NATURE OF CATTLE RUSTLING IN PASTORAL COMMUNITIES IN KWAME LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF GOMBE STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the nature of cattle rustling among pastoral communities of Kwami local government area, Gombe State, Nigeria. Data were collected through the administration of questionnaires to fifty respondents randomly drawn from the study area. The result was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentage, mean and range. The result reveals that all (100%) of the respondents were male and 82% had the basic Qur'anic education. The result shows that a cattle rustling in the study area was caused by factors such as increase value of cattle from rustlers (30.15%), poverty (22.22%), unemployment (22.22%), illiteracy (3.17%), and accumulation of wealth (8.73%) and availability of guns to people (8.73%). About 80% of the respondents agree that cattle rustling in the study area do take place during the night hours and mainly through sneaking (50%). Also, the result indicates that 88% of the respondents received no help/intervention from government. Hooves /foot tracing (41.30%) and sending messages across neighbouring villages (33.69%) were the major actions taking by herders to find rustled cattle. Majority (60%) of the respondents have found their rustled cattle at cattle markets and neighbouring communities (20.0%). The major (96%) constraint faced by the cattle herders was that of lack of trust on security personnel. The study concludes that cattle rustling do occur in the study area. The study therefore, recommends that cattle herders should form vigilante groups across communities to help fish out rustling activities. Government too needs to recognize that cattle rustling is a national problem, hence the need to put strategies in place that could help reduce cattle rustling in the study area and Nigeria at large.

Keywords: Cattle, Communities, Nature Pastoral, Rustling.

INTRODUCTION

Cattle rustling is the act of stealing cattle either for economic or for social reasons. Recent studies have used the term "cattle raid" to mean cattle rustling (Greiner, 2013). Cattle raiding are the act of stealing cattle in Australia; such stealing is often referred to as doffing, and the perpetrator as a duffer. In North America, especially in cowboy culture, cattle theft is dubbed rustling, while an individual who engages in it is called a rustler. (Okoli and Atelhe, 2014; Okoli and Iortyer, 2014).

A number of factors are attributable to this transformation. In the first instance, contemporary cattle-rustling activities operate as a form of organized crime, motivated by wealth accumulation given that proceeds are never subject to state taxation (Alemika, 2013; Okoli and Okpaleke, 2014; Ladan, 2014). A major impetus for the syndicated criminality is the presence of what Kwaja (2014) captured as the "underground economy," which is linked to the political economy of some agrarian societies. 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, Kiyanbana, and Fagore forests in Northern Nigeria. Also there is a wave of collaborations at various levels of cattle rustling and there is an obvious inability of the police

and other security outfits to deal with the problem because they are insufficiently equipped to be able to handle the challenge (National Express, 2016). What is more critical and dicey is the correlation between cattle rustling and spiral violence in some parts of northern Nigeria. The incessant attacks by cattle rustlers on herding communities tend to set them at loggerheads with their ecological neighbors, the settled native farmers. This engenders ill feelings that exacerbate the already conflictive herder/farmer inter-group relations, leading ultimately to vicious circle of violence. Another critical dimension of the implication of cattle rustling is its apparent degeneration into a terror-brand mass raids wherein innocent villagers, including women and children are victimized and often killed (Olaniyan *et al*., 2015).

Cattle rustling have recently become a major internal security concern in Nigeria, with the country's northern region as the epicenter. Between October 2013 and March 2014 approximately 7,000 cattle were rustled from commercial livestock farms and traditional herders in Northern Nigeria (Bashir, 2014; Tauna, 2016). In most cases, the rustlers kill and main their herders and rape the women before dispossessing them of their cows (Akowe and Kayode, 2014); in some instances, they also kidnap girls or women in the process (Adeniyi, 2015; Yusuf, 2015).Virtually all the states in the northern region of Nigeria are affected by cattle rustling. In most cases, the rustler wore military style Camouflaged uniforms and showed considerable experience in herding (Adeniyi, 2015). Although cattle rustling have been rampant in the rural areas of northern Nigeria, it does not only pose serious security challenges at the specific sites of conflict but also threatens to engulf places outside of the rural sector and northern Nigeria (Blench, 2004). The contemporary cattle rustlers operate with modern weaponry and their operations are marked by trans-locational and trans-national syndication (Alemika, 2013). This clearly underscores cattle rustling as a typical and prominent instance of "underworld franchise" in contemporary societies (Okoli and Okpaleke, 2014; Okoli and Francis 2014). A cattle rustling is not only peculiar to Nigeria, it is a global phenomenon. For instance, in Scotland, 300 cattle were reported to have been rustled at the end of 2013, resulting to declaration of cattle rustling as a national emergency by the Scotland government (Daily Trust Editorial, 05 February, 2014).

