Role of Public Relation Strategies as a Tool for Solving Farmers-Herders Conflicts in Selected Local Governments Area of Adamawa State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of Public Relations Strategies in mediating the farmers-herders conflict in selected Local Governments area of Adamawa State, Nigeria. Data was collected through focal group discussion and a survey-based questionnaire administered to a sample of 316 respondents drawn from the three selected Local Governments which includes Mubi-North from the Northern Senatorial Zone, Hong from Central Senatorial Zone and Numan from the Southern Senatorial Zone. The findings revealed that the Public Relations Strategies have a considerable impact on resolving the farmers-herders conflict. Specifically, it was found that the use of Public Relations Strategies helps to foster trust and understanding between herders and farmers, encourages open dialogue, and provides a platform for the swift resolution of disputes. On the basis of the findings, it is recommended that the government and relevant stakeholders should encourage the use of Public Relations Strategies in resolving the farmers-herders conflict, rather than resorting to the use of force. Further research should also be conducted on the impact of Public Relations Strategies in resolving conflicts in other parts of Adamawa State and across the country Nigeria.
Keywords: Farmer Herder, Public Relation Strategies, Conflict, Dispute and Mediation

INTRODUCTION

The recent increasing threat posed by farmer-herder clashes in most parts of Nigeria today, is threaten the fabrics of the fundamental human rights to live, work and the freedom to own property. This is as a result of incidents of killing, robbery, rape, maiming, cattle rustling and kidnapping by the farmers and herdsmen [1]. Their activities have caused pains and losses to their victims based on the recent happenings which were revealed by facts on ground in most parts of the country. "The activities of these herdsmen have also caused agony to their host communities. There was anger and condemnation expressed across the country as a result of the killing occasioned by famers/herdsmen conflicts, [2]. The activities of farmers and herders in Nigeria have caused more harm than good. The killings, maiming, rape and wanton destruction of properties of populace are living testimonies that cohabitation and peaceful existence among herdsmen and their host communities cannot easily be achieved, unless government/national, its agencies and other appropriate authorities intervene very seriously on this burning issue. Herdsmen have caused agony to most farmers and rural dwellers who are victims of such menace meted out by the herdsmen [3]. In the past, the movement of herdsmen's was seen as a means of increasing the economy of the country because the income made from the sales of their cattle's and other animals increased the internally generated revenue of that area. Today, these herdsmen have been seen as a problem due to their actions or inaction which government needs to have a thorough investigation and

proffer a lasting solution to the problem for the country. It has become very imperative to use Public Relations Strategies in the management of the conflicts between the Fulani Herdsmen and the farmers in selected Local Governments s of Adamawa State. Public Relations Strategies will make both the conflicting party to know that they are causing havoc to human existence. It will make them to understand that it is morally and constitutionally wrong to attack each other rather they should compensate each other where necessary. Public Relations Strategies will make the parties to understand the need for co-operation and co-existence. More so, it will make them know that it is not good to be barbaric and wicked in their interaction. They will also understand that it is against the law of nature to engage in bloodshed of innocent citizens. Public Relations Strategies will help to bring everlasting peace between Herdsmen and the farmers in Adamawa State and Nigeria. The study examines the role of Public Relations Strategies as a tool for resolving Farmers/Herders in some selected LGAs of Adamawa State.Dispute, generally is a reality of public relations. Disputes at any level arise from divergences of interests, desires, goals and values aspirations in the competition for resources to meet imposing demands on social life in a defined socio-physical environment [4]. As a matter of fact, Man in a socio-physical environment lives in continuous process of dependence and interdependence which often produces contradictions and conflicts more especially in a multi-ethnic society. Farmers/herders disputes constitute one of the major recurring communal crisis problems bedevilling the socio-political landscape of Nigeria. In every human co-habitation, there is a likelihood of personal likes and dislikes. The interrelationship of people in a particular environment leads to friction which is brought about by personal interests, greed and insatiability of which man is noted for [5]. The need for harmonious co-existence is a necessity because man must relate with fellow man since no man is an island.Public relation is the task of goodwill creation directed at building harmony between an organization and its environment through mutual understanding based on truth and full information. "It is the deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organization and its public" [6]. In Nigeria, Farmers/Herders is prevalent in many parts of the country. This necessitates the need for strategies aimed at winning the co-operations of people through implementation of programs of action which will serve the public interest. Accordingly, the function of Public Relations Strategies is directed towards developing and encouraging attitudes and behaviour, which will nurture the seeds of mutual understanding and assist their strong and healthy growth. In Madagali Local Governments of Adamawa State, there exist confrontations between inhabitants within communities and Herders across communities and this engender disharmony among some   residents culminating in insecurity problems in Adamawa State. The violent conflict between residents and herders in the State have been manifesting in form of bloody clashes (attacks and counter attacks). These bloody attacks and counter attacks have created social or relational implications and economic adverse effects such as loss of human lives, displacement of people from their homes and low rate of socio-economic activities. There has been reported case of conflicts between Herdsmen and farmers arising from open grazing by cattle of Herdsmen. Since then much damages have been done to human life, agriculture and different forms of human endeavors in Adamawa State and Nigeria at large. This wanton destruction of lives and property by the herdsmen under the guise of open grazing has resulted to death tolls. Other negative effects of this menace arising from these conflict among others include rape, intimidation, destruction of native vegetation, damage of soils and stream banks, damage of farm lands and agricultural products, contamination of waterways with fecal wastes and a lot more. These constant attacks of Herdsmen have generated serious tensions and conflicts between the herdsmen and the farmers in Adamawa State. This situation has created social insecurity and disunity. The reported cases of this Herdsmen is nationwide that some States of the federation such as Benue State, Ekiti, Taraba etc. have enacted laws against open grazing. The activities of Herdsmen in Nigeria have attracted both national and international attention and therefore should be seriously checked before it becomes much uncontrollable. This study therefore examines the role of Public Relations Strategies in the management of Herdsmen/Farmers conflicts arising from open grazing in Adamawa State so as to ensure peaceful atmosphere and healthy living for all and sundry in the Adamawa State and Nigeria in general.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to examine the role of Public Relations Strategies as a tool for solving Farmer/Herder conflicts arising from open grazing in Adamawa State. The specific objectives include:

