

The Socio-Economic Repercussions of Cattle Rustling in Gusau Local Government Zamfara State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study dwells on the recent upsurge of the problem of Cattle rustling in Gusau Local Government in Zamfara State, Nigeria. The acts which is one of the different forms of rural banditry, involves attacking rural communities with dangerous weapons and the stealing of their livestock by the gang of cattle rustlers. These result in the indiscriminate killings of innocent livestock owners, farmers, rural traders, vigilante group members, rape and abduction of young girls and married women and burning of hamlets/settlements by the various gang of cattle rustlers operating in the affected areas. Consequently, this resulted in mass migration of innocent rural dwellers out of the conflict areas of Gusau to safer regions. Negatively this has affected the area economically and undermined the social fabric of the rural communities. In addition, the study also examined the reasons for the recent upsurge of cattle rustling in the affected districts. The research used the Queer ladder theory and for analysis of the functional significance of organised crime as a means for socioeconomic empowerment and social climbing Dahrendorf's theoretical model of conflict to demonstrate the impact of authority relations that precipitate the conflict. Data were collected using survey method with a sample of 100 respondents while ten (10) key informant interviews were conducted with the stakeholders that include Police officers, local vigilante, NGOs, civil defence corps and community leaders making a total of 110. The findings indicated that, the upsurge in cattle rustling could be attributed to factors which include proliferations of fire arms among the Fulani herdsman, activities of the rural vigilante groups, influence of violent culture, lack of adequate or complete absence of security personnel in the affected districts. As a way forward the research recommends that, government should as a matter of urgency embark on comprehensive disarmaments of all parties involved, and adequate security to be immediately provided to the affected communities and other vulnerable areas prone to attack and generally uplift the standard of living of the people.

Keywords: Socio-economic Effects, Cattle Rustling, Rural Banditry, Proliferation of arms, Violent Attack

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Background to the Study

Cattle's rustling is a practice of stealing livestock for either economic or social gain. Livestock is fundamental form of pastoral capital, besides functioning as a means of production, storage, transport, and transfer of food and wealth. Natural resources such as pasture, water, natural vegetation, and livestock are key drivers of the rural economy. However, reduced access to these resources, in particular grazing land and cattle routes has increasingly put the rural people especially cattle owners under intense pressure. (Kapron, 2013).

The phenomenon of cattle thefts is an ancient practice that is associated with societies suffering from social and economic upheavals and where the structures and functioning of leadership and government have collapsed or are significantly weakened (Mohammed and Jibrin, 2015). Traditionally theft of livestock has been driven by the criminal intent to expropriate cow for meat or for sale. Pertinently, it must have served as a means of primitive accumulation of cow-herd in the contexts of subsistence and commercial pastoralism (Okoli and Opaleke, 2014).

Hitherto, this phenomenon is usually triggered by either a loss of herds due to famine, drought, or cattle diseases. In traditional African communities, cattle rustling are perpetrated when young person or children were sent to the bush with livestock for grazing, this gives the rustlers an easy opportunity to threaten and rustled the livestock from the young person's looking after the animals with utmost ease without any resistance. But recent incidences of cattle rustling in north western Nigeria especially in Zamfara state has presented a different scenario. The upsurge in cattle rustling and rural banditry affecting villages and districts in Zamfara state is attributed to the increased sophistication of the rustlers who were mostly armed with dangerous weapons while attacking the targeted villages.

Also in recent period, rural banditry and violent conflict between pastoralists and farmers in Nigeria have been on the rise. This social conflict has traditionally consisted of dispute over natural resources and is often presented as a conflict between pastoralists and farmers over land have recently developed into rural banditry with heavy human and economic cost, ranging from the sexual assault of women and girls, attacks on villages, to cattle rustling, among others (Mohammed and Jibrin, 2015).

Over the years, cattle's rustling has evolved into a pattern of organised crime with immense criminal sophistication and efficiency. Hence, contemporary cattle rustlers operate with modern weaponry and their operation are marked by trans- locational and trans-national syndication (Okoli and Opaleke 2014). To corroborate further the devastating effect of cattle rustling all over Nigeria, the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) has alleged that at least 40 million cattle have been stolen from its members across the country in the last two years. (People's Daily 26 March, 2015).

This new pattern of organised criminal syndicate of cattle rustlers with enough numerical strength and fire power has made it imperative for the local vigilantes to recruit more members and to expand their operation to cover most of the vulnerable villages/hamlets devastated by the activities of cattle rustlers. The activities of the vigilantes in some of the villages/hamlets in the respective districts of Gusau local government area, which is aimed at targeting the

suspected cattle rustlers was usually uncoordinated which invariably triggered reprisal killing with vigilante members and cattle owners as the major casualties.

The districts affected by the activities of cattle rustlers in Gusau local government of Zamfara state were largely porous with difficult terrain which made it almost impracticable for effective patrol and surveillance to be feasible. This made it easy for the rustlers to operate unabated on motorcycles, armed with dangerous weapons. Upon arrival at any targeted villages/ hamlets they shoot sporadically to scare the local vigilantes and cattle owners, sometimes inflicting serious injuries or multiple deaths to the victims in order to do away with any resistance from the cattle owners so that they can move the rustled cattle easily to their hideouts in the forest.

The problem was further aggravated by the migration of foreign nomads into some of the forested areas of Magami, Wanke, Rijiya, and Mada districts of Gusau Local Government from various regions. This was as a result of drought, famine, or armed conflict; these have invariably undermined the efficacy and hegemony of the traditional community leaders which hitherto served as a mechanism of social control in the rural communities. The issue of integration and adaptation to new norms and values by the immigrant's nomads and the spreading of violent cultural traits and the supply of dangerous weapons to the indigenous nomads posed serious threat to these rural communities.

The significant increased in reprisal killings, constant raiding of villages/hamlets by cattle rustlers and harassment of women and girls, rape and kidnapping of cattle owners and the failure of government to address the problem, has forced many herdsmen who could not bear the uncertainty and constant threat to their livelihood to migrate out of these districts. The increased in human migration especially herdsmen along with their livestock out of Gusau Local Government, has translated into huge economic lost as the mainstay of the economy of the region is largely agricultural activities which livestock formed the significant part.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, rural communities in north-western Nigeria, especially in Zamfara state has been devastated by banditry, proliferation of fire arms, kidnapping, rape, abduction, and indiscriminate killing which has direct bearing with the problem of cattle rustling. The problem in Gusau local government area especially in the four districts which includes; Magami, Wanke, Rijiya, and Mada have reached an alarming proportion. The significant losses of life, livestock, and properties of innocent herdsmen and farmers have adversely affected the social fibre and economic base of the district.

