



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Causes Of Pastoralists And Farmers' Conflict In Benue State Nigeria And Integrating Nomadic Education For Managing It

Agbegbedia Oghenevwoke Anthony*, Awe Norah Ene

Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Federal University Oye Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria

Abstract: Pastoralists and farmers' conflicts have persisted for too long in Nigeria and particularly in Benue State, and the respective mechanisms adopted for managing it have brought little or no progress in dousing it. The paper thus explored the causes of the conflict in the state as well as the need for integrating nomadic education for managing it. Primary and secondary sources were used for gathering data. The paper adopted the environmental scarcity theory and utilised the survey and descriptive research design. The survey method was used to elicit quantitative data from 480 respondents aged 10years and above from purposively sampled communities across the 3 senatorial regions in the state while Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussion with purposively sampled farmers, pastoralists, community and Fulani leaders were relied upon to generate the qualitative data for the study. Findings revealed that crop damages and activities of young pastoralists are the major causes of this conflict. Other causes include bush burning, unemployment, drought and water scarcity amongst others. Furthermore, respondents were of the view that introduction of nomadic education scheme will help in reducing the conflict. The paper concluded that pastoralists-farmers conflict is destructive and has dare impacts on the state in particular and the country (Nigeria) in general. Nomadic education should be incorporated into the mainstream activities of managing farmers and pastoralists conflict.

Keywords: Conflict, Conflict Management, Farmers, Nomadic Education, Pastoralists

*Corresponding author: Agbegbedia Oghenevwoke Anthony, Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Federal University Oye Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria

E-mail: anthony.agbegbedia@fuoye.edu.ng

Field Code Changed

1. Introduction

Conflicts caused by the struggle for both human and natural resources have been in existence from ancient civilisation but more frequent in recent times. This is as a result of the fact that humans killed members of their own species in order to satisfy their hunger and thirst. One of such conflicts is the one between pastoralists and farmers which could be regarded as scarce environmental resource which necessitates competition between and among multiple users (Blench, 2004). The northern region of the country (Nigeria) has been a theatre of resource conflict involving sedentary farmers and mobile pastoralists apart from the Boko Haram saga. This conflict is one of the primary manifestations of this anarchy and it has been noted in the history, ecology and political economy of the country. The pastoralists migrate within and across states, mainly in search of pasture (grazing land) and water for their herds and in the process encounter the settled farmers who most times, find it difficult to live in peace with them. Nevertheless, these two groups have a symbiotic relationship; for instance,



according to Shettima and Tar (2008:164) the pastoralists need the calories produced by the crop farmers, just as the farmers also need the protein, manure and dairy products by the pastoralists. In essence, nomadic pastoralists and settled farmers relationship is unavoidable for the smooth handling of affairs in the society.

However, this relationship between the farmers and pastoralists does not last long. Shettima and Tar (2008) affirmed this that, no nomad can exist for long without contact with sedentary farmers. According to them, even the Tuareg nomads of the Sahara maintain contact with the Oasis dwellers. Hence, the pastoralists and the farmers are intertwined as they share their resources such as land, water and fodder together. This however, leads to conflict which often affects the relationship between them. For instance, in Benue State where the people are predominantly settled farmers, the conflict seems to have become almost a daily activity and very acute in recent years. This could be linked to the fact that some of the pastoralists, mostly the younger ones, move with arms and usually in large groups and assault innocent and armless/harmless farmers in the farm as well as the destruction of farmers' crops by the pastoralists' herds.

