused on the factors responsible for farmers and herdsmen conflict. This article has actually done the same; however, it examined the influence of farmers and herdsmen on cattle rustling and banditry, and vice versa. The article helps in proffering explanation to the influence of farmers—herdsmen conflicts, cattle rustling, and banditry on insecurities permeating some local government areas of Zamfara State.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopted the environmental resources scarcity and frustration-aggression theory because both theories provided insight into the prevalence of farmers and herdsmen conflict as well as the act of banditry. In Homer-Dixon’s (1994) Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases, he asserted that increasing population of nations around the world highly depended on four key environmental resources, namely, water, agricultural land, fish, and forest. These environmental resources are very pertinent to their existence, and any decrease or scarcity as a result of overuse or misuse, depletion, degradation, climate change, and population growth bring about competition over the resources among various groups which eventually leads to conflicts. His argument was that scarcity of resources is as a result of insufficient supply, high demand, and inequality in distribution of resource which stem from social, political, environmental, and economic factors. These resources already are becoming scarce, and the scarcities are contributing to violent conflicts in many parts of the developing world. According to him, therefore, some groups in the society are deprived of some essential resources, and subsequently competition, violence, and conflict over the resources arise. He never sees anything wrong with social conflict because it will bring about mass mobilization and civil strife which would eventually produce opportunities for beneficial transformation in the distribution of wealth and land and in processes of governance. However, he was concerned about fast-moving, unpredictable, and complex environmental problems that may consequently overwhelm the efforts directed at constructive social reform. Homer-Dixon’s Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict theory can be likening to the farmers and herdsmen conflict; this is apparent in the way the two groups killed each other over the scarce resources in Anka and Maradun local government area of Zamfara State.

Another important theory relevant to the study is the frustration-aggression-displacement theory as cited in Holmes (1972). The theory was said to have been proposed by John Dollard, Leonard Doob, Neal Miller, Robert Sears, and Orval Mowrer in 1939. It was expanded by Neal Miller and Leonard Berkowitz in 1941 and 1969, respectively. The theory assumed that aggression is a consequence of blocking and frustration which a person is confronted with in a bid to attain a particular goal. The theory stated that frustration brings about behavior that may or may not be aggressive, and it is a necessary condition for aggression. Dollard defined frustration as “a condition which exists when a goal-response suffers interference” and aggression as “an act whose goal-response is injury to an organism (or an organism surrogate) . . . .” This theory is applicable in the farmers and herdsmen conflict as well as in the act of banditry. This can be depicted in the fact that both farmers and herdsmen want a total control of the scarce resources, namely, land and water; however, these resources are under the control of either the farmers or the herdsmen who denied the other the opportunity to access it. The denial eventually prompted frustration which results in aggression. The aggressive action can also be seen in the apparent killing that has been going in Anka and Maradun local government area of Zamfara State. Various studies have also revealed that the acts of banditries usually come from either the frustrated farmers or the frustrated herdsmen who have been denied the full control of land to farm and to graze on, respectively.

Study Setting and Methods

Anka and Maradun local governments are both local governments in Zamfara State. Anka has a population of about 250,000, an area of 2,746 km², and the town head quarter at
employed: Ali//FGD/Farmer/Anka. Spurious names such as

tiate between respondents, the following coding method was based on the patterns that were generated. In a bid to differen-
gorization were provided. The researchers thereafter provided an account of verbal interview) and were converted into written
scribed, and patterns identified and organized according to the day, and the venue.

