INTERROGATING THE IMPACT OF FARMERS-HERDER CONFLICTS ON THE LIVELIHOODS OF FARMERS IN KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

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KEYWORDS
Effect, Farmers, Herders, Conflicts, Livelihood

ABSTRACT
Farmers-herder conflicts in Kaduna State, Nigeria, have emerged as a pressing and multifaceted issue, inflicting severe consequences on the livelihoods of the farming communities within the State. The objective of the study is to interrogate the impact of farmers-herder conflicts on the livelihood of farmers in Kaduna state of Nigeria. The study was based on Marxist political economy theory. The study adopted a qualitative method and employed phenomenological approach using primary and secondary data to explain Farmers-herder conflicts in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Key Informant Interviews (KII) were used for data collection, KIIs were conducted with ten (10) stakeholders. The collated data were analysed using thematic analysis. The findings of the study reveal a complex interplay of factors contributing to the emergence and persistence of farmers-herder conflicts in Kaduna State. It also shows that the findings of the study underscore the profound economic impact of farmers-herder conflicts on farming communities in Kaduna State as farmers have experienced significant economic losses stemming from crop destruction, livestock theft, and property damage during clashes with herders. The study therefore recommends that Nigeria government should as a matter of urgency ensure that law enforcement measures are implemented with sensitivity to the underlying causes of conflicts, avoiding actions that may exacerbate tensions and mistrust between communities by supporting community-based peace committees composed of representatives from farming and herding communities to promote understanding, collaboration, and localized conflict resolution efforts.

Introduction

Farmers-herder' conflicts, characterized by tensions between sedentary farming communities and nomadic or semi-nomadic herder, have been observed in various parts of the world. These conflicts often revolve around competition for land and natural resources, as well as differing land-use practices and lifestyles. Globally, such conflicts have been documented in regions like the Middle East, where they have taken place between settled agricultural communities and nomadic pastoralists (Blench,

2001). For instance, in Sudan and South Sudan, these conflicts have been a long-standing challenge. The nomadic Arab herder have clashed with sedentary African farming communities, often resulting in violent confrontations over grazing lands and water access (Human Rights Watch, 2019). In the Middle East, the ongoing conflict between Israeli settlers and Palestinian herder exemplifies the complex interplay of land and resource competition. The herder in this region have faced the displacement and destruction of their livelihoods due to land seizures, settler encroachment, and water resource disputes (B'Tselem, 2021).

In many parts of Africa, farmers-herder' conflicts have been particularly pronounced due to the continent's rich diversity of ethnic groups, land tenure systems, and the historical legacy of colonialism. These conflicts have been reported in East Africa, where they are prevalent in countries like Kenya and Tanzania (Loiske & Poutiainen, 2018). The issues revolve around land rights, water access, and competition for grazing areas. The Maasai herder in Kenya have come into conflict with farming communities, such as the Kikuyu. Disputes over land rights, water access, and grazing areas have resulted in violence and displacement. These conflicts have also been exacerbated by political and ethnic tensions (Human Rights Watch, 2019). Tanzania has experienced similar conflicts, with the nomadic Barabaig people clashing with neighboring agricultural communities. The conflicts have led to the displacement of herder and a loss of livelihoods (Msoffe et al., 2019).

Nigeria stands out as a hotspot for farmers-herder conflicts in West Africa. The Fulani herder, primarily from the northern regions, have been at odds with farming communities across the country. The most well-known conflict hotspot in Nigeria is the Middle Belt region, including states like Benue and Plateau. Here, the herder has clashed with indigenous farming communities over land access, grazing rights, and crops. These conflicts often result in loss of lives and displacement (Kalu, 2019). The escalation of farmers-herder conflicts in Nigeria is a significant concern, affecting multiple states across the country. The Nigerian context is particularly complex due to the coexistence of a wide array of ethnic groups, each with its own land-use practices, and competition for land and resources. These conflicts have been documented for decades, with increasing intensity in recent years. Farmers-herder conflicts in Nigeria are deeply rooted in a complex historical, cultural, and economic backdrop. The longstanding competition for land and water resources, which escalated with the expansion of agriculture and grazing areas, has exacerbated tensions between farming communities and nomadic herder (Ogunbameru, 2018).

In recent years, the issue has been compounded by factors such as climate change, population growth, and urbanization. As arable land becomes scarcer due to these factors, competition for resources intensifies, leading to violent confrontations between farmers and herder. Climate change has disrupted traditional grazing patterns, pushing herder further south in search of pasture (Olayemi, 2019). The clashes between farmers and herder result in significant socio-economic consequences. Farmers often lose their crops, livestock, and property due to these conflicts. Displacement and loss of income further aggravate their economic vulnerabilities. These impacts have ripple effects on the wider agricultural sector, food security, and rural development in Kaduna State (Mkandawire & Birner, 2020).

Kaduna State, located in the northern region of Nigeria, has witnessed its fair share of farmers-herder' conflicts. The state's diverse ethnic and religious composition, coupled with competition for land and water, has made it a hotspot for such clashes. The conflicts have resulted in significant displacement, loss of lives, and the destruction of property, especially in rural areas. These conflicts have grave implications for the livelihoods of farming communities in Kaduna State, as they face the loss of crops, livestock, and property, thereby increasing economic vulnerabilities and food insecurity (Olayemi, 2019). A prominent example is the 2018 crisis in Kajuru, which left dozens dead and many more displaced (Punch, 2019). Beyond the immediate economic losses, farmers in Kaduna State suffer from psychological distress and social disruptions as a result of these conflicts. The constant fear of attacks and the loss of loved ones have lasting psychological repercussions (Yakubu, 2021).

