

# Herdsmen/Farmers Conflicts in Kogi State: Security And Developmental Implications

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**Abstract-** One major security and developmental challenge that has attracted much national discourse in the recent past is the conflict between herdsmen and farmers in different parts of the country. The crisis has become a recurring decimal, especially in Kogi State and indeed a time bomb, which appears not to have been given the desired national attention by government at all levels. Irked by the bizarre dimension herdsmen/farmers conflicts have taken in Nigeria in recent time and Kogi State in particular, this research was carried out with a view to proffering solutions that could arrest the ugly situation and prevent it from becoming a monster like Boko Haram crisis. Thus, this research was carried out to achieve the following objectives:

1. Identify the root causes of herders/farmers conflicts in Kogi State.
2. Examine the security implications of the herders/farmers conflicts in Kogi State.
3. Examine the socio-economic implications of herders/farmers conflicts in Kogi State.
4. Proffer workable solutions that can be put in place by both the Federal and Kogi state Government to resolve the herders/farmers conflict in Kogi State.

The study was a survey research. Three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The area of study is Kogi State. Data for the study were generated from primary and secondary sources. The instruments used for data collection were questionnaire and interview. The population for the study was drawn from farmers, herders, traditional rulers, community leaders and security agents from the study area. The data collected were presented and analyzed using qualitative and quantitative approaches. Descriptive statistics was used with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16. Findings were made based on the tested significance level of the responses as revealed by the standard deviation analysis. Based on the results of the analysis, the study categorized the causes of herders/farmers conflicts in Kogi state into **major** and **incidental** factors. The major factor centred on economic use of land resources while incidental factors include policy framework, deficient response and demographic, ecological/environmental factors. Far reaching recommendations were made among which were: the need for definite policy enactment on use of land resources as it relates to grazing lands as well as establishment of Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms (ADRM) for

resolving disputes between farmers and herdsmen as the conflict groups (farmers/herders) have lost confidence in the Nigerian judicial system, establishment of ranches, combating desertification and mop up of illicit arms amongst others.

**Index Terms-** Farmers, Herdsmen, Conflict, Land use, Economy.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The herdsmen/farmers conflict in Nigeria in the past few years especially in the last five years or so portends a very great danger and a serious security threat to peace, unity, and socio-economic development of the country and Kogi State in particular. Pages of newspapers and empirical studies are replete with stories of massive killings arising from the conflicts between herders/farmers across various States in Nigeria particularly Kogi State.

Areas affected by the conflict in the North Central Zone include Kogi, Benue, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, which have left heavy casualty figures, (Chinweizu, 2015 and Abiodu, 2016). Other parts of the country affected by the crisis include Ukpabi Nimbo in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State, Oyo, Ekiti, Ondo, Osun, Abia, Anambra, Delta, and Edo states respectively. Virtually all States in Nigeria have had (or are still experiencing) the herdsmen/farmers conflict (Abraham, 2017).

Many writers, commentators and researchers have expressed different opinions and dimensions to the causes of these conflicts. Some people see it from the cultural/historical perspective of nomadic pastoralism and climate change, (Adogi, (2013); Stone, (2013). Yet, others see it from socio-economic perspective and the struggle for resource control (Abba, 2008). Other groups also view the conflicts from ethno-religious angle, while another school of thought views the crisis from the land use planning occasioned by land tenure system in Nigeria (Isah, 2012). Those who subscribe to the land resource control premised their arguments on the presumption that farmers believe that they are the traditional owners of the land and are strongly in support of the old order which gives them inheritance of land as ancestry hereditary, patrimonial and transmissible and opposed to any unauthorized occupation or intrusion on their lands by herdsmen for forceful grazing. The herdsmen on the other hand, want free access to any grazing land for their cattle and reject or

oppose to the old order of land as hereditary and transmissible. In pursuance of these conflicting interests by the two parties, clashes ensued.

Reports in newspapers and empirical studies have indicated that there are tensions in any parts of country including Kogi State as a result of incessant conflicts between herders/farmers. The dimension the conflict has taken in recent past is left much to be desired. If the problem of herdsman/farmers conflict is not tackled early enough and with dispatch too, it could lead to deviant defeatism and may be more catastrophic than Boko Haram crisis because of its spread, and sophistication which may degenerate into a threat to national security, peace and development.

It is interesting to note that the rapid escalation, spread and frightening dimension that the herdsman/farmers crises have assumed in recent time, and the increasing use of sophisticated weapons as well as the impunity with which they carry out their dastardly acts call for a very serious early decisive attention to the issue in order not to allow this time bomb to degenerate beyond control. In an increasingly interconnected and complex world, it has become clear that security and development are inextricably linked, especially in a developing nation like Nigeria. Threats to security can have socio-economic implications which could impinge on development if not tackled early enough.

As the world sets a new global agenda for sustainable development, security and development research becomes very crucial to bridge these two domains. Thus, the 2003 European Security Strategy and the 2005 European Consensus on Development acknowledged the fact that there cannot be sustainable development without peace and security, and that without development and poverty eradication, there will be no sustainable peace (The WRC<sup>3</sup>, 2017). Literatures have shown that conflicts have enormous costs in terms of human, financial and infrastructure resources. Hence, International Cooperation and Development, (2017) strongly noted that Development cooperation must tackle the root causes of conflicts as instability, insecurity, violence, organized crime etc not only deter investment, hinder trade, divert public social expenditure and hamper access to development, but also severally weaken democracy, human rights and the rule of law which are core values of development (ICD, 2017). It is for the foregoing reasons that this study was carried out to identify the immediate and remote causes of herdsman and farmers conflicts in Kogi State with a view to finding lasting solutions to the problem so as to pave way for peace, harmony and development.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS/JUSTIFICATION

There has been hue and cry by many people in various communities across Kogi State on the incessant herdsman/farmers conflicts in the recent past. The conflicts have taken new dangerous dimension to the extent that the clashes have become so frequent culminating into killings, maiming, and in some cases burning of houses and invasion of communities. Cases in point include various communities in Kogi State such as Agojeju-Idaka in Dekina Local Government Area where herders invaded the village early hours of the morning in October, 2015

and killed about 23 persons, destroyed properties and burnt down houses. Egbolo in Igalamela/Odolu Local Government Area, Umomi in Ofu Local Government Area, and the most recent was the 2018 attack in Omala Local Government Area in Kogi State where the following communities were affected by the attack – Ajichekpa, Opada, and Agbenema, while Amuro in Mopa Moro Local Government area in Kogi West and a host of other communities had experienced the same fate (Oladipo, (2018). In each of these conflicts lives were lost, property worth billions of Naira destroyed and houses were burnt. It has been observed that in the very recent past, herdsman/farmers conflicts have increased exponentially.

Many people have attributed the conflicts to different factors such as cultural/historical, backdrop of nomadic pastoralism (Adogi, 2013). Others also attributed the causes of the conflicts to factors such as migration due to climate change, Boko Haram insurgency, policy on land law and land resource control system (Okpaleke, 2016).

Whatever may be the perceived/presumed causes, it is germane to state that a thorough research is necessary with a view to unearthing the actual causes of the conflict so as to take proactive measures that could put a stop to the herders/farmers conflict. The continuous neglect of this all important challenge poses a great threat to peace, unity, security and socio-economic development of the State and Nigeria at large as any problem in any part of the country directly or indirectly hinder national development. This research work was therefore undertaken with a view to proffering solutions that could identify early warning signals, use conflict risk analysis method and mediation to prevent eventual crisis.

Going by the foregoing backdrop, this study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the causes of herders/farmers conflicts in Kogi State?
2. What are the security implications of herders/farmers in Kogi State?
3. How does farmers and herders conflict affect the social and economic development of Kogi State?
4. What policy measures can be put in place by both the Federal and State Governments to resolve herders/farmers conflicts in Kogi State?

## III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study examined the causes of herdsman/farmers conflict in Kogi State.

More specifically the study:

1. Identified the immediate and remote causes of herdsman/farmers conflicts in Kogi State.
2. Examined the security implications of herdsman/farmers conflicts in Kogi State.
3. Examined the social and economic implications of farmers/herders conflict in Kogi State.
4. Proffered mitigative measures that could lead to the resolution of herders/farmers conflict in Kogi State.

#### IV. HYPOTHESES

1. **H<sub>0</sub>:** Herders/farmers conflict in Kogi State emanates from the struggle for economic use of land resources.

