

The Impact of Land Dispute on Community Development in Central Senatorial District of Cross River State

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Abstract

There are cases of land disputes in Nigeria and this affects community development in Cross River State. This paper examines the influence of land dispute on community development in Central Senatorial District of Cross River State. Relative deprivation theory by Ted Gurr (1970) was used to explain the variables of the study. Data were obtained from primary and secondary sources. The research design adopted for this study is the ex-post facto design. A total sample of 1940 respondent which consisted of 0.5% of the entire population was used for the study. Simple regression was used to analyze the data obtained from the respondent. The result obtained showed that the null hypothesis is rejected as there was a significant influence of land disputes on community development in the central senatorial district of Cross River. Based on the findings, the study recommends the need for adequate measures to be adopted in the allocation of resources to communities, especially land in other to reduce injustice and promote equitability and transparency.

Keywords:

Land dispute,
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Background to the Study

Land disputes, which are one of the forms of communal conflicts at any level arise from divergences of interests, desires, goals, values, and aspirations in the competition for resources to meet imposing demands of social life in a defined socio-physical environment. Conflict is a part of human existence that should be avoided. It has been known to bring about all manner of outcomes that have a severe adverse effect on food production, peaceful co-existence, and economic development. Man in socio-physical environment lives in the continuous process of dependence and interdependence which often produce contradictions and conflicts. Lyan (2001) defined communal conflict as any disagreement or dispute between two or more communities which is capable of degenerating into riots or wars. This disturbs the peace, economic life, tranquillity and progress of people or communities concerned, which eventually lead to loss of lives and property.

Land and its resources are very important to mankind as they provide a wide range of man's needs. The needs, therefore, impinge on man to utilize land and its resources to satisfy his insatiable needs. Decisions concerning land utilization involve a complex mix of economic, political and cultural purposes (Abegunde, 2011). Land utilization, however, depends on who owns/controls a given plot of land, and also, on the incentives and pressures which sharpen the land owner's behavior.

In recent times, due to increasing pressures on land as a result of migratory nomads and decreasing access to land, there has been an increase in land use disputes and such has led to an increase in communal conflicts that have arisen from such disputes. This occurrence no doubt affects efforts towards community development in Nigeria. This paper is therefore set to examine the influence of land dispute on community development in Central Senatorial District of Cross River State. The study is guided by the question, to what extent does land disputes influence communal conflict in the central senatorial district?

The Objective of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to examine the influence of land dispute on community development in Central Senatorial District of Cross River State.

Hypothesis

There is no significant influence of land disputes on the communal conflict in the central senatorial district of Cross River State

Empirical Literature

The underlying causes of communal conflict, especially issues evolving land deserve a thorough investigation. By adopting a descriptive survey design, Yamano and Deininger (2005) evaluated the causes, impacts, and resolutions of land conflicts in Kenya. The study's population was made of all households in the central and western regions of the country while stratified random sampling was adopted to select a sample of 899 households from which information was qualitatively obtained from the heads of the households. Among other inquiries, the researchers sought to assess the causes of land conflicts among the local people.

Using content analysis, the data revealed that approximately half of the recorded land conflict cases were as a result of land use disputes which occurred mainly with neighbors or relatives who lived close. It also revealed that a major remote cause of the land use disputes was land-sale. In line with the finding, the researchers concluded that land use disputes were on the increase and that land-sale was its major driver. The finding of the above-reviewed study could be helping in seeking solutions which will address illegal and documented land sales. The study of Yamano and Deininger (2005) was deemed relevant to the present study based on its evaluation of the incidence and prevalence of land conflicts in Kenya.

In a study designed to investigate a grazing land dispute between two different tribes in a region within Namibia, Shapi (2005) adopted a descriptive survey design. The study's population comprised adults (specifically chiefs, farmers and cattle herders) from the two tribes while purposive sampling technique was utilized to select a sample of respondents from whom information was sought through interviews. The power within the interview session which is pertinent to the present study's literature review is the inquiry which sought to determine the origin of the disputes. Collected data were analyzed using content analysis.