Pastoralist make substantial contributions to the economics of developing countries, in terms of supporting their own households and supplying animal protein (meat and milk) to villages and towns however, the production cattle is hampered by rustlers. 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.

It is based on this background that the study examined the nature of cattle rustling in pastoral communities in Kwami local government area, Gombe State, the specific objectives were to: describe the socio-economic characteristics of the pastoralist in the study area; identify the causes of cattle rustling in the study area; describe the nature of cattle rustling in the study area; examine the lost (in naira) due to cattle rustling in the study area and identify the constraints to cattle rustling in the study area.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
The Study Area
Kwami local government area is among the eleven (11) local government areas, carved out of Gombe local government on 17th November 1996 with its administrative legislative headquarters at Malam Sidi. Kwami local government area is located between longitude 10˚E and 10˚30'N and 11˚15'N. Kwami local government is bounded by Dukku local government area to the North, Funakaye local government to the North East, Akko local government to the South West, Yamaltu Deba local government to the South East, Gombe local government to

the South, Kirfi local government in Bauchi state to the West and Bayo local government in Borno state to the East.The local government Area has an estimated land area of 1787 square kilometers with an estimated population of 195,298 people (NPC, 2006). The indigenous tribes of the area include Fulani, Bolewa, Kanuri, Tera, Hausa, and Kare-Kare. The study area is a home of diverse cultures with different socio-cultural backgrounds and practices. Which include Dunu, Ngorda, Babu-nare and Garaya, with a costume of wearing big gowns, Jumpers, trousers, wrappers and caps. The most distinctive feature of the study area and its environment are presence of river Ngaji flow into the Dadin-Kowa Dam to the eastern part of the local government. The study area is characterized by two distinct season's dry and rainy season. Its environment is very conducive for keeping of livestock. The average annual rainfall is between 850mm-1200mm and temperature range is between 25˚c - 30˚c during the hottest months (March to May). The major agricultural activities involve production of crops such as Maize, Millet, Rice, Beans, Groundnuts, Sugar Cane, Corn, Vegetables and livestock such as cattle, sheep, goat and poultry. Aquaculture (fish farming) is gradually picking up in the study area.

Sampling Technique and Sample size

Multistage random sampling was used in selecting the respondents for the study. In the first stage, 5 districts were randomly selected out of the 10 district in the study area (Bojude, Gadam, Komfulata, MallamSidi, and Doho). Second stage involves random selection of 2 communities from each of the selected districts; these were Wailare, Kobniyo, Gadam, Kalajanga, Roddo, Komfulata, Kwaja, Malko, Jauro-Gardo and Musa-Gudu respectively. In the third stage, 5 respondents were randomly selected from each of the selected communities making a total of 50 for the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

Primary data were collected from the respondents through the administration of structured questionnaire while the secondary data were collected from past research works, journals, internet. Descriptive statistics like frequency, percentage mean, and range was used in analyzing the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents

The socio-economics characteristics of the respondents include: Age, sex, marital status, household size, and years of herding experience, occupation and educational level.

Age of the Respondents

The results in Table 1 shows that 30.0% of the respondents were between the ages of 41 to 50 years, while 28.0%, 24% and 18.0% fell between the ages of 31 to 40, 51 to 60 and 20 to 30 years respectively. The average age of the respondents was 42 years old. The implication is that pastoralist in the study area were within their active age. This is consistent with the finding of Olaniyan *et al.* (2015) that pastoralists in Nigeria are dominated by youth.

