

Entrepreneurship Training and Support for Farmers in Livestock Feed Industry: A Proposed New Paradigm Toward Mitigating Open Grazing Crises in Benue State

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Abstract: Concerned about open grazing crises devastating the farming communities in Benue State, Nigeria was a call for this investigation. The study advocates a paradigm shift toward mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State. The study was guided by four research objectives, four research questions and three null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a Survey Research Design with a population of 82 subjects, made up of 3 groups: 17 Lecturers, 23 Agricultural Extension Agents and 42 Livestock Feed Entrepreneurs. There was no sampling because of the manageable small size of the population. A 32-item structured questionnaire for the study was titled: Questionnaire for Entrepreneurship Training and Support in Livestock Feed Industry (QETSILFI) which was developed by the researchers from the available literature and duly validated by three experts. The reliability coefficient for the instrument was .92% determined by Cronbach Alpha Reliability Method. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while Analysis of Variance ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses. Results of the study identified nine (9) objectives of anti- open grazing law, found six (6) characteristics of the old strategy which were confirmed not acceptable for mitigating open grazing crises and established seventeen (17) acceptable new strategies required for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State. In conclusion a wholistic, multi-purpose and integrated acceptable new strategy for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State was proposed. The proposed strategy was tagged; "A new paradigm Toward Mitigating Open Grazing Crises in Benue state". The new paradigm was thus, recommended for implementation at all levels by the Benue State government administration.

Keywords: Livestock Feed Industry; Open Grazing Crises; New Paradigm, Entrepreneurship Training and Support for Farmers

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Feed is food for animal especially livestock. Livestock feed connotatively, could refer to any edible material that is either naturally grown, purposively produced, processed or may be distributed by marketing to supply the nutritional requirement of livestock. Feed for livestock in turn could

provide food for man and a pathway to socio-economic sustenance of human lives. Livestock include farm animals such as dairy cow, cattle, goat and pig, also are sheep, horse and mules among others. A Livestock is a farm animal that is raised either for food, sale or pleasure (Garrigus and Holden, 2020). Livestock could produce labour and commodities such as meat, milk, fur, leather and wool. Herdge (2018) posited that the term livestock as used does not include poultry or farmed fish however, the inclusion of these within the meaning of livestock is common. In the context of this study, the term livestock is used to represent conventionally farmed animals that despite their importance constitutes crises to the public due to their nature of feeding. Such livestock in Benue State include cattle, sheep, goat, pig, horses, asses and mules. It is important that farmers in the livestock feed industry could be encouraged through capacity building in form of training and support for sustainable and profitable production of such animals. As established, Dumbiri (2011) states that an industry is an involvement of all the enterprises and their relevant skills through which people can practice and make sustainable living. This inveterate the fact that ignorance and incompetence among farmers in the livestock feed industry could be responsible to poor practices and invariably feed losses. However, shortage of feed could lead to high flock diseases and even death beyond livestock. Salman, El-Shargi, Al-Habsi and Al-Sadairi (2017) pointed that the main factors limiting ruminants' productivity is the shortage of grazing feed resources resulting from the declining natural pasture.

Ashcroft (2017) defined grazing as "the consumption of standing forage (grasses and herbs) by livestock and wildlife." In a layman's terms, "grazing" is a verb meaning to eat. The traditional practice in the livestock feed industry by pasturing livestock to feed in open fields without any form of restriction is termed open grazing; though devastating. Open grazing is liable to structural unemployment, industrial crises, destruction of lives and properties as well as poverty among the people. There are other profitable livestock feeding practices such as rangeland management, pasture and forage crop production and feed processing among others. Though these practices required intensive entrepreneurship competence with both tangible and intangible supports without which are less feasible. Going by conceptual clarifications Aligba, Omanchi, and Gbakighir (2018) defined in accordance to the anti-open grazing law that the phrase 'open grazing' referred to the act of pasturing livestock to feed on dry grass, growing grass, shrubs, herbage and farm crops in open fields without any form of restriction.