The analysis of collected data revealed that the origin of the disputes was as a result of one of the tribes which were mainly made up of herders migrating into a community of farmers. The migration by the cattle herders was then accompanied by issues of crop- destruction, messing of waterhole by the cattle, indignant insults on vulnerable members of the farming tribe mostly women, etc. In conclusion, the researcher acknowledged that the dispute between the two tribes was borne out of the social context of the land boundary dispute. The finding here could also be remotely attached to the migration of the herders from areas of absolute environmental resources scarcity to areas where they could have access to such in order to survive. The above-reviewed study was found relevant to the present study in that, inclusive in its assessment was an inquiry of a land boundary dispute between two tribes.

Abegunde (2011) examined the role of land in inter-communal conflicts in the southwestern region of Nigeria by utilizing a descriptive survey design. The study's population was made up of the adult population in the region while simple random sampling technique was employed to select a sample of 721 respondents from eight communities in four states. Data was obtained quantitatively through a questionnaire and one of the studies inquires was concerned with whether land use related issues served as a cause of communal conflicts. On completion of the data collection, a response rate of 82% (593 copies of the questionnaire) was attained and the collated data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentage scores.

The analysis of the result revealed that 437 (73.7%) of the respondents indicated that land use related issues were causes of communal conflict within the area. The finding revealed that issues concerning land use within the area had the propensity to result in communal conflict. The implication here could mean that communal conflicts within the area had land-use related issues as one of its main drivers. The above-reviewed study was considered relevant to the present study on the basis that it examined the role of land-use related issues in inter-communal conflicts.

Adisa (2012) assessed land-use in Kwara state, simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 360 respondents (300 farmers and 60 herdsmen). Data were obtained quantitatively using a questionnaire and one of the posers therein was an inquiry into the effect of the conflict on the respective groups of persons. Collated data were analyzed using percentage and mean scores, respectively, for each of their conflict outcome experiences and socio-psychological effects. The analysis revealed that in terms of conflict outcome experiences, 90.8% of the farmers experienced income loss, 85.0% experienced yield loss, 55.6% experienced job status loss, 23.5% experienced loss of household resources while 22.5% experienced job status loss, 19.6% of them self-esteem loss, 16.1% of the family/personal health loss while 14.3% of them had income loss. For socio-psychological effects, for the farmers, the following were revealed; (i) reduction in food quality/quantity = 3.95; (ii) sleepless nights = 3.85; (iii) psychological/physical exhaustion = 3.75; (iv) marital dissatisfaction = 3.60 and; (v) declining quality of children's education = 3.55. For the herdsmen physical exhaustion = 3.64, and; (ii) sleepless nights = 3.58 (Adisa, 2012).

The above findings revealed that the farmers suffered more losses when comparing them to those lost by the nomads. This was as a result of the conflict taking place within the domains of the farmers. This implies that the effects were not only that of the farmers facing economic and financial challenges in the aftermath but also, food production and supply lines were endangered. The above-reviewed study was deemed pertinent to the present study on the premise that it investigated the losses (effects) of land-use conflicts on each of the farmers and the herdsmen (Adisa, 2012).

Mworia and Ndiku (2012) investigated the causes, effects and intervention strategies of inter-ethnic conflict in Kenya by using the case of Tharaka-Tigania ethnic conflict as a case study. The communities which were directly affected by the inter-ethnic conflict provided the study's population while a convenience sampling procedure was employed to select a sample of 87 respondents. Data were obtained quantitatively with the aid of a questionnaire and one of the posers therein was concerned with assessing the causes of the conflict between the two communities. Obtained data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentage scores.

The analysis revealed that 80 (91.95%) of the respondents indicated land-use dispute as for the second major cause of the conflict between the two ethnic groups. The finding revealed that land use dispute served as a major driver of the conflict between the two ethnic groups. Conclusively, the researchers opined that being that the boundaries between the two ethnic groups were newly designated, the community members' conflict may have arisen as a result of the non-acceptance of the boundaries. The study's finding is in line with the cause of conflict between the two ethnic groups could bring about ideas on how to create boundaries amongst new created district, regions, countries or even states in a way which will reduce conflict in the long term. This could be achieved by rigorous dialogue between the groups of tribes through which the boundary will pass through so that an agreement will be reached between them. The above-reviewed study was considered pertinent for review by the present study as a result of its evaluation of the causes of inter-ethnic conflict between two ethnic groups.

