



THE EFFECTS OF MIGRATION BY NOMADIC FARMERS IN THE LIVELIHOODS OF RURAL CROP FARMERS IN ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA

EMEKA NZEH (Ph.D)

Department of Agricultural Economics & Extension,
Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), Enugu
E-mail: nzecelestine@yahoo.com; ecnzeh@gmail.com
Mobile: +234 – 8038739788



ABSTRACT

The study focused on the effects of migration by nomadic farmers on livelihoods of the rural crop farmers in Enugu State of Nigeria. The study had the following specific objectives; determine the socio-economic attributes of the rural crop and nomadic farmers; identify the sources of nomadic farmers conflicts in the rural crop farmers farm fields; assess the socio-economic effects of migration by nomadic farmer on rural development and describe the methods adopted to resolve nomadic farmers conflicts with rural crop farmers in the area. In the sampling procedure, purposive and random sampling techniques were used. A purposive multi stage sampling technique was used to obtain a sample size of 60 nomadic farmers and 80 rural farmers, information was elicited using questionnaires. The major findings show that both parties identified the following as the causes of conflict; competition over land, cattle trespass, encroachment by farmers and conflict of culture. The results show that 56% of rural crop farmers and 75% of nomadic farmers fall in the age range 21 to 40 years while only a few of the respondents were above forty-one years of age for both respondents. Majority of respondents of both rural crop farmers and nomadic farmers are males; of which they account for 81% for rural farmers and 92% for nomadic farmers. The results also show that 50% of rural crop farmers have a family size of between 6 to 10 persons. At least 63% of rural crop farmers have formal education while only 42% of nomadic have formal education. It was recommended that farmers should adopt viable techniques of cultivation such as use of organic manure and the use of night paddocks and ranching as forms of livestock rearing to minimize land pressure and reduce farmer-nomadic conflicts. The farmers should practice crop rotation and use of organic manure on their fields while nomadic farmers should produce hay and silage to reduce the rate of their migration even during dry seasons.

Key words: nomadic farmers, migration, rural community farmers.

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1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In recent years, Nigeria has witnessed series of violent communal clashes arising from the activities of the nomads who move about on a daily basis with their cattle in search of water and green pastures. They are on the streets in most of our cities and could also be found operating in the remotest villages in various states of



the country. These nomads who are essentially Fulani tribesmen were originally found in small make-shift communities scattered across the northern fringes of Nigeria and other countries in West Africa.

By their culture, tradition and occupation, they have not remained an itinerant race who owned lands nor had any permanent abode. In fact, they cared less about land ownership because they are always on the move. They simply lived with their cattle wherever there was abundance of fodder and absence of tse-tse-fly, the blood sucking insect that once threatened the existence of their flocks. The nomads used to embark on seasonal migrations from the North to the South but this movement has become an all season's affair. The reason has been that over-grazing in the far north has given way to desertification and the normal alternating wet and dry seasons have metamorphosed into some unusual weather conditions now known as climate change. Initially, a symbiotic relationship existed between the nomads and the farmers in every new community they stopped over to take a rest. The host communities usually peopled by farmers derived organic manure from cow dungs and protein from the beef and dairy products while the nomads relied on the farm produce for food Ofem and Inyang (2014).

However, over the years, the presence of the nomads and their cattle has provoked violent clashes in several communities in Nigeria even in the rural communities of Enugu State. Apart from the language and cultural barriers which usually spots out the nomads as strangers, the audacity with which they shepherd their flocks to graze on every available vegetation on their route has often attracted protests from communities. This scenario has given rise to an unhealthy rivalry between farmers and herdsmen leading to violence, loss of lives and property. In some cases, a whole community is wiped out and those fortunate to escape have become refugees in other places.

These clashes have occurred several times in Plateau, Benue, Nassarawa, Kogi, Kwara, Edo, Delta, Enugu, Abia, Ebonyi, Ondo, Oyo Osun and many other states as reported by Okoli and Atelhe (2014). Whenever these clashes occur, the ripples wriggle through the immediate flash points down to the foundations of Nigeria. When herdsmen attack and kill scores of villagers in the course of a contest for grazing fields and water, there are usually reprisal attacks. There are also claims and counter claims as to who were the aggressors and the underlying motives for the violence. It often brings to the fore, the indigene/settler question, land ownership and citizenship rights in Nigeria. This scenario has times without number thrown up tribal, ethnic, regional, religious and political sentiments that threaten the corporate existence of Nigeria.

