

**NON-VULNERABLE AGAINST THE VULNERABLE: A SOCIO-CRIMINOLOGICAL
ANALYSIS OF HERDSMEN ATTACK ON VULNERABLE POPULATION IN
NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The paper explored the sporadic victimization of the vulnerable population by herdsmen. The study acknowledges that herdsmen attack on communities has become so alarming. Nigeria has witnessed unprecedented incidence of herdsmen attacks on people of different ethnic nationalities. The activities of the non-vulnerable group is always targeted at the vulnerable population such as children, women, the aged and the sick, with the sole aim of destruction of lives, properties and carting away of valuables. Government effort at addressing the problem is still blur as no frantic effort has been adopted to provide a lasting solution to the problem. The areas that has been severely victimized by the herdsmen are north-central states of Benue, Plateau and Nasarawa. The activities of herdsmen has created social dislocation, indelible hatred and forgiveness among population, erosion of the repository of traditional knowledge and declination of the working population. We recommended amongst others that the fight against corruption should begin with the security agencies such as the police, Department of State Security, Immigration and Customs. Government through appropriate agencies should probe the source of the sophisticated weapons at the disposal of herdsmen. Government should ensure that adequate security is provided for the vulnerable populations that are in dire need of security. Finally, community leaders in partnership with state government should commission neighbourhood watch group that will assist in providing security for the vulnerable population.

Keywords: Victimization, vulnerable population, security, herdsmen and killings

Introduction

Nigeria, the acclaimed giant of Africa is engulfed with myriad of socio-economic, political and security problems. Apart from the scourging economic recession, the Niger-Delta militancy, the Boko Haram saga, the problem of suspected Fulani herdsmen ravaging most rural communities in Nigeria is alarming. The herdsmen's sporadic killings, destruction and looting of belongings have gone on for some decades, but are now becoming more prevalent in many parts of the country (Adedeji, 2016). It is more worrisome as it appears that the security agents lack the capacity to contend with the hydra-headed security problems occasioned by Fulani herdsmen. The herdsmen militia that kills and destroy lives and properties with impunity have not been frankly confronted by the State security apparatus. This has compelled many Nigerians to conclude that government has no political will to address the problem of herdsmen in Nigeria, or Nigeria's security forces and allies are not adequately protecting the vulnerable (CCC, 2015).

Empirical evidence suggest that herdsmen classified in this study as non-vulnerable group population have repeatedly and sporadically embarked on massive attacks on residents across North-Central, South-West, South-South and South-Eastern Nigeria with impunity (Okoli & Iortyer, 2014; Olayok; 2014', Adedeji, 2016). Herdsman between 2010 and 2013 have reportedly murdered about 80 people in total, but by 2014 the number had increased to 1,229 people and they pose a major threat to peace and stability (GTI, 2015). Of late the states of Benue, Taraba, Nasarawa, Plateau, Kaduna and Katsina have been the worst hit, having suffered devastating attacks by the unrepentant Fulani herdsmen with a heavy toll on human lives and property. The herdsmen are usually armed with sophisticated weapons and usually employ surprise to attack their target communities at a time the communities are unprepared such as midnight or on Sundays when they are in church, killing people indiscriminately and burning houses and looting properties. Classifying Fulani herdsmen as non-vulnerable in this piece is not engulfed with bias. The paper assumes that there are more or less protected, equipped, prepared and fully aware of their victims' weaknesses to appropriately defend themselves from herdsmen's victimization. From the violence perspective, the herdsmen are dogged, possess sophisticated weapons, fearless, hardened and are atoned with the environment. A chronicle of the recent victimization by herdsmen, revealed that the vulnerable are constantly victimized. This however, does not negate the fact that herdsmen can become victims of recurrent violence. These outstanding qualities of herdsmen provide a platform for their wanton killings and destruction of properties with impunity.

