

FARMER-HERDER CONFLICTS AND THE PLIGHT OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED WOMEN IN GUMA LGA OF BENUE STATE-NIGERIA, 2015-2021

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Abstract

Women and children are the most vulnerable people in most societies. Most of them are armless and defenseless. This group of people has been the worst hit by most violent conflicts, and this has consequently limited their contributions to the socio-economic development of their societies. The violent resource conflict between farmers and herders across Nigeria has been responsible for the displacement of millions of persons including women and children in several farming communities, especially in North-Central Nigeria. Most of the displaced persons are forced by circumstances beyond their control to reside in Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps where social amenities are either lacking or insufficient to meet their needs. Against this backdrop therefore, this paper examines farmer-herder conflict and the plight of Internally Displaced Women (IDW) in Guma Local Government Area (LGA) of Benue State. The paper is anchored on Relative Deprivation Theory (RDT) as its framework of analysis. The paper deploys mixed-methods approach with quantitative dominance in collecting and analyzing data. The research hypotheses were tested using non-parametric statistics (chi-square) at 5% level of significance. The findings of the study showed that the rising incidences of farmer-herder conflict resulted to an increasing number of IDW faced with numerous challenges ranging from inadequate shelter to inadequate food supply. However, the test of hypothesis showed no significant relationship between farmer-herder conflict and the plight of the IDW. The paper, therefore, recommends among others that the Federal Government should ensure that the basic needs of IDW and other vulnerable groups such as children, people living with disabilities and the aged are met in their various IDP camps while at the same time making prompt arrangements for their peaceful resettlement in their ancestral homes.

Keywords: Farmer-herder conflict, Internally Displaced Women (IDW), land resources, water sources.

Introduction

The West African sub-region in general and Nigeria in particular started experiencing an escalation in resource conflicts between nomadic cattle herders and sedentary crop farmers beginning from mid 2015 (Genyi, 2019). This conflict has since then become a common feature of States in North-Central Nigeria, especially Benue State. The conflict between the two groups has led to the

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death of hundreds of thousands of human beings and property worth millions of Naira have been destroyed, especially with the introduction of sophisticated weapons of warfare such AK-47s among other assault rifles. This was probably what Bagudu (2017) had in mind when he said that farmer-herder conflicts in North-Central Nigeria has taken a dangerous dimension in recent times with the introduction of highly sophisticated weapons of warfare such AK-47s and assault rifles among others. The conflict has also resulted to increasing numbers of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who have either relocated to relatively secure locations or IDP camps.

In Benue State, no fewer than sixteen LGAs have been affected by the menace of farmer-herder conflict with devastating consequences in the last decade. This include Katsina-Ala, Ukum, Logo, Kwande, Makurdi, Tarka, Buruku, Guma, Gwer West, Gwer East, Ado, Ogbadibo, Okpokwu, Agatu, Ohimini and Oju. To address the conflict, the Benue State government came up with the "Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law" in 2017. The implementation of this law resulted in mass exodus of herders from Benue State to neighbouring States from where they now launch attacks on the people of Benue State. Barely two months after the law had been implemented, had a group of nomadic cattle herders suspected to be Fulani attacked some farming communities in Guma and Logo LGAs of Benue State killing 73 crop farmers including women and children (Amnesty International, 2018) to show their disapproval of the law. According to the Governor of Benue State, Samuel Ortom, the rising incidence of farmer-herder conflicts in the State has a link with the implementation of the grazing law. He said:

I have warned over this. I have written to Mr. President and I have written to security agencies that *Miyetti Allah* anchored a meeting in Yola and threatened that unless we repeal the open grazing prohibition law, nobody would know peace. That they will kill, they will maim, they will rape and do all sorts of things and they have started doing it. And it is amazing that we are becoming a banana republic (Duru & Agbakwuru, 2021).