Researches in recent time have shown that by its population and capacity for animal production, with 25% of livestock herds in the sub-region, Nigeria is by far the leading livestock producer in Central and West Africa. The country's cattle herds are estimated at over 16 million head, far ahead of Niger (8.7 million), Mali (8.2 million) and Chad (7 million). The share of Sahel countries is significant, however, representing over 50% of total cattle herds. Cattle raising in Nigeria is largely supplemented by short-cycle livestock operations, estimated at 33.8 million head of sheep and 175 million poultry birds.

Between 85% and 90% of domestic cattle herds are tended by 8 million migratory shepherds and farmer herders, the majority of whom are of Peul ethnicity although other groups are also herders (Shuwa Arabs, Koyam, Kanuri, Kanembou, Touareg, etc.). It is very difficult to assess import flows of live animals from Niger, Chad or Mali, as many animals are "naturalized" when they cross the border, some of which are fattened and finished on their way to the final market outlets. Large parts of the livestock sold on these markets come from the Sahel countries. Cross-border movement of herds during seasonal migration also involves a significant number of animals. Demand for beef is largely driven by the Federation of Nigeria, as Nigerians make up 50% of beef consumers in ECOWAS. Nigeria is experiencing a historic demographic expansion and a spectacular change in food habits. With a population growth nearing 2.8% per year, according to NPC 2006, the country's own domestic production is far from being able to meet demand. Nigeria is therefore forced to import more than 25% of the beef consumed, and is therefore a major outlet for Sahel livestock, via direct sales or the moving of herds for commercial purposes. At the federal level, livestock operations contribute only about 5% of GDP, whereas agriculture as a whole contributes 35% of GDP as reported by CBN 2013.



Following the foregoing discussion, one can see why it is difficult for both the nomadic and rural communities to co-exist without problems. This is because, as the nomadic are busy trying to protect their herds and make livelihood from their sales, the rural farm communities need to protect their farms which these animals upon migration use as grazing land.

The objectives this paper are to:- determine the socio-economic attributes of the rural and nomadic farmers; identify the sources of nomadic farmers conflicts in the rural farmers farm fields; assess the socio-economic effects of migration by nomadic farmer on rural development and describe the methods adopted to resolve nomadic farmers conflicts with rural farmers in the area.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Enugu State of Nigeria which was created out of the former Anambra State during 1991 creation of States in the Country. The state is located between latitudes $5^{\circ}56^1$ and $7^{\circ}06^1$ N and longitudes $6^{\circ}53^1$ and $7^{\circ}55^1$ E (Ezike, 1988). Enugu State is bounded on the East by Ebonyi State, on the North by Benue and Kogi States, on the south by Abia State and on the west by Anambra State (Ezike, 1988). The State occupies an area of about 8,022.95km² (Ezike, 1988) and has a population of 3,257,298 with average growth rate of 3% according to NPC, 2006. Enugu State with seventeen local government areas is divided into three agricultural zones namely: Awgu, Enugu and Nsukka Zone.

In the sampling procedure, both purposive and random sampling techniques were used to select those vulnerable areas where there are effects of nomadic farmers' activities on the livelihoods of the rural crop farmers. In the study area made of three agricultural zones two (2) local government areas was purposively selected given total of six (6) local government areas. From the selected local government areas, two (2) rural communities were selected given total of twelve (12). Finally, from the selected rural communities seven (7) household's heads were selected as respondents given total of eighty-four (84). But during the analysis for the rural crops farmers, only eighty (80) respondents were used, as four of the data collection instruments were discarded because the respondents did not give satisfactory information as required. In the case of nomadic farmers, 62 of them were interviewed. At analysis, 60 of the respondents gave adequate information whereas 2 were rejected due to incomplete information. Therefore, a total of 140 questionnaires were used for the study. Primary data were collected through the use of well-structured questionnaires. The questionnaire focuses on demographic, socio-economic characteristics as well as data on conflict management and rural development. Data were analyzed using descriptive.

