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The Effects of Farmers–Herders Conflict on Internal Security in Katsina State, Nigeria

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Abstract
Farmers-herders conflict is a persistent feature of rural life in Nigeria because it directly threatens internal security, food production and community cohesion. Without effective and timely management mechanisms, the phenomenon is capable of causing severe setbacks to agricultural productivity, livelihoods and the overall goal of sustainable development in affected states. Several states in Nigeria, particularly in the North-West, have witnessed escalating farmers-herders clashes in the last decade, resulting in loss of lives, destruction of property and the transformation of resource disputes into organised criminality. Existing studies have largely examined the causes and national-level interventions, yet the specific strategies and challenges of managing the conflict by state governments have not been adequately explored. This salient gap is what the present study filled by appraising the strategies and challenges of managing farmers-herders conflicts by the Katsina State Government. The objectives of the study were to: (i) examine the causes of farmers-herders conflict in Katsina State; (ii) explore the implications of the conflict for both feuding parties; (iii) investigate the transitional patterns of the conflict into other acts of criminality; (iv) examine the strategic intervention approaches and their effectiveness; and (v) identify the challenges faced by the Katsina State Government in managing the conflict. A mixed-methods research design was adopted. The study purposively selected respondents from seven high-conflict Local Government Areas (Kankara, Batsari, Jibia, Safana, Faskari, Sabuwa and Dandume). Five hundred copies of a structured questionnaire were distributed, out of which 485 were retrieved and analysed. In addition, 16 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with relevant stakeholders and subjected to content analysis. Frequency distribution, percentages and thematic analysis were used for descriptive and qualitative data.

Keywords: Farmers, Herders, Informants. Conflicts, Intebal Security, Katsina State

Introduction

These days, security is no longer considered the then gun battle between the military and/or militia forces of two or more states in defence of external attack, aggression or invasion. Rather, social conflicts, social strife, communal clashes, religious crisis, ethnic violence, chieftaincy tussle, political rivalry and assassination of opponents, poverty, wars, environmental degradation, militia formation and attacks, kidnapping, terrorism/insurgency, suicide bombing, HIV/AIDS, epidemics, food crisis, water shortage, etc., which are considered the results of bad governance, have become of security concern that the traditional military antagonism and gun battle between states or nations. They constitute severe threats or challenges to security (Gowon, 2015; Ghirmazion, 2006; Renner, 2006; Fücks, 2006). The government owes citizens the duty of ensuring that they are safe, protected, granted fundamental human rights and considered equal before the law (Akanji, 2021). Regrettably, the government fails in its duties to the Nigerian citizens. The repercussion of the failure manifests in form of the widespread security threats confronting Nigeria and its people and systems overtime.

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According to Yagboyaju, human rights abuse, lack of respect for the rule of law, illiteracy, lack of food security, malnutrition, hunger, starvation, poor living conditions and diseases, low levels of education, corruption and crimes are socio-economic factors that constitute non-military threats to internal (national) security. Other threats to national (internal) security include the menace of Fulani herders' wanton killings of farmers and other members of agrarian communities (Besong & Robert 2019, pp. 1-8), poor sanitary conditions, persistent epidemics (e.g. Lassa fever, Ebola, Meningitis and Covid-19) (Yagboyaju, 2019, pp. 49, 51-2). In 2018 alone, BBC report had (www.bbc.com) it that about 1,700 people were killed by Fulani herdsmen (Global Terrorism Index, 2018). The killings and activities of Boko Haram and Fulani herders worsen issues of malnutrition and hunger, particularly as a result of displacements. The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) reported that about 1.7 million children were severally under fed in Nigeria as at 2015 (Ogunbiyi, 2015, p. 26). Yusufu, Aliyu and Ogaji (2021) agreed and proved beyond reasonable doubt that the conflict between farmers and herders causes displacement, with women and children being the most vulnerable and the highest number of victims.

