

FULANI HERDSMEN ATTACKS: AN IMPEDIMENT TO RURAL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT IN KADUNA STATE

Bakwaph Peter Kanyip, PhD

Department of Educational Foundations

Veritas University Abuja

bakwaph@yahoo.com

DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.12616.55046

&

Monica Ghibi

Department of Educational Foundations

Veritas University Abuja

ghibimonica20@gmail.com

DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.12616.55046

Abstract

This work is meant to examine the effects of Fulani Herdsmen attack on the rural education especially on Education of Primary and Secondary Education in Southern Kaduna. The research is Qualitative Research using descriptive method and instrument used for data collection are primary and secondary data. These include interview (primary source) as well as textbooks, journals, magazines and library (secondary sources). Findings revealed that Fulani herdsmen crisis have become an impediment to rural education development. It has also led to a drastic fall in school enrolment, low pupils' turnout, migration of parents, absenteeism of teachers and pupils as well as lack of commitment on the part of teachers and pupils in affected rural communities. In view of the findings, the researcher recommended that communities should be trained or enlightened on the need, necessity and importance for peaceful co – existence within the community irrespective of their ethnics' groups or religion. Security agencies should provide adequate security for schools /residence in rural areas. Finally, it was recommended that whosoever instigates crisis in rural or urban areas, should be called to book to serve as deterrent to others.

Keywords: Fulani Herdsmen, Attack, Effect, Education, Rural Areas, Crisis, Conflict, School enrolment, Children.

Introduction

Nigeria in general and Southern Kaduna in particular have recorded bitter experiences of violent conflicts in various forms like ethno-religious conflicts and other crisis. Since the early 1980s, ethnic and religious crises have become a re-occurring decimal, especially in northern Nigeria. Today, Fulani Herdsmen crisis remains a major issue in Nigeria. So far, thousands have been

killed and many more have been expelled from their homes, many schools have been turned into refugees' camp, and the Nigerian government does not seem to be in a hurry nor appear willing to initiate any forceful action against them. Rather, they are requesting for pieces of land from states in order to provide the rampaging herdsmen with permanent feeding ground. Kaduna State in the past two years was enmeshed in a humanitarian crisis. The southern part of the state has become a battle field of deadly violence, most of it inflicted by herdsmen on farming communities.

Kaduna is capital city of the Northern region and is a state with diverse cultural and ethnic heritage. The main ethnic groups include the Fulani, Hausa, Bajju, Jaba, Adara, Moro'a, Gbagyi, Gure, Kurama, Numana, Ninzo, Kataf, Koro, Atyap, etc. The name Kaduna originated from the Hausa word "Kada", which means crocodile and 'Kaduna' is the Hausa plural word for crocodiles, many of which abound in The River Kaduna (Iniobong, 2016). Kaduna is now divided into two settlements: the Christian dominated the south and the Muslim dominated north of which people have taken undue advantage of to foment ethno-religious conflicts. Kaduna which used to be a relatively peaceful town, has witnessed a circle of violence that has singled it out as one of the most volatile cities in northern Nigeria (Makarfi, 2004, p.5). So far, there have been opposing relationships between the two dominant religions - Christianity and Islam, in the socio-economic and political affairs of the state which further reveals that subsequent upheavals in Kaduna state, often identified as ethno-religious conflicts has paved way for the Fualani Herdsmen constant attacks in rural areas of Southern Kaduna, which in turn has affected the educational development within the areas and entire state.

Education is crucial to the development of individual and the nation. Its continuous growth and quality improvement depend on a number of factors; some of these factors are provision of infrastructures and maintenance, quality of teachers, payment of teachers' wages and salary on time, provision and constant revision of the curriculum and provision of adequate funds for infrastructures Ogbonnaya (2013). The factors mentioned above are paramount and can bring the desired growth where they are pursued and provided. On the other hand, where there is any inhibition and they are not pursued, it hinders growth and slows down the education process. Apart from the factors mentioned above, there are some other factors that could stifle the process of growth in the educational sector; such factors include natural disaster, insurgencies, and crises from the Fulani herdsmen. This is because many people will run from their place of abode to a safer place. When there are insurgencies for instance, Boko Haram in Nigeria or the Fulani

Herdsman crises, many people flee the area for safety, and this action affects quality of educational improvement and the population of the area.

