

## Implications of herdsman and farmers conflict on food security in Doma local government area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Sarkin Noma Yahaya Sabo

Department of Sociology  
Nasarawa State University,  
Keffi-Nigeria

### Abstract

*Peace is one of the preconditions for development to flourish in any nation of the world. This study examines the implications of the Herdsmen and Farmers conflict on food security in Doma Local Government of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. A social survey design was adopted. A survey of 381 respondents was drawn, using multi-stage sampling techniques involving electoral wards, towns/villages, main streets, houses, households, and individuals. Primary and secondary data were utilized in the study. Primary and secondary data were utilized in the study. The primary data were generated through the use of questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively using tables; frequency, percentage, and in-depth interviews were transcribed verbatim. The results indicate that destruction of crops and trespasses on farms were the most causes of Herdsmen and Farmers conflict and has negatively impacted the area. It is based on this that the study recommends that grazing reserves should be properly gazetted and customary owners paid adequate compensation to avoid the taking over of land by force and States should be seen clearly and specifically make budgetary provisions for ranch development, International agencies should come to the aids of States and Federal Governments by partnering to facilitate the provision of amenities like fencing materials for farmland and ranches.*

**Keywords:** Doma, Food Security, Farmers, Herders, Nassarawa.

### Introduction

Peace is one of the preconditions for advancement to thrive in any country of the world as absence of the previous will debilitate the last option. For the Thinker Aristotle, peace isn't only the shortfall of war or struggle yet the presence of equity, of law, of request to put it plainly, of government. Herdsmen and farmers have agreed from time age-old in a comparatively serene relationship even though there have been pockets of discussion yet were an exact moment to be marked by history. As indicated by Sinclair and Frywell (1985), subsistence farming and little surplus generation were in trend as herdsman and farmers lived in a mutual relationship.

Irrespective of Nigeria's incredible potential to increase agrarian efficiency and food production predominantly in northern regions, serious crises of conflicts in these areas have deteriorated the already existing challenges to production, such as climate change, poor soils, and deficiency of access to credit and extension services. In Nigeria, for instance, diverse savage conflicts over land



assets have provoked weakened agrarian generation, sustenance instability, and appetite, the conflicts between different ethnic, word-related, and inhabitant bunches for the most part result in the obliteration of domesticated animals and farmland. The destruction of crops on farmers' farmland and in some cases reprisal by the farmers by killing livestock owned by the herdsman impedes the overall food production, both in crops and meat. This denotes increased hunger disease and malnutrition. The never-ending resource conflicts witnessed in the tropics have occasioned the loss of lives, properties, and environmental degradation <sup>1</sup>. Moreover, clashes as demonstrated by Ojeleye<sup>2</sup> will generally influence crop yield by making food deficiencies, which as a result transforms the fabric of custom and habitual behaviour in northeast Nigeria.

Conflict, as showed by Ukeji<sup>3</sup> provides off an impression of being a universal element of human social orders, prone to happen whenever and anyplace. For example, an investigation led on condition prompted conflict in Kwara state by Adebayo<sup>4</sup> demonstrates that farmers were displaced as a result of the destructions inflicted on their crops by cattle, while only 39 percent of the respondents were not displaced. This stemmed from a very low harvest of crops in the study area. Hussein<sup>5</sup> also establishes that, in a border between Nasarawa and Benue states, herdsman and farmers' conflict left not fewer than 50 persons dead, over 10 villages sacked and over 200,00 persons both nomads and farmers displaced. Additionally, a research Muhammad<sup>6</sup> herdsman have nonstop to clash with sedentary farming communities in Plateau, Ogun, Oyo, Sokoto, Nasarawa, Benue, Rivers, Bauchi states, and federal capital territory. Also, Abbas<sup>7</sup>, in his study of major sources of conflict between the herdsman and farmers shows that land-related issues especially overgrazing fields accounted for the highest percentage of the conflict. Various cases of conflict in northern Nigeria concerning the herdsman and farmers conflict form significant variables in economic, in areas of stiff competition for grazing land but the degree of intensity varies from state to state depending on the ecological location and the community involved. Abbass<sup>8</sup> emphasizes that in Nasarawa State, for example, areas most affected include Awe, Keana, Lafia, Obi, and Doma local government areas among others. These local governments recorded serious cases of conflict for survival between pastoralists and farmers, which led to the loss of lives destruction of properties with the emergence of

<sup>1</sup> Muhammed, R.A. (2008). Sokoto: Causes of farmers/herdsman clashes identified. In *Daily Trust*, October 13, (20)16:2.