Ikurekeng, Sunday, and Esin (2012) examined the relationship between communal conflict and resource development in Akwa Ibom state by adopting a descriptive survey design. The total adult and youth population of Ini LGA in the state served as the study's population while systematic random sampling technique was utilized to select a sample of 400 respondents. A questionnaire was used to elicit data from the respondents and one of the posers therein was concerned with identifying the major causes of conflict among conflicting communities within the LGA. Obtained data were analyzed using Varimax rotation component analysis.

Analysis of the obtained data revealed that most of the components loaded significantly high when they were rotated on the factors of land use dispute and food shortage. Even the cumulative percentage on loading each of the four factors of (i) land-use dispute/food shortage; (ii) yearly destruction of properties (iii) freedom of movement, and (iv) loss of life and property revealed that the highest cumulative percentage (61.2%) was gotten on loading land use dispute and food shortage. The finding revealed that land boundary dispute/food shortage. The findings revealed that land use dispute/food shortage served as the major driver impeding resource development in the LGA under study. This implied that resource development within the study area had been adversely affected by land use disputes/food shortage. The study of Ikurekong et al (2012) was deemed necessary for review by the present study on the premise of its inquiry of the major causes of conflict within the LGA under study.

In a study designed to evaluate the relationship between communal land conflict and food security in Obudu LGA, Uyang, Nwagbara, Undelikwo and Eneji (2013) utilized a descriptive survey design. The youth and adult population of the LGA under study made the population for the study while a systematic random sampling procedure was employed to select a sample of 400 respondents. A questionnaire was used to obtain data from the respondents and one of the posers therein was concerned with assessing the respondents' response in line with whether land-use disputes did cause communal land conflict. Collated data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentage scores.

The result revealed that 380 (95%) of the respondents agreed that land-use disputes did cause communal land conflict. The findings revealed that land use dispute was a source of communal land conflict. This meant that communal land conflict within the LGA had land use dispute as to its probable cause. The study of Uyang et al (2013) found relevance to the present study in line with its evaluation of the relationship between land use dispute and communal land conflict.

Fahmidm (2013) adopted a descriptive survey design in a study which sought to examine the typology of rural agrarian conflicts among rural areas in Indonesia. The total number of youths and adults whose occupation borders on agrarian related practices within the area and agrarian-related government officials served the population for the study. Purposive sampling technique was utilized to select a sample of respondents from whom data were obtained qualitatively through interviews and focus group discussion. The inquiry within the interview session which is of importance to the present study's literature review is the poser which inquired the causes of agrarian conflict among the rural people. Content analysis was used to analyze obtained data.

The analyzed data revealed that there were two main causes; (i) unilateral issuance of land permission/decision on a particular land's function, or unilateral claim by either investor(s) or government to a given plot of land dominated by the local people, and; (ii) unpaid land compensation or non-payment of complete land compensation by either investor(s) or government. Based on the finding, the researcher submitted that the causes of land conflict within the rural folks were when either government or investor(s) encroach into their land and unilaterally lay claim to such, or when any of government or investor(s) either pay incomplete or do not pay land compensation to the locals. This implies that the sources of land conflict amongst the locals were due to external factors. The study of Fahmidm (2013) was considered pertinent for review by the present study on the basis that it inquired the causes of land conflict among agrarian local people.

A descriptive survey design was adopted by Emanuel and Ndimbwe (2013) in a study carried out to examine traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution over the land resource in Tanzania. The youth and adult population of a community in the northern part of the country served as the population for the study while systematic random sampling technique was employed to select a sample of 140 respondents. Data were obtained quantitatively and qualitatively, and one of the posers in the questionnaire was concerned with whether issues concerning land (land use disputes inclusive) served as a source of conflict within the community. Collated data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentage scores.

The analysis revealed that 120 (85%) of the respondents indicated that issues concerning land use actually served as a source of conflict within the community. According to the researchers, the finding revealed that issues concerning land conflict have had an impact based on the respondents' responses. This implies that the community must have had a lot of land conflict cases and such does not facilitate a healthy environment for community development. The above-reviewed study was deemed relevant for review on the premise of its inquiry concerning whether land-related issues did serve as a source of conflict within a rural community.

