

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF CATTLE RUSTLING AND BANDITRY IN ZAMFARA STATE, NORTH-WESTERN NIGERIA.

Usman Rabi'u

Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Abuja.

Phone: +2347066414112/+2348067888778

Email: urdaura@gmail.com

&

Hapsat Hamidu Muhammad

Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Abuja.

Phone: +2348060844647

Email: hapsatuhamidu@yahoo.co.uk

ABSTRACT

Cattle rustling and Banditry has become major threat to security and social life in Nigeria especially the northwest region, with far reaching political, economic, and social consequences. All efforts to end this security menace had remained fruitless as cattle rustling and banditry continue to thrive with impunity in the country. The main objective of the study is to assess the causes and effects of cattle rustling and banditry in North-western Nigeria with particular reference to Zamfara State. primary and secondary data was used to generate relevant information. The study found out that some of the causes of the menace of cattle rustling and banditry is as a result of ungoverned space which serves as hideouts for the criminals, weak security system, porosity of the borders, and armsproliferations. Also, the effects of cattle rustling and banditry identified are; killing and destruction of property, displacement of people and destruction of livelihoods. The study therefore recommended that Government should provide adequate security to improve the socio-economic condition of the people in Zamfara State. Government should provide basic amenities and economic support to those affected by the criminality in the State.

Keywords: Cattle rustling, Banditry, Zamfara state, north-west.

Introduction

Over the years, North West region had witnessed a serious insecurity challenge of cattle rustling and banditry which transformed to kidnapping, abduction, wanton killings and ethnic bigotry, that completely distorted the social order and fabric of the various communities in the region.

However, a problem, which initially appeared as localized disputes between herders and farmers over access to land, has morphed into an intractable crisis posing a major threat to national and regional security. The level of rural banditry escalated between 2014 and 2019 attracting a lot of attention (suleiman, 2019).

North-west region comprised of seven states, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, kebbi, Jigawa, Sokoto, and Zamfara are the core areas of insecurity and a threat to national security and development. As of 2011 to date about 21 million people living in those states have been exposed to insecurity as a result of banditry activities which led to destruction of lives and properties, women and children were vulnerable and a lot of internally displacement people (Acaps, 2020). According to Akowe and Kayode (2014) reported that several villages in areas lying between the four northern states of Kaduna, Katsina, Zamfara and Niger have been under siege from cattle rustlers who freely unleash terror on helpless herders, and farmers.

In Zamfara and parts of neighboring states in the Northwest, rampaging gangs of armed bandits have engaged in violent acts, attacking, abducting, killing, and robbing villagers and travelers, and engaging in cattle rustling (Suleiman, 2019). With 3,425 fatalities reported in 1,191 occurrences, crime had surpassed political and religious disputes as Nigeria's leading cause of deadly violence in 2018. According to the United Nations, about 1400 lives were lost to banditry and kidnappings in the first quarter of 2019. About 685 kidnappings occurred in the same period costing families hundreds of millions of Naira. Furthermore, According to a report from the West Africa Network of Peace building (WANEP), from January to December 2019, armed bandits were responsible for more than 1,000 civilian deaths in the Northwest. Zamfara state have been under siege from cattle rustlers and banded who freely unleash terror on helpless communities in Zurmi, Maru, Birnin Magaji and Kauran Namoda LGAs of Zamfara state. In Mada District, Gusau Local Government for example, the District Head stated that they witnessed over 12 different attacks by the bandits which claimed the lives of over 20 people and 1,500 heads of cattle were stolen at different times from 2014 to 2016. This did not include other assaults like rape, kidnapping and injuries inflicted on the people by the bandits. The village of Badarawa in Shinkafi Local Government Area, is another area hit by the bandits, the village head has compiled a list of 318 widows, orphans and destitute who lost loved ones in the various attacks carried out by the bandits in 2015 alone. The levels of attacks in these areas are less compared to Anka, Maru and Chafe that witnessed frequent attacks and recorded high casualties. In these areas, so many villages were raided and people killed indiscriminately; women were raped and livestock stolen by the bandits (Saleh, 2015).

However, virtually all the states in northern region are affected by cattle rustling and banditry. In Plateau state cattle rustling activities are prevalent in (Mangu, Bokkos,

BarkinLadi, Shendam, Jos south, Riyom, Langtang North, and Langtang south) (Abimaje, 2014; Yusufu, 2014). In Benue State, cattle rustling were prevalent in Guma, Makurdi and Agatu LGAs. In Nasarawa State, Awe, Keana, Doma and Obi LGAs. While in FCT, Bwari, Kuje and Gwagwalada Area Councils.

Akowe and Kayode (2014) reported that several villages in areas lying between the four northern states of Kaduna, Katsina, Zamfara and Niger have been under siege from cattle rustlers who freely unleash terror on helpless herders, cows and farmers. Banditry resulted in 930 deaths out of 3,425 deaths brought on by criminal occurrences throughout 15 states, with Zamfara (714) and Kaduna (100) states accounting for more than half of the total (Okewu et al., 2019; Enor, Magor&Ekpo, 2019). However, 582 fatalities were recorded in bandit attacks on 10 LGAs in Zamfara following the arrival of soldiers in June, 2018 (Okewu et al., 2019).

