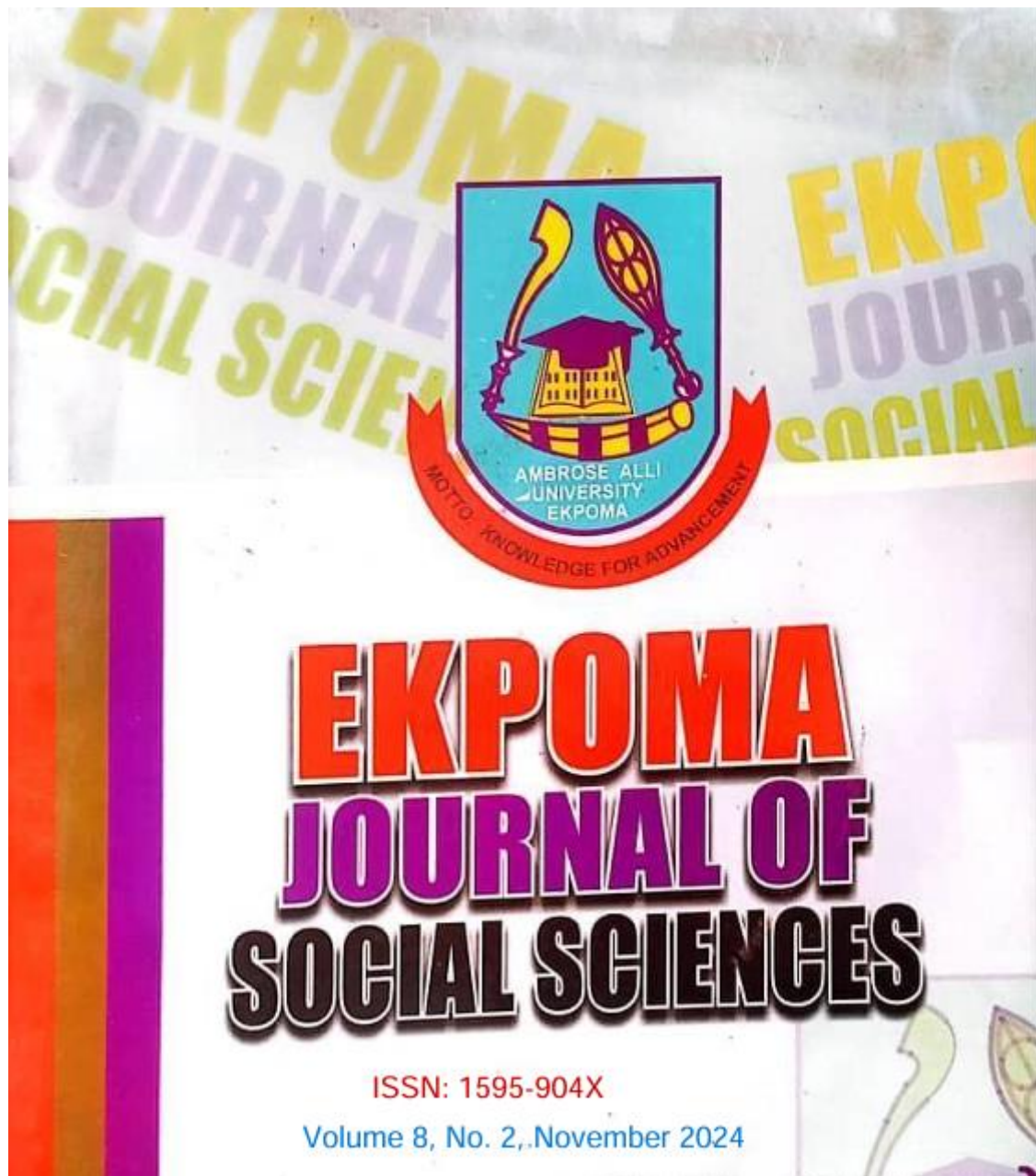




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Herdsmen Attacks and the Challenge of Rural Development in Different Geo-Political Zones of Nigeria

Taiye A. Awotunde, Ph.D

Department of Political Science, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria

E-mail: awotunde.ta@unilorin.edu.ng

Tel: +2348033815757

ABSTRACT

Another security challenge that has reared its ugly head over the years is the Herdsmen attacks on rural communities of Nigeria. The Herdsmen attacks have been experienced in different parts of the country by farmers and others alike. Though it is of high magnitude and highly destructive in recent years, the issue with the Fulani Herdsmen attacks like some other violence has its security implications. Lives and property are being destroyed virtually on daily basis by the attacks traced to the Herdsmen. The main objective of the work is to examine issues of herdsmen attacks and their impacts on rural development in Nigeria. The specific objects are to examine challenges of herdsmen attacks on rural development in Nigeria; examine the causes of the attacks by herdsmen; and elucidate on the tactics employed by herdsmen in launching attacks. The research work made use of the Frustration-Aggression theory. The methodology of the research work is qualitative. This involved the use of secondary sources of data like textbooks, journals, and newspapers. The paper found out that herdsmen have embraced violence in their day-to-day interactions with other people. The paper also realised that herdsmen attacks are usually grievous in nature with the use of sophisticated weapons. The paper recommends that both federal and state governments should look into the issue of drought and desert encroachment, particularly in the North-East and North-West Geo-Political Zones. It also recommends that law enforcement agencies should be provided with necessary equipment in order to effectively protect the borders.

Keywords: Herdsmen, Rural Community, Development, Challenge, Violence.

Introduction

Globally, herdsmen have become known as nomadic people who engaged in livestock business as source of livelihood. The presence of the herdsmen was felt in Nigeria, with their migration to the country from Senegambia Region in the 13th and 14th century (Aniche and Ngwu, 2019). The herdsmen then moved about and lived peacefully with their neighbours. However, as Tsau (2016) noted, the herdsmen, known for going about with their sticks, for grazing are now roaming about with AK47 rifles and other dangerous weapons.

Herdsmen attacks on rural communities of Nigeria became prominent in 2016, and it has become unabated since then. The attacks are not limited to a particular geo-political zone. This is as southern Kaduna, Benue States and some parts of Plateau State have become killing fields. Parts of South East and North West have also not been spared (Punch Editorial Board, 2023). The attacks have resulted in killings of numerous Nigerians and scores injured and maimed. The herdsmen are also believed to have been responsible for thousands of death in Nigeria's Middle Belt region (The Pillar, 2022). Different reasons have been adduced for the attacks by herdsmen. The main reason behind the attacks as posited by Gursory (2019) is the

scarcity of resources like arable land and water; needed by both herders and farmers. It is imperative to mention that existing studies have dealt mainly on herders and farmers' clashes in the middle belt region of Nigeria. With the antecedents of herders and the concern over their activities, this study dealt with herdsmen attacks in different geo-political zones of Nigeria.

The main objective of this study is to examine the issues of herdsmen attacks and elucidate on their impact on rural development in Nigeria. The specific objectives are to: examine the factors responsible for herdsmen attacks on rural communities; examine the strategies utilised by herdsmen in their attacks; elucidate on challenges faced by rural communities in terms of development based on the attacks; make recommendations on how the attacks would be reduced drastically.

Conceptual Clarification

The concepts that are worth clarifying in this study are rural development and nomadic herding.

Rural Development

Rural development has been variously defined by scholars. As Atkinson (2017) opined, rural development involves efforts which are economic and social in nature, aimed at encouraging the ideas of growth and expansion in areas outside cities and these include improving the quality of life of those resident in rural areas. This definition implies that rural development are social and economic efforts aimed at improving the quality of lives of the rural dwellers in terms of enhanced standard of living. The USDA (2006) in Adisa (2012:15) posited that, rural development is an "improvement in the overall rural community conditions, including economic and other quality of life considerations such as environmental health, infrastructure and housing". This implies that rural development concept is an all encompassing one, covering all aspects of rural dwellers welfare.

Sharma (2022:1) defined rural development as "planned efforts undertaken to eliminate poverty, enhance resilience, promote ecological sustainability and build capacity to meet these challenges faced by the rural areas". This denotes upliftment of the rural areas for better life. Rural development can thus be seen as any type of change that can be promoted by a state or federal government, whether political, economic and even social to enhance the living standard of rural dwellers.