In Nigeria, farmers–herders conflict has heightened recently, with increasing threat to security of both lives and property. Banditry has emerged from this phase of conflict in present-day Nigeria. As Felix and Nneka (2016) agrees, bandits, kidnappers, rustlers, ethno-religious militias and even political thugs, who are neither herders nor farmers, take advantage of the farmers–herders conflict to operate under the guise of herders or farmers being on punitive rampage attacks on not just citizens in rural communities but also those in towns, particularly emerging towns. The states suffering the highest burdens and ratios of herders-farmers conflict are Kaduna, Katsina, Zamfara, Sokoto, Kebbi, Niger, Plateau, Benue, Taraba and Adamawa. Most conflicts between herders and farmers are rooted in dispute of right to land use (Blench, 2010). According to Rufa'i (2021), in Zamfara State, the conflict has so far claimed over 12,000 lives, about 250,000 livestock and countless property between 2011 and 2021. About 120 villages were destroyed, while over 150,000 persons were either internally displaced or made refugees in the neighbouring Niger Republic.

Herders and farmers are both the primary victims and actors in the sustained conflict between them. Even within each of these two parties, the conflict occurs. It is important to note that farmers-herders conflict has occurred in all the 36 states of Nigeria, including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), as herdsmen are often seen even in public or open places, where there are no grasses for grazing. Thus, they constitute nuisance to the public. This reality points out that herders not only cause nuisance to farmers but other members of the public too. Being seen where there are no grasses for grazing rouses the question about such herders' motive behind such (open) grazing.

It is in view of the foregoing menace of killings and destructions that this study seeks to examine the effects of farmers-herders' conflict on internal security in Katsina State of Nigeria, focusing on 2015 to date period.

Statement of the Problem

Farmers-herders' conflict is one of the key security challenges bedevilling Katsina State (Kunle, 2018). This conflict has escalated and transformed into many phases of crime being orchestrated in form of cattle rustling, armed banditry and kidnapping. These crimes and emergent phases of insecurity are heightening tension and fear in many communities, such as Yankara, Sabua, Runka, Maidabino, Sabuwar Kasa, Kanon Haki, Dugul, Yashi and Yantumaki, amongst others, in the State. Apart from heightening fear and creating sustained tension in the minds of the residents of various parts of Katsina, so many people are displaced. The displacement in itself is a serious issue of concern. Despite being so, no deserving attention is yet paid by government to quelling it. As such, a study of this magnitude on the situation is hoped to rouse the desired attention and cause some challenge to what currently obtain in the state.

The nature and dimension of this conflict is such that few people could go to farm. This is because they have the fear of been kidnapped or killed by such herders. Obviously, many several farmers have been abducted on their farms and huge ransom demanded of them. The herders too could not herd their cattle as expected in the community due to the activities of cattle rustlers, who are out to retaliate on the herders. Again, the conflict between farmers and herders in Katsina State is recurring and deadly. It poses serious threat to internal security. Some of the internal security dimensions arising from herders versus farmers' conflict are community

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displacement, economic insecurity, food shortage and crisis, hunger and starvation, environmental security challenges, social disorder, political instability, vandalism, high death rate reducing population, and threats to investment and tourism. Essentially, no meaningful activities could be done in an insecure environment. The conflict is thus causing a lot of problems of Katsina State, as many people now dread the State for any meaningful ventures that would ordinarily be of immense benefits to them and the State too.

The implication is that if the conflict is halted, many profitable activities would fold, as those involved in them would flee the State for safety. It is taking too long to proffer lasting solution to it by the government, particularly the Federal Government. No individuals or groups are more than a state, both in the capacity of Katsina State of Nigeria and in the capacity of the sovereign state called Nigeria. If notorious criminals, such as Tony Anini of the then Bendel State (the today Edo and Delta States) and Gana of Benue of Nigeria, among others, could be caught and killed for the safety of the masses and the stability of the polity, no wanting bandits, kidnappers, herders or farmers cannot be got rid of in Katsina or elsewhere. Where and when the otherwise obtains and the heinous criminals go about unpunished, the government is the first suspected kingpin or power behind the evil operations of such criminals. Other elites other than the secular political elite also have hands in such ills against the masses of such areas, basically for political and economic gains. These thoughts are commonly expressed by different scholars and researchers, though they are often said to be allegations. The effects of farmers-herders conflict on internal security in Katsina State have not gained any (deserving) scholarly attention. The unfilled research gap on this subject matter makes this study imperative, as it rises to chronicle the effects of this phase of armed conflict in Katsina State in North-West Nigeria.

