

**ASSESSMENT OF EFFECT OF FARMER-PASTORALIST CONFLICTS  
ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN OMALA LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
AREA OF KOGI STATE.**

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**Abstract**

This study examined the causes of farmer-pastoralist conflicts, consequences for rural development as well as conflict resolution mechanism in Omala Local Government area of Kogi state. The study adopted triangulation methodological approach using both qualitative and quantitative approaches and focus group discussion (FGD) as well as structure and unstructured questionnaire. Data obtained were analyzed by the use of descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution and tables. The study revealed among others that land encroachment without permission, , inadequate grazing reserves, lack of access to water points, killing of stray cattle, pollution of water point, cattle routes blockage, Mbororo migrant, ECOWAS treaty fertile land of host community, socio-economic, cultural differences, political economy of cattle herders were major causes and persistency of farmers-pastoralist conflicts. The consequences are crop damage, loss of lives and properties including harvested crops and livestock as well as destruction of infrastructural facilities. Based on findings, the study among others recommends the need for demarcation of cattle routes and its strict enforcement, regulate the influx of pastoralists from neighboring countries, rehabilitation of the numerous grazing reserves across the country and establishment of cattle colonies.

**Key Words:** Farmer-Pastoralist Conflict, Economic-Security/Political threat, Rural Development.

**Introduction**

According to Aristotle in one of his greatest aphorism, he said and we quote; “Man by nature is a political animal”. This assertion is hunched on two factors: (i) there is scarce resource in the society (ii) many people subscribe to this scarce resource, and in the process of allocating or distributing this

resource conflict becomes inevitable in the society because man as pleasure seeker and pain avoider tend to encroach the fundamental human rights of others which in turn translate to conflict, that is resource use constitute the breeding factor of conflict between man and his fellow man. Nigeria since 2015 have suffered from the socio-economic and political mayhem unleashed by two groups that are necessary to the survival of the Nigeria state (pastoralist; cattle herders and farmers; agricultural producers) as well as rural underdevelopment caused by the destruction of life and properties worth millions of Naira, destruction of social facilities like burning of primary health care centres, markets among others which are aspect of rural industrialization. Farmers-pastoralist conflicts are majorly caused by economic livelihood in West Africa (Tonah, 2006). Subsequently, clashes getting sporadic have spread in many parts of the nation (Kolawole et.al.1993, Kolawole, and Bukar, 1994, Blench 2003, Kolawole, 1991, Gefu and Kolawole, 2002),

Nigeria has witnessed and is still witnessing myriad of conflicts that has challenged and threatened rural, socio-economic development the internal security and unity of the nation. Agitation for secession and farmers-pastoralists conflict (pastoral vs arable) in Nigeria are threatening overall national development, Gefu and Kolawole (2002.) Insecurity of lives and property of the citizen are challenges to meaningful development. An environment of terror frightens local and overseas investors. It suffices to say that at heart of these conflictual situations lies disagreement of “who” gets “what” “when” and “how”. These conflicting situations has intensify environment of tension, division among various groups and disunity which most times translate to open violence and animosity, (Egwu, 2006).

The crisis between pastoralist and farmers in Agbenema, Iyade, Bagana and Agojeju-Ikpoba chiefdom of Omala local government area of Kogi State has a debilitating effect on rural development and the socio-economic activities of Omala and its environs, chiefly among them was rice and cassava production, this particular Chiefdoms are known with, and other staple foods that was of short supply during that season to date (2011-date), as most of the farmers were afraid to go to their farms because of the mayhem the pastoralist's may unleashed on them. Equally, this crisis also witnessed 'urban' migration drift among the rural farmer. This point to the fact that Nigeria is facing its greatest challenges that is a sad reflection complexity of the nation's diverse ethnic religious, cultural, and geo-political arrangements, which more often than not have threatened Nigeria's corporate existence and collective quest for national security and stability. The conflict has undermined rural development and security of the country, and poses threat to its survival as a nation. The crisis has also weakened the scenario of pleasant relationship between various communities that make up the country, Imobighe, (1990). Farmers- pastoralist conflict disturbs the development and socio-economic and political equilibrium of the nation to include; religious intolerance, fanaticism that unleashes violence, political intolerance, unpatriotically selfish leadership and followership, etc.

Between 1999 and 2015, cases of conflict, confrontation, killings between farmers and herders abound between indigenes of the area they moved to. The print and electronic media have reported cases of clashes between the pastoralist from the North and the inhabitants of the Plateau, Kogi (10 people feared dead in Omi community of Yagbe-East LGA) and Benue in the North central of the country and some states of the south east geopolitical zone, (Vanguard Newspaper, December, 17, 2017). The Sun Newspaper of June 30th, 2014 reported of conflict between the pastoralist and the Agatu people of Benue state and this conflict caused the death of many lives /devastation of properties worth millions of Naira. For example, Governor Samuel Ortom of Benue state which is one of the state that has suffered from farmers-pastoralist conflict, reports that over 1,878 people were killed between 2014 and 2017.

To this end, the study aimed to bring to limelight how farmer-pastoralist conflicts constitute a recipe for rural underdevelopment in Omala L.G.A in Kogi State. This paper therefore identify and discusses the causes of farmer-pastoralist conflicts; draws its consequences for rural development, its persistence and assesses the effectiveness of the conflict resolution mechanism in place and proffer sustainable solution.

### **Farmer-pastoralist Conflicts in Nigeria**

Conflict to a common man and everyday assumption is that conflict is necessarily negative because it often reflects the picture of war, fighting, argument, and misunderstanding and in the mind of many people, it stagnate the society. This picture of conflict is popular but not true because conflict is beneficial for societal existence due to its role in correcting structural imbalance in the society and pointing to existing issues that needs attention for peaceful coexistence and eventually leading to innovative break-through or new methods of mediating social problems. However, conflict is bad when it degenerate to open violence and animosity (bloodshed) and thus leads to a state of war between parties involved (Obi, (2017).