<sup>2</sup> Ojeleye, O. A. (2015). Farm Household and Community Food Security Analysis in Kaduna State, Nigeria. *Ph.D. Thesis: Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria*.

<sup>3</sup> Ukeji, E.U. (2000). Productivity in Agriculture Sector. *CBN Proceedings of Annual Zonal Conference, Research Unit, Gateway Hotel, Abeokuta*, 11<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> June.

<sup>4</sup> Adebayo O. O. (2008). Factors associated with Pastoral and crop farmers conflict in derived savannah zone of Oyo state, Nigeria. *Journal of human ecology*, 23(1):71-74

<sup>5</sup> Hussein, K. (2000). Conflict between farmers and herders in the semi-arid Sahel and East Africa: A review. London: IED/OD Group. <http://www.modernghana.com>

<sup>6</sup> Muhammed, R.A. (2008). Sokoto: Causes of farmers/herdsman clashes identified. In *Daily Trust*, October 13, (20)16:2

<sup>7</sup> Abbass, I. M. (2012). No retreat no surrender conflict for survival between pastoralists and Farmers in northern Nigeria. *European Science Journal*, 8(1): 331 -346.

<sup>8</sup> Abbass, I. M. (2012). No retreat no surrender conflict for survival between pastoralists and Farmers in northern Nigeria. *European Science Journal*, 8(1): 331 -346.

insecurity due to the incessant desire for reprisal. The conflict between these two groups has prompted the loss of properties worth millions of naira and the passing of a huge number of lives. In spite of all these, there seem to be no solutions in sight<sup>9</sup>.

A common basis of conflict is crop damage<sup>10</sup>. Access to land is another major cause of conflicts between pastoralists and farmers depending on economic, environmental, and other factors, for example, increases in the herd sizes, due to improved conditions of cattle can compel the pastoralists to search for additional pastures beyond their limited array. Likewise, conflicts as indicated by Ojeleye<sup>11</sup> tend to affect crop output by creating food shortages, which disrupt both upstream input markets and downstream output markets, thus dissuading food production, commercialization, and stock management. In conflict situations, food-producing areas experience seizing or destroying of food stocks, livestock, and other assets, interjecting marketed supplies of food. Herdsmen-Farmers conflict is a standout amongst the most fundamental problems that have perturbed Nigeria right now. This is a national issue that needs to be tackled with every sense of importance. The conflict between the two groups is not just restricted to any specific state or geo-political zone rather it's an issue that poses a serious danger to all parts of the country and its unity as well. In a bid to solve the problem, the Federal Government has recommended the setting up of Cattle Colonies in all the thirty-six (36) states of the federation as a solution after the Grazing bill failed to scale through at the National Assembly. The proposed Cattle Colony has been widely condemned as many have deduced this move by the federal government in different ways. Therefore, the will study x-rayed the implication of the Herdsmen and Farmers conflict on food security in Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

### Statement of the Problem

The regular conflicts among herdsmen and farmers in the transcendently farming zones of Nasarawa state have brought about the destruction of lives and farmlands and have turned into a noteworthy danger to endeavors to support sustenance creation which is the real diversification alternative of the present administration of President Muhammadu Buhari. The conflicts have left in its trail significant loss of lives and properties. These hardships of lives have unfavorably predisposed farming activities and other related businesses. This has achieved a sudden abatement in ranch yields, an improvement that has elevated the dread of yearning. Previously most farmers in the State have abandoned farms for fear of being attacked by the herdsmen. For the predominantly farming communities in Nasarawa and other border communities of Benue and Plateau states, farming is no longer business as

