

AN ASSESSMENT OF OPEN-GRAZING PROHIBITION AND RANCHES ESTABLISHMENT LAW (2017) ON DETERMENT OF FARMER-HERDER CONFLICT IN BENUE STATE

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Abstract

The study examined the Open-Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law 2017 on the determent of herders attacks in Benue State. Specifically, it assessed the effectiveness of the law, factors affecting the efficacy of the law. Marxist Political Economy theory was used in the study. The study adopted the survey research method, administering questionnaire to 376 respondents within the communities that have witnessed intense attacks by the herders. Analysis was based on frequencies and simple percentages. The major findings of the study were that, the law was not effective enough to prevent the herders' attacks in Benue state. Beside there was inadequate support from the Federal Government to enhance effective implementation of the law as well as political factors, where some citizens prefer to protect their political interest rather than the interest of the Benue people in general. It was observed that self-interest (in economic, religious or ethnic ties) has prevented many government functionaries from taking proactive measures to end the attacks. Therefore, there is need for value reorientation among the leaders in order to consider the interest of the masses too. Federal Government must be fair to all citizens (no matter their ethnic identity or religious inclinations) in addressing farmer/pastoralist clashes in order to prove that the country remains secular and to preserve Nigeria's unity in spite of the diversity of her people.

Keywords: Open-Grazing, Prohibition, Ranches Establishment, Law, Farmer-Herder, Conflict.

Introduction

Open grazing has over time remains one of the major challenges confronting security and sustainable development in Nigeria. Globally, grazing lands comprise the largest land use, estimated to cover about 25% of Earth's land surface (Tonah, 2016). Grazing reserves in Nigeria started during the pre-colonial era (Taiye, Dauda & Emmanuel, 2017). The attempt by the British in 1940 to separate the grazing land from the farm land, however, faltered because the Europeans imposed land use controls from economic and demographic dynamics in the pastoral system (Asner; Elmore; Olander; Martin & Harris, 2004).

Free grazing has positive and negative impact on the ecosystem. Positively, it aids in promoting nutrient dense soil and stimulating the growth of plant

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varieties through the droppings of the animals. These organisms can aid in carbon sequestration and water filtration. These nutrients and organisms are necessary for soil to be prosperous and capable of production at a very high level (Akpehe, Kwaghga & Akpehe 2018). However, open grazing equally has significant negative impacts on local biodiversity, such as destruction of native vegetation, soils and stream banks damage, increased soil erosion through increase in runoff and contamination of waterways with fecal waste (Adewuyi & Mustapha 2017). Repeated herdsmen attacks on farming communities in this region have posed a very serious threat to food and health security in the states that constitute the region and the Nigerian nation at large (Akpehe et al, 2018).

In Benue state alone for instance, Amina (2017) maintained that the herdsmen have killed over 1878 men, women and children in cold blood across 12 local government areas and have wantonly destroyed farm fields and other sources of livelihood, thereby forcing many into refugee camps where their health statuses are compromised. Similarly, cases of herders attacks on crop farmers have been experienced in Kogi, Nasarrawa, Niger, Plateau, Kwara, Kaduna and Taraba states etc. with high rates of destruction ranging from human lives to food and cash crops as well rural infrastructures. This ugly monster whose primordial cause is open or unrestricted grazing according to Eme, Uche, Onyishi and Ojeome (2014) has resulted in a drastic reduction in farm outputs, a development that has heightened the fear of hunger. Of course, Federal Government of Nigeria has just rolled a whooping figure of over 2.2 Million children that are ravaged by hunger in a country blessed with every resource. As a result of this, the Benue State Anti-Open grazing bill was signed into law by the Governor Samuel Ortom in October 2017 to ban open rearing and grazing of livestock in Benue state. The law was meant to see to the establishment of Ranches and also see to other matters relating to Open Grazing of animals. Its major aims and objectives are as follows:

- To prevent the destruction of farm crops.
- To bring to an imminent end clashes between farmers and herders.
- Protect the environment while optimizing the use of land.
- To prevent, control, and manage the spread of diseases.
- To create a conducive environment for large scale crop production etc.