**H<sub>i</sub>:** Herders/farmers conflict in Kogi State does not emanate from the struggle for economic use of land resources.

2. **H<sub>0</sub>:** Herders/farmers conflict constitutes security threat to Kogi State.

**H<sub>i</sub>:** Herders/farmers conflict does not constitute security threat to Kogi State.

3. **H<sub>0</sub>:** Farmers/herders conflict impedes socio-economic development of Kogi State.

**H<sub>i</sub>:** Farmers/herders conflict does not impede socio-economic development of Kogi State.

#### V. LITERATURE REVIEW

##### HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF NOMADIC PASTORALISM

Nomadic pastoralism is a form of agriculture where livestock such as cattle, sheep, goats and camels are taken to different locations in order to graze on fresh pastures. According to New World Encyclopedia, nomadic pastoralism is commonly practiced in regions with little arable land, typically in developing world. The New World Encyclopedia also identified three basic kinds of nomads, namely hunter gatherers, pastoral nomads and peripatetic nomads. Nomadic hunter gatherers have been probably identified as the original life style of most indigenous people world over as they subsist harvesting seasonally available wild plants and game. Pastoral nomads, on the other hand raise herds and move about with them with the intent of obtaining fresh pastures to graze, hence their continuous movement from place to place, while peripatetic or tinker nomads travel from place to place offering trades and services wherever they go. Peripatetic nomads are said to be commonly found in industrialized states. The diverse groups that are commonly called Gypsies are the typical examples (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica). Pastoral nomads who depend on domesticated livestock migrate in an established territory to find pastures for their flocks, with the focal sites that they occupy for a considerable periods of the year (Encyclopedia Britannica).

Historically, nomadism appears to have been the earliest type of human society. However, most such cultures are now extinct with only a few tribes still living with nomadic life style. As noted in the World Encyclopedia, as human societies evolve, different life styles emerged, many of them sedentary, hence nomadism declined significantly. Thus, the development of modern agriculture, industrialization and technology have come to change the hitherto life style. Pastoral nomadism have declined severally in the 20<sup>th</sup> century for both economic and political reasons, including the spread of systematic agriculture, the growth of industry and the policies of governments (world over) that view nomadism as incompatible with modernity (Encyclopedia Britannica).

In the early days of nomadism, the relations between farmers and herders, especially in Africa were characterized by close reciprocal ties often referred to as symbiotic. However, the reciprocal ties and symbiotic relationships have waned due to

many factors such as breakdown of traditional social ties, Hussein (1998), population increase, Ibrahim et al, (2017), live-hood interference, Dimelu et al, (2017), land use/land tenure system, (International Crisis Group Report 2017). The waned relationship between herders and farmers created a gap which culminated into the development of cold war between farmers and herders resulting into the present open conflicts.

#### VI. ORIGIN OF FARMERS/HERDERS CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA

It has not been easy situating the origin and main causes of conflicts between sedentary farmers and Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria. Many presumed reasons have been adduced in literature ranging from historical background of Nigerian herdsmen, economic, ethno-religious, political to climate change.

Tracing the history of herdsmen in Nigeria, Danver, (2015) noted that Hausa Language speakers interpret the term Fulani largely describing the nomadic people commonly found across West Africa. Historical pundits also trace the history of nomadism in Nigeria to the backdrop of Fulani herdsmen of Futa Jalon in the present day Guinea specifically Takrur on the Futa Jalon highlands of the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Tordoft and Fage, 2013). The innate behaviour of Fulani origin of Futa Jalon background was said to be settling and razing as strangers in unused parcel of land, and that it is normally expected that they breach pre-existing security protocols and order and would move to conquer any less powerful land owners and tribes (Mandal, 1990, Sotunde, 2016). This type of behaviour, according to Abraham (2017) is characteristic of the Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria which has consistently defined their strategy by friendly occupation before getting into hostilities, with the host communities.

Historical antecedents showed that the Fulani's who migrated to the Northern Nigeria were of the Futa Jalon origin who upturned the political equation in Jalonke and then started competing for power with the indigenous people from 1726 – 1750 (Hammond, 1961). This backdrop, according to Makiberidze, (2013) in Abraham (2017) unarguably laid the foundation for violence attack by Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria.

The pattern and mode of Fulani herdsmen attacks on host communities in Nigeria over the years, have been sources of controversy with arguments skewed around religious, social-economic and ethnic dimensions Mikailu (2016). According to a study of the attack carried out on Batern Village in Riyon Local Government Area of Plateau State in March, 2010, it showed that the attack repeated a historical pattern of besieging a community with imported trained mercenary fighting forces (Emeni, 2012). Again, the report of the attack by herdsmen on Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State in 2016 where it was claimed that over 40 villagers were said to have been killed was also said to have been executed by imported mercenary, Sandra and Oyiyepe et al, (2016), Sotubo (2016).

Those who view farmers/herders conflict from the economic perspective assert that the struggle over the use of land resources for livelihood and economic interests has been at the centre of farmers and herders conflicts in Nigeria (Zayyad, 2018). For instance, a study carried out by Ibrahim et al (2015) showed that the increase in crop farming in wetland areas and the expansion in grazing land areas have been sources for conflict

between farmers and herders in Nigeria. The study further showed that there has been an increase in agricultural land uses in all parts of the country, with the major change appearing to be intensive row crop farming covering large areas in Taraba, Benue, Nasarawa, Jigawa and parts of Cross River, Oyo and Niger States. In the same vein, the study also revealed that extensive grazing has also expanded with the main expansions covering lands in Taraba, Plateau, and Kwara States. The summary on the study of land use by farmers and herders showed that intensive row crops consumed 43,778.60km of the Nigeria's total land area, while extensive grazing consumed 21,913.75km of the country's total land area, (Ibrahim et al 2015). The study further revealed that the increase in the land use by both farmers and the herders brought about some form of overlap, that is, an extension or encroachment of one into another leading to more competition over available land space for utilization by the two interest groups.

As rightly observed by Rashid (2012), the multifarious uses of land and its limitedness have necessitated that various shades of competition for its uses must ensue. Thus, Rashid noted that competition for land between and within various user groups (for economic purposes) has been the centre of mankind conflict since time immemorial.

Tenuche (2009) observed that conflicts arose in the Benue Valley as a result of loss of land which the people considered as the basis of their social, economic and spiritual existence. Tenuche (2009) further noted that a high percentage of conflicts in Benue arising from land disputes have to do with land matters and conflict between Fulani herdsmen and farmers over grazing land. He also observed that the inability of the state (government) to address the indigene and settler phenomenon in Nigerian constitution, the unresolved issues of grazing land and water spots which are central to the economic survival of both the herders and farmers, and the Nigerian land tenure system which has had serious implications for land acquisition by the peasants and the low class are factors that keep the conflict lingering, since the economic lives of both the farmers and herders revolve around the use of land resources. Thus, causes of herdsmen/farmers conflicts linked to economic interests as outlined by Adisa (2012) include inequitable access to land, diminishing land resources, antagonistic values among user groups, policy contradiction and non-recognition of rights of indigenous people.

Other scholars and writers attribute the conflict between farmers and herdsmen to ethno-religious and reprisal factors, Musa et al (2014). Such view was also expressed by the International Crisis Group Report of September 19, 2017 where it was observed that the conflicts, particularly herdsmen attacks on farming communities have spawned dangerous political and religious conspiracy theories. Noting that one of such theories is that the attacks are part of a longer term Fulani plot to displace indigenous populations and seize their lands. While among Christian communities, herdsmen attacks are widely seen as a subtle form of Jihad, the International Crisis Group Report added.

The interview conducted by the International Crisis Group as reported in the September 19, 2017 edition read in part:

In March 2016, the Prelate of the Methodist Church of Nigeria, Dr. Samuel Uche said: we are aware there is a game

plan to Islamise Nigeria, and they are using Fulani herdsmen to initiate it.

In the South East, the Biafra separatist groups describe the attacks as part of a Northern plot to overwhelm the peoples of the South and forcefully convert them to Islam.

However, the Crisis Group Report concluded that the above charges are not supported by any solid concrete evidence but that such comments are capable of aggravating inter-faith distrust and undermining the country's fragile unity.