Some negative implication that may result from incessant incidents of rural banditry relate to a society's social capital in terms of family and communal cohesion, gender relations, and customary institutions that condition social control and may undermine the prospects for human development. Incidents of armed banditry have in some instances been accompanied by sexual violence against women and young girls, the consequences of which cannot be overlooked. The terror generated by armed banditry is a critical factor that can induce displacement and delay later return and resettlement. Such displacement may be internal or cross-border. Forced displacement has been observed to destroy families and communities,

disrupt normal economic activities and undermine human development. It is notable also that contrary to traditional norms. Women and children are not spared in contemporary bandit's operations. They seem to even bear most of the brunt in form of rape, torture and murder. (Muggah and Batchelor 2002:26).

Also during incidents of armed violence such as armed banditry, the direct consequences for women victims of sexual violence are manifold: psychological trauma, pregnancy, and the spread of HIV. In addition, however, sexual violence has specific poverty implications. Stigmatization as prostitutes, loss of spouses and prohibition of future marriage, and rejection by family and community members is common. Such treatment, in turn, limits women's access to livelihood assets such as land and labour and cuts them off from sharing in social capital. (Centre for International Cooperation Security. 2005:21). The resultant effects of this dastardly acts, and raiding of herdsmen and farmers by different gangs of bandits and indiscriminate killing of innocent villagers by the rustlers, has raised question as regards to what might be wrong with security agency's efficacy of dealing with crimes of this magnitude. This trend if left unchecked could lead to entire annihilation of the district which hitherto, has been full of pastoral activities which by and large contributed to the flourishing of the rural economy.

Thus, it is imperative therefore, to examine some of these effects of cattle rustling on the economy of the districts which is largely depended on agricultural activities. During both the rainy and dry seasons, the activities of cattle rustlers have prevented people of the districts from farming, trading, and rearing of their domestic animals. The absence of economic activities and the fear of indiscriminate killing in these districts have caused huge migration out of these districts which significantly, undermined the social fibre of the affected community. As cultural activities and other rituals like, naming, and marriage ceremonies and other traditional ceremonies are no longer feasible due to the immense threat posed by the rustlers.

However, this study aims at studying the socio-economic repercussion of cattle rustling in Gusau local government of Zamfara state Nigeria. Apart from the killing of hundreds of innocent people of Zamfara over the years under review, no one can estimate the high rate of economic lost encountered by the people of the state especially food and other livestock either destroyed or stolen from the affected areas. But one most bad aspect of these deadly attacks, is that in every single attack, there must be lost of live and properties while severally houses and places of worships were being target by these hoodlums.

Again it crippled the investment opportunity of the state because foreign investors some time are not willing and interested in coming to Zamfara to invest due to lack of safety of their life and property. A clear example was the threat on some of the officials of road construction companies along Dansadai area who were ask to quit their location of work or be killed. Also the development has impacted negatively on the mining and solid minerals opportunities henceforth, the foreign companies and investors did no longer consider Bagegga and mining communities safer for economic attraction.

Movement of goods and other agricultural product is no longer possible considering the fact that people and even the security agencies are being attacked on the daily basis while farmlands are equally destroyed even before harvest and the hope for agricultural is almost dashed out. Above all the exit of the Fulani people from Zamfara state due to the increasing rates of attack against their settlements and other livestock remain one of the most critical economic challenges heating the state. There is no doubt to the fact that Fulani in Zamfara according to recent studies contributes up to eighteen percent of the state GDP and contributes about twenty-four percent of the state internally generated revenue but with the situation on the ground, trailers loaded with Fulani people and their luggage's are being sighted almost on daily basis living the state for lack of safety. (247 U Reports 2014, February).

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the research are as follows;

- i. Identify the impact of cattle rustling on the socio-economic conditions of the people of Gusau local government area of Zamfara State, Nigeria,
- ii. Identify the factors responsible for the upsurge of cattle rustling in recent years in the districts of Gusau.

Scope of the Study

This research work is limited to the study of the negative impact of cattle rustling in Gusau local government area of Zamfara state, Nigeria. Particular attention would be given to four districts under Gusau which includes, Magami, Rijiya, Wanke, and Mada. Gusau is a city and local government area located in the north western Nigeria. It is the capital of Zamfara state in Nigeria. Gusau is located 12.17 latitude and 6.66 longitudes and it is situated at elevation 451 meters above sea level. The local government has an area of 3,364km² and a population of 383,162 as at the 2006 census. (National Population Commission: 2006).

It is also imperative therefore, to limit the study to the examination of the impact of cattle rustling on the socio economic conditions of the people and the factors responsible for the recent upsurge even though is not peculiar to Zamfara State and other districts, the phenomenon affects other neighbouring states as well which is beyond the scope of this study.

Operational Definition of Concepts

Concepts have been widely used in this research; therefore, this unit is entirely devoted to defining them according to their meaning and usage in the research.

1. **Cattle** - large domesticated mammals kept for the production of milk, meat, and hides. Cows and oxen are commonly types of cattle. They are usually the major source of economic wealth among the rural dwellers both the small scale farmers and full time herdsmen kept cattle for various economic reasons.
2. **Rustling** - stealing of grazing cattle or more generally refers to the acts of stealing livestock by means of violence using mostly dangerous weapons before, during or immediately after the commission of the offence.

3. **Rustler** - a persons' involved in the act of cattle or livestock theft who usually operate in groups and operate mainly in rural areas. They also engaged in other violent crime in rural areas like armed robbery, kidnapping, arson, indiscriminate killing of livestock owners, rape and abduction of young girls and married women.
4. **Vigilante** - is a civilian organisation acting in a law enforcement capacity without legal authority especially in remote areas where there is inadequate or complete absence of law enforcement personnel presence? The rural vigilantes were largely men who lack training and techniques of interrogation of suspected persons which by and large create antagonistic relationship with relatives of the suspected persons in their custody.
5. **Herdsmen** - persons who watch over a herd of cows, sheep etc. They are usually nomadic people who move with their animal from one place to another looking for pasture for their livestock to graze.
6. **Fulani** - a member of an ethnically diverse nomadic people living in western and central Africa. A significant number of them are nomadic in nature, herding cattle, goats and sheep across the vast dry grass lands of their environment, keeping isolate from the local farming communities making them the world's largest postural nomadic group.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The literature review is divided into sub-themes which purposely aim at highlighting the scholarly contributions of various authors on the subject matter in this study. Issues such as, proliferation of fire arms and perspectives on cattle rustling would be more important among them.