The law provides that an intending Rancher is to send an application to the ministry of justice with written consent from the owner or family head of the land where he intends to set up the ranch, the land owner must also get a go ahead from community leaders before a one year lease can be granted to an intending rancher (Unini 2018)..

The Open-Grazing Prohibition Law also stipulates that permits already issued can be revoked by the ministry of justice at any time although with approval from the state government and compensation must be paid to the Rancher. Land owners are not allowed to sell a leased land under any circumstances. The law clearly states that besides the Ranch Owners and staff,

eligibility of people allowed to enter the ranch will be determined by the ministry of justice by implication, every ranch must be fenced and movement in and out overseen by the government. The law also stipulates that in cases where livestock wander into someone else's farmland and destroy crops/plants, the owner of the livestock would have to pay damages or pay some sort of compensation to the land owner (Unini 2018).

It is also interesting to note that Ranchers are strictly responsible for any injury, loss of life or any accident that might occur and they are strictly disallowed from carrying both licensed and unlicensed gun but they can hire registered security guards, defaulters shall be prosecuted under the Robbery and firearm provision act. Livestock can only be moved in Benue State through trucks and wagons and livestock wandering the street shall be impounded and can only claimed by the owner after paying fine which will be sent into the revenue account of the state. This law has been set up to regulate all issues regarding grazing and rearing of livestock in the state and all offenders are to be tried and prosecuted by the magistrate or the high court (Unini 2018).

There has been yearning aspirations by researchers to ascertain the effectiveness of the Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law 2017. This is due to the fact that, despite the establishment of the law, there are cases of open grazing in other parts of Benue State attendant consequences of farmers/herders conflict engendering loss of lives and property in parts of Benue state. It is in view of the above that the study is undertaken to evaluate the efficacy of Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law 2017 on the Resolution of herdsmen attacks on Benue farmers.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to evaluate the efficacy of Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law 2017 on the Resolution of herdsmen and farmers conflict in Benue State. The specific objectives of the study include to:

1. Examine the effectiveness of Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law 2017 controlling herding activities in Benue State.
2. Examine the efficacy of the Open Grazing Prohibition Law on the determent of herders/farmers conflict in Benue state
3. Suggest what can be done to enhance effective implementation of Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law 2017 in Benue State.

Literature Review and Conceptualization

Open Grazing

"Open grazing" means the act of pasturing livestock to feed on growing grass shrubs, herbage, farm crops, etc. in open fields without any form of restrictions" and so on. It is different and opposite to 'ranching' which means, "movement of livestock from one grazing area to another" (Abbas, 2012). Open grazing means the age-old practice of roaming about with animals in open fields, plains and nearby bushes in search of pasture or food for the animals. It is mostly

practiced in Nigeria by Fulani herders who move for days on foot with their herds from the north to the more rain-fed southern parts of the country, pasturing their flock as they go. Many have come to take this type of animal grazing as an indiscriminate way of grazing with several attendant negative consequences, (Henry, 2017). The open grazing system could be said to be appropriate when human and animal populations were small and land was huge, just as the system of shifting cultivation was appropriate then. But over the last few decades, populations of both have exploded, fallow periods have been drastically reduced and weather patterns have changed. Since change is a constant thing in life, some experts believe that changing this culture of primitive or everywhere grazing system has become inevitable. At the moment, the system constitutes a serious threat to national security (Abubakar, 1980 and Adegbuyi, 2016).