In an effort to end the manace of cattle rustling and banditry in Zamfara and neighbouring states in the north west region, A committee was set up to investigate the menace of armed banditry, headed by Mohammed Abubakar, a former inspector general of police, reported that in Zamfara state between June 2011 and May 2019, 4,983 women were widowed, 25,050 children were orphaned and more than 190,000 people were displaced as a result of armed banditry. The Nigerian security forces initially responded to this issue by increasing the deployment of the military and police to the troubled zones. These deployments were under several code names such as "Operation Puff Adder," "Diran Mikiya," "Sharan Daji," "Hadarin Daji," "Thunder Strike," and "Exercise Harbin Kunama III." But these operations have produced mixed results. While the security forces have successfully pushed back bandit attacks, destroyed several hideouts and killed or arrested hundreds of bandits, On November 29, 2018, not less than 104 bandits and 16 policemen were killed and 50 hideouts belonging to the bandits

destroyed during a raid (Okewu et al., 2019). Despite these successes by the security forces, attacks have continued. Against this backdrop, the governors of Katsina, Sokoto, and Zamfara, agreed on a peace deal with the armed bandits in 2019. According to Governor Aminu Bello Masari of Katsina, negotiation was the best way to achieve lasting peace in the North West. The agreement involved disarmament, the release of kidnapped victims, and an amnesty for the bandits. But the agreements did not last. While there was a lull in attacks toward the end of 2019, the attacks have picked up again in 2020. One state governor recently admitted that the bandits had reneged on the terms of their agreement.

The main aimed of this study is the assessment of the causes and effect of cattle rustling and banditry in Zamfara state, northwest nigeria

Review of Empirical Study

Farmers-herdsmen conflict, cattle rustling, and banditry: the dialectics of insecurity in Anka and Maradun Local Government Area in Zamfara State were the subjects of a research by Bello and Abdullahi in 2021. It looked at the conflicts between farmers and ranchers and how they affected banditry and livestock rustling. In this exploratory study, primary data were gathered from the respondents using focus group discussions (FGD) and key informant interviews (KII). The material acquired was verbatim (word-for-word account of a spoken interview) transcribed, recorded, and then put into written form. The internet and relevant publications were used to acquire secondary data. In this study, the theories of frustration-aggression and the scarcity of natural resources were applied. According to the study, hostility between farmers and herders serves as a trigger for banditry and livestock theft. On the other side, the farmers-herders dispute in Zamfara State's local government area was exacerbated by banditry and cattle rustling. The authors suggested creating grazing areas with appropriate social

amenities as well as rules to help herders make the transition from conventional to contemporary animal husbandry.

In a similar research by Al-Chukwuma, Francis, and others titled "Banditry and Crisis of Public Safety in Nigeria: Issues in National Security Strategic" (2014). The banditry phenomenon is examined in connection to the current public safety situation in Nigeria. Based on exegesis of significant secondary sources, the research claims that banditry poses a serious threat to Nigeria's public safety and, consequently, national security. In order to tackle the rising incidence of banditry in Nigeria, among other things, the study advocates a Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) approach for police.

The socio-economic effects of cattle rustling in Gusau Local Government Zamfara State, Nigeria is the title of a research by Abdullahi (2017) that focuses on the current increase in livestock rustling in Gusau Local Government Zamfara State, Nigeria. Using deadly weapons, a group of rural criminals known as cattle rustlers break into isolated settlements and steal their animals. In-depth interviews with some of the stakeholders in the affected regions, including police officers, victims, and community leaders, were conducted in addition to a survey that was used to gather data. The percentages of each response were displayed in tables that analyzed the data. The findings suggest that a number of factors, including the widespread use of firearms by Fulani herders, the unethical actions of rural vigilante groups, the influence of violent culture, and a lack of sufficient or complete security personnel presence in the affected districts, are responsible for the rise in cattle rustling. According to the research, the government should immediately start completely disarming all parties participating in the retaliation attacks, and it should also give the affected communities and other vulnerable populations' proper security.

Shehu, Victor, and Binta (2017) analyse Katsina State's livestock rustling and

banditry as a threat in north-western Nigeria. According to the report, public safety and security in north-western Nigeria have been seriously threatened by cattle rustling and banditry. People have been killed, hurt, populations have been displaced, and the number of livestock has decreased as a result. The implications of this situation are not favourable for the general welfare of the herding groups. The study's conclusions showed that the lack of willingness to share grazing land, widespread drought, and famine in the region; lack of awareness of the 1978 Land Use Act; claim to ownership of land with limited resources; grazing fields as a source of conflict between herders and farmers; and decline in social cohesion and internal discipline among Fulani and farmers. The report advised that grazing spaces and defined stock routes should be built by the federal and state governments, and that the settlement and dialogue obtained should be maintained.