The recurrent victimization of the vulnerable group in Nigeria has assumed a more lethal, and sophisticated dimension due to the nature of arms and ammunition used, charms involved, communication gadgets and casualties recorded (Michael, 2000; Qlayoku, 2014; Akpan, 2015). It has been observed that herdsmen (non-vulnerable) migrate several kilometers, while taking violence to their victims' communities. Their attack is always carried out at night or early hours of the morning when unsuspecting victims least expect. Irrespective of the nature of weapons at herdsmen's disposal, and the time of victimization, the non-vulnerable population are the major triggers of violence. What then is the major indices of the vulnerable and non-vulnerable population in the context of herdsmen violence? What are the implications of herdsmen attack on the vulnerable groups, on socio-demographic development of the society? This discourse seeks to provide answers to the above questions.

Conceptualizing Vulnerability, Vulnerable and Non-vulnerable Population.

The concept of vulnerability reflect in extant literature. Clark (2008) opined that the term vulnerable and vulnerability are used in areas of economic development, social science, human security, crime prevention, environmental research, disaster management, famine, contagious diseases and mental health. Each of these areas of endeavour has carefully developed framework that serve as road maps for analysis. Scholars of criminology, health and disaster traditions view vulnerability from different perspectives. Interestingly, the first attempt at defining vulnerability to crime was advanced by Perloff (1983) as a belief that one is susceptible to future negative outcomes and unprotected from danger of crime. Vulnerability refers to exposures and defenselessness. Clark (2008) maintained that vulnerability is the condition resulting from how individuals or communities negatively experience the complex interaction of social, cultural, economic, political and environmental variables that create the platform for the individuals or communities to be exposed to the harm of crime or violence. An elaborate definition of vulnerability in the context of crime and violence was provided by Michael, Chinwokwu and Inyang (2016), that it involves the potential for loss due to the crime and violence. The definitional analysis reveals that vulnerability from the context of herdsmen victimization encompasses the conditions triggered by social, environmental, physical and economic variables which increase the susceptibility of an individual, family and community to the consequences of violence triggered by herdsmen. It is the conditions and circumstances of a person and community that make it prone to the damaging and detrimental effect of violence allegedly spearheaded by herdsmen. All over the globe, the indices that either generate vulnerability or promote human society are influenced by what appears to be promoting processes for socio-cultural, political and environmental changes (Leichenko& O'Brien, 2008)

Proceeding from the conceptualization of vulnerability, the vulnerable groups are population considered to be defenseless and unprotected against herdsmen victimization. Alagu (2009) asserted that the vulnerable groups consist of people who are more exposed to the harm of crime and violence. Michael (2015) maintained that the vulnerable from violence or crime perspective are groups, population and communities that are not capable of anticipating, coping with, resisting and recovering from the impact of crime and violence. These groups or population lack the capacity to prevent their victimization against criminals or perpetrators of violence.

In developing nations, the vulnerable groups are subjected to all forms of molestations including the deprivation of their rights. Adeleye (2014) observed with dismay the manner at which the vulnerable are frequently victimized by the non-vulnerable groups. Okoye and Okoye (2014) eruditely captured those regarded as vulnerable form security perspective. These are the poor, the defenseless, the children, the elderly, the sick, the malnourished, pregnant women, those without security, the untrained civilians, the armless, those living in fear and all those who can be attacked by any criminal element without any body stopping. The above vividly captures the state of the vulnerable. Okoye and Okoye's (2014) argues that the vulnerable are individuals and communities that can be victimized by criminals without the capability of the community or government to prevent or curtail their victimization. From their perception, we make bold to assert that the vulnerable to victimization by herdsmen are characterized by:

1. Lack of ability to defend themselves, members of their families and communities against Fulani herdsmen attacks
2. Still young and are not strong, hence not able to understand what violence is all about.
3. Weak because of pregnancies that alters their physiological and anatomical being
4. Unable to resist herdsmen attacks because of ill-health
5. Weak and lack the ability to resist attack by herdsmen because they are old

6. Lack basic military training and have not necessarily been trained on warfare
7. Have no sophisticated weapons to defend themselves against the non-vulnerable (herdsmen)
8. Respect human dignity, thus may not be able to take life
9. Exposure to all forms of attacks from herdsmen without government at all levels providing them adequate security
10. Unprepared for herdsmen attack
11. Law abiding citizens not willing to carry unlicensed arms
12. Physical and cognitive impairments.