Open grazing is a traditional feeding practice that is crises associated; there is struggle for cheaper feed stuff, survival of the fittest and elimination of the unfit. This could be referring to as abnormal grazing practice and supply about nine percent of the world's production of beef and about 30 percent of sheep and goat meat (Food and Agricultural Organization FAO, 2015). This suffice to explain that open grazing is an agricultural practice by which through free land movement, grasses and other forages are converted by livestock into meat, milk and other products. The pastoral herdsmen are best known for open grazing tenant. On drawbacks of open grazing, Aligba, Omanchi, and Gbakighir (2018) lamented that the sudden influx of the Fulanis with large number of cattle led to ecological devastation, as in the removal of the top soil, introduction of strange grasses brought from distant lands to the State, as well as, the destruction or pollution of water from ponds and streams. The greatest of the challenges is its being prone to communal crises between the herdsmen and farmers in crop production. In recent time, the term open grazing has echoed more harm than the original concept of the term.

Though the Nigerian constitution allows every citizen to conduct his/her business in any part of the country as desired, it does not state that herdsmen should destroy the lives and properties of others (Abugu and Onuba, 2015).

The devastation due to open grazing has attracted the attention of some government administrations in Nigeria including Benue State to have taken bold steps towards policy direction by promulgating a law prohibiting open grazing, with an option for animal ranching. According to Jooji, (2020) the basic provisions of the law include peace; characterized by respect, justice and goodwill among people in a community. Iorgbir (2021) enumerated the objectives of the Benue State Anti-Opening Grazing Law including:

- i. To address the escalating problem of conflicts between farmers and herders in the state.
- ii. To promote peaceful coexistence between farmers and herders by providing a framework for the regulation of grazing activities.
- iii. To protect the environment from the degradation caused by open grazing, such as soil erosion, deforestation, and loss of biodiversity.
- iv. To promote the development of modern livestock farming practices in Benue State.
- v. To ensure the safety and security of the citizens of Benue State from the activities of criminal elements hiding under the guise of herders.
- vi. To ensure accountability and transparency in the livestock industry in Benue State.
- vii. To boost the economy of Benue State by promoting the development of value chains in the livestock industry.
- viii. To provide a legal and regulatory framework for the management of conflicts arising from grazing activities in Benue State.
- ix. To create an atmosphere of peace and stability necessary for the development of the state.

The law required all kinds of livestock to be reared under confinement such as ranches. Thisday live (17 Nov 2020) confirmed that the law, was assented to on 22 May 2017, it came into effect on the first day of November, after a period of six months' grace, to allow for the establishment of ranches. According to the Benue State government, as stated by Aligba, Omanchi, and Gbakighir (2018) the law's target is not to victimize any person, neither institution nor an ethnic group. Punch (13 Apr 2023) reported that the Benue State Government, in a statement said, the media reports suggesting that the law had been suspended were not correct; the state's anti-open grazing law is still in force. As revealed, the Benue State Anti-Open Grazing law was in place to bring peace to the State but it failed to realize its objectives as no ranches were established; and the herdsmen continued to use the border areas with the neighboring states to launch attacks and make incursions into the State to graze in opposition to the law (Ugbudu, 2021).

It thus, justifies that the law has suffered from poor implementation in the past; due to wrong use of local forces called livestock guards, cattle rustling and poor refugee attention among others by the past Benue State government administration in attempt to mitigating open grazing

crises in the state. Even though, the law itself was acceptable by majority of the Benue people, the strategy for its implementation went erroneous, as it escalated un-quantum destruction of lives and properties nor catastrophic displacement of villages to refugee camps. These are indications that the implementation approach by the Benue State government was wrong, ineffective and has to be updated. The State implementation approach undermined ranches establishment phrase; involved the establishment and use of *the Benue State livestock volunteer guards* resulting to livestock wrestling and consequently, some significant devastations amidst. Attempt by the Federal Government, through Ministry of Agriculture, tried to introduce cattle colonies; Rural Grazing Areas (RUGA) settlements in mitigating open grazing crises, but the Benue State Government and other stakeholders maintained that ranching is the global best practice in rearing livestock, and they challenged anyone with a superior argument, to bring it to the table (Punch, 13 Apr 2023). This call for a proposal that would employ wholistic and integrated approach requiring tangible and intangible inducements that will outstand the old approach which neglected the psychological and philosophical demands of the affected people in the implementation approach in mitigating open grazing crises. Hence, entrepreneurship training and support in livestock feed industry a drive toward socio-economic emancipation could be imperative.