ii.   To identify how the use of Public Relations Strategies can be used to manage Herdsmen/Farmers conflict in some selected LGAs of Adamawa State.

iii.   To describe the consequences of lack of the use of Public Relations Strategies to resolving Herdsmen/Farmers conflict in selected LGAs of Adamawa State.

iv.   To determine whether the use of Public Relations Strategies in Adamawa State will enhance resolution between the Herdsmen and the Farmers in some   selected LGAs of Adamawa State.

v.   To suggest possible solutions on how Public Relations Strategies can be used in solving the problems between Herdsmen and Farmers in some selected LGAs of Adamawa State.

Significance of the Study

The outcome of this study would be used to prevent the incessant attacks by herdsmen on their host communities

in Adamawa State. It can also be used as a tool for peaceful cohabitation, prevention of loss of lives and property caused by the herdsmen in Adamawa State. The researcher believes that, the outcome of this study will be of great advantage to a number of people. Amongst the benefits and beneficiaries of this study are rural dwellers, related governments agencies in the country. The study can also acts as a deterrent to both herdsmen and the indigenes who may wish to cause social misunderstanding or disorder in Adamawa State because; it will help them to understand how to cohabit peacefully, irrespective of their socio-political and religious backgrounds. This study is equally significant because of the contributions it will make to the field of knowledge. With the information arising from this study, organizations (Local Government Areas) would appreciate the implications of Public Relations inputs in the growth and development of the revenue base of local governments. Furthermore, the study will be of importance to security agencies in discharging their primary mandate professionally. Finally, this study can generate information that can be useful to non-governmental organizations in their bid to engender communal peace and also to consultants who have special interest in Local Governments Public Relations.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study examines the role of Public Relations Strategies as a tool for resolving Farmers/Herders conflict in Nigeria within the scope of 2023-2024 covering Mubi North, Hong and Numan Local Governments Area of Adamawa State. These areas were randomly selected through the hat-draw fish bowl method. Due to lack of adequate funds and accessibility to some classified data for the study and time constraints made, the timely access to some information are difficult and so, data for the work was limited. Because of the rural nature of the study area, many respondents could not adequately respond to our research questionnaire and interview for fear of been subjugated to unnecessary embarrassment which served as the challenges and limitation of this study which I was able to overcome. However, none of these in any way affect the substance of this study

Concept of Public Relations

Although, Public Relations Strategies is described, explained and defined in so many ways. However, the researcher shall make effort to examine some of them. The Institute of Public Relations Strategies in Great Britain, defines it as the deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organization and its publics. In other words, Public Relations Strategies is sound human relations geared towards the elimination of misunderstanding and chaos between individuals and bodies whose lives touch one another, in one way or the other. Also, the International Public Relations Strategies association (IPRA), defines Public Relations Strategies as the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organization leaders and implementing planned programmes of action which will serve the public interest. Research and evaluation are paramount in public relations. As such, the Public Relations Strategies executive should engage in trends survey and analysis and from the results, advises the organization's leaders and plan programmes that will serve public interest. Furthermore, (http://www/conflictdynamics.org), define Public Relations Strategies as the management function that identifies, establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the various publics on whom its success or failure depends. The researcher believes that the above definitions are synonymous with maintaining a sustainable two way communication between an organization and its publics. It also shows that, in today's management style, Public Relations Strategies have transcended the lower level of the official hierarchy to the top, thus, becoming the responsibility of the management. Public Relation is one of the most difficult concepts to define. The reason for this is not farfetched. This is because it seems so easy to understand and yet, quite difficult to describe in practical terms. Two of these definitions which [7], described as "standard" include one which was initially produced by Public Relations news, slightly modified by John Morton which goes thus:

> *"Public Relations Strategies is the management function which evaluates Public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an organization with the Public interest and executes a programme of action and communication to earn public understanding and acceptance".*

The second is the Statement of Mexico which goes thus:

> *"Public Relations Strategies are the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organizational leaders, and implementing planned programme of action which will serve both the organization and public interest".*

Implicit in the above definitions is the fact that, though they tend to differ in their stress of some functions of Public Relations that has to do with maintaining mutual understanding between an organization and its public.

Concept of Conflict

Although it emerges in various environments and levels, conflict in its general meaning could be defined as a difficulty encountered by an individual or a group in the process of choosing an option and disruption in decision making mechanisms as a consequence [8]. In addition to this, although it arises from individual differences in general, conflict may also originate from the issues such as codependency of jobs, differences in definitions of jobs, duties and organizational structures. As regards, conflict may also be defined as a dispute between two or

more organization members or groups as a consequence of the need to work in positions that require functional codependency and that differ in status, purpose, value or perception [9]. When considered as a process, the sub stages that may be drawn from the definitions concerning the concept of conflict are listed as in the following sequence [10]:

- The presence of incompatible or opposite interests between individuals or groups,
- Diagnosis of these oppositions by the parties involved,
- The belief by both parties that the other is obstructing and disrupting their interests,
- Action taken by both parties with the aim of obstructing or disrupting the other's work.

Wherever there is human factor as a social input, arguments and conflicts among individuals are inevitable as a consequence of individual differences especially in today's environment of intense globalization and competition [11]. Everybody may adopt and defend different feelings, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, preferences, etc. depending on individual differences. These differences are one of the important factors constituting the source of conflicts [12]. According to Nicholas [13], conflict is a situation where two people or groups wish to carry out acts which are mutually incompatible. Everybody has his or her own mind over issues, such that to accept anybody else's opinion becomes very difficult. Conflict in simple terms means a State of disagreement, controversy or opposition. It could also mean the existence of a prolonged battle, struggle or clash between two or more parties [14]. Conflict according to [15] is a situation in which people, groups or countries are involved in serious disagreement. It is also a situation in which there are opposing ideas, opinions, feelings or wishes; a situation in which it is difficult to decide either way because the options are mutually exclusive. [4], defined conflict as a struggle over values or claims to status, power and scarce resources, in which the aims of the conflicting parties are not only to gain a desired value and positions but to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals. According to [16], conflict is an overt struggle between individuals or groups; when tension or stress is involved and develops; when the satisfaction of specific needs is thwarted by equally attractive or unattractive desires. [4], added that conflict is a situation where the disputants are hostile to each other in order to achieve a set goal. In the process of the struggles the organizations may be destabilized and these struggles are regulated by a hierarchy of human needs, selfishness, possessiveness, greed, as well as sociological, political, cultural, psychological, religious motives, students' genuine and selfish demands. Conflict therefore, is an act of disarray, a situation where there is disorganization, discord, instability, open quarrel and no peace for the people involved. Conflict destabilizes organizations.

Communal Conflict

[17], in his definition of communal conflict, underscored the importance of components like place, interaction and subsistence which provides an insight into the dynamics of communal life. For instance, people inhabit a geographic area, and work together in turn which provide opportunity for interaction, which engender conflict. Importantly, even the ubiquity of modern communication technology has not replaced the fundamental relationship between propinquity and interaction. In this regard, [18], notes that conflicts in any social system (society), result from differences in perception, limited resources, role conflicts, inequitable treatment, violation of territory etc. Communal conflicts arise over the production and consumption of goods, socialization, social control, and social participation [19]. Communal conflicts are therefore products of social relations. Communal conflicts are threat or action of one party directed at territory – rights, interests or privileges – of another party, because of differences over economic issues, power or authority, cultural values and beliefs [20]. It has been posited in the literature that most communal conflicts are mainly economic issues of which land constitute about 90% [4]. The thesis then is "if community is place where people interact to meet their daily needs, then communal conflict takes place within a geographical area and relates to peoples' interaction. From the foregoing, there are salient, impinging critical variables that can be isolated. Importantly, conflicts are system driven at both social and physical levels. In other words, pluralism and divergences are fundamental to the development of conflict. But violent conflict inherent in the organization and community deserve study as it can be functional and dysfunctional to the goal of development and so should be properly managed. Communal conflicts constitute one of the major recurring problems bedeviling the sociopolitical landscape of Africa. To be sure, communal conflicts are not new, particularly in socio-cultural complex societies defined by a high number of ethnic nationalities and language groups such as Nigeria. Pre-colonial and colonial Nigeria experienced inter-kingdom dynastic feuds, and inter-community conflicts [21]. Many contemporary Nigeria communities have experienced several cases of communal conflicts. Some of the notable examples include the Zango-Kataf conflict in Kaduna State (1999-2001); Tiv-Jukun Wukari conflict in Taraba State (1999-2001); Itsekiri-Urhobo Warri crisis, (1999-2000); Yelwa-Shendam conflict (2003- 2005), Mangu-Bokoss crisis (1988-1999), the Ife-Modakeke crisis (1999-2000) [22-24]. One of the common features of these conflicts has to do with their confrontational and violent dimension which led to the loss of lives and property of people who hitherto lived together in relative harmony.

