Herder and Crop Farmer Conflict: A Perspective in North-Central Nigeria

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Abstract

Conflict in the Nigerian agricultural community has in recent times attracted attention at the national level, this is because crop farmers have fled their communities due to the violence. This study was conducted in the north-central region of Nigeria to investigate the conflict between crop farmers and herders in the area. The study used the random sample technique, where one hundred and twenty crop farmers were sampled and interviewed from selected communities. Descriptive statistics, Likert-type scale, and Chi-square were used for the analysis. Observations revealed that the farmers are aware of the existence and location of the stock route. Results revealed that the triggers of conflict between the two stakeholders in the agricultural community include rape, rustling, crop damage, pollution of the water point, access to grazing lands, and bush burning. The implications of the conflict include loss of property, loss of lives, and crop damage. Identified institutions involved in resolving conflict in the area are traditional institutions, farmer associations, local government authorities, and the court of law. The study further revealed that the institutions' effectiveness in resolving conflicts varies with the triggers. The analysis further reveals that the traditional institution is the most effective in managing the conflict but the least used avenue in the study area. Therefore, it was recommended that grazing reserve demarcation for herdsmen should be carried out along the various grazing tracks to avoid encroachment into farmland.

Keywords: Conflict Management, Farmer/Herder, Grazing Land, Stock Route, Triggers of Conflict

INTRODUCTION

Conflict is prevalent in all spheres of human endeavor; it is the occurrence of disagreement or a clash between and among groups or individuals. The agricultural sector in Nigeria is not an exception to the conflict situation; hence there has been a lingering hostile relationship between crop farmers and herders. Among all natural resources, access to land has remained a dominant factor underlying contentions among different groups, especially crop farmers – herders. This has given rise to aggressive and violent engagements between these groups. Crop farmers derive their livelihood through the ownership, and management of land resources and the cultivation of same for agricultural produce: While herders own and manage livestock for their livelihood. Herdsmen in Nigeria rely on the natural wild vegetation to graze their cattle, the quality and quantity of the vegetation and water availability is the attraction to graze in a particular location and time. Ofuoku and Isife, (2009) stated that conflict between crop farmers and herdsmen is an old phenomenon. Farmers - herders clashes have become widespread among coastal countries of West Africa; Nigeria is not an exception, such conflicts abound and are widespread all over the country. In recent times, for instance, quite some farmers were displaced and rendered homeless in the latest hostility between crop farmers and herdsmen (Amnesty International, 2018). Cotula and Toulon (2004) reported that conflicts have not only heightened the level of insecurity but have also demonstrated a high potential to exacerbate the food crisis in Nigeria due to the loss of farmer lives, animals, crops, and other valuable properties. Nyong and Fiki, (2005) reported that resource-related conflicts are responsible for over 12 percent decline in per capita food production. In recent times many farmers have fled from their communities due to killings, and destruction of farm crops, livestock, properties, and other infrastructures by the herdsmen most especially in north central Nigeria like Benue, Plateau, Kogi, Nassarawa, Taraba, Niger, and Kwara (Ilo et al., 2019). Furthermore, many casualties were recorded from January 2014 to March 2018 as a result of farmer – herder conflicts in Niger state (Amnesty International, 2018). The lack of harmony among the key players in Nigeria's agriculture sector is a drawback to the aspiration of the country's goal of achieving food security. Furthermore, the farm families involved, who constitute a majority of the country's poor would be most affected. It is therefore pertinent to explore the dynamics of the crisis to better understand the scenario and proffer approaches to managing and coping with the situation in a sustainable manner. Against this backdrop, the causes and consequences of the conflict between the crop farmer and herdsmen, the occurrence of conflict, and institutions managing and coping with the conflict were examined in the study area.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical background

Karl Max's theory of structural conflict posits that the cause of conflict between groups is an unequal distribution of economic resources, leading to discontent and, eventually, revolution. The herder-farmer conflict can be situated broadly in social conflict, specifically conflict of interest. It is posited that conflict is a distinct category of social behavior where two parties want to have something they cannot exclusively have (Rummel, 1976). Conflict is an existing condition of disagreement between at least two parties (Nicholson, 1992). In other words, the pursuit of incompatible objectives by two parties usually results in a conflict situation. Hence, conflict is inevitable when two or more groups struggle over power and resources; likewise, it may involve physical hostility (Jeong, 2000). Such struggle may involve violent engagement resulting in bodily harm and loss of life. Be that as it may, not all diversity in perception results in physical hostility. Therefore, conflict might just be an alternate view of an issue or circumstance (Barash and Webel, 2002).

