



RUGA SETTLEMENTS: A STRATEGY FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND  
CONFLICT RESOLUTION AMONG FARMERS/HERDERS IN NIGERIA

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**Abstract**

*The neglect of Grazing Reserves Law of 1965 by the succeeding governments after the First Republic in Nigeria has led to farmers and herders clashes/conflicts due to struggle over limited scarce resources such as lands, water, crops and grasses. The clashes/conflicts made the incumbent President Muhammadu Buhari to approve the introduction of Ruga settlements plan in Nigeria. The Niger State government has already taken a lead through the rehabilitation of about 30, 000 hectares of the Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area and intends to increase the game reserve to 35,000/45,000 hectares. The objective of this study is to investigate the feelings of the residence concerning socio-economic importance and conflict resolution strategy using Ruga settlements plan in Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State. The sample size of study was 100 respondents who are residents of the five villages (Oro, kamfanin-bobi, Durgu, Ukuru and Tashan-Bala) around Bobi Grazing Reserve. The major findings of this study are that 58% of the residence are aware of the Ruga settlement plan; 52% of the respondents are of the opinion that Ruga settlement plan will not reduce farmer-herders clashes and 71% of the people observe that Ruga settlement plan will create job opportunities for most unemployed youths in the area. In addition, 53% of the residence say that Ruga settlements plan will improve the quality of meat/milk production; 51% of the respondents indicate that Ruga settlement plan will increase income generation to people of the area and 90% of the respondents see Ruga settlements plan as a way to provide formal education to the children of farmers/herders in villages around the Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State. The study concludes that Ruga settlement plan around Bobi Grazing Reserve will reduce conflicts problem between farmers and herders but it will not eliminate it completely as the problem is an age long issue. However, the scheme will improve socio-economic activities of the people residence in the area as business activities will improve. The research recommends that Niger State government should do more of enlightenment campaign to sensitize the people living around Bobi Grazing Reserve as they do not believe that the Ruga settlement plan by government will eliminate the problem of farmers/herders clashes in Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Clashes/Crisis, Farmers/Herdsman, Niger State, Ruga settlements, Rural Residents.

**1. Introduction**

Ruga settlements or Fulani settlements plan in Nigeria known as cattle ranching is not new, it is an old wine in a new bottle. This is because the idea of Ruga settlements is traceable to First Republic immediately after the independence in 1960 by the Former Premier of the Northern Nigeria, Sir Ahamdu Bello (the Sadauna of Sokoto) (Waheed, Abiola, Nzor & Nda-Isaiah, 2019). To be precise, Northern Region of Nigeria passed Grazing Reserves Law in 1965. The



law stipulates that minimum of 10% of the country's land area to be legally acquired and constituted into grazing reserves for lease allocation to grazers (Premiumnewsnigeria, 2019). *Ruga* settlements means allowing herdsmen to settle down permanently in a particular area to prevent open grazing or roaming about with cattle that may cause farmers/herdsmen clashes. The reasons for *Ruga* settlements initiatives among others are to address the issue of insecurity; provide quality of meat and milk production for healthier nourishment; provide former education to children of nomads; provide employment opportunities to citizens; attract investments opportunities to the country and generate revenue for the nation (Uche, 2019). It is important to note that 90% of Nigeria cattle and by-products comes from pastoralists (herdsmen) and contributes between 6% and 7% to GDP. Agriculture overall contributes up to 23% to the national GDP (Mohammed, 2016).

Historically and up till the first Republic era of 1965 in Nigeria, farmers (agriculturalists) and herders (pastoralists) enjoyed a fairly symbiotic relationship. Farmers provide grain and other farm products for herders' livestock. Herders' livestock provided farmers with manure to fertilize their farm lands. This is because farmers engage in crops farming and herders engage in animal husbandry with little or no clashes. At those periods, the population of Nigeria was small and number of people that were involved in the farming activities for consumption and business purposes were also small. The small number of farmers couple with few population and a lot of uncultivated lands allow herdsmen to wander about with their cattle freely. As the population of Nigeria increases over time and more lands cultivated, the herders' routes of open crazing were taken over by the farmers causing herders/farmers clashes. The clashes resulted in the loss of lives and properties due to neglect of the grazing reserves law by subsequent governments in Nigeria after the First Republic (Premiumnewsnigeria, 2019). Therefore, clashes/conflicts emanate in pursuing limited scarce resources (farmlands, grasslands and water spots for animals) by both the farmers and herdsmen (Ofem & Inyang, 2014).