The above description captures the vulnerable in Nigeria. Herdsmen over the years have capitalized on the security lapses and the vulnerable nature of different communities to victimize them with impunity (Abbas, 2012). A chronicle of the various attacks by herdsmen in Nigeria revealed that the vulnerable population have constantly been victimized with impunity. The destruction of lives and properties by the non-vulnerable (herdsmen) has risen geometrically in recent years without the government having the political will to provide a lasting solution to it (Adogi, 2013; Okoli&Atelhe, 2014).

The non-vulnerable consist of population that possesses the ability and capability to defend themselves and other members of their groups. There are energetic, healthy, and capable of resisting attack in a given context, matured in terms of age, have little military training and have access to and use of sophisticated weapons, (Michael, 2015). The description of the non-vulnerable group in this context stands in sharp contrast with the vulnerable group. Onyeko (2015) opined that Fulani herdsmen possess some of the attributes of the non-vulnerable. One of the interesting and revealing attributes of the herdsmen is their access and use of sophisticated weapons. Agbedo (2016) and Igomu (2016) reported on separate occasion on the nature of weapons at the disposal of suspected Fulani herdsmen. The herdsmen all over the country at different time and locations have been arrested by security personnel with sophisticated weapons (Igbedo, 2016). The source of these weapons remained unclear. Onyeko (2015) had earlier observed that these weapons are purchased with the proceeds from the sales of their herds. The assailants capitalized on our porous borders to import weapons with which they use to killed and destroy properties in Nigeria.

The security operatives are not exonerated either. The sophisticated weapons at the disposal of herdsmen could be provided by security forces. Nigeria is a materialistic society where the get-rich-quick mentality has engulfed many (Ihejiamaizu, 2005). Nigerians attached so much importance to wealth and can worship people and their wealth. Security operatives in an attempt to get rich quick, often sell weapons to herdsmen with which they used to kill the security forces and their relatives. Ihejiamaizu (2005) had earlier warned that any society with so much attachment to wealth without considering the source of the wealth, will certainly plunged into crisis and violence. Michael (2010) observed that security forces in Nigeria had continuously betrayed public confidence, because of their affiliation with some assailants.

Wantu (2015), Agbedo (2016) and Igomu (2016) are of the view that government on their part had not taken up their constitutional responsibility to providing security for the vulnerable adequately. It is worrisome that some leaders, for political interest could arm the herdsmen to kill, destroy and displace a community for their political gains. If government officials saddled with the responsibility of providing security for the vulnerable could in turn arm a group of criminals to kill others for their selfish interest, then, development is far from Nigeria. Nigerians, especially leaders will always condemn the activities of herdsmen on the pages of newspapers and social media without adequate policy measure to prevent reoccurrence. All over the six geo-

political zones, children, women, pregnant women, the aged, the sick and the weak have repeatedly be victimized by herdsmen at will without any disturbance from the government and community leaders.

Chronicle of Herdsmen Victimization of the Vulnerable Population in Nigeria 2015-2016

Herdsmen victimization of the vulnerable population has assumed an alarming perspective. Almost all communities in the geo-political zones in Nigeria had witnessed incidences of brazen destruction of life and properties orchestrated by unrepentant herdsmen. Few years ago, Boko Haram insurgents had dominated both domestic and international headlines (Smith, 2014), while it appears government via the security forces are gradually winning the war against them, the blood-letting herdsmen have become the focus of both domestic and international headlines and security challenge discourse. While the dreaded Boko Haram has been acknowledged as one of the destructive groups in the globe, the herdsmen have become so lethal and sophisticated in their victimization. The Global Terrorism Index (2015) acknowledged the level of destruction of lives and properties by Fulani herdsmen, and has been branded the fourth most dangerous terrorist group in the globe. They reported that alongside the destabilized security situation in Nigeria due to increased activity of Boko Haram, there was a dramatic increase in attacks by Fulani militants. From 2010 to 2013, Fulani militants killed around 1,229. Most of the attack occur in just six of the 36 states of Nigeria (GTI, 2015). The figure has escalated with the sporadic attack in 2016.