There has been public outcry and expression of worry, fear and uncertainties over the declining school enrollment in Nigeria especially in Kajuru local government Area of Kaduna State. This in turn affects teaching and learning and any quality educational activities in the area and Nigeria at large. The effects of Fulani herdsmen or any conflict on the education of our children has been an area of discourse neglected by researchers, but nowadays with specific reference to Kaduna state, has become a force to be reckoned with as far as growth in the educational sector is concerned. For the past two to three years, there has been series of frequent interruption of schools' programs or calendar. This disturber's in school activities has further worsened by the constant interruption of the Fulani herdsmen crisis and farmers.

Statement of the Problem

Ethnic conflicts have extremely and negatively affected the education, socio-economic and political development of Nigeria as a nation. This has negative effects on the country's national security, stability and integration. One of the main obstacles to the country's drive towards achieving greater height in Africa and among the Comity of nations is the manipulation of religion and ethnicity.

Kaduna State has its ethno-religious peculiarities. These peculiarities that ordinarily ought to be harnessed as strength have over the years been the State's albatross. Interestingly, however, the latest round of conflicts in southern parts of Kaduna State has been largely between herders and farmers. These have to a wanton and malicious destruction of lives, property, farmlands and farm produce which in turns affect the educational system of the state especially in rural areas of southern Kaduna.

Ethno-religious conflicts in Southern Kaduna have become one of the major indices responsible for the divisions among the people. The area has experienced varieties of conflicts - Sometimes subtle and at other times violent - mostly expressed in ethno-religious forms by Fulani Herdsmen. Bad leadership at both macro and micro levels has also played a major part in the escalation of ethnic conflicts, particularly when adequate mechanisms to reduce their occurrence are not employed. The central issues continue to revolve around people, social equality, citizen's rights and educational development.

Objectives

The incessant conflicts in Southern Kaduna have attracted the attention of all and sundry - academics, government, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations and international communities. The objectives of the study is to examine the effects and aftermath effects of Fulani herdsmen attack on education development in rural areas of Kaduna among primary and secondary school children. The study is meant to create awareness and awaken Nigerians on issues relating to rural education, to determine the level which rural education has been affected as a result of Fulani herdsmen crisis in Nigeria, evaluate the effect of Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis on social development in Nigeria, and to discuss the management options of the Fulani herdsmen crisis as it affects rural education development in Nigeria.

The main motivating factors and objectives of this study are:

- To delineate the influencing factors that have fuelled the Fulani Herdsmen Attacks in southern Kaduna
- To understand the outcome and implications of the negative endemic trend towards education
- To outline the possible strategies that can be employed to manage, mitigate and if possible eradicate this nefarious development and lastly to make recommendations that can enhance sustainable peace in the area

Methodology

The research methodology adopted for this study is Qualitative Research approach using descriptive method and instrument used for data collection are primary and secondary data. These include interview (primary source) as well as textbooks, journals, magazines, newspapers and library (secondary sources).

Conceptual Clarification

Fulani Herdsmen

The Fulani people also known as Fulani in Hausa language, they have a mass population widely dispersed and culturally diverse in all of Africa, but most predominant in West Africa. The Fulani's generally speak the Fula language. A significant number of them are nomadic in nature, herding cattle, goats and sheep across the vast dry grass lands of their environment, keeping themselves isolated from the local farming communities, making them the world's largest pastoral nomadic group (Eyekpimi, 2016). They are massively spread over many states within Nigeria, and are found basically in every state within the country. The main Fulani sub-groups in Nigeria are: Fulbe

Adamawa, Fulbe Mbororo, Fulbe Sokoto, Fulbe Gombe, and the Fulbe Borno (Eyekpimi, 2016).