Nomadic Herding:

This is one of the oldest forms of herding, nomadic herders move about with their cattle, and goats in small tribal and extended family groups having no home base. This is with the aim of providing meat, milk and hides for societal use (National Geographic Society,). The herdsmen have also been seen as nomadic herders largely located in the Sahel and Semi-arid parts of West Africa and due to changes in climate patterns they have moved further South into the Savannah and tropical forest area of West Africa (Obiora, 2019).

Herders or pastoralists have had a long history of migrating and establishing relationships with various sedentary farming populations with which they co-exist, cooperate, and compete for shared renewable resources (Cabot, 2017) cited in Njoku (2021). The herdsmen interaction with farming communities as Njoku (2021) posited, is often influenced by factors such as the reduction of water and pasture. In terms of occupation, herders rely on herding as means of livelihood and can hunt or practise agriculture in form of production of grains in exchange for other goods. Some herders continue to migrate seasonally in search of pasture for herds (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2024). The group of herders that engage in seasonal migration survive mainly on milk, meat, and blood gotten from the herds.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Frustration-Aggression theory. Breuer and Elson (2017) asserted that the theory was propounded by Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, and Sears in 1939.

The theory states that, “the occurrence of aggressive behaviour always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some forms of aggression” (Breuer & Elson, 2017:1). This in essence implies that without frustration there is no aggressive behaviour. It is frustration that triggers aggression on the part of the individual.

Frustration occurs when an individual's efforts aimed at attaining a goal is interrupted or thwarted. When the individual has no alternative way of surmounting the obstacle, he can put up aggressive behaviour (Crawford, 2015). This denotes that frustration arises from inability to meet some needs which are germane to the individual's welfare and this result in aggressive behaviour. In other words, aggressive behaviour comes up due to frustration. In essence, aggression does not occur without frustration (Breuer & Elson, 2015). In an attempt to define frustration, Jeranimus and Lacaille (2017) sees it as a key negative emotion that has its root in disappointment and it is a form of irritable distress with a wish colliding with an unyielding reality. Jeronimus and Lacaille (2017) further asserted, frustration is encountered when the individual has unresolved problems which may be contextual or psychological or obstructive in nature. This may be removed in order for the individual to be able to fulfil personal goals, drives, desires or needs.

Frustration-Aggression hypotheses has been criticised for its theoretical rigidity and overgeneralisation. Although, it is not specific or definite in its analysis (Mentovich & Jost, 2017 cited in Smarter n.d). It had also been asserted that the theory does not also state how aggressive behaviour might arise in different social settings devoid of provocation or feeling of frustration (Smarter n.d). In other words, the theory assumes that provocation or aggression is always a product of frustration in a social setting. Another criticism of Frustration-Aggression theory is that it leads to aggression that is targeted at person that caused it or provoked it, but displaced aggression can also occur in situations where the source of frustration is not visible or even tangible (Miller, 1941 cited in Crawford, 2015).

The benefit of this theory lies in the fact that it has been used to explain behaviour of animals and in recent times it has been used to study human behaviour in the social sciences and in particular, psychology and also medical research (Braver & Elson, 2017). This indicates that when an individual is frustrated there is tendency for him or her to become aggressive.

The theory is relevant to this study in the sense that the herdsmen in quest for suitable grazing land, water and other necessities for cattle often encounter confrontations from the rural communities, impeding the attainment of the set goals. These barriers and confrontations arise from the desires of the communities also for the same resources as herders, thus leading to conflicts. The herders become aggressive towards members of rural communities and as a result members of the rural communities are attacked by being killed, raped and mayhem. The attacks on rural communities take place in different geo-political zones of Nigeria, but are more prominent in the North-Central, North-East, and North-West.

Methodology

The methodology of this research work is qualitative. This is in the sense that it made use of secondary sources of data, like textbooks, newspapers, journals, and magazines. Descriptive analysis was utilised to analyse the data collected.

Identified Causes of Herdsmen Attacks

For a workable solution to herdsmen attacks on rural communities, there is the need to identify the causes of these attacks.

In the first place, there is drought and desert encroachment. This factor can be attributed to climatic changes ravaging the settlements and hamlets along the fringe of the Sahara. This had impacted severely on the land of the nomadic people that became very dry and dusty; with the resultant loss of millions of animals to the nomads (Jibunoh, 2018). The situation had being made worse by the continuous depletion of the ozone layer, which had also brought much sun

and heat across the Sahara. This had led to influx of herders to various rural communities in Nigeria, particularly the middle-belt zone. Over time, the influx became too much for the people in the middle belt to bear, as the number of the herders and their animals increased to millions and the migration became a permanent thing (Jubunoh, 2018). This no doubt pitched the indigenes against the nomads as they were gradually being deprived of arable land to cultivate crops to enhance their livelihood.