The Nigerian government, both at the federal and state levels, has implemented several policies and initiatives aimed at resolving these conflicts. These efforts have taken various forms, including policy initiatives, legislative measures, security operations, and peacebuilding programs Kaduna State has witnessed several

interventions, including the establishment of committees and initiatives for conflict resolution and peacebuilding (Aning & Badmos, 2007). While these efforts are indicative of the government's recognition of the severity of the issue, there have been challenges in implementing and sustaining these policies and initiatives. Farmers-herder' conflicts persist due to a combination of factors, including resource competition, ethnic tensions, and inadequate resources for effective conflict resolution. Understanding the efficacy of these measures is critical to assessing the overall impact on farmers' livelihoods. Thus, it is against this backdrop that this study is poised to assess the Effect of Farmers-Herder Conflicts on the Livelihood of Farmers in Kaduna State, Nigeria

Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative method and employed phenomenological approach using primary and secondary data to explain Farmers-herder conflicts in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The primary data was collected by the use of Key Informant Interviews (KII) guides. Secondary data were obtained through desk review of relevant books, peer-reviewed journal articles, published and unpublished thesis, magazine articles, websites publications and news channels. KIIs were completed with ten (10) participants from various professions. The collated data were analysed using thematic analysis. Due to the nature of the study, more of secondary sources of data than primary sources were employed given the complex factors contributing to the emergence and persistence of farmers-herder conflicts in Kaduna State.

Farmers-Herders Conflict in Perspective

The farmers-herders conflict is a longstanding and complex phenomenon characterized by a prolonged struggle between two distinct groups: agriculturalists (farmers) and pastoralists (herders). At its core, this conflict is driven by intense competition for finite resources, notably land, water, and grazing areas. This competition, stemming from the inherent needs of both groups for sustenance and economic viability, creates a dynamic and often contentious relationship. To delve into the historical roots of this conflict, one must trace its origins to historical land-use patterns and the enduring legacy of colonial rule. The imposition of boundaries and policies by colonial powers significantly disrupted the traditional practices of migration and communal land use that had long characterized the interaction between farmers and herders. This disruption laid the foundation for the tensions and disputes witnessed in contemporary times (Nnoli, 1980).

Historical land-use patterns, shaped by traditional practices and communal arrangements, once facilitated a coexistence between farming and herding communities. However, the imposition of boundaries during the colonial era altered these dynamics, leading to the creation of demarcated areas and restrictions that disrupted the traditional migratory routes of herders and the communal use of land. The consequences of these changes resonate in the contemporary farmers-herders conflict, as communities grapple with the ramifications of historical interventions. The imposition of boundaries and policies during the colonial period not only disrupted the physical landscape but also had profound social and economic implications. Traditional patterns of movement and resource-sharing were replaced by rigid demarcations, setting the stage for increased competition and conflicts over essential resources (Bassett & Turner, 2007). This historical backdrop underscores the intricate interplay of factors contributing to the farmers-herders conflict, shaping the narratives and perceptions of the involved communities.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework utilized in this study is Marxist political economy theory.

Marxist political economy theory was derived from the ideas of Karl Marx (1818:1883). A great German theorist and political activist of that time opined that society is a system in a state of constant change through conflicts. On the other hand, Marxist political economy begins with relations between people and classes and does not attempt to discover harmony but looks at an economy as a conflict-ridden system that will sooner or later be overthrown. Political economy is not about the relationship between commodities, prices, supply and demand: It is first of all about people and the interactions between them about the owners of capital and how they act to the rest It is about what it is created and how. In that respect, therefore, economics is political and social and historical. The Marxists also have an opposite opinion towards these divisions in the academic context as they make an ignorant attitude towards relations existed between things. According to

Marx, men are always in the social production of their will, namely; relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production, the totality of which constitutes the economic structure of society.

According to the Marxist political economy perspectives society is constantly in conflict over resources, and that conflict drives social change. For example, political economy theorists might explain the civil rights movements of the1960s by studying how activists challenged the racially unequal distribution of political power and economic resources. This, give a nod to why, according to conflict theorists in general, social change is viewed more as a process of revolution, as mentioned in the example we have looked at. In this perspective, change comes about through conflict between competing interests, not consensus or adaptation. Marxist political economy perspectives, gives sociologists a framework for explaining social change. All conflicts share common qualities. The first is that there are some sort of communion between the parties that are involved. Secondly, the parties in conflict perceive conflicting views and finally, one of the parties always wants to redress existing contradictions (Ofuoko & Isife, 2009).

Competition has thus become inherent in all social relationship because resources that elicit competitive behavior are scarce. Evidently, competitiveness rather than collaboration is the key to human interactions. Conflict between herder and farmers in Nigeria is exacerbated by some notable factors such as climate change, demographic forces, environmental degradation, ecological pressures, insurgency and many others. These factors pushed the pastoralist in search for land and water in other region to feed their livestock and to ensure their livelihood and economic sustenance. These sudden changes caused by natural or artificial forces which affected their mode of production led to what affects the economic production of other group (farmers) thereby causing serious effect on their source of livelihood and long-term practice of farming which thereby resulted to struggle and conflict. Farmers crops were destroyed thereby leading to poor yield, low productivity and food insecurity. Herder's cows are rustled or killed as a pay back. The struggle for control and ownership of land by farmers and inability of the herder to discontinue their pastoral activities on lands which are sometimes claimed by them as grazing route has breeds form of conflict. This has led to destruction of properties and losses of lives where this form of conflict is predominantly found like in Kaduna State and other parts of the country.

Subsume within the discourse of this study, according to Aristotle in one of his greatest aphorisms, in Obi, et al (2018) he said; "Man by nature is a political animal". This assertion is hunched on two factors: Every satisfactory definition of quality must meet at least two conditions: (i) there is a scarce resource in the society (ii) many people subscribe to this scarce resource. Thus, in the process of allocating or distributing this resource, conflict becomes inevitable in the society because man as a pleasure seeker and pain avoider tend to encroach the fundamental human rights of others which in turn translate to conflict. In other words, resource use is the breed factor of conflict between man and his fellow man. Conflict between farmers and herder, which evolved over time is in accordance with changes in society's means of meeting its material needs, i.e., changes in society's mode of production.