The Nature of Anti Open Grazing Law

The recent trend in Nigeria is the enactment of the Open-grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Act in some of the states plagued by violent conflicts between farmers and pastoralists. Laws were introduced to criminalize open-grazing of animals including cattle, the laws became necessary to minimize the conflicts between the two groups (Adzande, 2019). In Nigeria, states determine what is permissible on the land within their territory/borders. Similarly, the states also have the legal mandate to enact laws that prohibit certain practices and spell out punitive measures for the offenders. These powers have been vested in state governors by the Land Use Act of 1978 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1978). Acting within its legal authority, the Benue State Government promulgated the Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law in May 2017 (Benue State government, 2017). However, the implementation of the law was delayed for about six months. The law sets the conditions under which livestock rearing can be done within the state. The law, popularly called the Anti-open Grazing Law, came into effect in November 2017. According to the law, pastoralists and other interested parties are to lease land from the government for the establishment of ranches. The lease permit issued for such land is to be renewed annually (Adzande, 2019). The law further stipulates penalties for defaulters including a jail term of a minimum of five years, or a fine of one million Naira (equivalent of \$3,000). In Benue state, Adzande, (2019) notes that the implementation of the law commenced about 5 months after it was signed by the governor – a very short period for interested pastoralists to establish ranches and take the steps towards a sedentary lifestyle. Figure 1 below shows a billboard erected by the Benue State government providing information on the Anti-open Grazing Law as adopted from Adzande (2019).

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Theoretical Framework

This study adopted the Marxist Political Economy. Marxism is a method of socioeconomic analysis that views class relations and social conflict using a materialist interpretation of historical development and takes a dialectical view of social transformation. It originates from the works of 19th-century German philosophers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (Haroon, 2017). Marxism has developed into many different branches and schools of thought, with the result that there is now no single definitive Marxist theory. Different Marxian schools place a greater emphasis on certain aspects of classical Marxism while rejecting or modifying other aspects. Many schools of thought have sought to combine Marxian concepts and non-Marxian concepts which has led to contradictory conclusions. It has been argued that there is a movement toward the recognition that historical materialism and dialectical materialism remains the fundamental aspect of all Marxist schools of thought (Haroon, 2017).

It is fundamentally lucid to state that, where resources are scarce, competition is eminent and conflict inevitable. The relationship between farmers and herdsmen is that of competition for resources in which each group claims superiority over the other for the purpose of exploiting the dominated class. Each group strives to take eminent control over the resources of the other leading to a situation of endless conflict between the contending classes. Conflict theory is relevant in proving the fact that competition for access to natural resources between farmers and herders gives rise to conflict. It sets the background for the origin of the conflict in terms of access to the means of production. Every farming system such as the nomadic cattle herding has a boundary, which separates it from the larger system, the environment. The boundary represents the limits in the larger system. Farmers increasingly compete with nomadic herders for farmland, pastures, water, trees and the use of rangeland in general.

Methodology

The study was carried out using a cross sectional design. A cross sectional study limits its observation to a single point in time. The data for this study was collected at a single point in time to address the objectives it set to achieve. The setting for this study is Benue state.

The land in this State is generally low lying, averaging a total of 100m-250m and gently undulating with occasional inselberg, knolls, laterites, capped mesas and butts. It is only at the terrain where the State shares boundary with Cameroon Republic and in Kwande and Oju LGA that the land has hilly terrain with appreciable relief. Steep slope, deep incised valleys and generally rugged relief characterize the relief. In Benue State, there are broadened villages with occasional swamps and extensive folded plains, where the River has become braided (just like the case of Numan and Jimeta in Adamawa State).

The sample size of this study was determined using Cochran Sample Size formula (1977). This is expressed as:

$$No = \frac{Z^2Pq}{e^2}$$

Where

No = Population size

e = Desired level of precision (Margin of error)

P = The estimated proportion of the population which has the attributes in questions.

Z= The Z value is found in Z table. (See appendix for Z-table)

That is to say

$$no = \frac{(1.96)^2 (0.05)(0.05)}{0.052} = 384.16 = 384$$

Therefore the sample size for this study is 384 respondents; however, 16 respondents were added to 384 in case of non willingness by some respondents to respond to the study bringing up to 400 respondents.