Secondly, there is the issue of porous borders that enables herders from Benin Republic, Burkina-Faso, Togo and Mali to take over some parts of Imeko-Afon local government in Ogun State. These herders with their cattle, not only destroyed farmers' crops but also engaged in criminal activities like armed robbery, and kidnapping (Ayinla, 2021). Similarly, the issue of porous borders enables herders to migrate easily to Nigeria from neighbouring countries like Niger and Cameroon, as the country possesses a lot of greenery along the middle belt zone serving as a buffer. This makes such places to be attractive and Nigeria's herders now joined their brothers in the North to invade the different parts of the country under siege (Jubunoh, 2018). It is also not out of place to say that, the militants from war torn countries like Libya and Chad have also complimented the these nomads with their arms (Jubunoh, 2018).

The anti-grazing law that has been introduced in Benue and Ekiti States had also infuriated the herdsman. The Benue grazing law provides for procedure by which land could be acquired for ranching in the state. The amended law made it clear that if any cow is found moving about the owner will pay ₦500,000 as fine (Charles, 2022). Herdsman had found this law as unpalatable.

Ethno-religious sentiments also serve as another cause of the attacks on some rural communities in Nigeria by rampaging herdsman. Incidents worth mentioning are the attacks waged on the people of southern Kaduna State by herdsman. Even in its 5th year (precisely 2017), thousands of people had been killed in their homes and farms, with livelihoods of thousands destroyed. As at 2017, 53 villages were ruined and some of them occupied by herdsman and their cattle, a sort of forceful occupation (Ochonu, 2017).

Dispute between herders and farmers over land is another major cause of attacks on rural communities. While farmers depend on and cherish the farmlands for their crops, the herders also passionately desire same land and their crops to feed their cattle. The people of Egbeleli Agwu Council of Enugu State had of recent raised alarm over the invasion of their community by herdsman who have threatened and prevented them from entering their farmlands to harvest their crops and even killed two of the indigenes, burnt motorcycles and bicycles belonging to members of the community. Njoku (2023) further alleged that they often waylaid the women in the farm and rape and kidnap them. This was equally the situation in Ughelli, Delta State, when suspected herdsman attacked a mosque, kidnapped three worshippers and injured one (Osayanda, 2022).

At another time, suspected herdsman also attacked Owode-Ketu and Ijoun villages in the Yewa-North Local Government Area of Ogun State and two persons were killed in the attacks. They were alleged to have been killed on their farms by the herdsman (Olatunji, 2021). While virtually all the states of the federation have their share of herdsman attacks, the attacks in Benue villages have become worrisome. As at May, 2019, it was alleged that an estimated 7,000 Nigerians died between the year 2015 and 2019 as a result of persistent clashes between farmers and pastoralists, in the middle belt states of Nasarawa and Benue States (Sanni, 2019). The attacks on the farmers in the villages of Benue State had escalated to a very high level as the attacks are almost on daily basis, often with heavy casualties.

Cattle rustling is another reason for herdsman attacks. The herdsman having lose their cattle to bandits and impoverished often unleash terror on host communities or their neighbours who are not. Cattle rustling is a source of concern in some Northern states of Nigeria, with Zamfara State worst hit in the North West Zone. Here, bandits often kill herdsman and steal

their cattle (El-Kwerebe, 2016). As El-Kwerebe (2016) further asserted, as at February, 2016, 75 people were killed and many others were injured, while thousands of cattle were carted away by the rustlers. Some of the villages that were worst affected are Anguwar, Duke, Angwar Kawo, Malale, Sebuwar, Aguwa, Sawale and Renda. Consequently, the feeling of unjust treatment made herders to become criminals, engaging in kidnapping and other vices (Usman, 2021). It is therefore not surprising that Sheikh Gumi became an advocate of forgiveness and compensation for the herdsmen, clamouring that they be pacified and offered amnesty and with these as he asserted they would drop their weapons (Nasiru, 2021).