Sex of the Respondents

The results in Table 1 also reveal that all (100%) the respondents in the study area were male. This shows male domination of the cattle enterprise. This study agrees with the finding of Olaniyan *et al.* (2015) who reported that the pastoral system in Nigeria is masculine and youth-dominated, with women owning little stock. A woman with six cows is considered wealthy, while a male with 20 cows is seen as poor.

Marital Status of the Respondents

The result further shows that most (86%) of the respondents were married; only 14.0% were single. Implying that most of the pastoralists were married and responsible. This means

that they will take cattle rearing very serious to be able to earn more money to take care of their families. This also shows the importance attached to marriage in the study area.

Household Size of the Respondents

Table 1 further reveals that, 34.0% of the respondents had 11 to 15 number in their household , while 26.0%, 18.0%, 16.0% and 6.0% have 16 to 20, 6 to 10, 1 to 5 and 21 to 30 respectively. The mean household size of the respondents was 15. This shows that pastoralists in the study had large family size. This could be due to the polygamous nature of the northern people. This also indicates access to cheap labour which could result to reduction in cost of keeping livestock. It could also mean many mouths to feed which is an additional cost on the family.

Years of Herding Experience

The result indicates that respondents with 16-20 years of herding experience had the highest percentage (42.0%), 5 to 10, 11 to 15, and 21 to 20 constitutes 30.0%, 20.0% and 8.0%, respectively. Their mean year of experience was found to be 15years.

Occupation of the Respondents

Table 1 also indicates that all (66.67%) the respondents in the study area engage themselves in crops and livestock farming while 33.33% of them do attached livestock farming with business.

Educational Level of the Respondents

The result in Table 1 reveals that almost all (82.0%) of the respondents in the study area attend Qu'ranic school while 14.0% had primary education and 4.0% have never being to school. The implication was that majority of the respondents will have problem interpreting written instructions in English.

Cattle rustling experience of the Respondents

The result in Table 2 shows that almost all (86%) of the respondents have experienced cattle rustling. Only 14% have not experience it. This implies that cattle rustling affect almost everyone in the study area. The result is in line with the findings of Bashir (2014) and Tauna (2016) who reported that approximately 7000 cattle were rustled from herders in the northern part of Nigeria between October 2013 and March 2014.

Times of experience of Cattle Rustling by Respondents

Table 2 indicates that half of the respondents (50%) have experienced cattle rustling twice, while 30.0%, 16.0%, and 4.0% have experienced it once, thrice and above three times respectively. This result shows that, half of the respondents in the study area have experienced cattle rustling at least twice. Only 2% experience cattle rustling three times. Adeniyi (2015) reported that cattle rustling are rampant in the rural areas of Nigeria.

Number of Cattle Rustled From the Respondents.

The respondents that lost 1 to 5 cattle were the majority (58%) while 16% lost between 6 to 10 cattle to cattle rustlers. About 18% lost 11 to 20 cattle. Only 4% lost above 20 cattle.

Time of Occurrence of Cattle Rustling in the Study Area

Table 2 shows that, cattle rustling in the study area do occur mostly at night and this constitute 93%. Only 7.0% of the respondents said rustling occur in the day time. This agrees with Alemika (2013) that theft involves breaking into a pasture at night and loading cattle onto a waiting trailer, and is normally limited in number by what the trailer can hold. They also often target unbranded calves, which can then be branded with the theft's own brand.

Table 1: Distribution of Herders based on their Socio-economic Variables

Variables	Frequency(n=50)	Percentage	Mean
Age			
20-30	9	18.0	42
31-40	14	28.0	
41-50	15	30.0	
51-60	12	24.0	
Sex			
Male	50	100	
Female	0	0	
Marital status			
Single	7	14.0	
Married	43	86.0	
Divorced	0	0	
Widowed	0	0	
Separated	0	0	
Household size			
1-5	8	16.0	
6-10	9	18.0	
11-15	17	34.0	
16-20	13	26.0	
21-30	3	6.0	
Years of experience			
5-10	15	30.0	
11-15	10	20.0	15
16-20	21	42.0	
21-30	4	8.0	
Occupation			
Crop and livestock	50	66.67	
Business/livestock	25	33.33	
Civil service	0	0	
Student	0	0	
Educational level			
Primary education	7	14.0	
Secondary education	0	0	
Tertiary education	0	0	
Adult education	0	0	
Qur'anic education	41	82.0	
Never being to school	2	4.0	