The study adopted the Cluster sampling technique. Cluster sampling is where the whole population will be divided into clusters or groups. The state was clustered into three existing Senatorial Zones viz; zone A which has 7 Local Governments Areas (Katsina-Ala, Konshisha, Kwande, Logo, Ukum, Ushongo, Vandeikya) Zone B has 7 Local Government Areas, (Buruku, Gboko, Guma, Gwer East, Gwer West, Makurdi, Tarka) and Zone C has 9 Local Government Areas (Ado, Agatu, Apa, Obi, Ogbadibo, Ohimini, Oju, Okpokwu and Otukpo),

Considering the varying population of these clusters, a proportional sampling techniques was used to select one local government each from the clusters. The selected Local Governments were Logo, Guma, and Agatu, these Local Governments have high rates of attacks in the State. The choice of these local government areas was based on the fact that these places were mostly attacks by the herdsmen, so, the study selected them to examine if the introduction of anti-open grazing law had reduced the menace of the attacks. The instrument of data collection for this study was structured questionnaire. The Structured questionnaire was used to elicit data from 400 respondents who were able to read and rewrite. The questionnaire was both open ended and close ended. The questionnaire were designed in English language, given the assumption that in a heterogeneous society like Benue State, the official language 'English' is the most appropriate way of conveying message. The quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistical measures. The data

collected through the quantitative technique were processed and analyzed by means of an electronic computer through the use of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 23). The SPSS was used to analyze and generate data into frequency tables, charts and cross tabulations to show the major trends that would help to draw conclusions.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Data is presented and analysis in normal distribution tables using frequency distributions. The presentation is subdivided into subsections. 400 copies of questionnaire were administered, however only 376 were retrieved. So, the analysis was based on the 376 returned copies of questionnaire only.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by their Socio-Demographic Variables
Variable Frequency (N=376)

Variable		Frequency (N=376)	Percentage (100%)
Sex	Male	172	45.7
	Female	204	54.3
Age	18-20	47	12.5
	21-25	146	38.8
	26-30	43	11.4
	31-35	86	22.9
	36-40	36	9.6
	41-45	9	2.4
	46 and above	9	2.4
Education	Tertiary Education	21	5.6
	Primary	42	11.2
	Secondary	102	27.1
	No formal Education	211	56.1
Marital Status	Single	172	45.7
	Married	204	54.3
Occupational Status	Civil Servants	16	4.3
	Businessmen	53	14.1
	Applicants	103	27.4
	Farmers	182	48.4
	Students	22	5.9
Monthly Income	<5,000	13	3.5
	6,000-14,000	51	13.6
	15,000-30,000	102	27.1
	31,000-91,000	185	49.2
	100,000 and above	25	6.6
Number of People in a household	1	39	10.4
	2-3	80	21.3
	4-6	74	19.7
	7-9	123	32.7
	10 and above	60	16.0

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Data for this study was collected from respondents with diverse socio-demographic variables. Data on table 1 showed that 45.7% (172) of the respondents were males, 54.3% (204) of the respondents were females. The findings here means that ore females than males participated in the study. The table also revealed the data of age categories of respondents, which showed that 12.5% (47) of the respondents were within the ages of 18-20 years, 38.8% (147) respondents were within the ages of 21-25 years of age, 11.4% (43) respondents were within the ages of 26-30 years old of age, 22.9% (86) respondents were within the category of 31-35 years old of age, 9.6% (36) of the respondents were within the ages of 36-40 years old, 2.4% (9) respondents were within the ages of 41-45 and 2.4% (9) respondents were within the ages of 46 years old. The findings here means that majority of the respondents for this were youth of the ages of 21-25 years. It also implies that there were more youths in the place of the study.