Strategies of the Herdsmen in their Attacks on Rural Communities

The attacks have been regular, systemic and targeted in nature. Those that have been vulnerable to attacks are mainly farmers living in rural communities (Akinloye, 2021). The Global, Terrorist Index 2019 published by the Institute for Economics and Peace had attributed rise in terrorism to extremists who launched attacks that accounted for the majority of terror related deaths (Akinloye, 2021). Innocent individuals are target of attacks, the killings had somehow become the most organised and systematic “ethnic cleansing ever launched against a people in the country since the pre-civil war of 1966 and 1967 in Northern Nigerian when Igbos and some southerners were murdered” (Etim, 2023).

Nocturnal attacks by herdsmen serve as another strategy of the herdsmen. It has been realised that majority of the attacks by herdsmen take place in the night. For instance, the Igangan attack started at midnight when the people were far asleep. The attackers struck and killed several persons and razed property (Taiwo-Hassan, 2021). In Taraba and Adamawa States, it has been asserted that farmers were being attacked in their homes by herdsmen at night (Kazeem, 2018). This was also the situation in Agatu LGA, when marauding herdsmen attacked the communities in 2015 at about 4:30am and killed several villagers. Their mode of operation is to attack at night and retreat to their hideouts.

The weapons of attacks by the herders are usually guns, machetes, and daggers, killing children, mothers and pregnant women, not even sparing the foetus (Ugwanyi, 2015). There is unfettered access to arms as a result of some countries like Chad and Libya were in war and some of the arms used were brought into Nigeria by herders. As Okoli (2017) pointed out, the militant herdsmen now use modern weaponry as well as guns in their quest for the attacks of rural communities.

The herdsmen are also known for reprisal attacks, which may not take place immediately or even for months. It has been asserted for instance that, the attack on Agatu community in February, 2016 was a retaliatory attack based on the killing of a prominent herdsman by the Agatu people years before. In a similar vein, “12 residents of Taraba, Mada, Migini and Angwan Barar communities in the Kokini Local Government Area of Nassarawa State were killed by herdsmen, with houses and property worth millions of naira belonging to the residents burnt in a reprisal attack (Sunday, 2023).

Herdsmen Attacks and the Challenge of Rural Development in Nigeria

The challenges of frequent attacks by herdsmen on rural communities have manifested unbearable consequences on rural communities and Nigeria as a whole.

There is the impending problem of food supply. The major occupation of rural dwellers in Nigeria is farming. With the continuous attacks of herdsmen in the various rural communities in Ekiti, Benue, Plateau, Ogun, Oyo and even the South East states, there is shortage of food supply in the next few years. This is because, farmers have incurred massive losses in farm produce over the years. The herders are accused of feeding their animals with growing food crops to the disadvantage of the farmers (Adeniran, 2014). With persistent destruction of crops, the situation has brought loss and frustration on farmers and the decision of some of the farmers to engage in other traders. There has been threat from farmers in Saki, Tede, Iseyin and the whole of Oke Ogun region of Oyo State to quit farming and the food crops affected are cassava,

yam, sorghum, cassava flour and maize (Adeniran, 2014). The crops due for harvest are also affected by the attacks while those stored up in barns are not spared.

Loss of revenue is a serious challenge arising from herdsmen attacks on rural communities. A report from global humanitarian organisation, known as 'Mercy Corps' revealed that, conflict between farmers and herdsmen in rural communities across the North Central zone of Nigeria was costing Nigeria about \$14 billion revenues yearly. This report was issued by Mercy Corps (Ogundipe & Oluwole, 2016). Mercy Corps, funded by the British Department for International Development (DFID), based on its research work between 2013 and 2016 (Ogundipe & Oluwole, 2016). The issue of loss of revenue that would have accrued to individuals and served as a boost for rural development was buttressed by Governor Samuel Ortom, who observed that, between 2015 and 2018, Benue State lost over N400 billion worth of property (Ejembi, 2018). It has been revealed that due to the onslaughts, bustling farmlands have been deserted with its attendant negative effect on internally generated revenue which had reduced drastically in Benue State due to decrease food production (Duru, 2021).