It should be noted here that, this conflict is not limited to Nigeria alone. It is a conflict which occurs in almost every part of the African continent. According to Bujra (2000:12) pastoralists and farmers' conflicts are common and widespread in Africa. For instance, fighting over grazing land and cattle has existed for more than three decades in Karamajoug of Uganda as well as the Pokot of Kenya. It is also common in Sudan where most of them are pastoralists. Tonah (2006:33-45) stated that there is a consensus among people, that pastoralists and farmers clashes have only since the 20th Century, become frequent in the coastal countries of West Africa. He further stated that, the southward movement of pastoral herds into the sub-humid zones accounts for this increasing conflict in Nigeria in general and the central region in particular. Conflicts between pastoralists and farmers are major conflict not only in the central region of the country but the country generally, since the country attained her independence. This conflict according to Adamu (2007:200) has led to several losses of properties worth millions of naira and the death of hundreds of thousands of lives. Despite all these, no generally accepted solution has been proffered by the Nigerian governments or conflict experts. Thus, this conflict could be said to be going out of hand since every effort adopted to end or resolve it has become abortive.

Researchers have conducted several researches on the nature of the pastoralists and farmers conflict including nomadic education. However, it goes beyond this. As an effort to add to the existing literature, this study examined the causes of the conflict and evaluated the appropriateness of how nomadic education could be promoted in managing the conflicts between the pastoralists and farmers not only in Benue State, but the country in general.

1.1. Objectives of The Study

- (1). To identify the causes of pastoralists and farmers' conflicts in Benue State
- (2). To examine how nomadic education could be used as a means for managing pastoralists and farmers conflict in Benue State.

1.2. Research Question

- (1). What are the causes of the conflict between pastoralists and farmers in Benue State?
- (2). How can nomadic education be used to manage pastoralists and farmers' conflict in Benue State?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Resource use conflict

Resource use conflict between farmers and pastoralists for example, is by any definition, 'a social conflict'. Social conflict generally entails an interaction between groups in competitive setting and such interaction need not be 'violent' or transformed into a 'war' before it is considered as a conflict. According to Hocker and Wilmot (1985), conflict is the interaction of interdependent people who perceive incompatible goals and interference from each other



in achieving these goals. In this context, resource conflict is simply operationalised in this study as the interaction between two or more interdependent resource users; in this issue, between crop farmers and pastoralists over common environmental resources including land, pasture, crop residues, livestock passages and water points such as boreholes, drainages, wells and streams. Resource use conflict springs from competition and conflict of interests and can be violent or non-violent. Hussein et al., (1999:401) defined violent conflict as conflict with violence of a physical nature in order to distinguish it from non-violent which also manifests from conflict of interests and competition. In this conceptualisation, non-violent outcomes of conflict of interests and competition over resources consist of institutional rules defining classes of inclusion and exclusion to natural resources; migratory avoidance strategies adopted by herders to keep away from zones of intense competition with farmers, and both farmers and herders diversifying into multiple sources of livelihood. Other results include, agreement building between farmers and local herders to check resource exploitation by external actors and litigation action taken to define use rights and or obtain compensation for crop damages.

Blench (1999) on his part provides a very broad and useful classification of resource conflict in semi-arid Africa. He based his classification on two general arenas of conflict, namely; point and eco-zonal resources. Point resources are defined as resources such as mines, large farms and reserves while eco-zonal resources on the other hand, refer to the patchy resources of the semi-arid region. Conflict between pastoralists and farmers is a classic example of conflict over eco-zonal resources. According to him, this conflict is the most geographically spread and dominant in the literature. Other sources of resource conflict may be locally important, but are tied to point resources such as mines, game parks or infrastructural projects.

2.2. Crop farming (sedentary crop farming)

Sedentary farmers are those farmers who live permanently in settlements, gaining their livelihoods mainly from crop production, with domestic animals providing supplementary income and practice crop farming (Hussein, 1998). Thus, lowland dry farming systems are crop livestock production, occupying about ten percent of the worlds' dry lands and supporting ten times, the number of people that live under pastoral production systems. In such environments, unpredictable rainfall often creates acute shortage of food and unless livestock are few and integrated closely with crop production, overgrazing may occur and add to environmental degradation (UNRISD, 1997). It must however be noted that sedentary cultivators are also 'stock breeders' or 'herders'; and just as many stock breeders or herders are also to some extent, farmers. In essence, the links between 'farming' and 'herding' is a continuous rather than a separate one. Besides, while it may appear paradoxical, the emergence of pastoralism as a specialised economic activity was actually enhanced by the development of agriculture (Galaty and Johnson, 1990). Abba and Usman (2008) concurred to this when they state that agriculture made it possible for the development of a regional system of complementary exchange between pastoralists and farmers.

