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**THE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN LAND DISPUTE MANAGEMENT: A STUDY OF BAUCHI
CENTRAL SENATORIAL DISTRICT, BAUCHI STATE NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Land dispute is one of the challenges confronting the Nigerian landscape. This could be connected to the ever-increasing demand of the property by both farmers and herders in one hand and between the agricultural land users and other land users on the other. It is obvious that, the competition between land users has often turned into serious sign of conflicts and social friction in many parts of the country. The disputes have therefore demonstrated high potential to aggravate insecurity and particularly in the rural communities where most of the conflicts are localized with reverberating repercussions nationwide. This study describes the role of stakeholders in land dispute management. The study adopts qualitative research approach and case study design was employed. Both primary and secondary sources of data were utilized. Primary source has been used to obtained data through interviews, while secondary source relies on the existing literatures on the topic from books, journals, magazines and internet. The study found that although government institutions and traditional rulers listen to the land users however sometimes they tend to handle the issue of land dispute lightly. The study recommended among others; that relevant stakeholders in the management of land dispute should come together to work assiduously so that a long-lasting solution could be achieved, all local government land allocation committee decisions should be timely and fully implemented.

Keyword: Dispute Management, Land, Land Dispute, Stakeholders.

1. Introduction

Land disputes are becoming more intense and diverse around the world (Idowu, 2018). In recent times, there has been an increase in land use disputes as a result of migratory nomads and lowering access to land, which has led to an increase in communal conflicts that have arisen as a result of such disputes (Ironbor & Anam, 2018). Similarly, in Mallumje Village Misau Local Government Area more than ten (10) were killed as a result of land dispute between herders and farmers in the year 2020 (report of the administrative committee of inquiry).

For many decades, competition for land among and within different users has been a source of concern in human history. Non-agricultural users compete with agricultural users (Eromo, 2016). These contests among

land users frequently cause tensions that necessitate the attention of concerned authorities.

Most often people confuse the word actor and stakeholder to have same meaning while some scholars/writers differentiates between the two concepts Dlakwa (2014) defines actors as those whose activities have a significant impact on the design and implementation of public policy. He did, however, mention legislators, civil servants, political parties, and pressure groups as internal policy actors, whereas organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank are external actors. The description of actors by Omokhua and Okuchukwu (2018) becomes less tautological than it appears. They further posited that actors are only those who actually act.

In regards to land dispute management, actors consist of claimants (disputants), Local leaders (traditional rulers), elders, the judiciary, and surveyors are all examples of law enforcement agencies (Jahun, 2015). In Nigeria, institutions enforcing land resource governance include the Ministry of Land, Survey and Urban Development, law enforcement agencies, and the Local Government Council's Land Use and Allocation Committee (Omokhua, 2018).

Similarly, the Hand book on Local Government Administration specify that issues related to land dispute is being handled by the Local Government Peace and Security Committee which comprised of Chairman of the Local Government Council, One Nigeria Police Force Officer (DPO) representative, the Secretary to the Local Government, One State Security Service representative, One representative from the Army unit (where applicable), one representative from the Naval Unit (where applicable), one representative from the Air Force Unit (where applicable), the far more senior traditional ruler in the local government or his representative, two community leaders, one of whom must be a non-indigenous resident of the local government, two religious leaders appointed by the local government chairman, and one representative from Women Organizations (where applicable).

Blakwa (2014) asserts that, actors and stakeholders are interwoven in the policy process. In nutshell, actors are those who have a stake in policy making. And stakeholders are the target beneficiaries of the policy either directly or indirectly. Tambunan (2016) categorized stakeholders in land use management into macro and micro level. At macro level, he said the stakeholders are: government (department or agencies), company or community and individuals. While at micro level the stakeholders are many, such as builders, miners, businessmen and women, farmers, herders, and other people doing their businesses and normal life on the land.

On the other hand, in any given society government have already set up a transparent procedures to be followed in resolving land dispute or lead to a process of mitigating the occurrences of such dispute among the land users. However, it has been observed that in societies marked by interest, insecurity,

inequality, and weak institutions, such disputes may be forced through total lack of care or greedy and discriminatory policies (Mbazor, 2019).