Dispute Resolution

According to [22], dispute resolution is the art of appropriate intervention to achieve political settlements,

particularly by those powerful actors having the power and resources to bring pressure on the conflicting parties in order to induce them to settle. It is also the art of designing appropriate institutions to guide the inevitable conflicts into appropriate channels. According to [23], dispute resolution is "process that requires the services of the warring parties or a third person-the third party may be an individual, a national or international institution". [24], see conflict management as the positive and constructive handling of differences and divergence. It addresses the more realistic question of managing conflict such as, how to deal with it in a constructive way, how to bring a practical, achievable, cooperative system for the constructive management of differences. The term dispute resolution is more extensive than the term conflict resolution. In other words, conflict resolution expresses reconciliation of conflict while conflict management includes both reconciliation of conflict and directing destructive conflicts towards constructive results. Conflict management may be expressed as a process that involves stages of diagnosing the conflict, determining its intensity, defining appropriate intervention methods through an evaluation of this intensity with regard to its effects and monitoring its result [25]. The success of organization in conflict management is indicative of an organizational structure that enables constructive interaction between individuals and groups. In such organizations, majority of employees consist of individuals who are adequately knowledgeable, experienced and ready to accept different standards of judgment. Individuals show a genuine, honest and determined attitude in an attempt to find a solution for the conflict by virtue of trust between the members of organization, by loyalty to the work group and organization and motivation for cooperation. There is a prominent inclination to find a constructive solution rather than carrying on the conflict. The solutions found are often quite creative and are better than the resolution proposed by the conflicting parties [26].

Early Warning System of Dispute Resolution

A system is seen as structured elements organized in terms of specific functionality. Strategically, an early warning capacity is the management integration of expert local knowledge with existing specialized systems and processes of emergency management service. Emergency management stakeholders assess the functionality and integration of these systems and processes for fitness of purpose relative to a specific hazard. An early warning capability provides for preparedness, response and mitigation mechanism needed to deal with emergency needs. Early warning emphasizes the need to improve and optimize not only the science and technology, and human capability in the entire range of interactions that support emergency management. It is the conscious social attempt to use science and technology to accurately detect, interpret and report a hazard event at the earliest possible moment [27]. The community and emergency managers need communication technology infrastructure that integrates traditional methods of communication to relay and transmit emergency information to every community, person at risk and risk managers.

Early warning was primarily to alert relief agencies of impending humanitarian crises to allow for contingency planning and ensure the timely provision of adequate food, shelter and medication. As a form of conflict management, its application is to keep a close watch over the activities that could lead to conflict (pre-conflict) situations, those that could escalate an existing conflict (on-going conflict) and also to monitor activities during and after ceasefire (post-conflict). The activities being monitored are those of the group that make up the society and those involved in the conflict in question. "It is a network of sensing devices such as a satellites or radar, for detecting an enemy attack in time, to take defensive or counter-offensive measures" [28]. It could also take the form of observer mission. This entails the use of military personnel, civilian police and indigenes that make up that society. The concept of EWS comprises the following: Collection of information using specific indicators.

- Analysis of information-attaching meaning to indicators, setting it into context and recognizing crisis development.
- Formulation of best- and worst-case scenarios and response options.
- Communication to decision makers and the targets [6].