Others who frown at the religious dimension being introduced into the conflict include President of America, Donald Trump and the Nigerian President Buhari. The two leaders condemned the attacks in strong terms. President Trump on his part said; "we have had very serious problems with Christians who are being murdered in Nigeria. We are going to work on that problem very, very hard because we cannot allow that to happen". President Buhari on his own part also knowing the implications of the incident had this to say: "this latest assault on innocent persons is particularly despicable. Violating a place of worship, killing Priests and worshipers is not only vile, evil and satanic, it is clearly calculated to stoke up religious conflict and plunge our communities into endless bloodletting" (Business Day, 2018).

The statement credited to T.Y. Danjuma on March 24, 2018 on the herdsmen/farmers conflict in Nigeria also corroborated the ethno-religious theorists. T.Y. Danjuna, a onetime Minister of Defence, called on Nigerians to rise and defend themselves against ethnic cleansing at the maiden convocation ceremony of Taraba State University, Jalingo. His statement read in part: *you must rise to protect yourselves from the people (the Fulani's), if you depend on the Armed Forces to protect you, you will all die. This ethnic cleansing must stop in Taraba and it must stop in Nigeria; these killers have been protected by the military, they cover them and you must be watchful to guide and protect yourselves because you have no any other place to go. The ethnic cleansing must stop now; otherwise Somalia will be a child's play* (Vanguard News March, 24, 2018).

The accusation by T.Y. Danjuma was also corroborated by the report in the Vanguard News, March 27, 2018 as reported by David which chronicled the efforts made by the Taraba State Government by reporting various threats of attack to presidency and the military high command but that no action was taken by either the presidency or the military high command.

In the series of communications between the Taraba State Government, the presidency and the military high command, David, (2018) noted, the State Government had severally drawn the attention of the presidency to the activities of military commanders in the State who turned blind eye to series of attacks by the armed men against local farmers and natives of the state, some of such letters, as reported by David in the Vanguard include, the accusation by the State Government of military collusion against the Taraba people, paving way for the herdsmen militia to attack; a letter to the Chief of Army Staff dated February 23, 2016 where the State Government accused the military of disrespect for the Office of the Governor as the Chief Security Officer of the State, a letter to the Presidency on the threat to peace in the State involving Fulani herdsmen and Tiv which led to the sacking of about 200 settlements in Gassol, Bali, Ibi, Donga and Gashaka Local Government Areas by

herdsmen believed to have moved into the State from neighbouring countries, and several others, but that the government did not take any positive action (David, 2018).

However, the Director of Defence Information of the Nigerian Army, Brig. Gen. John Agim refuted the allegations by T.Y. Danjuma and the Tartaba State Governor, and said that the military has been neutral and has been carrying out its constitutional duties (Vanguard, March 27, 2018).

Moreover, other writers who still view the attack from ethno-religious angle accused the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria and its leaders of being the brain behind the attacks (Global Terrorism Index Report, 2015). The Global Terrorism Index Report accused the Fulani militant herdsmen under the Miyetti Allah, of not just a terrorist group, but the world fourth deadliest. Again, the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria refuted the allegation and exonerated their members from any vicious terrorist crime, but blame such attacks on Fulani herdsmen from other West African countries (Ojo, 2016). The argument against the above defence by Miyetti Allah, according to Abraham (2017) is that if it is true that Fulani herdsmen from other West African regions are the ones attacking farming communities in Nigeria, why are such illegal aliens not arrested by the Nigerian Security Forces, and why are (some of) the Northern leaders and government officials defending their murderous atrocities against Nigerian citizens? That is why it is believed in some quarters that the attacks are sponsored and ordered from the 'above' by people like Fulani Emirs, Governors, Senators and other top Fulani bourgeoisie, (Olanian, in Abraham (2017). These calibers of people with Fulani ancestral ties are said to own most of the cattle and co-opt the cooperation of Fulani Security Officers which explains where the AK47 rifles come from (Eweka, 2017).

The foregoing school of thought, though not yet empirically substantiated with any concrete and empirical data/evidence, also corroborated the alarm raised by T.Y. Danjuma and other Nigerians and alluded to the fact that there could be some form of neglect, incompetence or overt or covert collusion by some powerful individuals. That is why the Catholic Bishop of Gboko, Williams Avenya as reported by Tor (2018) in Independent News, reminded the Vice President Yemi Osinbajo of the campaign promises of President Buhari that he would protect the interest of all Nigerians including citizens of minority ethnic groups if voted into power, noting that the killing of Christians and members of the minority ethnic group particularly in Benue State had proved that the Federal Government under Buhari was not living up to expectation (Tor, 2018).

In his reaction to the claim of religious coloration to the killing, Osinbajo averred that there was no religious matter, but if it was, he would not mind resigning his appointment as the Vice President. Osinbajo also debunked allegations that there was an agenda to Islamise the nation (Tor, 2018).

s Ofuoku and Isife (2009) citing Tonah (2006) opined that since farmers and herders groups have very different values, customs, physical and cultural features, disputes between them are frequently characterized as ethnic conflict. Ofuoke and Isife (2009) concluded that the feeling of belongingness that is extant among the members of the group is focused around their

economic interest and the protection of the values, culture and power. Noting further, they observed that the Fulani nomadic cattle rearers, being a minority in host communities have their unique culture and strong sense of solidarity and are often isolated from the farming population. Given the foregoing scenario, conflict between them and the farming population of the host community is always regarded as having ethnic coloration. A study carried out by Umar (2002) on pastoral agricultural conflict in Zamfara State revealed that Hausa farmers and the Fulani herdsmen have some perceptions for each other which affect their relationship. The study revealed that while the Fulani's see the Hausas as 'kado' (infidels or unbelievers) whose property can be used without offending God, the Hausas see the Fulani's as intruders, uncivilized and uninformed. These perceptions, according to Dimelu et al (2017) have been on since the Jihad of Sokoto caliphate and they have been at logger head triggering conflict at any slightest provocation.

Another school of thought which attributed the cause of the conflict to geographic factors opined that, the crisis emanated from the climatic condition which has pushed the herdsmen from the North to look for greener pastures to the Middle Belt region and the Southern parts of the country (International Crisis Group Report, 2017). This school of thought anchored its argument on drought and desertification. The International Crisis Group Report (2017) observed that Nigeria's far north is arid and semi-arid with a long dry season from October to May and low rainfall (600 to 900mm) from June to September. In 2008, the National Meteorological Agency reported that over the past thirty years, the annual rainy season dropped from an average 150 to 120 days; adding that in the last six decades, over 350,000sq km of the already arid region turned to deserts or desert like conditions. The report further indicated that in Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Jigawa, Kano, Kastisna, Kebbi, Sokoto, Yobe and Zamfara States, estimates suggested that 50 – 75% of the land area was becoming desert. These environmental changes wreaked havoc to agriculture and human livelihood, compelling pastoralists and others to migrate south in search of greener pastures.

The migration was initially seasonal where herders migrate from December to May to the Central Zone before returning to the North, but later herders started staying longer up to June or July due to climate change, while more recently some herders become more sedentary and prefer to graze their herds there permanently. This situation has aggravated dispute on land resources utilization between farmers and herders in the north central zone.

Another related area of the causes of the conflict between farmers and herders identified in the International Crisis Group (2017) is the loss of grazing reserves. The Report revealed that most of the 415 grazing reserves established by the Northern regional government in the 1960s have since been lost, with only 114 formally documented or demarcated. Equally too, it was observed in the Report that the government did not back the establishment of the grazing reserves with legislation which could guarantee exclusive usage or take active measures to prevent encroachment (interview with the Miyetti Allah by the ICG (2016). State creation, population growth and other developmental factors connived to overrun the land hitherto

designated as grazing reserves making herders to seek for pastures elsewhere.

The changing patterns of pastoralism and farming have also been identified as some of the factors that contributed to increase in herders and farmers conflict. Literatures indicated that over the last three decades, some cattle herders have gradually become sedentary, leaving cattle herding to very young and inexperienced youths who always violate the hitherto rules of the game by grazing on farm crops. This always leads to crisis escalation.

The International Crisis Group Report (2016) observed that the introduction of Agricultural Development Projects in the 1970s encouraged expand land cultivation thus, shrinking areas left for grazing. In the same vain, the introduction of Fadama Development Projects produce little residue for livestock feeding, complicating and diminishing available fodder, making the competition for use of land resources stiffer than ever before, especially in the absence of negotiations between farmers and herders to secure access to grazing grounds and livestock routes (International Crisis Group Interview, 2016). The foregoing analysis also agrees with Akpaki (2002) who said that farmers increasingly compete with nomadic herders for farmland, pastures, water, trees and the use of range land. The interview conducted by the International Crisis Group (2016) indicated that farmers ignored the 1988 National Agricultural Policy Provisions that 20 percent of the flood-plains be set aside for grazing. This neglect has made the competition between farmers and herders stiffer.