The study was conducted among the farmers and herders in Anka and Maradun local government are. Exploratory research design and a qualitative method (focus group discussion [FGD] and key informant interview [KII] were used to collect primary data from the respondents) of data collection were adopted. FGD involves engaging 12 purposively selected farmers, on the one hand, and herdsmen, on the other hand. Twelve farmers and 12 herdsmen were selected in each of the two local governments, namely, Anka and Maradun local governments, where there are prevalent conflicts between farmers and herdsmen. The KII involves engaging three purposively selected communities’ leaders from each of the two local governments, namely, Anka and Maradun local governments where there are prevalent conflicts between farmers and herdsmen. The qualitative method provided a forum to have one-on-one with those who are affected either directly or indirectly. These are the questions that were posed to the respondents:

a. What are the causes of farmers–herdsmen conflicts, cattle rustling, and banditry?
b. Do you see farmers–herdsmen conflicts having influence on cattle rustling and banditry, and vice versa?
c. Do you see farmers–herdsmen conflicts, cattle rustling, and banditry having influence on insecurities permeating Anka and Maradun local government of Zamfara state?

The researchers established relationship with both the farmers and herdsmen in a bid to have the information required. One of the researchers is actually an indigene of the state, who served as a middle man. He explained to the respondents the purpose of the research, convinced them that there was no financial or material compensation for participants; and Anka as the community of the respondent

Findings and Discussion

The findings of the study have been subdivided into three: the causes of farmers–herdsmen conflicts, cattle rustling, and banditry; the influence of farmers–herdsmen conflicts on cattle rustling and banditry, and vice versa; the influence of farmers–herdsmen conflicts, cattle rustling, and banditry on the insecurities that permeate the local governments.

The Causes of Farmers–Herdsmen Conflicts, Cattle Rustling, and Banditry

This study found that the pervasive clashes between farmers and herdsmen in many parts of Anka and Maradun local governments have to do with the destruction of farm lands by the cattle which are mostly owned by the herdsmen; the contamination of water by the cattle; overgrazing by the cattle; disregard for the traditional authority of their host communities; and indiscriminate defecation by the cattle. The farmers were also found to be harassing the herdsmen and some of their women (sexual harassment of women), bush burning, and blockage of cattle routes and water points. It was also found that climatic change which is responsible for desert encroachment and structural factors such as scarcity of resources; reduction in the interdependence of pastoral and agricultural economies; and the lack of commitment on the part of the government to resolve the differences between the herdsmen and the farmers are some of the factors responsible for the farmers and herdsmen conflict. This is consistent with the assertion of Solomon and Chinwe (2015) who were of the view that clashes between farmers and herdsmen are a result of destruction of farmlands by the cattle which are mostly owned by the herdsmen. According to them, the herdsmen are mostly migrants who transit, and the movements have been characterized by cattle entering the farmers’ land and sometimes causing serious damage which eventually lead to terrific conflicts between the herdsmen and the farmers. It is similar to the findings of Ofem and Inyang (2014) who identified that some of the causes of conflicts between farmers and herdsmen are as a result of the destruction of farmland by the cattle, contamination of water by the cattle, overgrazing by the cattle, and indiscriminate defecation by the cattle. This is also similar to De Haan (2002) who attributed the herdsmen and farmers conflicts to the way both parties handle situations in their disposal. This is consistent with the discovery by Ofem and Inyang (2014) who identified sexual harassment of women as factors responsible for the prevalent farmers and herdsmen conflicts. They argued that the youth among the farmers are involved in raping and harassing of herdsmen women as well as the act of stealing herdsmen cattle. On the contrary, they also mentioned the
fact that the herders allow their cattle indiscriminately defecate on the road. The causes of farmers–herdsmen conflict according to some of the respondents are as follows:

Many of the clashes between farmers and herdsmen stem from the destruction of farm lands by the cattle which are mostly owned by the herdsmen. The cattle usually enter the farmland to cause damage. This subsequently leads to conflicts between the herdsmen and the farmers. (Group 2/farmers/FGD/Anka)

In another session with respondents which is similar to the previous, respondents further reiterate the challenges they are confronted with as a result of the cattle destruction of the infrastructural facilities:

Many of the herdsmen have been allowing their cattle to overgraze on our farmland. They allowed destruction of the farmland by the cattle and thereby making farming activities to be difficult. Therefore, the continuous conflicts between farmers and herdsmen can be attributed to the destruction of farmland, contamination of water, overgrazing and indiscriminate defecation by the cattle. (Group 1/farmers/FGD/Maradun)

The responses of the herdsmen were totally different from those of the farmers as they were also identifying some important factors which largely affected them as follows:

Many of the conflict that exist between the farmers and the herdsmen has to do with the action of the farmers who mostly engage in bush burning as well as blocking the water point route that are meant for the cattle. There is no other means but for the cattle to enter the farmland. (Group 1/herdsmen/FGD/Maradun)

In a related session with the herdsmen, some of their responses show that sometimes the herdsmen are being physically and sexually harassed:

Those who claimed to be the host community mostly harassed our men and women. These have been responsible for the various conflicts between the farmers and herdsmen. They harassed our women sexually and our men physically. Therefore, how do we stay in such situation without conflict? (Group 2/herdsmen/FGD/Maradun)

KII conducted with communities’ leaders illuminates the following:

The herdsmen have serious disregard for the traditional authority of their host communities. They have no respect and they usually assumed that every land belongs to them. They enter peoples’ land with their cattle and cause various destruction. (Ali/farmer/KII/Anka)

The herdsmen do not respect the authority, they don’t believe in it and they want to control at will. The hosts communities expect them to do their grazing in harmonious coexistence, however, the lack of respect usually make them to go beyond their limit, to the extent of entering people’s farm without any fear. (Sule/farmer/KII/Maradun)

The responses of those who represented community leaders for the herdsmen were totally different from those of the farmers:

The harassment of women by the so called host people is beyond imagination. The youth among the farmers mostly engaged in raping and harassing of our women. They sometimes connive with outsiders to steal our cattle. (Iliya/herdsmen/KII/Anka)

The farmers usually complained of herdsmen entering their farmland, however, there are paths specifically meant for the herdsmen which are called “Burtalli.” These “Burtalli” has been covered with plantation by the farmers, thereby, making the herdsmen to have no any other option than to enter their plantation. The farmers are into serious and uncontrollable bush burning and blocking the water point route meant for the cattle. (Sule/herdsmen/KII/Maradun)

The FGD and the KII revealed the cause of farmers’ and herdsmen’s conflicts. It revealed that both the farmers and herdsmen have peculiar explanation as to the factors responsible for the conflicts.

**Influence of Farmers–Herdsmen Conflicts on Cattle Rustling and Banditry, and Vice Versa**

The study found that the causes of cattle rustling and banditry have to do with the “Long-Standing Disagreements” between farmers and herdsmen. The “Long-Standing Disagreements” mostly arise from the scrambling for the available scarce resources. It found that banditry and cattle rustling are critical aspects of farmers and herdsmen conflict. The study discovered that many of the farmers and herdsmen who have lost their means of livelihood have taken to cattle rustling and banditry. This has to do with the fact that many of the youth from the farmers and the youth from the herdsmen have nothing left to survive from. They have no option than to take up either cattle rustling or banditry employment. The study also discovered that cattle rustling and banditry are on the increase because they have economic and commercial benefits which the farmers and herdsmen conflict have deprived them. The finding is similar to Mohammed and Ibrahim (2015) who argued that cattle rustling and banditry are on the increase because of economic and commercial benefits. It serves as a means of livelihood which farmers’ and herdsmen’ conflicts have denied them. In a related discovery by Bashir (2017) in an empirical study, he asserted that there are relationships between banditry and cattle rustling. He stated that factors responsible for cattle rustling and banditry have to do with the competition between farmers and herdsmen. It is also similar with the assertion of Belay, M., & Bewket, W. (2013) who stated that cattle rustling and banditry can be attributed to the daily occurrence conflicts between farmers and herdsmen. It is also consistent
with Blench (2004) who stated that increases in cattle rustling and banditry have affected the relationship between farmers and herdsmen. It is also consistent with the findings of Abdulazeez et al. (2018), who were of the view that banditry and cattle rustling have been contributing factors to the pervasive farmers and herdsmen conflict, and vice versa. They stated further that those conflicts are responsible for the high poverty level of both the farmers and the herdsmen. This is because their abilities to excel positively in their field of endeavor have been inhibited.