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<sup>9</sup> Abubakar, M. B. (2012). A Sociological Assessment of Nomadic Pastoralists and Sedentary Farmers Conflict in Katsina State (2007-2011), *Unpublished M. Sc. Thesis, Department of Sociology, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.*

<sup>10</sup> Adamu, M. M. (2007). *Colonial origins of post-colonial conflicts between cattle rearers and farmers in Katsina State.* In historical perspectives in Nigeria's post-colonial conflicts.

<sup>11</sup> Ojeleye, O. A. (2015). Farm Household and Community Food Security Analysis in Kaduna State, Nigeria. *Ph.D. Thesis: Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria.*

usual. Numerous farmers have been displaced and dispossessed of their farms by armed men believed to be herdsmen.

The destructive effects of these conflicts coupled with the impracticable policies of the federal government concerning food production and importation, prices of essential commodities, and food products have skyrocketed making them exorbitant to the common man. Nigeria continues to be affected by recurring violent conflict between farmer-herdsmen in some States, posing a grave danger to food security and destruction of the sources of social and economic livelihood of people. Data were generated from the National Early Warning System (NEWS) from January – 16th March 2018, but the figures of deaths arising from the Farmer-Herders conflict were at 5281. The figure advocates that the conflicts have increased in occurrence, strength, and geographical scope with terrible humanitarian, social, political, and economic consequences. Inherent in this conflict is the issue of access to natural resources such as water and land for grazing or farming exacerbated by deteriorating climatic conditions due to Global Warming. The growing availability of illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) both locally produced and those smuggled in from other nations further compounds the crisis.

Nonetheless, various studies like Ephraim<sup>12</sup> on “managing conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Benue State, Nigeria,” Heinrichy<sup>13</sup> on “an empirical phenomenological psychological study of farmers –herdsmen conflict”, Hussein<sup>14</sup> on “conflict between farmers and herders in the semi-arid Sahel and East Africa”, Muhammed<sup>15</sup> on “causes of farmers/herdsmen clashes” and Musa and Igbawua<sup>16</sup> on “resource use conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in Guma Local Government Area of Benue State among others have been conducted on implications of herdsmen and farmers conflict in Nigeria but none of these have examined the implications of herdsmen and farmers conflict in heterogeneous settings such as Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. This study, therefore, intends to fill these gaps.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

- i. What are the causes of Herdsmen and farmers' conflict in Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?
- ii. What are the implications of herdsmen and farmers' conflict on food security in Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

<sup>12</sup> Ephraim, G. (2014). *Managing Conflict Between Farmers And Pastoralists In Benue State, Nigeria*. Peace Trends. Issue 2, vol.3.

<sup>13</sup> Heinrichy, O. A. (2006) “An empirical phenomenological psychological study of Farmer –Herdsmen, Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences vol.2 No.1 1 – 27.

<sup>14</sup> Hussein, K. (2000). Conflict between farmers and herders in the semi-arid Sahel and East Africa: A review. London: IIED/OD Group.<http://www.modernghana.com>

<sup>15</sup> Muhammed, R.A. (2008). Sokoto: Causes of farmers/herdsmen clashes identified. In *Daily Trust, October 13*, (20)16:2

<sup>16</sup> Musa, S.D. and Igbawua, M.I. (2014). *Resource Use Conflict Between Farmers and Fulani Herdsmen in Guma Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria*. J Def Stud Resour Manage Vol. 4, Issue 1.