The major causes of farmers-herders clashes in Nigeria among others include lack of inadequate grazing areas and conflict of interest over land resources among others.; cattle theft and attack; increase in human and livestock population; increase in agricultural practices; destruction of crop among others (Ofuoku & Isife, 2010; Adogi, 2013; Nformi, 2014). The adverse effects of farmers/herders' clashes include loss of human and animal lives; destruction of crops; reprisal attack which affects innocent souls; displacement of persons and animals; and distrust between herdsmen and farmers (Oli, Ibekwe & Nwankwo, 2018).

As the clashes between herders and farmers deepen, the idea of *Ruga* settlements was re-echo during the Fourth Republic in Nigeria when the Former President Goodluck Jonathan budgeted about N10 billion for the scheme and the money could not be found for its implementation (Waheed, Abiola, Nzor & Nda-Isaiah, 2019). Nowadays, herdsmen are seen doing open crazing in schools, stadium surroundings and road sides as their crazing roots were taken over by the farmers because of the increase in number of. people that engage in faming activities.

In order to ameliorate the problem and stop the roaming of cattle about, Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) under the leadership of President Muhammadu Buhari approved the re-introduction of *Ruga* settlements in the six Geo-Political Zones of the country on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2019 (Shehu, 2019). The scheme shall be implemented in seven pilot states which are prone to



farmer-herder clashes in the country. Such states are Adamawa, Benue, Kaduna, Plateau, Nasarawa, Taraba and Zamfara (Shehu, 2019). The re-introduction of the scheme by FGN follow the initiatives of the National Economic Council (NEC) presentation under the National Livestock Transformation Plan (2018-2027). It is conceptualized to permanently stop the age-long herders-farmers crises and to massively develop the livestock industry (Shehu, 2019). The scheme was formerly pronounced to Nigerians by formal Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Chief Audu Ogbah on 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2019 that the President had approved the *Ruga* settlement implementation and the scheme will start immediately due to crises (Uche, 2019).

After the official pronouncement of the implementation plan of the *Ruga* settlement initiative, there were series of condemnations from some Nigerian in both Northern and Southern part of the country especially the Yorubas and Igbos from South as well as few Northern Christian faithful. The condemnations were followed with a lot of protests by some citizens in some states like Benue and Taraba states. The citizens of these states think that the FGN is planning to take over the lands and no part of their lands will be ceded to the government. The protests made the FGN to suspend the idea of *Ruga* settlements initiatives plan on 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2019 and made it voluntary as forcing the scheme on states may cause more clashes between herdsmen and farmers (Nnamdi, 2019).

In 2019, the FGN made the issue of *Ruga* settlements plan voluntary to states, and some states like Gombe, Kano and Niger States have showed interest in the scheme due to its economic importance (Matane, 2019; Olasupo, 2019; Umoren, 2019), what will be the response of Nigeria, concerning the issue of *Ruga* settlements plan?

Nigeria has over 40 million hectares of grazing lands, but just about 3 million hectares are specifically tagged as grazing reserves established under the Northern Region Grazing Reserves Law of 1965. Also, out of 417 grazing reserves, only about 113 grazing reserves have been gazetted. The need to permanently rehabilitate herders is of paramount important (Premiumnewsnigeria, 2019). It is essential to note that Niger State Government has already taken a lead through the rehabilitation of about 30, 000 hectares of the Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area and intends to increase the game reserve to 35,000/45,000 hectares (Shittu, 2018; Matane, 2019) because of the anticipated socio-economic importance.