Source: Field survey, 2018

Association of Cattle Rustling With Festivities of the Year

More than half (60%) of the respondents said cattle rustling has no association with any festivity, about 40% believe that cattle rustling is associated festivities of the year. The implication is that cattle raiding are not carried out for festive reasons but rather for wealth accumulation. This corroborates the finding Kwaja (2014) that stealing of cattle by rustlers is mainly done for economic reasons.

Method of Cattle Rustling in the Study Area

Half of the (50%) respondents admitted that cattle rustling occurs through sneaking in method followed by face to face operation (24%), then through connivance (18.0%) and lastly by disguise (2%).

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Nature of Cattle Rustling

Nature of rustle	Frequency	Percentage
Experienced rustling		
Yes	43	86.00
No	7	14.00
Times rustled		
Once	15	30.00
Twice	25	50.00
Thrice	8	16,00
Above three times	2	4.00
Number of rustles		
1-5	29	58.00
6-10	8	16.00
11-15	2	4.00
16-20	7	14.00
Above 20	2	4.00
Time of occurrence		
Day time	3	6.00
At night	40	80.00
Both	7	14.00
Festivity period		
Yes	20	40.00
No	30	60.00
Method of rustling		
Face to face	12	24.00
Sneaking	25	50.00
Connivance	9	18.00
Disguise	3	6.00

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Types of Weapons Seen With the Rustlers

The result in Table 2 reveals that rustlers do make use of weapons such as bore and arrow (27.27%), swords (30.94%), guns (14.34%) and stick (27.27%) in their rustling operations. The implication is that cattle rustlers use all kinds of arms in their operations. The result also shows that more half (69.04%) of the rustlers in the study area used local weapons in their operations. However, some (30.94%) used guns, this makes the result similar to the findings of Alemika (2013), who reported the of use modern weapons by cattle rustlers.

Season at Which Rustling occurs

The Table 2 shows that, 44% of the respondents agree that rustling do take place between January to march, 40% agree to take place between April to August and 16% between September to December.

Aftermath from Cattle Rustling in the Study Area

The results in Table 2 reveals that injury, property destruction and other minor cases constitute 60%, 32% and 8%, respectively. Loss of life was not recorded during the study period. The result goes contrary to the findings of Akwe and Kayode, (2014)., Adeniyi, (2015)., and Yusuf, (2015) who reported that, in some instances, rustlers kidnap women or children, kill and main herders, rape their women in the process before disposing them of their cattle.

Intervention Received From Government by the Respondents in the Study Area

Table 2 reveals that, 88% of respondents did not receive any help/intervention from government while visit constituted 12%.

Action Taken by the Respondents after Rustling

Table 2 further indicates that foot/hooves tracing (41.30%), and inform neighbours (33.69%) about the incidence were the major actions taken, respectively. This finding disagrees with that of Abbas (2012) who reported that, the sedentary agrarian communities have resorted to self-defense. However, agrees with that of Manu et al. (2014) that Pastoralist in the Northern region of Cameroon use similar measures to check cattle theft.

Location Where Rustled Cattle are found

The result from Table 2 reveals that, the location at which the respondents do find their rustled cattle were cattle market (60%), neighbouring villages (20%) abattoirs (16%) and other farms (4%). The implication is that rustled cattle are mostly found in cattle markets.

Causes of the Cattle Rustling as Perceived by the Respondents

The result in Table 3 shows that, attached value to cattle by rustlers was the major (30.15%) cause of rustling, then followed by poverty(22.22%) and unemployment (22.22%), availability of guns to people (8.73%) and accumulation of wealth (8.73%), ready market for cattle (3.96%), illiteracy (3.17%), dowry (0.79%). The implication was that increase value of cattle is an important cause of cattle rustling. The finding disagrees with that of Alemika (2013), who said Cattle rustling are largely motivated by the quest for primitive accumulation of capital and untaxed wealth.