- iii. What are the conflict resolution mechanisms employed to resolved herdsman and farmers' conflict in Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

### Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

#### *Conflict*

The concept is defined differently by different scholars. Conflict is a circumstance of conflict between two gatherings. Conflict is an inescapable component of society. The state of health of a society lies along a continuum that ranges from a conflict-free society to a conflict-ridden society. Conflict is a characteristic condition existing in any multiparty heterogeneous framework. It is an integral social condition derived from the fact that persons, parties, social groups and collectivities differ from one another on a variety of values, goals and material resources. Conflict is often defined as a form of behaviour mutual interference escalated hostilities. A conflict situation is therefore one that is characterized by the inability of those concerned to iron out their differences. It is the perceived incompatibility of goals, actions and outcomes between two or more people. Dubrin<sup>17</sup>(cited in Ejiogu, 2002) saw the conflict as "opposition of persons or forces that gives rise to some tension". As long as we have more than an individual in interaction, there is bound to be conflict.

Conflict is not an awful thing. As pointed out by Anih<sup>18</sup>, conflict is a part of life, but it becomes unhealthy when it is between people rather than about ideas. Conflict is bound to occur as long as people are dealing with fellow people, making a decision, or having meetings. Conflict, therefore is direct opposition, a clash or disagreement between people. Schramm-Nielsen<sup>19</sup> states that conflict is the state of serious disagreement and argument about something perceived to be essential by at least one of the parties involved. Conversely, not all conflicts are bad and not all conflicts are good. People tend to view conflict as a negative force operating against the successful completion of a group or common goals. Adebayo<sup>20</sup> affirmed that conflict arises as a result of common group consciousness for survival or a quest to attain certain goals that are considered to be of great value and which are perceived as being fruitless. This encourages discrimination, based on 'We' and 'Them'.

Also, Yecho<sup>21</sup> describes conflicts as a condition of disharmony within an interaction process. This usually comes about as a result of the clash of interests between the parties involved in some form of relationship. Conflict is an inevitable outcome of human dynamics and diversity. Its major source in any given society is derivable from the pursuit of divergent interests, goals, and aspirations by individuals or groups in a defined socio-economic and geo-

<sup>17</sup> Ejiogu, A. M. (2002). *Human resource management: Towards greater productivity*. Lagos: University of Lagos Press

<sup>18</sup> Anih, S. (2008). Conflict frames of reference: Implication for dispute processes. *A paper presented at Centre for Management Development workshop, Lagos*

<sup>19</sup> Schramm-Nielsen, J. (2002). "Conflict Management in Scandinavia" *Department of International Communication and Management, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark*.

<sup>20</sup> Adebayo O. O. (2008). Factors associated with Pastoral and crop farmers conflict in derived savannah zone of Oyo state, Nigeria. *Journal of human ecology*, 23(1):71-74.

<sup>21</sup> Yecho, J. I (2006). *An overview of the Tiv-Jukum Crisis*. In Timothy T. Gyuse and OgaAjene (eds.) *Conflicts in the Benue valley, Makurdi: Benue State University*

political environment. In this study, the researcher concurred with the definition provided by Schramm-Nielsen<sup>22</sup> that conflict is a state of serious disagreement and argument about something perceived to be important by at least one of the parties involved.

### Food Security

The concept of food security has been used in several ways. Food security in its most essential structure is characterized as the admittance to all individuals to the food required for a sound life consistently<sup>23</sup>. Food security can be taken to mean access by all people at all times to sufficient food for active, healthy life<sup>24</sup>. Its focal components are: (a) the accessibility of food and (b) the ownership of the capacity for its obtaining<sup>25</sup>.

Definitions of food security have changed with time. At the 1974 World Food Summit, food security was characterized as, "accessibility consistently of sufficient world food supplies of basic foodstuff to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices" (UN 1975).

By 2001, the definition of food security evolved to, "a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life"<sup>26</sup> This unending evolution of food security as an operational concept in public has reflected the wider recognition of the complexities of the technical and policy issues involved.

### Literature Review

#### *Implications of the Herdsmen and Farmers Conflict on Food Security*

There is most likely that the present conflicts among herdsmen and farmers in the usually farming regions of the middle belt area have brought about the loss of lives and farmlands have become a main threat to the efforts to boost food production. From Nasarawa to Benue, Taraba, and Plateau in the North Central area and Zamfara State in the North West, clashes between farmers and herdsmen have left in its trail heavy losses of lives and property. The misfortunes of lives have hurtfully impacted cultivating exercises and other related organizations and financial exercises. This has caused a drastic decrease in farm outputs, a change that has heightened the fear of hunger. At present

<sup>22</sup> Schramm-Nielsen, J. (2002). "Conflict Management in Scandinavia" *Department of International Communication and Management*, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark.