The herdsmen's nefarious activities has grown geometrically in recent years. Between 2014 and 2016, Fulani militants stepped up their operations, targeting farming communities dominated by Christian faithful. It is a sort of concern among some scholars (Wantu, 2016, Igomu, 2016) that herdsmen operating in Nigeria are mercenaries hired to killed, destroy and destabilized assumed enemy- communities to pave way for political fortunes of the group of desperate politicians. The promotion of herdsmen's militancy for political advantage by desperate politicians was amplified by Michael and Chinwokwu, (2016). Politicians with no credibility, and who champion bad governance via corrupt practices often resort to the use of diverse militant groups for political advantage. Nwokoye (2013) argued vehemently that herdsmen victimization has political undertone.

Another quite impressive school of thought attributes the high incidence of herdsmen victimization of the vulnerable groups on resource scarcity and frustration aggression perspective. Abugu and Onuba (2015) while reasoning in frustration and aggression perspective posited that violent transgressions occur due to the accumulation of residual instigator effects of frustration. Aggressive behavior of the herdsmen is traceable to the resource depletion or scarcity which in the long-run affect their economic wellbeing. Frustration and aggression stem from resource scarcity and depletion. In such a situation, herdsmen often channel their frustration to the vulnerable groups which they consider as obstruction to their migration to a safe place or must have been involved in rusting their cattle. Irrespective of the triggers of herdsmen attacks, their activities are condemnable.

Statistical evidence indicate that herdsmen victimization is considered one of the leading causes of violent death in Nigeria. From 2006 to 2014, about 615 cattle grazing related violence were witnessed with detrimental consequences on many Nigerians (Olayoku, 2014). A chronicle of the sporadic incidence of herdsmen victimization in Nigeria between 2015 and 2016 is shown on the table below.

Table 1: Herdsmen Victimization of Vulnerable Population 2015-2016

S/N	Date	Village	Local Government Area	States	No of Victims
1	3/01/2015	Ambe-madaki	Sanga	Kaduna	15
2	3/01/2015	Shurun	Mangu	Plateau	10
3	23/01/2015	Tarkum	Tarkum	Taraba	1
4	27/01/2015	Yangal-fadan	Zango-Kafat,	Kaduna	18
5	29/01/2015	Nwonko	Wukari	Taraba	30
6	15/03/2015	Egba	Agatu	Benue	90
7	20/04/2015	Donga	Donga	Taraba	7
8	25/04/2015	Barkin Ladi	Barkin & Riyom	Platau	70
9	15/05/2015	Shengeo	Gwer West	Benue	8
10	19/05/2015	Barkin Ladi	Barkin Ladi	Platua	27
11	24/05/2015	Ukura Gafa	Logo	Banue	100
12	4/07/2015	Barkin Ladi	Barkin Ladi	Plateau	2
13	8/07/2015	Dananacha	Gassol	Taraba	2
14	11/07/2015	Dananacha	Gassol	Taraba	24
15	12/07/2015	Kofar Gwari	Kokona	Nasarawa	5
16	14/07/2015	Dagari	Gassol	Taraba	2
17	17/07/2015	Katsina Ala	Katsina Ala	Banue	13
18	19/07/2015	Kofar Gwari	Kokona	Nasarawa	2
19	31/07/2015	Ropp	Ropp	Plateau	1
20	20/08/2016	Barkin Ladi	Barkin	Plateau	2
21	28/08/2015	Tanti	Bokkos	Plateau	2
22	30/08/2015	Dorong	Foron,	Plateau	2
23	30/08/2015	Joi	Kanam	Plateau	2
24	31/08/2015	Tanti	Bokkos	Plateau	5
25	3/09/2015	Bachit	Riyom	Plateau	1
26	3/09/2015	Sho-Barkin Ladi	Barkin Ladi	Plateau	5
27	6/09/2015	Kortse	Gassol	Taraba	2
28.	6/09/2015	Riyom	Riyom	Plateau	3
29.	9/09/2015	Kwi	Riyom	Plateau	2
30	10/09/2015	Asema Pever	Gassol	Taraba	1
31	12/09/2015	Sarkin Kudu	Ibi	Taraba	10
32	13/09/2015	Zakupwany	Barkin Ladi	Plateau	20
33.	13/09/2015	Donga	Donga	Taraba	6
34	15/09/2015	Ibi	Ibi	Taraba	9
35	15/09/2015	Mangu	Mangu	Plateau	18
36	01/01/2016	Nkanu East	Nkanu East	Enugu	1
37	01/01/2016	Alakkio	Nasarawa Eggon	Nasarawa	12
38	10/01/2016	Agatu	Agatu	Benue	45
39	17/01/2016	Wukari	Wukari	Taraba	0
40	25/01/2016	Wunamakoh	Girei	Adamawa	20
41	06/02/2016	Buruku	Buruku	Buruku	12
42	07/02/2016	Yawa North	Ogun	Ogun	1
43	07/02/2016	Buruku	Buruku	Benue	10