Furthermore, the resource dependency theory highlights the relationship between organizations and the resources they need to operate (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). These resources could be human, material, or financial, and the scarcity of which places those not in control of such resources at risk of stagnation and eventual extinction. Farmers and herders alike depend on land as a resource, hence, both parties seek access and control for land-base resources such as water points, grasslands, forests, etc. Conflict as part of human socialization is most often than not generated by competition for this scarce resource. The struggle for access and ownership of this resource base has continued to precipitate mutually exclusive dominance behavior among users. Hence, natural resources such as water points, grasslands, forests, and forest resources continue to generate conflict within and between groups such as farmers and herders. This study hinged on resource dependency and structural conflict theories.

Conceptual framework

There are three approaches to the conceptualization of conflict, these are the social-psychological conceptualization of conflict, the sociological concept of conflict, and the semanticist conceptualization of conflict (Bernard 1957). The social-psychological concept has to do with the individual and involves statistical, clinical, and experimental processes. Under this concept, issues considered have to do with hatred, hostility, stereotyping, scapegoating, aggression, fighting, quarreling, and violence. The sociological conceptualization is concerned with the relationships between systems (groups). This is more inclusive in that it includes the functional interaction pattern of humans. This approach utilizes historical data, statistical analysis, individuals, content analysis, and possibly mathematical deduction. In this concept, conflict arises as a result of incompatible or mutually exclusive goals. Such goals cannot be met simultaneously even though they are both desirable. Such conflicts may be viewed as rational. The semanticist conceptualization views conflict as an outcome of a verbal or conceptual misunderstanding. This approach is hinged on the ability to communicate adequately to eliminate misunderstanding among groups. The philosophy of this approach is that the universe is in fundamental harmony, and conflict happens when there is an error (Bernard 1957). This work is situated in the sociological conceptualization of conflict (Figure I).

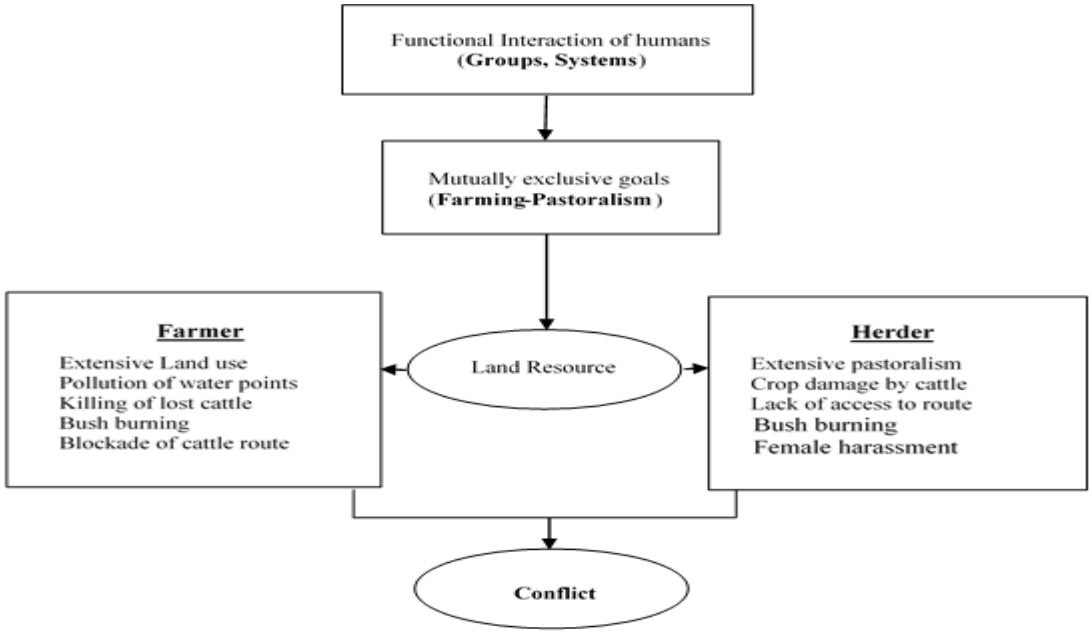

Figure I: Conceptual Framework of herder/farmer conflict
Source: Authors' construct 2021