Estimated Loss in Naira from Cattle Rustling

About 62% of the respondents lost between 100,000 to 500,000 naira. About 22% of the respondents lost between 600,000 to 1,000,000 naira. Also, the result shows that 12% of the respondents lost between 1.1 to 1.4 million naira. Only 4% lost above 1.5 million naira. The implication of the study is that, cattle rearing are associated with high risk. The finding is in line with the findings of Horecka (2006) and Johnson (2006) who reported a loss of 15 to 20 cows valued at up to $20,000 who also agree that such a loss can be devastating to some producers of cattle.

Table 2 Cont.: Distribution of Respondent by Nature of Cattle Rustling

Nature of rustling	Frequency	Percentage
Type of weapon used		
Bore and arrow	15	27.27
Sword	17	30.90
Guns	8	14.54
Sticks	15	27.27
Period of rustling		
January-March	22	44.00
April-August	20	40.00
September-December	8	16.00
Aftermath		
loss of life	0	0
Injury	30	60.00
Property destruction	16	32.00
Minor cases	4	8.00
Government assistance		
No assistance	44	88.00
Restocking	0	0
Cash compensation	0	0
Visit	6	12.0
Action taking by herders		
Inform neighbouring villages	31	33.69
Community search	0	0
Inform local security	16	17.40
Report to police	7	7.60
Foot/hooves tracing	38	41.30
Discovery location		
Neighbouring villages	10	20.00
Other farms	2	4.00
Cattle markets	30	60.00
Abattoirs	8	16.00

Source: Field survey, 2018

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents based on the Causes of Cattle Rustling

Cause	Frequency	Percentage
Availability of guns to people	11	8.73
Ready market for cattle	5	3.96
increase value of cattle	38	30.15
Poverty	28	22.22
Illiteracy	4	3.17
Dowry in form of cattle	1	0.79
Accumulation of wealth	11	8.73
Unemployment	28	22.22

*Multiple Response
Source: Field survey, 2018

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents according to Loss (₦) Experienced due Cattle Rustle

Cost estimates (₦)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
100,000-500,000	31	62.0
600,000-1m	11	22.0
1.1m-1.4m	6	12.0
1.5m and above	2	4.0
Total	50	100

Source: Field survey, 2018

Constraints to Cattle Rustling

Table 5 reveals that 96.0% of the respondents have lack of confidence in security agent's .About 4.0% reported fear of further attacks. Kidnapping was not a problem as at the time when the study was conducted or attack by the respondents in response for the rustling. The implication is that lack of security trust is an important constraint to cattle rearing in the study area. The study supports the report from National Express (2016) about the inability of the police and other security outfits to deal cattle rustling problem, which could be due to insufficient equipments to be able to tackle the challenge.

Table 5: Distribution of the Respondents recording Constraints to Cattle Rustling

Limitation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Fear of further attacks	2	4.0
No security trust	48	96.0
Kidnapping	0	0
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The result reveals that, 76% of the respondents were within the category of 20 to 50 years old, all (100%) were male, 86% married with 15 years of herding experience 82.0% had Qur'anic education, 14% attained primary school. Only 4% had never being to school. About 78% had between 6 to 20 persons in their households. Most of the occurrence of cattle rustling were caused by factors such as increase value of cattle from rustlers (30.15%), poverty (22.22%), and unemployment(22.22%) majority (86%) have experienced cattle rustling . The also shows that all kinds of weapons were used rustling cattle was recorded. The results further reveals that, lack of confidence in security personnel was their major (96.0%) constraint to tackling of cattle rustling cases. In conclusion, cattle rustling do occur in the study area. It can also be said that cattle rustlers use different weapons in rustling cattle. The use of dangerous weapons such as bore and arrow, sword and guns might induce fear into the herders. Lack of confidence on security personnel will result to reduce or no cattle production in the study area. It is therefore recommended that Pastoralist should organize themselves and form vigilant groups across communities and cattle markets that would help monitor and fish out suspicious persons on cattle rustling activities for further action by government.

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