44	11/02/2016	OZo Uwari	Enugu	Enugu	2
45	24/02/2016	Agatu	Agatu	Benue	300
46	27/02/2016	Wukari	Wukari	Taraba	9
47	28/02/2016	Agatu	Agatu	Benue	9
48	03/03/2016	Logo	Logo	Benue	1
49	05/03/2016	Agatu	Agatu	Benue	0
50	08/03/2016	Logo	Logo	Benue	40
51	08/03/2016	Buruku	Buruku	Benue	12
52	09/03/2016	Logo	Logo	Benue	8
53	10/03/2016	Agatu	Agatu	Benue	2
54	13/03/2016	Agatu	Agatu	Benue	90
55	13/03/2016	Buruku	Buruku	Benue	2
56	13/03/2016	Tarkaa	Tarkaa	Benue	6
57	17/03/2016	Logo	Logo	Benue	25
58	17/03/2016	Buruku	Buruku	Benue	15
59	19/03/2016	Udi	Udi	Enugu	1
60	21/03/2016	Guma	Guma	Benue	2
61	29/03/2016	Ogba-Egebema	Ogba-Egebema	Rivers	7
62	04/04/2016	Tarkaa	Tarkaa	Benue	1
63	09/04/2016	Oktipupa	Oktipupa	Ondo	1
64	12/04/2016	Gashaka	Gashaka	Taraba	15
65	13/04/2016	Bali	Bali	Taraba	44
66	13/04/2016	Ifedore,	Ifedore, Ondo	Ondo	0
67	16/04/2016	Ayamelum	Ayamelum, Anamabra	Anambra	1
68	18/04/2016	Kwande,	Kwande	Benue	18
69	25/04/2016	Nkpabi Nimbo	Uzo-Uwan	Enugu	57
70	26/04/2016	Ndokwa	Ndokwa	Delta	0
71	27/04/2016	Ozo-Uwani	Uzo-Uwani	Enugu	20
72	16/06/2016	Ossissa	Ndokwa- East	Delta	1
73	20/06/2016	Logo	Logo	Benue	59
74	25/07/2016	Gaambe-Tiev	Logo	Benue	14
75	25/08/2016	Attakwu	Nkanu –West	Enugu	3
76	24/12/2016	Many villages	Many Local Governments	Kaduna	803