They are largely nomads who go through towns and villages with their cattle. In Nigeria, the Fulani and the Hausa people dominate the northern states, with a population of well over 30 million. Notably, people of the Fulani tribe rarely ever use artificial birth control methods and, as a result of this, the tribe is very fertile, hence their vast population and their presence in almost every state across the country. Due to the way these Fulani's attack innocent people, many Nigerians are beginning to wonder whether they are members of the Boko Haram sect or not. This is obvious as there is no difference in their behavior from that of the Boko Haram.

A few others, including the Nigerian military, have said they are herdsmen from other parts of West Africa and not Fulani. While the latter may be admissible due to porous Nigerian borders and poor immigration surveillance, especially in northern parts of the country, it is very difficult to correlate the activities of Boko Haram terrorists to those of the Fulani Herdsmen. Boko Haram has utilized explosives carried by suicide bombers or hidden in a target, but accounts by victims of the herdsmen crises have shown that the Fulani Herdsmen are mainly concerned with gaining greater access to grazing lands for livestock.

Fulani Herdsmen Attacks in Rural areas in Kaduna State

Conflict is a great predicament in any human society, and most times, it is predictable. In fact, history indicates that conflict is an ongoing process in human relations and may occur within and among groups and communities. In the case of Nigeria, the frequent occurrence of Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis has left adverse effects on food, security and socio-economic development of the people (Damba, 2007). In the course of these conflicts, farmers have at certain times, taken up weapons to counter the attacks from the Fulani herdsmen, claiming to do so in self-defense. The study conducted by Kassam (2016) gave an overview of the general concept and causes of conflicts in Nigeria and, advocates for ethical principles such as the common solidarity of humanity by origin, forgiveness and tolerance that could engender cordially and understanding rather than sustained hostility and suspicion in Fulani herdsmen and farmers relation in Nigeria.

Serious crisis as we have witnessed in the past two years, is a major reason for drastic decrease in school growth and development especially in the rural areas. During the peak of the conflict, all schools within the crisis zones, were closed down. The schools became like graveyards. Teachers who were only

working in the local government, want back to their homes or states. A lot of people were compelled to go to Internally Displace People's (IDP) camp.

Nigeria is seriously threatened by Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis and therefore, considered to be a major potential threat affecting Nigerians mostly on the part of social activities of the country (Egodi, 2010). The Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis are posing a serious obstacle to a successful national development in education and other sectors of the economy. Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis has become a major threat to the national security and development of Nigeria due to the fact that its increased operation has caused diversion and removed government attention on some key areas of the economy, as huge amount of human and material resources is channelled into curbing the menace (Egodi, 2010)

Occasionally, there have been night raids by these herdsmen on reprisal attacks and also attacks specifically directed against women. The reason for this vulnerability is that most of these villages are isolated, and the number of security staff are too small to cover the entire area. Also, the lack of electricity means that the attackers have the cover of darkness to operate without being identified. The reprisal attacks are also deemed necessary because many of the victims feel the security services are compromised and can no longer protect them. As such, they feel it is necessary to defend themselves on the principle that "attack is the best form of defense" Women are particularly vulnerable because going out alone to fetch water and firewood from nearby forests and streams makes them easy targets. Another element of the conflict is the widespread impunity enjoyed by perpetrators of violence in Southern Kaduna. To date, Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen have never been arrested, prosecuted and punished in all the attacks hipped on the people of Kajuru / Southern Kaduna, and victims have not been adequately compensated. Additionally, violent gangs have taken advantage of the situation to instigate violence, rustle castle (belonging to some Christians) for personal gain and to conduct criminal activities against innocent citizens.

The Aftermath Effects of the Fulani Herdsmen Attack on Rural Education Development

Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis no doubt have negative effects on the lives, property, food security and the educational development in Kajuru Local Government Area and Nigeria. Though, there is the dearth of quantitative evaluation of the catastrophic attacks, available statistics has it that about one hundred and thirty-five (135) people lost their lives during the attack.