Also, it is obvious that most communal conflicts today are the result of unresolved land disputes. According to (Mowalli, 2020), conflicts over land and other natural resources can arise from disputes within one or more communities, such as boundary disputes between community members and outsiders, boundary disputes between community members, land use disputes between community and outsiders, and land use disputes between communities. According to Okoro (2018), increased competition for limited resources has frequently led to violent conflicts among herdsman and farmers in many parts of Nigeria. In the year 2020 land dispute caused deadly attack on farmers by some group of herders killing over ten (10) at Malumje Village in Misau Local Government Area of Bauchi Central Senatorial District (administrative committee of inquiry report).

Therefore, going by the enormity of land dispute in almost all parts of Nigeria, it can be said that if proper management is not in place, it may lead to a violent conflict that will cost the state lot of resources including loss of human lives and destructions of many properties, as witnessed in the states of Benue, Taraba, Cross River, Ebonyi, Adamawa and north-central part of the country (Oladotun & Emmanuel, 2019, Ironbar & Anam, 2018, Musa, Shabu & Igbawua, 2014, Idowwu, 2017, Mbazor & Ojo, 2019, Okoro, 2018).

The continuous increase in human population all over the world, particularly rapid population growth in developing countries like Nigeria, is posing another challenge. This has undoubtedly increased the number of claims on land usage per person. Some researchers have observed that the earth's population tends to outgrow its ability to feed itself (Okoruwa et al, 2019). However, Professor Thomas Malthus (1826) first expressed this idea in his Principles of Population Growth. Malthus discovered that the population grew at a geometric rate while resources grew at an arithmetic rate. Therefore, the principle postulated that unless checked by a reduction in food supplies or some voluntary moral restraints in terms of birth control, there are tendencies for a population to outstrip food

supply; a phenomenon later dubbed the 'Malthusian population trap' by economists (Todaro & Smith, 2012). Thus, Nigeria is one of the developing countries where land disputes are becoming order of the day. According to Giver (2014), north-central Nigeria, where Benue State is located, faces many security threats, the most serious of which is the ongoing conflict between farmers and herdsman. According to Abbas (2012), the most affected Local Government areas in Bauchi State include Jama'are, Gamawa, Misau, Zaki, Darazo, Kirfi and Ganjuwa, among others. These Local Government areas witnessed serious cases of survival conflict among pastoralists and farmers, which resulted in the loss of lives and the destruction of property, as well as the emergence of insecurity due to the continued desire for retaliation.

Meanwhile, some scholars attributed the cause of conflict between land user groups in Nigeria to scarcity of grazing land (Musa, Shabu & Igbawu, 2014, Okoro, 2018, Oguntegbe, Okoruwa, Obi-Egbedi & Olagunju, 2019, Owolabi, Oladimeji, Ojeleye & Omokore, 2016, Oyama, 2014) while others see it as negligence from the part of government (Omokhoa & Okuchukwu, 2018, Gberu & Okumo, 2016, Suleman, 2019, Abbas, 2012, Oladotun & Emmanuel, 2019, Mawoli, 2020).

Meanwhile, going by the geometrical increase of the country's population, there is need for increase in the production of food to feed up the ever growing population.

For many years, the Nigerian Government Policy has been countered on the establishment of grazing reserve in the cattle producing areas. The overarching goal provides livestock owners with legal grazing rights and land title in response to increased pressure on traditional grazing lands from arable farmers as well as government agriculture projects (Eromo, 2016). In Bauchi Central Senatorial District, however, these grazing reserves have been subjected to illegal allocations and encroachment by some farmers, sometimes at the request of the local government land expert panel (Memorandum by Organization for African Child Development and Human Right Protection, 2020).