Nomadic cattle herders orchestrate attacks on Benue crop farmers because they believe that the farmers are responsible for the introduction of the law which deprives them access to fertile land, green pasture and water sources for open grazing. Consequently, many persons have been killed, permanently disabled or internally displaced including women and children (Aver, 2020). The women and children are vulnerable and have continued to face a lot of challenges as a result of this conflict. The conflict has the potentials to negatively affect the unity and security of Benue State in particular and the country at large (Tativ & Zasha, 2020). The conflict between crop farmers and cattle herders also negatively impacts on human capital formation as well as agricultural productivity and consequently, farm decision and livelihood activities (Abbass, 2012).

It is in the light of the above that this study sought to examine the relationship between farmer-herder conflicts and the plight of Internally Displaced Women (IDW) in Nigeria using Guma LGA of Benue State as a reference point, between 2015 and 2021. The justification for the choice of IDW was informed by the fact

that in Nigeria, there are about 1.7 million IDPs across the country out of which 70% are women and children (Aluko 2017). The paper is divided into eight sections. Section one is the introduction. Section two focuses on research hypotheses. Literature review is the focus of section three. Theoretical framework forms the thrust of section four. Research methodology is the focus of section five while data generated from the field survey are presented and analysed in section six and the results/findings are discussed in section seven. The conclusion is drawn and recommendations made in section eight.

Research Hypotheses

H_0 : There is no significant relationship between insecurity caused by farmer-herder conflict and the plight of Internally Displaced Women.

H_1 : There is a significant relationship between insecurity caused by farmer-herder conflict and the plight of Internally Displaced Women

Literature Review

In this section, relevant and related literature on farmer-herder conflicts are reviewed under two sub-headings, namely conceptual review and empirical review

Conceptual Review

Citing Coser (1956), Musa, Shabu and Igbawua (2014, p. 21) define conflict as a struggle between parties over desirable value. It refers to the struggle over values or claim to status and scarce resources, in which the aims of the conflicting parties are not only to gain the desired value, but also to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals. Conflict means struggles for opposing needs of natural resources that gives rise to deadly attacks between the herders and the farmers (Adewuyi & Bakare, 2020). The element of all conflicts is the existence of resource scarcity where the wants of all actors cannot be fully satisfied and where the quests for such resources result in conflict behavior (Mark & Snyder, 1971). Conflict refers to a clash or disagreement between two or more groups who have incompatible and sometimes competing differences. It occurs when parties or groups in a society perceives divergent views or believes that their aspirations or goals cannot be achieved simultaneously. In a way, conflict connotes a situation where two or more parties pursue similar goals but believe that such goals are achievable by just one of them and as such employ every resource within their disposal to hinder the other party from the attainment of such goal (Aliyu, Ikedinma & Akinwande, 2018)

The conflict between cattle herders and crop farmers is a resource conflict, which means the conflict by groups of people over access to and use of landed resources such as fertile land, green pasture, forest resources and water points (Yusufu, Audu & Akuva, 2020). Farmer-herder conflict refers to the conflict between nomadic cattle herders and sedentary crop farmers over ecological resources such as land and water sources. The conflict has been in existence since the beginning of agriculture but escalated in the last decade due to the

stiff contestation for shrinking ecological resources consequent upon the changing climatic conditions. Different sophisticated weapons of warfare such as AK-47s among other assault rifles have been introduced in the conflict with devastating consequences. The conflict has resulted to the death of thousands of people including women and children, permanent disability of able bodied crop farmers and displacement of people from their ancestral homes. Most of those displaced, especially the vulnerable groups, have either relocated to neighbouring States or have found solace at IDP camps in different locations in the State.