Critics to this theory such as Dahrendorf conclude that society can be characterized correctly in terms of conflict between competing interest groups. In the light of this argument, Dahrendorf point out what he considers the weaknesses of Marx's theories. For him, the basic weakness of Marx's approach is that the way he ties power - economic and social, political to the ownership of the means of production. Dahrendorf is wrong for insisting that most people in society cannot be involved one merely big political-economic-social-industrial confrontation, that is born from single structural relation, property relations. Instead, alterations of social structures produce the social structural potential of interest groups and thus bases of conflict (Dahrendorf, 1959 p. 106). In other words, Marxist political economy perspectives have been criticized for its focus on change and neglect of social stability. Still, there are many critics who truly understand the fact that societies are always in change but argue the change is gradual. For instance, most of the modern so called capitalist nations have never experienced communism revolution and instead, have developed complex welfare systems. While conflict theorists very frequently examine processes hold, they have painted a social change picture and formulated a theory with respect to social stability as well. Also, based on the ideas of Marxist political economy, differentiation in the distribution of power and

remuneration is inherently integrated into all types of social relations. Any structure that is beneficial to any individual or group seeks to keep it that way. For instance, the rich will defend their right as privileged groups in the society and access to better education by resisting policies spearheading change such as affirmative and public schooling. This is applicable to herder who will struggle to resist any measure that will affect their traditional mode of grazing along with their livestock's, likewise farmers to give out their farm land without resistance which is their traditional mode of practice.

Overview of Farmer-Herders Conflict in Nigeria

The Nigeria farmer-herder conflict is a stable and complex crisis that has impact on the nation's peace, security and, socio economic development. This conflict is informed by historical, environmental, economical, political, and socio-cultural factors which make multiple layers of conflict hard to deal with making the conflict to persist and even escalate (Ikezue, & Ezeah, 2017). The disturbances of farmer-herder relationships in Nigeria are traceable back to colonial days when the British policy of indirect rule made certain policy decisions that shaped the allocation of land, the land use rights and often, the territorial borders. This historical background laid down the foundation of fairly complicated and sustainable relationship between farmers and herders in the country. Another area of influence of the colonial masters was the introduction of what they called land tenure systems. Prior to the advent of colonialism, most societies in Nigeria embraced communal land tenure system, which allowed societies' or individuals' occupancy of land on conventional and communal line. However, with the introduction of western mode of land tenure system, such organized customary encounters was under threat (Adigun, 2019). The colonial powers brought in individual title and property boundaries and more often than not did not take into consideration the transhumance patterns of people in the region where they would move around from place to another in search of grazing lands for animals. This can be best seen as the extension of boundaries during the period had drastically changed the mobility of herders. Such phenomenon affected the traditional migration corridors that were vital to graze and water sources for pastoralist by the provision of individual tenure. They exercised little political authority over their own affairs, and were bordered by artificial fronts that put them into conflict as they trespassed on farming communities or ranked with other groups of herders vying for limited pasture. It was also seen that the colonial influence was responsible for setting up of grazing reserves and forest reserves thus advancing the farmer-herder interactions. These reserves were usually created without due consideration of the ecological requirements of the herding communities thus compounding resource constrains and thereby increasing conflict (Ogunbameru, 2018).

Farmer-herder conflict in Nigeria has been receiving interest from scholars, policymakers and researchers who have been concerned with the nature, root causes, impact and future of this conflict. The conflict has brought about the negative effects on peace, security and socio-economy of the country (Ogunbameru, 2018). As is the story of many states in Nigeria, the land and politics of Kaduna State is shaped by lines of history such as colonial structures on land, structures of boundary. Such background historical forces distorted circular mobility and community land use practices and set the stage for present day disputes (Nnoli, 1980). The past continues to resound in the present in the form of current conflicts between farmers and herders owing to past land-use systems (Yakubu, 2021).

Factors Contributing to The Emergence and Persistence of Farmers-Herder Conflicts in Kaduna State

Farmer herder conflicts and their sustenance in Kaduna State, Nigeria has been blamed on the following factors as analysed by recent literature. All these factors have made the conflicts dynamic and long-drawn security threats that affect people's economic activities, security, and social-economic transformation. This paper argues that the antecedent factors and the effects of colonialism and pre-colonial settlement patterns are responsible for farmer-herder conflict in Kaduna State, as discussed by Suleiman (2017) and Isah & Umar (2020). Colonial contracts superimposed land tenure systems and boundaries thus the creation of modern day conflict over migration and communal use of the land. All these aspects of Hima remain a historical legacy in current developments that shape conflicting situation on

land and over resources between farmers and herders.

In addition, Ibrahim (2018) and Yahaya and Ahmed (2021) reveal how unsustainabilities, including those relating to land and water, are responsible for conflicts between farmers and herder in Kaduna State. Since the rate at which this kind of population is growing is way higher than the rate of production of available resources other factors such as urbanization and environmental degradation meaning that the available resources get depleted within a short span of time hence there is added pressure in the competition between the two groups. While moving with their cattle in search of pasture, they come into contact with the settled agricultural people with whom conflict is inevitable. Power relations and domination, which is influential in generating conflicts, makes the context' economic opportunities such as poverty, unemployment, and unequal resource distribution as well explained by Mohammed (2019) & Yahaya & Ahmed (2021). Existing dynamics of market and living conditions also turn out to be contributing factors as mostly both farmers and herders depend much on agriculture and animal production. Ethnic, religious and cultural characteristics discussed by Isah and Umar (2020) and Suleiman (2017) also have an influence on the Farmer-herder conflict in Kaduna State. In this case cultural differences, tribe, and rivalry enmity plus hatred history prolong conflict more often than not. Also, as noted by both Ibrahim, (2018) and Mohammed, (2019), issues of weak governance and failing institutions contributed to the problem, and continue to hamper the search for solutions to the conflicts.

To support this analysis on factors on how farmers-herder conflicts have emerged and sustained in Kaduna state, information from SU interviews has also helped elaborate on the matter. The KII study respondents described their experiences and points of view based on their own experiences through their responses.