Ukonze, Odo and Ogu (2017) asserted that to overcome socio-economic crises, people should engage themselves in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship as described by Uzuagulu & Uzuagulu (2013) is taking a bold heart and hand to enter a business, bear the business risk until progress and profits are achieved. Training in the view of Ekele (2019) is a process and usually involves a certified expert working with a trainee or learner, in the course of training, the expert transfer skills to the learner to enable the trainee improve and master the job at hand. Training could vary in approaches as formal, non-formal and informal. As it relates to this study, training could mean the use of experts in the process of imparting competence required in gaining confidence in any occupational area in livestock feed industry for self-employment and economic emancipation. Training alone cannot salvage the global community from the advancing insecurity due to feed and food shortages. There is, therefore, the need for general support for the practicing farmer-entrepreneur in livestock feed industry in Benue state in order to cope with the socio-economic realities of the time.

In a statement, Jones and Koerner (2015) revealed that support are messages and behaviors people use to help others cope with stressful life events: There are two broad support categories, emotion-focused support and problem-focused support. Emotion-focused support primarily assist people in dealing with difficult emotional experiences that are a result of upsetting life events. Emotion-focused support strategies include emotional support (expressions of care and concern), esteem support (reassurances of worth), and network support (expressions of inclusion and connection). Problem-focused support strategies are all those strategies that are directed at resolving the problem at hand and involve tangible aid (providing concrete aid) and information assistance (advice) that helps the person in need mobilize resources or resolve the stressor. Farmers therefore need both tangible and intangible supports to be able to overcome their socio-economic stresses in live. A farmer as conceptualized by Olaitan in Jimoh (2017) is a person who grows crops and rears animals for the benefit of mankind. The author defined a farmer as a person who has the knowledge and skills required to produce crop and rearing of

animals for human consumption. A farmer is therefore somebody who own or operates a farm.

Therefore, integrating training and support strategies in livestock feed industry at all levels of government administration will go a long way mitigating open grazing crises among worrying groups of farmers in Benue State and beyond. Hence a call for acceptable paradigm in mitigating open grazing crises in Benue state Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The commonest livestock feeding practice in Benue State is open grazing, the practice is traditional, and crises associated; there is struggle for cheaper feed stuff and survival of the fittest. Observation has shown that for long the livestock feed industry has remained in the realm of ignorance, incompetence, structural unemployment and poor farmers. The devastation due to open grazing has attracted the attention of the Benue State government hence, in the year 2017, promulgated "Anti-Opening Grazing Law" for prohibition of open grazing and promotion of ranches establishment in the State. The law was in place to bring peace to the State, however, preliminary investigations by the researchers revealed that the law has suffered from poor implementation for over six years now; the implementation approach was less humanitarian based, involving the use of local or home-grown guards, livestock rustling' destruction of lives and properties as such imposed more poverty among the farmers than ever. Such implementation approach was of no impact benefit, archaic, invalid and outdated thus, a wholistic, multi-purpose and integrated acceptable paradigm involving entrepreneurship training and support is sacrosanct in mitigating the pervasive open grazing crises for socio economic emancipation of farmers in livestock feed industry in Benue State.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The main purpose of this study was to propose a new paradigm for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises in Benue State. Specifically, the study sought to;

- i. identify objectives of Anti-Open Grazing Law for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State.
- ii. identify characteristics of the old strategies for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State.
- iii. Find out new strategies required for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State.
- iv. propose acceptable strategies for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- i. What are the mean ratings of the responses of Lecturers, Agricultural Extension Agents and Livestock Feed Entrepreneurs on objectives of Anti-Open Grazing Law for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State?
- ii. What are the mean ratings of the responses of Lecturers, Agricultural Extension Agents and Livestock Feed Entrepreneurs on characteristics of the old strategy for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State?
- iii. What are the mean ratings of the responses of Lecturers, Agricultural Extension Agents and Livestock Feed Entrepreneurs on new strategies required for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State?

- iv. which strategies are acceptable and proposed for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are formulated for the study and were tested at .05 level of significance.