By adopting a descriptive survey design, Bello (2013) examined the causes, repercussions, and resolutions of farmers-herdsmen conflict in the Northeastern part of Nigeria. The total population of farmers and herdsmen in Yobe state made up the study's population while random sampling technique was employed to select a sample of 750 respondents (500 farmers and 250 herdsmen). A questionnaire was used to obtain data from the respondents and one of the posers therein was concerned with ascertaining the conflict outcome experiences and the socio-psychological repercussions of the conflict on each of the farmers and the herdsmen, respectively. The obtained data were analyzed using percentage scores for conflict outcome experiences and mean scores for socio-psychological repercussions. The finding above is similar to that of Adisa (2012) once again revealed that the farmers were more at the receiving end than the nomads. Adisa's study was in Kwara state while Bello's own was in Yobe state and the findings point in one direction-farmer has both worst conflict outcome experiences and social-psychological repercussions than the nomads. Perhaps a similar study could be carried out in other regions of the country so as to have a justifiable generalization round the whole country. The above-reviewed study was deemed relevant to the present study as a result of its investigation of the repercussions of herdsmen-farmers conflict on each of the conflicting parties.

Musa, Shadu, and Igbawua (2014) evaluated resource use conflict between herdsmen and farmers in Benue state of Nigeria by adopting a descriptive survey design. The study's population was made up of all farmers and herdsmen in an LGA within the state while purposive sampling technique was employed to select a sample of 208 respondents (160 farmers and 48 herdsmen). Data was obtained quantitatively from the respondents and one of the posers therein was concerned with an assessment of the socio-economic effects of the conflict. Obtained data were analyzed using weighted mean.

The analysis revealed the following (i) displacement of both farmers and herdsmen = 3.7; (ii) loss of properties = 3.49; (iii) decrease in output = 3.48, and; (iv) loss of lives = 2.94. The finding revealed that the conflicting parties always end up losing their lives and properties, experience a decrease in productivity and get displaced. This implies that the effect of the conflict is not a healthy development for both the farmers and the herdsmen. The above review study was considered relevant for review in the present study based on its assessment of the socio-economic effects of the conflict on both the farmers and the herders.

Campion and Acheampong (2014) assessed the causes and arbitrators of the conflicts in the Jatropha area of Ghana by adopting a descriptive survey design. The study's population comprised of an adult population of the area while a convenient sampling frame was employed to select a sample of 234 respondents from eight communities within the area. Data was obtained quantitatively and qualitatively. Within the qualitative section, an open-ended inquiry sought to elicit information on the perceived causes of conflict with the area. Data obtained was analyzed using content analysis and grouped into three categories of very important, important and not important.

The analysis revealed that all of the respondents from seven communities indicated that unclear land boundaries served as the source of conflict. In addition, all the respondents from the eight communities indicated that illegal sale/lease of land served as the source of conflict. The finding revealed that issues concerning unclear land boundaries and illegal sale/lease of land were drivers of conflict within the area. This implies that the conflict within the area was facilitated by the intrusion into people's lands due to unclear land boundaries and subsequent selling/leasing of such lands. The study of Campion and Acheampong (2014) found relevance to the present study based on its investigation of the causes of a communal conflict.

A descriptive survey design was adopted by Ofem and Inyang (2014) in a study carried out to assess the relationship between livelihood and land-use related conflict among local farmers and Fulani cattle herders in Yakurr LGA of Cross River State. The study's population comprised of all registered farmers and Fulani herdsmen within the LGA while purposive sampling technique was utilized to select a sample of 80 farmers and 20 Fulani herdsmen. Data was obtained using questionnaires and interview sessions. One of the posers therein the questionnaire was concerned with ascertaining the cause of conflict from both the farmers and the herdsmen, respectively. Collated data was analyzed using mean scores with a reference mean of > 2.50 indicating such as a major cause while < 2.50 was categorized as a minor cause.