Research Objectives

To determine the extent of the effects of farmers-herders conflict on internal security in Katsina State;

To ascertain as well as describe causes of farmers-herders conflict in Katsina State.

Literature Review

Concept of Conflict

Conflict is variously conceptualised, though seemingly alike. Accordingly, Idris (2019) defines conflict simply as what arises whenever what one party puts over another has negative effects on it and resistance is put forward to foil or put out that which comes with the effects. From the materialist perspective, John (2018) defines conflict as an act of physical force and aggression that follow the pursuit of incompatible goals and interests between opposite parties over resources. The resources include land, water bodies, minerals, capital, power, etc., which greed, misunderstanding and misinformation about them result to conflict. This definition highlights the fact that bitter struggle over competing interests, goals or resources is what amounts to conflict. This definition also leaves out intra-conflict.

For Boulding (2013), conflict is what arises between two parties, groups or states as a result of their pursuit of same, opposing or incompatible goals. This shares the same position with above definition. It also leaves out the conflict that occurs at individual or personal level. Its focus is only on group as well as inter-conflict. What is interesting is that it also captures the point that conflict arises when and where goals clash. Similarly, Hagberg (2011) describes conflict as any form of competitive behaviour between two parties, groups or individuals, having clashing interests and thereby taking to overpowering force(s) to counter the interest of the other party (group or individual) and get what is being competed for at all cost.

Internal Security

Internal security (IS hereafter) is described as state actions aimed at putting in place, upholding and deploying national laws, strategies, policies and law enforcement agencies to maintain peace, law and order, and to safeguard citizens from fear or threats to lives, property, environment and national interests of the state (Arase, 2018). For Kamenju (2001), internal security is the preservation of public security of persons and property, prevention and suppression of rebellion, mutiny, violence, intimidation, disorder, crime, attempts of overthrow the government, maintenance of the administration of justice, provision of sufficient supplies and services and provision of administration and remedial measures

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during periods of national danger and calamity.

Causes of Farmer-Herders Conflict

Different reasons or factors are identified to be behind farmers-herders conflict. Given that most scholars share similar position in identifying the perceived and real causative factors behind the conflict, the study shall not be treating each scholar's identified factors separately. Accordingly, consumption and destruction of crops by cattle, herdsmen's vandalism, burning of rangelands, Fadama and blockage of cattle routes and water points by crop encroachment are considered to be the major direct causes of conflicts between the two parties (De Hann, 2002; Boh, 2007). Other perceived causes of the conflict include inequitable access to land, diminishing land resources, antagonistic values among the two parties, policy contradictions and politicised policy, and non-recognition of rights of indigenous people (De Hann, 2002; Boh, 2007).

As it has been observed, crops, livestock, water resources and other vegetable resources play key roles in the development, maintenance and projection of socio-economic strength of a society (Berger, 2003; Schama, 1996).The ecological scarcity struggle for resources prompts the Fulani herdsmen to resort to the use of or devise livelihood strategies that are conflict-driven. The environmental degradation is perceived to be contributing enormously to the deterioration in ecosystem services to the environment of various communities (Tenuche & Ifatimehin, 2009). As it has also been observed, the increased provision of social services in towns, such as health centres, schools and food aid as well as increased economic opportunities has led to the migration and settlement of herders and the concentration of grazing in areas around towns in the modern/contemporary times (Haro and Doyo, 2005). These new unplanned settlements, together with their un/foreseen implications, are providing the basis for the painful lessons from the fact that environmental resources are finite as human economy (population and resource utilisation) has exceeded them and are becoming limited, as unsustainable utilisation affects human, social, economic and environmental sustainability (Tenuche & Ifatimehin, 2009). Economically viable land has been a major cause of conflict between communities in Nigeria (Tenuche and Ifatimehin, 2009; Gbehe, 2007).