> *To be precise one incidence which is sometimes a cause of concern is the intrusion of the herders into our farmlands and over the years, there has been a gradual tendency of expanding grazing areas into the agricultural land and thus the constant incidences of conflict of land use. It is as regards to this encroachment that has raised tension and sometimes led to confrontation between farmers and herders because this hands cannot fold and watch everything we labored for disappear through the naked incursion of the ransacking herders…. (Male, KII Respondent, 2024).*

Interestingly, this respondent's view echoes findings made from community meetings as well as documentary research conducted in this study. Society meetings have time and again complained of herders intruding into farmlands and the resultant unrest in the society. In the same way, the analysis of documents provides evidence of conflict that originated from land use and misuse by farmers and the herders in the region. The respondent's description of the gradual growth of the territorial base, its constant conflict over the use of land seems closer to history and present, described in historiographic records.

In addition, the form of how the respondent described the herders as 'marauding,' correlates with findings made in the participant observation session where the mobility, actions, and interactions of herders and their stock were recorded within the farmers' crops fields. This observation supports the perception used by the farmers with regard to acts of the herders as invasive and a menace to their sources of income. However other data from our semistructured interviews with some of the community leaders give more background to the tensions mentioned by the respondent suggesting that the tensions between farming and herding communities in the area go back to older conflicts.

> *You see, conflicts arising from issues to do with land use such as grazing land, have been common in our region, hence triggers to farmer and herder confrontations. Because of the escalating competition for scarce land space for farming, cases of land disputes over ownership and usage have emerged prominently in Runji village in Zangon Kataf district. When land resources are scarce this creates rivalries and tensions for the control of this valuable resource as were evidenced by just recent skirmishes between farmers and herders… … (Male, KII Respondent, 2024).*

The respondent's position in relation to prior research situates the conclusions in an

academical dialogue on the causes of such conflict in Kaduna State among farmers-herders. Yahaya and Ahmed (2021) and Ibrahim (2018) reveal how scarcity of resources such as land and water fuels farmers and herders clashes in the region. As earlier noted by the respondent there are tendencies to land issues, which trigger tension and fight among the population. In addition, the discus- sion about the problems such as high population growth rate, urbanization, and deterioration of the natural environment, identified by Ibrahim (2018) and Yahaya and Ahmed (2021), also backed the respondent's view on the dwindling stock of resources. This scarcity raises the conflict between farmers and herders as the respondent mentioned when referring to increasing competition for the use of the piece of land.

Furthermore, the effects of poverty and unemployment, and overall inequitable distribution of resources earmarked by Mohammed (2019) and Yahaya and Ahmed (2021) contextualises the respondent's narrative. Such economic factors are that both farmers and herders experience some form of vulnerability, which fuels the competition for resources and possibly conflict.

> *Allow me to be blunt with you, there have been clear religious and ethnic undertone here in southern Kaduna consequently playing into farmers-herders' clashes. In some instances, the conflicts have born religious and ethnic roots and some it has evidenced from micro level occurrences of targeted violence and retaliation on ethnic ground. These tensions even fuel the conflicts and freeze the compromises… (Male, KII Respondent, 2024).*

This paper has elicited the KII respondent's impression of existing literature that offers understanding about the contribution made to the Farmers-Herders conflicts in Kaduna State by Ethnic, religious, and Cultural factors. The respondent's comment on the relevance of religion and ethnicity echo what Isah & Umar (2020) and Suleiman (2017) discovered. These studies describe how ethnic hatreds, politics of identity, and past enmities breeding conflicts in concord with the respondent's accentuation of religious and ethnic hatreds underlying conflicts. In addition, the use of words as 'targeted attacks' and 'reprisals based on identity' complements well the discourse referring to ethnic and religious tensions, which prevent people from living in harmony, as noted Isah and Umar (2020) Suleiman (2017). This suggests that the conflicts as not motivated solely by contest over resources but also by underlying hostility between the different groups and identity issues.

Furthermore, the analysis of weak governance and institutional failures as described by Ibrahim (2018) and Mohammed (2019) can also help to understand the perception of the respondent. Inadequate governance and an especially institutional setting amplify the ethnic and religious hatred and fail to address the causes of the conflict. This implies that conflict solving procedures must look at not only the game resource contentions, but also at the governance and institutional structures that keep fueling intergroup rivalry.

With the above analysis in mind, this study also brings out various categories of factors to show how they have influenced the occurrence and continuance of farmers-herder conflicts in Kaduna State. Disturbances resulting from existing colonial unjust systems of land tenure, delimitation of land and territories, and resulting displacement of traditional land use and social structures have created modern fertile grounds for the conflict. Extensive environmental pressures such as population pressure and degradation propel interests to further competition over available resources such as land and water to the extent of violently competing over resources between farmers and cattle grazers. All such conflicts are compounded by socio-economic differences particularly in matters of economic power and access to resources, which are noticeable determinants of animosity and impacts of violence on the affected communities.

Additionally, ethnic and religious factors remain key to enhancing intergroup hostility and impastoing constant cycles of conflict despite resilience to peacebuilding. High levels political interferences, poor resource management, as well as poor governance structures also reduce effectiveness of conflict resolution processes. This is why; regardless of various endeavours to rectify these concerns, the recurrence of the farmers-herder conflicts necessitates additional effective analyses that focus on the reasons of clashes and guarantee fair sharing of resources and peaceful confabulation.

Economic Impact of Farmers-Herder Conflicts on Farming Communities in Kaduna State

The consequences of farmers-herder conflicts in Kaduna State in particular and Nigeria as a whole on the part of the farming populace are enormous and far-reaching as research literatures have portrayed. Such conflicts affect agriculture production, destabilize food security and poverty levels enhancing the affected community's unfavorable conditions. Scholars like Ahmed, et al. (2020) and Musa and Yusuf (2019) endorse the farm level economic damages through crop, livestock and property losses during conflicts. Most of these are felt within the farming communities because the impacts affect their main source of livelihood that is farming. gone and lost their productivity as most farmers are unable to overcome the living destruction that has been wreaked on their farmland.