At this juncture, the empirical evidences about the feelings of the residence concerning socio-economic importance and conflict resolution strategy using *Ruga* settlement plan in Bobi Grazing Reserve is not available to the best of my knowledge. This made the research new and different from other past studies. However, empirical studies concerning farmers/herders clashes and conflict are available in few numbers such as research by Ofuoku and Isife (2010); Bello (2013); Mwamfupe (2015); Baba & Abeyasinghe (2017); Chinwokwu (2017) and Oli *et al.* (2018).

The above identified gaps make the researcher to investigate the feelings of the residence around the Bobi Grazing Reserve concerning the issue of *Ruga* settlements plan in the Niger State. This study will be beneficial to potential academic researchers, area of contribution to knowledge and citizens of the Federal Government of Nigeria.



## 2. Literature Review

### *Conceptual Review*

*Ruga* settlements which herdsmen are allowed to settle down permanently in a particular area to prevent roaming about with their cattle that may cause farmers/herdsmen clashes is long overdue. Just for two years (2016 and 2017), the farmers/herders clashes have caused wanton destruction of lives and properties as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Farmers-Herdsmen Clashes/Conflicts in Nigeria (January 2016 and May 2017)

S/N	Place	Date	Immediate cause(s)	Death toll/Casualties/Degree of Destruction
A. Incidences of 2016				
1.	UdeniRuwa, Nasarawa state	January 6, 2016	Destruction of farm crops	Between 12 and 38 people were killed and many wounded.
2.	Gareji village in Taraba State	January 17, 2016		3 people were killed
3.	Demsare, Wunamokoh, Dikajam and Taboungo of Adamawa State	January 23		Between 30 and 60 people including a police DPO were killed and properties destroyed.
4.	Agatu, Benue State	February 2, 2016	Reprisal attack	7 people were killed and the community was thrown into mourning.
5.	Tom-Anyiin and Tom-Ataan communities, Tombu in Buruku LGA, Benue State	February 7, 2016	Clash between Fulani herdsmen and farmers	10 persons were killed and the community was raided.
6.	Abbi, Enugu State	February 11, 2016		2 persons were killed and some were declared missing
7.	Agatu, Benue State	February 24 & 28	Reprisal attack against the alleged killing of a prominent Fulani man by the people of Agatu in 2013	Between 300 and 500 persons were killed and wounded. Others were displaced.
8.	Ossissa, Ndokwa, Delta State	March 2, 2016		Some people were wounded and residents were forced to flee their homes as houses were destroyed.
9.	Mbaya-Tombo, Benue state	March 13 & 17, 2016	Dispute and destruction of farm crops	Over 35 persons died and properties were destroyed.
10.	Ugwunesi in Awgu LGA, Enugu State	March 26, 2016	It was a reprisal attack by the 2 Soldiers, 18 others were Fulani herdsmen after armed farmers killed a Fulani traditional ruler- Kardorko- AlhajiHabibu Domo, and four others	Killed. Thousands were displaced and more than 1000 homesteads of were destroyed.
11.	Ohali-Elu, Rivers State	April 3-7, 2016	Clash with communities	About 7 to 16 people were killed.