According to Oghuvbuand Oghuvbu (2020), the causes of the conflicts are: control over land for grazing and farming; huge desertification of vegetative lands and droughts in Northern Nigeria, which compel herders to migrate closer to the middle belt region and the south in search of greener pasture and water for their animals; and the herders' encroachment into and destruction of their farmlands and crops and contaminating their predominant supply of water. Loss of land is the source of deep-seated grievances that render groups more inclined to take up arms. Land disputes are central to the story of armed conflicts across the region. Land scarcity is worsened by rapid population growth. Anxiety over land is heightened by weak and unreliable government land titling systems, and that anxiety is easily exploited by violence entrepreneurs (Khadiagala, 2008; Jok, Menkhaus & Sheekh, 2015). Conversely, the herders, on their part, accuse the farmers of poising, killing or even stealing their livestock, especially cattle and blocking their grazing routes. The conflict has assumed worrisome dimensions with the use of sophisticated weapons, such as AK47, by the herders who are only supposed to use sticks and cutlasses while grazing.

Furthermore, for Akuva and Yusufu (2020), Ogoh (2019), Mohammed (2018), Fashua (2014) and Gleick (2014), among others, the natural causative factors border on climate change and its ensuring depletion of land resources, while the human factors include killing, poisoning and looting away cows (known as cattle rustling). Climate change impacts are expected to severely affect arid and semi-arid rangelands which cover nearly two thirds of the African continent (Galvin et al. 2001). Many of the impacts of climate change in these areas are characterized by variability in rainfall patterns and extreme weather events such as recurrent droughts, floods and wind storms (IPCC 2007, 2013). One of the major factors affecting pastoral farming in Nigeria is climate change, this result from long dry season in a year (Mezie-Okoye & Asike, 2020; Mohammed, 2018).

Southward migration of herdsmen in search of grass and water is another causal factor (Nzeh, 2015; Bernard, 2012; Tonah, 2006). Meanwhile, their southward migration is not caused by any problem of resource management, desert encroachment and cattle rustling (Bernard, 2012). It is a case of their wilful migration perhaps for expansionism and better grazing of their livestock. Yet, the southward movement is said to become a problem

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because of the destruction of farmers' crops by herders, who often turn crops and farm produce to animal feeds for their grazing livestock, is one remote cause of the conflict. Despite grazing their animals on farms rather than fields, most herders are reported to molest, intimidate, rape, maim and even kill farmers and their relatives for daring to question or stop them (Ahmed-Gangum, 2018). Angered by such ill deeds, farmers retaliate or confront herders, who do same or even worse in return to the farmers.

Effects of Farmers-Herders Conflict on Internal Security

The effects of utmost concern to Badamasi's (2020) study are those on agriculture, peace and tranquility and socio-economic development. The present study looks beyond these effects to others, which include internal security, sour intergroup relations, disruption of educational and healthcare activities, threatening investment and tourism, population reduction, political instability and so on. This present study also differs from that Badamasi's (2020) in terms of the methodology. Unlike the former study that employed only quantitative method, the latter (being this present study) combines both qualitative and quantitative methods. That means they also vary in their analytical tools despite their several statistical similarities.

Mezie-Okoye and Asike (2020) examine 'Climate change and Fulani herdsmen–farmers' conflict in Nigeria'. The study finds out that the impact of climate change on the conflict between farmers and herders. The paper reveals that the major social effect of the menace of Fulani herdsmen are loss of human life, sexual harassment of human life, acquiring of weapons/arms, reduction in quality of social relationship, reduction of social support and high cases of rape. The major economic effect of the menace of Fulani–Herdsmen are reduction in output and income of farmers/nomads, loss of produce in storage, displacement of farmers, scarcity of agricultural products, loss of house and properties and infrastructural damages. The results tally with those of Nweze (2005) and Bello (2013).