Rural banditry and cattle rustling have also been identified as some of the factors that precipitated the movement of herders from the core north to North Central and Southern parts of the country (Egwu, 2016). The main theatres of rural banditry and cattle rustling have been identified to be Kanuku forest in Kaduna, Falgore forest in Kano, Dansadau forest in Zamfara and Davin Rugu forest stretching through Kaduna, Katsina and Zamfara States (International Crisis Group Report, 2017).

Other supposed causes of the conflict which could be termed incidental causes of the conflict include escalating conflicts across Northern Nigeria which have displaced herders and made them to move southward and the erosion of traditional mechanisms (International Crisis Group (2010) . The erosion of traditional mechanism was said to begin with the involvement of the Police and Courts in disputes resolution between farmers and herders in the 1970s which were fraught with competition thereby creating more crisis between the farmers and the herders. Instead of amicable resolution, the matter became the highest bidder gets justice which was alien to herders and farmers alike. This was also exacerbated by the interference of the political class in conflict management who were not transparent enough in the process of their mediation, as political consideration dominated the process of mediation, which brought about more confusion and mistrust (International Crisis Group Interview Report, 2016).

Other incidental causes include arms proliferation arising from weapons from various sources such as Libya's looted stockpiles which created opportunity for people to have easy access to arms, including assault rifles. This was equally corroborated by the statement credited to the Nigeria President Buhari while speaking with the Arch Bishop of Canterbury in

London on April 11, 2018, when he said that attacks by herdsmen in Nigeria were carried out by Libya's Muamar Gadhafi strayed trained militia who found their ways into Nigeria (Sahara Reporters (2018). This statement from the Nigerian President was utterly condemned by a cross section of Nigerians as reported by Emmanuel Okagba in the Vanguard News of April 19, 2018, saying that utterances of such from the Nigerian President showed a lack of competence on the side of government whose primary responsibility it is to defend the integrity of the country from any external aggression.

Population increase has also been identified in literature as one of the factors responsible for the herders and farmers conflict. The population growth rate of Nigeria per year is put at 3.2% as recorded by the National Population Commission (2012), while population continues to increase, the land mass remains static. As rightly observed by the Minister of Information and Culture, Lai Mohammed (2018), he said in 1963, the Nigeria's population was 52 million but in 2018, the population was estimated to be over 180 million, yet the land space has remained the same. Against this background, he notd, the contest for land and other natural resources is bound to be keener and more friction, (Oyeyemi in the Vanguard News, May 17, 2018).

Others who view the crises from population perspective include Dimelu et al (2017) who observed that population growth of herds and human has brought about more competition over the use of land resources.

Other causes of the conflict include livelihood failure and vulnerability (Philip, 2010) and government failure to implement policies. The 1988 National Agricultural Policy provided for a minimum of 10% of National territory, that is, 9.8 million acres of land to be allocated to grazing reserves. However, only 2.82% was said to have been acquired (Ibrahim, 2015), controversy on land use Act 1978 which prevented the National Assembly from enacting the National Grazing Route and Reserve Bill, (Kumolu, 2014) are all contributory factors to farmers and herders crisis in Nigeria as the law on land failed to give clear demarcation of crop and grazing lands. The lack of clear demarcation for grazing creates competition between farmers and herders.

Politicization of crises has also been seen as one of the causes of escalation of farmers/herders conflicts in Nigeria. This was succinctly explained by the International Crisis Group Report of September 19, 2017, where it was noted that:

More often, the country's dysfunctional law enforcement and criminal justice system fails to arrest and/or prosecute any perpetrators. Moreover, authorities have generally treated these crimes as political rather than criminal acts, arguing that sanctioning suspects could spark further violence. Even if commissions of inquiry are established, they typically are used as instruments to temper tensions rather than pursue justice. These responses, however well meaning, create a climate of impunity.

The above observation by the International Crisis Group Report (2017) was supported by empirical evidence of inaction of government in various crises across the country including the Agatu herders and farmers conflict in Benue State in 2016, Ukpabi Nimbo attack in Enugu State in April, 2016, Southern Kaduna clashes in late 2016 where about 200 – 800 people were said to have been killed (International Crisis Group Report, 2017).

Literatures showed that the lack of adequate, transparent, decisive and early actions by the Federal Government has generated a number of reactions which threaten the unity of the country as many militia groups are being formed by various states across the country, such group include self-defence vigilante group by some communities in the Middle Belt Region. One of such comments was made by Leonard Kashima Shilgba, an ethnic Tiv leader in March 2014 when he warned that if the Federal Government could not stop the attacks, the Tiv people would also demonstrate that they equally have the right and the capacity to raise standing army of thousands from each ward and kindred (The source, 2014). Other reactions include the threat by the movement for Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra ordering Fulani herdsmen to vacate Biafra Land or face their wrath (Vanguard, April 27, 2016), a sound of warning by the then Ekiti State Governor, Ayodele Fayose of possible attacks on Fulani herdsmen if their alleged predatory behaviour against the locals continued (International Crisis Group Report, 2017).

These reactions are enough warning signals for serious government to take proactive actions to prevent attacks and reprisal attacks, which is ominous.

## VII. SECURITY IMPLICATIONS OF FARMERS AND HERDERS CONFLICTS

An important aspect of changed nature of the conflict between herdsmen and farmers has been the increasing availability and use of modern sophisticated weapons which not only constitute security threat to the means of livelihood of the conflict groups but also threatens the nation. Thus, Moritz, (2010) rightly observed herdsmen-farmers conflicts not only have direct impact on lives of those involved, they also disrupt and threaten the sustainability of agricultural and pastoral production in West Africa, and invariably the sustainability of the livelihoods of the rural communities. Hence, the primary impact of the conflict is the resultant food insecurity. That is why Adetula (2007) noted that more often, crop farmers are highly vulnerable, perhaps due to the subsistence, small scale, rudimentary system of production and over dependence on natural resources for livelihood. In the same vein, Attah (2012) equally observed that farmers have limited resources and are dependent on rainfall, traditional farming implements, family are hired labour with poor access to institutional and infrastructural facilities (input, advisory services and market information, roads, etc) which have implications for yield per hectare, and any threat to the farmers constitute serious threat to food security with its attendant negative multiplier effects.

International Crisis Group Report (2017) indicated that proliferation of light arms and infiltration of looted stockpiles from Libya, constitute great security implication that is heightening conflict in Nigeria. As indicated in the said Report, easy access to small arms, including assault rifles, make the conflict situation more dangerous, as weapons come from various sources, some local, others from black markets across West and Central Africa.

This situation has made the conflict groups (herdsmen and farmers) to have easy access to weapons. Thus, the increasing prevalence of weapons has simplified the human cost. The

International Crisis Group Report (2017) noted that there may be wider regional implications of herdsmen vs farmers conflicts as a major confrontation involving Fulani herdsmen could draw into Nigeria their brethren from beyond Nigeria as they could mobilize support including fighters from several West and Central African countries which could worsen the security situation. The said report corroborated Spring, (1993) who noted that Fulani herdsmen that migrated to Nigeria were already in the act of organized mercenary fighting force which was what they applied during Uthman Danfodio's Jihad war in Northern Nigeria. Equally too, a study carried out by Emeni (2012) on the crisis in Batern in Riyon Local Government Area of Plateau State indicated that mercenaries were deployed. The mercenary approach was also said to have been deployed in various other herdsmen – farmers crises such as Benue and Kogi States, George (2014), Nimbo in Uzuwani Local Government Area of Enugu State, in 2016 (Sandra and Oyiyebo, 2016), Kaduna (Aljazeera News, 2014).

The mercenary approach also validates the raiding approach as a means of forcefully obtaining more land by Fulani cattle rearers, as explained by Oba (1992) where one pastoralist group could make an area unstable for others by constantly raiding the other groups with the intent of weakening the other group so as to take over the land.

Again, investigations carried out by Premium Time in 2016 showed that attacks by herdsmen in the North-Central Nigerian State of Benue had led to the killing of at least 1,269 persons between 2013 to July 2016.