S/N	Place	Date	Immediate cause(s)	Death toll/Casualties/Degree of Destruction
12.	Ilado, Ondo State	April 9, 2016	Hon. OluFalae, former SGF, was attacked by herdsmen and they killed his security guard	Herdsmen attacked and killed the security guard of Chief. Falae.
13.	Angai, Dashole, Dori and Mesuwa villages of Taraba State	April 10, 2016	Farm land dispute	Between 15 and 44 people were killed.
14.	Agatu, Benue State	April 20, 2016	Policemen attacked	Some persons were injured and a policeman was declared missing.
15.	NdiaguAttakwu, Nkanu-West LGA, Enugu State	April 25, 2016	Herdsmen were alleged to have entered the heart of the community that afternoon and a woman sounded a gong, after which the cows scattered: the herdsmen gathered the herds and left, only to return in the night and raided the village.	Many were murdered, including a catholic church seminarian and a pregnant woman whose stomach was cut open. Also, houses were destroyed,
16.	Nimbo Community of Uzo-Uwani LGA, Enugu state	April 25, 2016	Herdsmen were said to have earlier disagreed with the villagers over the use of farmlands as grazing fields.	46 people were killed and 10 houses were burnt, including Christ Holy Church International during the invasion.
17.	Dungun Mu'azu, Sabuwa LGA, Katsina State	November 25, 2016	Reprisal attack	8 people were massacred (7 men and 1 woman)
<b>B. Incidences of 2017</b>				
18.	Abraka and Obiaruku, both in Ethiopie East and Ukwuani LGAs, Delta State	January 9, 2017		No fewer than 5 persons were killed.
19.	Zango-Kataf Local Kaduna State	January 17, 2017,	Herdsmen opened fire in SamaruKataf market	3 persons were killed and five injured.
20.	Ipiga village in Ohimini LGA, Benue State	January 24, 2017	Grazed cattle and destroyed farmlands	15 persons were killed. A bloody fight that took the lives of two of the herdsmen and about 13 of the villagers.
21.	Jema'a LGA, Kaduna State	January 24, 2017	Commercial car taking students to school from Kafanchan was waylaid by alleged herdsmen	5 students of the College of Education, GidanWayawere shot dead.
22.	RukumawaTsafe LGA, Zamfara State	February 10, 2017	Clash between community members and suspected herdsmen	8 people were confirmed dead.
23.	Southern Kaduna, Kaduna State	February 21, 2017	Fulani herdsmen launched attacks on four communities	About 21 people were killed.
24.	Mbahimin community, Gwer East LGA, Benue	March 2, 2017	Renewed hostilities between herdsmen and farmers in	No fewer than 10 persons were killed.



S/N	Place	Date	Immediate cause(s)	Death toll/Casualties/Degree of Destruction
	State		Mbahimin community	
25.	Omumu community, South LGA, Delta State.	Ika March 6, 2017	Clash between suspected herdsmen and residents of Omumu community	6 persons died.
26.	Tiv community, Mkgovur village in Buruku LGA, Benue State	March 11, 2017		7 people were killed.
27.	Umuobasikwu, Ozuitem community in Bende LGA, Abia State	March 14, 2017	Clash between herdsmen and the people of Umuobasikwu	1 person was killed and several others injured.
28.	Adam Village, Kwande LGA, Benue State	March 27, 2017	Herdsmen farm attack	1 killed, 1 injured, women raped in their farms.
29.	Emuhu community in Ika South LGA, Delta State	March 28, 2017	Attack by suspected herdsmen	3 persons were killed while six others sustained injuries.
	ObioUsiere in Eniong Abatim, Odukpani LGA, Cross River State	April 1, 2017	Raid a community	killed no fewer than 10 persons
30.	Tse-Akaa village, Ugondo Mbamar District of Logo LGA, Benue State	May 8, 2017	Clash with herdsmen	3 persons were killed.
31.	Ossissa community in Ndokwa East LGA, Delta State	May 12, 2017	Farmers who worked with Ugo Farm were ambushed on their way home	Suspected herdsmen beheaded a commercial motorcycle rider and six farmers.
32.	AfamUku, Oyigbo LGA, Rivers State	May 18, , 2017	Herdsmen attack	2 persons lost their lives.
33.	Ewu community, LGA, Edo State	Esan May 22, 2017	Herdsmen entered farmland raped two women and strangled them to death	2 people were killed and 1 was wounded. Crops were destroyed and lots of persons sacked from their farmlands.

Source: (Umoru, 2017; Kalu, 2017; Oli et al, 2018)

Table 1 is a clear evidence of unjustified killings, mayhems and destruction of properties by farmers and herdsmen. The Federal Government of Nigeria is on the right path to come up with the idea of *Ruga* settlement as it has constitutional right to protect lives and properties.