In addition, according to Ahmed et al. (2020) and Salisu & Yusuf (2018), farmers and herders are displaced from their land and this affects the agricultural labor demand and supply keeping the workforce inadequate or too expensive. Disputes endangerment to properties and policies, perceived as unpredictable dissuades the farmers from innovations through acquisition of better technologies that would improve on output in the farming sector. Also, as indicated by Musa and Yusuf (2019) and Salisu and Yusuf (2018), funding allocation towards conflict prevention and protective precautions creates additional workload on the already limited resources of farming societies. Money that could otherwise be used for development of agricultural sectors or for participating in earning activities are used for handling the consequences of conflict and rehabilitation.

Therefore, this not only imposes spending losses, but long term ones, as expounded in Ahmed et al. (2020) and Musa & Yusuf (2019). Sustained insecurity and unpredictability dissuade investors and strategic partners who may society and encourage growth of agri businesses and value chains in the region. In addition, increased social capital and trust within communities, strategic as described by Salisu and Yusuf (2018) and Ahmed et al. (2020), hampers economic development for cooperation and coordination efforts to foster development cannot be easily coordinated.

Additional qualitative evidence on the economic effects of farmers-herder conflicts on farming communities in Kaduna state, was provided by the participants' informal discussion. KII study respondents shared their firsthand experience and point of view through their response.

> *Well, the reality is that the effects from the causalities between farmers and herders on the economy of Kaduna state especially for farmers have been disastrous in the last few years. In this area of Kajuru our crops are usually attacked or stamped by stray herds and this is a great loss on both production and income. The wiping out of farmland and controlled water systems also extends our financial challenges that make it challenging to feed our families] … (Male, KII Respondent, 2024).*

The KII respondent's perception about the adverse economic loss as a result of conflict with the herders coincides with Ahmed et al., (2020) and Musa and Yusuf, (2019) findings. These studies focus on the working of the direct calculations of economic impact by estimating the costs of crops, animal losses and damaged properties due to wars.

The respondent's observation on the crops being destroyed or trampled by the wandering herds corresponds with the previous findings made elsewhere by Ahmed et al., (2020) Musa and Yusuf (2019) on agricultural destruction. This is illustrative of the extent of harm that conflicts pose for farmers, as that which are central to their sustenance- crops- are rendered unproductive by the damages done by herds.

In addition, the respondent's assertion of worsening financial difficulties due to destruction of farmland and irrigation systems is also found in the literature. According to population, Ahmed et al. (2020) and Musa and Yusuf (2019), the negative impact is not only in terms of monetary value of the destroyed infrastructure, but also in terms of prospective yields and farmers' income.

> *You see, various people threats and insecurity challenges have derailed our agricultural practices as a people. Threats from the herders make it even impossible or at least unprofitable to invest in crop growing in some areas*

and thus making our yields low. Hence, the costs of the conflicts have now driven many of the farmers in Kaduna State into debts and poverty. Sometimes it seems that there is no recourse for these expenses, no one to go to for reimbursement. In order to foster long-term peace and stability, it is imperative to speak about the economic problems of the farming population… (Female, KII Respondent, 2024).

The respondent of the KII also echoed opinion of Salisu and Yusuf (2018) and Ahmed et al. (2020) on how violence and insecurity disrupted agricultural practices. These studies show how daily threats of attacks by herders threaten production through disrupting labor supply and messing up supply chains through causing labor scarcities, and higher production costs.

The respondent's perception on attacks which makes farmers to quit or reduce cultivation in particular areas due to perceived danger is consistent with the impacts of conflicts on yields as explained by Salisu and Yusuf (2018) and Ahmed et al (2020). This highlights how insecurity affects farmers, making them give less of their farmlands and lacking the capability to embrace state of the art farming technology hence farm output will indeed be poor.

Also, the respondent's description of the economic repercussion of conflicts which has seen most farmers mortgage their future due to debts is well documented. According to Salisu & Yusuf (2018) and Ahmed et al. (2020) factional conflicts swing money to conflict resolution and protection measures thus denying farming populations sufficient capital to use for farming advancement or create income-generating undertakings.

As pointed out above, one major difficulty is the theft, particularly of livestock which forms a basic source of revenue and food for most farming societies. During conflicts, herders take or even slaughter our livestock leaving us lose worthy stock and property. This loss is not only an individual farmer's loss, but it also demoralizes the strength of the community or theöm because we rely on the grace of the herders… (Male, KII Respondent, 2024).

The respondent's concern for reduction of stock loss as an important source of income and food security for households engaging in animal farming is supported by Ahmed et al. (2020) and Musa and Yusuf (2019). These studies concentrate more on the flow of direct resource losses in the conflicts among farmers-herders, effects that do not only retard but also have Unfavourable impacts on economic development in the area. Ahmed et al. (2020) and Musa & Yusuf (2019) discussed various cases of theft and destruction of livestock, the respondent witnessing herders steal or kill them during clashes. This goes to show that farming communities are easily subjected to loses and food deficits since they are dealing with a rapid degeneration of important capital assets and resources.

Also, the respondent's mention of the effect on the capacity of the communities goes along with the discusions made by Salisu and Yusuf (2018) as well as Ahmed et al. (2020) about decreased social capital and trust in communities. Long standing insecurity and instability prevent the emergence and development of agribusinesses as well as value chains through discouraging investors and business partners alike.

Based on the aforementioned analysis, the conclusion of the study applies light on a traumatic economic implication of farmers-herder conflicts in affecting the farming communities in Kaduna State. Farmers have suffered grave economic losses because their crops are being gother and their livestock stolen while herders attack them during their operations. It is their own losses – both big and small – as they not only monetarily but also personally, strip a farmer, which is equally significant for a community, hence offending its sustainability as a locality as most of the assets and resources are being defaulted or damaged.

In addition, land degradation through clearing of farmland and irrigation systems compounds the difficulties and places most farmers in serious financial straits. Food insecurity, famine, and population displacement arising from conflicts negatively affect agriculture by making available labour scarce, producers having to spend more on production, low yields. Funds that could otherwise be invested in agricultural development projects, or in income generating activities for food producing households as well as financial

support to farming families are channeled to conflict mitigation and security enhances.