- i. HO₁. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of Lecturers, Agricultural Extension Agents and Livestock Feed Entrepreneurs on objectives of Anti-Open Grazing Law for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State.
- ii. HO₂. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of Lecturers, Agricultural Extension Agents and Livestock Feed Entrepreneurs on characteristics of the old strategy for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State.
- iii. HO₃. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of Lecturers, Agricultural Extension Agents and Livestock Feed Entrepreneurs on new strategies required for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a Survey Research Design, this is because a Survey Research Design gathers information about variable from a representative sample of the population for systematic description of existing situation. Survey research design was considered appropriate for the study since it elicited information from respondents who are a sample representation of the population regarding entrepreneurship training and support for mitigating open grazing crises. The study was conducted in Benue State, with a population of eighty-two (82) subjects made up of seventeen (17) Lecturers of Animal Nutrition, Joseph SarwuanTarkaa University Makurdi; twenty-three (23) Agricultural Extension Agents and forty-two (42) Livestock Feeds Entrepreneurs. The sample size for the study was eighty-two (82) respondents which is the whole population of the study. There was no sampling, because the population of the study was small and therefore easy to be managed. The Instrument used for the study was a structured questionnaire titled: Questionnaire for Entrepreneurship Training and support in Livestock Feeds' Industry (QETSILFI). The instrument contained 32 items with an adjusted Likert scale of four options response categories. The instrument also consisted of two parts: Part 1 provided three (3) items to provide respondent biodata information while part II was made of sections A, B and C to elicit respondents' information for answering research questions and further test of hypotheses. The instrument was duly validated by five experts all in Joseph SarwuanTarka University Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria. The reliability coefficient for the instrument was determined at .92 using Cronbach Alpha Reliability Method: By trial testing, thirty (30) respondents were chosen in Nassarawa state North Central Nigeria. Nassarawa State was chosen for trial-test because of its proximity in the context of the problem under study. The respondents to the trial-test were not the real parts of the study sample but had the same characteristics of the population of the study. Data were collected by the researchers with the help of three research assistants. Eighty-two (82) copies of the questionnaire were administered and all retrieved. Descriptive data analyses were done using mean and standard deviation in answering the research questions. Hypotheses were tested and inferences made by using Analysis of Variance ANOVA. The decision rule based on the

mean value was 2.50. Using real limits of number values any item with a mean value of between 3.50-4.00 was regarded as Highly Agreed (HA), while a mean value of between 2.50-3.49 was regarded as Moderately Agreed (MA) Also mean values between 1.50-2.49 were regarded as Not Agreed (NA) and mean values between 1.00-1.49 were regarded as Highly Not Agreed (HNA). Pre-decision and intermediate decision arrived at in answering research questions 1, 2 and 3 complemented the final decisions in answering research question 4. Thus, where Agreed in research question 1, 2 and 3=Acceptable and Proposed in research question 4. Where Not Agreed in research question 1, 2 and 3= Not Accepted and Not Proposed in research question 4. For test of hypotheses, where the Sig. value (equal P-value) is greater than the alpha value of 0.05%, the null hypothesis was accepted otherwise rejected.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

Research Question One

What are the mean ratings of the responses of Lecturers, Agricultural Extension Agents and Livestock Feed Entrepreneurs on objectives of Anti-Open Grazing Law for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State?

Table 1. Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Respondents on Objectives of Anti-Open Grazing Law for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises in Benue State (N=82)

S/N	Item	\bar{X}_1	\bar{X}_2	\bar{X}_3	SD_1	SD_2	SD_3	\bar{X}_G	SD_G	Decision
SECTION: Objectives of Anti-Open Grazing Law in Benue State										
1	To address the conflicts between farmers and herders	3.34	3.52	3.42	.98	.70	.80	3.42	.81	Agreed
2	To promote peaceful coexistence between farmers and herders	3.00	3.51	3.55	1.22	.92	.86	3.35	.93	Agreed
3	To protect the environment from the degradation and loss of biodiversity.	3.66	3.64	3.48	.80	.67	.71	3.59	.70	Agreed
4	To promote modern livestock farming practices	3.98	3.66	3.58	.54	.67	.42	3.74	.62	Agreed
5	To ensure the safety and security of the citizens.	3.74	3.57	3.59	.46	.55	.54	3.63	.46	Agreed
6	To ensure accountability and transparency in the livestock industry.	3.00	3.61	3.45	1.20	.94	.82	3.35	.93	Agreed

7	To boost the economy of Benue State in the livestock industry.	3.02	3.44	3.25	1.02	.92	.84	3.23	.92	Agreed
8	To provide a legal and regulatory framework for the management of conflicts arising from grazing.	3.64	3.64	3.58	.82	.67	.76	3.62	.66	Agreed
9	To create an atmosphere of peace and stability for development.	3.90	3.64	3.58	.44	.67	.74	3.70	.68	Agreed