Herdsmen attacks had also encouraged rural-urban migration. Rural-urban migration is the movement of people in the rural areas to the urban areas. As Ogunmakinde, Oladokun and Oke (2015) opined, such an internal movement had resulted in rural poverty, abandonment of agriculture and unbalanced population concentration. The implications of such movements for urban areas are socio-economic and political in nature. Some of these implications as posited by Johnson and Ifeoma are urban traffic congestion, high crime rate, armed robbery, drug abuse, inadequate refuse and waste disposal system (Johnson & Ifeoma, 2018). In addition, the aged women and children in some cases are left behind to labour on the farms with its attendant consequence on agricultural output, the gross domestic product of the nation and reduction in funds for development, income and standard of living of the rural dwellers (Johnson & Ifeoma, 2018).

Internal displacement is another challenge for rural development resulting from herdsmen attacks. As Okoro (2018) posited, displacement of persons internally abound based on herdsmen attacks. The case of farmers, the displaced farmers and their families have become liabilities to other farmers, as they have to beg for food for their upkeep. As a result of repeated attacks in Benue communities, by herdsmen, over one million residents have been displaced across the state (Charles, 2021). Life, however has not been easy for a number of internally displaced persons in Nigeria. As observed by Bolaji, Maria – Thereso and Peter (2019) in most of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps, the inhabitants looked pale, hungry and consciously waiting for the next round of handouts, which are often not enough to cover for their needs in Taraba, Plateau and Benue States. These have led to deaths being recorded in the camps.

Herdsmen attacks on rural communities had also promoted ethnic disunity in Nigeria. this is to the extent that political office holders like President Muhammadu Buhari are seen as ethnic bigot, that is always doing things in favour of the herders, which is his ethnic group. At different times, there had been verbal wars between the leaders of Miyatti Allah/Meccab and some other ethnic groups like the Odua Peoples Congress (OPC), Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), the Arewa Elders Forum and others alike. The ethnic dimension has been enhanced for instance, by President Muhammadu Buhari's decision in 2000 to lead the cattle rearers in Oyo State, to the then Governor of Oyo State, Alhaji Lam Adesina to protest the shock inflicted on them by Oke-Ogun farmers (The Cable, 2018). There was trading of wards between the leadership of the Pan-Arewa socio-cultural organisation, the coalition of Northern Groups and that of Oodua People's Congress over the killings of some residents of Igangan community, which occurred shortly after the arrest of Wakili, a herdsman in the town (Oloror, 2021).

Underdevelopment of rural communities also manifests from herdsmen attacks in Nigeria. Underdevelopment can be perceived as a situation that is characterised by

unemployment, underemployment, low per capita income, poverty, abundant but underutilized net worth resources, and low productivity (Jose, 2020). In Nigeria, poverty is particularly severe in rural areas as a large number of inhabitants live below the poverty line, and social services and infrastructure are inadequate (Paul, Agba, Chukura, 2014). This in essence implies that rural dwellers experience deprivation politically, socially, and economically.

Another challenge for rural development as a result of herdsmen attacks is that it has brought about the loss of able bodied men and women in their prime thus depleting the human resources needed for development in the rural areas. For instance, there has been “tales of alleged Fulani herdsmen attacks on some villages and gruesome killing of innocent people in the South West, and in some parts of Delta and Enugu States” (Adeniran, 2014, 42). Worst hit are the Middle Belt regions, in particular, Benue and Plateau States, it is on record that between 2015 and 2016, more than 170 lives were lost in Tiv land, while in Agatu community, more than 500 people had been hacked to death. The situation is worrisome as the herdsmen have occupied 15 out of the 25 local governments in the state (Ameh, Owumanan & Awoyinfa, 2016). Below is a table showing attacks by herdsmen on rural communities in different parts of Nigeria.

Selected attacks by herdsmen on some rural communities in different geo-political zones of Nigeria

S/N	Date of attack	Place of attack	Casualty
1.	September 21, 2015	Falae's farm in Ondo State (Ilado village)	Abduction of Chief Olu Falae from his farm for 3 days
2.	September, 2016	Akachele village of Ibimo in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State	3 catholic priests were attacked by suspected herdsmen
3.	August, 2017	Ore, Odigbo Local Government Area of Ondo State	A grandmother was raped by Fulani herdsmen.
4.	October, 2017	Tudun Lambaga, Eggon Local Government Area, Nassarawa State	A 14 year old girl was raped by two Fulani herdsmen
5.	January 1, 2018	Attack on communities in Benue State	73 persons were reported to have been killed.
6.	January 6, 2018	Lau Local Government Area of Taraba State	55 villagers were killed
7.	13 th , 14 th and 15 th February, 2020	Avwon, Agadama and Ohoror communities of Uwhoru kingdom, Ughelli North Local Government Area of Delta State.	14 persons lost their lives.
8.	5 th January, 2021	Igangan in Ibarapa North Local Government Area of Oyo State	10 persons were reportedly killed

