

Survey of cattle rearing by herdsman in Lagos State, Nigeria

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Target Audience: *Policy makers, Farmers, Extension officers*

Abstract

*The incidence of clashes between herders and crop farmers elsewhere necessitated the survey of cattle rearing by herdsman in Lagos State to obtain baseline information on the herders, their cattle and the commonly grazed forages. Self-administered questionnaires were administered on the herders in Epe, Badagry and Ikorodu Local Government areas being the agrarian zones of Lagos State. Data obtained were analyzed by descriptive statistics. Results on the socio-economic characteristics showed that all the respondents that reared cattle were male and mostly (77%) married. About 70% of respondents have been in the business for over 20 years. 70% of the farmers attended only Quranic school. They mostly (63%) lived with their family who assisted in milk processing. The breeds of cattle reared were White Fulani (50%), Keteku (20%), Sokoto Gudali (20%) and others 10%. The herd size of respondents varied between 11-20 bulls (73%), 16-30 cows (57%) and 20 calves (50%). Most (57%) of the herders grazed their cattle for one to four hours daily. Respondents (67%) also reported incidence of clashes with crop farmers which were settled by the community leaders through restitution. Continuous grazing was mostly (70%) practiced. The commonest forages selected were; *Panicum maximum*, *Chromolaena odorata*, *Sida acuta*, *Centrosema pubescens* and *Tridax procumbens*. It is concluded that cattle herders and the residents cohabit in Lagos State.*

Key words: *Cattle, Herders, Pasture, grazing method.*

Description of Problem

Lagos State is the commercial capital of Nigeria with diverse ethnic presence who migrated for economic reasons. Naturally, migration in most countries is usually towards the coastal area which Lagos is. The migration of pastoralists from the Northern part of Nigeria to the southern parts has been reported (1). The movement had been in search for greener pasture and portable water. Incidences of skirmishes between crop farmers had equally been observed (2). Some migrating herders have also settled in some locations in the southern part of Nigeria including Lagos. For the purpose of planning and maintenance of peace in the state, it is important to obtain a baseline information on the activities of the

cattle herdsman and the forages that are commonly grazed in the locality. The results obtained from the survey would be useful in planning for the herdsman and their cattle. The well-being of the latter would be of advantage to the State to meet the animal protein needs of the inhabitants.

The objectives of the survey are therefore:

1. To obtain information on socio-economic characteristics of the cattle farmers (herders) in the study areas.
2. To identify the forages that are commonly selected by cattle in the study areas.
3. To identify the problem encountered by the cattle farmers in study areas.

Materials and Method

The survey of cattle rearing by herders in Lagos State considered the agrarian zones where there are abundant land and forages. These areas include Epe, Ikorodu and Badagry respectively.

Epe is located on the north side of the Lekki lagoon with longitude 6.58333N° and latitude 3.98333E° (3). At the 2006 census, the population of Epe was 181,409 (3). The major occupation of the people of Epe is fishing and hunting.

Ikorodu is at the extreme of Lagos state, with longitude 6.6000N° and latitude 3.5000E° (3). As of the 2006 census Ikorodu had an enumerated population of 535,619 (3). The Ikorodu people's occupation are farming, hunting and fishing.

Badagry local Government lie on the latitude $625'0.012''\text{N}^{\circ}$ and longitude $252'59.988''\text{E}^{\circ}$ (3). It is situated between metropolitan Lagos and the border with Benin Republic at Seme. As of the preliminary 2006 census results, the municipality had a population of 241,093. Badagry subsists largely on fishing and agriculture, and maintains a small museum of slavery. The town inhabits dwellers from all over the country doing different business in the town. Some trade in clothing, food items, used cars from overseas and other imported goods.

Cattle farmers (Herdsman) in their respective locations were interviewed using open questionnaire, to obtain information on their socio-economic characteristics as well as other useful information relating to grazing cattle and their welfare. Also grazing cattle in respective locations were followed for three hours when they go out to graze with the aim of monitoring the selected forages.