Also, the table revealed that, 5.6% (21) respondents had tertiary education, 11.2% (42) of the respondents had primary education, 27.1% (107) respondents had secondary schools, and 56.1% (211) of the respondents had no formal education. On the basis of the marital status, 45.7% (21) respondents were single while 54.3% (204) of the respondents were married. The findings here showed that majority of the respondents were married. It means that the rate of married in the study area was high. On the occupational status of respondents, the findings showed that, 4.3% (16) of the respondents were civil servants, 14.3% (53) of the respondents were businessmen, 27.4% (103) of the respondents were unemployed, 48.4% (182) were farmers while applicants were 5.9% (22) respondents. On the level of the monthly income, the data showed that 3.5% (13) respondents were earners of less than #5,000 only, 13.6% (51) respondents were earning #6,000-#14,000 only, 27.1% (102) of the respondents were earning #15,000-#30,000, those who were earning #31,000-#91,000 were 49.2% (185) while only 6.6% (25) of the respondents were earning 100, 0000 per month. On the number of people in the household, the study showed that, 10.4% (39) of the respondents were only I person in a household, 21.3% (80) of the respondents were 2-3 persons in a household 19.7 (74) of the respondents were staying 4-6 persons in their households, those staying 7-9% in their households were (32.7%) 123 while 16.0% (60) of the respondents were staying 10 and above people in their households. The information are presented in the table below.

The Efficacy of Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law 2017 on the Resolution of Herders' Attacks in Benue State

This section examines the efficacy of the law in resolution of herders' attacks in Benue State. The findings are presented in the table below:

Table2: Respondents' Awareness on the Ranches Establishment Law

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	169	44.9
Agreed	154	41.0
Disagreed	41	10.9
Strongly Disagreed	12	3.2
Total	376	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The findings on the table above revealed that, 44.9% respondents strongly agreed that they were aware of the law, 41.0% of the respondents agreed while, 10.9% respondents disagreed and 3.2% respondents strongly disagreed. Based on the findings of the table above, it was concluded that, there was high level of awareness about the ranches establishment law.

Sources of Information about open-grazing prohibition Law

Table 3: Respondents' Opinion on where they hear of the grazing prohibition and ranches establishment law in Benue State

Variable	Frequency	Percentage%
Radio	185	49.2
Public gathering	153	40.7
Family and friends	34	9.0
Television	4	1.1
Total	376	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Data on the above table revealed that 49.2% of the respondents reported that they heard about grazing prohibition and ranches establishment law in Benue State on the radio sets, 40.75 of the respondents reported that they heard about the law through public gatherings like community meetings, religious organizations schools among others. 9.0% of the respondents reported that they heard about it family and friends while 1.1% of the respondents reported that they heard it on the Television. Based on the findings above, it was concluded that, the law was passed and made public through radio and public gatherings.

The availability of ranches since enactment of the Opinion on whether ranches establishment law has reduced herders attacks in Benue State

Table 4: Do you think the open grazing prohibition and ranches establishment law in Benue State has reduced herders attacks in Benue StateVariable

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	41	10.9
Agreed	12	3.2
Disagreed	146	44.6
Strongly Disagreed	154	41.0
Total	376	100.0

Field Survey, 2020

The findings on the table above revealed that, 10.9% respondents strongly agreed that the open grazing prohibition and ranches establishment law in Benue State has not reduced the herders attacks in Benue State, 3.2.0% of the respondents agreed while, 44.6% respondents disagreed and 41.0% respondents strongly disagreed. Based on the findings of the table above, it was concluded that, the open grazing prohibition and ranches establishment law in Benue State has not reduced herders' attacks in Benue State.

The findings on the above revealed that, 10.9% respondents strongly agreed that the open grazing prohibition and ranches establishment law in Benue State has reduced herders' attacks, 3.2% of the respondents agreed that the open grazing prohibition and ranches establishment law in Benue State has reduced herders' attacks, 44.6% disagreed that the open grazing prohibition and ranches establishment law in Benue State has reduced herders' attacks while 41.0% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the open grazing prohibition and ranches establishment law in Benue State has reduced herders' attacks. Based on the findings in the table above, it was concluded that the open grazing prohibition and ranches establishment law in Benue State has not reduced herders' attacks.