That is why this study revealed the imperative of multi-faceted approaches towards mitigating the economic loses generated from farmers-herder conflicts in Kaduna State. The strategies developed in relation to food security should thus address the ways to assist vulnerable farming communities, rebuild the livelihoods and encourage sustainable use of agricultural land to prevent adverse long-term economic impacts of enduring peaceless.

Impact of Farmers-Herder Conflicts on Food Security in Kaduna State

Hence, the incidence of farmers-herder conflicts has implications on almost all dimensions of food security in Kaduna State. As has been pointed out by current academic research on the subject, these conflicts interfere with agricultural production, cause low yields, famine – and hence food insecurity amongst the affected groups.

Another social cost of farmers-herder conflicts on food security rightly pointed out by Akinola et al., (2020) is land and crop sabotage. The violence being perpetrated normally and drastically impacts on the crops, livestock, and other farm implements, and thus cause immense loss of property for farmers (Akinola et al., 2020). They however pointed out that this destruction not only decreases the supply of food but also disappears the means of life for agriculturists.

Moreover, Ibrahim et al., (2018) opines that, farming aggression affect crop growing processes such as planting, reaping, and animal rearing. Popovic et al. (2015) argue that concerns surrounding violent attack and insecurity push farmers away from their farmland or grazing fields, and consequently, they end up with untended fields, and a minimal harvest of crops. The disruption of orthodox farming practices by further steroiding the problem of food insecurity in Kaduna State due to the live hazards that accompany the conflict.

But as pointed out earlier, displacement of farming communities through farmers-herder conflicts is also a cause of food insecurity. Farming displaced populations can end up being homeless, and become unemployed; therefore they lose their means of livelihood and feeding (Omotesho et al., 2019). A high population of IDPs experiences extremely Low food and water security, minimal procurement of basic needs which escalates food insecurity in the region.

However, as explained by Adisa et al., (2017), conflicts involving farmers and herders destabilize food supply chains, markets, food availability, and price stabilization. For instance, most roads may be closed due to conflicts in the areas where food products have to be transported from production centers to markets (Adisa et al., 2017). Such disruption of food chains leads to food deficits and further intensifies food insecure status in vulnerable groups. Therefore it is safe to conclude that farmers-herder conflict affects the food security in Kaduna State in a very major way. These are some of the conflict hot issues that require solution in efforts to bring about a peaceful environment in the food security and better livelihood of farmers in the region.

Besides, interviews conducted with the participants provide additional evidence on how farmers-herder conflicts affects food security in Kaduna state. From the answers given by the participants of the KII study, they expressed their own experiences and views to encounters.

> *From my observation in previous years or so concerning farmers-herder conflicts, it has escalated food insecurity in Kaduna State. Due to disturbances in farming activities accompanied by crop damage there is production reduction. In this context, market changes and increase in the prices of food stuff means that families face difficulties in sourcing for foodstuffs.... (Male, KII Respondent, 2024).*

The respondent herein admitted that food insecurity has recently deteriorated in Kaduna State and largely blamed it on farmers-herder conflict, in confirmation with the works of Akinola et al. (2020) who identified destruction of farmlands and crops as among the effects of such conflict. Most of the cases involve the use of force that leads to the burning of facilities; crops and livestock, which are major set backs to farmers.

The respondent's source of worry in relation to farming and food production is in synch with the outcomes of conflict mediated damage to agricultural land and crops as captured by Akinola et al. (2020). Besides, the destruction of

property diminishes the food supply while decimating the source of income for farmers through farming.

Additionally, the respondent's comment on market disruptions, increase in food prices is contained in the discourse made by Akinola et al (2020) on economic consequences of farmers-herders' conflicts on food security. Market shocks and food price increases negatively affect food security since the households have poor access to adequate quantities of food.

> *Yes, indeed, there are many ways in which access to food gets an issue because of conflicts. For instance, when farmers are evicted from their farmland or when there is insecurity personnel within a given market, it becomes hard for people to acquire foods. This usually results to increase in hunger and nutrition unsustainability in the affected communities…… (Male, KII Respondent, 2024).*

With respect to the respondent's observation on how the conflicts impacted negatively on food availability, Adisa et al. realize that farmers-herders conflicts significantly disrupt food distribution network and markets. Road construction could be interfered by instabilities in the society in form of conflict that makes transport of food from production point to market area difficult. These disruptions in the supply chain mean that a lot of food is not reaching the markets and therefore affect food security for those most in need.

In addition, the respondent's awareness of the increased hunger and malnutrition in the affected communities owing to the diminished food access finding confirms with a larger picture of farmers-herders' conflict consequence of food security highlighted by Adisa et al. (2017). Unavailability of food due to changes in market and transport hampers negatively aversion of hunger and malnutrition affecting the vulnerable persons.

> *To be more honest let me say that Food insecurity results from the farmer-herder conflict in the region. They make a direct impact on the agricultural production and food supply chains disrupting them across the country. When markets are either not available or when the transport routes are insecure it becomes difficult for people to access food hence high food insecurity levels… (Male, KII Respondent, 2024).*

The opinion of the respondent regarding the domino effect of farmers-herders on food security in the region corresponds with the view of Adisa et al., (2017) who noted disturbance of food systems and markets as impact of conflicts between farmers and herders. Thus, the observation of the respondent that conflicts do impact directly the production of agricultural; The conflicts also lead to food shortage and high food prices because of interruptions in supply chains as posited by Adisa et al (2017) on farmers-herders conflict..

Similarly, the respondent mentioned the problems of doing without food when markets are out of reach or transport routes become insecure, something similarly noted by Adisa et al. (2017) about the problems of moving food from production areas to markets in war zones. These challenges lead to food deficits, and thus increased food insecurity among food insecure groups of people, thus parallel to the general effects of farmers-herders' conflicts on food security as has been established in the body of knowledge.