The analysis revealed that “destruction of crops” had 3.5 for the farmers and 1.5 for the herdsmen; “contamination of stream by cattle” had 3.4 for the farmers and 3.2 for the herdsmen while “overgrazing of fallow land” had 2.8 for the farmers and 1.8 for the herdsmen. The finding, according to the researchers indicates the issues which the two different parties consider important and those considered unimportant. This implies that the herdsmen may not have seen issues when their cattle destroy crops or even overgraze on fallow lands. The study of Ofem and Inyang (2014) found relevance to the present study's review of the literature as a result of its assessment of the relationship between local farmers' and herdsmen livelihood and land-use related conflicts.

Adonteng-Kissi (2015) identified the sources, causes, and cost of conflicts in a mining community in Ghana by adopting a descriptive survey design. The total adults and youth population of the community served as the study's population while simple random sampling was utilized to select a sample of 1,220 respondents. Data was obtained both quantitatively and qualitatively with 1,200 respondents for the quantitative section while 20 respondents were for the qualitative section. One of the study's posers was concerned with inquiring the source of conflict within the area. Obtained data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentage scores.

The analyzed data revealed that 1,126 (93.83%) of the respondents indicated that land use related issues served as the source of conflict while 74(6.17%) of them indicated environmental impact as the source of conflict. Based on the finding, it is pertinent to state that land use related issues within the community served as a major source of conflict. This implies that there may be a wide range of issues that resulted in disputes before degenerating into conflict within the community based on land use related matters. The study of Adoteng-Kissi (2015) was deemed pertinent for review by the present study as a result of its identification of sources of communal conflict in a community.

Sop-Sop, Abossolo, Nuebissi, Mbarga, and Baoha (2015) utilized a descriptive survey design in a study designed to examine land use conflict in the North West region of Cameroon. The study's population comprised of the youth and adult of the Tubah sub-division in the country while purposive sampling technique was employed to select the study's respondents. Data was obtained both quantitatively and qualitatively. Within the qualitative section were open-ended questions which sought to assess the various types of land use conflicts within the area. Content analysis was used to analyze the obtained data from the qualitative section.

The analysis of the data revealed the various land use types which bring about the communal conflict. They are stated in decreasing order of propensity to yield conflict. They are; (i) farmer-grazer conflict; (ii) residential- farming conflict; (iii) watershed-farming conflict, and; (iv) watershed-grazing conflict. According to the researchers, the finding showed that farming and grazing within the area served as the most likely to involve farmers and grazers. The above-reviewed study was considered necessary for review by the present study based on its assessment of land use conflict types.

A descriptive survey design was utilized in a study designed to determine conflict management and the production level of farmers in Ogun state of Nigeria by Adebajo, Bolarinwa, and Omotayo (2015). The study's population comprised of all registered farmers within the Saki area of the state while purposive sampling was employed to obtain a sample of 240 respondents. Questionnaire served as the instrument for data collection and one of the posers therein inquired the causes of conflict within the area. On completion of the data collection procedure, 221(92.08%) questionnaire was deemed valid for analysis. Frequency counts, percentage scores and mean scores were used to analyze the collated data. The finding showed that issues concerning land use also served as causes of conflict within the area. This means that conflict within the investigated area based on land use issues could arise when any of territorial dispute, land ownership dispute or competition for natural resources occurs. Adebajo et al's (2015) study was considered relevant to be reviewed in this study due to its evaluation of causes of conflict.

In a study designed to assess a sociological post-mortem of matters which facilitated the Arogno Ijaw-Ilaje conflict of 1998/1999 in Ondo State, Ayoyo (2015) adopted an ex-post facto design. The study's population comprised of all youths and adults from the two communities while purposive sampling technique was utilized to select a sample of 45 respondents. Data was obtained qualitatively through in-depth interviews and the study's objective was to ascertain the remote causes of the conflict. The responses from the respondents revealed that the most fundamental remote cause was that of land use dispute between the two communities. According to the researcher, the finding was in agreement with findings from other authors who revealed that communal conflict could result from unresolved land use disputes. Ayoyo (2015) study was deemed necessary for review in the present study based on its assessment of the remote causes of a communal conflict.