Agri and Eneji, (2020), did research on socioeconomic development, insecurity, and violence in Nigeria. They made the case that war and insecurity are significant issues in Nigeria and West Africa that demand immediate study attention. The study looks into and reveals the socioeconomic effects and underlying reasons of insecurity in Nigeria. It collects data from important informants using the survey research approach. Focus group discussions, interviews, and structured questionnaires were used. The liker scale, straightforward percentages, statistical tables, and charts were used to classify, categorize, and evaluate the questions. Unprecedented levels of insecurity in Nigeria are a result of terrorism, abduction, ritual killings, cultism, corruption, injustice, poverty, inflation, and a weak government. The effects of violence and instability on Nigeria's economy have been severe. Insecurity breeds insecurity, which in turn breeds crime. This study suggests inclusive growth and participatory development for the pro-poor. There should be policies and initiatives in place to integrate

underprivileged populations and rural regions into the mainstream of development.

Cattle rustling and insecurity in rural communities of Kaduna State, Nigeria: An Empirical Study" was the title of the study conducted by Abubakar, Rohana, and Talib (2018). It looked into the nature of cattle rustling and how it affects security in Kaduna State's rural villages. The study was empirical, and extensive interviews were used to collect qualitative data. The data show that cattle rustling have caused instability in rural communities by causing fatalities, psychologically induced migration, and organized crime. The research claims that the study area's continued insecurity may be significantly reduced by the government being responsive and including the local population in security efforts.

Cows, Bandits, and Violent Conflicts: Understanding Cattle Rustling in Northern Nigeria, by Olaniyan, Yahaya (2016). The investigation of Nigerian cattle rustling's causes, effects, and state reactions are the focus of this essay. According to the report, Nigerian security personnel are undertrained and unmotivated, whereas criminals are well-armed and driven. Second, security personnel and rustlers usually work together. This is clear given the overt nature of the rustling and the security personnel's hesitation to take action despite being given information by locals. According to the newspaper, the government should send security agents to the woodlands where the marauders hide out. The woodlands must be controlled, and unauthorized users must be chased out and permanently forbidden from claiming ownership of the areas.

In their study on Nigeria: Rural Banditry and Community Resilience in the Nimbo Community, Uche and Iwuamadi (2018) stated that a lack of efficient security tending mechanisms and a rural governance deficiency led to a worsening of the situation. The most significant discovery was that the factionalization of a local vigilante in Nimbo led to criminal actions that increased the stressed environment in addition to the

typical conflict causes. The conventional qualitative research methodology was used. The report supports a multi-stakeholder agreement to build mutually beneficial conditions of participation for pastoralists and sedentary farmers as well as the priority of rural security in terms of gathering information, reacting to early conflict warning signals, and combat operations.

Armed Banditry and Human Security in North Western Nigeria: The Impacts and the Way Forward is the title of another study completed by Abdurashed in 2020. He makes an effort to infer the connection between banditry and human security in North Western Nigeria given the nation's existing socioeconomic and political challenges. The study employs the collapse state, failed state, and fragile theories as a paradigm for its investigation. The paper's technique involved using qualitative content analysis. A critical evaluation of banditry demonstrated that despite many years of government in Nigeria, the aspirations of the populace were still unmet. Therefore, the country's insecurity—which led to robberies, kidnappings, oil pipeline bunkering, and the emergence of militancy throughout the nation—was caused by our leaders' inability to provide effective democratic governance. Therefore, the study argues that internal security cannot be ensured unless competent democratic administration is established, together with well-funded security services and a contemporary gazette system.

Herdsmen/Farmers Conflict and Its Effects on Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria was the subject of a research by Okoro (2018). The report contends that increased competition for limited resources has repeatedly led to violent clashes between herders and farmers in different regions of Nigeria. The incidence of herdsmen-farmers conflict and its impact on socioeconomic advancement in Nigeria are examined in this study. It is based on the theories of dialectical materialism and frustrated aggression theory. With an emphasis on secondary sources including journals, books, newspapers, and

internet media, the study applies a qualitative data analysis methodology. The results show that, among other things, the conflicts brought in fatalities, evictions, mistrust, and property destruction. The study's final recommendation was that state governments set aside grazing pastures for the nomadic herders and require them to pay taxes to the state since the conflict between herdsmen and farmers led to food insecurity, mistrust, and unemployment.

In their study, "Impact of Banditry on Nigeria's Security in the Fourth Republic: An Evaluation of Nigeria's Northwest," Olapeju, & Adeniyi (2020) looked at how banditry has affected Nigeria's security with a particular focus on the north-west. The Queer Ladder Theory (QLT) and Frustration-Aggression Theory served as the explanatory framework for the article, which took a descriptive approach and relied on secondary data. According to the report, among other variables that are escalating banditry in Nigeria's Northwest area include the existence of sparsely controlled spaces, high unemployment with accompanying poverty, a poor security system, the permeability of Nigeria's borders, and armament proliferations. The report suggested, among other things, that government strategies and tactics be more aggressive in battling banditry and that real job possibilities be made available to young people in order to deal with the pervasive poverty in the area.