Based on the analysis provided in this study, the following conclusions are drawn in relation to the main findings: Information derived from the analysis undertaken in this study shows the extent to which farmers-herder conflicts affects Kaduna State's farming population economically. There is evidenced from available global reports that farmers suffered severe loss in terms of economic returns from farming, food processing, and animal produts resulting from crop depredation, livestock raiding, and destruction of properties and infrastructure during some conflicts. Agent of land degradation: loss of soil productivity through farming has been made worse by the destruction of farmland and irrigation systems, which have in turn deepened financial problems and made farmers dwindle into outright poverty and indebtedness. The insecurity crises, including Boko haram and the civil unrest have cumulatively affected agricultural productivity and sustainability because they cause the following problems: the shortage of labor, high production costs, among others. Thus, the allocation of resources to conflict solution and ensuring measures increasingly overburdens the financial resources of farming populations; it

slows the effective outcome and availability of projects and activities aimed at agriculture and income generation. Such insights this study brings out underscore the importance of effort to address the economic impact of farmers-herder conflicts and come up with measures to foster and support the livelihoods of the people of Kaduna State.

Effectiveness of Strategies Employed to Address Farmers-Herder' Conflicts in Kaduna State

This paper has observed the differences in the success rates of measures taken to address the farmers-herder conflict situation in Kaduna State, thus underlining the complex processes in developing conflict situations. Measures by government, non-governmental organizations, and community members to reduce the levels of tensions and fears between farmers and herders have been put in place as follows. However, a recent review of the literature attempting to demonstrate the effectiveness of these strategies has revealed contrasting trends, some of these strategies may be promising while others are experiencing challenges and restrictions. Of course, one that has been undertaken before is; the creation of institutions for peace building and conflict resolution at the grassroots. Such efforts are targeted at helping warring factions sit down and dialogue, mediate, and reconcile since somebody else takes the role of evaluating complaints and seeking for a solution (Abubakar et al., 2018). Religious leaders and other stakeholders have come together to form the community-based peace committees to mediate and negotiate localized farming and herding conflict and the resultant agreements (Murtala et al., 2019).

Also, attempt has been made to address the issue of natural resources, especially land and water and regenerate farmers and herders struggle. Conservation and land-use planning measures aim to identify and define grazing corridors, establish space around those corridors as well as control access to resources in an effort to avoid over grazing and land degradation (Salihu et al., 2020). Likewise, water resource management projects' goals are to foster easier access to water for crops and livestock, one of the main causes of interfarner and inter-pastoralist conflicts (Adisa et al., 2017).

Additionally, the expansion of livelihood diversification initiatives and economic livelihood activities is listed as a policy approach to enhance non-dependence on agriculture and eliminate source based conflicts. Programs that include skills development, vocational education, and micro-finance boost undertakings hope to change the farmer and herder income diversification thereby decreasing competition for resources, and socio-economic vulnerability (Omotesho et al., 2019).

Nonetheless, there is still much difficulty in handling farmers-herder conflicts in Kaduna State. Lack of human and material resources, lack of funding as well as political interference hampers the effectiveness of peace building initiatives as well as resource management projects (Akinola et al., 2020). However, the inter-communal conflicts remain prevalent due to long-standing socio-cultural self-organizing, historical injustices and ethno-religious differences, which are key factors hindering positive and sustainable farming and herder reconciliation and harmony (Ibrahim et al 2018).

In order to support the verification of the effect of farmers-herder conflict on food security in Kaduna state, the experiences of the participants of this study are as follows: From the answer given by the respondents for KII study, the first-hand experience and observation of the participants were presented.

> *All I can say is that, several tries have been made to solve farmers-herder in Kaduna State such as the formation of peace and dialogue committees. These are to bring together the conflicting parties in an effort to talk and solve the problems in between them but most of the time, due to bitterness and refusal to surrender, the conflict has continued to act itself out… (Male, KII Respondent, 2024).*

Contrary to the findings made by Abubakar et al. (2018) about various limitations of peace committees and dialogue platforms in handling farmers-herders conflicts because of deep and bitter resentment between the conflicting sides, the respondent saw these modalities as more appropriate ways of solving the conflicts although not very effective. However, the development of such measures has not stopped the conflicts as pointed out by the respondent by their constant occurrence and the multifaceted nature of the issues.

Furthermore, it is pertinent to mention here the respondent's comment about the community level peace committee and function of developing cohesion and understanding of the process, which also finds echoes in the views expressed by Murtala et al. (2019) about the significance of peace agreements on the domestic level and therefore conflict soluton process. However, the respondent's view means that those efforts are not fully efficient to solve the conflicts' causes or to promote sustainable peace.

Actually, some policing actions, including deployment security operatives to areas that experience farmer/herder conflicts to check the spate of violence is in motion in Kaduna. While these provisions may offer a temporary solution to eliminate the conflicts, it can be largely noted that such attempts do not remedy the sources of the conflicts and at times actually escalate the degree of hostility between the communities and the security forces… (Male, KII Respondent, 2024).

With reference to the observation make by the respondent about deployment of security forces to the conflict zones, the studies by Adisa et al (2017) have also claimed that employing the law enforcement measures as strategy of preventing violence and maintaining law and order in the areas affected by farmers-herders' conflicts. However, the respondent's view implies that such efforts give short-term remedies which do not deal with roots of conflicts.

This has been in line with other scholarly works that have correctly pointed out that Police operations to control the farmers-herders' conflicts cannot effectively deal with the fundamental causes. Likewise, Abubakar et al, (2018) has argued that there should be more research about the economic, social and-political factors that cause these conflicts, not merely security solutions. The above statement made by the respondent highlights the failure by the implementers of the conflicts solution strategies to go an extra mile and look at the root cause of the conflicts about issues of encroachment and trespass between some communities and security personnel.

> *In some regions, the prior projects that would try to address the issues of conflict and ethnic reconciliation have been developed. The strategies include the mobilization of stakeholder groups such as local associations, religious bodies and institutions, and cultural and traditional institutions in the promotion of farmer/ herder relations. Such efforts are promising in a particular context but face problems in scaling up and making them sustainable in the future… (Male, KII Respondent, 2024).*

The respondent's attitudes towards community-based interventions correspond to the scholarly discourse on the role of grassroots organisations in reconciliation and interethnic conflict transformation in the identified conflict-affected communities. Other authors also underlined the importance of integrating community and local actors in building peace, as it is warmly supported by grassroots organizations, religious and traditional leaders to reduce conflict between farmers and herders as it has been discussed by Akinola et al. (2020).