Meanwhile, from the foregoing, it is obvious that various studies have been conducted on land and associated disputes, but majority of them focuses on the impact of land disputes on community development (Ironbor & Anam, 2018, Okoro, 2018, Mbazor & Ojo, 2019, Musa, Shabu&Igbawua, 2014, Garba, 2017, Oladimeji, 2016), land resource governance and farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria (Omokhoa & Okuchukwu, 2018, Adam, 2014, Kwaja & Adelehin, 2018, Mawoli & Adamu, 2020), land dispute as related to ethno-religious conflict (Suleman, 2019), the role of institutions in land conflict management (Jahun, 2015, Osioma, 2016, Vehrman, 2017). However, few empirical researches were conducted on the role of actors and stakeholders in the management of land dispute in Nigeria (Okoro, 2016, Usman, 2017, Oyama, 2014, Blestri, 2015, Tambunan, 2016). Therefore, this study is initiated to improve on the existing literatures on the subject matter, with particular reference to Bauchi Central Senatorial District. As such, the study seeks to answer questions like what are the role of actors and stakeholders in the management of land dispute. How these roles improve management of land dispute in Bauchi Central Senatorial District? And to also investigate the effect of negligence of actors and stakeholders.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Definitions

2.1.1 The Concept of Stakeholder

It is pertinent to acquaint ourselves with the concept of stakeholders in order to better our understanding of the subject matter under study. Most often people confuse the word actor and stakeholder to have same meaning while some scholars/writers clearly differentiates between the two concepts. For instance, Dlakwa (2014) consider those whose activities profoundly influence the design and prosecution of public policy as actors. He however mentioned legislators, civil servants, political parties, pressure groups as internal actors in policy making while organizations such as International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank are refers to an external actors. Omokhua and Okuchukwu (2018)

described stakeholders as those who act is less tautological than it might appear. They further posited that actors are only those who actually act. Okoro (2016) categorized stakeholders into five segments: political stakeholders, Bureaucratic stakeholders, special interest stakeholders, General interest stakeholders, and Expert stakeholders. He went on to say that political stakeholders are elected representatives who need access to decision-making arenas; bureaucratic stakeholders are those in the administrative sector who influence decision-making based on specific responsibilities. Individuals, organizations, or persons who live in a specific area may be considered special stakeholders. Their involvement in decision-making processes frequently witnesses the intervention of subjects who attempt to influence the results in a utilitarian logic, General Interest are the stakeholders who base their claim of involvement in the decision-making process on the premise that they represent subjects and/or interests that cannot defend themselves, and Expert are the actors who base their claim of intervention on the fact that they have the necessary knowledge, and thus decision-making processes must involve them as much as possible.

In regards to land dispute management, stakeholders consist of claimants (disputants), law enforcement agencies, community leaders (traditional rulers), elders, judiciary and surveyors (Jahun, 2015). In Nigeria there are institutions enforcing land resource governance as enumerated by Omokhua (2018) to include; Ministry of Land, Survey and Urban Development, Law enforcement agencies as well as Land use and allocation committee.

However, at the local government level, it is stated in the Hand book on Local Government Administration that issues related to land dispute is being handled by Local Government Peace and The Security Committee was made up of the Chairman of the Local Government, one representative of the Nigeria Police Force (DPO), the Secretary to the Local Government, and one other person. One representative of the State Security Service, one representative of the Army unit (where applicable), one representative of the Naval Unit (where applicable), one representative of the

Air Force Unit (where applicable), one of most senior traditional ruler in the local government or his representative, two community leaders, one of whom must be a non-indigenous resident of the local government, two religious leaders appointed by the local government chairman, and one representative of Women (where applicable).

Okoro (2016) distinguished five types of stakeholders: political stakeholders, bureaucratic stakeholders, special interest stakeholders, general interest stakeholders, and expert stakeholders.

Thus, for the purpose of this research work, actors refer to government agencies and traditional rulers as well as security agencies in Bauchi Central Senatorial District.

2.1.2 Stakeholders

Many people confuse the two concepts of stakeholders and actors to mean the same thing but they are different. For instance, Dlakwa (2014) referred actors as those whose activities greatly influence the design and prosecution of public policy. According to him, legislators, civil servants, political parties, pressure groups that have partnership with government and international organizations (IMF & World Bank). While stakeholders are those who stand to either gain or lose from the outcome of the policy, whether or not they had participated directly in the policy process. These consist of plan's intended target, public officials involved in developing and implementing the policy, and anyone else with an interest in the policy's outcome.