Many narratives have been given for the escalation of farmer-herder conflicts in Nigeria in the last decade. Scholars such as Ogoh (2019) and Akuva and Yusufu (2020) blame the conflict on climate change-induced migration of cattle herders from the Sahel region southwards to North-Central Nigeria. While climate change, insecurity and diseases among others serve as push factors; the good rainfall and greener pastures in the region especially in the Benue Valley serves as pull factors to the nomadic cattle herders (Idyorough, 2017). As more and more cattle herders find their way to places where they could get water and green pasture for their cattle all year round, they tend to increase the already increasing population of their host communities. This therefore makes the available land limited in relation to the competing needs for it. The stiff contestation for these limited ecological resources by the cattle herders and crop farmers, most times turns bloody resulting to the destruction of human lives and property.

Another explanation that has been given for the persistence of this conflict in Nigeria in general and Benue State in particular is the activities of traditional rulers (Musa, Shabu & Igbawua 2014; Ukase & Ityonzughul, 2020). The first point of call for most cattle herders whenever they come to a new community is the palace of the traditional ruler. These cattle herders pay the traditional rulers some money and at times give them some of their cattle in exchange for grazing rights. The cattle herders pay these traditional rulers on the assumption that community land belongs to these traditional rulers. Citing Morgan (2013), Ukase and Ityonzughul (2020, p. 6) carry this argument further when they said:

It is common knowledge that the common, average, ordinary, regular northerner respects, and reveres traditional ruler far over and above anybody else including the President of Nigeria. Armed with this attitude, the Fulani herdsmen, upon arrival in Tivland, pay courtesy visits to our Chiefs to allow for safe passage and grazing in their domain. They in turn offer them royalties in cash and kind (cattle). This, however, has gone beyond royalties only and has amounted to exploitation.

In some cases these traditional rulers would collect money from cattle herders and fail to give them land for grazing as agreed. This has also contributed to the persistence of conflicts between crop farmers and cattle herders, because the herders get frustrated as they are denied access to land for grazing. This was probably what Kengkeng (2018) had in mind when he said:

Check across the entirety of Tivland and you'll hardly find a traditional ruler without connections to Fulani herdsmen and almost none without a herd of cattle numbering in the hundreds. This relationship has been going on for years until lately when it upgraded to the sale of land. Grazing areas have been sold to Fulani herdsmen and they have been denied access to such lands in specific areas... Attempts to prevent the herdsmen from accessing the land led to rancor and fighting (Cited in Ukase & Ityonzughul, 2020, p. 6).

Other factors that have been identified as being responsible for the persistence of farmer-herder conflict in Nigeria include: pollution of water sources, destruction of crops/farmlands by stray cattle, land tenure system, cattle rustling, killing of stray cattle by crop farmers, encroachment of cattle routes by crop farmers and indiscriminate bush burning (Aliyu, 2015; Musa, Shabu & Igbawua, 2014; Shimawua, 2018; Akuva & Yusufu, 2018).

According to the Kampala Convention (2009), Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) is a person or group of persons who have been forced to flee their homes or places of habitual residence suddenly or unexpectedly as a result of armed conflict, internal strife, systemic violations of human rights or natural or man-made disasters, who have not crossed an internationally recognized State borders. IDPs can also be defined as persons who have been displaced by natural disasters or conflicts from their homes and traditional support structures and have not crossed the borders of their countries. IDPs are victims of man's inhumanity to man, which manifests in the forms of violent conflicts, armed banditry, terrorism, and natural disasters among others.

Durosaro and Ajiboye (2011) identified two components of IDPs, namely involuntary and voluntary movement. The former takes place within national borders as a result of violent conflicts, human rights violations and disasters which could either be natural or man-made. Involuntary movements give no choice to the people but to leave their homes and deprive them of the most essential protection mechanisms, such as community networks, access to services and livelihoods. The second component of IDPs is the movement within national borders. The IDPs face untold economic hardships, psychological trauma and social dislocations. Internally Displaced Women (IDW) in this context refers to women who have been forced by farmer-herder conflict to leave their homes suddenly and are residing in places other their homes in the State or other parts of the country. Most of the IDW live in IDP camps where social amenities are either lacking or limited in supply.