But the remark of the respondent is also demanding the issues around the scalability and sustaining community-based interventions a concern highlighted by the research. Akinola et al. (2020) and Ibrahim et al. (2018) review some of these limitations considering that poor institutional capacity, inadequate fund and political interference may counteract the influence of cooperation aimed at peace building and resource management.

> *There is the need to emphasize on the core issues in socio-economic injustices that trigger bearing of arms in Kaduna State. Strategies aimed at enhancing the land and resource base, promoting the diversification of the livelihoods, educating communities and ensuring resource share are effective in solving origin of conflict and preventing emerging violence. Hence this interview with a Kenyan postgraduate female student (Female, KII Respondent, 2024).*

Appeals to socio-economic justice to reduce conflict hotbeds in Kaduna State draw on the respondent's comment and with prior academic literature to call for improved livelihood diversification opportunities, education, and distributional fairness. Similar observations have been made by Salihu et al., 2020; Adisa et al., 2017, and others who mentioned the key socio-economic factors contributing to farmers-

herders' conflicts and called for measures going to the root of the problem.

Furthermore, the experience of the respondent expands the existing approaches towards better natural resource management especially on land and water. According to Salihu et al. (2020), some of the land use management measures include outlining of grazing land and provision of restricted resources access buffer zones. Likewise, Adisa et al. (2017) note water resources management initiatives for improving water availability for farming and to the rearing of livestock as having the potential of resolving one of the major sources of conflict between farmers and herders.

> *There is a need to have better or wide spread and liberal forums in which women, Young people and other disabled groups are encouraged to participate in decision making processes. They remain voiceless and unnoticed despite the fact that they provide essential voices, ideas, and needed solutions for depression… (Female, KII Respondent, 2024).*

The respondent's perception echoes the views that encourage for the creation of more artisan and representative forums that include the women and youth that victims and marginalized groups where am, in the decision-making process –The scholarly discourse on the effect of community involvement to conflict resolution initiatives. Murtala et al. (2019) have enumerated similar points and they stressed the importance of other drivers for collaboration and adaptation, including peace committees of the communities which are involved both in farming and cattle herding.

Furthermore, the respondent's perception completes other attempts made towards cultivating dialogue-based conflict resolution platforms, which would embrace members of Kaduna State. Through the awareness that everyone counts in decision making the respondent underscores the principle of participation in the peace building process as a positive value.

Based on the analysis done above the following study findings indicate that; various strategies have been used in trying to solve farmers herders conflict in Kaduna State. There are common truce making committees and dialogue intermediaries for the purpose of resolving conflicts from the conflicting factions. However, their effectiveness has been hampered by unresolved structured tension and systematic distrust of the parties. Also, punitive actions that include mobilization of security personnel have been used in a bid to tame the raging violence. However, these measures are usually ineffective in preventing emergence of new conflicts besides it tends to exacerbate existing conflicts in some cases.

Additionally, some community based efforts towards post conflict reconciliation and conflict resolution mechanism have been begun in some regions. Although several of these initiatives have had some effectiveness, issues related to the scalability and sustainability of the approaches have been seen as major barriers. Besides more efforts being needed to prevent and contain consequences of conflicts, more attention should be paid to factors associated with socioeconomic issues which trigger the conflict in the first place. These range from those that provide for means of income generation, access to education opportunities and fair share to resources. In this regard, the following fundamental issues have been addressed: it is therefore widely believed that sustainable peace as well as stability in Kaduna State can only be attained.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study contributes to the understanding of the multiple face of F-H conflicts in Kaduna State, the multiple-layered interaction of past, land use change, poverty, and culture. This study establishes the colonial impact as the fundamental basis for current concerns regarding land use and human interactions on that land. Main driving factors are population increase, environmental challenges, natural resource struggles which increase conflict between farmers and herders.

Besides, social factors of strife, in form of demands for equality and equity in the distribution of resources such as employment opportunities – have aggravated people's animosity and contributed to the escalation of conflicts. Ethnic and religious factors have also however come into play contributing to inter-ethnic tensions, and slowing down the processes of post war reconciliation and recovery. Political instability, poor policy implementation, corruption, poor resource mobilization and misallocation also contributed to poor resolution of conflicts' source. The consequences borne by

farming communities mostly affected by the farmers-herder conflicts have not only been in form of poverty, indebtedness and insecurity without food. Livestock raiding, crop destruction and physical damage to farming inputs have impaired production through destruction and loss of stocks, including food crops leading to increased food insecurity among the affected communities. However, current approaches to tackle conflicts have been partially successful based on the use of symbols called Peace Committees and through force as represented by police forces, laws etc, whereas the major root causes are rooted on imperialism, vendorism, three worlds theory, fundamentalism, civil strife, corruption and general lack of representation of minorities. Hence, there are require significant efforts and approaches in conflict solution that respond to socioeconomic, politic, and cultural circumstances.

Base on the findings, the study recommended the following;

- The Kaduna state government should encourage the establishment of grass root level peace committees with members drawn from farming and herding -value chain sectors in order to foster understanding, cooperation and local level conflict solving mechanisms
- Nigeria government should as a matter of urgency ensure that law enforcement measures are hardly accompanied with adherence to root causes feelings that fuels conflict and even enhance antagonistic perceptions.
- Kaduna state government should ensure that measures could be taken in the following areas as emergency preparedness and response to conflicts influences food security in different ways: These are food support structures and network, market access projects and programmes and stabilization of food prices during conflicts.
- Compensate farmers who have been driven away from their land by conflict and help restore farmland and irrigation systems where they can; ensure that farmers have the means to rebuild and develop, with recovered land where possible.
- Subnational government and federal should enhance institutional capability in resource management, land use planning, water resources and conflict sensitive resource utilization.

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