The following discussions illuminate the view of the respondents:

Farmers-herdsmen conflicts have influence on cattle rustling and banditry and vice versa. This is because all make our daily living within the same socio-cultural, political and geographical location. We are subjected to the same condition (availability and non-availability) of resources. There is every tendency therefore that there would be conflict and counter conflict between us. It is important that we handle situations in our disposal effectively. (Group 1/M/herders/FGD/Anka)

Farmers-herdsmen conflicts have influence on cattle rustling and banditry and vice versa. This is because many of the attack that come in the form of cattle rustling ad banditry are mostly form of reprisals in which either the farmers or herdsmen used as a defense. Most of the reprisals were a result of the farmers-herdsmen conflicts. (Group 1/M/farmers/FGD/Maradun)

The following represents the responses of the community leaders for farmers and herdsmen:

There is “Long-Standing Disagreements” between the farmers and the herdsmen, which is mostly as a result of the conflict between the farmers and the herdsmen, as such cattle rustling and banditry usually comes up as a reprisal from the both sides. Farmers-herdsmen conflicts have influence on cattle rustling and banditry and vice versa. This is because cattle rustling and banditry are mostly consequences of daily occurrence farmers-herdsmen. (Amad/herders/KII/Anka)

There is no doubt that many of the attack that come in the form of cattle rustling or banditry are the consequences of the farmers and herdsmen conflict. Some of the youth who have engaged in the cattle rustling are those who have no land to farm on and many of those youth who have engaged in the banditry are those who have no cattle to rear any longer. (Sani/herders/KII/Anka)

The above FGD and KII revealed that farmers–herdsmen conflicts have influence on cattle rustling and banditry, and vice versa

**Influence of Farmers–Herdsmen Conflicts, Cattle Rustling, and Banditry on Insecurities**

The study found that farmers and herdsmen conflict, cattle rustling, and banditry have influence on the current insecurities of the local governments (Anka and Maradun). It also discovered that farmers and herdsmen conflict, cattle rustling, and banditry have apparently enhanced the proliferation of arms, and this has encouraged crimes in all ramifications. The study discovered that as a result of farmers and herdsmen conflict, cattle rustling and banditry security agencies have been intercepting illegal arms (SALW) trafficking within and across the borders. The study also found that increasing insecurities in the north has also been attributed to the prevailing farmers and herdsmen conflict, cattle rustling, and banditry, which is the reason why many people lose their lives and properties. The study discovered that proliferation of arms for the purpose of banditry and cattle rustling has largely enhanced the Boko haram activities. This is consistent with the findings of Okoli and Okpaleke (2014) that were of the view that on many occasions security agencies have been intercepting illegal arms trafficking within and across borders. It is similar to the findings of Muggah and Batchelor (2002) who argued in a study that prevailing farmers and herdsmen conflict, banditry, and cattle rustling have contributed to the serious insecurity situation. It is also closely related to the findings of Adeniyi (2016) who was of the view that farmers and herdsmen conflict, banditry, and cattle rustling are responsible for many people lose their lives and properties. The findings of the study are also close to Bashir (2017) who discovered that the consequences of farmers and herdsmen conflict, banditry, and cattle rustling are the eventual loss of lives among those living in the communities (both farmers and herdsmen). The study is also consistent with the findings of Mohammed and Ibrahim (2015) who were of the notion that continuous increases in banditry and cattle rustling are responsible for insecurities in many of the communities. It is also similar to the findings of Omitola (2014) who stated that banditry and cattle rustling have enhanced Boko haram to have easy delivery of small arms from the rebels:

The following discussions illuminate the view of the respondents:

Farmers and herd’s conflict, banditry and cattle rustling remained the reason why there are insecurities. It can be seen that on several occasion the security agencies have been intercepting illegal arms trafficking within and across the borders meant for the either the farmers or herdsmen. (Group 1/M/herders/FGD/Anka)

The continuous farmers and herder’s conflict, banditry and cattle rustling have contributed to the serious insecurity situation because of the rate at which many people have been losing their lives in the communities. The most unfortunate aspect of the whole things is that the killing includes the two sides (both farmers and herdsmen). (Group 1/M/farmers/FGD/Maradun)

The following represents the responses of community leaders for farmers and herdsmen:

The continuous increases in banditry and cattle rustling are responsible for insecurities in many of the communities. These
can be seen at the rate at which it has enhanced the Boko haram activities. (Amad/Herders/KII/Anka)

The rate at which people are killed in the name of reprisal attack has seriously increase the level of insecurities in the communities. (Sani/herders/KII/Maradun)

The above FGD and KII revealed that farmers–herdsmen conflicts, cattle rustling, and banditry have an influence on the insecurities

Recommendations

Based on the findings, researchers have proffered the following suggestions.

There should be grazing reserves equipped with adequate social amenities so that herdsmen can shift from the traditional method of animal husbandry to modern methods. This is in a bid to curb the menace of destruction of farm land by the cattle.

Government should also formulate policies that discourage the unnecessary expansion of crop field to the corridors of animals’ passage (Burtalli). This will put an end to the complain of not having pathways for the cattle

As there are issues of harassment, rape, violation of law, and others by either the farmers or herdsmen, there should be conflict resolution through appropriate institutions (such as traditional and religious leaders).

Security agencies should be further equipped in a bid to curb the proliferation of arms and dagger. They should be further equipped to confiscate those small arms that already gained access to the communities.

Implications of the Study

The study provides the policy-makers on the need to step up securities in those communities (Anka and Maradun). It also highlighted various grievances of both the farmers and the herdsmen. The study shows that there are needs to provide laws that stipulate the boundary for farmers and herdsmen. This study investigated the influence of farmers and herdsmen conflict, cattle rustling, and banditry. It further examined the influence of farmers and herdsmen conflict on cattle rustling and banditry, and vice versa. It also examined the influence of farmers and herdsmen conflict, cattle rustling, and banditry on insecurities. Further studies may examine the role of government in curbing the menace of farmers and herdsmen conflict, cattle rustling, and banditry.

Conclusion

The study examined farmers–herdsmen conflict, cattle rustling, and banditry in Anka and Maradun local government area of Zamfara state, Nigeria. The study shows the influence of farmers–herdsmen conflicts on cattle rustling and banditry, and vice versa. It also shows the influence of farmers–herdsmen conflicts, cattle rustling, and banditry on insecurities permeating some local government area of Zamfara state. It has, therefore, been concluded that synthesis of farmers–herdsmen conflicts, cattle rustling, and banditry pose serious threat to the safety and security of people. Therefore, in a bid to curb the menace, there are needs for the introduction of grazing reserves equipped with adequate social amenities. That will enhance herdsmen’s transformation from the traditional to the modern method of animal husbandry. Importantly, also the communities (Anka and Maradun) are characterized by farmers–herdsmen whose lives revolved around farming and cattle rearing. The population of both farmers and cattle are rapidly increasing, but land remains fixed, which subsequently leads to competition on land and other scarce resources (such as water, grazing areas). It has, therefore, become pertinent that all hands must be on deck to minimize or address the farmers and herdsmen conflict, cattle rustling, and banditry so as to bring to an end the pervasive insecurity and to promote economic growth and development in the country. It is also pertinent that international organizations such as United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), and others assist in bringing an end to the menace of farmers and herdsmen conflict, banditry, and cattle rustling.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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