Empirical Review

Audu (2013) sought to examine the situations that constitute freshwater scarcity and the conditions under which such scarcity engenders violent conflict among crop farmers and cattle herders in northern Nigeria. The research adopted a survey design of an ex post facto type. The sample population consists of 150 crop farmers, 100 cattle herders and 50 respondents from government official, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and members of the public selected from 3 northern geo-political zones through purposive sampling technique. The

research instruments used for data collection were structured questionnaire and semi-structure interview schedule. Data analysis was done using Multiple Regression and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Findings of the study showed a significant positive relationship between freshwater scarcity and conflicts among crop farmers and cattle herders, and struggle for access to sources of water, and not water scarcity *per se*, was found to be the most powerful predictor of causes of conflict. The paper concludes that freshwater scarcity and conflicts instigate a loss of livelihoods to crop farmers, and contributes to diffuse and persistent violence such as ethnic clashes and regional interstate conflict.

Musa, Shabu and Igbawua (2014) sought to assess the conflict between herdsmen and crop farmers in Guma LGA of Benue State. The sample population consists of 160 heads of farming households and 40 herdsmen drawn from areas that have experienced farmer-herder conflicts through purposive sampling technique. Questionnaire, field observation and reports from the Benue State Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (BNARDA) were the research instruments used for data collection. Findings of the study showed that herdsmen are not accepted in their host communities. Further findings revealed that the role of traditional rulers, destruction of crops/farmland, contamination of water sources, and harassment of herdsmen by their host communities were the major causes of conflict between crop farmers and herdsmen in the area. The study equally revealed that displacement of both crop farmers and herdsmen, loss of human lives and property, and decrease in agricultural output were the major effects of the conflict. The paper concluded that the conflict is a setback to the development of agricultural sector and therefore recommended among others the creation of grazing reserves so that herdsmen can shift from traditional method of animal husbandry to modern methods.

Manu, Bime, Fon and Nji (2014) sought to investigate the effects of farmer-herder conflicts on rural development in the northwest region of Cameroun. 360 crop farmers and 360 cattle herders were selected through a purposive multi-stage sampling procedure. Questionnaire was the survey instrument used for to elicit information from target respondents. Data generated from the field survey were analysed using SPSS and Microsoft excel. Findings of the study showed that competition over land, cattle trespass, encroachment by crop farmers and conflict of culture were the major causes of the violent conflict between crop farmers and herdsmen in the area. The paper recommended among others that crop farmers should adopt viable technique of cultivation such as the use of organic manure and the use of night paddocks and ranching as forms of livestock rearing to minimize land pressure and reduce the incidence of farmer-herder conflicts in the area. Also, crop farmers should practice crop rotation and the use of organic manure on their fields while cattle herders should produce feed and fodder.

Aliyu (2015) sought to investigate the cause of farmer-herder conflict and the performance of management institutions towards the resolution of the conflict in Katsina State of North-Western Nigeria. The sample population

consists of 126 respondents who were mainly cattle herders and crop farmers selected using multi-stage sampling procedure. Data were collected from the field survey using structured interview schedule and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Descriptive statistics and logic regression analysis were used for data analysis. Findings of the study showed that crop damage by stray cattle, encroachment of cattle routes by crop farmers, pollution of water sources by cattle, indiscriminate bush burning, cattle rustling, land tenure system and changes in climatic conditions were the major causes of conflict in the State. Further findings showed that traditional institutions and Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) were the most effective mechanisms for resolving farmer-herder conflicts in the study area. The study recommended among others that mass campaign for formal education should be intensified in farming communities, and the amendment of the existing land use Act and the sedentarization of the herders.