The Socio-Economic Repercussions of Cattle Rustling in Gusau Local Government Zamfara State, Nigeria" was the title of a research by Kabir and Mohammed (2021). According to the report, the crime, which is one of the many types of rural banditry, entails a group of cattle rustlers invading rural villages with deadly weapons and taking their animals. The Queer Ladder Theory and Dahrendorf's theoretical model of conflict were utilized in the study to analyze the functional importance of organized crime as a tool for socioeconomic empowerment and social ascent and to show how authority relationships affect conflict. In addition to ten

(10) key informant interviews with stakeholders such as police officers, neighborhood vigilantes, NGOs, civil defence corps, and community leaders, a total of 110 people were surveyed with a sample of 100 responses. The findings suggest that factors including the widespread use of firearms by Fulani herders, the actions of rural vigilante groups, the influence of violent culture, and a lack of sufficient or nonexistent security officers in the affected regions may be to blame for the rise in cow rustling. The study suggests that the government should begin a total disarming of all parties concerned, give appropriate protection right away to the afflicted neighborhoods and other weak points at risk of assault, and generally raise the standard of living of the populace.

Insurgency, armed banditry, and corruption in Nigeria: The curse of socio-economic underdevelopment, Saheed (2020). It was noted that the country faces a significant internal socioeconomic and security threat. The danger has effects on social, economic, political, and environmental fronts on a larger scale. The frustrated aggression hypothesis explains the genesis and growth of insurgency, armed banditry, abduction, and corruption. The study's research and analysis methods were historical. Secondary sources, including a review of relevant scholarly journals and write-ups, were used to document the data for the study. Because it is based on the results of earlier studies on the escalating security concerns in Nigeria, the study is also descriptive in character. The research urges the government to establish a viable social security system that deters public servants from engaging in corruption as well as strong information sharing protocols that give individuals lucrative job possibilities.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Cattle rustling

According to the extant literature, the fundamental view of modern cattle rustling is

that it is a type of livelihood crime driven by "commercial" and "subsistence" imperatives (Gueye, 2013). In this sense, cattle rustlers are primarily driven by the sinister desire to seize grazing animals for the purpose of selling or eating them (Gueye, 2013). Therefore, the pursuit of primitive capital accumulation and untaxed riches has also been a major driving force behind cattle rustling (Alemika, 2013). In this regard, cattle rustling is considered to be an example of organised crime (Okoli and Okpaleke, 2014; Okoli and Agada, 2014). A criminal operation that uses discernible hierarchical social networking and syndication is considered to be organised crime (Alemika, 2013).

Banditry

Banditry refers to the occurrence or predominance of violent crime or armed robbery. It entails using force or making threats to use force in order to frighten someone with the intention to loot, rape, or murder them. A crime against people is banditry. It has been a frequent kind of crime and a source of violence in modern countries (Nigeria Watch, 2011). Nigeria appears to have a high and growing banditry prevalence that has persisted through time. Therefore, using force to steal animals is what is referred to as "cattle rustling" and "armed banditry" in this context.

NORTH-WEST

The north-west region comprises of seven states Kano, Jigawa, Kaduna, Zamfara, Kebbi, Sokoto, and Katsina. The rate of growth, size, and development between the seven states has not been equal for various historical and geographical reasons but almost had the same weather and tropical conditions. The Zone is endowed with a sizeable landmass of 216,065 sq. km and a high population density estimated at 35,786,944 (National Population Commission, 2006 Census) Population forecasts are used to determine the projected

birth rate, mortality rate, and migration of the population based on the state's fourteen (14) local government areas' 3,259,846 population as of the 2006 census (Kumar: 2018). 4,515,427 according to the 2016 population prediction, and 5,298,931 according to the fundamental calculation $N_t = P e (r * t)$ in 2021. The number "Nt" denotes the population in the future.

The zone is currently estimated to constitute 25.75 percent of the total population of the Nigeria (www.infoguidenigeria.com as cited in SCA, 2016). The inclusive states share numerous social, political and economic characteristics, which include the wide and dominant usage of the Hausa Language, religious affinities, multiple intra and inter-ethnic group configurations and common general political orientation as often manifested in the individual states.(SCA: 2016)

The region is one of the volatile with the different forms of conflict, some of the conflicts are virtually in all the north-western states while some are happens in one or two states depending on the nature of the conflict (Zaharaddeen,: 2020). Herders/farmers conflict, kidnapping, arm-robbery, cattle rustling, adoption, banditry, land dispute are, virtually all over the north-western states of Nigeria.