2.3. Nature of nomadic pastoralists and farmers conflicts

Generally speaking, conflicts manifest in different ways which include mild and non-violent such as avoidance, ridicule and verbal exchanges, insults, character assassination to the violent and destructive ones such as riots, assaults, crisis and war. Although, much has not been written on the nature of pastoralists and farmers' conflict in Benue State Nigeria, writers and academia have made some inputs on the dimensions of the conflicts. According to Yahaya (2008:8) pastoralists and farmers conflicts are most times violent, destructive and within a short period. For him, these conflicts sometimes, take place in the night when farmers are asleep at their homes while the pastoralists move to the farmlands before dawn and harvest times. Khan (2007:6) stated that ethnicity also play a greater role in pastoralists and farmers conflicts as it often involves the Fulbe (Fulani) who are mostly pastoralists and the Tiv and Idoma (as the case in Benue State) who are mostly farmers. Khan went forth to say that the



conflicts sometimes result to ethno-religious conflicts (though ethno-religious conflict has not actually happened in Benue State). This could be attributed to the facts that those in the central region of the country, of which Benue is a state, are predominantly Christians as well as farmers while the pastoralists who are few are mainly Muslims. Thus, the tendency of the conflict leading to ethno religious one is undebatable.

Ingawa et al (1999:6) observed while carrying out a research in the core National Fadama Development states that, the conflicts have been a recurring incidence for many decades now. According to them, the conflicts occur especially during the dry season when the animals move southwards and sometimes at the beginning of the wet season when they are returning. They further noted however that, the activities of pastoralists who wander with arms and usually in large groups, and who commit intentional crop damage has added a new dimension to the conflicts in recent times. This implies that, the conflicts are presently fought with arms and heavy ammunitions against the bows and arrows which were earlier weapons of these pastoralists. This could be attributed to the inflow of light weapons and small arms into the country through our porous borders. The Bauchi State Agricultural Development Programme Report (1997) confirmed this when it pointed out that the emergence of militant pastoralists like the “Udawa” and “Bokoloji” have introduced a violent and fatal dimension to the conflicts. According to the report, they are young pastoralists who are heavily armed with guns and arrows, and they seem to enjoy the support and protection of their local godfathers and bandits, and thus, have no respect for any law or authority.

3. Research Method and Materials

Primary and secondary data were generated and integrated for the study. The secondary data were obtained from extant literature in archives and libraries. The study adopted a combination of survey and descriptive research designs, to gather detailed information from a relatively large population. Based on the objectives of the study, quantitative and qualitative data were gathered using different methods such as, the Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). In addition, copies of five (500) hundred structured questionnaire were administered to respondents (both farmers and resident pastoralists) to elicit information about the conflict, out of which four hundred and eighty (480) were retrieved for validation. The contents of the questionnaire were precise, clear and legible, which made the subjects’ responses logical and constructive. The study was conducted in Benue State, Nigeria. However, it was limited to three local government areas of Katsina-Ala, Guma and Ado, each representing the three (3) senatorial zones of the state. Thereafter, five communities of Katsina-Ala, Abinsi, Gbajimba, Agila and Igumale where the conflicts were most rampant were purposively selected for this study. Simple percentage frequency distribution and descriptive analyses were adopted for data analysis and interpretation which provided the basis for the conclusions and recommendations reached. In essence, completed questionnaires were collected, coded and analysed making use of percentage frequency distribution while the secondary data were descriptively analysed.