Proliferation of Fire Arms

In recent years the upsurge in cattle rustling and attacks on villages by the rustlers could be attributed to the problem of arms proliferation in the African continent more particular in the West African sub-region where conflict became a daily occurrence.

Anthony (2015), were of the view that the regular interception of illegal arms trafficking within and across the borders by security agencies also reveals the worrisome dimension that arms proliferation has recently assumed in the country. The media is awash with frightening reports of sophisticated Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) being seize by security operatives either at ports, borders, highways or crime and conflicts scenes. Although Nigeria's problem with SALWs is not new, its increasing availability in the last decade has helped stoke a wave of insurgencies, ethno-religious conflicts, cross-border banditry, kidnapping, armed robbery and other violent crimes.

Omitola (2014), posited that the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the Sahel are perpetuated by Fulani herdsmen who have been reported to be involved in transporting small arms to Nigeria through their cattle. The Nigeria military magazine quoting military sources claimed that most of the small arms came to the Boko Haram insurgents (and other dangerous groups and individuals) through Libyan and Malian rebels on the backs of camels and donkeys

desperate to exchange arms for money. This has been made possible to a greater extent by a combination of both internal and external factors such as Nigerian porous borders, corruption of immigration officers, inadequate record of immigration and emigration and the problem of identifying who is a Nigerian, since the country lacks any means of identifying her citizens.

Okoli and Okpalake. (2014, 21) stated that, “contemporary cattle rustlers operate with modern weaponry and their operation are marked by trans- location and trans- national syndicate.... In Nigeria, the prevalence of cattle rustling has been wide spread, particularly in the northern part of the country where cattle rearing obtains as dominants agricultural practice. Recent development tends to have implicated cattle rustling in rising wave of violence in northern Nigeria.” The continuing infiltration of dangerous weapons into the rural communities and the unwholesome acts perpetrated by various gangs of cattle rustlers prompted the government to involve the military in its fight against rural banditry.

Before July 2015, cattle rustling had been a nightmare to cattle owners across the core Northern states in Nigeria, but it only took a federal Government directive for the problem to come to national attention.... In fact, April was significant among the recent successes as troops of 1 Division Nigeria Army under the auspices of operation Sharan Daji succeeded in clearing suspected armed bandits camps in Zamfara and Katsina states during the period. In Zamfara state, they raided and destroyed suspected armed bandit's camps at Rafe and Ajah forests in Gusau Local Government Area. During the operation, the troops killed four bandits, while some escaped with gunshot wounds. The troops also recovered 5 Ak-47 rifles and 11 Ak-47 rifle magazine, 205 rounds of 7.62 mm (special) ammunition and 25 rounds of 7.62mm (NATO). (Vanguard Newspapers, 14 November 2016).

In a similar operation, troops of 223 Battalion Nigeria Army have averted another attack on Dansadau town by suspected Cattle rustlers and armed bandits on Wednesday 14th May 2016. The troops who were on patrol were alerted by well meaning individuals on seeing the bandits, the patrol team laid an ambush for the suspected cattle rustlers and armed bandits who come in large numbers on motorcycles fully armed. It was gathered that they were en route Ruwan Tofa and Babban Doka villages in Dansadau district of Maru Local Government Area, Zamfara state to wreak havoc on the helpless innocent people of those communities...The troops killed 18 and wounded several bandits. They also recovered 11 Ak-47 rifles, 1 G3 rifle, 1 locally made pistol, 11 magazines of Ak-47 rifle, a magazine of G3 rifle and 161 rounds of 7.62mm (special) ammunitions. (New Nigerian Newspapers, 06 May 2016). It is worth mentioning to state that, this proliferation of fire arms has created a new pattern of organised crime in most rural communities in Nigeria. This has led to an increase in the incidences of rural banditry in the north western Nigeria and certain economic motives have aggravated the problem of cattle rustling in recent years.

Mohammed and Jibrin (2015, 43) stated that, “Rural banditry and cattle rustling are on the rise, with aggressors motivated largely by economic and commercial motives; they have been encouraged by the ready availability of markets serving their underground economy.” In the same manner they further argued that, cattle rustling involve the use of arms to steal

households' entire livestock possession, thereby threatening the very existence of the affected households and communities.

Perspectives on Cattle Rustling

The phenomenon of cattle rustling in recent years has attracted the attention of scholars and analysts who interrogated it differently and this gave rise to different perspectives on the subject matter. The sustained insurgency in Northern states has given wings to another equally deadly vice known as cattle rustling which devastates a large percentage of nomadic Fulani people in addition to sedentary mixed-farmers across many grazing areas in most parts of North states without previous governments doing anything to contain the menace and the nuisance it presents. Accordingly, growing concerns have greeted the rising incidence of cattle theft and accompanying rape of women and children by heartless rustlers. These had also resulted in conflicts, deaths and loss of means of livelihood to countless number of cattle breeders across the country. The resultant factor has been the manifestation of a pattern of organised crime with immense lawlessness and adeptness. The prevalence of cattle rustling has, of recent, been a big problem especially in the North-Western zone of the country where cattle rearing is an integral part of agricultural practice. Recent happenings tend to poster conducive atmosphere for cattle rustling to become an effective means of perpetrating violence in Northern Nigeria (Desert Herald Newspaper 15 November, 2015).

Armed bandits have regularly attacked Fulani settlements in the region, stealing cattle, setting fire to homes and raping women, prompting the herders to move south and cross the border. In response, young Fulani men have become involved in cross-border rustling and armed robbery syndicates in West Africa, according to the Miyatte Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), the umbrella body of Fulani herders in Nigeria. They have turned on their kinsmen for not helping them out during decades of conflicts between herders and farmers over grazing and watering rights, which led to loss of their entire herds, creating poverty. (Daily Mail Newspaper 11 May, 2016)

According to Azeez and Aliyu (2016: 50) “Cattle rustling has recently become a major internal security concern in Nigeria, with the country's northern region as the epicentre. Reports of bandits with automatic weapons storming herder's settlements and farms with mission of killing people and pillaging cows proliferate... Our study discovers the involvement of cattle herders in the rustling business. A corollary to this development is the proliferation of small arms and light weapons across the country. The possession of these arms by non-state actors has set in motion chains of security challenges, one of which is the ability to organise armed syndicates to perpetrate cattle rustling. This situation is compounded by the inability of the Nigerian state to take control of the situation- evidence of increasing state weakness...Another trigger of the rustling business is the presence of large swathes of forest reserves that are generally out of the reach of the Nigerian security operatives. Most of the rustling activities take place in state-owned reserves such as the Kamuku, Kiyabana, and Falgore forests in North Nigeria”.