Key: where N = Number of respondents; \bar{X}_1 = Mean response of Lecturers; \bar{X}_2 = Mean response of Agricultural Extension Agents; \bar{X}_3 = Mean response Livestock Feeds Entrepreneurs; SD_1 = Standard Deviation of Lecturers; SD_2 = Standard Deviation of Agricultural Extension Agents; SD_3 = Standard Deviation of Livestock Feeds Entrepreneurs;

\bar{X}_G = Grand mean response; SD_G = Grand Standard Deviation

Table 1 reveals 9 items with their grand mean values ranged from 3.23 to 3.74 which were all greater than the cutoff point of 2.50. This indicated that the respondents agreed that all the items were objectives of anti-open grazing law for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State. The 9 items also had their standard deviation value ranged from .46 to .93 which indicated that the respondents were not far from the mean and one another in their opinion.

Table 2. ANOVA for Testing the Differences Among Respondents on Objectives of Anti-Open Grazing Law for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises in Benue State

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.26	2	0.13	3.25	.22
Within Groups	3.25	80	0.04		
Total	3.51	82			

Table 2 shows the p-value of .22 greater than the alpha value of 0.05. This implies that there was statistically no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of lecturers, agricultural extension agents and livestock feeds entrepreneurs on objectives of anti-open grazing law for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises in Benue state. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted

Research Question Two

What are the mean ratings of the responses of Lecturers, Agricultural Extension Agents and Livestock Feed Entrepreneurs on characteristics of the old strategy for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State?

Table 3. Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Respondents on Characteristics of the Old Strategies for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises (N=82)

S/N	Item	\bar{X}_1	\bar{X}_2	\bar{X}_3	SD_1	SD_2	SD_3	\bar{X}_G	SD_G	Decision
1	Undermined ranches establishment phrase	3.38	3.54	3.52	.97	.79	.80	3.48	.81	Agreed
2	Use of home-grown livestock guard	3.00	3.51	3.55	1.22	.92	.86	3.35	.93	Agreed
3	Involved livestock rustling	3.67	3.64	3.58	.80	.67	.71	3.63	.69	Agreed
4	Involved destruction of lives and properties	3.90	3.64	3.58	.44	.67	.74	3.70	.68	Agreed
5	Poor refugee attention	3.71	3.67	3.59	.46	.55	.55	3.65	.54	Agreed
6	poverty among the people	3.00	3.51	3.55	1.22	.92	.86	3.35	.93	Agreed

Table 3 reveals 6 items with their Grand Mean values ranged from 3.35 to 3.70 which were all greater than the cutoff point of 2.50. This indicated that the respondents agreed that all the items were characteristics of the old strategies for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises. The 6 items also had their standard deviation value ranged from .54 to .93 which indicated that the respondents were not far from the mean and one another in their opinion.

Table 4. ANOVA for Testing the Differences among Respondents on Characteristics of the Old Strategies for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.26	2	.130	4.81	.62
Within Groups	2.23	80	.027		
Total	2.49	82			

Table 4 shows the p-value of .62 greater than the alpha value of 0.05. This implies that there was no statistically significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of lecturers, agricultural extension agents and livestock feeds entrepreneurs on characteristics of the old strategies for mitigating open grazing crises. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted.

Research Question Three

What are the mean ratings of the responses of Lecturers, Agricultural Extension Agents and Livestock Feed Entrepreneurs on New strategies Required for mitigating open grazing crises in livestock feed industry?

Table 5. Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Respondents on New Strategies Required for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises in Benue State (N0 = 82)