9.	17 th April, 2022	Kanam Local Government Area of Plateau State	142 villagers were killed
10.	12 th & 13 th April, 2022	Communities in Usi-Uzo Local Government Area of Enugu State	3 persons were killed
11.	31 st July, 2022	Jos South Local Government Area, Plateau State	7 persons were killed.
12.	3 rd April, 2023	Ugbobi Community, Apa Local Government Area, Benue State	The Ugbobi traditional ruler and several other people were killed.
13.	5 th April, 2023	Umogidi Community Entokpa Adoka district Otukpo Local Government Area, Benue State	46 persons including a policeman lost their lives.
14.	25 th April, 2023	Opaha, Odogbo and Edikwu Communities of Apa Local Government Area of Benue State	10 persons killed
15.	15 th and 16 th May, 2023	Several villages on the Mangu district of Plateau	About 80 people were killed

Sources: Abraham, J. (2022); Charles, J. & Adewole, S. (2023); Ochogwu, S. (2023); Olaniyi, O. (2021); Oluwagbemi, A. (2018); Ebiri, K., Okafor, N. S., Egbejule, M., Akpan-Nsoh & Osahon, J. (2020); Essien, H. (2022); Asadu, C. (2023); Ojoye, T. (2017); Charles, J. & Dada, P. (2018); Isiguzo, C. (2016); Duru, P. (2023); Nigeria Watch (2020).

From the table above, it would be seen that states in the North-Central Geopolitical zone, namely: Nasarawa, Benue, and Plateau States experienced a large number of attacks from herdsmen, with lots of casualty. For instance, on January 1, 2018, the attacks on communities in Benue State led to the death of 73 persons. On 17th April, 2022, Plateau State witnessed attack in Kanam Local Government Area with 142 deaths recorded, while several villages in the Mangu District of Plateau State recorded 80 death, on 15th and 16th May, 2023. In the South-East Geopolitical Zone, specifically in the Akachaele of Ibimo in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, three Catholic Priests were attacked in September, 2016. On 12th and 13th April, 2022, attacks on communities in Usi-Uzo Local Government Area of Enugu State led to three deaths. In Avwom, Agadama and Ohoror communities of Uwhoru Kingdom, Ughelli North Local Government Area, Delta State (South-South), 14 lives were lost due to herdsmen attack, while in Ondo State, Chief Olufalae was adopted on his farm in Ilado village on September 21, 2015 and a grandmother was brutally raped on her farm in Ore Ondo State by two herdsmen in August 2017. The attacks were perpetrated without intervention from the law enforcement agencies and left victims, their relatives and associates devastated. Some of those that were not dead or injured sought refuge in Internally Displaced Persons Camps in Benue State.

It is worth noting that most of the killings in the communities discussed above have been carried out without any genuine reasons.

Conclusion and Recommendations

From the foregoing, it would be seen that a lot of factors like climatic issues, ethno-religious sentiment, and porosity of Nigeria's borders are responsible for the attacks by herdsmen on rural communities. It has also been realised that herdsmen employed different strategies in attacks on rural communities. These attacks have far-reaching consequences on the rural communities concerned in Nigeria.

It is hereby recommended that the Nigerian government should deal with the issue of drought and desert encroachment through massive tree planting, especially in the North-East and North-West Geo-Political Zones. There should also be protection of marginal lands in these geo-political zones in order to avoid further damage to the lands. The soil can also be enriched with required nutrients and alternative sources of energy can be provided in order to reduce felling of trees. In order to deal with border porosity, the law enforcement agencies, particularly the Nigeria Immigration Service should be provided with the necessary equipment and vehicles that will assist them in monitoring Nigeria's borders effectively. Efforts should also be made to improve the relationship among the different ethnic groups and religious groups, so as to enhance harmonious living among the different groups.

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