A study carried out by Abraham (2017) reported that the spate of killing and the intensity it takes pose serious security challenge to the Nigerian nationhood. Abraham (2017) further reported that between 2012 and 2016, herdsmen attacks across the country led to the death toll of about 9,037 and over 5,991 injured. Between 2017 to 2018, the attacks continued unabated with more frequencies and high intensity across the North Central States, particularly Benue, Kogi, Nasarawa, Kwara and Plateau. In Kogi State, it was reported by Olaniyi and Akubo (2018) that herdsmen invaded three communities in Dekina and Omala Local Government areas leaving at least 35 people dead. The communities attacked according to report included Oganenigu, Ojiapata, Iyale and Ojoo in Dekina Local Government Area, while in Omala Local Government Area Obakume, Abejukolo, Agojeju-Ikpoba and Ogo communities were said to have been attacked. This was said to be a reprisal attack for 2016 altercation that led to the death of four Fulani herdsmen and a number of cattle, (Olaniyi and Akubo, 2018), Oladipo, (2018).

As revealed from available literature, it has been observed that from 2011 to 2016, herdsmen attacks have occurred in virtually all states of the federation, with Kebbi State having only one of such attack in 2014 (S.B. Morgan Intelligence Report 2016). This report was also supported by Abraham (2017) whose findings revealed that the established pattern of attacks, injuries, deaths and timing suggests that herdsmen attacks obviously poses a great threat to contemporary security situation in the Nigeria. The security threat of herdsmen attacks as observed by Asabo (2017) may create a hydra headed security challenge that may become more monstrous than the challenge

posed by Boko Haram terrorists because of the spread of herdsmen attack across the country.

The summary of the frequency of the attacks across the country for a period of five years, 2012 – 2016 as noted in Abraham (2017) put the figure at 830 times throughout the country (see appendix 1). That is why Crisis Group Report of September 19, 2017 warned that the geographical spread and escalation of the conflicts could put Nigeria security forces under greater stress.

Security implications of climate change and the likely effects on the Sahel were widely documented in literature. The most striking and widely referred to is the Solana Report of 2008 which identified the likely threat that may be posed by climate change and sent a warning signal to Africa in 2008. The report, according to Philipp (2010) identified seven climate change related threats to state and global security which it hypothesized that they may not necessarily degenerate into armed conflict. The Solana Report viewed climate change as a threat multiplier which could exacerbate existing trends, tensions and instabilities. The report as cited in Philipp (2010) read in part:

These threats and forms of conflict cover all countries, however, Africa is identified as one of the continents most vulnerable to climate change because of multiple stresses and low adaptive capacity, and is therefore likely to cause growing international insecurity that directly affects European interest.

The above report could be seen as a warning note to African leaders and their governments to be more proactive in relation to climate change and its security threat to the African continent.

Again, arms proliferation, especially in Africa and Nigeria in particular has been described as great security threat to the nation.

A recent study on arms proliferation as reported in This Day, August 19, 2016 indicated that out of the 857 million small arms and weapons in the world, 500 million are illegal out of which 100 million were found in sub-Saharan Africa, with about 7.5 percent of (that is 75%) of the 100 million found in Nigeria. This was validated by the findings of the Presidential Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons in 2015 which found that 350 million of the 500 million small arms and light weapons in West Africa are in Nigeria. This was equally supported by Kehinde (2016) whose study reported that Nigeria holds about 70% of the estimated 500 million of small arms and light weapons proliferation in West Africa sub-region. Kehinde further observed that Nigeria is one of the countries that are experiencing devastating effects of arms proliferation due to spillover effects of crisis in Libya and Mali as well as the unresolved internal conflicts in many parts of the country, including farmers-herders conflicts.

#### VIII. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF HERDSMEN – FARMERS CONFLICTS

Farming and cattle rearing are two economic means of survival of the two groups (herders and farmers) that have always engaged in the conflict. At any point in time, there is conflict between these two groups, the economy of the groups and of course, the state(s) suffer retardation. It is pertinent to note that

the contributions of these groups to the economic development of Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. Thus, farmers and herdsmen conflicts have socio-economic implications which affect not only the individuals or groups involved in the conflict, but also the state(s) and nation at large. As reported in the Premium Times of July 5, 2017, Governor Samuel Ortom of Benue State lamented that more than 1,878 people were killed between 2014 and 2016, with tens of thousands displaced and disengaged from their main economic activities. Equally too, The Nation Newspaper March 22, 2017 reported that the Benue State Government lost N95 billion between 2012 – 2014 to herdsmen attacks, as asserted by the State Governor, Ortom. The International Crisis Group Report of 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2017 indicated that between January 2015 and February 2017, about 62,000 persons were displaced in three states mostly affected by the herders-farmers conflict, namely; Benue, Kaduna and Plateau. This has brought serious social and economic dislocation to the people of the affected states as most people sought shelters in other rural communities, compounding the existential stress on the available scarce resources.

Similar reports were given in Kogi State in March 2018 where herdsmen razed down some communities notably Ojuwo-Ajomayeibi, Iyade, Agbenema and Opada villages in Omala Local Government Area where the locals allegedly said that the herdsmen had come to displace them in order to take over their land for cattle colonies, Boluwaji (2018). The economic effects of the crisis also hit the national government as reported by Mercy Corps, (2015). The Mercy Corps of July 2015 reported that the Federal Government of Nigeria was losing about \$13.7 billion revenue annually due to herdsmen and farmers conflicts in Benue, Kaduna, Nasarawa and Plateau States with the four states losing nearly 47% of their annual internally generated revenues.

Similarly, Dimelu et al, (2017) citing Ofuoku and Isife (2009) revealed that crops worth about N40 million were usually lost annually in the South-South Region, notably Delta and Edo States as a result of invasion of cattle on farmers' crops.

A study carried out by Dimelu et al (2017) in Kogi State also revealed that various local governments in the state have experienced farmers-herders conflicts with substantial loss of revenues. Tenuche and Ifatimehin (2009) also reported that conflict between farmers and herdsmen, especially in the Benue Valley has always resulted in loss of lives and property, destabilizing economic activities and the livelihood of the people.

The conflict between farmers and herdsmen centers on the conflict groups desire to protect their individual economic interests. This always leads to high competition between the two. Hence, Adisa (2012) observed that the competition between the two agricultural land-user-groups has often times resulted into serious overt and covert manifestation of hostilities and social upheavals in many parts of the country, which have high potential for social and economic crises nationwide. Economic and social losses arising from herdsmen and farmers conflicts as revealed by the study carried out by Adisa (2012) include loss in quality of relationship, loss of job status, self-esteem and personal/family health. Direct economic losses on farmers include income losses, loss of yields and household resources. Other ancillary implications of the conflict which affect both



social and economic lives of the conflict groups reported by Adisa (2012) include marital dissatisfaction, declining quality of children's education, physical exhaustion, reduction in food quality/quantity, farm/job abandonment and frequent complaints. These are all tied to economic and social lives of the affected groups and other residents as no meaningful economic and social activities can take place in tensed and crisis-ridden environment.

## IX. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Piaget's theory of adaptation (1896 – 1980) was used for analysis in this study.

The theory of adaptation by Piaget postulates that cognitive development occurs from two processes – namely; adaptation and equilibrium. Adaptation involves the child's changing to meet situational demands, and this requires assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation is said to be the application of previous concept in the face of new information or development. Equilibrium on the other hand, is the search for balance between self (what one use to be) and the world (the exigency of the time), and involves the matching of the persons adaptive functioning to the situational demands.

Equilibrium keeps human moving along the developmental path way. Thus, Morphy (1993) defines adaptation as man's adjustment for survival in an environment. Hence, adaptation theory is sometimes referred to as survival theory. Adaptation according to Morphy (1993) is viewed from both short-term and long-term perspectives. The short-term defines the way and manner in which individuals modify their behaviour to align with environmental conditions and dictates where they found themselves, hence behavioural adaptation is regarded as short-term adaptation. Cultural adaptation on the other hand, refers to the ability of a group of people to adapt to predictable environmental changes which is regarded as long-term and it relates to a society or group of persons. Thus, King (2018) noted that adaptations occur over generations of species with those traits that help an individual animal eat and mate most profusely being passed down from one generation to another until the whole species changes to be better suited to their environment.