This why Otite (2002) argued that conflict can be battle over resources and disagreements over values and claims, control and possessions of which the aim of the deed are to kill or take part in regulating interest over others. In like manner, Akande (1998) opined that “every societal existence has witness clash at one stage or the other”; it is part of societal relation and management. The ability to manage crisis makes a good society or state because conflict can't be vanished.” It is very pertinent to not that conflict differs from one locality to other. In some instances, it can be violent approach and most times lead to a condition of lawlessness. For instance, it can be social conflict i.e. ethnic and religious. It can be economic like the struggle on resource control, establishment of markets and the location of some viable economic organisations like banks, industries, etc. similarly conflict either be political such as the January, 1966 military coup d'état, the political bottleneck after the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election in Nigeria, and the then 2011 post-election brutality and killing of innocent people and bombardment of security outlet by a group allegedly known as Boko Haram and competition of resource use (land) between the pastoralist and famers’.

Consequently, conflicts occur due to distrust, antagonism and division of relations among groups at times in a competitive situation. One fact is that there are many causes of conflict. As stated earlier, conflicts know no bound as it happens in most countries of the world, and such conflicts cut across both advanced and the developing nations. However, the nature and dynamics of the conflicts depends on the conflict management techniques that are put in place to take care of the situation. Osaghae (1994:13) observed that;

“There is a tendency to assume that these conflicts are more rampant and devastating in African countries where alternative action-bases like class, activity organizations and party identities have not become deep rooted enough to challenge the primacy of ethnicity. But they have been no less destructive in advanced industrialized states where alternative action-bases and management strategies are arguably better developed. Examples are Scottish and Irish separatism in the United Kingdom, the Flemish and Walloons in Belgium, the Quebec question in Canada and diverse ethnic problems in the USA.”

Many scholars have written extensively on pastoralist-farmers conflict (Blench,2009, Abbas, 2012; and Tanuche & Ifatimehin 2009). For example many have written on Rwandan conflict and the tragic genocide of 1994. Many believed that these conflict is an ethnic one (IISS, 2009). But the 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi' are not ethnic named rather means “people who farm” and “people who own cattle” (Ejigu, 2009). Ejigu argues that the conflict is an example of a farmers-pastoralist herder conflict.

Major reasons for this crisis are mostly linked to disagreement over sharing of natural resources such as land, economic trees and water points. in additional, the crisis of such comparable complexity is that of Darfur crisis in Sudan since 2003. Mazo argued that the cause of the crisis were tribal struggle over access to resources (such as grazing land) going back to the 1980s (Mazo 2010). Similar cases of struggles for resource between farmers and pastoralist affects West Africa. For example, herders from Burkina Faso in search of grazing land for their cattle are increasingly crossing borders which may lead to cross-border conflicts between farmers and herders (IRIN 2012). It is on records that about 60 % of Burkina Faso's central-southern herders live on the other side of the border in Ghana (IRIN 2012). According to IRIN,

eighteen people died from farmer-herder conflict which took place between 2007 and 2010 in the south of the country; twenty-nine cases of land damaged by cattle were registered in the southern province of Nahouri, Burkina Faso (IRIN 2012). These violent and destructive conflicts are very common in West Africa and most times result into open violence and animosity. For example, Nigeria recorded about 2000 deaths between September 2001 and May 2004 (Moritz 2006).

These disastrous conflicts are current examples of conflicts between farmers-pastoralist which most times are said to be "as old as man" (Meier 2011). No doubt the conflicts between the two groups of study have been a long historical issue, but are on the increase in West Africa (Breusers et al. 1998). Another fundamental fact worth noting here is the proliferation of modern light arms also accounts for the proportional propensity of casualties.

However, Blench is of the opinion that benefit derives from fertile land or fadama area in fattening their herds and bringing them close to markets, account for major reason the herders graze large proportions of their cattle in North central and southern Nigeria. Consequently, Abbas proposed that climate change and land acquisition by capitalist farmers were other reasons fueling North-South and West migration for grazing lands and also account for conflict with farming communities.

Farmer-pastoralist conflicts are not peculiar to the Middle Belt region of Nigeria, or Nigeria alone. For example there have been reported cases of farmer-pastoralist conflicts in Central African Republic, Mali and Democratic Republic of Congo and across West Africa countries. Environmental changes, political instability, and security concerns are forcing pastoralists to migrate to other locales for better lands for grazing their cattle. Within Nigeria, farmer-pastoralist conflicts have stretched beyond the North, Middle Belt and begun to affect communities in the South West, Southeast, and South-South.

Southern people have not historically hosted nomadic pastoralists and find themselves unprepared to handle land disputes as they arise. In already unstable environments like the Niger Delta, protracted farmer/herder violence has the potential to aggravate pre-existing tensions. If the violence remains unaddressed, or improperly dealt with, farmer/herder conflicts have the potential to undermine community relationships across Nigeria, destabilizing the country and the region. At its core, this is neither a religious nor an ethnic conflict, but rather a resource-based conflict playing out on ethno-religious lines in a fragile country characterized by impunity and corruption. Brutal clash among farmers and pastoralist are recent development, nor inevitable. While the violence is spreading to communities across the country, the intensity of violence remains fiercest in Nigeria's volatile Middle Belt region.

In 2014, groups of heavily armed pastoralist reportedly killed more than 100 villagers in Kaduna State, 69 villagers in Katsina State, 10 people in Omi community of Yagba-East LGA in Kogi Western Senatorial district, in December 2017, 2 feared dead in Obakume community and between 2014 and 2017, more than 50 persons have been killed in Omala LGA in Kogi East senatorial district and 37 villagers in Benue State in separate attacks, (Vanguard news online, 2018). These large casualty counts per attack remain high, as over 100 people were killed in clashes in Southern Kaduna in one incident alone in early 2017. When these resource disputes interact with political and social tensions and turn violent, they have a deadly tendency to spark self-perpetuating cycles of indiscriminate reprisal attacks.