Ogoh's (2019) study, entitled 'Climate change and farmer-herder conflicts in Plateau State of North-Central Nigeria, 1999-2016,' is also a valuable empirical literature. It explores the dynamics of herders-farmers conflict in Plateau State through the lens of Homer-Dixon's eco violence theory. A sampled population of 384 respondents were drawn through a multi-stage sampling procedure. Information was elicited from the respondents using focus group discussion, key informant interview and a structured questionnaire that was based on a 5-point Likert Scale (LS). Descriptive statistical tools were used for the analysis of the gathered data. The analysis shows a correlation between climate change and farmer-herder conflicts in the study area. It also reveals that the conflict has grave effects on the people and their environment along with the natural resources therein. People are killed and displaced; properties are lost; youths have become troublesome, destroyers, drug addicts and threats to the society; and peace, development and socio-political stability are shattered. The study recommends that grazing corridor and ranches, not grazing reserves, should be created. Doing so would resolve the issue of encroachment on farmlands by herders.

Theoretical Framework

Eco-Violence Theory

Homer-Dixon's (1999) Eco-Violence Theory holds that the decrease in quantity and quality of renewable resources, population growth and resources can combine or singly increase the scarcity of natural resources like land, water, forest, food and other agricultural produce for certain population, which, of course, brings about high competition and violent struggles for survival in an ecosystem. The decrease could reduce economic productivity for the involved groups and the national economies. And, a large number of the members of the affected groups might have to migrate out of their environment(s) in search of betterment.

The migration has adverse effects on both their abandoned environment(s) and the new one(s) they migrate to. Basically, the former faces population decrease, while the latter battles with population explosion. As Homer-Dixon, (1999, p. 30) has observed, migrating groups often trigger ethnic conflicts as they go to their new areas, while decrease in wealth could cause conflicts arising from deprivation. This aptly captures the case under study. As the Fulani herders migrate to other parts of or other peoples' areas, they trigger ethno-religious conflicts, which do not necessarily arise from the struggle for land between them and farmers for grazing and farming land portions respectively. Their elites, conscious of this reality, often take advantage of their

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migration and incite ethno-religious conflicts between them and farmers. Beyond that, they sponsor them and fuel the conflicts to the brim by covertly supporting them with weapons, ammunitions, finance, food and mercenaries

Methodology

The descriptive survey design is adopted. The study area is Katsina State, which is located in the North-West Nigeria. It was created from the northern part of Kaduna State in 1987. The State Katsina is bordered by the Republic of Niger to the north, Kaduna to north, Jigawa and Kano to the east, and Zamfara to the west. Katsina comprises largely of scrub vegetation with some wooded savannah in the south. Katsina town is the state capital and largest settlement. The state has a steel-rolling mill, a Federal University, two State Universities, two Colleges of Education and a Polytechnic. It has an area of 9,341 square miles (24,192 square km), a population of 5,792,578 (NPC, 2006) and two main highways: Kaduna-Zaria Highway and Kano-Maradi (Niger) Highway.

The multistage sampling technique was used in research study. The simple sampling, which is a raffle draw system, adopted. To cut the 34 LGAs of the state to a researchable size, only 10 LGAs prone to herders-farmers conflict and banditry were selected for the study. The ten LGAs, selected from among the thirty four (34) LGAs of the state, are Faskari, Kankara, Sabuwa, Dandume, Funtua, Dan-Musa, Batsari, Safana, Dutsin-Ma and Jibia LGAs. The primary reason for these 10 LGAs is that they are those with the highest recorded incidence of farmers-herders conflict within the study period– from 2015 to date. For equitable distribution, each of the 10 LGAs has equal number of respondents and the same questions were put across to them in each of the two sets of the LGAs. Six (6) LGAs make up the first set of the LGAs, while the remaining four make the other set. The primary data were drawn from questionnaires. The secondary data were got from library and the internet. The sources of these data include textbooks, journals, theses, conference and seminar papers, special reports and papers, government publications, serials, newspapers and magazines. The gathered data were subjected to critical observation, evaluation and analysis, employing quantitative techniques and tools that suitably apply to the study. These involve simple percentage, tabular statistical analysis, charts, interpretation, critical thinking, inductive and deductive skills, objectivity, and logical argumentation.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Data of Questionnaire Respondents