## X. THEORETICAL APPLICATION TO THE STUDY

The adaptation theory is therefore very relevant to the study of behaviour of Fulani herdsmen and sedentary farmers, as the two groups (herdsmen and farmers) must, as a matter of necessity, be ready to adapt to the environmental dictates of the time and adjust accordingly in accordance with the exigencies of the time. In this regard, the herdsmen must be able to realize that the status quo ante of continuous free range grazing can no longer stand the test of time in view of the wind of change that has been blowing over the years worldwide ranging from population explosion both of human and herds, climate change, technological development and a host of other changes that have affected the use of land resources. The same is also applicable to farmers. Therefore, the two groups need to be properly educated and sensitized by the elites in government, using the governmental instrument as the moderator, modifier, balancer

and societal regulator to create the desired equilibrium. Every human culture is dynamic in relation to situation, environment and time. That is why Birket-Smith (1964) in Hann (1997) asserted that all cultures adapt themselves to the environmental conditions under which they exist, even though they do not all exhibit the same degree of adaptation but adaption is seen as sine-qua-non to harmonious coexistence.

The most important is that adaptation theory tries to awaken the consciousness of the groups involved in the interaction to be conscious and mindful of time, space and environment and make all the necessary adjustments required for adaptation to enable them move and cope with the dynamics of society and the world at large for peaceful coexistence.

The forgoing is in-tandem with the explanation of adaptation theory by Benneth (1976) who views adaptation as action-focused, and refers to the coping strategies or mechanisms adopted by humans in obtaining their wants or achieving their objectives or adjusting their lives to the surrounding milieu or the milieu to their lives and purposes. This theory also conforms with inter-cultural adaptation of Benneth as explained by Pietila (2010) which calls for dialogue that would lead to higher levels of intercultural sensitivity resulting in intercultural encounters that would be beneficial to both parties in the intercultural adaptation process, with the ultimate purpose of arriving at integration which will result in harmonious coexistence among the parties.

This theory is very apt and relevant to the analysis of farmers and herdsmen conflict in Kogi State and Nigeria at large, as Hussein (1998) noted that conflict could sometimes be positive resulting to the necessary adaptation and achievement of desired change. That necessary desired change can only be attained if the political elites, as the moderators and regulators of society can cultivate the right political will and attitude to educate, sensitize and enlighten the critical stakeholders to develop the right spirit, attitude and readiness to make the necessary adjustment and adaptation to achieve this all important goal for harmonious coexistence, national cohesion and development.

## XI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design used in this study was survey design.

### AREA OF THE STUDY

This study was carried out in Kogi State. The study covered the three Senatorial Districts of the State, namely, Kogi Central, East and West respectively. The Local Government Areas selected for the study across the State were those affected by the crisis. In Kogi Central, Adavi Local Government was selected; Kogi West Mopa Muro Local Government and Kogi East which was the most affected area, the Local Governments covered include Ankpa, Dekina, Igalamela/Odolu, Ofu and Omala respectively. The localities/communities covered in the study include Adavi in Adavi Local Government Area, Amuro in Mopa Muro Local Government Area, Agojeju-Idaka, Ogane Enugu, Ojuwa-Ajomaye-igbi in Dekina Local Government Area, Ajichekpa, Agbenema, Opada and Ikpoba in Omala Local Government Area, Egbolo, Okpakpata and Odolu in

Igalamela/Odulu Local Government Area, Ogegume and Umomi in Ofu Local Government Area Ogbagbala, Onupi and Ogodo in Ankpa Local Government Area respectively.

### SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION

The data for this study were collected from primary and secondary sources. The primary data were obtained from the subjects (respondents) selected for this study, while the secondary data were derived from information obtained from documented sources such as textbooks, journal, articles, published research reports, internet and other print media

### INSTRUMENTS OF DATA COLLECTION

The major instruments used to obtain primary data/information from the subjects were interview and structured questionnaire method. Data for the study were collected by the use of interview schedule with the respondents. The services of interpreters were employed, especially in situations where the respondents could not communicate effectively in English Language. Where necessary, local languages were also used to enable researchers get detailed information from the respondents. Pilot survey was initially carried out to avoid overlooking errors. Appointments were made to meet with the respondents for the interview. Some research Assistants were also engaged having been tutored on the use of the interview schedule.

### POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population for this study was drawn from farmers and cattle rearers (herdsmen) in the study area, as well as traditional rulers, community leaders and the security agents. The population frame was drawn from among the entire farmers and herders in the study area.

A total of 130 farmers were purposively selected from the various communities/localities selected for the study made up ten (10) from each locality which represented the diversity of

other farmers, while a total of 52 herders comprising of four (4) from each locality were purposively selected for the study. First class and second class traditional rulers in the Local Government Areas studied totaling fourteen (14) were included in the population of the study, while a total of fourteen (14) community leaders drawn from the studied communities were also included in the study. The 7 Miyetti Allah officials included in the study were drawn from the local government areas selected for the study while the security agents included in the study were drawn from the heads of security agencies in the study area, namely, the Nigeria Police Force, the SSS and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps in the Local Government Areas studied. In all, a total of 238 respondents was used for the study.

### POPULATION SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The population sampling technique adopted in this study was the purposive sampling method.

### METHOD OF DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The data collected in this study were presented and analyzed with quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative method made use of descriptive statistics (percentages and mean) with a bench mark of 3.5 (upper limit of mean of 3.00) as the decision rule while chi-square was used to test the significance level of the responses so as to determine the strength of the responses for causal relationship

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The major focus of the section of the study is to present and analyse the data collected and derive findings therefrom. Data presentation is structured as follows:

### SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

**Table 1: Age Distribution of respondents**

Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
15 – 25	20	08
26 – 35	50	21
36 – 45	80	34
46 – 55	68	29
56 and above	20	08
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field survey, 2018

As shown in table 1 above, 20 respondents, equivalent of 8% fall within the age range of 15 – 25, 50 respondents (21%) are within the age bracket of 26 – 35 years, 80 respondents representing 34% are within the ages of 36 – 45, 68 respondents (29%) fall within the ages of 46 – 55, while 20 respondents (08%) were 56 years and above. This shows that the population of the respondents is predominantly people within the productive ages.

**Table 2: Marital Status of respondents**

Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Married	209	88
Single	10	04
Divorce	08	03

Widow	11	05
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field survey, 2018

The analysis on table 2 shows that 209 respondents (88%) of the population are married, 10 of them or 4% are single, 08 or 03% divorcees, while 11 or 05% are widow.

**Table 3: Sex Distribution**

Sex	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	218	92
Female	20	08
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field survey, 2018

Table 3 shows that 218 (92%) of the respondents are male while 20 (08%) are female. This shows that males are the dominant people in both farming and cattle rearing activities in Kogi State.

**Table 4: Educational Level Distribution**

Educational Qualification	Respondents			
	Farmers, Traditional Rulers/Community Leaders/Security Agents	%	Herders/Breeders	%
Degree/HND	30	17	03	05
ND/NCE	42	23	17	29
WASC/WAEC O/L	85	47	30	51
FSLC	22	13	09	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field survey, 2018

In the area of educational level distribution, 30 (17%) of the farmers, traditional rulers, community leaders and security agents have either first degree of HND while 3 or 5% of the herders/cattle rearers/breeders have same qualifications. Again, 42 or 23% of the farmers, traditional rulers, community leaders and security agents possess either ND or NCE, 17 or 29% of the herders, cattle rearers/breeders possess the same ND or NCE. 85 people or 47% of the farmers, traditional rulers/community leaders and security agents have WAEC certificate. 30 persons or 51% of the herders, cattle rearers/breeders possess WAEC certificate. Finally, 22 respondents or 13% of the farmers and their categories have FSLC, while 9 persons or 15% of the herders and their group have FSLC. This analysis shows that majority of the respondents have basic Western education for effective communication in English Language.

**Table 5: Occupational Distribution**

Occupational/Role	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Farmers	130	55
Cattle rearer/breeders	59	24
Traditional Rulers	14	06
Community Leaders	14	06
Security Agents	21	09
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field survey, 2018

In the occupational level, 130 or 55% of the respondents are farmers, 59 or 24% of them are cattle rearers/breeders, 14 or 6% are traditional rulers, another 14 or 6% of the respondents are community leaders while 21 or 9% of the respondents are security agents.

## XII. CAUSES OF FARMERS/HERDERS CONFLICT

**Table 6: Causes of farmers/herders conflicts (farmers, community leaders and traditional rulers' perception).**

Table 6 below shows the mean score and SD of perceived causes of farmers/herders conflict in Kogi State from the perspective of farmers, traditional rulers and community leaders.