### **Review of Empirical Studies**

Ofuoku and Isife (2009) investigation on causes, effects and resolution of farmers-nomadic cattle herders' conflict in Delta state, Nigeria: the research was carried out using interview method where both farmers and herdsmen were engaged and the result was further analyzed using t-test statistical method. Major causes that leads to conflict between Fulani-herdsmen and agriculturalist were identified which are destruction of crops, contamination of stream by cattle, over-grazing of fallow land, disregard for traditional authority, sexual harassment of women by nomads, harassment of nomads by host youths, indiscriminate defecation by cattle on roads, theft of cattle, stray cattle, Indiscriminate busy burning. The

research further revealed that the following were the major effects of the recurrent dispute between Fulani-herdsmen and farmers. This include: reduction in output and income of farmers/ nomads, displacement of farmers, erosion, loss of lives, arms running, loss of house and properties and loss of produce in storage. Ofuoku and Isife gave extension of intervention through Local Development Plans can be used to minimize recurrent clashes of interest between farmers and herdsmen.

Furthermore, Patience (2005) a Cameroonian scholar stressed that conflict over land ownership triggers clash between cattle grazers and farmers in the North West region of Cameroon. The findings of her research identified factors such as climate change, scarcity of land which leads to struggle to control large portion of land, ineffective land use act and so on. This has resulted to class discrimination between the wealthy herdsmen who amaze wealth for themselves at the detriment of farmers whose farm produce is destroyed yearly. Landownership in Cameroon is a traditionally complex and problematic issue which has in a dynamic and fluctuating manner been influenced by the quest for political power and social status. The situation of the peasant has not been static and has evolved as the country evolves socio-economically. Cameroonian peasants have not yet acquired the same socio-economic height as the rich, they are considered as the heart of development despite their marginalised status in the society. They are seen to be the backbone of agricultural activity and family well-being in Cameroon.

Idowu (2009) provides explanation on factors that leads to conflict between the Fulani herdsmen and farmers. Environmental scarcity was seen as the major cause of clash between these two groups which Dixon further buttress by stating that conflict between Fulani-herdsmen and farmers is usually induced by climatic and environmental factors such as acute drought, climate change, environmental degradation, fresh water depletion, desertification, erosion, extreme heat, loss of water land. All this were identified as limitation in environmental resources that leads to conflict between farmers and cattle rears. Idowu further identified population explosion which is in accordance with Malthusian theory of population which state that in which he proposed that population and resources are initially in equilibrium, but while populations grow exponentially, food production increases only linearly. According to Malthus (1789), population will grow (exponentially) faster than food production which would grow at arithmetic progression and population growth will reduce the availability of natural resources because population grow faster than food supply, and poor people will impoverish the soil and natural resources by overuse and this will induce competition and conflict over means of existence. He further identified other factors such as expansive use of land for non-agricultural purposes, unfavourable ecological changes, unregulated transhumance, land ownership system, ethno-religious intolerance, Boko-haram attack and coerced migration of herdsmen, cost minimization and dearth of or absence of effective institutional mechanism of conflict mediation.

Idowu established that this factor has consequential effect such as loss of life and human insecurity, loss of cattle and farm crops, destruction of properties, threat on national unity and displacement. To him, establishment of ranches, grazing and reserve routes will go a long way to help reduce conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen.

A study carried out in the department of human resources, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike by Abugu and Onuba (2015) on climate change and pastoral conflicts in the middle belt and south-east Nigeria: implication on human resource of the regions further indicates climate change, resources depletion and pastoral migration as the centre core of crisis between agriculturalist and herdsmen in south-eastern region of Nigeria in the same light, Olayoku (2014), analyses the root causes, dynamics, evolution, and politicization of cattle grazing conflicts in Nigeria. After reviewing the historical, political, and socio-economic contexts, he identifies the key actors in lethal rural violence from cattle grazing as herdsmen, farmers, community members, vigilantes, security operatives, government officials, and, in rare cases, religious leaders.

DeHaan (2002) noted that antagonistic perceptions and beliefs among farmers and cattle readers could compound conflict situation, especially due to failing institutions and fierce competition for resources.

Another cause of farmer-herdsmen conflicts is increasing rate of cattle theft, according to DeHaan (2002), often sprout violence. Other perceived causes of farmer-herdsmen conflicts include inequitable access to land, diminishing land resources, antagonistic values among user groups, policy contradictions, and non-recognition of rights of host community Adisa (2011)

In the light of the above, it is pertinent to note that both the migrant pastoralist and the indigenes all constitute human resources of the nation and both contribute individually or collectively to national development. While the migrant pastoralists are carrying their cattle to graze in the regions, the owners of the land, essentially the farmers are heavily affected as the herdsmen cattle's destroys crops, farm land and other agricultural products which often results to conflicts and confrontation.

### **Gap in Literatures**

No research work can be 100% complete as there will be some lapses left behind by the scholars. In this section, gaps left behind or underexplored by other scholars that have written related topics to this research work were critically scrutinized in this section and missing piece were adequately explored.

The research carried out by Ofuoku and Isife (2009) was done using in depth method of data collection, which makes it tough to compare candidates unlike the structured interview which enables researcher to weed out respondents who are aren't fit for the position. Furthermore, it is difficult to generalize since small sample and random sampling methods were utilized. Other data collection method was not used which makes valuable information unobtainable. The method of data collection used by Ofuoku and Isife (2009) restricted them to small number of interview and gave more chances for illegal questions. Tenuche and Ifatimehin (2006) also adopted the same method in their examination on resource conflict among farmers and Fulani herdsmen: implications for resource sustainability.

Patience (2005) only adopted qualitative approach and never adopted any quantitative approach which makes her research highly subjective which also leads to data that were generalized or even accurate because it is reliance on researcher subjectivism. It is difficult to prove that there is rigidity in the information that is collective since the human minds tends to remember things in the way it want to remember them. The research was valuable but difficult to present, gleans from the data can be very different from what outside observer gleans from the data. The result from the qualitative research is replicate since scientific community wants to see results that can be verified and duplicated to accept research as factual. The scope of data gathering in her research can be extremely even if the structure of gathering information if fluid because each unique perspective.