Dimelu, Salifu, Enwelu and Igbokwe (2017) sought to examine the challenges faced by cattle herders in the conflict with farming communities. The sample population consists of 72 Fulani herders drawn from transit camps in the study area. Data were collected using structured interview schedule, FGDs and personal observations. Analysis of data was done using descriptive statistics and factor analysis. Findings of the study showed that the conflicts between cattle herders and crop farmers were caused by socio-economic, security, production practices, and institution related factors. Further findings revealed that cattle herders were faced with the problems of human and animal lives, displacement and economic losses leading to poor productivity. The paper therefore recommended among others that all stakeholders should intensify efforts to build cooperative and peaceful coexistence between crop farmers and cattle herders through public enlightenment, education, and campaign in agrarian communities. Also, government and NGOs should promptly intervene with aids/compensation to reduce vulnerability, persistence and further spread of conflicts between cattle herders and crop farmers in the communities.

Ogoh (2019) sought to explore the dynamics of the perennial farmer-herder conflicts in Plateau State of North-Central Nigeria from the perspective of Homer-Dixon's eco violence theory. The sample population consists of 384 respondents drawn through a multi-stage sampling procedure. A structured questionnaire was used to elicit information from the respondents based on a 5-point Likert Scale (LS). This was supplemented by Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interview (KII). Data generated from the field survey were analysed using descriptive statistical tools such as tables, frequency distribution, simple percentage, pie chart, bar chart and ranking. Findings showed a significant relationship between climate change and farmer-herder conflicts in the study area. Further findings revealed that killing of people, internal displacement of people, turning of youths into destroyers and the threatening of the evolution, growth and consolidation of credible civic culture in Plateau State. The study recommended among others the creation of grazing corridor and ranches rather than creating grazing reserves in order to address the problem of herders' encroachment on farmlands.

Badamasi (2020) sought to examine the escalation of the farmer-herders conflict in Southern part of Kaduna State. The paper argues that the conflicts between the two groups that have affected agricultural output as well as peaceful development of the area and the State in general between 2011 and 2018. The study utilizes quantitative techniques of one-on-one in-depth interview and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with 29 participants in the study area. The thematic analysis uses MAXQDA software 2018 to generate codes, themes and subthemes for the escalation of the conflict among the groups. Findings of the study showed the escalation of the conflict between the two groups is due to tending cattle by young children among both settled and foreign migrant herders as the key to the conflict escalation. Young and underage children lack the mature sense of reasoning to properly tend and coordinate the castles with minimal risk in crossing highways and public places couple with drugging attitudes tends to escalate any little arising issue by the intoxicated youth that could have been resolved amicably. On the basis of these findings, the paper recommended among others that the general public, authorities concerned and all stakeholders should put in place measures that would lead to de-escalation of the situation for gradual peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Apenda (2021) sought to assess the policies and interventions of government and other relevant stakeholders for the purpose of suggesting pragmatic opportunities for the prevention of violent farmer-herder conflicts in Benue State, Nigeria. The paper utilized both primary and secondary methods of data collection. Primary method involves collecting data from 240 crop farmers and 80 cattle herders via questionnaire administration. Descriptive statistical tools such as tables, frequency counts, and simple percentage were used for data analysis. The paper argues that the conflict between cattle herders and crop farmers have been politicized in the State which has consequently exposed both groups to social and economic deprivations. The paper therefore recommended among others that, the conflict should be depoliticized. Also, there is the need for Benue State government and the federal government to come together to discuss the pragmatic ways to address the menace so that both groups can create an enabling environment for development to thrive.

Theoretical Framework

The paper adopts Relative Deprivation Theory (RDT) as its framework of analysis. The theory was developed by Samuel Stouffer (1900–1960) after World War II in his book entitled *The American Soldier* written in 1949 (Adewuyi & Bakare, 2020). The central argument of the theory is that, it is not the objective condition of a person that determines his extent of dissatisfaction. His dissatisfaction instead depends on many factors that are cognitive and emotional (Musa & Aminu, 2017). This suggests that a person feels deprived and alienated or dissatisfied not on absolute, but relative terms. A person continuously compares himself to others around him and his dissatisfaction depends on his condition compared to that of others.

