

## EFFECT OF BANDITRY ON THE SOCIO-STATUS AND LIVING STANDARD OF RUMINANT ANIMAL FARMERS IN KATSINA STATE, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

This study was an investigation of the effect of banditry on some socio status and living standard of ruminant animals in Katsina state. Using a two-stage sampling procedure, six (60) ruminant farmers were selected across the state from who relevant information using well-structured questionnaires were obtained. Due to irregular information supplied, only the information obtained from 44 respondents were found usable and analyzed in the study. Analyses were done using descriptive statistics and correlation. The study showed that banditry has led to income reduction, reduction in flock size and forceful relocation of ruminant farmers' households leading to lower social status of the farmers. Similarly, it was found that income generation, food security and children education have been negatively affected. The study equally showed that there is a weak positive tie (0.4) between bandit attacks and the flock size in the study area.

**Key Words:** banditry, herders, living standard, ruminant,

### INTRODUCTION

The vast majority of the rural populace in Katsina State primarily engages in agricultural production for subsistence and commercial purposes. Livestock production appears to be second to crop farming in the ranks of agricultural activities pursued in the State, and the common species of livestock reared include cattle, sheep, goats and poultry (Najamuddeen *et al.*, 2012). In the last decade, the relative normality and stability enjoyed by livestock production in Nigeria was interrupted by a vicious cycle of cattle rustling, which has led to a drastic decline in pastoralist income levels (Chikwuma and Francis, 2014). Banditry is a type of predatory, acquisitive, and violent action by groups of men, and sometimes including women (Paul, 2020). Banditry has aggravated the myriads of factors militating against ruminant production in Nigeria. Banditry and cattle rustling is one of the factors pushing the herders from the North to the South thereby aggravating the existing conflict between the crop farmers and cattle herders. In recent time, banditry has become a major socio-economic phenomenon in Katsina State. It is one of the States in the North West that is presently affected by banditry, cattle rustling and kidnapping. The frontline Local Government Areas (LGAs) mainly affected are Jibia, Batsari, Safana, Danmusa, Kankara, Faskari, Dandume and Sabua (Mahmoud, 2020). A once peaceful state has now turned to be among the epicenters of banditry in the northwestern Nigeria. Herders are forced to a daily migration; they move with their animals to nearby urban centers at night and return the following morning. The traumatic effects of banditry even trivialized the seriousness of covid-19 pandemic in the affected communities. More than 100 people were killed in attacks between April and June 2020; these have led to series of protests (Nduka, 2020). The spate of bandit attacks in some parts of Katsina state are posing serious threat to agricultural activities in the State as farmer's desert their affected villages in droves (Mahmoud, 2020). Livestock farmers' sources of livelihood are lost to this group of criminals, women, children and able body men at the peak of productive age are kidnapped or maimed and, in many instances, deaths are

recorded. This has impacted negatively on livestock productivity and living standard of the farmers. This study evaluated the effect of banditry on some socio-status and living standard of ruminant animal farmers in Katsina State.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The study was conducted in Katsina State North-Western Nigeria. Katsina state covers a land area of 24 192Km<sup>2</sup> with coordinates of 12<sup>o</sup> 15'N 7<sup>o</sup> 30'E and had population of 5,801,584 according to 2006 population census (Wikipedia, 2020). There are 34 LGA in the state and three agricultural zones in the state and has a lot ruminant farming activities. A Two-stage sampling method was used for this study. In the first stage, a cattle market was purposively selected from each of the three agricultural zones in the state namely: Maiadua livestock market from Ajiwa zone, Charanchi livestock market from Dutsin-Ma zone and Sheme livestock market in Funtua zone. The purposive selection of these markets from the zones was predicated on the volume of livestock trade that takes place in each. Livestock markets were used because it further boosted the confidence of the respondents on anonymity since they were to answer sensitive questions on banditry attack. Meeting them in the markets rather than their homes/settlements made them to shed the fear that their answers might lead to attacks. From each market, a random sample of twenty livestock was taken from each market to get a total of sixty respondents. Well-structured questionnaires were administered to the respondents with the aid of trained enumerators. However, due to some challenges bothering on the sensitivity of the study, some of the questionnaires administered had some missing vital information. Only forty-four respondents that gave complete information were used for the study. Descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used to analyze the information elicited from the respondents using SPSS version 20 and MS-Excel (2013).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Effect of Banditry on some Social Status variables of Ruminant farmers**