Ofuoku (2009) work on the role of community development committees in farmer-herder conflicts in central agricultural zone of Delta state, Nigeria. This research work was restricted to some part of Delta State since quantitative research methodology was adopted and which usually acquires a large sample size. However, due to the lack of resources this large scale becomes impossible and the outcome of this research was limited since questioners were usually distributed with close ended questions.

Based on the above methodological short comings and lacuna in literatures, the researcher adopted triangulative methodological approach using both the qualitative and quantitative approach and adopted the focused group discussion technique, oral interview and both structure and unstructured questionnaire in generating information from study participants.

### **Methodology**

The study was carried out in four chiefdoms of Omala LGA namely; Iyade, Agbenema, Bagana and Agojeju-Ikpoba Chiefdoms. The LGA headquarter is in Abejukolo town with area of 7°43'N 7°33'E. It has an area of 1,667 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 108,402 at the 2006 population commission (National Population Commission, 2006). However, adopting the geometric progression formula at 2.9% growth rate, the population is therefore projected against 2018; the total population of Omala Local

Government Area is estimated at 323,038 persons (Author's projection, 2018). The Igala ethnic group dominates the population of Omala Local Government Area of Kogi State. The remaining ethnic groups include the Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Fulani, Edo, Calabar, Idoma, Tiv and others. It shares boundary with River Benue in the north, Ankpa Local Government in the south, Bassa and Dekina in the west and with Benue to the East. Simple random proportionate sampling technique was used to select 400 participants. The quantitative and qualitative method of data collection was utilized using questionnaire, focus group discussion and oral interview. A total of 400 (100%) structured (close ended) and unstructured (open ended) copies of questionnaire were administered to respondents and 395 (98.75%) copies questionnaire were retrieved from respondents, 5 (1.25%) copies of the questionnaire were not retrieved. Information gotten from field survey was categorized into two sections for easy and better interpretation. The first category was the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents such as, sex, age categories, marital status, religious affiliation, ethnic group, educational qualifications and number of years lived in Omala LGA. The second category was the substantive issues of the study and presentation of data and analysis of research findings. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version twenty (21) was used to code the questionnaire and the data was analysed using descriptive statics such as frequency distribution, table, and percentage of the responses.

#### Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

| Variable                         | Category                     | Frequency (N=395) | Percent (%) |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| <b>Gender</b>                    | Male                         | 231               | 58.5        |
|                                  | Female                       | 164               | 41.5        |
| <b>Age (in years)</b>            | 18-30                        | 104               | 26.3        |
|                                  | 31-43                        | 80                | 20.3        |
|                                  | 44-56                        | 147               | 37.2        |
|                                  | 57-69                        | 64                | 16.2        |
|                                  | 70 and above                 | 104               | 26.3        |
| <b>Marital Status</b>            | Single                       | 80                | 20.3        |
|                                  | Marnied                      | 259               | 65.6        |
|                                  | Divorced                     | 28                | 7.1         |
|                                  | Widow/Widower                | 28                | 7.1         |
| <b>Religion</b>                  | Christianity                 | 260               | 65.8        |
|                                  | Islam                        | 68                | 17.2        |
|                                  | African Traditional Religion | 44                | 11.1        |
|                                  | Others                       | 23                | 5.8         |
| <b>Educational Qualification</b> | Primary                      | 112               | 28.4        |
|                                  | Secondary                    | 171               | 43.3        |
|                                  | Tertiary                     | 112               | 28.4        |
| <b>Occupational status</b>       | Employed                     | 111               | 28.1        |
|                                  | Unemployed                   | 176               | 44.6        |
|                                  | Retired                      | 108               | 27.3        |
| <b>Years of Residence</b>        | 1-5 Yeas                     | 36                | 9.1         |
|                                  | 6-10 years                   | 68                | 17.2        |
|                                  | 11-15 years                  | 52                | 13.2        |
|                                  | 16 and above                 | 239               | 60.5        |
| <b>Occupation</b>                | Farming                      | 363               | 91.9        |
|                                  | Cattle Rearing               | 12                | 3.0         |
|                                  | Farming and cattle rearing   | 20                | 5.1         |
| <b>Size of Farm</b>              | Less than 1 ha               | 75                | 19.0        |
|                                  | 1-2ha                        | 88                | 22.3        |
|                                  | 3-4ha                        | 148               | 37.5        |
|                                  | 5-6 ha                       | 16                | 4.1         |
|                                  | 7 ha and above               | 24                | 6.1         |

#### Result and Discusion of Findings

Gender: Table 1 indicates that, 58.5% of the respondents were male while 41.5% of the respondents were female. From data presented in the table above, it is obvious that majority of the respondents were male.

Age: The result also indicates that, majority of the respondents were within the age range of 44-56 while minority of the respondents was within the age range of 57-69 with 14.2% of the total respondents.

Marital Status: The Table further reveals that majority of the respondents (65.6%) were married, while minority were divorced and widow/widower at 7.1%

Religion: Majority (65.8%) of the respondents were Christians, 17.2% of the respondents practised Islam.

Educational Qualification: 28.4% of the respondents had primary education, 43.3% had secondary education and 28.4% of the respondents indicated that have tertiary education.

Occupational Status: 28.1% of the respondents were employed, 44.6% of the respondents were unemployed, and 27.3% of the respondents were retired. This shows that majority of the respondents were unemployed.

Years of Residence: majority of the respondents (60.5%) had resided in the study area for 16 years and above. This is very good for this research because the respondents will be able to give first hand information needed for this research.

Occupation: Table 1 shows that 91.9% of the respondents practice farming, 3.0% of the respondents practice cattle rearing and 5.1% of the respondents practice both cattle rearing and farming.

Size of farm: 19.0% of the respondents had less than 1 hectare of land, 22.3% of the respondent had 1-2hectare of land, 37.5% had 3-4hectare of land, 4.1 had 5-6hectare of land and 6.1% had 7ha and above.