The Role of Public Relations Strategies in Dispute Resolution

[29], asserts that Public Relations Strategies is about people, about communication, planned communication. It is about identifying and fulfilling the needs of the public so as to have mutually beneficial relationship with elements in these publics. In other words, Public Relations Strategies entails effective utilization of planned communication to get the consent, support, cooperation of the public and thus, influence their behavior and attitude to a desired point. However, [26], notes that, "in the process of communication, conflict may be generated." Hence, human conflicts are situations of discord and disharmony, discontent and disillusionment and of dissatisfaction and of dissatisfaction and brought about by communication interaction [11]. This is why [30], opines that: Communication has a causal relationship with accepted solutions to conflicting issue(s). In his contribution to the role of Public Relations Strategies in conflict management, [14], opines that: Specifically, the role of Public Relations Strategies in conflict management requires the adoption of a sharp focused and concerted effort comprising: planning a strategy, an action plan. The key lies in first defining the problem clearly, with all seriousness and then, fix clear cut objectives that need to be med and be achieved by communication with the target publics. As earlier mentioned, Public Relations Strategies activities are always

planned. There is no fire brigade approach in dealings with Public Relations Strategies public. Public Relations Strategies activities have to be effectively, planned in order to ensure productive result and to enable the impact of the activity, adequately felt their target publics. To this end, the Public Relations Strategies input in conflict management is for the practitioner or whoever that is concerned to adopt the Public Relations Strategies process model.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution is often confused with the term conflict resolved. Conflict resolution is primarily not conflict resolved, but agenda setting on peace principles. It is defined by Heitler as "the attainment of a solution that satisfies the requirement of all the seemingly conflicting forces and thereby, produces a feeling for all participants". [12], defines conflict resolution as a situation where the conflicting parties enter into an agreement that solves their central incompatibilities, accept each other's continued existence as parties and cease all violent acts against each other. It is essentially aimed at intervention to change or facilitate the course of a conflict. According to [14] conflict resolution serves three purposes namely: minimization of chances of destructive conflicts, stabilization of cessation of destructive conflicts so as to prevent escalation, and prevention of outbreak of a full-blown conflict done by uprooting the basic reasons for the conflict.

According to [5], a "cooperative process of conflict resolution must entail the following:

a)   The Positions: These should be made known. These are the initial Statements of the warring parties as regards to what they want and are saying.

b)   Explore Underlying Concerns: These are the concerns of the parties. These interests are lying behind the initial positions made known and act as stepping stones to addressing the issues at stake.

c)   Joint-Problem Solving: this should be practical in the true sense of it. It involves selecting mutual satisfying solutions. This is when the two warring parties cooperatively explore their underlying concerns and work out ways of attaining a resolution. According to Heitler, the exploration of their underlying concerns and interests often disclosed that conflict actually involves concerns and complementary. The solutions should equally complement each other's needs irrespective of their incompatibility.

Conflict resolution can be both formal and informal. Also, it can either aim at resolving to terminating conflicts in an open and predictable process in accordance with legal principles or focus on efforts to increase cooperation among the parties to a conflict and deepen their relationship by addressing the conditions that led to the dispute, fostering positive attitudes and allying distrust through reconciliation initiatives, and building or strengthening the institutions and processes through which the parties interact. Conflict resolution tends to emphasize intervention by skilled but powerless third parties working unofficially with parties to foster new thinking and new relationships. It is important to note that there is no ready-made conflict resolution for every conflict. It differs from one conflict case to the other. However, through exhibiting various styles and approaches, conflicts can be handled. It is a process that requires more of a cooperative, dialoguing and joint problem-solving process. In all of these, it is important to note that, the essence of conflict resolution is to uproot the major cause of the conflict in question.

The presence of incompatible or opposite interests between individuals or groups,

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- Analysis of information-attaching meaning to indicators, setting it into context and recognizing crisis development.
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- Communication to decision makers and the targets [14].

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that is adopted for the study is the general system theory because of its suitability and relevance to the objectives of the study, The general system theory also inform our discussion on the role of Public Relations Strategies in the resolution of communal conflicts in Some selected LGAs is the general systems theory, the two-way symmetric model and Melvin Sharpe's behavioural model.

General System Theory

The scholar most associated with this theory is [32] "sees the political system as a set of interrelated and reciprocally regulated patterns of actions and orientation, pattern that cluster together in equilibrium and that have certain needs of maintenance and survival. It is a phenomenon of whatever type, including physical, biological, social, political, etc., which is an organized whole with identifiable, interrelated structures delineating it from the environment (supra system) in which it is located and with which it interacts, processing the inputs from it into outputs for it. The general systems theory seeks to argue that every system, including political system, has subsystems which make up the entire system. They are assigned functions and provided with enabling empowerment, including resources, appropriate authority, etc. to enable them discharge their responsibilities optimally [33]. Where this is the case, there is said to be homeostasis (stability) in the political system. On the other hand, instability reigns in the political system where the contrary is the case and the subsystems and entire system are also unable to function optimally. Input and output analysis of a political system is very important. A political system is said to obtain its inputs (demands, supports, liberty or autonomy, cooperation, criticisms, resources, information, direct labour, etc.) from the environment. These inputs are what the subsystems employ to discharge their responsibilities, so that the political system can send out its outputs into the environment and obtain further inputs for its operations.