Source: Compiled by the authors, 2016

The table clearly uncovered incidents of herdsmen victimization of the vulnerable groups in “the giant of Africa”. The table revealed that the victimization which was properly planned was carried out with impunity and without confrontation, took place in various parts of the country between 2015 and 2016, which terminated in August. It further revealed that the attacks in most communities were arithmetical (occurring sequentially) without prevention by security operatives. The data presented in the table also point to the fact that herdsmen violence and victimization is on the steady increase, affecting more of the less privileged class in all societies. The table clearly established that when government has failed in its constitutional responsibilities to provide security for the citizens, the traditional institution has also failed. Michael and Arop

(2016) observed that local leaders in our rural communities are known for galvanizing the youths to provide security for the people. In the absence of the formal security apparatus, it is the onus of the community to provide security for its people. The repeated attacks by herdsmen on communities has not been repelled or prevented. This depicts the fact that both government and rural communities have not made serious attempt to secure the communities against herdsmen victimization. The over reliance on government to provide security for rural communities over the years has proved abortive. In the midst of dwindling resources and corruption, government has clearly shown that it is incapable of securing rural communities. With the huge resources earmarked for security, corrupt government official divert such resources for personal gains. Part of the resources meant for security are diverted into buying houses, fleet of exotic cars. Apart from the political gains derived from the herdsmen attack by corrupt politicians, the corrupt leaders prefer such crisis to occur so that it will create avenue for them to siphon the resources of the state. Observing that government at the federal, state and local levels had failed in severing the people, Michael and Arop had advocated the use of community guards to secure the rural people.

Table 2: Most Victimized States From 2015 - 2016

S/N	States	No Attack	Casualties Recorded
1	Adamawa	1	20
2	Anambra	1	1
3	Benue	25	880
4	Delta	2	1
5	Enugu	5	84
6	Kaduna	3	833
7	Nasarawa	3	16
8	Ondo	2	1
9	Ogun	1	1
10	Plateau	17	172
11	Rivers	1	7
12	Taraba	14	163
	Total	75	2,161

Source: **Compiled by the Authors, 2016**

Table 2 indicated the most attacked States in Nigeria and the number of deaths recorded in the period under review. The table established that Benue was the most attacked state. Benue witnessed 25 attacks with 880 deaths recorded. This situation is detrimental to the food basket of the nation. The table also pointed out that Kaduna, Plateau and Taraba recoded 4, 17 and 14 attacked with 833, 172 and 163 deaths respectively. Adamawa, Anambra, Delta, Ogun, Ondo and Rivers states has the least attacks during the period. In all 74 attacks and 1,361 people especially the vulnerable population were killed and their belonging destroyed by herdsmen. Another interesting observation from the table is that the two most victimized states of Kaduna, Benue and Plateau are found in the North Central Nigeria where incidences of violence has been sporadic and steadily without government at all levels providing adequate security for the people. It is clear from the analysis that the federal government has failed in its constitutional responsibility of providing security for the vulnerable.

Theoretical Consideration

Routine Activity Theory (RAT)

The Routine Activity Theory (RAT) of Cohen and Felson (1979) is one of the theories of environmental criminology. The theory was developed to explain victimization, it can also be used to explain crime management in the community. RAT states that for a criminal event to occur, there must be a convergence in time and space of three factors. These are the presence of a motivated offender, the absence of a capable guardian and the presence of a suitable target (person or object). Whether or not these elements converge or coincide is a product of the routine activities (day-to-day movement) of potential targets and offenders. From the premise of RAT, people can become victims of crime in the presence of offenders, in the absence of social control agents or mechanism such as street lights and CCTV. People's daily activities such as going to work, storage of farm produce, pursuing recreation and running errands can bring offenders in contact with suitable victims and target. The likely offender may be the herdsmen armed with sophisticated weapon, the suitable target may be persons, an object or place while the guardian may be police patrols, security guards, vigilant staff, friends, neighbours or close circuit television (CCTV) system being monitored. In the light of this theory, daily activities of locals Local leaders such as farming, relaxation, and undertaking diverse socioeconomic activities can make the prone to victimization by the herdsmen in the absence of security operatives. The persistent attack by herdsmen can be explained in the absence of security to protect the vulnerable population.