A stable socio-status variables of households is necessary for productivity. This type of stability thrives in an atmosphere of peace. No doubt, banditry have a negative toll on the socio-status lives of the victims. The results in Table 1 presents the effects of banditry on the socio-status variables of the ruminant animal farmers in the study area. Not less than 56% of the respondents reported to have suffered significant reduction in their flock size. For some of the farmers, their animals (especially cattle) give them prestige and a high social status in the community. For these victims, these benefits of large flock size have been eroded and consequently their financial and socio status. Furthermore, 49%, 22% and 13% of the respondents have suffered income reduction, loss of relations and forceful relocation respectively. Some of these farmers have lost income to payment of ransom as well as the loss of dear ones. Those who have relocated forcefully now have to live in smaller buildings that are demeaning to them. All these have had a toll on the health status of some of the respondents. This finding confirms the report of Ladan and Matawali (2020) that banditry in Katsina state has led to loss of lives, loss of animals, burning of storage facilities, kidnappings and blockage of trade routes across the state.

### **Effect of banditry on the living standard of the ruminant farmers**

The living standard of a household is a reflection of how well they are doing. As a result of banditry, some households have experienced drastic negative change in some things they have always enjoyed. All the respondents that have been attacked before confessed that banditry has affected their income generation and children education. Majority (97%) alluded to the fact that banditry has affected their food consumption and 52% said that the varieties of food they consume has been affected. These are signals to the impoverished standard of

living of the respondents. Most parents are now reluctant to release their children to school or study because of incessant attacks on the schools. This is affecting the quality of education among the children of ruminant animal producers. According to Assessment Capacities Project (2020), banditry attacks of late have been targeted at education facilities in the northern part of the country. For instance, on February 17th, armed men attacked the Government Science College in Kagara, Niger state, and abducted over 40 people, including students. Following the attack, Niger state authorities ordered the temporary closure of all boarding schools in other local government areas for security reasons.

**Table 1: Effect of banditry on some social status variables of ruminant farmers**

Socio Economic Variables	**Frequency	*Percentages
Income Reduction	11	49
Reduction in flock size	13	56
Indebtedness	2	9
Forceful Relocation	3	13
Loss of Relations	5	22

\*\* Computation was based on only 23 of the 44 respondents that have been attacked

\*Multiple responses were allowed

Both the quantity and quality of food consumption also reflects their standard of living. This is in line with the report of Ladan and Matawali (2020) that the activities of bandits in Katsina state has affected food security negatively. Since income has been affected, standard of living definitely will reduce, this also concurs with Ladan and Matawali (2020) that since the people in Katsina state are primarily agrarians, bandit affects their income and by implication, their standard of living.

**Table 2: Effect of banditry on the living standard of ruminant farmers**

Variables	Frequency	Percentages
Income Generation	23	100
Children Education	23	100
Food Consumption	22	97
Food varieties	12	52
Health status	4	17

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study concludes that banditry has affected standard of living and the social status of ruminant farmers in Katsina state and therefore, recommends that the Government should put more effort in securing the lives and properties of farmers in the state. Community leaders should be helped with good knowledge of surveillance so that spies in communities can quickly be searched out and properly interrogated by relevant authorities. Similarly, the entire constant training on security and safety tips should constantly be carried out especially in rural communities where more of these attacks have taken place. Finally, relevant national and Non-Governmental Agencies should help the affected communities and households to cushion the effects of banditry attacks they have suffered.

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