Perceived Causes	Mean	SD	Remarks
Crop destruction by herds	3.6	.56736	Major factor
Violation of grazing agreement	3.5	.88464	Major factor
Refusal to pay compensation by herders	2.81	1.21277	Insignificant factor
Indiscriminate grazing by herdsmen	3.6	.58330	Major factor
Destruction of water sources by herds	3.7	.61098	Major factor
Cattle rustling	1.8	1.12286	Insignificant factor
Cattle killing by farmers	2.0	1.22887	Insignificant factor
Reprisal attacks due to poor dispute resolution	3.7	.61098	Major factor
Over grazing on fallow lands	3.7	.57161	Major factor
Violent reaction to dispute by herdsmen	3.7	.55642	Major factor
Violent reaction to dispute by farmers	3.2	.90907	Insignificant factor
Rape of women	2.1	1.23940	Insignificant factor
Poor handling of dispute by security agencies	3.6	.56736	Major factor
Inadequate capacity of security agents	3.5	.79302	Major factor
Soil degradation and land scarcity	3.5	.82198	Major factor
Politicization of dispute/conflict	3.7	.5542	Major factor
Ethno-religious divide	2.8	.122591	Insignificant factor
Population growth of human and herds	3.5	.88580	Major factor
Climate change	3.5	.88464	Major factor
Changing patterns of farming/grazing	3.5	.88565	Major factor
Inadequate institutional framework for dispute resolution	3.5	.73333	Major factor
Lack of proper understanding of grazing desire by traditional rulers	3.5	.79302	Major factor

Source: Field survey, 2018

**Table 7: Causes of farmers/herders conflict (herders perception)**

Causes	Mean	SD	Remarks
Crop destruction	3.3	1.17444	Fairly significant
Refusal to pay compensation	2.8	1.21276	Insignificant
Refusal by farmers to allow free grazing	3.6	.61636	Major factor
Restriction by farmers to water sources for cattle use	3.6	.61636	Major factor
Cattle rustling	2.9	.93631	Insignificant
Cattle killing by farmers	2.4	.94253	Insignificant factor
Farming on grazing reserves/routes	3.0	1.16695	Not too significant
Inappropriate demarcation of grazing lands	3.6	.48290	Major factor
Violent reaction to dispute by farmers	3.4	.87333	Not too significant
Violent reaction to dispute by herders	3.2	.90907	Not too significant
Poor handling of dispute by security agencies/other constituted authorities	3.5	.81733	Major factor
Inadequate institutional framework for dispute resolution	3.5	.81733	Major factor
Rape of women by herdsmen	2.0	1.17444	Insignificant factor
Climate change affecting range land	3.6	.62343	Major factor
Population increase of human and herds	3.7	.75139	Major factor
General development activities affecting land	3.5	.81733	Major factor
Ethnic and religious differences	2.2	1.25037	Insignificant factor
Politicization of farmers/herders conflicts	3.5	.75100	Major factor
Lack of capacity of security agents to provide security	3.5	.70400	Major factor
Reprisal attacks due to poor dispute resolution	3.5	.65050	Major factor
Lack of clear policy on grazing land	3.5	.65319	Major factor
Traditional rulers do not always understand the grazing desires of herders	3.5	.67907	Major factor
Changing patterns of farming/grazing	3.6	.62343	Major factor

Source: Field survey, 2018

The above data show the mean score and standard deviation of the perceived causes of farmers/herders conflict from the herders' point of view.

**Table 8: Causes of escalation of farmers/herders conflicts (security agencies perspective).**

Causes	Mean	SD	Remarks
Inadequate security personnel	3.8	.51177	Major factor
Poor attention to security needs by government	3.6	.87014	Major factor
Lack of capacity by security agents	3.6	.65828	Major factor
Climate change	3.6	.74642	Major factor
Lack of clear grazing policy	3.6	.73030	Major factor
Ethno-religious differences	2.7	1.27055	Insignificant factor
Poor dispute resolution mechanism	3.5	.87286	Major factor
Politicization of farmers/herders conflict	3.6	.74001	Major factor
Changing patterns of farming/grazing	3.6	.66904	Major factor
General development activities affecting land	3.6	.66904	Major factor
Inadequate demarcation of grazing land	3.5	.87287	Major factor
Population increase of human and herds	3.6	.87282	Major factor
Lack of definite policy on grazing	3.6	.73030	Major factor
Poor understanding of grazing needs of herdsmen by traditional rules	3.5	0.87282	Major factor
Soil degradation	3.7	.76139	Major factor

Source: Field survey, 2018

## SECURITY IMPLICATIONS

**Table 9: Security implications of farmers/herders conflicts**

Security Implications	Mean	SD	Remarks
Loss of human lives	3.6	.73775	Leads to societal devastation
Stresses security agents	3.6	.8535	Results in security Inefficiency
Leads to development of militancy	3.6	.7632	Results to deviant behaviour
Heightens tension in the state	3.6	.70988	Makes the state volatile
Creates instability	3.5	.78344	Stresses security agents/ government
Leads to infiltration of criminals from external forces	3.6	.73775	Creates ground for breeding and development of criminality
Creates ethno-religious suspicion	3.7	.7377	Threatens harmonious co-existence
Leads to arms proliferation/arms running	3.6	.83459	Potential danger to the state

Source: Field survey, 2018

## XIII. SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

**Table 10: Socio-economic implications of farmers/herders conflicts**

Socio-economic Implications	Mean	SD	Remarks
Disruption of economic activities	3.8	.51603	Leads to economic destabilization
Loss of livelihood opportunities	3.6	.78122	Social/economic dislocation
Loss of property	3.7	.67684	Leads to psychological trauma to the citizenry
Increase in poverty and diseases	3.5	.89339	Could lead to criminality and risk state
Traumatizes the people	3.6	.83407	Frustrates the citizens
Leads to migration	3.5	.84442	Brings pressure to the economy of urban centres
Loss of revenue to government	3.5	.93570	Declining fortune for government

Strains farmers/herders relationships	3.7	.53888	Creates mutual suspicion
Leads to closure of schools/dropouts	3.6	.69048	Potential danger to the state
Stresses government resources	3.5	.78439	Diverts government resources from development activities
Leads to individual/group frustration	3.6	.75292	Retards socio-economic development
Leads to food insecurity/hunger	3.6	.83417	Leads to poverty/penury

Source: Field survey, 2018

#### XIV. TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

Three major hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

##### Hypothesis One

The assumptions made in the first hypothesis were:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Farmers/herders conflict in Kogi State emanates from the struggle over the economic use of land resources.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Farmers/herders conflict in Kogi State does not emanate from the struggle over the economic use of land resources.

In order to test the assumptions of the above hypothesis, respondents were asked to rate the perceived factors responsible for the conflicts between farmers and herders in Kogi State. Their responses indicated that the major causes of the conflict centred on the desire by the conflicting groups to make economic use of the land resources as revealed by the mean score (3.5 and above) of the respondents rating in tables 6, 7 and 8 where the factors relating to economic use of land resources were discovered to be the trigger of the conflict.

We therefore accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative.

##### Hypothesis Two

In the second hypothesis, it was postulated thus:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Farmers/herders conflict constitutes security threat to Kogi State.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Farmers/herders conflict does not constitute security threat to Kogi State.

In order to test the assumptions of the above hypothesis, respondents were asked to rate the security implications of the farmers/herders conflict in Kogi State. Their responses on security implications as shown on table 9 had mean scores of 3.5 and above which point to the fact that farmers/herders conflict constitute great security threat to Kogi State.

We therefore accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative.

The assumptions made in hypothesis three were:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Farmers/herders conflicts impede socio-economic development of Kogi State.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Farmers/herders conflicts do not impede socio-economic development of Kogi State.

In testing the above postulations, respondents were asked to rate the impact of the conflicts on socio-economic development of the State. The mean score of their responses on table 10 which had a mean score of 3.5 and above indicated that the conflict have negative impact on socio-economic development of the State. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted while the alternative is rejected.