Empirical Evidence

Causes of Herder-Farmer Conflict

Conflicts between herders and crop farmers have resulted in increased violence and general insecurity in Nigeria. The incidences have resulted in citizens being consistently murdered and properties destroyed. Sunday (2013), reported a significant positive relationship between freshwater scarcity and conflicts among farmers and herders in Northern Nigeria. The study further revealed that the struggle for access to the water source is among the most potent predictor of the causes of conflict in the zone. Hoffmann et al. (2008) opined that the connection between crop farmers and cattle herders began worsening when the farmers started to raise dairy cattle which led to the utilization of crop residue by the

farmers thereby creating scarcity for the herders. Ofuoku and Isife (2009), reported the destruction of crops, overgrazing of land, female harassment by the herders, contamination of streams by cattle, disregard for local traditional authorities, and indiscriminate bush burning as causes of conflict between the two parties in Delta state, Nigeria. De Haan (2002) asserted that damage to crops by cattle and other property (water system and infrastructure) by the cattle herders themselves are the major causes of conflict mentioned by the farmers, though setting ablaze of rangelands and fadama and blockage of the stock route and water points by crop farmer are critical direct reasons cited by the cattle herders. Aliyu (2015), researched the causes of conflict between the herder and farmer in Katsina State, Nigeria. He identified crop damage by cattle, encroachment of cattle routes, inadequate grazing reserves, lack of access to water points, pollution of water points, and cattle rustling among others as the causes of conflict in the state.

The most predominant cause of conflict between these two agricultural-land users is the obstruction of water points and damage to crops (Aliyu, 2015). Adebayo and Olaniyi (2008), found that farmers' and herders' socioeconomic variables such as age, religion, gender, education, marital status, and place of residence were significantly related to the causes of the conflict. Also, Bello (2013) enumerated the major causes of herders-farmers conflict including the damaging of crops by cattle and other properties (reservoirs, water system, and infrastructure), setting ablaze of rangelands, fadama, and blockage of stock routes.

Effect Of the COnflict On LivelihOOd

The effects of conflict between the farmer/herder include a drop in crop yields and harvest, which results in reduced income for farmers. Other effects include displacement from ancestral homes and loss of life, properties, and stored produce (Ofuoku and Isife, 2009). Dimelu et al., (2017), also asserted that socioeconomic life, crop harvest, and farm communities are disturbed when such conflicts occur (Nweze, 2005). The conflict also depletes farmers' savings and reduces credit qualification and repayment capability. Summarily, the food security status of the farmer and the food value chain to urban inhabitants are threatened (Ofem and Inyang, 2014).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Study area

The study was conducted in Niger state in the north-central zone of Nigeria. The state lies on latitude 8° to 11°:30' North and Longitude 03° 30' to 07° 40' East. The State has a land area of 74,244 square Kilometres, which is 8% of the total land area of Nigeria, and a population of about 3,950,249 (National Population Commission, 2006). The ethnic groups in the state are Bissan, Dibo, Fulani, Gbagi, Hausa, and Nupe. The area has two distinct seasons which are wet and dry. Rainfall of about 1000-1500mm per annum with a relative humidity of 62% and temperature ranges between 29^0 - 32^0C. The area is agriculturally oriented with a large percentage of its populace fully engaged in farming and agro-allied activities. The major crops grown in the area includes maize, sorghum, cowpea, cassava, millet, sesame, yam, melon, and soybean.

Source of data collection

The study utilized primary data collected from Bosso, Shiroro, and Munya local government areas of Niger state. The data were collected using the interview method with the aid of a structured questionnaire. The locations were purposively selected for the study due to the high occurrence of crop farmer–herder conflicts in the area.