Age	Frequency	Percentage
10-19 years	29	6.0
20-29 years	80	16.7
30-39 years	90	18.8
40-49 years	150	31.3
50-59 years	76	15.8
60-above	55	11.4
Total	480	100

Also, 367 (73.5%) of the respondents were of the view that they do not know much about nomadic education in the state and thus, not familiar with it while 113(23.6%) seem to have knowledge of it.

Table 3. Distribution of respondents by knowledge of nomadic education

Information about NE	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	113	23.6
No	367	76.4
Total	480	100

Furthermore, respondents who practice farming as occupation have the highest percentage with 246(51.2%). Respondents who are involved in pastoralism with 119 follow this (24.8%). Civil servants are 53(11.0%), business men/women are 37(7.7%), artisan are 19(4.0%), while respondents in other occupation are 6, representing 1.3% of the population.

Table 4. Distribution of respondents by occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Farming	246	51.2
Pastoralism	119	24.8
Civil servant	53	11.0
Business men/women	37	7.7
Artisan	19	4.0
Others	6	1.3
Total	480	100

The Tiv speaking ethnic group have the highest percentage with 227(47.3%), 128(26.7%) are respondents who belong to the Idoma speaking ethnic group with 81(16.9%) respondents belonging to the Fulani/Hausa ethnic group. In addition, 31(6.4%) respondents belong to the Jukun ethnic group while 13(2.7%) belong to other ethnic groups within the communities.

Table 5. Distribution of respondents by ethnic group

Ethnic group	Frequency	Percentage
Tiv	227	47.3
Idoma	128	26.7
Fulani/Hausa	81	16.9
Jukun	31	6.4
Others	13	2.7
Total	480	100

4.2. Causes of the pastoralists and farmers' conflict in Benue State

From the information gathered during the interview, all the respondents were of the view that this conflict is common in the state. The position was confirmed and recapped by the adviser to the governor on land and boundary resolution thus:

Pastoralists and farmers' conflict cum land disputes in Benue State are very rampant. This is particularly in the Tiv and Idoma speaking areas, mainly because they are predominantly farmers who depend largely on agriculture and who would not tolerate any form of intrusion from the Fulani pastoralists. Since my assumption of office, over 4000 cases of conflicts between not only pastoralists and farmers, but also communal disputes, have been received by this office and almost half of these cases are from Guma, Katsina-Ala, Vandeikya, Gwer West and Ado local government areas (Political leader, KII).



The following are some of the causes of the conflict between the pastoralists and farmers as gathered from respondents during the research.

Table 6. Distribution of respondents for the causes of pastoralists and farmers' conflict

Causes of the conflict	Frequency	Percentage
Crop damage	283	59.0
Drought and water scarcity	34	7.0
Activities of young pastoralists	44	9.2
Bush burning	33	6.9
Ownership and usage of land	19	4.0
Lack of confidence in the judiciary	25	5.2
Unemployment	15	3.1
The role of the elites/chiefs	27	5.6
Total	480	100

(a). Crop damage

From information gathered from two hundred and eighty-three (283) respondents representing 59%, it was evident that crop damage is regarded as the major cause of the conflict between the farmers and pastoralists in Benue State. The damage often attracted quick reactions from the farmers, either in form of litigation or open clashes. An informant affirmed this by stating that:

Both the Tiv and the Idoma are predominantly farmers who cherish and depend largely on agriculture for their sustenance and livelihood. Thus, they will not tolerate any intruder who wants to encroach on their land, or allow any Fulani's herds to destroy their farm products when grazing. In essence, the major cause for this crisis is destruction of farmlands and crops by cattle (political leader, KII).

Asked if there has been conflict between the two groups of recent, he answered in the affirmative. Some security agents affirmed the re-occurrence of the conflict in their respective communities and traced it down to destruction of crops by the cattle and the reaction of the farmers is always offensive. An informant stated that:

The Fulani attacks innocent farmers on their way to the farm having smoked marijuana and got drunk (security agent-farmer, FGD).