<sup>23</sup> FAO (2002). The State of food insecurity in the world. FAO Report. Rome. 2002. *Food and Agriculture Organization*

<sup>24</sup> Idachaba, F. (2004), "Food Security in Nigeria Challenges under Democratic Dispensation", *paper presented at ARMTI*, Ilorin, Kwara State (March 24)

<sup>25</sup> Adeoti, J.A. (1989), "Economic Crisis in Developing Countries: The Food Dimension", *Ilorin Journal of Business and Social Sciences*, Vol. 1.

<sup>26</sup> FAO (2002). The State of food insecurity in the world. FAO Report. Rome. 2002. *Food and Agriculture Organization*

most farmers in the affected states have abandoned farms for the fear of being attacked by the herdsmen. For the primarily farming communities of Nasarawa and border communities of Benue and Taraba states, farming is no longer a business as usual. Numerous farmers have been displaced and evicted from their farms by armed men alleged to be herdsmen<sup>27</sup>.

Agricultural and development experts are unanimous in their forecasts that the gains recorded in the agricultural sector of the economy, especially in the area of food production, may suffer a serious impediment as a result of the negative effects of terrorist activities on farmers in Nasarawa and neighboring States. Now, Doma Local Government Area is one of the most affected by the rampaging herdsmen have a tale of woes to tell. The effects of the sustained Herdsmen war in the affected locality have led to farmers' unwillingness to go back to their farms. Resident farmers nearby fled the area leaving their farms harvested and uncultivated, thereby endangering farms to unwarranted grazing by the herdsmen. In all the attacks, heavy fatalities in human lives and properties are recorded on both sides. Although the farmers in Doma Local Government count losses in terms of houses and farm produce, the herdsmen are counting theirs in terms of cattle. Farms and schools in the impacted regions have been surpassed with weeds and those that were prepared for reap have been left unattended.

These ruinously influence food supply by ranchers in Doma Local Government Area and to all pieces of the State since the majority of the farmers have moved to safe spots where they are not cultivating and are remaining inactive. Though the conflict between the sedentary farmers in Nigeria and the Fulani nomadic cattle herdsmen is decades old, the present escalation into a full-blown war between the herdsmen and the farmers is a current phenomenon. As the blood-letting lingers on a sophisticated proportion, security agencies appeared to have been overwhelmed by the refined nature of the arms used by the mercenaries. The killing of men, women, and children and the destruction of farm crops and animals become a characteristic of this war, which has pursued people out of their ancestral homes into excruciating situations as internally displaced persons.

The conflict between the Herdsmen and the Farmers has stimulated a reduction in not just the farmers' outputs but also the income of farmers owing to the destruction of crops by cattle. This is ironic to the Federal government's call to return to agriculture to boost the ailing economy and food security. As a result of the conflict, a lot of farmers have lost their farm produce to the conflict. This inevitably affects earning capability at the micro-level and the macro-level affects the Gross Domestic Product of the country (GDP) bringing about the dearth in food security of the nation. This is a synergetic scenario as herdsmen are not also spared. They also count their losses as cattle are rustled, leading to a decrease in income and the unavailability of beef for the general public. The contention in many cases doesn't just influence the productivities of farmers or

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<sup>27</sup> John, V. (2016). Governing Interests of Fulani Herdsmen and Peasant Farmers in Natural Resources in the Asante Akim North District of Ghana. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*. Vol. 3, No. 10.



that of herders yet additionally upsets each and every business inside the assigned clash regions and on second thought of drawing in financial backers, it frightens them off.