Frustration-Aggression Theory

Frustration-Aggression theory (Dollard, 1939, Berkowitz, Leonard, Yates & Aubry, 1962) explain violent behaviors that result from inability to fulfill needs. A feeling of frustration develops when men's ability to derive satisfaction from the existing situation undergoes a change. This frustration is released in the form of conflict when men try to strike the sources of frustration. For instance, where expectation does not meet attainment, the tendency is for the people to confront those they hold responsible for frustrating their ambitions. The greater the difference between what is sought for and what is attainable, the greater the chances that anger and violence will result. The herdsmen desire to take over the farm land including the crops is often resisted by the farmers. The inability of the herdsmen to achieve their nefarious agenda, often result in frustration and aggression. This often results in violence that has claimed many lives and properties.

Implication of Herdsmen Attacks on Societal Development.

There are wide varieties of approaches that have been used to measure and catalog the effects of herdsmen's victimization. Their attack affects the social, economic, political, cultural, health and demographic activities of the people.

Social Implications

The unprecedented attack by herdsmen, erodes social relationships, not just via the demise of the vulnerable population, but restricting physical movement. Nwokoye, (2015) and Michael (2005) have all agreed that the attack has created social dislocation and continuous suspicion among Fulani and other ethnic groups within the areas of attack. Herdsmen are now looked upon as social stigma as people are no longer comfortable with herdsmen who are generally undertaking their legitimate nomadic business. The social integration and cohesion which often exist among herdsmen and residents has been battered as most communities no longer socialize with herdsmen. Odey (2014) observed that previously, Fulani herdsmen were allowed to join community

associations and relate with members of the community (currently, they are strongly denied the privilege of joining such associations where they exist). This inevitably has created social dislocation. In some communities, it has been resolved that no member shall provide land for herdsmen to graze their herds. This has greatly affected social relations.

Demographic Implications

Herdsmen attack and victimization of communities has decimated the young and aged population. The sporadic and gruesome killing of the vulnerable groups of various communities has reduced the population of diverse ethnic nationalities. Herdsmen in the past and at present constantly killed the young population that are considered active in the production of goods and services. The destruction of the young or working population has affected production in Nigeria. Smith (2015) opined that violence and the continuous destruction of lives especially that of the working population greatly affect production in all sectors of our society. Adamu (2014) argued that if the young and energetic people are constantly killed by herdsmen, production of crops would likely be affected. He further stated that when the older, but vulnerable people are killed, their moral, financial and other forms of support that is required for the younger generation to be more active in their socio-economic activities is lost (Adamu, 2014). The destruction of life by Fulani herdsmen has enormous implications on mortality. Aniah and Okpiliya (2003) earlier observed that mortality rate was higher in the urban centers due to overcrowding, poor sanitation and automobile accident. By contrast, rural environments were better off because those conditions which were found were not in the rural areas (Aniah & Okpiliya, 2003). Recent occurrences have shown that mortality rate is high in the rural area. Many of the death are caused by herdsmen.

Political Implications

Fulani herdsmen attack on the vulnerable population has enormous implications on political development. The attack by herdsmen permanently disenfranchise many. Lives lost cannot be replaced, thus such people can no longer participate in the political activities of their communities Okoye (2014) observed that Fulani –farmer’s violence create fear, political tension and prevent many from getting involved in the political activities of their communities. Adogi(2013) observed earlier that herders- farmers’ violence could be politically motivated, aimed at disenfranchising many for some selfish political benefit; they get power by all means. Politicians could sponsor and use such violence to displace and create fear in communities where they presumes their fellow contenders could have political advantage over them. The displacement of such communities will affect the voting strength of such communities, thereby paving way for them to have political advantage over their opponents.