A total of thirty (30) questionnaires were administered with ten (10) per local

government area. Statistical analysis of data obtained from the study was by descriptive method.

Results and Discussion

Socio-economic characteristics of cattle herdsman

Table 1 shows the socio-economic characteristics of Cattle farmers in Epe, Badagry, and Ikorodu Local Government Areas (LGAS). Results from the survey revealed that all Cattle farmers in the (LGA) were male (100%). The dominance of male in the business may be attributed to the fact that Hausa/Fulani tribes usually have their wives at home, due to cultural and religious belief (4). This may be attributed to the labour requirement involved among others which may be too demanding for the female gender. This result is in agreement with the study of (5) who reported the non-participation of the female gender in cattle marketing in Adamawa State, and also with the report of (4) that majority of ruminant livestock farmers are male.

In the areas studied, 77% of the cattle farmers were married while the remaining 23% were single. This implied that majority of the respondent that were married are old enough to be married and also because of their religious belief which prohibits infidelity.

On years of experience on cattle rearing, 10% of the population had been in the business for between one to ten years, 20% for eleven to twenty years, 33% twenty-one to thirty years and 37% for thirty-one to forty years. Years of experience among other factors determines the success of business (6). Regarding their education, (70%) of the respondents only attended Quranic School, while the remaining 30% had primary education. This is due to the fact that education is not a priority in cattle rearing business (4).

Table 1: Distributions of Socio- Economic characteristics of cattle farmers in Lagos State

Variables	Responses	No of respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	30	100.0
	Female	0	0.0
Marital status	Married	23	77.0
	Single	7	23.0
Duration in location(years)	6-10	9	30.0
	16-20	9	30.0
	1-5	6	20.0
	11-15	5	16.0
	21-25	1	3.3
Years of experience	1 – 10	11	37.0
	11-20	10	33.0
	21-30	6	20.0
	31-40	3	10.0
Educational background	Quranic	21	70.0
	Primary	9	30.0

Family, Grazing time and clashes with crop farmers

Table 2 shows the family data of cattle farmers, grazing time and incidence of clash with crop farmers in Lagos State. The table revealed that 63% of respondent lived with their family members. The reason given was that cattle farmers need their families to assist in milking the cows and taking them out for grazing. Regarding hours of grazing, 57% of the farmers grazed their cattle for one to four hours, 37% for five to ten hours and the

remaining 7% grazed cattle for eleven to fifteen hours. The range of grazing period of 1-15 hours is similar to the findings of (7) who reported a grazing time of 11 hours, 15 minutes in dry season and 9 hours, 13 minutes in raining season for N'dama cattle.

67% of the respondents reported that they had clashes with the crop farmers. Such problems were usually resolved by the head of the community through the restitution of same. The observation agrees with findings of (8).

Table 2: Distributions of Family, Grazing Record and clashes with crop farmers in Lagos State

Variables	Responses	No of respondents	Percentage
Family	Live with family	19	63.0
	Live without family	11	37.0
Grazing period (Hrs/day)	1-4	17	57.0
	5-10	11	37.0
	11-15	2	7.0
Clashes	No	20	67.0
	Yes	10	33.0

Breeds of cattle reared

Presented in Table 3 is information on the breeds of cattle reared by farmers in Lagos State. The common breeds of cattle reared in these locations were White fulani (50%), Keteku (23%), Sokoto gudali (20%), and Red

bororo (7%). The composition of cattle breed is slightly different from what was reported by (9) for Oyo State. The predominance of White fulani and Keteku in the areas, indicated that tsetse fly infestation was not pronounced. Similarly, the preference for White fulani

breed by cattle farmers might be due to the fact that it is the most widely distributed breed of cattle in Nigeria. It constitutes fifty

percent of total population of cattle in Nigeria (10). It might also be due to its dual purpose nature.