The loss of lives and displacement of both farmers and herdsmen in this case farmers are the most affected because they have always been at the receiving end of the conflict. According to Amnesty International, clashes between herdsmen and farmers in Adamawa, Benue, Taraba, Ondo, and Kaduna have occasioned in 168 deaths in January 2018 alone and in 2017, 549 deaths and thousands were displaced across Enugu, Zamfara, Kaduna, Plateau, Nasarawa, Niger, Cross River, Adamawa, Katsina, Delta, and Ekiti State. In most cases of the conflict, both farmers and herdsmen relocate as a result of attacks and reprisal attacks. More often than not, farmers are afraid of going to their farms' lands for fear of attack by herdsmen in areas where there is conflict. This again affects the production and income of farmers. Furthermore, as a result of the killings, a lot of children have been rendered fatherless and motherless and husbands and wives turned into widows and widowers.

The herdsmen-Farmers conflict has led to the wanton destruction of material resources. It has also facilitated land degradation as conflicts often result in the destruction of environmental, physical, human, and social capital, thereby altering available sustainable development opportunities that should improve national development. Obviously, the conflict impacts negatively on the general human well-being of society. Victims who sustain major injuries from the conflict are in most cases handicapped. In certain cases, families lose their breadwinners while some children happen to lose their both parents. This further entrenches people into poverty. It also reduces the quality of life and the capabilities of people to live the kind of life they desire. Such victims if not well rehabilitated become a burden to others in society. Aside from the loss of lives, livelihoods, and opportunities, such conflicts harm human dignity and fundamental human rights as such rights stand to be abused during conflicts. Administratively, the federal government must protect the lives and properties of its citizens, protect the country from both external and internal aggression. In a situation where the federal government fails in managing the conflict effectively, it will harm the country's image abroad. Instability and vulnerability are a portion of the variables that deter financial backers from putting resources into a specific nation consequently sabotaging the monetary and public advancement of the country. Socially it has planted the seed of conflict between the Fulani race and their partners in Nigeria.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This paper is situated within the Conflict theory. This research adopts the Karl Marx (1818) conflict theory which states that modern society is characterized by diverse schools of thought, each exploring social phenomenon from its orientation. For this review, the contention hypothesis is embraced to clarify herders-ranchers clashes in Nasarawa State concerning Doma Local Government Area. In its overall utilization the word or term "conflict" encompasses the perspective on contrast and conflict, hardship and battle. The conflict perspective or conflict theory was derived from the ideas of Karl Marx (1818-1883) the great German theorist and



political activist who thought that society is a dynamic entity constantly undergoing a transformation driven by conflict. To Marx, men, in the social creation of their reality, unavoidably go into clear relations which are autonomous of their will, in particular relations of creation proper to a given stage in the advancement of their material powers of creation the entirety of which comprises the financial construction of society. The truth that the prevailing or administering class (the bourgeoisie) controls the social relations of creation, the predominant philosophy in entrepreneur society is that of the decision class. Ideology and social institutions, in turn, serve to reproduce and perpetuate the economic class structure, Marx, the genuine establishment whereupon the superstructure of social, political, and scholarly awareness was assembled, has been the shady monetary game plans of free enterprise. Marx avowed that any group environment dependent on a shady monetary game plan created inside it the seed of its annihilation (Marx, 1971).

Generally, the conflict perspective views society as made up of individuals competing for limited resources. Competition over limited resources is at the heart of all social associations. Competition, rather than consensus, is a characteristic of human relationships. Broader social structures and organizations reflect the competition for resources and the inherent inequality competition entails, some people and organizations have more resources (i.e., power and influence), and use those resources to maintain their positions of power in the society (Marx, 1971). From the conflict perspective, society is constantly in conflict over resources, and that conflict drives social change. For instance, conflict theorists might explain the civil rights movements of the 1960s by studying how activists challenged the racially unequal distribution of political power and economic resources. As in this example, conflict scholars by and large consider social change to be sudden, even progressive, rather than steady. In the conflicting viewpoint, change comes about through conflict between competing interests, not consensus or adaptation. Conflict theory, therefore, gives sociologists a framework for explaining social change. All conflicts share familiar traits. The first is that there is a sort of contact between the gatherings that are involved, furthermore, the gatherings in struggle see clashing perspectives lastly, one of the gatherings consistently needs to change existing inconsistencies<sup>28</sup>.