Penetration of small arms and light weapons from the neighboring states, big forest connect with the states in the region give an avenue for bandits, mostly operating in gangs engaged in serial killings, kidnappings, robberies, rape, cattle rustling and other forms of terrorism in states like Zamfara, Kano, Kaduna and Katsina – with devastating consequences for the rural population (SCA,: 2016). Another factor influencing and fueling insecurity in the north-western region is the easy access to, and the use of, hard drugs by young people and, specifically, young women. Such drugs are often smuggled and openly and cheaply sold in the markets. Respondents across the states complained about the effects of drug addiction among

young people with devastating personal and public consequences. The poverty index of the Zone is 71.4 percent (NBS Website, 2016).

Poverty and unemployment rate in the seven states ranges from 20 percent to 35 percent – with a zonal average of 30.0 percent (Ajakaiye, 2015). Virtually that means almost all over the region population are poor in terms of their basic need.

ZAMFARA STATE

The Zamfara Kingdom was founded in the eleventh century and thrived as a city-state until the sixteenth century. The kingdom's fortunes have caused its capital to move around from place to place, including Dutsi and Birnin Zamfara. The Gobir Kingdom demolished its previous capital, Birnin Zamfara, in the first part of the 18th century, and by the second half of the 19th century, Anka had become the new capital. Like the Yandoto metropolis, Zamfara had several commercial and academic hubs that drew in a lot of academics. After Usman DanFodio's jihad in 1804, it was included into the Sokoto Caliphate. In reality, Usman Dan-Fodiyo chose SabonGari as his base to fight Gobirand Kabi, where Sarkin Zamfara Abarshi had already erected a garrison headquarters during the early stages of his Jihad (Zamfara Ecological Transform, 2004).

Zamfara Anka, Bakura Bungudu, Bukkuyum, Gusau, Kauran Namoda, Talata-Mafara, Maradun, Tsafe, Zurmi, Gummi, and Maru were the 12 Local Government Areas (LGAs) that made up the state when it was first created out of Sokoto State. With the establishment of Shinkafi and Birnin Magaji LGAs, there are currently 14 LGAs. The state is divided into LGAs, with Gusau serving as both the state capital and the LGA's administrative centre.

Cause of Cattle Rustling and Banditry in Zamfara State.

The current situation of militarised cattle rustling marks a change from the formerly

conventional practise of livestock raiding, according to Azeez and Aliyu's paper (2016: 93–105). (Osamba, 2000) Cattle raiding have been a Fulani cultural activity for many years as a way to demonstrate strength and replenish dwindling herds. In most cases, it is non-militarized. However, the recent rustling is very militaristic and dangerous. This shift can be attributed to a variety of circumstances. First, given that the earnings are never subject to governmental taxation, modern cattle rustling operations function as a type of organised crime driven by wealth growth (Alemika, 2013, Okoli and Okpaleke, 2014).

The existence of what Kwaja (2014) described as the "underground economy," which is connected to the political economy of some agricultural communities, is a significant driving force behind organised criminality. Secrecy and the amassing of untaxed riches are the cornerstones of an underground economy. In this instance, the shadow economy essentially serves as a market for stolen cattle and generates a sizable amount of revenue. Cattle rustling have also been connected to some of the financing sources for terrorist organisations in Northern Nigeria. Cattle rustling and the Boko Haram insurgency have been directly linked, as Borno State Governor Shetima asserted, according to intelligence sources. According to him, "Our security agencies have reasonably established that most of the cattle being traded at the markets in Borno state were the direct proceeds of cattle-rustling perpetrated by insurgents and were sold at prohibitive costs to unwary customers." This is done through some shady middlemen who use shady schemes to purposefully disguise the transactions as legal. The proceeds from such transaction(s) would subsequently be used to finance their violent behaviour (Ogbeche, 2016).

The governor enacted a restriction on the sale of dried meat in the state as a result of the identification of this connection. Additionally, he limited the sale and importation of cattle to members of the

Nigerian Butchers and Cattle Breeders Association's Borno State chapter (Ogbeche, 2016). Markakis (1993) asserted in his study of the Horn of Africa that a cattle rustling is largely caused by a "shrinking resource base" that has sparked a fierce conflict for survival, which in turn poses major dangers to the survival of some communities. It is fought with the help of cutting-edge weapons, just like a modern conflict. Our research reveals that cattle herders are involved in the livestock rustling trade. The spread of light weapons and small arms across the nation is a result of this evolution. The potential to organise armed gangs to commit cattle rustling is one of the security concerns that have been triggered by the ownership of these weapons by non-state actors. The Nigerian state's incapacity to handle the situation - evidence of growing state weakness - makes the issue worse (Kwaja, 2014). Large tracts of forest reserves that are often out of the reach of Nigerian security personnel serve as another catalyst for the rustling trade (Olaniyan, 2018). The majority of cattle rustling occur in state-owned reserves including Northern Nigeria's Kamuku, Kiyabana, and Fagore forests. The woodlands provide ideal hiding places for criminals from security personnel (Olayoku, 2014).