Fulani herdsmen attack apart from the loss of lives has also led to the destruction of arable farmland and valuable properties worth several billions of Naira. The above scenario has dire consequences for sustainable and educational development in the rural areas and Nigeria in general. In Kajuru Local Government, where the Fulani herdsmen and farmers crises are pervasive and the property destroyed potentially and in real terms, drag their educational fortune back by several mails. Besides the property destroyed, school life in those areas are automatically grounded to a halt. People are no longer free to go about their normal activities like farming, places of worship, economic and educational activities for fear of being killed. This is made worse as several thousands of people have migrated swiftly to other parts of the state or country. The overall implication for sustainable development is that the farming, economic and educational activities are fast deteriorating. The frequent blood shied, kidnapping and vicious onslaughts on individuals and institutions provide highly unfavorable learning and business environment for internal and foreign investment, which is a major factor in the achievement of sustainable development (Damba, 2007).

The immediate impact of conflict on education includes, but is not limited to, destruction or damage of school infrastructure, school closure, and the use of schools to accommodate internally displaced people (IDP). The long - term effect of violence on the education includes migration of teachers to safer communities, increased in school dropouts, and segregation of schooling along tribal and religious lines. The backdrop of violence and insecurity has contributed to an environment of fear and distrust, fuelled by religious conflict. Insecurity and displacement effect households' access to education and trust in state and community actors and willingness of parents to send children to school

The government has spent huge amount of money on the renovation of buildings, and infrastructures that has been destroyed by these religious conflicts cause by Fulani herdsmen. Generally, the crisis has brought more hardship to pupils and other learners living with their parents in the entire Local Government Area. Most people lost their lives, houses were set ablaze, economic trees were burnt and some fled from the area. Educational activities came to a halt as school buildings were burnt down, while school enrollment decreased because of emigration and death of innocent children. Teachers were scattered and some even lost their lives. School activities came to a standstill as the crisis destabilized school calendar. The carnage brought about increased school enrolment in some parts of the local government that are not affected by the crises. This has created management problems for teachers and

head teachers in such areas. Most parents who have returned from the Internally Displaced People's (IDP) camp preferred to stay at home with their children, then sending them back to school to continue their education. According to most parents they prefer to stay at home with their children because they don't know when next the Fulani herdsmen may strike the school or village. This psychological problem further aggravated the pain and fear for the people in the Local government area.

Another major problem posed by Fulani and herdsmen and farmers clash is that farming activities in some parts of the State and even the country, has been put to a halt, particularly in southern where most of the inhabitants are predominantly peasants' farmers and teachers. Farmers within this region find it hard to go to their farms as well as to get enough food crops to the market thereby, increasing price of commodity in the market.

Furthermore, many of the displaced Christians have been forced to live in the Internally Displace People's (IDP) camp or with relatives and families in Kaduna town, Kafanchan, Kagoro and need aid.

On the whole school enrolment and staff turnout reduced by sixty percent when normalcy returned to the area because many people left the local government and even the state in search of peace and school for their children. Even some teachers resigned their appointment while others relocated to other places that are crisis free. The after effect of this attack has led to the misery and trauma suffered by Christian women, children and the most vulnerable who were mostly neglected.

The overall effect for sustainable development is that the farming, economic and social activities seem to be fast deteriorating. Also, a substantial part of the country's budget has been spent on the compensation of some families who lost their relations to the Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis. Also, huge amount of money is being spent on weapons and ammunition acquisition so as to equip the military to handle the situation on ground. All these seem to have affected Nation's economy.

Nigeria is seriously threatened by constant Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis and therefore, considered to be a main threat that is affecting education, social and economic activities of the country. Fulani herdsmen and farmers clashes seem to have become the major problem especially the security and development of our beloved country. However, with the return of peace to the area, it is hoped that social, economic and school activities will return to

normal and will increase as the internally displaced people are gradually returning back to their homes.