**Causes of Farmers - Pastoralists Conflicts**

**Table 2: Causes of farmers-pastoralists Conflicts**

| Causes  | SD (%)    | D (%)     | U (%)     | A (%)     | SA (%)    |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Crops damage by cattle  | 24 (6.1)  | 24 (6.1)  | 6 (2.0)   | 20 (5.1)  | 319(80.8) |
| Land encroachment   | 24 (6.1)  | 12 (3.0)  | 64 (16.2) | 68 (17.2) | 227(57.5) |
| Inadequate grazing reserves   | 24 (6.1)  | 16 (4.1)  | 103(26.1) | 92 (23.3) | 160(40.5) |
| Lack of access to water points  | 32 (8.1)  | 36 (4.1)  | 103(26.1) | 92 (23.3) | 160(40.5) |
| Killing of stray cattle   | 83 (21.0) | 40 (10.1) | 40 (10.1) | 48 (12.2) | 184(46.6) |
| Pollution of water points   | 32 (8.1)  | 32 (8.1)  | 60 (16.2) | 115(29.1) | 156(39.5) |
| Indiscriminate Bush Burning   | 32 (8.1)  | 48 (12.2) | 100(25.3) | 79 (20.6) | 136(34.4) |
| Land tenure system  | 88 (22.3) | 64 (16.2) | 56 (14.2) | 131(33.2) | 56 (14.2) |
| Disregard to rules and regulations                                    | 100(25.3) | 20 (5.1)  | 112(28.4) | 91 (23.6) | 72 (18.2) |
| Change in Climate condition   | 108(27.3) | 60 (15.2) | 108(27.3) | 75 (19.0) | 44 (11.1) |
| Land use policy that vested control of land to Government Authorities | 108(27.3) | 60 (15.2) | 108(27.3) | 75 (19.0) | 44 (11.1) |
| Family Problem  | 108(27.3) | 116(29.4) | 115(29.1) | 24 (6.1)  | 32 (8.1)  |
| Financial Problem   | 100(25.3) | 92 (23.3) | 127(32.2) | 44 (11.1) | 32 (8.1)  |
| Perceived Hatred  | 24 (6.1)  | 12 (3.0)  | 8 (2.0)   | 144(35.6) | 207(52.4) |

Field Survey, (2018)

Crop damage was identified as one of the major causes of farmers-pastoralists conflict, with 80% of the respondents attesting to this, land encroachment without permission from the owners of the land, was also identified as a major cause of the conflict between the two groups with 57.5% of the respondents attesting to this. Also, inadequate grazing reserves were also identified as factor instigating the conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen. Lack of access to water point (46.3%), killing of stray cattle (46.6%), pollution of water point (39.5%), indiscriminate bush burning and perceived hatred were identified as the major causes of Fulani herdsmen conflict. Few of the respondents identified disregard to rules and regulations, change in climatic condition, land use policy that vested control of land to the government authorities, family problem and financial problem were not identified as the major cause of the conflict. In Nigeria, the most frequent causes of conflicts between the nomadic cattle herders and



sedentary farmers are illegal invasion of farms and destruction of crops by cattle, particularly during the planting season and immediately after the harvesting period (Blench, 2004).

**According to the Fulani Alhaji Bature:**

The causes of the crisis in this area were caused by the damage of crops by the Mbororo migrant pastoralist from neighbouring countries and not the Fulani (us) living here.”

“We have lived here for over ten years now, we trade here, our families are here, we have areas of settlement given to us, our chief settles misunderstanding with the traditional ruler of this locality”

“We know all the routs here, so we guide our cows and sheep to avoid entering people's farms. The only time we had some misunderstanding was when we came here new and our cows mistakenly destroys some crops and the indigenes killed some of our cows and we still paid some compensations” (Source: Interview respondents, 2018).

“But the farmers also block our routs during farming seasons making it impossible for us to move and eventually leads to destroying of crops by the cattle's which also leads to conflict. (Bature, 2018)

However, according to B.U., Musa Onu Ife paramount ruler of Abejukolo, and Bagana district Head:

“The causes of crisis in Bagana chiefdom, were as a result of settler-indigenship phenomenon, leadership tussle, conflict of land ownership between indigenes (Ebira-Mozum/Igala's) and settlers (Tivs, Kakanda, Fullani's Herdsmen)”. (Musa 2018)

This findings are in line with (Blench, 1994; Abbas, 2010; & Tanuche & Ifatimehin 2009, Kolawole 2003, Ejigu 2009:) who argued that the major causes of farmer-herder conflict in sub-Saharan is linked to disputes over the sharing of natural resources such as water and grazing land and ethnic competition over access to and control of resources.

**Persistence of Farmer-Pastoralist Conflicts**

**Table 3: Responses on reasons for persistence of Conflict between farmers-pastoralists**

| Response  | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Political | 36        | 9%         |
| Economic  | 288       | 73%        |
| Culture   | 71        | 17         |

Field Survey, (2018)

**Persistence of Farmer-pastoralist Conflicts**

As indicated in table 3, among the reasons adjudge for conflict persistency in the study area, economic reasons took higher blame with 73%, economic reasons such as lack of rationalized profit with the respondents claiming that the host community does not benefit from the profit made by pastoralist herdsmen from their cattle business, but rather they destroy their crops while roaming their cattle around, also, the respondents attested that the cattle are actually owned by the bourgeoisies. cultural reasons such as Cultural differences between pastoralist herdsmen and indigenous farmers have escalated the conflict between the ethnic group is one of the reasons for the conflict between Fulani-herdsmen and farmers with 17% of the total respondents attesting to this. Also the respondents claimed that Lack of respect for the customs and traditions of the host groups by the pastoralist which were considered offensive, provocative and insulting for the host group and attempt to take away land which is culturally valued and seen as ancestral gift by the indigenous people and any attempt to be taken away from them aggravates violence. Furthermore, political reasons with 9% of the causes of conflict persistence is linked to the politicking of initiation of drastic measures in solving this crisis ones and for all as vested interest by those in the helm of affairs; president, governors, senators, house of rep members, local government

chairmen and who actually owns these cattle's reared by the local Fulani's comes to play as they and use their power to influence policies for their benefit to favour their herders because drastic measures to curb free movement of pastoralist migrants will definitely affects local Fulani's movement in the country..