Sampling technique and sampling size

A mixture of sampling techniques was utilized for the study. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used for the study. One hundred and twenty crop farmers were sampled and interviewed from the selected communities. This research utilized both quantitative and qualitative variables (Kothari, 2004). The quantitative variables were measured as intervals and ratios, these include age and effectiveness of conflict-resolving strategies (Sarantakos, 2005). Qualitative variables were measured in ordinal and nominal terms, these include among others educational level, gender, marital status, and other demographic variables (Kerlinger, 1986). These variables were organized utilizing frequencies and percentages.

Analytical technique

A combination of analytical techniques was used for the study. This comprises descriptive statistics, Likert - type scale, and the Chi-square. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequency distribution, and mean, were used to describe and categorize the socioeconomic characteristics of respondents, causes and consequences of conflict, and occurrence of conflict. While the Likert-type scale and Chi-square were used to further evaluate the institutions managing the conflicts.

RESULT AND DISCUSION

Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents

Results show that most of the respondents 76.70% are males while the remaining 23.30% are females (Table 1). This finding implies that males are dominant in crop farming in the study area, perhaps the reason being that men are more energetic and active when it involves tedious farm production activities than women.

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	92	76.7
Female	28	23.3
Total	**120**	**100.0**
Age of respondent		
< 25	21	17.5
26 – 35	40	33.3
36 – 45	28	23.3
46 – 55	24	20.0
56 – above	7	5.8

Mean	**46**	
Total	**120**	**100.0**
Marital status		
Single	29	24.2
Married	62	51.7
Widow	3	2.5
Divorced	14	11.7
Separated	1	.8
Widower	11	9.2
Total	**120**	**100.0**
Educational level		
Quranic	21	17.5
Primary	15	12.5
Secondary	29	24.2
Tertiary	20	16.7
Adult education	5	4.2
Non-formal	30	25.0
Total	**120**	**100.0**
Extension service		
Yes	26	21.7
No	94	78.3
Total	**120**	**100.0**

Source: field survey, 2018.

This finding is in line with the report of Adesiji et al., (2012) who asserted that male dominance and supremacy are prevalent in Nigeria's agricultural community. The mean age of the respondents was found to be 46 years, however, the result reveal that 74.1% (simple majority) of the farmers were below the mean age indicating that farmers are still in their active and productive years.

This finding implies that crop farmers may respond strongly to aggressive actions from any group that constitutes a threat. The tendency for conflict/disagreement/aggression to occur would be high due to youthful exuberance. Furthermore, findings concerning marital status revealed that 51.7% were married. It was also observed that about 11.7% of crop farmers were widowed, 11.7% divorced, and 8% were separated respectively. Further observation revealed that the majority (75%) of the respondents had formal education. The implication of this finding is that crop farmers that had formal education would be more enlightened than those that had no formal education and thus likely to be more refined in the manner they carry out their business. Regarding extension contact, the study reveals that a simple majority (78.3%) of respondents do not have access to extension services relating to the conflict. This finding implies that crop farmers are left to interpret their rights and privileges without recourse to the rights and privileges of other land users. This may lead to unpleasant situations and repercussions.

Level of awareness of stock route among farmers

Passage (stock route) for livestock movement has for long been mapped out across Nigeria, in the past, such passages were adhered to by crop farmers and herders alike. Strict compliance with the stock routes forestalls encroachment by either party into the other's rights and privileges to access land resources. Doubtful is the situation in recent times as to whether or not adherence to the stock routes are been complied with. Observations from the study showed that the majority (83.3) of the farmers in the study area know the stock routes (Table 2).

This finding is contrary to the report of Ajibefun, (2017) who asserted that the majority of the herders–farmers in their study area are not aware of the existence of stock routes. Further findings showed that a simple majority (83.3%) of the respondents have local stock routes around their community. This is because both crop farmers' and herders' conflicts are prevalent in the area, and to ensure harmony in the community, passages are created for herders to access water points and graze lands. The existence and location of the routes are also known to a majority of crop farmers (81.7%). This finding implies that all things being equal clashes between the two parties should be minimal provided the stock routes are utilized. The question that begs for an answer is "what then causes the conflicts between crop farmers and herders?"