Ways to Manage Fualani Herdsmen attacks and to improve Education Standard

Different methods should be used to solve local conflicts, to show how to deal with struggles for power, social status and economic advantage between interest groups. Conflicts require fundamental changes in socio-political systems or through the legislative process (Cheldelin, Druckman, & Fast, 2003). Even though the process of solving the conflict between the two groups has many challenges, there are alternatives and de-escalation resolutions for different parties to consider. The central government, local authorities, security agencies, local community leaders, farmer associations, and local groups can all play an essential role in managing the Fulani herdsman-farmers conflict. They can cooperate by taking responsibility for security in their communities and enhancing administration. For example, the federal government should provide plans to stop armed attacks on farming communities.

The rule of law should also be applied equally to all parties as well as finding common ground to end bias towards each other. Also, the government should consider limiting the weapon usage of the Fulani herdsman. Moreover, the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps should focus on finding measures to gather information and intelligence for emergency responses to further avoid violent attacks. Crimes such as robbery, kidnapping, and indiscriminate killings should be prohibited, and government security forces should protect communities. Furthermore, the infrastructure in these areas such as roads and water would require rapid improvement and modernization to meet the demands of a growing population. Business activities and investment should be encouraged through policy making to improve modern farms. The following methods can also help in restoring peace:

Forcing and Competing: Several conflict management techniques and strategies can be applied to reach a peaceful resolution. For example, conflict management techniques such as forcing and competing strategies can be used by the government when the herder-farmer conflict becomes a threat to Nigeria's national security (Mohammed, Umar, & Hamisu, 2017). The government and state government should flexibly use forcing strategy when they have more power or legal rights to enforce law or regulation. The federal and security agencies can intensify operations to protect both parties from being harmed, as well as improving supervision systems to track livestock

movement. Also, people can strengthen cross-border cooperation with the neighbouring regions.

Win-Win Strategy: Fulani herdsmen and farmers can use this strategy to achieve a win-win situation to satisfy the concerns of both parties. The win-win strategy will help both parties build a high level of trust and create a long-term relationship. Parties need to work and cooperate, as well as be willing to take full responsibility to establish a win-win solution. Additionally, both Fulani herdsmen and farmers can discuss how to improve their shared resources such as transportation in order to live together in their communities peacefully.

Avoiding: Parties can choose the Withdrawing model when both parties can not pursue their interests or concerns and to avoid unacceptable consequences. They can use this model when the issue is not essential for them to take efforts immediately. When it is not the right time to deal with the problem, or when the conflict cannot be solved immediately because it requires a system change, herdsmen and farmers can choose to withdraw or to avoid the confrontation.

Accommodating: The last model that can be used to address the Fulani herdsmen attack is accommodating; when the attack is not as important to another party, people can use this model. For example, if one party believes they lack evidence to persuade another party, or when people assume they are wrong, they have to accommodate.

Modernization of rural areas: If Nigeria government can assist in providing basic needs of the people in villages, it will help in curbing crisis. Such needs include infrastructure, building and equipping standard schools, employment opportunity for our youth, electricity and water. Schools in the villages should be attractive and the teachers well paid.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that Fulani Herdsmen attacks in Southern Kaduna have the propensity to break down the peace and harmony of the entire state and the education system. The attacks have brought about serious and grave effects in the lives of the people – displacing a good number of them, making them widows, widowers and orphans, making them go hungry by reason of the wanton destruction of their schools, farms and farm produce all of which have caused untold hardship and brought about abject poverty and lack of continuation of education. The study equally concludes

that strategic means of mitigating and possibly eradicating this menace must be taken, the remote and immediate causes of these conflicts must be properly studied to forestall future occurrence.

In conclusion, things can only work well if and only if, people are alive, peaceful and in a good stead of mind and body. Meaningful educational activities cannot take place in any confused environment. What makes a school is the population of the pupils, qualified teachers and dedicated parents. School of any level can only grow where there is no crisis and where there is constant crisis school process of teaching and learning, enrolment, growth and development are bound to decrease.