Table 7.1 Age brackets of the respondents

Age brackets	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
18 – 30 yrs	126	10.4
31 – 42 yrs	573	46.8
43 – 55 yrs	422	34.5
56 – above yrs	102	8.3
Total	**1223**	**100**

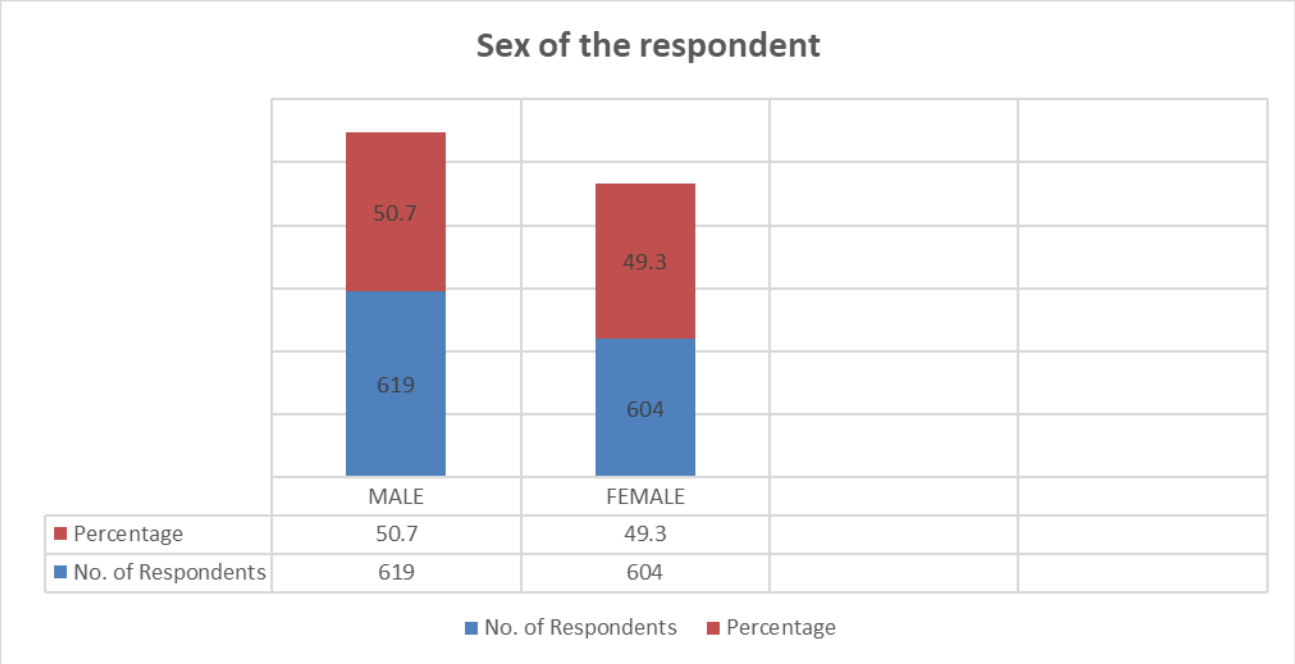
Source: Author's Field Survey, 2023

The above Table 4.1 shows that the respondents, whose ages fall within 31–42 age brackets, had the highest number with the highest percentage. They are followed by those between the ages of 43 and 55, with 422 of 34.5%. The respondents, who came third in number and percentage, are young people within 18–30. The last but not the least respondents are the advanced adults of ages 56 and above, having 102 of 8.3%. From the above data, it is quite clear that underage persons were not involved. Their exclusion followed ethical considerations and their poor knowledge of the subject matter of the study.