Empirical Literature Review

[33], in a study titled Public Relations Strategies and the administration of Jos North Local Governments, Plateau State, Nigeria The study set out to critically examine the place of Public Relations Strategies in the administration of Local Governments s in plateau State, with Jos North Local Governments as an area of study. The study examines the extent to which Public Relations Strategies is used to manage the Local Governments, which has been riddled with one form of crisis or the other, in the last ten years. In addition, the paper examines the factors which impede the effective practice of Public Relations Strategies in Jos North Local Governments and also, the Public Relations Strategies that can be used to effectively manage the crisis in Jos. The survey research method was adopted and the questionnaire was used as instrument of data collection. One hundred (100) copies of questionnaire were administered to the sampled population. Findings show that, although the Local Governments endeavours to inform the people about its policies and programmes, the information provided, is done on an occasional basis. Findings show that there is a general dissatisfaction with Public Relations Strategies practice in Jos North Local Governments. Based on the findings, the paper concludes that the extent to which Jos North Local Governments recognizes and makes use of Public Relations Strategies is little. On the basis of the findings and conclusion, the study, among others recommended that, Local Governments in Nigeria should evolve Public Relations Strategies policies, which will serve as guides towards their attainment of Public Relations Strategies objectives

METHODOLOGY

This section includes the study design, techniques, and models used for estimating the specified objective. Data sources, measurement, and descriptive statistics for the objective already defined is also presented and discussed accordingly to find policy implications in the subsequent section. Also, before starting the techniques and model that were used for estimating the objective of the study, the model adopted for the primary investigation is also stated. Moreover, this section gives a brief definition and explanation of some concepts that are useful in understanding the result of the analysis. In this regard, the study considered the use of Survey research design for the study. It is an investigation in which sample of the population is selected such that the sample is representative of the whole population. Information gather must be able to be generalized to the whole population and thus survey research is useful for development and planning purpose.

Population of the Study

The three, (3) selected LGA of Adamawa State has a projected population of 260,312 (National Population Census, 2006) but the study examines the perception of the staff of three Local Governments s on the role of Public Relations Strategies in resolving Farmers/Herders in selected Local Governments s. The staff of the selected LGAs of Adamawa State was form the population of the study. The three selected Local Governments Areas have staff strength of approximately one thousand five hundred (1500). This forms the population of the study and simple random method of sampling has been adopted in the selection of the three (3) Local Government Areas

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

Simple Random Sampling Techniques was adopted in which the hard draw fish bowl simple sampling techniques was used for the study. In this method of drawing a sample the names of the Local Governments per zone was written on a paper and put inside a bowl which was shuffled and one piece of paper was selected which represent the zone for the study. It is a scientific method involving in the selection of sample for generalization from an ordered sampling frame. Using this procedure each element in the population has a known and equal probability of selection and its bias free.

In determining the sample size for the study, Yamani (1964) formula for determining sample size for study is been adopted for this study. However, the populations of selected LGAs staff are 1500.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+ N (e)^2}$$

Where n = Sample size
   N = Population
   I = Constant factor
   e2 = Level of significance (0.05).
   n = $\frac{1500}{1+ 1500 (0.05)^2}$
   n = $\frac{1500}{1 + 3.75}$
   n = $\frac{1500}{4.75}$
   n = 315.8
Sample size = 316

Method of Data Presentation and Analysis

The data collected for the study are here under presented. Out of 389 questionnaires distributed, 316 were returned and used in the data presentation. The data was organized, arranged and presented in such a manner that they provide answers to the research problems. The data collected were subjected to statistical manipulation using the frequency distribution system in tables and simple percentage. Chi-square (x2) was further used for the test of hypotheses. The test of hypotheses necessitated the use of Chi-square (x2) as earlier Stated.

Chi – square formula
$$X2 = \frac{\sum (fo-fe)2}{DF}$$

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Under this chapter results are presented out of the data analysis carried out on the dataset collected from the field using the research instrument (i.e. the questionnaire). First, summary of statistics on the respondents' demographic biodata, describing same using frequencies and percentages depicting their distribution within the sample taken are presented. The estimate of the reliability index for the research instrument using the Cronbach's alpha index is shown and the rates of return of the administered questionnaire by the respondents were discussed. Similarly, some inferential statistics were presented based on the research questions and the study hypotheses; discussions of findings are made and then some inferences and conclusions are drawn relative to the study outcomes.