Cultural Implications

From the cultural perspectives, the aged population are the custodians of our cultural values. They are regarded as the repository of knowledge that is transferable from generation to generation. Herdsmen attack has constantly claimed the lives of the aged population. The implication of the loss of the aged via herdsmen attack is that culture and values of the community is at risk of being lost in the younger generation. Michael and Arop (2016) noted that traditional or local leaders (Aged) are always in the best position to give a vivid history, culture and values of the community. The persistent decimation of such vulnerable population will affect the culture history of the community.

Psychological Implications

Due to the high incidence of violence allegedly perpetrated by herdsmen, resident are constantly living in fear. Herdsmen's victimization of the vulnerable population has created indelible hatred and un-forgiveness among survivors. Children who witnessed or have been informed that herdsmen murdered their parents or other kinsmen, will develop hatred and unforgiveness for herdsmen who may not have been involved in the murder of their parents or kins. Violence witnessed by children, affect their cognitive development. Adogi (2013) asserted that violence carried out by herdsmen make people to live in constant fear of the unknown.

Health Implication

The health consequences of herdsmen victimization of the vulnerable population is enormous. Nwokoye (2013) was alarmed at the extent of injuries sustain from attack by suspected herdsmen. Some injuries of not properly managed may cause other health problems for the victims. The aftermath effect of attack by suspected herdsmen may create public health problems. When corpse are not interred and allowed to decompose, it will provide offensive smell which have public health implications. Adogi (2013) observed that some corpses are deposited in the river thereby rendering the water unfit for consumption. Those who consume such water, will develop health problems. It has been observed that most corpses are buried in mass grave, the offensive smell from such graves affects the health of the public.

Religious Implications

The activities of the herdsmen continues to impact negatively on the religious activities of the people. Various worship centers are burnt down and some desecrated by herdsmen. The killing of religious leaders could also result in the closure of worship centers, which could also affect religious activities in the affected communities. Nwokoye (2013) revealed that most violence witnessed in Nigeria, target worshippers and worship centers. The destruction of worshippers and worship centers affects the functions and operations of religious activities.

Legal Implications

Herdsmen victimization of different communities in Nigeria, has triggered so many legal battles. The destruction of crops often result in the use of police to arrest culprits. In some situation, the conflicts are resolved in court. The legal battles have enormous economic implication. Makinde observed that the people of Gwer-West have been in a legal battle with herdsmen for killing their wives, children and destroying their farms. The Gwer-West people are demanding ₦100 billion as compensation for herdsmen attack on their people. Similarly, the Movement against Fulani Occupation (MAFO) and Benue State Indigenes have also sued the Federal Government at the ECOWAS court for her inability to protect them from incessant attacks by suspected herdsmen. The prolonged battles have great economic implications on the communities and Federal Government.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The wanton and sporadic destruction of lives and properties by herdsmen are long in Nigeria. The present study becomes so expedient when it is considered that herdsmen victimization of the vulnerable populations still persist in the midst of security personnel. That Nigeria is ranked among the most victimized countries and herdsmen are considered the fourth terrorist group in the world is unpalatable. based on empirical findings of this study, the evidence of the various incidences of victimization with victims such as the children, youth, women, the aged and the sick, the major conclusion reached is buttressed here that Nigeria's vulnerable populations

remains one of the most victimized by herdsmen. The persistent victimization affects the cultural and socio-demographic development of our society. The paper therefore recommend the following in addressing herdsmen victimization of the people.

1. The fight against corruption should begin with the security agencies such as the police, Department of State Security, Immigration and Customs.
2. Government should through appropriate agencies probe the source of the sophisticated weapons at the disposal of herdsmen.
3. Government should ensure that adequate security is provided for the vulnerable populations.
4. Community leaders in partnership with state government should commission neighbourhood watch group that will assist in providing security for the vulnerable population.
5. Strict and adequate sanction should be meted out to any herdsman arrested with sophisticated weapons and those involved in the victimization of other people should equally be punished accordingly.
6. Government should ensure that the survivors of herdsmen victimization are adequately compensated.
7. Community must ensure that they regulate grazing activities of herdsmen within their area in the best security interest of their people
8. Arrested cattle rustlers should be made to face the full weight of the law of the land.

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