Table 2: Level of Farmer Awareness of Stock Route

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Knowledge of route		
Aware	100	83.3
Not aware	20	15.8
Total	120	100.0
Local stock route		
Yes	100	83.3
No	20	16.7
Total	120	100.0
Location of route		
Aware of location	98	81.7
Not aware of the location	22	18.3
Total	120	100.0

Source: field survey, 2018.

4.3 Seasonality of crop farmers and herders conflict

The conflict between crop farmers and herders does happen during the rainy and dry seasons, be it as it may, the frequency varies between seasons. Figure 1 shows that 93.3% of the respondents reported that the conflict mostly happens during the rain-fed cropping season.

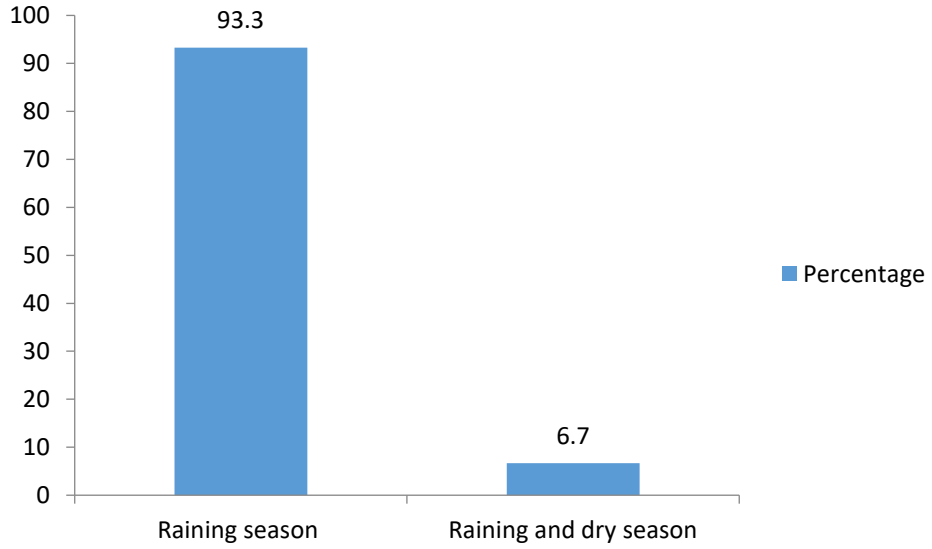

Figure 1: Seasonal Occurrence of Conflict between Crop Farmers and Herders

Source: field survey, 2018.

This is so because crop farming in the country depends on rain for the moisture requirement of their crops. Hence, farmers seize the opportunity of the season and cultivate all available cultivable land in the community; with the occupation of the cultivable lands by the crop farmers, the herders have to make do with what is left. During the off-season, the conflicts are rather minimal (6.7%), this is because just a few crop farmers utilize the dry season to cultivate crops through irrigation. This finding implies that sensitization on adherence to stock routes by both parties through extension can be intensified to forestall or minimize incidences of conflicts in the agricultural community during the rainy season.

Triggers and implications of conflict between crop farmers and herders

Triggers of conflict between crop farmers and herders

The right to enjoy land resources is mostly the privilege of the indigenous people of an area. This is buttressed by the land tenure regimes operational in a region. Hence, the root cause of conflicts in Nigeria's agricultural community is access to nature's bounty, in this case, land resources. However, the triggers of conflict situations are usually the disregard for the rights and privileges of the other party to access the resource. The major trigger (causes) of conflict between the herdsmen and crop farmers ranges from crop destruction by cattle, indiscriminate bush burning, rape cases, early commencement of grazing, and pollution of water points. Observation reveals that the major cause of conflict between herdsmen and crop farmers is the destruction of farmers' crops (Table 3). The situation where stray cattle destroy crops on the farm most often than not constitutes a colossal loss to the farmer. The damage incurred by the farmer as a result of cattle incursion into the farm is usually not a concern to the herder. There are allegations that cattle encroach into farms to graze under the watch of the herdsmen or even deliberately driven into un-harvested farmlands. This finding is in agreement with Tonah (2006) who pointed out that the most frequent cause of herders and crop farmers conflict is the destruction of crops by cattle. Land is a natural resource that many lay claim to because of being the first to take possession or dwell in the area.