#### *Empirical Review*

Exact empirical studies concerning the issue of *Ruga* settlements initiatives were not available. However, related empirical studies include the work of Ofuoku and Isife (2010); Bello (2013); Mwamfufe (2015); Baba & Abeysinghe (2017); Chinwokwu (2017) and Oli et al. (2018). Ofuoku and Isife (2010) empirically assessed the causes, effects and resolution of farmers and nomadic cattle herders conflict in Delta State, Nigeria. Study randomly sampled 80 farmers and 20 nomadic cattle herders from randomly selected communities. Data were collected using structured interview schedule. The result of structured interview revealed that the causes of farmers and nomadic cattle herders conflicts are destruction of crops, contamination of streams



by cattle, zero grazing of land, disregard for local traditional authorities, female harassment, harassment of nomads by host communities youths, indiscriminate bush burning, defecation of cattle on roads, cattle theft, and straying of cattle. The socio-economic effects of the conflicts result to reduction in crop yield and income of farmers/nomads displacement of farmers, loss of lives and properties and loss of products in the storage. The result of T-test statistic shows differences in the responses of farmers and nomads in the respect to the causes of the conflicts. The research suggested that the mechanism of local development plans should be established to reduce such conflicts. However, the study used interview method which is qualitative in nature and non-parametric T-test statistic.

Bello (2013) examined herdsman and farmers conflicts in Yobe State -Nigeria in North-Eastern Nigeria. Four-stage cluster random sampling procedure was used to select respondents for the research. Out of the 17 local government areas (LGAs) in the state, 14 LGAs are mostly associated with farmer-herdsman conflict. Out of these 14 LGAs, ten were randomly selected. In each of the 14 LGAs, five farming communities were randomly selected making a total of 50 villages. Ten arable crop farmers were randomly selected from each village, thus giving a total of 500 farmers. In each of 14 LGA, 250 cattle herdsman were also randomly selected for data collection. This was done by randomly selecting five herdsman from ten transit camps in each LGA. In all, 750 respondents were selected for the quantitative data collection. Descriptive statistic (frequencies and percentages) was used to present and analyse the data collected. The study indicates that the necessity to provide food crops and animal as well as raw materials for industry and export in order to meet ever-growing demands has led to extensive use of land. Also, the study reveals that conflicts have demonstrated high potential to exacerbate the insecurity and food crisis particularly in rural communities where most of the conflicts are situated with repercussions nationwide. The study concluded by stating that the periodical struggle for scarce ecosystem resources is what had degenerated into violent conflicts in Yobe State between Fulani herdsman and farmers. But the research is conducted in Yoba State and not Niger State of Nigeria.

Mwamfupe (2015) examined the persistent crises between farmers and herders in Tanzania. The study used interview method to collect information (2012-2014) from respondents who are farmers, herders, and district level officials in Kilombero, Kiteto, Rufiji and Kilosa districts. Focus group discussions were conducted to collect information on conflict resolution mechanisms and the persistence of the conflicts in their areas. The study found that the major factors for the persistence of conflicts between farmers and herders include policy deficiencies and contradictions; insecurity of land tenure; inadequacy of capacity of the local institutions; corrupt practices; poor coordination in resettling the migrants; inadequate capacity in village land use planning; and the heavy-handed approaches used to resolve the conflicts. The study concludes that the root cause of the conflicts is the lack of security of land tenure to smallholder farmers and herders who hold and use unsurveyed land that is liable for alienation through acquisition and encroachment. Unless the government reviews its land policy to ensure security of land tenure land grabbing and corrupt practices will escalate and lead to further conflicts. However, the study utilized interview method that requires the researcher to be present for interviewing.