The lack of effectiveness, cooperation, and corruption appears to be the main reasons why Nigerian security personnel are reluctant to approach these forested regions. First, the security forces in Nigeria are incredibly ineffective as a result of their inadequate equipment and low desire. In contrast to the criminals, who are fully armed and motivated, Nigerian security personnel are underequipped and unmotivated. Second, rustlers and security personnel frequently work together. Given the open nature of the rustling and the security personnel's hesitation to intervene, even when given information by locals, this appears evident.

Corruption is a third problem. People steal hundreds of cattle, move them around for days without being caught, which indicate a

problem with our security system, according to Y. Z. Ya'u, Executive Director of the Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD), a non-governmental organisation funded by the MacArthur Foundation and working to develop practical technological solutions against cattle rustling in Nigeria. Second, if they can bring the cows to our local markets in Nigeria and sell them off, it indicates that not only is there a problem with our intelligence gathering system, but also that the dealers have been working in concert with the thieves. The major cattle dealers in the markets should be able to tell if the cows are stolen. It demonstrates that there is a surge of partnerships in cattle rustling at all levels and that the police and other security organisations are obviously unable to deal with the issue because, first of all, they are inadequately equipped to meet the task.

Thirdly, there is overt corruption. The second is a type of cooperation between criminal groups and security personnel. 2016 National Express Due to the inefficiency of Nigerian security personnel and the development of forest reserves into hotspots for criminal activity, ungoverned areas still exist today. Such ungoverned zone was defined as "a physical or non-physical place where there is an absence of governmental capability or political will to exercise control" by Theresa Whelan in 2006. She asserted that the non-physical includes regions like the financial space, which is used by criminal organisations to transfer money for illicit purposes, while the physical refers to land and sea zones. Such justifications imply that the Nigerian forest reserves may devolve into lawless areas. According to the legislation, the state intentionally uses forest reservation as a conservation strategy since it is "a delicate social and political problem" (Manu, et al., 2014). This preserves forests for the benefit of mankind. The woods should thus be well protected because they are a byproduct of legality. However, the rising invasion and conversion of Nigeria's forested areas for criminal purposes has brought up

severe security concerns as well as the more general issue of the expansion of ungoverned places. Insurgents are increasingly using forest reserves as grounds for their operations, as well as hiding places for armed robbers who target tourists and traders, as well as bases for attacks against locals (Ladan, 2014). The absence of government presence in these places serves as a catalyst for criminal operators to act freely.

However, Chukwuma, and Francis (2014) quoted Onimode (2001:39-40) as saying that the following causes have mostly encouraged crimes including armed robbery, livestock rustling, and banditry:

- i. Opportunity to commit crime with impunity
- ii. Poor law enforcement
- iii. Post-conflict access to arms and ammunition
- iv. Pervasive corruption
- v. Social injustice and oppression
- vi. Mass poverty and very poor pay
- vii. Excessive greed and materialism
- viii. Moral decay

EFFECT OF CATTLE RUSTLING AND BANDITRY IN ZAMFARA STATE

In Zamfara, livestock rustling and armed banditry have a long history. However, following the general elections in 2011, it spiraled out of control. Despite the fact that opinions on the causes varied greatly, there are several factors that contribute to these endless wars. While many attribute the situation to long-standing confrontations between Fulani herders and farmers over control of farmland and grazing grounds, others see it as a direct result of the Fulani people's response to their sociopolitical and economic marginalisation by their Hausa neighbours. According to Kiruwa (2017), people have attempted to misunderstand the origin of these conflicts in Zamfara, despite the fact that not all of the attacks are carried out by Fulani herders. Instead, because of how people perceive Fulani people, every act committed in rural communities is blamed on Fulani herdsmen. The state's citizens are

experiencing a great deal of hardship and dread as a result of these armed banditry and livestock rustling incidents. Numerous individuals were slain by the criminals who took advantage of the topography in some of these locations and rustled hundreds of thousands of livestock and other valuables. Settlements including Kwokeye, Bingi, Kizara, Mashema, Maji, Fanda, Haki, Matankari, Yar Katsina, as well as other communities in Maru, Anka, Gusau, Chafe, Birnin Magaji, and Zurmi Local Governments, were severely impacted, according to Bello's (2017) argument. In addition to cattle rustling, women may experience ongoing intimidation and harassment, including instances of rape and

assault, while kids are compelled to migrate unprepared because they are afraid of the unknown. They are sexually harassing our ladies, as stated by Shehu (2017), and "no one dares to resist them occasionally when they urge a local to take his daughter or wife to their camp to be raped." No precise figures could be given as to how many individuals have died as a result of this violent robbery since 2011. According to Tukur (2017), murders occur in villages that the security services aren't even aware of, and due to the nature of such communal settlements, not all crimes, particularly those involving Fulani herders, are recorded. Bello (2017) tries to draw attention to a few flashpoints that are considered the victims of modern banditry.