#### XV. DESIRED REMEDIES

**Table 11: Desired Remedial actions to farmers/herders conflicts (as perceived by the conflict groups)**

Desired Remedies	Mean	SD	Remarks
Establishment of grazing reserves /Establishment of ranches	3.7	.67816	Accepted by the conflict groups
Continuous use of open grazing	1.4	1.02497	Not sanctioned
Use of judicial/legal dispute resolution	1.8	1.13231	Not welcomed
Use of Alternative Dispute resolution method	3.6	.95353	Seen as a welcome development
Strengthen capacity of security agents	3.6	.70692	Welcomed by the conflict groups
Effective intelligence network of locals and security agencies	3.6	.7032	Supported by the conflict group
Definite policy on grazing lands	3.6	.74816	Accepted as a welcome development by the conflict groups
Formation of standing committees of stakeholders to dialogue and constantly review strategies for harmonious coexistence	3.6	.74730	Supported by the conflict groups

Quick response to early warning signals by government	3.6	.74283	Well taken by the conflict groups
Adequate awareness to stakeholders on any policy initiative before implementation	3.5	.84513	Leads to support for policy implementation
Curbing illegal arms proliferation	3.7	.55229	Seen as panacea to conflict impunity

**XVI. FINDINGS**

Based on the analysis of the data collected in this study, it has been revealed that the causes of farmers/herders conflicts in Kogi State are myriad and have been categorized as follows:

1. Economic use of land resources has been discovered to be the major trigger factor which led to other incidental factors, such as:
  - i. Policy framework factors, which include lack of definite policy on grazing land and traditional rulers acceptance of herdsmen for grazing settlement without clear understanding of grazing desires
  - ii. Deficient response/poor policy implementation factors, such as poor dispute resolution mechanisms and politicization of herdsmen-farmers conflicts.
  - iii. Ecological/environmental factors, resulting into desertification and rural banditry, and
  - iv. Security related factors which include inadequacy of personnel, lack of capacity and equipment infrastructure, ECOWAS protocol policy and arms proliferation
2. Security implications of the farmers/herders conflicts include loss of lives, overstressing of security agencies, encouraging the development of militancy, and arms proliferation/arm running, creating suspicions and making the state tensed and volatile.
3. The social and economic implications of the conflict as the study revealed include economic stagnation, loss of livelihood opportunities, loss of revenues to government, food insecurity and hunger, school closures and dropouts among the school children.

**XVII. CONCLUSION**

This study identified the factors responsible for the conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Kogi State and their security and socio-economic implications. Notable among the factors include struggle over the use of land resources which is the main trigger of the conflict as the conflict groups regard land resources as their major economic sources of livelihood. Other factors include poor policy framework, deficient response/poor policy implementation, and ecological/demographic factors such as climate change, soil degradation, population increase of human and herds and general development activities affecting land. Escalation of farmers/herders conflicts is one of the most pressing security challenges the State and the country have to grapple with and if not carefully, decisively and properly handled, it can degenerate into a monster which may portend more danger than Boko Haram insurgency because of its sophistication and spread. Therefore, it is our submission that the recommendations in this study should be brought to the

attention of relevant critical stakeholders/authorities for implementation as panacea to the farmers/herdsmen conflict in Kogi State and Nigeria at large.

**XVIII. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. It is hereby recommended that the Federal Government, through the instrumentality of National Assembly should enact new and definite law on the use of land resources as it relates to grazing lands as the present Land Use Act is fraught with deficiencies/irregularities which have created confusion over the control and use of land resources in in this respect in Nigeria.
2. As an interim solution, grazing lands should be clearly and definitely acquired and demarcated in selected areas in the State where fallow lands are surplus and fallow for cattle grazing. This should be done as a temporary measure to restrict cattle roaming until ranches are established. This is not equivalent to cattle colony. The acquisition of such lands should be done through a proper survey and must be with the consent of the traditional custodians of the lands. Adequate consultations must be made by government with the critical stakeholders and the decision to establish grazing lands must not be forced or imposed on any community.
3. Government should take further steps to encourage establishment of ranching as the ultimate long-term panacea to the conflict as the present free rein or open grazing and roaming cattle has been increasingly the source of conflict between farmers and herdsmen. In order to achieve this goal, government must engage the critical stakeholders in dialogue through continuous sensitization and education on the benefits of ranching over roaming cattle/open grazing system to convince the herdsmen to accept the new method of grazing. This could be done through sponsorship of critical stakeholders on inter-country visits, especially the leaders of herdsmen and sfarmers to appreciate and understand the benefits of ranching on the productivity of cattle as well as the economic benefits therein to the herdsmen, farmers and other stakeholders.
4. Traditional rulers should consult widely with their community leaders/members before accepting to allocate grazing settlement for herdsmen and their cattle. Such acceptance and settlement should be done only where there are enough fallow lands which could be used exclusively for grazing to avoid cattle roaming into crop farms.

5. It is also recommended that the State Government should constitute/set up committees on Alternative Dispute Resolution in local governments across the State where herders settle to handle disputes arising between farmers and herders in the state. Membership of the committees must be selected based on the credibility, integrity and honesty of purpose of the individuals; the membership must be drawn from elite farmers and herders alike, devoid of any partisan coloration. This should involve tested and trusted individuals including religious leaders of repute. The committee should be saddled with the responsibility of constantly reviewing strategies to building peaceful and purposeful relationships for harmonious co-existence between farmers and herders. This has become necessary due to the suspicions created between farmers and herders as a result of the conflict over the years.
6. Government at all levels should, as a matter of necessity and urgency ensure the provision of adequate security to all nooks and crannies of the state to secure peoples' lives and property. This should be done by recruiting more security personnel in all levels and areas such as Police, Army, Civil Defence, etc. The government should equally reinvigorate the Nigeria security agencies by strengthening their capacity to combat security challenges. The capacity building should be done in the areas of adequate personnel, provision of needed security apparatus and gadgets including modern technology gadgets and training of personnel to enable them function more effectively.

Security issues should not be treated on reactionary or on ad-hoc basis as being practiced currently. Security operatives should be made to be more efficient and proactive through effective intelligence gathering with the usage of local intelligent informants so as to be able to nip criminals/crimes in the bud with ease. The locals are the closest to the grassroots and they know the criminals among them and can give more accurate and reliable intelligent information to curb crimes. Thus, formation of Local Security Intelligence Corps which will be responsible for gathering, analyzing and disseminating intelligence information to security agencies will go a long way to curb criminalities in various localities and communities and minimize crisis.

7. Political office holders should stop politicizing farmers/herders conflicts. Farmers and herders should be seen as critical stakeholders in the Nigerian project and issues relating to their economic affairs and means of livelihood should not be treated with disdain and levity but be given the needed serious attention. On this note, the fast growing grasses proposed by the Minister of Agriculture should be given desired attention to encourage ranching along with more other improved method of animal husbandry as practiced in developed climes.
8. The Federal Government should as a matter of necessity and urgency, tackle the issue of rural banditry in the Northern region/states which has spilled-over into the North Central and Kogi State in particular. Rural banditry in the Northern region has become a fertile

training ground for criminals and they have become ready tools for destabilization. The Federal Government must therefore deploy the necessary security forces to bring down the rural banditry in the North from becoming a monster. All security forces including Air Force, Military and State Security Services should be deployed to face these bandits and bring them down before they degenerate beyond control.

9. It is also recommended that Federal Government should make immediate effort to combat desertification which is responsible for the movement of the herders from the core North to the North Central and other regions in the country.

Issue of desertification was well reported and documented many years ago but neglect by governments at all levels to respond to early warnings on climate change made Nigeria to be caught up with desertification, provoking considerable losses in economic means of livelihood of the citizenry. Nigeria, as the giant of Africa must take the lead in the implementation of the Great Green Wall (GGW) which is aimed at rehabilitating 22,500sq km of degraded land by 2020 as recommended by Nigeria's National Agency for the Great Green Wall (Essen, 2017).

10. It is recommended that ECOWAS protocol be reviewed. In view of the new revelations that foreign herders were part of those attacking farming communities in Nigeria, step must be taken urgently to review the ECOWAS protocol on free movement of persons, goods and services because of the security challenges it is posing to Nigeria. The need for this review was succinctly captured by the Minister of Agriculture, Audu Ogbe when he said the government would present proposals at the African Union "to compel member countries to take steps to prevent their herders from grazing into neighbouring countries". This should not end up as a mere political statement; follow up action is therefore needed to actualize that dream urgently.
11. One major drivers and impetus to the escalation of conflict between farmers and herders is the proliferation of small arms and light weapons which have become common place in Nigeria and Kogi State in particular. It is therefore recommended that decisive actions be taken by Kogi State Government in collaboration with the Inspector General of Police to ensure that all illicit arms and weapons in the State are mopped up as a matter priority, necessity and urgency. A definite action and deadline must be given for the mop of these arms and weapons by security agents particularly the Nigeria Police. Any deviant must be brought to book to serve as deterrent to others. The Nigeria Police must carry out this task professionally and not succumb to any political pressure of sacred cows.

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