S/No	Item	\bar{X}_1	\bar{X}_2	\bar{X}_3	SD_1	SD_2	SD_3	\bar{X}_G	SD_G	Decision
Characteristic Required in the New Strategies for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises										
1	Humane	3.67	3.64	3.58	.80	.67	.71	3.63	.69	Agreed
2	Intended to better the lives of the people.	3.38	3.54	3.52	.97	.79	.80	3.48	.81	Agreed
3	Mind ranches establishment phrase	3.00	3.51	3.55	1.22	.92	.86	3.35	.93	Agreed
4	Use of resolutions and volunteer guards	3.90	3.64	3.58	.44	.67	.74	3.70	.68	Agreed
5	Avoid livestock wrestling	3.71	3.67	3.59	.46	.55	.55	3.65	.56	Agreed
6	Support refugee by rehabilitation and repatriation programme	2.82	3.24	3.46	.48	.64	.66	3.17	.59	Agreed
Entrepreneurship Training required in Livestock Feed Industry for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises										
7	Rangeland Management	3.00	3.51	3.55	1.22	.92	.86	3.35	.74	Agreed
8	Pasture and Forage Crop Production	2.82	3.24	3.46	.48	.64	.66	3.17	.59	Agreed
9	Livestock Feed Processing	3.00	3.26	3.55	1.42	.92	.86	3.27	.66	Agreed
10	Livestock Feed Marketing	3.10	3.32	3.42	1.22	.90	.86	3.28	.93	Agreed
11	Financing Livestock Feed Enterprise	3.00	3.54	3.22	2.22	.92	.86	3.25	.74	Agreed
Entrepreneurship Support required in Livestock Feed										

Industry for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises										
12	Legal legislative (policy) support	3.26	3.50	3.54	1.22	.92	.86	3.43	.94	Agreed
13	Security support	3.67	3.64	3.58	.80	.67	.71	3.63	.69	Agreed
14	Credit facility support	3.90	3.64	3.58	.44	.67	.74	3.70	.68	Agreed
15	Land repatriation programme support	3.71	3.67	3.59	.46	.55	.55	3.65	.54	Agreed
16	Basic infrastructural support	2.82	3.24	3.46	.48	.64	.66	3.17	.59	Agreed
17	Research and information support	3.42	3.68	3.40	.52	.48	.54	3.50	.51	Agreed

Table 5 reveals 17 items with their Grand Mean values ranged from 3.17 to 3.70 which were all greater than the cutoff point of 2.50. This indicated that the respondents agreed that all the items were features required in the new strategies for mitigating open grazing crises. The 16 items also had their Standard Deviation value ranged from .51 to .93 which indicated that the respondents were not far from the mean and one another in their opinion.

Table 6. ANOVA for Testing the Differences Among Respondents on New Strategies Required for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises in Benue State

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.22	2	.110	2.75	.62
Within Groups	3.21	80	.040		
Total	3.43	82			

Table 6 shows the p-value of .62 greater than the alpha value of 0.05. This implies that there was statistically no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of lecturers, agricultural extension agents and livestock feeds entrepreneurs on the new strategies required for mitigating open grazing crises. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted.

Research Question Four

Which strategies are acceptable and proposed for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State?

Table 7. Acceptable Strategies Proposed for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises in Benue State.

S/No	Item	\bar{X}_G	SD_G	Pre-decision	Intermediate decision	Final decision
Characteristics of the Old Strategy for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises						
1	undermined ranches establishment phrase	3.48	.81	Agreed	Not Acceptable	Not Proposed
2	Use of forceful livestock guard	3.35	.93	Agreed	Not Acceptable	Not Proposed
3	Involved livestock Wrestling	3.63	.69	Agreed	Not Acceptable	Not Proposed
4	Involved destruction of lives and properties	3.70	.68	Agreed	Not Acceptable	Not Proposed
5	Poor refugee attention	3.65	.54	Agreed	Not Acceptable	Not Proposed
6	poverty among the people	3.35	.93	Agreed	Not Acceptable	Not Proposed
Characteristics of the Proposed new Strategy for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises						
7	Humane	3.63	.69	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
8	Intended to better the lives of the people	3.48	.81	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
9	Mindful of ranches establishment	3.35	.93	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
10	Devoid of livestock wrestling	3.70	.68	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
11	Use of resolutions and volunteer Guards	3.65	.56	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
12	Support refugee by rehabilitation and repatriation programme	3.17	.59	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
Entrepreneurship Training in Livestock Feed Industry						

for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises						
13	Rangeland Management	3.35	.74	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
14	Pasture and Forage Crop Production	3.17	.59	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
15	Livestock Feed Processing	3.27	.66	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
16	Livestock Feed Marketing	3.28	.93	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
17	Financing Livestock Feed Enterprise	3.25	.74	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
Entrepreneurship Support in Livestock Feed Industry for Mitigating Open Grazing Crises						
18	Legal legislative (policy) support	3.43	.94	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
19	Security support	3.63	.69	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
20	Land repatriation programme support	3.70	.68	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
21	Credit facility support	3.65	.54	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
22	Basic infrastructural support	3.17	.59	Agreed	Acceptable	Proposed
23	Research and information support	3.56	5.8	Agreed	Accepted	Proposed

Table. 7 shows 23 strategies for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State. The Table revealed at the pre-decision level that; respondents agreed that the first 6 items were identified to be characteristics of the old strategies for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State. However, the same items were not acceptable and not proposed for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State at the intermediate and final decision levels. The Table further revealed other 17 items as strategies for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State which were all agreed, all acceptable and all proposed as strategies for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State.