Baba & Abeysinghe (2017) studied the effective strategies for resolution and management of farmers-herdsmen conflict in the North Central Region of Nigeria. Closed ended questionnaire was administered on 60 respondents systematically selected from the six states in the North Central Region of Nigeria. Each state is represented by 10 respondents chosen from one of its local government area. Among every 10 respondents chosen, there were 4 farmers, 4 herdsmen and 2 Local Government Officials. The respondents were selected from the local government areas which have recorded more and frequent conflict between Farmers and Herdsmen in their respective state. Data collected through the questionnaire are analyzed using descriptive statistic (frequencies and percentages) and correlation statistic. The study shows that strategies of conflicts resolutions are building religious harmony and tolerance between Farmers and Herdsmen in the region since it is one the causes of conflicts. Another strategy is the establishment of effective mechanism for settling disputes between Farmers and Herdsmen will serve as an effective strategy for resolution and management of conflict between the two agricultural land users in the North Central Region of Nigeria. But the study administered the questionnaire to only 60 respondents from the six states in the North Central Region of Nigeria which is grossly inadequate. Chinwokwu (2017) studied glamorization of Fulani herdsmen's criminality and its implications on national security in Nigeria. The study revealed that government inaction to caution, arrest, prosecute or punish the criminal activities of the Fulani herdsmen is evidence that government is behind their activities. It also viewed government silence as shrouded in inert motive that is not far from expansionist ideology. Therefore, the study suggested that efforts of government must ensure that the activities of Fulani herdsmen are checked to ensure peace and security across the country. However, the study is term paper analysis and not empirical in nature.

Oli *et al.* (2018) examined the herdsmen and farmers conflict in Nigeria using historical documents. The study found that some of the factors that usually led to clashes are limited or unavailability of grazing fields and farm lands; grazing on crops; long-standing disagreements; lack of access to farm or grazing fields; and scarcity of fresh water. Consequently, loss of human and animal lives; destruction of crops and properties; displacement of persons and animals; distrust between herdsmen and farmers; rising anti-Fulani sentiment; and breakdown of peaceful relationship with many communities in some parts of the country. The study concludes that until this issue is amicably resolved and absolute cooperation among the conflicting parties enhanced; food and national security would continue to be threatened. Therefore, the study recommended amongst others that government should establish cattle grazing fields in the six geo-political zones of the country and out-law open grazing of cattle. But the study is based on term paper analysis and the ongoing study is empirical

From the review of the previous studies, there is no exact study on Ruga settlements. This is a research gap that this study intends to fill to contribute to the frontier of knowledge by investigating the feelings of the residence concerning socio-economic importance and conflict resolution strategy using Ruga settlements plan in Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State.

#### *Conflict Theory*

The proposed study shall anchor on conflict theory. This is because conflict occurs among two opposing groups or classes (farmers and herdsmen) who struggle over scarce resources (land,







respondents and Section B is questions relating to the subject matter. The questionnaire is subjected to both validity and reliability tests. The validity test of the questionnaire instrument is done through an expert in the field of management science discipline. Also, the validity and reliability tests were done through the pilot tests of the questionnaire to see whether the instrument is capable of sourcing required information.

Twenty (20) copies of questionnaires each were administered to the people of Oro, kamfaninbobi, Durgu, Ukuru and TashanBala by the research assistant who is an indigene of the Mariga Local Government Area of Niger state. The 100 copies of questionnaires (20 questionnaires multiply by 5 villages) was completed correctly and returned. The returned questionnaires was used for data analysis.

In addition, Statistic Package for Social Science (SPSS version 23) is the statistical software package for data screening and analysis. Since this research is studying a phenomenon known as *Ruga* settlement initiative, descriptive statistic (frequency and percentage) is utilized to present data collected and subsequently analysed.

#### **4. Data Presentation and Analyses**

This section presents frequency distributions of the data collected in percentages and analysed to draw conclusions.

Table 1: Gender of the Respondents

Response options	Frequency	Percent
Female	15	15%
Male	85	85%
Total	100	100%

*Source: Field Survey, 2019*

Table 1 indicates that 85 respondents representing 100% are male while 15 respondents representing 15% are female. This means majority of respondents are male that fill copies of the questionnaire concerning the issue of socio-economic importance and conflict resolution strategy using *Ruga* settlement plan around Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State.

Table 2: Marital Status of the Respondents

Response Options	Frequency	Percent
Single	38	38%
Married	62	62%
Total	100	100%

*Source: Field Survey, 2019.*

Table 2 shows that 38 of the respondents representing 38% are single while 62 of the respondent representing 62% are female residence around Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State. This discloses that majority of the respondents are married people.