Recommendations

Suggestions for peaceful co-existence in rural areas particularly in rural areas is highly needed and recommended. In view of the effects of Fulani herdsmen attack on the education of our children in the villages, it is very important for all stakeholders in Kaduna State to come together and ensure that normalcy return to the Local Government Areas affected and that school in the area resumed work accordingly.

The following suggestions may help in bringing about the desired peace and consequently increase in school enrolment, performance its daily activities.

Both Federal and State government should make conscious effort to restore confidence in the people through the provision of adequate security for the people to help maintain peace in the area. The presence of security men will scare people who may wish to formant trouble in the area.

Furthermore, when peace is restored, the internally displaced people should return to their homes and start normal activity, including sending their children to school to continue their education. This will help to boost enrolment that has hither to disappear from schools as a result of the crises.

Fulani herdsmen should be given a state that will be theirs with vast hater of land that would be enough for them and their cows so that the herdsmen will not destroy other people's farmland and economic trees that may lead to conflict.

The Federal government of Nigeria, individual and Non-governmental organizations should embark on reconstruction of buildings and other infrastructures destroyed in the carnage. This will encourage the people to send their children back to school.

The government should arrest, prosecute and make perpetrators (Fulani herdsmen) accountable for their crimes and all those responsible for attacks or crisis in Southern Kaduna or anywhere within the country, should not have been allowed to behave with impunity.

Finally, there is the need to empower the internally displaced persons through such means as asset ownership and access to credit facilities. Empowering them will make them to be productive and create wealth through the multiplier effect. The gains from their businesses can be used to support their children in schools.

References

- Adagba, O., Ugwu, S.C., & Eme, O.I. (2012). Activities of Boko Haram and insecurity question in Nigeria, *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review* V011(9), 77-99.
- Akwara, U. (2018). *The Attack of Herdsmen on Farmers in Nigeria: The Problems and Solutions*. Nigeria: Weafri Well Services CO.
- Adisa, R., S., & Adekunle, O. (2010). Farmer-Herdsmen Conflicts: A Factor Analysis of Socio-economic Conflict Variables among Arable Crop Farmers in North Central Nigeria. *Journal of human ecology*.
- Ajjah, A. (2016). Church says '808 killed in southern Kaduna. *Premium Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/219173-church-says-808-killed-southern-kaduna.html>
- Cheldelin, Druckman & Fast, eds. (2008). *Conflict*, 2nd ed. London: Continuum Press
- Coinco, E. (2014). *Education, conflict and violence research*. London, UK: Department for International Development.
- Echoes of Hope (2015). *Southern Kaduna Map*. Retrieved from <http://www.theechoesofhope.com/southern-kaduna-map/>
- Iniobong, M. (2016). *Kaduna State – The Main Capital City in the Northern Region*. Retrieved from <https://www.hotelnownow.com/blog/kaduna-state>
- Makarfi, A.M. (2004). *Peace Building and Conflict Resolution – The Experience of Kaduna State*. A paper presented on December 1st – 2nd at the Northern Governors' Peace Conference in Kaduna.
- Ochonu, M.E. (2016). *El-Rufai's Blunders and the Christmas Killings in Southern Kaduna*. Retrieved from <http://saharareporters.com/2016/12/26/el->

[rufai%E2%80%99s-blunders-and-christmas-killings-southern-kaduna-moses-e-ochonu](#).

Oguche, D and Rabah. M. (2001). *The Universal Basic Education, Planning, Implement a Sustenance*. Sokoto: AFP press

Ogbonnaya (2013) *Education Finance in Nigeria*, Onitsha. Cape International publishers.

Oguche, A. (2011) *Information and Communication Technology*. Information and Ankpa. Cuca press.

Rick, N. (2015). *Nine factors that affect school enrolment*. Retrieved from Rick. New