Table 3: Triggers of conflict between crop farmers – herders

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Crop damage	108	25.41	1st
Indiscriminate bush burning	77	18.12	3rd
Rape	64	15.06	4th
Early grazing	62	14.59	5th
Pollution of water	34	8.00	6th
Access to grazing lands	80	18.82	2nd

Source: field survey, 2018.

Results show that access to grazing lands is another major cause of herders' and crop farmers' conflict. The herders believe that land is a common resource endowed by nature hence they should not be prevented from accessing it. Another cause of conflict between the crop farmer and herders is bush burning by the herders in the study area. This happens during the dry season when dry grasses are set on fire to facilitate the regeneration of fresh pastures. Such fires may destroy crops on the farm which attracts negative reac-

tions from farmers. This is because, in the process of burning, the fire spreads into adjourning farms thereby destroying crops stands and those stored in bans.

This finding is in line with Ofuoku, (2010) who reported that bush burning destroys crops on the field which is considered a major trigger of conflict between farmer-herder. During the dry season herders believe that if the dried vegetation is burnt, fresh pasture would regenerate, the traditional practice of bush burning is common among herders. In every society rape is taboo, in Africa particularly, herders have been accused of raping women in the bush. This finding is corroborated by Ofuoku and Isife, (2009) who pointed out that rape is one of the major triggers of conflict in Nigeria.

Implication of crop farmers and herders conflict

The implications of the conflict between crop farmers and herders range from loss of property, the decline in the income of the farmer, loss of lives, crop damage on the farm, and loss of harvested crops due to arson. Figure 2 presents the aftermaths of farmer - herder conflict. The study reveals that the majority (32 %) of the respondents had experienced a reduction in farm income during such conflicts; while 12% lost their properties (Figure 2). The study also observed that 18% of the respondents experienced the loss of a relation or community member from the conflicts. The crop farmer-herder conflict has left many widows and orphans in its wake. This finding is in line with the report of Amnesty International, 2018; Ofuoku and Isife, 2009 pointed out that loss of lives always trails attacks by herdsmen.

Furthermore, 7% of the respondents lost their crops during the conflict. The study also reveals that 31% of the respondents have their harvested crops burned down during the conflicts (Figure 2). Some crop farmers lost a whole or part of their crops during indiscriminate bush burning. This result is in line with Ofuoku, (2010) who pointed out that the reduction in output and income of farmers is an outcome of crop damage by cattle and indiscriminate bush burning.

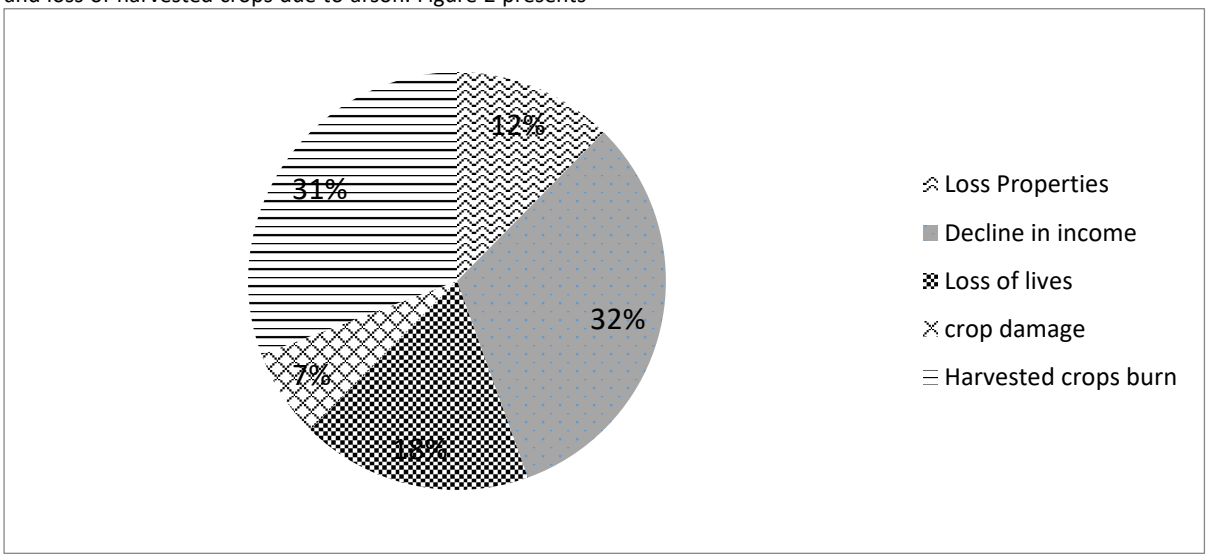

Figure 2: Implications of crop farmers and herders' conflict
Source: field survey, 2018.