Bevan, (2007), stated that, one modern dimension of pastoral conflict is the emergence of commercialized raiding which is facilitated by improved access to markets, brought about by

the growth of urban populations and infrastructure close to pastoral regions. Urban centres provide a market (hungry people) as well an opportunity (butchery and meat processing facilities) that formerly did not exist. In contrast to augmenting and compensatory raiding, this form of theft is undertaken with the explicit intention of selling livestock for immediate profit and usually results in the slaughter of the animals.

However, Ducan, et al (2015) have posited that, cattle rustling is largely caused by competition over control of and access to natural resources particularly water and pasture. Other causes of conflicts include historical rivalry, deep-seated cultural values, land issue, idleness amongst the youth and more recently proliferation of illicit arms.

Omitola (2014) look at the phenomena from different perspective and argue that the influence of foreign Fulani groups in search of pasture accounts for irreconcilable conflicts being witnessed between the Fulani and their hosts communities. Due to cultural and religious affinity, it is practically difficult to distinguish between Nigeria Fulani and Fulani from other countries across the Sahel region moving into Nigeria.

Further to this, Okoli and Opalake (2014) contextualized cattle rustling as a perennial problem in Nigeria. In northern Nigeria where cattle rearing constitutes a dominant occupation, the problem has been complicated by the rising incidence of farmer/ herders conflicts as well as the Boko Haram insurgency.

Olayoku (2014) associated the problem to climate changes, the migration further south, the growth of agro-pastoralism, the expansion of farming on pastures, the invasion of farmlands by cattle, assault on non-Fulani women by herders, blockage of stock routes and water points, fresh water scarcity, burning of range lands, cattle theft, inadequate animal health care and disease control, over grazing on fallow lands, defecation on stream, and road by cattle, extensive sedentarisation, ineffective coping strategies, ethnic stereotyping, and the breakdown of conflict intervention mechanism are seen to be usually the root causes of such violence in rural areas. He further added that, the major source of tension between pastoralists and farmers is basically economic, with land-related issues accounting for the majority of the conflicts.

In addition, for Manu et al, (2014) cattle rustling have undergone fundamental transformation from a cultural practice of testing a person's personal bravery and prowess to bloody warfare between various groups or communities. All these pose serious challenges to societal structures, survival, as well as moral foundations, It is a serious social problem as seen in other parts of the world that needs to be investigated and appropriate solutions proposed before it gets out of hand. These cattle theft have had devastating effects on the development of cattle herds and have retarded investment in this sector especially by non-Fulani pastoralists.

However, according to Schilling. et al, (2012) traditionally, livestock raiding often involved small scale manageable violence and theft of the best livestock or replacement of animals lost during periods of drought or diseases by contrast, in recent years, due to the proliferation of modern small arms, commercialisation of livestock, raiding, dispute over land tenure rights, the situation has created the tendency for banditry, and predation.

Some scholars such as Mohammed and Jibrin (2015) were of the view that in Nigeria, livestock was accounting for about 26% of the agricultural GDP and about 10% of the National Gross Domestic Product in the 1990's, but the level of this contribution has significantly declined with agriculture contributing only about 19.65% of the GDP in the first quarter of 2014. Consequently, the incidences of cattle rustling have significantly expanded in Nigeria since 2010 in many states thereby affecting the livelihoods of pastoral and agricultural households.

This research uses the Queer ladder theory (QLT) of Daniel Bell (1919-2011) an American sociologist for analysis of the functional significance of organised crime as a means for socioeconomic empowerment and social climbing. This theoretical perspective has been a popular theoretical framework mostly used in the present day studies of crime.

The theory has three basic assumptions viz;

- a. Organised crime is an instrumental behaviour; it is a means an end.
- b. It is an instrument of social climbing and/ or socio-economic advancement.
- c. It is a means to accumulate wealth, build power.

The theory is on the notion that, organised crime flourished in an environment where government presence is not felt especially in terms of crime prevention and control, where corruption prevailed with impunity, and where legitimate livelihood opportunities are limited (Okoli and Opalake 2014).

By applying this Queer ladder theory to this research work, it would enable us to come to term with prevalence of the phenomenon of cattle rustling in Gusau local government area of Zamfara state, Nigeria. The rustlers and their conspirators were mostly motivated to partake in cattle rustling due to the huge economic gains involved with little risks. This was predicated on the fact that, most of the targeted locations for cattle rustling are highly vulnerable without any or proper formal deterrence mechanism.

It is imperative to state here that, the adoption of the theory is to enable the research shade light on the sociological foundations of organised crime such as cattle rustling. Recent trend in the areas devastated by the activities of cattle rustlers indicated that, the bandits were highly organized in large numbers for their activities to be carried out unabated in the remotely vulnerable districts of the local government area.

In addition to the theoretical postulation by Queer Ladder Theory (QLT) on organised crime and its basic assumptions, it is important to state that, the underlying reality about the phenomena of cattle rustling in Gusau local government Zamfara state is beyond the quest for socio-economic advancement or a means to accumulate wealth or power.

This makes Dahrendorfs' theoretical model of conflict relevant here, for Dahrendorf, the social world is composed of "imperatively coordinated associations" (hereafter referred to as ICAs) which represent, in terms of criteria not specified a distinguishable organization of roles. This organization is characterized by power relationships with some clusters of roles

having power over others. Therefore, power differentials can be said to exist. Furthermore, while power denotes the coercion of some by others, these power relations tend to be legitimated and can therefore be viewed as authority relations in which some positions have the legitimate or normative right to dominate others. In this context the conflict between Fulani's and the Hausas are matters of along this direction

Authority is therefore a basic principle in this relationship and presumably throughout all layers of social systems. But at the same time, authority is also the scarce resource over which subgroups compete and fight, and is thereby the major source of conflict. This conflict parallels the organization of roles in relation to authority, since the "objective interests" inhering in any role are a direct function of the extent to which that role possesses authority and power over other roles. However, this role can be typified in terms of just two basic types of roles, ruling and ruled, with the ruling clusters of roles having an interest in preserving the status quo while the ruled clusters have an interest in re- distributing power, or authority. This can at best describe the conflict between the rulers who are the Hausas and the Fulani's who are those being ruled.