3.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Over the years researchers have studied the conflict theory in order to understand what the root causes of conflicts, are their effects on rural development and how they can be managed for effective and sustainable development. According to Hornby (1995), conflict is a serious disagreement, argument, struggle and serious difference of opinions, wishes or a clash. The threat is directed towards limiting or eliminating the access of one party to some resource or goal (Robinson, and Clifford 2010). This could be seen in cases of land disputes between crop farmers and grazers in the grass-fields where they share the same environment for farming and grazing.

The conflict theory attributes to a society the characteristics of coercion, division, hostility, dissension conflict, mal-integration and change. Klein and Ritti (1980) stated that conflict has various components which include; differences in tasks, values, attitudes and goals priorities as groups try to gain control over scarce resources. According to Ekong (2003), conflict may arise where there is difference of opinion between group leaders or in situations where one group tends to be exploiting the other. Conflict between personalities may lead to group quarrel and division of the community into several factions. Challenge to the security of the community may engender conflict. Conflict has both positive and negative effects on the society. Its negative effects include the disruption of social unity, generation of bitterness which may lead to destruction of property and bloodshed, generation of inter-group tension, disruption of normal channels of cooperation and diversion of members' attention from group's goals. Conflicts have been perceived to begin with the basic premise that



there should be a different distribution of some scarce resources in society and that one group or individual should have more equitable opportunity to maximize their potential than others. Conflict emanates from the insatiable nature of human wants; competition for scarce resources is the foremost cause of community or inter-group conflicts. This is most common with crop farmers and grazers who need the land for their activities. Another cause of conflict is associated with inter-dependence. If two groups depend on one another there tend to be more conflicts among them (Walton, Dolton and Caffety, 1991) Also economic relations have led to conflicts which in turn have led to change.

Pelican (2000) identified ethnic conflict and integration as problems of inter-ethnic relation facing the Fulbe grazers and their neighbouring crop farmers. Since their migration into the Grass-fields of the North-West, the relationship between the pastoral Fulbe and crop farmers has been both advantageous and problematic. Haman (2002), in his study in Mezam division, suggested that the future of pastoralists is tied to pastoralism itself. It was therefore clear that pastoralism in a very high population density and growth, where the pastoralists have no control over the grazing lands which they occupy, is an issue of major concern. In loosely structured group, conflict helps to stabilize and integrate its members by eliminating sources of dissatisfaction. Internal conflict serves as a means for asserting and ascertaining the relative strength of antagonistic interests in the situation of interaction. Conflict helps to bring to light the areas of discontent and suggested solutions to reach consensus and achieve equilibrium (Charles, 2005). This seems to be the situation in the North-West area in which the farmers and grazers tied together in the rural areas.

The grazing lands are considered as national lands which could be taken over at any time for any other development purposes by the government or some individuals. In former times, the pastoral Fulbe roamed with their cattle from one place to another as nomads and only settle temporarily where there was abundant pasture. Nowadays they are more sedentary practicing transhumance due to population pressure; which has reduced the grazing land. The settlement of grazers raises a number of conflicts, first of all within themselves since they find it difficult to give up their extensive grazing habits and secondly with local communities, who claim to be first settlers thus imposing a superiority complex and rights over land. Most farmers and grazers tend to resolve their problems by themselves, despite the setting up of a legislative procedure by the government to solve such disputes.

Despite efforts by the government at the liberalization of political space, the struggle for land natural resources remains one of the key factors fuelling instability in Africa. In the former settler colonies such as Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa, the failure to resolve historical claims arising from colonial expropriations and compounded by unequal re-distribution of land after independence, remains a primary source of conflict. Apart from dealing with issues relating to the redress of historical injustices and the attainment of social equity, land policy development and reform must address the problem of conflict prevention and restoration of peace and security in Africa (African Union, 2009).