However, a Fulani security agent differed on this opinion by asserting that:

It was the farmers who normally insult them (that is, the Fulani) first by calling them names such as 'bigol' telling them that they are animalistic in nature. Since they would not accept such names, the Fulani therefore respond quickly by attacking the farmers, and not that, they were neither drunk nor taken over doze of marijuana (security agent-pastoralist, FGD).

On how the conflict was carried out, securities from both sides maintained that

Arms, machetes and ammunitions were often used (farmers and pastoralists, FGD).

In another interview, an informant noted:

It is always difficult for the little herdsmen to control the large herds of animals during grazing. Thus, while they are behind, they would not see what the animals are grazing on in the front and while they are in front, it is always impossible for them to know what is going on behind. In addition, the animals are not human beings and as such, cannot differentiate between weeds and crops, therefore, would graze on every grass they come across (Fulani leader, KII).

Most of the clashes take place during the dry season which is also the farming period. At this time, the Fadama pastures were the only viable grazing resource. Most of the traditional cattle routes with water were already encroached upon, making it impossible for the pastoralists to have access to water. This correspond with what Abdullahi (2005) said that the land area that



was supposed to be reserved for grazing purposes in the northeast was four hundred and thirty thousand acres, but only one hundred and sixty-three acres was actually devoted to grazing.

(b). Drought and water scarcity

This information was the view of thirty-four (34) respondents which comprises 7.0% of the total number of the respondents. Pastoralists have experienced debilitating and recurring droughts. An inspection of the transition zone between the Sahel and the Guinea Savannahs reveals that incessant drought leads to crop failures and water scarcities. Periodic droughts take a heavy toll on the animals. This finding resonates with Stenning (1995) submission that during droughts, animals die from thirst, hunger and exhaustion. In an article in the *National Geographic* titled 'An age-old challenge grows,' Gore (1979) writes that in 1968 alone, the Sahelian drought claimed a quarter million people and a million animals. Droughts make rain-fed farmers to expand their farms into cultivable sylo-pastoral land, thus, displacing the pastoralists. An informant noted that:

Frequent droughts have forced the Fulani to move into the southern tsetse infested region. To counter natural and artificial disasters, the pastoralists engage in frequent movement and resource circulation and during this process, their cattle destroy the farm products which the farmers find difficult to bear. This often leads to serious conflict between the farmers and the pastoralists (Community leader, KII).

This is a key factor in the conflict between pastoralists and farmers. The semi-arid region of Africa lies between the Sahara and the Sudanian zone including most parts of West Africa. This region is said to favour contact between crop farmers and pastoralists as it is favourable for both finding new pastures and expanding crop cultivation. Nevertheless, serious consequences on resource use competition and conflict in the region became completely altered due to the existing pattern of human and livestock population movements.

(c). Activities of young pastoralists

Forty-four (44) respondents which represent 9.2% of the total figure affirmed this opinion. The conflict between farmers and pastoralists could also be based on the violent activities of a group of young pastoralists who rear cattle without being accompanied by older people. This group of young armed herders damage crops intentionally usually at night and attack any farmer who tried to prevent them. These immature young pastoralists beat and at times, killed farmers in the process. The problem usually arose as to how to identify them, since they move away as soon as they commit this atrocity, and the older innocent cattle pastoralists become the unfortunate victims of retaliation by the farmers. The district heads of Agila in Ado Local Government Area and Gbajimba, in Guma Local Government Area, at different times during focus group discussion, narrated incidents of how a group of young pastoralists killed farmers who approached them of destruction of their farm properties. According to the district heads:

This was the cause of the clash between their followers who are mainly farmers and the pastoralists whom the societies have been accommodating for a long period (community leader, FGD)

Even the leaders of the Fulani in the communities agreed that:

The major problem facing them was the irresponsible activities of these young pastoralists. Thus, the leaders of both parties in these communities met and agreed to outlaw the group. As such, no pastoralist was supposed to move or migrate without his or her families, and anyone found guilty of such crimes would be banished from the community (Fulani leader, FGD).