Tambunan (2016) categorized stakeholders in land use management into macro level and micro level. At macro level, he said the stakeholders are: government (department or agencies), company or community and individuals. While at micro level the stakeholders are many.

However, for the purpose of this research, the primary stakeholders are herders and farmers, while secondary stakeholders refers to forestry staff, local government officials, traditional rulers, security agencies, Miyatti Allah Association, political parties, pressure groups, company or community and individuals.

2.1.3 Land

The portion of the surface of the planet that is not surrounded by water is referred to as land. It is also known as ground or soil used as a foundation for agriculture (Omokhua, 2018). As according Mbazor and Ojo (2019), land is the foundation of wealth creation, a repository of production for peasants and commercial farmers, and a source of pride and social status for the community. Mudenda made a similar claim (2006). 'Land is a source of food, shelter, social status, and power,' he said. Since the beginning of time, and from generation to generation, land has been regarded as the most valuable resource and the foundation of wealth in many African communities, as either urban or rural (Mbazor, 2019).

According to the Government Gazette of 2004, land is recognized to be the main focus of growth in the economy, poverty eradication, as well as major increase of wellbeing. "Land basically refers to a definable area of the earth's terrestrial surface, encompassing all biosphere attributes immediately above or below this surface, such as located close climate, soil and terrain forms, and surface hydrology" (shallow lakes, rivers, marshes and swamps), near-surface sedimentary layers, groundwater, plant and animal populations, human settlement patterns, and physical outcomes of past and present human activity (terracing, water storage or drainage structures, roads, buildings, and so on." (Sara, 2015). This is also consistent with what Jahun (2015) stated: "land is a valuable asset on which all of our existence is dependent."

The Land Use Act of 1978 shall be vested all land in the Governor of each federation state to hold in trust as well as manage for the people. It states that land can be administered in two ways: statutory land and customary land. While statutory land is administered by government officials in accordance with written laws, customary land is administered by traditional authorities in certain parts of Nigeria based on unwritten and localized customary laws.

2.1.4 Land dispute

Land dispute become an issue virtually in communities globally. The problem is associated with the increase in human demand of land to cultivate crops and herder's continuous demand of vast grazing area to herd their livestock. Similarly, urbanization and other developmental activities are ongoing everyday which all requires land. This unpleasant incident becomes an issue of discussion among different scholars worldwide. According to Musa, Shabu and Igbawua (2014), 'Prior to the turn of the twentieth century, the issue was primarily confined to West African Savannah belts. A cattle rearing was common in the Sudan and Sahel Savannah belts, where crop production occurred only on a small scale during the short rainy season. This provided Fulani herders with access to vast areas of grassland in West Africa's Savannah belts. With the incorporation of irrigation farming in Nigeria's Savannah belt to improve food security and support the country's growing population, more land was dedicated to farming activities. This has restricted access to the vast area that Fulani herdsman used to rear their herds, particularly along the river banks of Savannah belts in the country's north.

The repercussions of these disputes are far-reaching and multifaceted, with serious adverse effects on social, economic, political, and ecological development. These effects are amplified in developing countries, in which land governance is weak, land markets are underdeveloped, corruption and political support are widespread, and many poor members of society lack access to land (Wehrmann, 2008). That is to say, when continue unchecked, violent conflict could lead to the loss of human lives and destructions of many properties, as witnessed in the states of Benue, Taraba, Cross River, Ebonyi, Adamawa and north-central part of the country (Oladotun & Emmanuel, 2019, Ironbar & Anam, 2018, Musa, Shabu & Igbawua, 2014, Idowwu, 2017, Mbazor & Ojo, 2019; Okoro, 2018, Oladotun & Emmanuel, 2019, Ironbar & Anam, 2018, Musa, Shabu & Igbawua, 2014, Idowwu, 2017, Mbazor & Ojo, 2019; & Okoro, 2018). Hence actors and relevant stakeholders in land dispute management must wake up from their slumber and face their responsibility

with enthusiasm in order to avert alarming danger associated with the land dispute so that both farmers and herders can live in harmony.