Table 3: Age Distribution of the Respondents

Age of respondents	Frequency	Percent
< 18 years	02	02%
18 – 30 years	35	35%
31 – 40 years	30	30%
41 – 50 years	20	20%
>50 years	13	13%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 3 indicates that 35 respondents representing 35% aged from 18 to 30 years. Thirty (30) respondents representing 30% aged from 31 to 40 years. Twenty (20) respondents representing 20% aged from 41 to 50 years. Thirteen (13) respondents representing 13% aged above 50 years. However, 02 respondents representing 2% aged below 18 years residence around Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State. This means that majority of respondents are youths aged from 18 to 30 years.

Table 4: Type of Education acquired by the Respondents

Response Options	Frequency	Percent
Former education (Western Education)	14	16%
Informal education (Arabic/Quranic Education)	86	84%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 4 shows that 86 respondents representing 86% have no formal education while 14 respondents representing 14% have formal education in primary/secondary schools around Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State. This implies that majority of the respondents acquired informal education in Arabic/Quranic studies.

Table 5: Respondents Occupation

Response Options	Frequency	Percent
Farming	27	27%
Cattle/Sheep/Goat herding	73	73%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 5 indicates that 73 respondents representing 73% do occupation farming. But 27 respondents representing 27% do occupation of herding cattle/sheep/goat residence around Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State. This discloses that few respondents are farmers and majority are herders.



Table 6: Are you aware of the *Ruga* settlement plan around Bobi Grazing Reserve?

Response Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	91	91%
No	09	09%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 6 shows that 58 respondents representing 58% say “Yes” that they are aware of the *Ruga* settlement plan. However, 09 respondents representing 42% say “No” that they are not aware of the *Ruga* settlement plan. This discloses that majority of the residence are aware of the *Ruga* settlement plan around Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State.

Table 7: Do you think *Ruga* settlement plan will reduce farmer-herders clashes among the people residence around Bobi Grazing Reserve?

Response Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	48	48%
No	52	52%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 7 indicates that 52 respondents representing 52% say “No” that *Ruga* settlement plan will not reduce farmer-herders clashes. However, 48 respondents representing 48% say “Yes” that *Ruga* settlement plan will reduce farmer-herders clashes around Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State. This means majority of the residence say that *Ruga* settlement plan around Bobi Grazing Reserve will not reduce farmer-herders clashes.

Table 8: Do you think that *Ruga* settlement plan will create job opportunities for most unemployed youths residence around the Bobi Grazing Reserve?

Response Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	71	71%
No	29	29%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 8 indicates that 71 respondents representing 71% say “Yes” that *Ruga* settlement plan will create job opportunities for most unemployed youths in the area. Nevertheless, 29 respondents representing 29% say “No” that *Ruga* settlement plan will not create job opportunities for most unemployed youths residence around Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State. This implies majority of the residence say that *Ruga* settlement plan around Bobi Grazing Reserve will create job opportunities for most unemployed youths in the area.



Table 9: Do you think *Ruga* settlement plan will improve the quality of meat/milk production among residence around the Bobi Grazing Reserve?

Response Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	53	53%
No	47	47%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 9 indicates that 53 respondents representing 53% say “Yes” that *Ruga* settlements plan will improve the quality of meat/milk production among residence around the Bobi Grazing Reserve. However, 47 respondents representing 47% say “No” that *Ruga* settlement plan will not improve the quality of meat/milk production among residence around the Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State. This means majority of the residence say that *Ruga* settlement plan around Bobi Grazing Reserve will improve the quality of meat/milk production.

Table 10: Do you think *Ruga* settlement plan will increase income generation to the residence around Bobi Grazing Reserve?

Response Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	51	51%
No	49	49%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 10 shows that 51 respondents representing 51% say “Yes” that *Ruga* settlement plan will increase income generation to the residence around Bobi Grazing Reserve. But 49 respondents representing 49% say “No” that *Ruga* settlement plan will not increase income generation to the residence around Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State. This means majority of the residence say that *Ruga* settlement plan around Bobi Grazing Reserve will increase income generation to the people of the area.