For example, many scholars like Awogbade, Ogungbile, Kolawole, Ayeni, Gefu in their report submitted to federal agricultural coordinating unit went as far as providing practical and workable feasible solutions to famers-pastoralist crisis and yet those in the helms of affaires never implement their recommendations. This why we conclude that the persistency of farmers-pastoralist conflict have a link not only on economic and cultural reasons but also the bourgeoisies play fundamental role in the conflict.

**According to affected victims (famers):**

“The herdsmen are not the real owners of the cattle, rather the politicians in the helms of affairs who influence policy formulation and implementation that will curtail the activities of herdsmen in the country”

According to the interview with the herdsmen:

The conflict in Omala seem to persist because of the good environment, the land is fruitful and there is water points that seems to be attracting other herdsmen from other parts of the country coupled with Boko-Haram insurgency in the far North which caused other herdsmen to come here and cause trouble by not us living here (Source: Fulani herdsmen Interview respondent, 2018).

**According to Focus group discussion:**

Aside from political, economic, cultural and social reasons that gave birth to persistent conflict, the issue of raping their women, lack of sufficient land to share with pastoralist, ECOWAS treaty that allows free migrants, poor security agencies at the border, corrupt nature of both group leaders (Myetti Allah and traditional rulers). According to affected victims (famers). The Fulani leaders have not put in enough effort to resolve the incessant attacks because if they have why is the attack on the increase on daily basis? and have refused to come for dialogue when called for negotiation by the traditional leaders. The Mbororo migrant from neighbouring countries like Chad, Mali, Senegal who don't move with family, but are very violent and speaks unfamiliar languages who will destroy your crops and when you complain they bring out AK 47, 49, cutlass and other sophisticated weapons and start killing innocent farmers unlike the old breed that were peaceful and god loving people with families, and in return the local farmers avenge by killing their cattle's and thus degenerate into conflict” (Focus Group Discussion, 2018).

President Muhammadu Buhari tend to uphold the findings of this in April 30,2018 in White House, Washington D.C. when he said:

“The problem of cattle herders is a very long historical problem. What is of a concern is that before now the Nigerian herders are known to carry sticks and machetes and cut follies for their animals but these ones are carrying AK 47. “So, I don't think we should underrate Libya, 43 years of Gaddafi people were being recruited from the Sahel and people were being killed.

“With the demise, they moved from their country and their region with their training and their weapons and that is what aggravated the situation” (Buhari in Johnbosco & Charles 2018)

**Consequences of Farmer-Pastoralist Conflicts on Rural Development**  
**Table 4: Responses the Effects of FarmersPastoralist Conflict**

| Effects   | SD (%)   | D (%)    | U (%)   | A (%)     | SA (%)     |
|---|----------|----------|---------|-----------|------------|
| Destruction of basic facilities e.g. schools, health care centres etc | 16 (9.1) | 8 (2.0)  | 32(8.1) | 16 (4.1)  | 323 (81.3) |
| Loss of yield due to conflict   | 0 (0)    | 8 (2.0)  | 8 (2.0) | 48 (12.2) | 331 (83.8) |
| Loss of live stocks   | 8 (2.0)  | 24 (6.1) | 0 (0)   | 44 (11.1) | 319 (80.8) |
| Displacement of victims   | 0 (0)    | 0 (0)    | 0 (0)   | 56 (14.2) | 339 (85.8) |
| Collapsing of social activities such as buying and selling            | 0 (0)    | 0 (0)    | 8 (2.0) | 36 (9.1)  | 351 (88.9) |
| Leads to underdevelopment   | 0 (0)    | 0 (0)    | 24(6.1) | 24.1(6.1) | 347 (87.8) |
| Loss of lives and properties  | 0 (0)    | 0 (0)    | 0 (0)   | 16 (4.1)  | 379 (95.9) |
| Tension among occupant of host community                              | 16 (4.1) | 0 (0)    | 0 (0)   | 0 (0)     | 379 (95.9) |
| Increases rate of poverty   | 36 (9.1) | 0 (0)    | 24(6.1) | 24 (6.1)  | 311 (78.7) |

Field Survey, (2018)

The effects of crop farmers and cattle herders conflict were destruction of basic facilities e.g. schools, health care centres with 81.3% attesting to this, loss of yield due to conflict (83.8%). Other factors identified were loss of live stocks (80.8%), displacement of victims (85.8%), collapsing of social activities such as buying and selling (88.9%), leads to underdevelopment (88.9%), leads to underdevelopment (87.8%), loss of lives and properties (95.9%) 78.7% affirmed that it increases rate of poverty and 95.9% strongly agreed that it leads to tension among occupants of host community.

According to the focus group discussion:

“On the 19th of March, 2018, Agbenema-Ife in Kogi State was attacked from 12am-2am by over 100 heavily armed pastoralists who killed over 4 villagers and left many injured, burnt down houses, Markets, stored harvested crops, destroyed infrastructural and social amenities like schools, burning of electricity pools which leave the people in darkness and health care centers, and our traditional leader Musa Edibo along with his wife were murdered. (Chief Daniel, Community Leader 2018 in group discussion)”

“Also, between May 6th 2011, Agojeju-Ikpoba chiefdom experienced her first attack around 7:30pm-11:30pm which left 20 casualties, and 20 burnt down houses raping of women and destruction of infrastructural facilities. Agojeju-Ikpoba chiefdom experienced her second attack on 1st August 2015 from 10am-3:30pm of which four people died, third attack took place in November 9th 2015 from 6pm to 12pm leaving 17 people dead, on 18th of April 2018 Iyade Chiefdom was attacked destroying of agro product such as rice, maize, pidgin pea, Guinea corn, okoro economic trees: plantation, orange, cashew, palm tree among others burnt down, the only senior nursery school teacher primary by name Emmanuel was killed and our houses burnt down of which has great effect on our development, and economic activities. Our children cannot go to school anymore because of fear being attack and it affects our development, corps members no longer come to our communities to impact on our children, people from the south east and west don't come here to trade any longer and its affects our business because we can't sell what we produce, (Group discussion 2018).