Table 1: Rates of returned by the three selected LGA of Adamawa State
Rate of Returns

S/N	Local Governments Areas	Respondents
1	Mubi North	124
2	Numan	98
3	Hong	94
	Total	316

Source: Field Survey 2024

Overall, out of the three hundred and eighty nine (389) questionnaires administered to the study area, a total of three hundred and sixteen (316) questionnaires were duly filled and returned which makes up an 81% return rate out of the total and a 19% (73) non-response rate. The table shows the return rate per Local Governments are with Hong Local Governments having the highest with 94.9% return rate, while Numan Local Governments has the least with 87.7% return rate. This turnout is largely aided by the use of trained research assistants who ensured a high retrieval of the filled questionnaires as indicated in table 1:

Table 2: Administration of Instrument to Respondents in three (3) LGA in Adamawa State

S\N	LGA	SP	RR	% RR
1	Mubi North	150	124	83
2	Numan	120	98	87
3	Hong	119	94	94
	Total	389	316	81

Source: Researcher, 2024
Note
Key:
SP = Sampled Population
RR = Rate of Return

Presentation of the Results of Study

Here are results presented to address the various research study objectives along with the discussion of findings from the respective data analysis.

Table 3: Is Open grazing the cause of farmer-herder conflict?

Respondents	Frequency	Percentages
SA	203	64%
A	109	34.8%
U	0	0%
D	003	0.9%
SD	001	0.3%
Total	316	100%

Source: Field Survey 2024

From table: 3 shows 203 respondents with 64% percent, strongly agreed that open gracing is the cause of farmer-herder conflict, while 34% percent making 109 respondents agreed that open gracing is the cause of farmer-herder conflict in their area and 0nly negligible percentages of 0.9% and 0.3% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed to the Statement if open gracing is the cause of farmer-herder conflict in their area.

Table 4: Consequences of farmer herder conflict?

Respondents	Frequency	Percentages
Wanton destruction of lives and crops	316	100%
Protection of lives and crops	0	0%
Total	316	100%

Source: Field data 2024

From table 4 shows 316 respondents with 100% percent, strongly agreed that Wanton destruction of lives and crops are the consequences of farmer-Herder conflict while 0% percent and zero (0) of the respondents do believe Protection of lives and crops are not the consequences of farmer herder conflict?

Table 5: Application of PR strategies brings everlasting peace between farmers and herders in Adamawa State?

Respondents	Frequency	Percentages
Possible	280	88.6%
Not possible	36	11.4%
Total	316	100%

Source: Field data 2024

Table 5, present on the possible application of PR strategies in bring everlasting peace between farmers and herders in Adamawa State, where 280 of the respondents believe that application of PR strategies can bring everlasting peace between farmers and herders in Adamawa State while only 36 respondents believed otherwise

Table 6: Governments make adequate efforts to mitigate the recurring of the conflicts?

Respondents	Frequency	Percentages
Govt. made adequate effort	165	52.22%
Govt. did not make effort	146	46.20%
No idea	05	1.58%
Total	316	100%

Source: Field data 2024

Table 6 above shows that 165 respondents agreed that Governments make adequate efforts to mitigate the recurring of the conflicts between the farmers-Herders in their area while 146 which makes 46.20% says Governments didn't make efforts to mitigate the recurring of the conflicts and only 5/1.58% says they don't have any idea   about the Statement, the implication here was no intensive awareness of the Governments making adequate efforts to mitigate the recurring of the conflicts between the farmers-Herders in their area, because almost half of the respondents are not aware if such happened.

Table 7: The Role of Public Relations Strategies can be used in resolving conflict in some selected LGAs of Adamawa State?

Respondents	Frequency	Percentages
SA	202	63.9%
A	110	34.8%
U	0	0%
D	003	0.9%
SD	001	0.3%
Total	316	100%

Source: Field data 2024

Data presented from table 7 indicate that 312 respondents representing 98.8% were of the opinion that open Public Relations Strategies can be used to solve conflicts between the Herdsmen and the farmers in Adamawa State. However, 4 respondents representing 1.2% had contrary view.

Table 8: Negotiation is used in managing farmers/herder conflict?

Respondents	Frequency	Percentages
SA	205	64.8%
A	075	23.7%
D	020	6.3%
SD	016	5.1%
Total	316	100%

Source: Field data 2024

The 8 indicates, strongly agreed to the assertion that Negotiation be used in managing farmers/herder conflict with frequency of 205 and 64.8%, 75 respondents making 23% agreed that Negotiation be used in managing farmers/herder conflict, while 20 respondents making 6.3% and 16 respondents with 5.1% percent disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively to the Statement that Negotiation can be used in managing farmers/herder conflict.

Table 9: is conciliation an option in managing farmers/herder conflict?

Respondents	Frequency	Percentages
SA	225	71%
A	065	21%
U	0	0%
D	015	5%
SD	011	3%
Total	316	100%

Source: Field data 2024

The table 9, indicates, strongly agreed to the assertion that conciliation be used in managing farmers/herder conflict with frequency of 225 and 71%, 65 respondents making 21% agreed that conciliation be used in managing farmers/herder conflict, while 15 respondents making 5% and 11 respondents with 3% percent disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively to the Statement that conciliation can be used in managing farmers/herder conflict

Table 10: Mediation as an option for managing farmers/herder conflict?