Displacement of crop farmers in the host communities was also observed. Farmers flee or abandon their communities when such conflicts occur. This is because farmers fear reprisal attacks by herders. Female farmers stopped going to distant farms for fear of attack by herdsmen, Also, displaced farmers have become a source of liability to other farmers whom they have to beg for food, and this has created a vicious cycle of poverty in the community. Furthermore, findings reveal that farmers experienced crop damage during the pre-harvest period and the harvesting period.

Conflict management institutions and settlement strategies

Conflict is inevitable, however, the escalation to physical aggression must be prevented through interventions targeted at making or keeping the peace. The conflict in the Nigerian agricultural community has attracted the attention of both governmental and non-governmental organizations. The study identified conflict management institutions as reported by the respondents in the study area which include; courts of law, traditional institutions, farmer associations, and Local Government Authorities (LGA). The majority (75.8%) of the respondents reported that conflict in the study area was mostly resolved through traditional rulers while a few reported resolution through farmer associations (Table 4). Further observation revealed that settlement of damages inflicted on a victim is usually through payment of compensation, a verbal warning, or an amicable resolution (Table 4). Findings also show a verbal warning to be the most utilized means of settlement for conflict triggers in the study area.

The implication of this finding is that damages incurred from herder encroachment on farms by crop farmers are most often not compensated. The prevalence of such a situation will worsen the already bad situation; giving rise to aggressive behavior towards the herders by the crop farmers. Table 4 further reveals that a simple majority (54.17%) indicated that the judgment they received was not adequate to compensate them for the damage incurred. This means that they are not satisfied with the outcome of the conflict settlement.

Table 4: Conflict management institutions and strategies

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Institutions		
law court	10	8.3
traditional rulers	91	75.8
farmers association	6	5.0
local government authorities	13	10.8
Total	120	100.0
Means of settlement		
payment of compensation	24	20.0
verbal warning	80	66.7
amicable resolution	16	13.3
Total	120	100.0
Victim's disposition to settlement		
Judgment is not adequate	65	54.17
Judgment is adequate	55	45.83
Total	120	100.0

Source: field survey, 2018.

Suitability and effectiveness of conflict management institutions in the study area

This section assesses the association of management institutions with the triggers of conflicts between crop farmers and herders. It also examined the perception of the crop farmers as it concerns the effectiveness of the institutions in resolving conflict situations in the study area. Results show that the courts are significantly associated with the conflicts triggered by bush burning and access to grazing areas at a 1% and 10% significant level (Table 5).

Table 5: Cross-tabulation of institutions with conflict triggers

Triggers	Traditional Rulers	Courts	Local Government	Crop Farmer Association
Rape	2.73	2.46	14.67**	11.01*
bush burning	3.66	29.46***	7.98*	3.06
Grazing area	0.32	9.81*	18.85***	4.94
Theft of cattle	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.60

Source: field survey, 2018.

Furthermore, the Local Government councils seem to be significantly associated with conflicts triggered by rape, bush burning, and access to grazing areas at 5%, 10%, and 1% respectively: Whereas the crop farmer association is significantly associated with only rape as a trigger of conflict at 1%. These findings imply that these institutions (the courts, local government councils, and crop farmer associations) are more often than not engaged in resolving these conflicts situations: Of concern is the non-significance of the association of the traditional institution to any of the triggers. This implies that the traditional institutions are not engaged at a significant level in conflict resolution in the study area. Does this mean that the traditional institution cannot resolve the conflicts? Doubtful as it may appear to be, the traditional institution is endowed with instruments of authority to wade through the intricacies of the relationship between the crop farmer and the herders; however, that would not be without support from the government. Furthermore, of critical concern is the non-significance of any of the institutions with cattle rustling. This is because rustling is a criminal act and hence if the culprit is not apprehended the best that could happen is to allege a suspect.