Land disputes are common in almost all societies around the world. In an ideal society, institutions and transparent procedures can be put in place to resolve such disputes or, at the very least, to lead to a process that reduces the possibility of violent disputes escalating. However, it has been observed that in societies marked by interest insecurity, inequality, and weak institutions, such disputes may be forced through total carelessness or greedy and discriminatory policies (Mbazor, 2019).

Nigeria has experienced centuries of land disputes, with the number of people killed and properties destroyed increasing year after year (Mbazor, 2019). This has had a significant impact on the speed at which Nigerian cities, particularly in the north, grow and develop.

2.1.5 Dispute Management

Dispute management requires that the underpinning causes of the dispute should firstly be eliminated. That means dispute managers should consider building of concrete foundation for societal peace and harmony by the means of system re-assessment and making necessary correction of the system in curtailing the occurrence of disputes (Oyama, 2014). In land dispute which mostly involved farmers and herders, especially in Misau Local Government Area of Bauchi State, personal intervention is used to resolve the conflict. According to Garba (2017), in all cases where crop destruction has caused conflict and the offending pastoralist admits guilt, an interpersonal agreement can be reached. Depending on the size of the impairment, compensation (varying in amount) is frequently demanded and paid where only a few crops have been destroyed. Herders and crop farmers had also coexisted for a long time in this area.

Farmers and pastoralists have had a long relationship in Misau Local Government Area. The method of conflict resolution in the area is more of an interpersonal intervention. Typically, the village head and the head of herdsmen (Hardo) are involved in resolving the dispute (Adebayo & Olaniyi, 2008). The

older methods of resolving disputes appear to be obsolete and/or require proper re-examination as well as ratifications. Modern scholars have made various recommendations for preventing the conflict from escalating into a violent conflict. For example, Momale (2003) suggests that the government should provide guidelines and ensure their effective implementation in order to ensure marginal groups' access to resources. Other strategies to avoid violent conflicts between nomadic pastoralists but rather sedentary farmers, he believes, include strengthening pastoralist institutions and using media to enlighten pastoralists to avoid violence; strengthening farmer institutions and using media to enlighten farmers to embrace peace; and encouraging locally based consultative meetings between farmers and pastoralists. In related development, Baba (1986) believes that the effective solutions to the problem of unhealthy competition of land resources are: to introduce the nomadic Fulani to sedentary life; and getting them to adopt farming as an occupation with cattle keeping.

It is therefore clear from the contributions of scholars mentioned and the nature of land dispute in study area that both pastoralists and farmers have been long together and the best method to adopt in resolving their differences is interpersonal intervention with additional government effort by providing policy framework in which its judicious implementation would form a basis of peaceful co-existence and harmonious relationship between and among diverse community of the area.

2.1.6 Farmers-Herders Dispute

Hussein et al., (1999) in Oyama (2014) stated that there are two causes of farmer-herder conflict; competition for access to increasingly scarce productive resources and failure of the local adjudicative mechanisms (traditional institutions) to resolve the tensions created by this competition. It is obvious in Bauchi Central Senatorial District that the competition upon the land resources between both farmers and herders is at high risk and the local adjudicative mechanisms in the area have shown their failures in resolving the tension created by the competition between the two parties, hence the resultant attacks in the area.

Since the fourth Nigerian Republic's founding in 1990, farmer-herder violence has killed more than 19,000 people and displaced hundreds of thousands more. It followed a trend in the increase of farmer-herder conflicts throughout much of the western Sahel, due to an expansion of agriculturist population and cultivated land at the expense of pasturelands, deteriorating environmental conditions, desertification and soil degradation; population growth, breakdown in traditional conflict resolution mechanisms of land and water disputes; and proliferation of small arms and crime in rural areas. Insecurity and violence have led many populations to create self-defense forces and ethnic and tribal militias, which have engaged in further violence. The majority of farmer-herder clashes have occurred between Muslim herdsmen and Christian farmers, exacerbating ethno religious hostilities.

2.2 Theoretical framework

Theory refers to a set of logically related ideas that try to explain reality. In this study, two theories are employed: relative deprivation theory and social control theory to guide the study for better understanding of the role of actors and stakeholders in the management of land dispute.