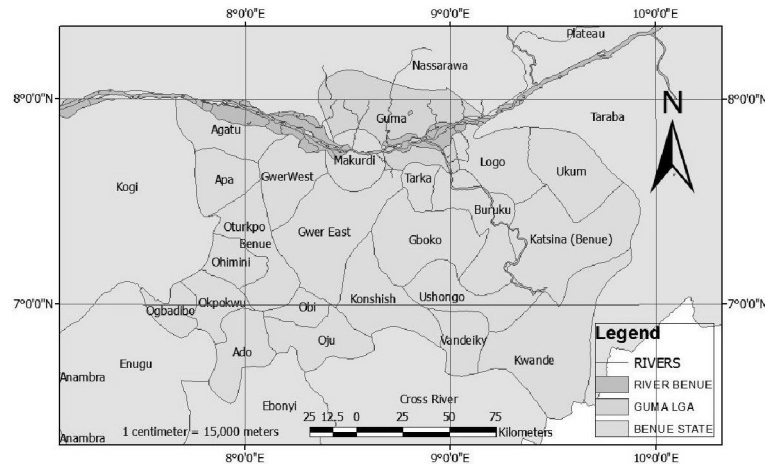
According to Musa and Adamu (2017, p. 250), Relative Deprivation is defined as a negative discrepancy between legitimate expectation and actuality. For Morrison (1971, p.675), the basic notion of Relative Deprivation is that of the feeling of deprivation and alienation on issues that affect one's interest, that deprivation and alienation occur in relation to a desired point of reference, often the reference group, rather than in relation to how little one has. Runciman (1966) argues that the necessary preconditions are wanting, comparison to others, deserving and future expectations.

According to Gurr (1970), Relative Deprivation refers to a discrepancy between the value expectations of individuals and their capability to fulfill these expectations, whereby expectations are understood as goods and life conditions individuals think belong to them (or should belong), while value capabilities are goods and life conditions individuals can attain (or maintain) with the means at their disposal. Besides, the theory is of the view that social change and movements, according to which people take action for social change in order to acquire something (for example, opportunities, status, or wealth) that others possess and which they believe they should.

In relation to the purpose of this paper, the violent attacks incessantly orchestrated by cattle herders on farming communities in Benue State is informed by the cattle herders believing that they are relatively deprived access to land for grazing and water for their cattle, which is their source of livelihood. Also, these cattle herders believe that the implementation of the "Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law" in 2017 was a plan by the State government to further deprive them of access to land for open grazing of their cattle. This explains why most of these cattle herders had to migrate to neighbouring States that do not have such laws in place.

Research Methodology

This study was conducted in Guma Local Government Area (LGA) of Benue State of North-Central Nigeria. The LGA is located between longitude 8° 21' - 9° 13' E and latitudes 7° 35' - 8° 8' N. The area lies in the extreme Northern part of Benue State. It is bordered in the North by Nasarawa State, in the East by Logo LGA, in the Southeast by Buruku LGA, in the South by Tarka LGA and in the Southwest by Makurdi LGA. Guma LGA extends over 2,925 Square Kilometers lies transversely to River Benue and its main tributary, River Katsina-Ala. The LGA has a population of 194,164 according to the 2006 census, and a projected population of 262,100 in 2016 with an annual population growth rate of 3.0%. Below is the map of Benue State showing Guma LGA (See figure 1):

Fig1: Map of Benue State Showing Study Area (Guma LGA)

Source: Ilevbare & Yusufu (2020, p.5)

Primary and secondary methods were employed to collect data. Primary method on the one hand involves collecting data via Structured Questionnaire (SQ) on a 5-point Likert Scale (LS) administered to target respondents. Twenty (20) respondents mainly women and ladies were drawn from each of the 6 IDP camps in Guma LGA of the State through convenience sampling technique. There are 2 IDP camps in Daudu, 1 each in Agasha, Uikpam, Ortese and Gbajimba. A total of 120 respondents formed the sample size for the study. The choice of the study area was informed by the fact that it has the highest numbers of IDP camps and also has a very high concentration of IDPs consequent upon farmer-herder conflicts in the State. Secondary method on the other hand entails that data were collected from books, journals and internet materials among others. Data gathered from the field survey were analysed using descriptive statistics. The research hypotheses were tested using non-parametric statistics (chi-square) at 5% level of significance.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