4.0 CONSEQUENCES OF CROP AND NOMADIC FARMERS CONFLICTS

The nomadic farmers or grazers suffer from material damages when the crop farmers inflict physical injuries on the cattle by using cutlasses, spears or guns or by poisoning the cattle. In Santa Sub division in Pinyin in 1994 a grazer lost his entire herd as a result of attack on the cattle by crop farmers (Haman, 2002).

Open confrontation results in rural insecurity and out migration (Ngoufo, 1992). In the event of a conflict, properties and lives are destroyed leading to misery and hardship. The socio-economic consequences of agro-pastoral conflicts are felt at three levels. At the social level, misunderstanding between the crop farmers and nomadic famers or grazers creates some mistrust, tension and open confrontations between the opposing groups. Crop and nomadic farmer conflicts, have increased in the last decade because many of those who have been retrenched or retired from service can no longer afford to live in the urban areas. They return to the rural areas and embark on agriculture thus increasing the demand for farm land. This is very visible in the grass-field areas of different parts of Nigeria especially in Enugu State where some rural areas have greater population per square kilometer. The nomadic farmers in Nigeria and even the study area practice transhumance to avoid



over grazing the available limited land or reduce the herd size during the dry season when there is scarcity of pasture and water on the highlands. The animals are taken to the low lands and farmer-grazer conflicts become intensified during this period because as the farmers cultivate vegetables in the river valleys with little or no land for grazing. Therefore, farmer-grazer conflicts pose a serious problem to the people and affect rural development negatively as project is executed during chaos or conflict.

5.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results of the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1. Most of the rural crop farmers (56%) as well as the nomadic farmers (75%) fall in the age range 21-40 years while only a few of the respondents were above forty-one years of age. Also it can be seen that majority of the respondents (both crop farmers and nomadic farmers) were males. This explains the fact that most of those who practice crop farming or are engaged in grazing of animals are mostly matured males. However, in reality it is the women who are engaged in crop farming but when there is a conflict it is the men who carry out the attack or go to courts. The table also shows that 56% of crop farmers have a family size of ≤ 10 persons. It further shows that 53% of nomadic famers have a family size of ≥ 11 persons. These are peculiar situations in rural areas as most of these families lack the basic resources for development and consider land or cattle their only source of livelihood. Also most of these farmers and nomadic famers believed that it is better to have more children who will work on the farm or help in grazing the herd than hiring external labour.

Most of the crop farmers had at least a primary school education (44%) while 38% had no formal education. On the contrary, majority of the nomadic farmers (58%) had no formal education. This goes to show that education amongst the nomadic farmers is not considered a priority because they are known for their nomadic life style which makes them to constantly keep migrating from place to place. Also the low level of education amongst the nomadic famers is a product of several factors in the society. Many of them live in remote and enclave areas where schools are not available. This confirms the reason why the present government of Nigeria established so many nomadic educational institutions in the country especially in the northern parts of the country. Furthermore, 62% of farmers had a farm size of less than or equal to one hectare while only 4% of the rural crop farmers have a farm size of equal to or above six hectares. This goes to confirm that land holdings in the rural areas are usually small and is obtained mostly through inheritance. On the other hand 58% of nomadic farmers have cattle herds of 30 and below while 3% had herd size of equal to 151 and above cattle. The number of cattle a man has is considered as a sign of wealth therefore those with 50 or below herd are considered poor amongst the nomadic famers.

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of respondents

Variable	Crop farmers (frequency)	Percentage	Nomadic farmers (frequency)	Percentage
Gender				
Male	65	81	55	92
Female	15	19	5	8
Ages				
≤ 10	3	4	2	3
11-20	12	15	5	8
21-40	45	56	45	75
≥ 41	20	25	8	14
Educational level				
No formal education	30	38	35	58
Primary school	35	44	15	25
Secondary school	10	13	10	17
Tertiary education	5	6	NA	NA
Experience				