Table 1.1 Flash Points Areas and Villages that are mostly affected by Armed Banditry and Cattle Rustling in Zamfara MACBAN

S/N	Flash Point Areas	Number of Cattle/Sheep Stolen	Death rate/ number of people killed	Property destroyed
1.	Kizara	Over 4000	48	
2.	Lilo	90 Cows	50	3
3.	Shigama and Kwokeya	1,020 Cows and Sheep	95	11
4.	GidanKaso	1,455 Cows	67	8
5.	Lingyado	Over 2,100 Cows	27	
6.	Tsabre	Over 3,500 Cows	47	11 huts
7.	Rukudawa	250 Cows and Sheep	20	
8.	Bagegga	Over4,500 Cows	33	
9.	Unguwar Galadima	350 Cows and 500 Sheep	178	17
10.	Guru	270 Cows	28	
11.	Tungar Baushe	1,110 Cows	26	
12.	Yar Gada	180 Cows and 500 Sheep	1	
13.	Badarawa	Over 200 Cows	11	
14.	Jangeme	Over 600 Cows	1	
15.	Madaba	76 Cows and 30 Sheep		
16.	Nasarawa Godal	Over 1000 Cows and Sheep		
17.	Nasarawa Mailayi	Over 500 Cows and Sheep		
18.	Dorayi	Over 2500 Cows		
19.	Filinga	Over 5,000 Cows	2	
20.	Cigama		21	
21.	Birnin Magaji		15	

22.	Madaba		58	2
23.	Rakumimallamawa and karagawa		20	
24.	Malmo under dumma village		37	
25.	Mutunji		30	
26.	Mashema		26	
27.	Dabgulbi		13	

Source: Report of Committee on Cattle Rustling in 2015 as cited by Bello (2017), and some incidences cited from Leadership and Daily Trust Newspapers (2018, 2019 and as of June 2020)

There are contrasting claims on the veracity of the data regarding the number of people killed by this armed banditry over the years. For instance, the police, army, and media all disagree on the precise number of fatalities in the attack on Yar galadima residents in 2014. The Nigerian Police Force reported that just 70 individuals had died, compared to the army's announcement of 100 fatalities. Akila Usman Gwary, the state police commissioner, stated that although scores of individuals were injured to varying degrees, the state police command could only confirm the deaths of seventy persons (NTA, 2014). As BBC's Haruna Tangaza reported that 250 people were killed in the Yar galadima incident, journalists on the site angrily disputed with the police's and other security forces' claims. As hundreds of innocent households were compelled to leave their homes because of dread of an unknown Tangaza, over 200 people, including women, children, and adults, perished in the attack (2014). These incidents, along with several more reported in more than fifty towns afflicted by this banditry since 2011, demonstrated the difficulty in gathering precise data and statistics on the number of people slain by armed bandits and livestock rustlers in Zamfara State. However, as noted by Bello, several incidents with records from the communities were highlighted in the interim report of the Committee formed by the state government to determine the origins of this disaster (Bello: 2017)

The impacts of this catastrophe go beyond the deaths of people and animals alone, since several homes were either partially or totally burned in more than 100 villages by local fire apparatus. According to Mande (2017), when the attackers arrived in my village of Badarawa, they found us participating in early morning prayers and, rather than immediately moving to take away the available cattle, if that was their intention, they went straight to the mosque and opened fire on any people they saw. In the mosque, they immediately killed thirty-two individuals, and subsequently they set fire to twenty-nine homes and a large number of nearby grocery stores. In a different perspective, Tukur (2017) asserted that the act of banditry and livestock rustling in Zamfara has caused unwanted forcible migration among the victims by making more than three hundred families homeless.

Since 2011, when this tragedy struck the locals in the Dansadau axis, the bandits have attacked the communities with a number of cruel murders and rape cases before setting fire to more than 200 homes. Any scholar found it challenging to calculate the number of structures destroyed in Zamfara as a result of armed banditry and livestock rustling, much like the number of people who were killed. While examining the effects of cattle rustling and armed banditry in Zamfara, Lawal (2017) argued that it is important to note that, aside from the numerous rape cases and brutal killings of people that have been reported, the loss of homes and other

property makes up the majority of the economic crises that the people of Zamfara will never forget.

As of December 2015, there were approximately 3,000 refugees from these towns, the bulk of whom moved to safer locations as a result of the loss of their homes. Between Fulani herders, farmers, and the other populations in Zamfara, the violence has since 2011 greatly strained relations. This animosity has been one of the driving forces behind the Fulani's mass exodus to other locations. The movement is characterised by a variety of issues, from retaliatory assaults prior to residing or rearranging to counterattacks specifically targeting vigilante group members.