The respondents were asked to express their opinions based on the statements given in the SQ as tabulated below using 5-point Likert Scale of SA (5), A (4), U (3), D (2), (1). The **Relative Importance Index (RII)** of the respondents is computed thus: $5+4+3+2+1=15/5=3$

Decision Rule: If the **RII** is less than 3, the respondents *disagreed*; if the **RII** is equal to 3, the respondents are *undecided*; if the **RII** is greater than 3, the respondents *agreed and as such the statement is taken as important*.

Table 1: Relative Importance Index (RII) of the Plight of IDW

Source: Field Work, 2022

Analysis of data in Table 1 reveals that the inability of women to go back to their farms as a result of the conflict between crop farmers and cattle herders is the plight with the highest **RII (4.38)** ranked **1st**. Inadequate food supply to the IDPs with **RII (4.31)** is another important plight of the IDW ranked **2nd**. Inadequate health care services with **RII (4.23)** is yet another significant plight of IDW ranked **3rd**. Also considered an important plight of IDW consequent upon farmer-herder conflict is the problem of inadequate shelter with **RII (4.21)** ranked **4th**. Poor sanitary condition is also found to be an important plight of IDW with **RII (4.13)** ranked **5th**.

Test of Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses stated below were tested with the aid of non-parametric statistical tool known as the chi-square (X^2) at 5% (0.05) level of

Plight of IDW	significance	5	4	3	2	1	TWV	RII	RANK
Inability to go back to farm	$\chi^2 = \frac{(59 - 55)^2}{57}$	55	01	02	03	03	525	4.38	1 st
Inadequate food supply	$\chi^2 = \frac{(57 - 54)^2}{57}$	54	02	03	04	04	517	4.31	2 nd
Inadequate health care services	$\chi^2 = \frac{(55 - 50)^2}{53}$	50	06	06	03	03	508	4.23	3 rd
Inadequate shelter	$\chi^2 = \frac{(56 - 48)^2}{53}$	48	05	07	04	04	505	4.21	4 th
Poor sanitary conditions	$\chi^2 = \frac{(53 - 51)^2}{53}$	51	03	05	08	08	496	4.13	5 th

H₀: There is no significant relationship between insecurity caused by farmer-herder conflict and the plight of Internally Displaced Women.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between insecurity caused by farmer-herder conflict and the plight of Internally Displaced Women

General Decision Rule

The decision rule for statistical significance states that wherever the calculated chi-square is greater than the table value, the alternate hypothesis should be accepted, while the null hypothesis should be rejected. On the other hand, whenever the table value is greater than the calculated value, the null hypothesis should be accepted, while the alternate hypothesis should be rejected (Spiegel, Schiller & Srinivasan, 2004).

Table 2: Test of Hypothesis Table (Variables 1 & 2 on Table 1)

Source: Authors' Computation, 2022

$$df = (c-1)(r-1)$$

$$df = (5-1)(2-1)$$

$$df = (4)(1)$$

$$df = 4$$

$$\alpha = 5\% (0.05)$$

$$f_e = \frac{\text{Column Total} \times \text{Row Total}}{\text{Grand Total}}$$

Table 3: Observed Frequency (F_o) & Expected Frequency (F_e) Table

Source: Authors' Computation, 2022

$$X^2_c = 0.73$$

$$X^2_t = 9.49$$

$$df = 4$$

Decision

Since the table value is greater than the calculated value ($X^2_{tab.} = 9.49 > X^2_{cal} = 0.73$), the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted while the alternate hypothesis (H_1) is rejected. Therefore, the test of hypothesis suggests that there is no significant relationship between insecurity caused by farmer-herder conflict and the plight of Internally Displaced Women in Guma LGA of Benue State. This finding indicates that the plight of the IDW has no significant relationship with the conflict, even though the conflict was actually responsible for their displacement in the first place.