Respondents	Frequency	Percentages
SA	198	63%
A	094	30%
U	0	0%
D	013	4%
SD	011	3%
Total	316	100%

Source: Field data 2024

The Table 10: above indicates, strongly agreed to the assertion that Mediation be used in managing farmers/herder conflict with frequency of 198 and 63%, 94 respondents making 30% agreed that Mediation be used in managing farmers/herder conflict, while 13 respondents making 4% and 11 respondents with 3% percent disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively to the Statement that Mediation can be used in managing farmers/herder conflict

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The major findings of this study have been summarized below.

(i)   Public Relations Strategies have a considerable impact on resolving the farmers-herders conflict. Specifically, It was found that the use of Public Relations Strategies helps to foster trust and understanding between herders and farmers

(ii)   That Public Relations Strategies encourage open dialogue, and provides a platform for the swift resolution of disputes.

(iii)   Evident from research data shows that open grazing of cattle is the major cause of the conflicts between the Herdsmen and the farmers in Adamawa State.

(iv)   Open grazing makes it too difficult to control the movement and grazing of cattle.

(v)   Research data indicates that Public Relations Strategies could be used in the management of conflicts arising from open grazing between the Herdsmen and farmers in Adamawa State. It was empirical proved that Public Relations Strategies are powerful tools in conflict management.

(vi)   Also evidence from research data shows that the consequences of the conflicts between the Herdsmen and farmers are wanton destruction of lives and properties of people in Adamawa State.

That is the conflicts have resulted to death tolls of innocent citizens and losses of valuables in the State.

(vii)   It was also gathered from research data that application of Public Relations Strategies technically can bring everlasting peace between the Herdsmen and farmers.

(viii) Available research data revealed that governments did not make enough efforts to stop the recurring of the conflicts between the herdsmen and the farmers. The data presented in Table 1 made it crystal clear that open grazing is the main cause of conflicts between the Herdsmen and the farmers in Adamawa State.

SUMMARY

The consequences of the conflicts arising from open grazing are not encouraging. It resulted to death of innocent citizens. The cases reported around some selected LGAs of are very embarrassing, painful, devastating and dehumanizing. It is a total violation of human rights. The implication of this ugly trend is that the activities of the Herdsmen must be properly and adequately checked. Law should be applied so that they will be punished adequately. Otherwise, if they are left unpunished it then means that they are above the law by violating human rights through killing of human beings like rats. They also insult, intimidate and rape women with impurity. They are always armed with dangerous weapons including guns, swords, daggers etc. Public Relations Strategies should be used to bring everlasting peace between Herdsmen and farmers. Appeal and persuasion should be used to make those who psychologically suffering from fear and insecurity to relax their nerves in that regard. Government should intervene quickly to save citizens and the society form destruction and decay. Compensations should be made to the families that sustained or lost relations. Government through law enforcement agents should help to restore peace and order in Adamawa State and the country in general.

CONCLUSION

The conflict arising from open grazing between the Herdsmen and the farmers has become a recurring decimal in the contemporary day. This ugly situation has generated tensions and insecurity all over the country. The death tolls and destruction of farm crops have attracted international attention. It is also a threat to national unity. The result of the study depicted that 205 and 75 respondents representing 64.8% and 23.7% strongly agreed and agreed that application of Public Relations Strategies can bring everlasting peace between the Herdsmen and the farmers while 20 and 16 respondents representing 6.3% and 5.15 % were of the view that it cannot bring everlasting peace. Furthermore, evidence from the result of the study shows that, the conflict between farmers and herders have inflicted economic hardship to both the farmers and herders and the general public. The gain usually drive from in the agricultural value chain is no longer harness due to the rise in the conflict which was characterized by destruction of farm produce by herders and cattle rustling which restrict herders from grazing in some areas and region of the country. To sum up the above assertion, evident from the study result revealed that, the rise in farmer herder conflict in the selected LGAs of Adamawa State have led to reduction in agricultural product thereby affecting gross domestic product of the area economically.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were drowned based on the findings of the study

I.   That the government and relevant stakeholders should encourage the use of Public Relations Strategies in resolving the farmers-herders conflict, rather than resorting to the use of force

II.   The Federal Government of Nigeria must wake-up from deep slumber and take urgent action by enacting law to stop open grazing of cattle in Nigeria. Tribal sentiments should be avoided in this regard.

III. Government should adopt Public Relations Strategies in the management of conflicts between the Herdsmen and the farmers.

IV.   Government should mobilize law enforcement agents, Military and paramilitary officers and should be deployed to conflict zones to stop it from further eruption and escalation.

V.   Public Relations Strategies should be adequately applied to stop the conflicts and bring the everlasting peace between the Herdsmen and the farmers in Adamawa State and Nigeria in general.

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