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Table 7.2 Sex of the respondents

Sex	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	619	50.7
Female	604	49.3
Total	1223	100



Source: Author's Field Survey, 2023

Following the duly filled and returned 1,223 questionnaires instead of the initial 1,600 questionnaires administered, the number of male respondents dropped from 800 to 619 of 50.7%, while the ratio for female respondents dropped from the same 800 to 604 of 49.3%. Nevertheless, the disparity or gap between female and male respondents remains insignificant. The difference is 15 of 1.3% (i.e., 604 to 15 of 1.3%).

Table 7.3 Marital status of the respondents

Sex	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Married	732	59.9
Single	301	24.7
Divorced	44	3.5
Widow/er	146	11.9
Total	1223	100

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2023

From the above table, it is realised that most of the respondents were married. While 732 of 59.9% of them indicated 'married', 301 of 24.7% of them ticked the 'single' option. Further, 146 of 11.9% of the respondents combined as widows and widowers. The lowest number of responses is got for the

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'divorced' option – 44 (3.5%).

Table 7.4 Respondents' experience of the conflict

Experience	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Many times	451	36.8
Several times	412	33.7
Once	310	25.4
Never	50	4.1
Total	1223	100

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2023

With the data in the above table, it is quite clear that most Katsina residents, particularly those in the selected LGAs under study, have experienced the conflict many times in different regards. As seen in the above responses gathered, 451 of 36.8% had experienced the conflict many times. Similarly, those who had experienced it several times were 412 of 33.7%. Only 310 of 25.4% respondents indicated that they had experienced the conflict only once. Finally, only 50 of 4.1% of the respondents indicated that they never experienced the conflict, as at prior to and during this study.

Causes of Farmer-Herders Conflict

Table 7.5. What are the causes of the conflict in your community/LGA of Katsina?

Variables	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
(i) Destruction of crops (ii) Contamination of water (iii) Competition over insufficient resources		
(i) Cultivation of cattle routes/grazing reserves (ii) Ethnic hate & suspicion (iii) Elites' misdeeds (iv) Corruption (v) Political leaders' and some other elite's interest and involvement in cattle rearing		
(i) Migratory movement of cattle by herders (ii) Land ownership (iii) Superfluous activities, e.g. rape, killing, stealing, etc.		
All of the above	622	100
Total	622	100

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Source: Author's Field Survey, 2023

The listed factors are affirmed to be together what cause the conflict. In each of the first three variables, different factors are identified as the causes of the conflict. The fourth variable is a summation of the three variables. Interestingly, all the interviewees (622 of 100%) chose the fourth variable, showing that all the factors in variables 1-3 together constitute the causes of the conflict.

Effects of Farmers-Herders Conflict on Internal Security

Table 7.6. What are the effects of the conflict in your community/LGA of Katsina?

Variables	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
(i) Huge loss of lives and property (ii) The rise of armed banditry (iii) Displacement (iv) Insecurity (v) Crimes, including cattle rustling	-	-
(i) Poverty (ii) Unemployment (iii) Sour intergroup relations (iv) Ethnic hate (v) Increased religious intolerance and uprising	-	-
(i) Food scarcity, hunger and starvation (ii) Spread of diseases (iii) Political instability (iv) Proliferation of small arms and light weapons	-	-
All of the above	622	100
Total	622	100

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2023

The Table 4.29 above reveals that all the items in Variables 1-3 are the effects of the farmers-herders conflict. All the interviewees expressed unanimous answers that all the points identified in Variables 1 -3 are indeed all the effects of the conflict. The collective affirmation of the listed effects tallies with that of the questionnaire respondents and many extant studies on the effects of the conflict. Thus, the responses of these interviewees go a very long way to strengthen previous findings on the effects of farmers-herders conflict.