Further, the occupational division between these two different ethnic groups even though having certain things in common like religion and intermarriages is largely responsible for the conflicting relationship. The Hausas owned majority of the lands in the area and engaged in full time farming while the Fulani pastoralists' main occupation is livestock and in the course of grazing, allegation of mischief on the farm land is usually emanated and if poorly handled it led to the escalation of conflict between the two different ethnic groups. It is imperative to stress that, allegation of unfair treatment and discrimination at the hands of the traditional rulers mostly Hausas when arbitrating disputes over mischief on farmland is one of the reasons for the soured relationship in recent years. The recent attacks and reprisal killings witnessed in the affected areas was perceived to be a retaliation on the long period of persecution suffered by the Fulani herdsmen at the hands of farmers and traditional rulers in the affected areas. Therefore, it is obvious that, reprisal attacks and killings prevalent in the affected areas in recent years is the manifestation of prolonged conflicting nature of the relationship between these two ethnic groups living together in the same geographical area for many decades.

Research Methodology

This research employed triangulation method; it entailed the use of questionnaire and Key Informant Interviews (KII). The adoption of these methods was predicated based on the nature of the study and types of respondents involved who were mostly nomadic in nature moving from one place to another and also non-literate in western education. Questionnaires and interview availed the researcher the opportunity of getting appropriate responses from the respondents which may represent the actual situation of this phenomenon of cattle rustling in Gusau local government of Zamfara state, Nigeria. The use of KII will complement the survey to have detailed responses from key informants who are the only people with the knowledge on the problem at hand.

For this, the following methods were adopted for the research;

Samples and Sampling Procedure

Usually the sample is relatively small number cases used as the basis for inferences in all cases (population). Because it is impossible or impractical to collect data from all the potential units of analysis, the sample represents the whole. The essential requirement of any sample is that it has to be as representative as possible of the population from which it is drawn. The multi-stage cluster sampling technique was used to select areas of study (districts) At stage one, the four areas were purposively selected as they were most affected by the problem of cattle rustling. In stage two the locations were selected through the simple random sampling by lottery method as all locations from the four districts were written and “pick from the hat method” as they were shaken and two were selected from each of the four clusters making a total of eight. Qualitative data was collected in the form of Key Informant Interview (KII) with stakeholders. For this, a total of ten (10) were purposively selected, translated as two Divisional Police Officers, (DPOs), two head of NGOs, two community leaders, two vigilantes and two Civil Defence Corps . The sample size for quantitative survey consists of a number of one hundred (100) respondents and was obtained with 100% return because the researcher was there physically and collected the information himself, therefore for both quantitative and qualitative the sample stood at 110 respondents.

Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

The preferred methods of data collection for this research are questionnaire and Key informant interview. The survey consisted of closed and open-ended questions which are easy to quantify, this means it is easy to test for reliability. On the other hand, Key informant Interviews are fairly quick to conduct which means that many interviews can take place within a short amount of time. The quantitative data was analyzed by the use of the statistical package for the social sciences software(SPSS) in the form of simple frequency and percentages, while qualitative data was initially tape recorded and transcribed, it was then sorted and thematic and contexts were identified to suit the objectives of the study.

Problems Encountered in the Field

The study “The Socio-economic Repercussions of Cattle Rustling in Gusau local government of Zamfara state, Nigeria” is an attempt to find out the negative effects of cattle rustlers activities on the people of Gusau. In the course of data collection while at the field which is largely remote, porous, and isolated areas in the rural Gusau, some difficulties were experienced with data collection exercise. Having anticipated these problems, the adoption of close-ended questionnaire and interview schedule was in the right direction. The respondents in this study became suspicious of any unknown visitor(s) to their villages as their suspicion was based on the spying activities the rustlers used to carry out before any attack to these villages/settlements. This contempt served as a hindrance to proper and efficient data collection exercise.

It is also imperative to state that, the data was collected from different districts within Gusau local government area. The victims of these acts includes the livestock owners, local vigilantes, and farmers were mostly non-literate in western education; therefore, the

questionnaire was administered to them while taking their responses by the use of researcher administered method. Trained research assistants were employed to collect data which helped to overcome some those challenges.

Another impediment experienced during data collection is the nomadic nature of majority of the respondents. They usually reside in the forest moving from one place to another for their animals to graze. In order to overcome this problem, responses were instantly taken from them without delay. Also to elucidate additional information on the subject matter under study, stakeholders in the areas were made as respondents for the interview schedule. These includes, police officers, District heads, vigilantes, etc who may be directly involved in managing of cattle rustling in the affected districts of the local government.

Analysis and Presentation of Data

This was basically designed to examine data collected from the field through the use of closed-ended questionnaire and structured interview schedule techniques. The quantitative method of data analysis was used simultaneously and in complement with qualitative method. The mass of data collected through questionnaire and interviews are analysed using statistical table. Therefore, the responses represent the views of the people of Gusau Local Government Area of Zamfara State and other stakeholders in the areas devastated by the criminal activities of cattle rustlers.

Socio-Demographic Attributes of the Respondents

Table 1: Ages Distribution of the Respondent

Ages	Frequency	Percentage
18-28	15	15%
29-39	48	48%
40-50	25	25%
51 and above	12	12%
TOTAL	100	100%

From the table above it is clearly shown that, fifteen percent of the respondents were between the ages of eighteen and twenty-eight years, forty-eight percent were between the ages of twenty-nine and thirty-nine. Twenty-five per cent of the respondents were between the ages of forty to fifty, while the remaining twelve percent of the respondents were fifty-one and above years. This has basically demonstrated that, majority of the respondents were within their youthful ages of active involvement in rural occupations which are mostly farming and rearing of domestic animals and invariably became more prone to the problem of cattle rustling as they are usually the target.

Table 2: Sex of the Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	75	75%
Female	25	25%
Total	100	100%

From the table above it is clearly indicated that, seventy-five percent of the respondents were males while twenty-five percent were females. This under representation of women in this study is associated with certain cultural and religion practice of the people of Gusau who happens to be predominantly Muslims and this has put some restrictions on women to interact freely outside the matrimonial homes and getting responses from such category is sometimes impracticable. Even though they are also directly affected by these unwholesome acts as they are mostly the victims of rape abduction and other forms of sexual abuses.