“We live in perpetual fear and distrust in our land, our young men and women are running away from our land and its affecting our development in all aspects.

This finding is in consonance with (Binniyat, 2016) who argued that Fulani herdsmen conflict in Agatu, Guma, Logo and Tarkaa local government area of Benue state of which 11 villagers were killed and two villages bunt down, and attacks refers to vengeance mission of the herdsmen on Godogodo chiefdom in Jema'a local government area in Southern part of Kaduna state has serious implication on rural development and in agreement with (Bakam and Owuamanam, 2016) findings of a first class traditional ruler, Sir Lazarus Agai, his driver and police men were killed on the way from his farm on

17th of October, 2016 in Plateau state, This shows the implication of Fulani's herdsmen and farmers on human security has it has led to the loss of many lives.

The social threats imposed by Farmer-pastoralist conflicts were reduced life expectancy (397), increased death rate (375), increased crime rate (387) and lack of basic amenities. This finding is in agreement with Adebayo and Olaniyi (2008) belief that, Conflict usually leads to disunity, violence, disagreement and bloodshed because parties involved try to reach their objective. It is a form of social interaction in which the actors seek to obtain scarce by weakening or eliminating other contender. The incessant resource conflicts witnessed in the tropics have resulted in loss of lives, properties and environmental degradation as also witnessed in some developed countries such as Balkans (Tenuche and Ifetimehin 2009).

Finding indicates that the economic threats imposed by farmers-pastoralist conflict includes Disrupt of business activities (383), retard economic growth (387). Hampered Economic activities (375) and discourages foreign investors (387). The incessant resource conflicts witnessed in the tropics have resulted in loss of lives, properties and environmental degradation as also witnessed in some developed countries such as Balkans (Tenuche and Ifetimehin 2009). Junaidu (2009), observed that persistent conflict over land resources have caused population displacement, which, as a result, changed the fabric of custom and habitual behaviour in the northeast Nigeria. This led to low agricultural output, which resulted in malnutrition and disease; and by inducing people to leave, economic decline may erode confidence in the national purpose and also upset the traditional balance of economic and political authority between ethnic groups in the area.

The political threat imposed by farmer-pastoralist clashes, this includes tension among the ethnic group (383) may lead to declaration of state of emergency, (387), increases call for session and craves for regionalization and tribalization of the National politics (383). The persistent attack by the pastoralist has called the attention of Nigerians to the threat it poses to Nigerian unity. Nigerian being a very ethnic conscious country that is polarised along ethno-religious lines is a very fragile and delicate union of culturally diverse ethnic groups (Ovuakporie and Agbakwuru, 2016).

Other factors identified were loss of live stocks, displacement of victims, collapsing of social activities such as buying and selling, leads to underdevelopment, loss of lives and properties, increases rate of poverty and leads to tension among occupants of host community. Majority of the respondents attested that farmers-pastoralist conflict poses threat to the internal security of the country. According to Ali (2013) the grief of insecurity in Nigeria is on the rise and this has been compounded by the rising waves of terrorism and insurgency since the country returned to democratic rule in 1999.

This findings concur with Tenuche and Ifetimehin 2009, Junaidu (2009), who argued that persistent conflict over land resources have caused population displacement, which, as a result, changed the fabric of custom and habitual behaviour in the northeast Nigeria and thus led to low agricultural output, which has resulted in malnutrition and disease; and by inducing people to leave and the economic decline may then erode confidence in the national purpose and also upset the traditional balance of economic and political authority between ethnic groups in the area.

### **Conflict Resolution Mechanism**

As shown in Table 5., majority identified formal methods such as deployment of security forces (73.6%), introduction of policies such as land act (55.5%) and making use of judiciary law. The informal methods that has been adopted to tame this conflict were making use of traditional rulers/heads in conflict management (59.5%), making use of religious leaders in conflict management (76.7%), making use of family heads in conflict management (55.5%) and making use of group leaders of both the farmers and herdsmen (59.5%) were identified as the informal methods that has been adopted in conflict management.

**Table 5: Responses on ways the Government has been able to tame farmerspastoralist conflict**

| Methods          |   | Yes (%)    | No (%)     |
|------------------|---|------------|------------|
| Formal methods   | Deployment of security forces                                 | 291 (73.6) | 104 (26.4) |
|                  | Introduction of policies (Land act)                           | 275 (55.5) | 140 (35.5) |
| Informal Methods | Making use of the judiciary (Law court)                       | 295 (74.6) | 100 (25.3) |
|                  | Making use of traditional rulers/heads in conflict management | 235 (59.5) | 160 (40.5) |
|                  | Making use of religious leaders in conflict management        | 303 (76.7) | 92 (23.3)  |
|                  | Making use of family heads in conflict management             | 275 (55.5) | 140 (35.5) |
|                  | Making use of Group Leaders of both the Farmers and Herdsmen  | 235 (59.5) | 160 (40.5) |

Field Survey, (2018)

However, majority of the respondents claimed the efforts by the government in taming this conflict were not successful, with 68% of the respondents disagreeing. This finding disagrees with this CPDDS (2012) findings that the Nigerian police have been very active in managing conflicts. The problem with the police is that the force lacks the capacity to guarantee security due to inadequate logistics, particularly mobility, which would enhance their ability to respond to crises effectively and efficiently (CPDDS, 2012)

**Table 6: Reasons Government Efforts were not successful in taming Farmers-Pastoralist conflict**

| Reasons                                      | Yes (%)    | No (%)    |
|--|------------|-----------|
| Inefficiency of the Security forces          | 323 (81.8) | 72 (18.2) |
| Lapses in the policies introduced            | 379 (96.0) | 16 (5.0)  |
| Delay by the Law court in passing judgment   | 379 (96.0) | 16 (5.0)  |
| Distrust among the group                     | 379 (96.0) | 16 (5.0)  |
| Corrupt nature of the leaders of both groups | 359 (90.9) | 36 (9.1)  |
| Corrupt nature of community leaders          | 363 (81.9) | 32 (8.1)  |

Field Survey, (2018)