Table 5: Are there ranches that have been built in order to reduce open grazing and the attacks in Benue StateVariable

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	4	1.1
Agreed	34	9.0
Disagreed	185	49.2
Strongly Disagreed	153	40.7
Total	376	100.0

Field Survey, 2020

Data on the above table revealed that majority of the respondents 49.7% reported that ranches were not built in order to reduce open grazing and the attacks in Benue State. 40.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed while only 9.0% and 1.1% of the respondents. This showed that there were no ranches that have been built in order to reduce open grazing and the attacks in Benue State.

Persistence of Attacks since the Enactment of the Law

Table 6: Do you still experienced any forms of attacks following the establishment of the law in Benue State

Variable	Frequency	Percentage%
Strongly Disagreed	21	5.6
Disagreed	42	11.2
Agreed	102	27.1
Strongly Agreed	211	56.1
Total	376	100

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Data on the above table revealed that, 5.6% of the respondents strongly reported that they did not experience some forms of attacks following the establishment of open grazing law, 11.2% of the respondents disagreed while 27.1% and 56.1% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the fact that they had experienced some forms of attacks following the establishment of open grazing law. Based on the findings here, it was concluded that, open grazing and ranches establishment law has not reduced the attacks in Benue state. This is because, despite the law, there are still incidences of attacks on the communities in Guma and there are some silent killings in the area.

Respondents or Relatives in IDP Camps due to Herders' Attacks

Table 7: Are you/or your relatives still in the IDP Camps in fear of the herders attacks ?

Variable	Frequency	Percentage%
Strongly Agreed	137	36.4
Agreed	127	33.8
Disagreed	28	7.4
Strongly Disagreed	84	22.4
Total	376	100

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Data on the table above revealed that, 36.4% and 33.8% of the respondents were of the opinion that they were still at the IDP Camps in fear of the herders' attacks in Benue State, 7.4% and 22.4% reported that neither them nor their relatives were on the IDP Camps in the state. Based on the findings above, it was concluded that, the establishment of open grazing and ranches establishment law did not sufficiently influenced the reduction of the people on the IDP Camps in the state.

Opinion of Respondents on the Presence of Herders in their Areas.

Table 8: Respondents' Opinion about whether the herders have left or are still within your area?

Variable	Frequency	Percentage%
Strongly Agreed	39	10.4
Agreed	80	21.3
Disagreed	74	19.7
Strongly Disagreed	123	32.7
Total	376	100

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Data on the table above revealed that majority of the respondents reported that they think the herders have not left as represented by 32.7% and 19.7% while only 10.4% and 21.3% who reported that the herders have left. The findings showed that, the people of Benue state are still in doubt it really the herders have left.

Table 9: The number of attacks experienced before and after the establishment of ranches establishment law?

Number of attacks Before the law			Number of attacks After the law		
	Frequency	percentage		Frequency	Percentage
1-3 times	201	53.6	1-3 times	117	31.2
4-5 times	125	33.3	4-5 times	-	-
6 times and above	49	13.1	Nil	258	68.8
Total	375	100%	Total	375	100%

Source: Filed Survey, 2020.

Data on the table above revealed that majority 53.6% of the respondents reported that they experienced herders attacks between 1 to 3 times before the law was made, 33.3% of the respondents reported that they experienced that attacks 4-5 times before the law was made why 13.1% of the respondents reported that they experienced the attacks for a period of 6 times and above before the law was made. Also, 31.2% of the respondents reported that they experienced that attacks for between 1-3 times after the law was made while majority of the respondents reported that they did not experience the attacks after the law was enacted. Based on the findings above, it was concluded that the law has reduced the rate of herders attacks in Benue state.