Table 3: Occupations of the Respondents

Occupations	Frequency	Percentage
Farming	26	26%
Rearing domestic animals	56	56%
Trading	14	14%
Others specify	4	4%
TOTAL	100	100%

The table above shown that, twenty-six percent of the respondents were predominantly farmers, fifty-six percent were involved in animal husbandry and other related pastoral occupation of maintaining livestock. Fourteen percent of the respondents were local traders conducting trading in rural markets in the districts, while four percent of the respondents were primary school teachers, security personnel, civil servants etc. This has clearly indicated that, the rural economy composed of farmers, trader, livestock owners and other people engaged in quasi- traditional works like black smith, wood cutting etc. Therefore, majority of the respondents were directly affected by the negative impacts of cattle rustling in the area under study.

Table 4: Perceptions of Respondents about Cattle Rustling in Gusau Local Government Area.

Perceptions	Frequency	Percentage
Theft of livestock by violent means.	52	52
Harassments and indiscriminate killings of livestock owners by rustlers.	30	30
Burning of hamlets and settlements by rustlers.	28	28
TOTAL	100	100%

From the table above it is shown that, 52% of the respondents' perceived cattle rustling to be associated with the theft of livestock in large number by violent means. While 30% of the

respondents viewed cattle rustling to involved theft of livestock by violent means, harassment, indiscriminate killing of cattle owners, in addition 30% were of the view that it involves burning of hamlets and settlements of cattle owners by rustlers. This has shown that, the problem is not only limited to theft but also other violent acts perpetrated by the various gangs of rustlers on the innocent rural dwellers in the areas in Gusau. It is imperative to state that cattle rustling have metamorphosed into rural banditry because of the massive economic gains involved in the illicit acts.

Table 5: Periods Which Marked the Upsurged in Cattle Rustling in Gusau Local Government Area.

Years	Frequency	Percentage
1999 to 2004	-	-
2005 to 2010	10	10%
2011 to date	90	90%
TOTAL	100	100%

From the above classification it is clearly shown that, ten percent of the respondents were of the view that, the upsurge in cattle rustling started between 2005 to 2010 in Gusau, while ninety percent of the respondents argued that, the upsurge in cattle rustling begins between 2011 to date in Gusau local government area of Zamfara State.

Also during an interview with a Divisional Police Officer he stated that:

The upsurge in cattle rustling in Gusau Local Government started between 2011 jkto date. He further argued that the period marked an unprecedented case of attacks, reprisal killing, and livestock theft in the areas affected by the activities of cattle rustlers (KII: DPO).

Table 6: Persons Mostly Involved in Cattle Rustling in Gusau Local Government Area.

Identity of People Involved in Cattle Rustling	Frequency	Percentage
Local nomads	14	14%
Foreign nomad	72	72%
Rural bandits	11	11%
All of the above	3	3%
TOTAL	100	100%

The table above indicated that, fourteen percent of the respondents attributed the upsurge in cattle rustling in Gusau local government area of Zamfara state to the criminal activities of local indigenous Fulani herdsmen who engages in the unwholesome acts for economic gains. Seventy two percent were of the view that, foreign herdsmen were mostly involved in cattle rustling as their life style is highly nomadic in nature moving across the boundaries of many countries across Africa. This has avail them the opportunity to rustled livestock in large number and escape with the same to other neighbouring countries across the open borders. Eleven percent of the respondents were of the view that, rural bandits were mostly involved in

cattle rustling, while three percent were of the view that, both local and foreign herdsmen, and rural bandits were responsible for recent increases in the incidences of cattle rustling in Gusau local government area.

During the interview with a local vigilante he argued that:

Mostly the foreign herdsmen were largely responsible for large scale theft of livestock in the areas. This was predicated on the fact that they travelled across the borders of so many countries in the sub region armed with sophisticated weapons and escaped after perpetrating their nefarious acts leaving little room for possible trace and prosecution (KII: LOCAL VIGILANTE).

Table 7: Method of Moving away the Rustled Cattle in Gusau Local Government Area.

Methods	Frequency	Percentage
Through The cattle routes in the bush.	44	44%
The use of vehicles	2	2%
Through the thick forest	53	53%
All of the above	1	1%
TOTAL	100	100%

From the table above it shown that, forty-four percent of the respondents were of the view that, most of the rustled livestock were taken away from the area where they were stolen through the cattle routes in the bush which is mostly isolated without much obstruction. Two percent of the respondents argued that, the rustlers usually move away the stolen livestock through the use of vehicles like Lorries or trucks for easy disappearance. Fifty-three percent of the respondents were of the opinion that, the stolen livestock were usually take away through the nearby thick forest to concealed their movement in case of follow up by cattle owners, vigilante or security personnel. While one percent of the respondents opined that, cattle rustlers used to utilise the enumerated alternatives in the course of committing the nefarious acts.

In one of the interviews with a Civil Defence Corp he opined:

Cattle rustlers usually invade the targeted villages and settlements with sophisticated weapons and usually unleashed terror on the cattle owners and local vigilantes who came to their rescue. They moved the rustled animals through thick forest and the cattle routes. The use of vehicle to transport the rustled livestock is very rare in the affected areas (KII: COMMUNITY LEADER).

Table 8: Factors Responsible for the Upsurge in Cattle Rustling in Gusau Local Government Area.

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Proliferation of lethal weapons	16	16
Vulnerability of the areas	03	3
Absence or lack of proper security	20	20
All of the above	61	61
TOTAL	100	100%

The table above indicated that, sixteen percent of the respondents were of the view that, proliferation of lethal weapons like short guns, rifles, machine guns and other assault rifles in the hands of potential rustlers was responsible for the upsurge in cattle rustling in the areas affected by this heinous crime. Three percent of the respondents attributed the upsurge in cattle rustling in recent years to the problem of vulnerability of the area which is porous and difficult to police. While eighty one percent of the respondents were of the view that, different factors enumerated above combined together was responsible for the upsurge in cattle rustling and other associated criminal activities in Gusau local government area of Zamfara state.

This data above concur with the statements of one of the local vigilante interviewed as follows:

Proliferation of dangerous weapons among the Fulani herdsmen especially foreign nomads who travelled along the borders of Niger, Chad, and Cameroon with arms and ammunitions concealed inside their loads help adversely in the spread of this dangerous weapon to other potential criminal gangs in the region. Vulnerability of the affected areas and lack of adequate security was largely responsible for the upsurge in cattle rustling in recent years in Gusau local government area. The affected areas where largely situated at the boundary of the forest with no access road and no proper communication facilities and also the security personnel are not stationed in the affected districts, these has gave the rustlers an ample opportunities to operate freely in the affected areas(KII: LOCAL VIGILATE).