The inefficiency of the security forces (81.8%), lapses in the policies introduced (96%), delay by the law court in passing judgment (96%), distrust among the group (96%), corrupt nature of the leaders of both groups (90.9%) and corrupt nature of community leaders (81.9%) were all identified as the reasons why the government has not been successful in taming the conflict between herdsmen and farmer. According to the findings from the report by Centre for Peace, Diplomatic and Development Studies (CPDDS, 2012) as far as dispute resolution was concerned, the vulnerable and the less privileged prefer to take their cases to alternative dispute resolution rather than to the police or the judiciary. In contrast, traditional and religious leaders have a central role in marital and other disputes. Testimony after testimony attests to the belief that „informal“ mechanisms such as traditional authorities, religious leaders, family heads, and women's groups are more effective than the security forces and the judiciary in resolving problems. In addition to the respect in which citizens of the North East hold their leaders, respondents also pointed out that such mechanisms, by bringing people together to express their viewpoints, get to the heart of the matter and thereby prevent recurrence of the dispute. On the other hand formal mechanisms such as the court system merely calm the situation without addressing the real causes of the problems.

From table 7, it can be deduced that majority 66.8% of the respondents identified establishment of farmers and cattle herders union, 23% identified provision of education and civic training for both groups while others (10.2%) did not respond to the question. Grassroots community-based activities, good governance, collaborations, negotiation, reconciliation, mediation, arbitration, adjudication and crisis management are all elements of western alternative dispute resolution (Best, 2009).

However, according to interview conducted with the respondents:

“Deployment of security personnel like the police and joint security task force, imposition of curfew, cattle colonies as proposed by the federal government and supported by Alhaji Yahaya. Bello Adoiza will not remedy herders-farmers conflict in Omala, Kogi state and the country at large. Because we can't give out our lands when we don't have enough to farm, our lands are ancestral heritage how can it be taken from us? Besides we and this people have no cultural affinity, values and customs, we cannot cohabit with them. We need to restructure the Nigeria state back to the first republic where we have regional government and the Fulani herdsmen should go back to their homeland because every human formation has a genesis. Restructuring will help in managing our differences because if you are moving to the east who have their own way of administration you have to abide by their rules and if not you will be punished by their laws so applies to other states of the federation, because the Nigeria constitution itself is not a true reflection of our identity, ethnic races and culture which favour one race over another (Hausa-Fulani)” (Interview with group respondents, April 2018).

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

It is clear that farmer-pastoralist conflicts in Omala Local Government Area centered on the cattle owners and crop farmers. The causes are seen in terms of competition on land and cattle trespass, land encroachment, Migration of Mbororo migrants among others. Periodical struggle for scarce resources has degenerated into violent conflicts in Omala local government Area between farmers-pastoralists. Since most of the cattle herders do not own or possess the rights to land, they therefore depend absolutely on open land to feed their cattle. Government policies on agriculture, especially the all-year fadama farming, are threats to cattle herders' access to pasture. Acquisition of, additional farms has encroached traditional cattle routes thus drastically reducing the grazing for herders livestock and access to pasture areas and water points. Furthermore, the use of police and courts to resolve conflicts between cattle herders and crop farmers by government has been ineffective as this approach had further contributed to the occurrence of the clashes. All these have instigated insecurity that have encouraged the conflicting parties to take responsibility for their own security and to defend themselves, which is a threat to the sustainability of the federation. Therefore, it is in the interest of the State to end the land encroachment and take concrete steps to address the genuine needs of cattle herders for availability of grazing land, resolve the re-occurring conflicts in the agricultural sector, which currently provides employment to large population of country. Efforts made by the stakeholders to prevent the conflict have been minimal or ineffective, which may have lead to a perception by some communities that they should take responsibility for their own security. These have increased the conflict in the study area. However, the government involvement of all the stakeholders has reduced the conflict, but the conflict is still ongoing.

#### **Recommendation**

- i. Since farmer-pastoralist conflicts were resourced based conflict due to blockage of cattle route by farmers which eventually leads to encroachment of farmers land and thus translate to open violence and animosity, there is need for demarking and gaz eting, and its enforcement ensured.
- ii. The proposed cattle ranching policy should by the federal government should be implemented as these ranching model will keep the herds of cattle away from the farms of farmers and away from major roads, it would not only guarantee peaceful co-existence of farmers and herdsmen, it would also enhance productivity of livestock and contribute to food security in Nigeria and the west Africa sub-region.\*\*\*
- iii. Regarding the transit route for irregular migrants through Niger, Senegal, Mali, Ivory Coast, Chade, Cameroon, it is suggested that the Minister of Interior should initiate dialogue with the neighbouring Nigerian government on how to address and curb the rising number of migrants transiting border Nations. Consequently, there is need to revisit the ECOWAS treaty as this is a major constraints to curb free movement into Nigeria.\*\*\*

- iv. Furthermore, the Land Use Act should be amended to accommodate pastoralist
- v. it is of the researcher suggestion based on the study findings that to end this crisis once and for all, there is need for urgent restructuring of the Nigeria state: that revisiting the constitution of land for holistic amendments particularly on the land use act, and also consideration of cattle colonies while implementing former recommendations. This is because, colonies are areas carved out for any specie of animal breeding over ranching with compensation to owners of the land by the government because ranch is usually owned by an individual or a company, sometimes with very few cattle.20, 30, or 40. While ranchers can share the same colony. Because in a colony you could find 30,000 cattle owned by different herders.
- vi. Finally, farmers should be watchful and report any strange face identify to be migrants to the traditional or cattle herders leaders for proper record.

#### Suggestions for further Studies

This research work is by no means exhaustive, for further studies can be carried out on:

- i. The Dynamics of Nigeria Tran border Security: Impact Assessment on Farmers -Pastoralist conflict
- ii. Nigeria Pluralism and the Nemesis on Nigeria Internal Security
- iii. Farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria: Is Restructuring of the Constitution an answer?
- iv. Politicking of Internal Security Policies : Breeding force for farmers-herdsmen conflict
- v. Free movement and the impact on farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria: An assessment of ECOWAS treaty

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