Social Control theory

Travis Hirschi developed the theory in 1969. It is also referred to as the Social Bond Theory. The theory's basic assumptions are: (i) that people will engage in delinquent behavior when their social bond to society is weakened; and (ii) that people have the ability to break the law rather than obey it. Humans are not born with the ability to follow the law. People commit crimes so because forces or constraints of society are insufficient.

According to social control theory, deviance becomes the norm in the absence of effective control measures (Weidman, 2007). Humans, according to this theory, rationalize what is more rewarding and then act on that basis. As a result, in the absence of the threat of punishment or sanctions, there is nothing to deter people from corruptly enriching themselves at the expense of others. As this phenomenon spreads, it becomes accepted as the norm, as is currently the case

with some forms of illegal land encroachment in African countries such as Nigeria.

Relevance of the theory to the study

According to social control theory, when people's social connections to society are weakened, they will take part in antisocial behavior; as well as individuals have the ability to break the law rather than obey the law. Humans are not born with the ability to follow the law. People commit crimes because the pressures or constrictions of society are insufficient. It implies that if people believe there will be no consequences for their actions, they will commit crimes; conversely, if they believe there will be consequences for their actions, they will refrain from committing crimes.

This study is considered relevant because it explains the nature of people and the reason why some people break the law or obeyed. Therefore if there is a strong enforcement mechanism that will ensure everyone who ever accumulates resources illegally will be punished, the level of clashing between land user groups will be limited.

The contemporary society is characterized by different schools of thought, each analyzing social phenomenon from its own orientation. For the purpose of this study some theories will be reviewed and at the end suitable one will be adopted.

3. Methodology

The study applied theoretical and qualitative methods. The case study method was chosen for this study because it intends to build universally accepted on in-depth, detailed understanding of the situation under study. According to Yin (1994), a case study is an empirical investigation that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in relation to its real-life context, particularly when the for the purpose of this research, purposive sampling technique was employed in which researcher selected members of the population that are considered to have stake in the subject under investigation to participate in the in-depth interview. The interviews have been conducted from farmers, herders, traditional rulers, local government officials, security personnel, academicians and local residents of Bauchi Central Senatorial District. In purposive

sampling, researcher intentionally selected the sites and the individuals to understand or learn the phenomenon that is central to his study (Creswell, 2008).

Table 1: Categorization of Informants

Category	Informant's Designation	Target Population	Number of Sample Size
A	Local Government Officials	15	3
B	Traditional Rulers	10	2
C	Security Personnel	15	3
D	Farmers	25	5
E	Herders	20	4
F	Local Residents of the area	20	4
G	Academician	5	1
	Total	110	22

Thematic analysis refers to the search for themes which emerge as important to describe the phenomenon; it has to do with pattern identification with data collected (Vaismoradi, Turenen & Bondos, 2013).

4. Discussions of Findings

This section provides the analysis and discussion of findings of the paper. The finding of the research will be presented, the view and the opinion of the informants in the interview were analyzed and presented in line with the objectives of the study, and are supported by scholarly work. The actors and stakeholders' role in land dispute management have greatly assists in preventing an escalation of such dispute into communal land violence in Bauchi Central Senatorial District. Relevant data obtained was analyzed thematically and narrative interpretative form; several issues were objectively analyzed and discussed. The origin of land dispute could be traced from the two causes of farmer-herder conflict; struggle for access to land resources and failure of the actors and relevant stakeholders (traditional institutions/local governments) in the area to resolve the tensions created by this competition. It is obvious in Bauchi Central Senatorial District that the competition upon land resources between land users is at high risk and the authority concern have shown their failures in resolving the tension between the two parties, hence the resultant attacks in the area.

One of the respondents who is a Forestry Guard in Misau Local Government revealed that:

Therefore, table 1 below indicated the number of target population and the sample size for the study.

Actually if there is clash between land users, especially herders and farmers, we use to be sent to the area for assessment. Later on, parties involved (farmers and herders) will be invited for a reconciliation meeting with the Chairman of the Local Government, Village Head concern, security and Miyatti Allah leaders who are also part of reconciliation meeting (Yuguda Dada Zindi, 2022).