Table 11: Do you think *Ruga* settlement plan will provide formal education to the children of farmers/herders residence around Bobi Grazing Reserve?

Response Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	90	90%
No	10	10%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 11 shows that 90 respondents representing 90% say “Yes” that *Ruga* settlements plan will provide formal education to the children of farmers/herders residence around Bobi Grazing Reserve. Nevertheless, 10 respondents representing 10% say “No” that *Ruga* settlements plan will not provide formal education to the children of farmers/herders residence around Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State. This implies majority of the residence say that *Ruga* settlement plan around Bobi Grazing Reserve will provide formal education to the children of farmers/herders in the area.



#### *Discussion of the Major Findings*

The major findings of this study in relation to the demographic information is that majority of the respondents are male, married, youths, acquired informal education in Arabic/Quranic studies and herders. These respondents live in five villages (Oro, kamfaninbobi, Durgu, Ukuru and TashanBala) around Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State.

In addition, the major findings in relation to the research questions are that 58% of the residence are aware of the *Ruga* settlement plan. Second, 52% of the respondents are of the opinion that *Ruga* settlement plan will not reduce farmer-herders clashes. The result is similar to the findings of Bello (2013) that observed the periodical struggle for scarce ecosystem resources is what had degenerated into violent conflicts. Mwamfupe (2015) found that the major factors for the persistence of conflicts between farmers and herders include policy deficiencies and contradictions; insecurity of land tenure; inadequacy of capacity of the local institutions; corrupt practices; poor coordination in resettling the migrants; inadequate capacity in village land use planning; and the heavy-handed approaches used to resolve the conflicts. Third, 71% of the people observe that *Ruga* settlement plan will create job opportunities for most unemployed youths in the area. Fourth, 53% of the residence say that *Ruga* settlements plan will improve the quality of meat/milk production. Fifth, 51% of the respondents indicate that *Ruga* settlement plan will increase income generation to people of the area. This is different from the findings of Ofuoku and Isife (2010) that found the socio-economic effects of the conflicts result to reduction in crop yield and income of farmers/nomads displacement of farmers, loss of lives and properties and loss of products in the storage. Also, Baba & Abeyisinghe (2017) indicated that strategies of conflicts resolutions are building religious harmony and effective strategy for resolution and management. Lastly, 90% of the respondents see *Ruga* settlements plan as a way to provide formal education to the children of farmers/herders in villages around the Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area Niger State. Therefore, majority of the respondent observe that *Ruga* settlement plan around Bobi Grazing Reserve will reduce conflicts problem between farmers and herders but it will not eliminate it.

#### **5. Conclusion and Recommendation**

From the beginning of the Nigeria independence in 1960, farmers/herders conflicts have been minimum compare to wanton killings and mayhems in different parts of Nigeria in recent years from 2015 to 2019 in Nige state, Benue state, Taraba state and so on. This is because Grazing Reserves Law of 1965 was neglected by succeeding governments after the first republic government that promulgated the law. The study findings among others are that *Ruga* settlement plan around Bobi Grazing Reserve in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State will not eliminate conflicts problem between farmers and herders. However, the *Ruga* settlement plan will improve socio-economic activities of the people residence in the area as business activities will improve. The prior expectation of the research result is that majority of the residence will welcome and accept the proposed *Ruga* settlement plan by the Niger State and Federal Government of Nigeria because of its socio-economic importance. The study concludes that *Ruga* settlement plan around Bobi Grazing Reserve will reduce conflicts problem between farmers and herders but it will not eliminate it completely as the problem is an age long issue. However, the scheme will improve socio-economic activities of the people residence in the area



as the business activities will improve. The research recommends that Niger State government should do more of enlightenment campaign to sensitize the people living around Bobi Grazing Reserve as they do not believe that the *Ruga* settlement plan by government will eliminate the problem of farmers/herders clashes in Nigeria.

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