Table 9: Social Effects of Cattle Rustling in Gusau Local Government Area.

Types of Social Effects	Number	Percentage
Forced migration	34	34
Abduction and rape	36	36
Inability to conduct ritual and cultural ceremonies due to fear of attack	30	30
TOTAL	100	100%

From the table above it clear indicated that, 34% the respondents saw the effects of cattle rustling responsible for the forced migration out of most vulnerable areas of Gusau as a result of constant attacks and theft of livestock by criminal gangs of cattle rustlers. A higher percentage believed that it was responsible for (36%) for abduction and rape of young girls, both married and unmarried women has been a daily occurrence in those areas devastated by the activities of the rustlers. Ceremonies like marriage, naming, and other cultural activities which attract large number of people is also not feasible due to the threats posed by the gang of rustlers to these rural communities in the area (30%).

In response to this also the respondents involved in in-depth interview stated that,

Due to fear of indiscriminate attacks and reprisal killing by the rustlers, majority of the herdsmen living in the in the affected areas were forced to migrate from the district to safer places thereby losing ties with their local community completely and became internally displaced. They usually encountered problem of integration and invariably treated with contempt as alien in the new settlements (KII: COMMUNITY LEADER).

Table 10: Economic Effects of Cattle Rustling in Gusau Local Government Area

Types of Economic Effects	Number	Percentage
Loss of entire herds to rustlers	20	20
Farming become impracticable	54	54
Trading and businesses in rural markets not feasible	26	26
TOTAL	100	100%

The table above shown that, all the one hundred respondents were of the view that, the economic effect of cattle rustling in Gusau local government area has been very devastating to the people living in these areas. Some families have lost the entire herds to the rustlers, (20%) while farming the main means of livelihood of the people was not feasible especially in farmlands that are far away from the settlements, or bordering the forest areas (54%). Trading and small businesses which hitherto flourished in most local markets in the affects area has been undermined (26%) due to frequent ambush and robbery by the rustlers on commuters travelling to rural markets in the areas. This and many more threats have invariably affected the economy of the local government area.

This was buttressed by a respondent as follows:

The activity of cattle rustlers has a devastating effect on the economy of the district. The rustlers have prevented important and viable economic activities like farming, trading, rearing of domestic animals due indiscriminate attacks at farmlands, cattle grazing areas, and blocking of local roads leading to other villages and settlements by the bandits (KII: COMMUNITY LEADER)

Table 11: Activities of the Local Vigilante and the Upsurge in Cattle Rustling in Gusau.

Activities of Local Vigilante	Frequency	Percentage
Increases the incidences attacks, reprisal killing and livestock thefts	92	92%
Reduction in cattle rustling	5	5%
Undecided	3	3%
TOTAL	100	100%

From the table above it shown that, ninety-two percent of the respondents were of the view that, the unethical activities of the local vigilante groups which involved unprecedented torture, extortion and killing of suspected rustlers on unverified allegations led to the upsurge in cattle rustling in Gusau local government area. Five percent of the respondents considered the activities of the local vigilante as one of the most effective measures which reduces the incidence of cattle rustling in the area, while three percent of the respondents were undecided.

In an interview with an NGO leader he lamented that:

The unethical activities of the local vigilant by means of arresting Fulani men suspected of belonging to the gang of cattle rustlers on unsubstantiated rumours and subjecting them to rigorous unethical interrogation by the untrained vigilante who in most case murdered these suspected Fulani men in cool blood was largely responsible for the reprisal killing and upsurge in cattle rustling in the district as the rustlers or any gang of rural Fulani bandits took it as an avenue of revenge on any community that attack and kill its member unjustly(KII: NGO LEADER).

Discussion of Findings

In the course of proper execution of this research work, questionnaire and interview schedule methods were respectively used to collect data from the respondents on the subject matter which have been presented and analysed earlier.

It was discovered that, majority of the respondents in this study were of the opinion that, the upsurge in cattle rustling in the affected districts of Gusau local government area started between 2011 to date. This dastardly act was characterised by indiscriminate attacks and killing of cattle owners, vigilante members, and other innocent rural dwellers by the various gangs of cattle rustlers. The most devastating moment of these acts was when the hoodlums decided to embark on reprisal killings in the affected districts.

It is also posited by the majority of the respondents that, significant number of the hoodlums involved in cattle rustling and other violent crimes in the affected districts of the area under study were mostly of Fulani decent who have prior knowledge and skills on how to quietly move large number of livestock with less hitch. Again majority of the respondents were of the view that, the proliferation of dangerous weapons among the Fulani herdsmen especially the youths in the respective districts was largely responsible for the increasing incidences of cattle rustling in the area under study. As a result of this widespread possession of these dangerous weapons, the efficacy of the local vigilante groups to deal with these ravaging acts has been greatly undermined as they cannot match the fire power of the hoodlums.

The respondents were also of the view that, the unethical activities of the local vigilante groups by way of conducting jungle justice on the suspected Fulani cattle rustlers in the affected areas of Gusau greatly served as a provocation to the Fulani's and their accomplices which invariably triggered reprisal reactions from the various criminal gangs in the area by means of attacks and killing indiscriminately to support their kinsmen. It is also important to note that, majority of the respondents were of the view that, as a result of indiscriminate attacks and killing of innocent livestock owners and general lack of security and safety in the affected districts, many families have relocated away from this troublesome area. Life in the affected areas became unbearable as normal cultural and communal activities are not being observe due the fear of been attack at any time of the day.

It is also pertinent to state that, majority of the respondents are not satisfied with the effort of the security agencies in the area in tackling this impending problem of cattle rustling. Many of the respondents expressed their dismay for insufficient effort from the security personnel to tackle the problem of indiscriminate attacks and killing of cattle owners by the different gangs of bandits. The state government was vehemently faulted for not doing enough to rescue the local communities ravaged by the unwholesome activities of cattle rustlers in the affected districts of Gusau. As most respondents were of the views that, for political reasons, the Zamfara state government is reluctant to physically intervene in the carnage due to their ties with the leadership of the Fulani's as their direct involvement can be seen by the Fulani leaders as direct confrontation against the Fulani people by the government. It was further argued that, in most cases, the government prefer dialogue rather than military action even though the Fulani bandits are fully armed with sophisticated weapons and their regular attacks on the rural communities continued unabated with no signs of ending the problem through dialogue and reconciliation.