The above response tally with the provision in the Hand book on Local Government Administration, which stated that, the issues related to land dispute is to be handled by Local Government Peace and Security Committee which consisting of the Chairman of the Local Government, a representative of the Nigeria Police Force (DPO), the Secretary to the Local Government, and other members One spokesperson of the State Security Service, one representative of the Army unit (where applicable), one representative of the Naval Unit (where applicable), one representative of the Air Force Unit (where applicable), the most senior traditional ruler in the local government or his representative, two community leaders, one of whom must be a non-indigenous resident of the local government, two religious leaders appointed by the local government chairman, and one representative of Women (where applicable).

Another respondent who is Security Personnel confirmed that:

When we received information regarding encroachment over the grazing reserve, we normally rush to the vicinity in order to ensure peace in the area and report to the Local Government Chairman who usually summons the complainants and encroachers for a reconciliation meeting at the local government secretariat. In the meeting, the leaders of the community, such as village head and miyatti Allah leaders used to be invited (Security personnel, 2022)

The above assertion corroborate with the work of Tambunan (2016) who categorized stakeholders in land use management into macro and micro level. At macro level, he said the stakeholders are: government (department or agencies), company or community and individuals. While at micro level the stakeholders are many.

Another respondent who is a Village Head of Yautare in Darazo Local Government Area confirmed that:

Actually, when there is an encroachment over grazing reserves, we use to talk to the encroachers at our level with a view to stop them. But where we use to get problem, is from our people who use to encroach, because they think we hate them and actually it is not hatred rather is the matter of preserving government grazing reserve and an effort to prevent unwanted conflict between them (farmers) and the Fulani herdsman (traditional ruler, 2022).

The above view agrees with the work of Idowu, 2018. He stated that the fighting is about some disagreement over the use of essential resources such as farmland, grazing areas and water between herders and local farmers as the major source of the fighting. Herders travel with their cattle in search of pasture. They frequently clash with farmers who consistently accuse them of damaging their crops and failing to control their animals.

However, Jahun (2015) in discussing the process of land acquisition and sources of land conflicts: added that, when the process of land acquisition is faulty would lead to complicating land ownership, land limitation and driven by legitimacy, as perceived by two or more claimants, interdependency of the claimants having almost equal power may also cause conflict. He also stated the causes of land dispute have been related to either positional, traditional, resources, or cultural origin. He further stated that land

dispute settlement, if not properly handled will create problems of unimaginable proportions.

Another respondent who is a Chairman of Ningi Local Government also confirmed that:

Yes, I can say in land related dispute, traditional rulers, security like police and sometimes courts, and usually local government use to intervene, especially in the cases related to grazing areas and cattle routes (Tabla, 2022).

The above response agreed with the work of Jahun (2015) which stated that, In regards to land dispute management, actors consist of claimants (disputants), law enforcement agencies, community leaders (traditional rulers), elders, judiciary and surveyors. Furthermore, Omokhua, (2018) stated that, in Nigeria there are institutions enforcing land resource governance to includes; Ministry of Land, Survey and Urban Development, Law enforcement agencies as well as Land use and allocation committee of the Local Government.

Another respondent who is Academician stated that:

Farmers - herders conflict in Nigeria has been a matter of serious concern. Traditional rulers, security and local government authorities had severally doing their best to curtail the menace but to no avail. The problem requires total government and community commitments to minimize its occurrences (Salisu, 2022).

The above responses contradict the work of Ghebru and Okumo (2016) who stated that, coordination among governance structures put in place by states for land administration was found to be poor, especially in Bauchi and Enugu states were very low levels of cooperation on issues related to land administration reforms were observed. Furthermore, the work of Omokhoa and Okuchuwu (2018) stated that, the cause of the violent conflict between land users includes negligence on the part of government to have good policies that govern cattle rearing in Nigeria.

Another respondent who is farmer asserts that: *Whenever herders crush into our farms to graze we quickly rush to inform our village head. Sometimes we report to forestry guard and police. They called both the parties to settle the land dispute by either warning or compensation (Sarkin Fadan Zadawa, 2022).*

The above findings confirmed Garba (2017) claim that, in all cases where crop destruction has caused conflict and the offending pastoralist admits guilty, interpersonal agreement can be reached. Depending on the extent of the damage, recompense (varying in amount) is frequently demanded and paid where negligible crops have been destroyed.