Siyum, Kassa, Sisay, and Gebremedhin (2015) examined farmland conflict and its attendant socio-economic consequence in a region in Ethiopia by adopting a descriptive survey design. The study's population was made up of all the 4903 household heads in a "woreda" within the Tigray regional state of the country while purposive sampling technique was employed to select a sample of 175 household heads. Data was obtained both quantitatively (questionnaire) and qualitatively (interviews and focus group discussions). Inclusive within the questionnaire was a poser which inquired the causes that facilitate farmland conflict within the area. Collated data was analyzed using mean scores with a reference mean of >2.50 indicating such as a major cause while <2.50 indicating such as a minor cause.

The analysis revealed that "fragmented land" i.e. land without specific land boundaries had a mean of 4.21; "trespassing land boundaries with drainages" had 4.17 while "land grabbing" had 3.64. The finding revealed that issues which involved land boundary disputes were major causes. This implies that exceeding land boundaries so as to use the land was a major driver of farmland conflict within the area. The above-reviewed study was considered relevant to the present study based on its investigation of the causes of farmland conflict.

Theoretical Framework

Relative deprivation theory by Ted Gurr (1970)

Gurr (1970) is the proponent of the relative deprivation theory. The theory states that the discrepancy between what people think they deserve, and what they actually believe they should get. Such disparity between aspirations and achievements is a cause of conflict in the society. The theory revealed that relative deprivation is the lack of resources to sustain the diet, lifestyle, activities, and amenities that an individual or group is accustomed to or that are widely encouraged or approved in the society to which they belong. Measuring relative deprivation allows an objective comparison between the situation of the individual or group compared to the rest of the society. Relative deprivation may also emphasize the individual experience of discontent when being deprived of something to which one believes oneself is entitled to however emphasizing the perspective of the individual makes objective measurement problematic.

Bello (2013) disclosed that the feelings of relative deprivation arise when desires become legitimate expectations and those desires are blocked by society, this explains clearly why the communities in Central Senatorial District as it could be burned out of deprivation of basic needs. Baidoo (2014) added that social satisfaction is the opposite of relative deprivation. Relative deprivation is generally considered to be the central variable in the explanation of social movements and is used to explain the quest for social change that inspires social movements; social movements emerge from collective feelings of relative deprivation.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is the ex-post facto design. According to National Population Commission of Nigeria (2006), there is a total population of about 387431 in Central Senatorial District of Cross River State. A total sample of 1940 respondent which consisted of 0.5% of the entire population was used for the study.

Table 1: Simple regression result of the influence of land dispute on community development in central senatorial district of Cross River State

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
.326 ^a	.106	.106	3.487

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2792.49	1	2792.49	229.72	.000 ^b
Residual	23558.40	1938	12.16		
Total	26350.89	1939			

a. Dependent Variable: Community development

b. Predictors: (Constant), Land Dispute

This indicated that the land dispute accounted for 10.6% of the determinant of communal conflict in the study area. This finding is an indication that land dispute is moderately high in the area of the study. The F-value of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) obtained from the

regression table gave $F = 229.72$ and significant value of $.000$ (or $p < .05$) at 1 and 1939 the degrees of freedom. The implication of this result is that the null hypothesis is rejected as there was a significant influence of land disputes on community development in the central senatorial district of Cross River.

Conclusion and Recommendation

From the analysis of data above, it is clear that there is a significant influence of land dispute on the communal conflict in the central senatorial district of Cross River State. The study's finding revealed that land dispute accounted for 10.6% of the variance in the communal conflict in the area under study. This implies that situations which breed land dispute can lead to communal conflict if not carefully managed. The degeneration of communal conflict from issues of land disputes could, on the other hand, be averted if the factors which make it lead to the conflict is resolved before they get out of hand.

This finding is in line with the finding of Yamano and Deininger (2005) that evaluated the causes, resolutions, and impacts of land conflicts and revealed that a major remote cause of the land use disputes was land sales. Abegunde (2011) also found out that land use related issues did serve as a cause of communal conflict. The finding is also in consonance with Adisa's (2012) finding which revealed the occurrence of communal conflict which resulted from unresolved land-related issues between two different sets of people.

The study, therefore, recommends the need for adequate measures to be adopted in the allocation of resources to communities, especially land in order to reduce injustice and promote equitability and transparency.

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