3.2 Findings and Discussion

Findings of the study identified nine (9) objectives of anti-open grazing law; the objectives include: To address the conflicts between farmers and herders; to promote peaceful coexistence between farmers and herders; to protect the environment from the degradation and loss of biodiversity; to promote modern livestock farming practices; to boost the economy of Benue State in the livestock industry; to provide a legal and regulatory framework for the management of conflicts arising from grazing among other objectives. These findings are in harmony with Jooji (2020) in a statement revealed that the basic provisions of the Benue State Anti-Open Grazing law were to bring peace characterized by respect, justice and goodwill among others.

Findings also identified 6 characteristics of the old strategy for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue state, the characteristics include: Undermined ranches establishment phrase; use of home-grown livestock guards; involved livestock rustling; destruction of lives and properties; poor refugee attention and poverty among the people. This finding agrees with Ugbudu (2021) whose study found out that the Benue State Anti-Open Grazing law was in place to bring peace to the State but it failed to realize its objectives as no ranches were established; and the herdsmen continued to use the border areas with the neighboring states to launch attacks and make incursions into the State to graze in opposition to the law.

Findings again revealed 17 new features required for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State. These include items on characteristics required in a new strategy for mitigating open grazing crises; on entrepreneurship training in livestock feed industry and on entrepreneurship support in livestock feed industry. The finding agreed with Jooji (2020) in a statement that the basic provisions of the Benue State Anti-Open Grazing law include peace; characterized by respect, justice and goodwill among people in a community. Again the finding is in line with Ugbudu (2021) on the statement that the Benue State Anti-Open Grazing law was in place to bring peace to the State but it failed to realize its objectives as no ranches were established; and the herdsmen continued to use the border areas and make incursions into the State to graze in opposition to the law. With these integrated features in the new strategies, it will be possible in realizing the objectives of the Anti-open grazing law in Benue State.

Finally, the study proposed acceptable strategies for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State which features included; Characteristics of the proposed new strategy for mitigating open grazing crisis; entrepreneurship training in livestock feed industry and entrepreneurship support in livestock feed industry. This finding is in harmony with the World Bank (2020) in a report that between 2017-2020, the Multi-Sectorial Crises Recovery Project (MCRP) for Strengthening, Recovery and Peacebuilding in North-East Nigeria, has made key progress on the ground in its implementation approach. Thus, the report had it that 17 peace groups were formed, with capacity building skills. Also psychosocial support services interventions to 13,500 households has been recorded, 687 infrastructure rehabilitation projects including; 295 hand-pump boreholes, 121 solar-powered boreholes, 76 Ventilated Improved Pit latrines, 31 public buildings, 12 schools and 15 hospitals; 178 kilometers (km) of roads and reconstruction of three bridges in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states was recorded and over 105,000 beneficiaries have gained access to rehabilitated roads, hospitals, schools, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities and public buildings.

4.0

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusion

Decision taken to propose a new strategy for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State was based on acceptable items in the opinions of respondents on the overall features of the proposal. In conclusion, a new strategy for mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State was proposed. The proposed new strategy was tagged 'a new paradigm towards mitigating open grazing crises in Benue State, Nigeria'.

4.2 Recommendations

It was recommended that;

- i. The proposed paradigm shift toward mitigating open grazing crises be implemented by the government of Benue State.
- ii. Benue State government should be liberal and humane in approach to all farmers rather than being chaotic and anarchistic in mitigating open grazing crises. In a case of strong external incursion on the land, a strong team of joint forces is preferable to the use of local or home-grown guards.
- iii. There should be a synergy between farmer training programmes (both formal and non-formal) and institutions of support for effective orientation and mobilization of farmers-entrepreneurs into livestock feed ventures.
- iv. Also, government, civil society groups and private investors should collaborate and set up ranches in Benue State.

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