Challenges Affecting the Effective Enforcement of the Law

Table 10: Respondents' Opinion on the challenges affecting the open grazing prohibition and ranches establishment law in Benue State is effective in controlling herding activities in Benue State

Variable	Frequency	Percentage%
Interest of stakeholders in cattle rearing.	185	49.2
Selfishness	153	40.7
Inadequate Support from Federal government	34	9.0
Inadequate awareness about the law	4	1.1
Total	376	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Data on the above table revealed that 49.2% of the respondents reported the major challenge confronting open grazing prohibition and ranches establishment law in Benue State was political factor. 40.75 of the respondents reported that selfishness was the major challenge confronting the operation of the law, 9.0% of the respondents reported that the major challenge of the law was inadequate support from the federal government, while 1.1% of the respondents reported inadequate awareness about the law was the major challenge facing the efficacy of the law. Based on the findings above, it was concluded that, political factors and selfishness was the major challenge affecting the efficacy of the law.

Discussion of Findings

The objective of this study was to evaluate the efficacy of Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law 2017 on the Resolution of herdsmen attacks in Benue State. On the effectiveness of Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law 2017 controlling herding activities in Benue State, the study revealed that, the level of awareness about the law in Benue State was high; however, the law has not effectively stopped the attacks in Benue state. As a result, victims of the attacks who were on the run, and had fled their villages for safety were still found to be at the IDP Camps. Also, it was found that, there were still some several attacks in the state. No wonder Adzande (2017) also doubted the efficacy of the law in the prohibition of the attacks. The introduction of the law was also faced by stiff resistance from various stakeholders including the President of Nigeria, the Chief of Defence Staff, the former Inspector-General of Police and members of the socio-cultural group representing all Fulani pastoralists in the country, the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders' Association of Nigeria (MACBAN).

On the factors affecting the efficacy of the Law, it was observed that, factors affecting the law included selfishness on the part of some top government officials who are believed to have some cattle and would not want the law to be implemented so that their cattle can graze freely; inadequate support from

the federal government to enhance effective implementation of the law as well as political factors, where some citizens prefer to protect their political interest rather than the interest of the Benue people in general, negatively affected the efficacy of the law among other factors.

Conclusion

Herders' attack in Nigeria is a problem that is historically situated at the intersection of agricultural/land use policy and the political economy of ethnic relations. Therefore, it requires careful attention due to the delicate relationships and sensibilities which it engenders, as has already been demonstrated in this paper. Handling such delicate issues in a consistently predictable manner to achieve peace, unity and progress in multi-ethnic, multi religious secular federal states like Nigeria requires specific regulatory policies that are not only transparent but also agreeable to a broad spectrum of stakeholders within the policy arena. Although the problem cuts across several countries in Africa, no continent-wide solution has been found for it even when countries have attempted to address the problem using different approaches including pastoralism, sedentarism and expulsion, among others. Experiences demonstrate that no single approach can be easily replicated in other countries due to historical reasons. Invariably, each country will have to seek solutions within the ambit of its specific circumstances and historical experiences.

Recommendations

1. First, self-interest (in economic, religious or ethnic ties) has caused many government functionaries to get emotionally involved to the extent of at least acquiescing to the attacks and conflicts if only by doing nothing where they should act or by secretly supplying groups with ammunition. Therefore, there is need for value reorientation among the leaders in order to consider the interest of the masses too.
2. Policy-related issues that require attention include, the undocumented movement of pastoralists across internal and international borders; unpacking the notion and implications of 'free movement' across internal and international borders to ensure fairness to all; and the development of institutions and mechanisms to specifically address issues associated with the migration of pastoralists should be put in place to ensure full implementation of the law.
3. There is also a need to find a compromise between national laws and local laws to address the contradictory issues to ensure free flow of all laws.
4. Focus should be placed on research to find ways of reaching this compromise and to identify the alternative policies that may be useful in addressing the migration of pastoralists in West Africa and beyond.
5. Finally, the Federal Government must be fair to all citizens (no matter their ethnic identity or religious inclinations) in addressing farmer/pastoralist clashes in order to prove that the country remains secular and to preserve Nigeria's unity in spite of the diversity of her peoples. Failure by the Federal Government to do so will cause state governments to seek to protect their

citizens and their occupations independently by various means. This will amount to the pursuit of peace by pieces, which can be detrimental to our collective welfare, unity and eventually, survival of the Nigerian state in its present form.

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