(d). Bush burning

Thirty-three (33) respondents representing 6.9% were of this view. This implies that bush burning is also another cause of pastoralists and farmers' conflict. This practice was widely used by farmers, but the pastoralists did not like this practice. Interviews with both groups revealed that bush burning served several purposes. For the farmers, bush burning facilitate fast clearing of the remains of previous season's crop residues on the field. It also destroys the hideouts of the rodents that damaged farm crops. From the point of the pastoralists, bush burning was an intentional act to prevent animals from eating crop residue. Apart from bush burning, the pastoralists complained that wood and grass cutters colluded with the farmers to carry out extensive wood grass cutting for commercial reasons, and that the practice greatly reduced browsing and fodder available for the pastoralists. The most annoying thing to the pastoralists was that, the grass cutting from grazing reserves was resold to them at very high prices.

(e). Ownership and usage of land

This factor was affirmed by nineteen (19) respondents representing 4.0%. Speaking generally on conflict situation in the state, all the security agents maintained that pastoralists and farmers' crisis are very rampant in the state due to ownership and usage of land. They stated further that:

This was particularly in the rural and remote areas where level of education and mutual understanding is still very low. Pastoralists sometimes attempt to exceed the plot of land given them while the farmers on the other hand, always fight hard to protect their land and farm products since they value farming so much. By so doing, they sometimes engage one another in battles or wars (security agents, KII).

An informant during a focus group discussion established the fact that:

Abuse of hospitality and backstabbing is the major factor responsible for this conflict in the state. According to him, Benue people in the olden days gave land freely to the Fulani pastoralists who migrated from different areas and other states to settle and pasture their animals. After sometime, most of these Fulani pastoralists started claiming ownership of the land and the community. Some of them have even extended their parcels beyond what was given to them. The fighting is now persistent in order to send the 'strangers' packing (community leader, FGD).

Another reason attributed to the frequent crises was that, both the farmers and the pastoralists depend largely on land and agriculture for their sustenance and livelihood. Thus, struggles over grazing land fermented troubles that precipitated to violence. A religious leader noted that:

The Tiv who are mostly farmers have had several violent conflicts which involved fighting and bloodletting between them and Fulani nomads over grazing land. Due to the strong value and the importance of grazing land (pasturing, settlement and others), the quest for ownership by the two groups degenerated to violent conflict (religious leader, KII).

The conflict led to the displacement of people from their homes and loss of family ties. In Agila, Ado local government area, the religious leaders reported how Fulani herdsmen who raided the community killed a woman and her nephew. Other similar stories were told of scores of deaths in other places visited like Gbajimba and Katsina-Ala.

(f). Lack of confidence in the judicial system and delay in response

Twenty five (25) of the respondents representing 5.2% were of the view that lack of confidence in the judicial system is really another contributing factor of this conflict. It is a common saying that 'justice delayed is justice denied'. As such, the prolonged delay by the courts in passing judgments in some cases over conflict between pastoralist and farmer and even land disputes, has not gone well with the people. Thus, the average farmer does not

have confidence on the modern court system. The researcher gathered from an informant that:

The people most often fight because they expect a quick resolution, intervention, identification and prosecution of culprits; thus, any delay for obvious reasons on the part of the court is regarded as connivance by the people, hence, the need to fight as a means of self-help (community leader, KII).

Some key interview informants also stated during an FGD that court judgments are often ignored because, in the view of the people, the judgments do not reflect their desires and aspirations. The judges according to some interviewees are often biased as some are always interested in the cases in one way or the other. An elder stated thus:

Rights to ownership of the community are determined on peculiar land traits, history and lineage, and not by scientific perceptions by the courts. Thus, the people conceive such judgments as victory to the victors, and the need to reject such judgments and challenge the victorious or successful communities become eminent (community leader, FGD).