The effectiveness of a strategy to an objective is established when the desired outcome is obtained, and the intervention of the highlighted institutions in resolving conflicts can only be said to be effective when peace is restored or maintained as the case may be. The respondents were asked to indicate on a scale of 4 whether or not institutions involved in resolving conflict do achieve restoring peace or maintain peace. Furthermore, the responses were analyzed using the Chi-square model to determine the significance of their responses. The responses are as presented in Table 6 below; results indicate that courts are effective in resolving conflicts, this is evident in the residual for the response agree is 30. The result is significant at a 1% level of significance. For the traditional ruler, the residuals for the responses agree and strongly agree are 23 and 19 respectively. This indicates that most respondents agree that traditional institutions effectively resolve conflicts in the study area. The result for farmer associations shows residuals of 5 for disagree and 15 for agree indicating a popular opinion that the farmer associations also achieve the desired outcome when they engage in conflict resolution. The analysis returned a residual of 4 for the response 'disagree' and 19 for 'agree' to Local Government Committees. This indicates a popular opinion that the committees also achieve the desired outcome when they engage in conflict resolution. The results for all the response variables were found to be significant at the 1% level of significance. Turner et al., (2006) in their study in the Niger republic, reported a usually high level of success in conflict resolution involving internal committees such as village chiefs and council of elders. This finding corroborates the finding of this study on the suitability of committees in resolving conflict between the two groups.

Table 6: Chi-square analysis of institutional effectiveness in resolving crop farmer/herder conflicts

	Observed	**Expected**	**Residual**	Chi-Square
Courts				43.47***
Strongly Disagree	18	30	-12	
Disagree	28	30	-2	
Agree	60	30	30	
Strongly Agree	14	30	-16	
Traditional Ruler				60.73***
Strongly Disagree	4	30	-26	
Disagree	14	30	-16	
Agree	53	30	23	
Strongly Agree	49	30	19	
Farmer Association				20.40***
Strongly Disagree	11	30	-19	
Disagree	35	30	5	
Agree	45	30	15	
Strongly Agree	29	30	-1	
Local Government Committees				23.40***
Strongly Disagree	13	30	-17	
Disagree	34	30	4	
Agree	49	30	19	
Strongly Agree	24	30	-6	

Source: field survey, 2018.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Nigeria has vast arable land, however, effective governance seemed to be lacking in its administration, hence the farmer/herder conflict situation prevailing in the country. Conflict in the agricultural community is triggered by the infringement or otherwise of the right and privileges of either the crop farmer or herder. This research work identified rape, bush burning, grazing area, and theft of cattle as triggers of conflict between the farmer and the herder in the study area. The study also found the court of law, traditional institutions, farmer associations, and Local Government Authorities as conflict management/ resolution institutions in the area. Furthermore, the courts, traditional institutions, and farmer associations were found to be effective in resolving conflict between the farmer and herder.

The losses suffered as a result of the conflict by the farmer include crops (both on the field and harvested), properties, and life. Mediation between the two groups in a conflict situation is carried out by institutions in the community. The mediation strategies include compensation and amicable resolution of damages and tense conflict situations. Furthermore, the institutions involved in conflict resolution vary in their effectiveness in resolving conflicts between the stakeholders in the study area. It is therefore imperative to consider the effectiveness of an institution in the deployment of conflict management strategies. Hence, engaging these institutions as well as empowering them to handle conflict situations between conflicting groups is expedient for the peaceful coexistence of the herders and farmers and agricultural development in the area.

Farmers suffer losses through conflict with the herder, it is pertinent for government to have conflict managing committees comprising traditional leaders, farmer associations, security organizations, and the legal institution for prevention and mediation of conflict situations. Furthermore, sensitization of both the farmer and herder about the conflict triggers should be done to reduce the occurrence of such triggers in the study area. Limitations of this study reside in the exclusion of the herder's perspective as well as the lack of a cross-interaction between the two groups; this study believes that bringing the parties together would reveal more inherent causes of the conflict and provide insights for a solution. Future research should bring together the two groups through a focus group discussion and survey for a combined analysis and outcome.

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