≤ 5	10	13	5	8
6-10	25	31	20	33
11-20	30	38	35	58
≥ 21	15	19	5	8
Household size				
≤ 5	5	6	3	5
6-10	40	50	25	42
≥ 11	35	44	32	53
Marital status				
Single	10	13	12	20
Married	50	62	45	75
Widowed	15	18	1	2
Widower	3	4	NA	NA
Separated	2	3	2	3
Land size (hectares)				
≤ 1	50	62	NA	NA
2-3	20	25	NA	NA
4-5	7	9	NA	NA
≥ 6	3	4	NA	NA
≤ 30	NA		35	58
31-60	NA		10	17
61-90	NA		5	8
91-120	NA		5	8
121-150	NA		3	5
≥ 151	NA		2	3
Herds (number of animals)				

Source: Field survey 2014; NA=Not applicable

Conflicts over the years have brought long sufferings and hardship on both the nomadic farmers and the crop farmers in Nigeria and Enugu State in particular. Table 2 below shows the various sources of conflict between these two groups and the various methods employed in trying to resolve these conflicts.

6.0 SOURCES OF FARMER-GRAZER CONFLICTS

Data on sources of crop and nomadic farmers' conflicts and possible methods of resolution are presented in Table 2 below. Results show that 37% of crop farmers and 8% of nomadic farmers consider competition over land as the major source of conflict between them. This indicates that land is a limiting factor for both and is declining as the population increases. On the other hand, 13% of crop farmers and 42% of nomadic farmers attribute the cause of conflict between them as being conflict of culture. This conflict of culture is a serious obstacle between crop farmers and nomadic farmers who are heterogeneous in race, occupation and religion. Other causes of crop and nomadic farmers' conflict include encroachment into grazing land, cattle trespass, as well as leadership struggle between the communities.

According to Baye (2002) the demarcation of grazing and cropping land in the grass field that took place since the colonial period in different parts of Africa is highly contested now because of the rapidly growing population, need of more land for agriculture and rural development. In the study area, many farmers are not generally satisfied with the manner in which crop and nomadic cases are handled by some local (traditional) and government officials. The general belief by the crop farmers is that the nomadic farmers sell their cattle to bribe the government officials, some traditional chiefs in order to twist judgments in their favour. The conflicts have contributed in depleting the primary assets of crop farmers and the nomadic farmers since they use their scarce resources to hire the services of solicitors. These are resources which could be used to educate their



children who are almost always remaining in a state of poverty and underdevelopment. The nomadic farmers even blame the crop farmers for the increasing encroachment into grazing land over the years and placement of crop farms along access routes to watering points and transhumance tracks across the country and the study area.

Table 2: Sources of nomadic/rural farmers' conflicts and possible methods of resolving them

Sources of conflicts	As seen by rural farmers (frequency)	Percentage	As seen by Nomadic farmers (frequency)	Percentage
Competition over land	30	37	5	8
Cattle trespass	25	31	10	17
Leadership struggle	8	10	15	25
Conflict of culture	10	13	25	42
Corruption	5	6	NA	NA
Encroachment into grassing land	2	3	5	8
Methods of conflict resolution				
Traditional councils	30	37	20	33
Magistrate courts	10	12	10	17
Peaceful settlement (ADR)	20	25	10	17
Deliberate escape	3	4	2	3
Law enforcement	5	6	7	12
Agricultural agents	2	3	1	2
Land commissions	2	3	2	3
Open confrontations	8	10	8	13

Source: Field survey 2014

NA=Not applicable

7.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the discussion on this paper, it is obvious that farmer-grazers conflicts in any parts of Nigeria and that of Enugu State are centered mainly on cattle owners and crop farmers. The population of both crop and nomadic farmers is rapidly increasing but land remains fixed. The research have found that majority of the causes are seen in terms of competition on land, cattle trespass, struggle for leadership, conflict of culture and corruption by some officials. Based on the above premise, and other relevant issues raised in this research, it is therefore, considered very necessary that to meet with the demand of the society, the government and other interested policy makers may find the following under listed recommendations useful.

In view of the rapid population pressure and declining farmlands there is the need to adopt improved farming techniques. The farmers should adopt intensive cultivation by using improved seeds and farm inputs. The pastoralists should adopt a viable and intensive system of grazing in order to cope with the rapid demographic pressure on the grass fields across the country. They should embark on greater fodder production to feed the cattle especially in times of scarcity during the dry season. The government at different levels should intervene and carryout periodic sensitization workshops for both crop and nomadic farmers.

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