Zakari and Umar (2006) affirm this in their writing that farmers report most of the cases brought to courts and the pastoralists are hardly prosecuted and even in the event where prosecution is instituted, the farmers hardly get commensurate compensation for damages meted unto their farms. In addition, the exorbitant charges by legal practitioners have worsened matters. The less privileged in these communities therefore, are not comfortable as their financial positions are so precarious so much so that they cannot even pay the required fees and charges, nor secure the services of legal practitioners. For instance, a retired police officer maintained during a discussion as follows:

It is almost five years now since I retired and my pension has not been paid and nothing is given to me. I have moved down to my village and I have nothing to live on, and cannot even afford to secure the services of a lawyer in case of any dispute over my farm products because of the high charges. Therefore, we prefer the old traditional systems of disputes settlement to the court settlement, because it is cheaper and convenient for us (farmer, FGD).

A pastoralist also concurred to the above statement in a separate Focus Group Discussion when he stated thus:

Some of us have been deceived into believing that the court can easily resolve our problems, but we have found out that it does not, and the price they charge is too high. We, therefore, prefer the indigenous methods to this so-called English method (FGD, pastoralist).

In this sense, both parties (that is, the farmers and the pastoralists) resort to self-help, which is, fighting.

(g). Unemployment

Fifteen (15) respondents representing 3.1% affirmed that unemployment is a cause of this conflict. It was also noticed during the research from key informant discussions through FGDs and interviews that the state lacks a lot of development infrastructure and this leads to various kinds of conflicts in the state. The youths are highly affected by this factor due to the high unemployment rate resulting from lack of industries as well as small and medium scale businesses. As affirmed by a youth of about 37 years in Igumale (Ado local government area) during an FGD:

We are angry and idle and therefore, have to fight just to receive small amounts of money and other gifts from elite and politicians (youth leader, FGD).

A district head of Abinsin (Guma local government area) concurred with this when he stated:

Look around me; I have five (5) wives and many children. They are all here with me. Some are even graduates while others are through with their secondary schools but none of them has a job. I can see that you (the researcher) is a young boy and have gone far in education



because your people are able to sponsor you, but I cannot sponsor any of them further. Therefore, if you can take some of these of my children with you to your place and offer them jobs, I will be very grateful (community leader, FGD).

The elders emphatically maintained that the trend would continue, if the economy of Benue State does not improve so that the youths can desist from such atrocities and be gainfully employed.

(h). The role of the elites/chiefs in conflict situation

From the administered questionnaire, (27) of the respondents representing 5.6% which made up the study figure expressed their fears concerning this issue. Findings from FGDs and KII affirmed the fact that the elites and chiefs in Benue State are reported to have played significant roles by fuelling all sorts of conflicts in the state. Their role as one of the causes of conflict between the farmers and pastoralists was confirmed by an informant during an interview. He stated thus:

Most chiefs, districts heads as well as leaders of pastoral groups have promoted conflict between the farmers and pastoralists but were not punished for their crimes. The state government has not been able to deal with them decisively by meting out any punishment (political leader, KII).

According to them, this inability on the part of the government has tended to encourage the chiefs, the Fulani herdsmen' leaders and the various farm group leaders to settle their differences through the 'illegal combating' instead of resorting to the law for help and thus, conflict is abound to occur.

4.3. How can nomadic education be used to manage pastoralists and farmers' conflict in Benue State?

From the information gathered, most of the respondents agreed that nomadic education will assist in reducing the conflicts between pastoralists and farmers in the state (Benue) and they mentioned some of the approaches to nomadic education to include mobile schools, radio and television education as well as town crier information. From the information gathered, respondents who preferred radio and television approaches have the highest percentage with 303(63.1%). Next to this are those who preferred mobile schools numbering 109(22.7%); 37(7.7%) suggested town crier while 31 representing (6.4%) do not prefer any of the approaches due to their lack of knowledge about it.