According to Labbo (2014), the main goal of the alleged bandits' attack on the Yargaladima village was to foil a vigilante group's ongoing intention to attack the residents. Instead, the effects destroyed the whole town and resulted in the deaths of nearly 200 individuals, including women and children. The attack at Dumburum in Zurmi, Badarawa in Shinkafi, Kizara in Tsafe, and Dangulbi in Maru local government districts, in addition to Yargaladima, is related to an implied retaliation attack that was expertly planned by Fulani herdsmen. Zamfara's residents will be more negatively impacted politically and socioeconomically as a result of the Fulani influx.

According to Tukur (2017), the state is lacking in cattle and meat, dairy products, and manure for farming operations because of the forced migration. It took Zamfara voucher more than a week to import cattle, sheep, and goats from Taraba, Benue, Nasarawa, Jos, and even the neighbouring Niger Republic. More than forty thousand cattle were moved out of Zamfara to alternative locations, and instead of exporting cattle, sheep, and goats to other states. Since most educational facilities are destroyed, damaged, or abandoned by individuals owing to continual harassment and fear from both sides, acts of banditry and cattle rustling have

also reduced the prospects of many youngsters getting basic primary and secondary education.

According to Maru (2014), more than 400 kids in Yargaladima alone were expelled from school because they either lost a breadwinner or couldn't afford to pay the community-hired instructors' monthly salary of 500 naira. The scenario is virtually worse than anyone could have imagined from the perspective of the Fulani and their possibilities of enrolling in western education through Nomadic Education programmes. According to Kiruwa (2017), research has revealed that over 62 nomadic schools and their buildings have suffered severe damage, making it nearly impossible for Fulani nomad children to use the facilities for their education. Another bad aspect of the conflict is the instances of rape and persistent harassment of women.

According to Badaru (2017), since 2014, rape instances have been reported in about two-thirds of the communities targeted along the Dansadai forest's border by armed bandits. They drove everyone away and raped women at will, with some even requesting that they follow them to their camps. Communities have experienced great conflict as a result of women choosing to migrate rather than remain with their families out of fear of bandits. In Zamfara, there were many attacks between 2020 and 2022 that resulted in 1,126 villager deaths and several kidnappings (Daily Trust, 2022). 30 people were slain by bandits in Zamfara state on December 10th, 2020 (10/12/202: Zamfara dailypost); on January 18th, 2021 (18/1/2021: premium time); 8 individuals were killed in Janbako and Maradun local government districts of Zamfara state. 4–6 January 2022 In Zamfara state, over 200 people have been slain by banditry and livestock rustlers (4-6/1/2022: Wikipedia), over 50 people have been killed by banditry there on May 7 (2022: premium time/news), and seven people have been killed there on May 8 (2022: Premiumtime/news). However, on May 21, 2022, cattle rustlers in the state of Zamfara

killed 7 individuals in the Kwan-doka, Gidan kada, and Kura-daw Local Government Areas (21/5/2022punchng.com/terrorists), terrorists abduct 10 people in communities of Dogon daji and Kazauda villages in wanke district of Gusau L.G.A in Zamfara state and demanded N20million ransom (31/10/2022 punchng.com/terrorists)

Conclusion

Banditry and cattle rustling has emerged as a major security challenge in Nigeria. As a criminal enterprise, it has consequences for the socio-economic, political, cultural, and psychological spheres of society. At the economic level, it constitutes a major threat to the livelihood of herders and those who depend on cows for survival. At the socio-political level, rustlers' activities have resulted in death, loss, and the destruction of lives and property, hereby disturbing peace and security. Therefore, the Nigerian government is expending major resources to eradicate rustling. At the psychological level, a vast number of people have been disposed of their belongings, and families have been traumatized; there have been reported cases of rape and kidnapping, which has caused psychological trauma.

Recommendations

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

- i. Government should provide adequate security to improve the socio-economic condition of the people in Zamfara State. Government should provide basic amenities and economic support to those affected by raids in the State.
- ii. Rural poverty and deprivation need to be urgently addressed to stem the increasing tide of banditry and cattle rustling and its negative effects on the socio-economic condition.
- iii. The joint task-force formed for surveillance should ensure prompt action to any up-rising or

violence. The government together with other organizations should take a leading role in addressing the challenges affecting youths especially unemployment, idleness and illiteracy which would go a long way in reducing their participation in livestock rustling in the study area.

- iv. There should be grazing reserves equipped with adequate social amenities so that herders can shift from the traditional method of animal husbandry to modern methods. This is in a bid to curb the menaces of destruction of farm land by the cattle.
- v. The dialogue and re-conciliation committee headed by the Secretary to the Zamfara State Government should ensure resolutions reached are followed and maintained for peaceful co-existence between the Fulani's, farmers and the teaming communities. The joint task-force formed for surveillance should ensure prompt action to any up-rising or violence.

Furthermore, the state government should provide funds and conducive environment for the establishment of mini-ranches. Crop farmers consider the idea of grazing reserves and routes inimical to their interests, and defenders of nomadic pastoralism consider sedentarisation an erosion of the pastoral way of life, these contentions should be looked at, in other to avert conflict and appropriate policies should be enacted.

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