The above statement is in line with provision of the Hand book on Local Government Administration, the issues related to land dispute is being handled by Local Government Peace and Security Committee which comprised of Chairman of the Local Government, One representative of the Nigeria Police Force (DPO), Secretary to the Local Government, One representative of the State Security Service, One representative of the Army unit (where applicable), one representative of the Naval Unit (where applicable), One representative of the Air Force Unit (where applicable), the most senior traditional ruler in the local government or his representative, two community leaders, one of shall be non-indigene of the local government, two religious leaders appointed by the local government chairman, one representative of Women Organizations (where applicable).

Another respondent who is member of Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria posits that:

We are facing serious challenges in resolving land dispute between our people and farmers. This is because our members travelling by road to deliver cattle to various markets and other destinations damage the crops of farmers. What we do sometimes to manage these conflicts is through mediating and payment of ransom to the farmers (Ahmed Daya, 2022).

The above findings corroborates with the findings of Oladotun & Emmanuel, 2019, Ironbar & Anam, 2018, Musa, Shabu & Igbawua, 2014, Idowwu, 2017, Mbazor & Ojo, 2019; & Okoro, 2018 posits that actors and relevant stakeholders in land dispute management must wake up from their slumber and face their responsibility with enthusiasm in order to avert alarming danger associated with the land dispute so that both farmers and herders can live in harmony. It is also in line with the work of Balestri (2015) who agrees and recommends timely solving of land related grievances and lay down of strategies for land conflict prevention

and mitigation by government and international aid community.

The issue of land dispute management in Nigeria has been a matter of concern by all stakeholders. The actors and stakeholders are the local government councils, traditional rulers, security personnel who are referred to as government department and agencies while stakeholders are; farmers, herders and non-agricultural land users. Strong mechanisms that will ensure timely response to all issues relating to land dispute have to be in place. Actors (government departments and agencies) should consider the dispute in land resource as a serious problem that may likely consume as many lives and properties as possible if lightly handled as witnessed in some states like Benue, Taraba, Enugu and Bauchi including the study area in 2020 where about 11 people were killed in one day (report of administrative committee of inquiry into the land dispute in zadawa village of Misau LGA). However, if land users noticed that whenever they break law there could be a harsh punishment on them, they might not engage in illegal encroachment of land. This is because, people only commit a crime when they are assured that there would be no punishment on them.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

From the findings of the paper, the actors in land dispute management consists of local government councils, traditional rulers, securities and other government agencies while stakeholders in land dispute management refers to herders, farmers and non-agricultural land users. However, the study shows that these actors and stakeholders are most often times neglect their role or fail to resolve land related disputes which usually resulted into violent conflict. The study therefore recommends that, actors and stakeholders should respond to the land disputes timely and the resolutions reached at by land dispute managers should be implemented immediately to prevent its worsening into communal conflict that can cause lost of lives and properties.

Implications/Contributions

This study contributed theoretically by studying the actors and stakeholders in land dispute management using social control principles. The theory of social control was propounded by Travis Hirchi in 1969 and 1977 has been used to explain the relationship between actors and stakeholders in regards to land dispute management. The core assumptions of the theory are: people engage in antisocial behavior when their social connection to society is weakened. Individuals have the capacity to violate the laws rather than to obey laws. Law-abiding behaviors are not the nature of human beings. In the absence of fear of penalty or sanctions, people would not be prevented from illegal amassing resources at the expense of others. It implies that, if people believe that there is no penalty on them, they

can commit crime likewise knowing their will be sanction on them, they could abstain from committing a crime.

Methodologically, the paper has provided empirical findings on actors and stakeholders in land dispute management in Bauchi Central Senatorial District. It utilized interview, few reports supported the findings. Data was obtained through heterogeneous sample of informants, and this go along way in enhancing the data fitness, transparency and credibility. In addition, the study has identified practical challenges of the actors and stakeholders in land dispute management. Contextually, the paper contributed in land dispute management in Nigeria.

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