Table 7. Distribution of respondents on the approaches

Approaches	Frequency	Percentage
Radio	303	63.1
Mobile schools	109	22.7
Town crier	37	7.7
None	31	6.4
Total	480	100

(a). Radio approach

On the issue of radio education, three hundred and three (303) representing 63.1% of the respondents were of the view that these are carried about not only by the pastoralists but also by the farmers and are used to convey information in order to avoid disruption and damages of properties during grazing. The district heads of Agila in Ado Local Government Area and Gbajimba, in Guma Local Government Area, at different times during focus group discussion, concurred to these approaches. According to the district heads:

The radio, television, mobile schools and town criers are basic tools for curbing conflicts between pastoralists and farmers (community leaders, FGD)

Even the leaders of the Fulani in the communities agreed that:

The major reason for introducing the nomadic education is to pass information that will be useful to the general society on the need to live in harmony and to avoid conflicts that will



result to killing each other, animals and destruction of crops and properties. Thus, the leaders of both parties in these communities met and agreed to implement the nomadic education policy. As such, no pastoralist was supposed to move or migrate without his or her radio, and anyone found guilty would be punished (Fulani leaders, FGD).

The findings revealed that radio approach should be introduced into the management procedure of this conflict.

(b). Mobile schools

One hundred and nine (109) representing 22.7% of the respondents were of the view that mobile schools should be introduced in the management of the conflict. According to the district heads:

It is a fact that most pastoralists go about with their mobile schools as they use collapsible equipment that could be easily assembled when the needs arise (Community leaders, FGD).

The respondents were of the view that these mobile unit consists of different classrooms through which the little children (pastoralists) are educated with the aid of audio-visual teaching techniques.

(c). Town crier

Other respondents are of the view that town criers should be employed to make public announcement within and around all the communities. This was the opinion of thirty seven (37) respondents representing 6.4%. An informant added that:

This will enable those who do not have access to radio, television or not involved in the mobile education, be equipped with current information about the relationship between the pastoralists and farmers on how to live in peace and harmony and the need to avoid conflicts (Community leader, KII).

(d). None

Thirty one (31) representing 6.4% of the respondents did not provide any answer on the approach or approaches to be adopted for managing this conflict.

Nevertheless, the respondents including the community leaders are of the view that various mechanisms for managing conflicts such as the informal and formal measures should be introduced into the nomadic education curriculum. According to them, when conflict management methods such as negotiation, mediation, accommodation, adjudication, litigation to mention but a few are taught during the nomadic education, the people will be properly informed of the needs to avoid conflicts and live together in peace and harmony.

5. Conclusion

From the study, it was discovered that in the normal course of the day, pastoralists leading their herds through grazing lands and watering points, unavoidably trespass on farmlands and products, thereby damaging and destroying farmers' crops. This often leads to instant retaliation and quarrels which degenerate into large scale violence, loss of lives and properties. However, several methods have been adopted to manage this conflict but no logical solution has been arrived at. It is therefore suggested by the pastoralists and farmers through description and explanation that nomadic education should be promoted to manage the conflict. The respondents including the community leaders are of the view that various mechanisms for managing conflicts such as the informal and formal measures should be introduced into the nomadic education curriculum. According to them, when conflict management methods such as negotiation, mediation, accommodation, adjudication, litigation to mention but a few are taught during the nomadic education, the people will be properly informed of the needs to avoid conflicts and live together in peace and harmony. These approaches are expected to widen the learning ability of the pastoralists and farmers,



expand their scope of learning and enable them know the value of human existence and of education. The nomadic education should also involve both the pastoralists and farmers brought together under a common forum and taught the same thing. This should be done based on the fact that, any conflict affected communities looking for a lasting and peaceful solution must raise the literacy level of the people mostly the pastoralists, through nomadic education. Nomadic education should therefore be seen as an approach to extending intervention in conflict resolution and for managing pastoralists and farmers' conflict. Thus, it is high time Nigeria joined the League of Nations in promoting nomadic education as a pedagogical approach for managing pastoralists and farmers' conflict.

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