Summary

The study has illuminated on the negative impacts of cattle rustling and it's associated devastating consequences on the living conditions of the rural communities in Gusau local government area, Zamfara state, Nigeria. This was by highlighting the basic contents, such as the origin, scope of the study and operational definition of concepts, statement of problem, objectives of the study among others issues.

In addition, relevant literature and theoretical framework for the study were offered. The literature review examined different perspectives on the phenomenon of cattle rustling, proliferation of fire arms which largely fuelled the recent upsurge in rural banditry and cattle rustling in the area under study. On the theoretical framework, the Queer ladder theory (QLT) was examined to explain the organized nature of cattle rustling in contemporary period which is more or less a means to accumulate wealth and build power by the actors involved in this crime. Further to this the theory was supplemented with Dahrendorf's theoretical model of conflict .In this context the conflict between the Hausas(farmers) and the Fulani's (herders)is purely as a result of conflict between the rulers and the ruled in an authority based relationship. It is conflict between those who want maintain a status –quo and assert hegemony and those who oppose it and want to change.

Conclusion

The major causes of cattle rustling in Gusau local government area of Zamfara state, Nigeria are multi-faceted and includes among others: proliferation of fire arms among the Fulani herdsmen, unethical activities of the rural vigilante groups operating without any legal code to guide their operations, harsh economic conditions which gave rise to massive youths unemployment in the rural areas, influence of violent foreign culture, and breaking down of social values which hitherto serves as a mechanism of social control.

Traditionally, rural areas are known for its peaceful atmosphere and harmonious co-existence among its inhabitants but the present day realities have changed the scenario to a more volatile and unpredictable nature of rural life security wise thereby eroding the social fabric of the rural community making it prone to all forms of rural criminalities.

The outstanding socio-economic impacts of cattle rustling are: disruption of economic activities, fall in rural businesses due to fear of indiscriminate attacks while on transit to and fro rural markets. Farming which is the main stay of the rural economy has been greatly affected due to fear of attacks and lack of safety while in the farm land. In some instances, bandits do attack farmers while cultivating their farmland injuring or even killing them and usually carted away with their oxen which they are using to plough their farmland and escaped to the nearby forest.

This lack of safety and security has prompted the mass migration of law abiding rural dwellers with large number of their herds away from the affected districts to safer places. This has detrimental effects on the rural economy thereby accelerating the problem of rural poverty and unemployment.

Recommendations

The research found out that in the districts affected by the menace of cattle rustling in the area under study, the security agencies and the state government failed to properly secure these areas from the constant raiding and attacks by the various gang of cattle rustlers and other rural bandits.

1. Moreover, activities of the local vigilante groups in various districts of Gusau local government area which involves indiscriminate arrest of suspected Fulani herdsmen, with frivolous, trivial or no evidence to prove their involvement in any attack associate with livestock theft. The situation was further aggravated when the vigilantes resulted into killing any suspected cattle rustler in an open market square without any justification.
2. The scenario created a chain of retaliation and reprisal attacks in the affected areas which culminated in the significant loss of lives and property. Also this situation has led to the mass exodus of herdsmen who were hitherto living in peace and harmony with the host communities to other regions considered to be safer.
3. It is in the light of this that, the following short and long term measures are recommended for consideration in policies, ways and means of addressing the problem of cattle rustling and other associated banditry activities in rural areas of Gusau Zamfara state, Nigeria.

Short Term Recommendations

1. There should be constant and effective deployment of adequate number of security personnel to the affected communities to checkmate the illegal activities of the cattle rustlers and other rural bandits as well as halting the unethical activities of the local vigilante groups which invariably aggravated the problem in recent years.
2. There should be 24 hours' surveillance patrol along Nigeria-Niger Republic borders to check the influx of foreign herdsmen who are mostly suspected of smuggling dangerous weapons, such as rifle, pistol, machine gun and ammunitions to Nigeria through these porous borders which greatly help in increasing the incidences of rural banditry in Zamfara state.
3. There should be aerial surveillance on the suspected bandit's hideouts in the forest. This would assist greatly for easier identification and location of the target for the ground troops to move in precision on the intended target in order to reduce human casualty during operations.
4. There should be collaboration efforts between the states of Zamfara, Sokoto, Kebbi, Katsina, Kaduna and Niger all in Northern Nigeria to check and prevent the fleeing bandits from residing in their forest areas. This became imperative since the bandits moves through the extended forest of one state with their loots to other state or other side of the forest to sale or safe keep the rustled livestock. The collaborating could be in planning, intelligence sharing and joint operation etc.

Long Term Measures

1. Disarmament, government should set up effective modalities to recover all unlawfully possessed fire arms from the wrong hands. These unlawfully possessed fire arms certainly precipitated the increasing attacks on rural communities in the affected districts and the rustling of their livestock by the cattle rustlers who operate with high degree of impunity because of their fire power which the villagers/rural vigilante cannot dare to confront them.
2. There should be a sustained effort from the government to encourage dialogue and reconciliation among the different ethnic groups in the respective communities affected by the problem of cattle rustling and other different forms of rural banditry. These communities have been hitherto living in peace and harmony with each other for many decades, but recent events have totally changed the existing peaceful relationship into serious confrontations which culminated in to significant loss of life and property.
3. The Government should create an enabling environment for local jobs creation at the village level for the teeming unemployed youths. Rural poverty has been pervasive in recent years; youths that supposed to be engage in different aspects of rural economy are now left roaming about in the rural community without doing anything, this and many more has contributed in the upsurge in rural banditry and cattle rustling as they are striving to make a livelihood out of the criminal loots due to non availability of opportunity for rural employment.
4. The government should make a new and strict legislation to deal decisively with the problem relating to all forms of rural banditry. This can serve as deterrence to the actual and potential bandits. As human beings are capable of calculating the cost and

benefits of engaging in any lawful acts, if the cost outweighs the benefits, this can serve as a deterrent for further misdemeanour.

5. There should be close intergovernmental cooperation between Nigeria and its neighbouring countries of Niger Republic, Chad and Cameroon to check the movement of herdsmen across these borders. The phenomenon of rural banditry is also prevalent in some rural areas of some of the countries bordering Nigeria. Bandits usually travelled along the porous borders with rustled livestock, arms and ammunitions escaping from the scene of crimes to safer places in order to dispose up the rustled livestock and in turn acquire additional arms and ammunitions for the continuation of their nefarious acts.

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