Discussion of Findings

Findings of the study showed that the most significant plight of the IDW in the study area is the inability of the women to go back to their farms. The implication of this is that the women are scared of going back to their farms for fear of being attacked by nomadic cattle herders who may lay ambush for them. This finding is in consonance with the results of related study carried out by Aver (2020) who found that women and children lose their sources of livelihood such as crop farming or cattle rearing due to farmer-herder conflicts. The direct consequence of this is the twin problems of unemployment and poverty of the women and other vulnerable groups that are dependent on them.

Another finding of the study showed that IDW are faced with the problem of inadequate shelter for themselves and their children. The accommodations provided for the IDW and other vulnerable groups are not enough considering the increasing numbers of IDPs that are moved to the limited numbers of IDP camps in the study area. Further findings revealed that the IDW are faced with problem of inadequate food supply. Since the IDW can neither go back to their farms nor have access to their farms, it follows logically that access to food would become difficult. The IDW only cope by depending on food supply from the government, well spirited individuals, and NGOs among others. And in most cases, the food supplied is not enough to satisfy all the IDPs. This finding agrees with the finding of similar study conducted by Adimula (2016) who found that the inability of the IDW to feed well exposes them to malnutrition.

The study also found that the IDW are faced with the problem of inadequate health care services and poor sanitary conditions. Even though health care services are provided for the IDW; they are not adequate to optimally cater for health needs of the IDPs whose number keeps increasing on a regular basis as a result of displacement of crop farmers consequent upon violent attacks orchestrated by cattle herders. This finding is in tandem with the results of similar study conducted by Iorhemen (2018) who found that women and children living in IDP camps as a result of farmer-herder conflicts have no access to medication and sleep on bare floors or anywhere they found themselves thus exposing them to chronic cough due to cold.

Lastly, the test of hypothesis showed that there is no significant relationship between insecurity caused by farmer-herder conflict and the plight of Internally Displaced Women in Guma LGA of Benue State. This finding suggests that there is no significant link between farmer-herder conflict and the plight of the IDW.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper examined the relationship between farmer-herder conflict and the plight of Internally Displaced Women (IDW) in Guma LGA of Benue State of North-Central Nigeria from the perspective of Relative Deprivation Theory. The paper deployed mixed methods approach in data collection and analysis

with quantitative dominance. The research hypotheses were tested using non-parametric statistics (chi-square) at 5% (0.05) level of significance. Findings of the study showed that IDW who reside in IDP camps are faced with challenges ranging from inadequate shelter to inadequate food supply. Also, the study found no significant relationship between farmer-herder conflicts and the plight of IDW in Benue State. Based on these findings, the paper made the following recommendations:

- a. The Federal Government in collaboration with the State Government and other stakeholders should ensure that the basic needs of IDW and other vulnerable groups such as children, people living with disabilities, and the aged are met in their various IDP camps.
- b. The Federal Government should synergize with the State government and other stakeholders to ensure prompt arrangements are made for the peaceful resettlement of IDW in their ancestral homes.
- c. The Federal Government should give the necessary support to the Benue State "Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law, and also ensure that open grazing prohibition becomes a Federal legislation.
- d. Benue State Government should review the "Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law" so as to amend any provision that may be discriminatory against the cattle herders.
- e. There is need for the Government to regularly educate the major stakeholders such as crop farmers and cattle herders on the provisions of the grazing law to enable them understand and appreciate it.
- f. Non-Government Organizations should always support Government's agencies such as the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) in providing humanitarian services to the victims of farmer-herder conflict on a regular basis.

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