Table 3: Distribution of Breeds of cattle reared by farmers in Lagos State

Variables	Responses	No of respondents	Percentage
Breeds of cattle	White Fulani	15	50.0
	Keteku	7	23.0
	Sokoto gudali	6	20.0
	Red Bororo	2	7.0

Average herd size

Table 4 shows the average herd size of cattle reared by herdsman in Lagos State. Most (73%) of the herdsman had eleven to twenty bulls. On adult female, most of the respondents (57%) had sixteen to thirty. This revealed that sixteen to thirty cows/ heifers and eleven to twenty bulls made up the population of the herd.

50% of the herdsman had one to ten male calves, 47% - eleven to twenty and 3% had twenty-one to thirty. However, for the female calves, 50% of respondents reared one to ten while 45% reared eleven to twenty. In all, there were more cows in the herd followed by bulls, male and female calves. This could be due to the fact that cows are predominant of a cattle herd (7).

Table 4: Distribution of herd size of cattle reared by Herdsman in Lagos State

Variables	Responses	No of respondents	Percentage	
Cattle population	Bull	1-10	1	3.0
		11-20	22	73.0
		21-30	4	13.0
		31-40	2	7.0
		41-50	1	3.0
Mature Cow		1-15	3	10.0
		16-30	17	57.0
		31-45	7	23.0
		46-60	2	7.0
		61-70	1	3.0
Male calf		1-10	15	50.0
		11-20	14	47.0
		21-30	1	3.0
Female calf		1-10	15	50.0
		11-20	14	45.0
		21-30	1	5.0

Housing of Herdsmen

As shown in Table 5, housing of herdsman in Epe, Badagry, and Ikorodu LGAs indicated that majority (80%) of the respondents lived in

brick houses and 20% in huts. Hausa/Fulani are known to be living in hut houses in the northern part of Nigeria, but in Lagos State, most of the houses were built with bricks.

Table 5: Distributions of Housing Type of Herdsmen in Lagos State

Variables	Responses	No of respondents	Percentage
Brick	Yes	24	80.0
Hut	No	6	20.0

Grazing Practices among herdsmen

Table 6 shows the grazing method practiced by the herdsmen in the LGAs. 70% of the respondents practiced continuous grazing. This might be due to the limited

grazing area while 30% practiced rotational grazing because of the land available. Some of the herdsmen practiced rotational grazing but it was not systematic (7).

Table 6: Frequency Distribution of Grazing Practices in Lagos State

Variables	Responses	No of respondents	Percentage
Type of grazing	Continuous grazing	21	70.0
	Rotational grazing	9	30.0

Cattle rearing system

Table 7 shows the system of rearing. 65% of the herdsmen practiced transhumant system of rearing and the remaining 35% practiced sedentary system of rearing. Majority of the herdsmen in Epe, Badagry and Ikorodu LGAs were sedentary because there were abundant forages and they also had access to the veterinary clinic in the LGAs which encouraged their production (7). The

transhumant system of rearing was due to the fact that there were limited forages in the northern part of the country from where they came. The great majority of the cattle in Nigeria were owned by pastoralists. Those owned by settled farmers were often managed by pastoralists for part of the year (11). They are also the major suppliers of cattle to settled farmers.

Table 7: System of rearing cattle in Lagos State

Variables	Responses	No of respondents	Percentage
System of rearing	Sedentary	19	65.0
	Trans humans	11	35.0

Forages selected by cattle

The commonest forages selected were: *Panicum maximum*, *Chromolaena odorata*, *Centrocema pubescens*, *Sida acuta* and *Tridax procumbens* in that order.

restitution on same. Hence allowing for co-habitation between herders and the residents.

4. By implication, the study affords policy makers to explore informal means of resolving the herder-farmer conflicts and institute structures that could assist in sustainable co-habitation.

Conclusion and Applications

1. Most respondents were male, and married. Cattle farmers were mostly exposed to Quranic school education.
2. White Fulani cattle were mostly reared and grazed continuously with a mean herd size of 15 bulls and 25 cows.
3. Reported incidence of clashes with crop farmers were settled internally through

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