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Discussion of Findings

There are extant studies that also point out the causes of conflict captured in Table 7.5 above, though with some variances. Datti (2022) explicitly and implicitly confirms all the above listed causative factors to be true. Alubo (2006), Alozieuwa (2016) and Robert and Besong (2017) identify socio-cultural factors, religious extremism, corruption, elitist incitement, resource allocation and control palaver, and indigene versus non-indigene dichotomy, among others, as causes of violent conflict in Nigeria. Albert (1994) is of the opinion that urban violence in Africa is caused by high population growth rates with its attendant unemployment, poor wages, poor living conditions, urban culture shocks, and poor quality of urban management that is manifested in the crisis in health care, transportation, housing and employment.

Sankore (2001) argues that the exploitation of terrible social and economic conditions by the so-called elite is what is responsible for the conflicts in Nigeria. For Agi (1996, p. 58), 'mystery or no mystery, many countries of the world have suffered and still continue to suffer untold hardship and misery engineered by religious strife and acrimony.' Similarly, Alozieuwa (2010) and Hoogvelt (2001), among others, lament the adverse effects of religious conflicts. These include loss of lives and property, vandalism, disunity, intolerance, sour intergroup and even interpersonal relations, civil unrest, political instability and paralysed socio-economic activities, to mention but a few.

One of the findings from the data is that the exposure of herders to sophisticated weapons is the bane of the farmers-herders conflict and armed banditry in the state as well as elsewhere. Yusufu, Aliyu and Ogaji (2021) reveal that the farmers-herders conflict causes displacement, with women and children being the most affected or vulnerable. Bagudu (2017) stresses the implications of exposing herders to sophisticated weapons, AK-47 and other assault rifles, as the exposure has made them to get used these weapons and thereby easily make use of them against farmers and their other victims. In the course of exploring the effect of climate change on herders along with their livestock, which is the major reason for their southward migration, Mezie-Okoye and Asike (2020) regret that allowing herders to use different sophisticated weapons freely is more dangerous than other causative factors behind farmers-herders conflict.

Adeoye (2017) gathers that although not all herders (tend to) engage in violent conflict with farmers, a larger number of them do so and thereby see nothing wrong with grazing their cattle on farms. According to Adeoye (2017), herders are those who most often start the conflict; intrusion by either farmers or herders cause conflict; and the intervention of traditional and religious leaders in conflicts resolution is more effective than that of law enforcement agents. Aliyu's (2015) study also reveals that traditional rulers and Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) are the most effective actors in the resolution of farmers-herders conflict in Katsina. This present study questions the efficiency of these said authorities, because if they were that effective, the conflict would not have remained endemic and defied the state government efforts to resolve it and armed banditry.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper has critically explored farmers-herders conflict and its effects on internal security in Katsina state, Nigeria. It has dissected the different situations and issues arising from the conflict. The implications of the conflict are dissected empirically, based on the factual data obtained from fieldwork. The multifaceted effects of the conflict are ascertained and described elaborately. The effects of the conflict on the internal security of the state are those given the utmost dissection. In brief, the conflict leaves untold effects on humans and non-humans alike. Lives are threatened and lost. Property and farm produce are also lost to the conflict. Tensed atmosphere obtains endlessly across the state.

Following the findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

(i) Federal Government should intervene with proactive and feasible measures that could duly tackle the menace of farmers-herders conflict in Katsina as well as other parts of Nigeria ridden with conflict.

(ii) Displaced persons should be taken good care of by state and federal governments.

(iii) NGOs should get more involved in the violent farmers-herders conflict bedevilling Katsina and its citizenry.

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(iv) Any leaders found to be behind the conflict in any way should be punished accordingly so that others would learn lessons.

(v) Security personnel should be guided by their professional ethics and state and federal laws of internal security operations so as for them to play positive rather than negative role in quelling the conflict.

(vi) Anti-open grazing laws, as in Benue, Ekiti and Taraba, should be encouraged by the federal government and be imbibed by Katsina and other states of the federation.

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