Conflict theory is relevant in proving the fact that competition for access to natural resources between farmers and herders gives rise to conflict. It sets the background for the origin of the conflict in terms of access to the means of agricultural production.

### Methodology

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<sup>28</sup> Ofuoku, A.U & Isife B.I. (2009). Causes, Effects and Resolution of Farmers-Nomadic Cattle Herdsmen Conflict in Delta State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology* vol.1(2). Pp. 047 – 054.

Doma is a local government area in Nasarawa State, with headquarters in the town of Doma. This paper adopted survey design because it will uncover data, interpret, synthesize and integrate data, as well as point to their implication in interrelationships. Doma Local Government Area has a population of 138, 991 at the 2006 census and a projected population of 187,600 as of 2017 (National Population Commission, 2017). Conversely, the target population for this study is not the entire population of Doma Local Government Area but the adult male and females, who are 18 and above years with a population of 148, 106 people (National Population Census, 2018). Consequently, the study used selected electoral wards which include Agbashi, Akpanaja, Alagye I, Alagye II and Doka I. Also, the study target eight (8) respondents for an in-depth interviews. These respondents include community leaders, religious leaders, women leaders, traditional rulers, herdsman, farmers, opinion leaders and others from the study area.

The sample size for this study was determined using the Yaro (1967) statistics. Below is a demonstration of how the statistics were computed:

According to Yamane, (1967):

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

N = Total population,

n = required sample size

e = margin of error allowed (10%)

Hence

$$e = (0.05)^2,$$

$$n = 74,249$$

$$n = \frac{74,249}{1 + 74,249 (0.05)^2} = \frac{74,249}{74,250(0.0025)} = \frac{74,249}{185.63}$$

$$n = 399.9$$

$$n = 400 \text{ app}$$

This paper adopted cluster sampling techniques. This is because the study area lacks a direct field listing and the clustered nature of the area hence the adoption of clustered sampling technique for the study. The selected clusters or areas are Agbashi, Akpanaja, Alagye I, Alagye II, and Doka I. The respondents were randomly selected from the clusters or areas Agbashi, Akpanaja, Alagye I, Alagye II, and Doka I. giving each respondent an equal chance of being selected. Questionnaire and in-depth interviews were the instruments used for data collection. This study elicits data using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data were analyzed using univariate analysis. The qualitative data were transcribed verbatim into English, together with observational notes. Furthermore, the data were sifted and sorted.

**Table 4.1** Causes of Farmers and Herdsmen conflict

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Trespasses into farms	86	22.6
Destruction of crops	208	54.6
Theft of cattle	16	4.2
Contamination of streams	16	4.2
Disregard for traditional authority	14	3.7
Government ineffective environmental policies	32	8.4
Blockage of grazing routes	7	1.8
Light arms proliferation	1	.3
Lack of conflict resolution mechanisms	1	.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.1 presents the causes of Farmers and Herdsmen conflict in the sampled population of Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Majority of the respondents reported that the destruction of crops is the main cause of Farmers and herders conflict in the study area with 54.6 percent of the total population of the respondents followed by the trespasses into farms with 22.6 percent of the total respondents. This implies that the destruction of crops and trespasses into farms are causes that triggered the Farmers and Herders conflict.

In the in-depth interview (IDI) conducted, there was clear agreement on the destruction of crops and trespasses of farms as the common causes of the Farmers and Herdsmen's conflict. Several interviewees stated that the Farmers and Herdsmen conflict is triggered as a result of the destruction of crops and trespasses of farms by herders in the sampled population. Four interviewees, Osabonya (Assistant Chief), Vigilante officer, Chairman Farmers Association, and Ardo (Head of the Herders) captured the general position of the interviewees as reported below. For instance,

Osabonya (Assistant Chief) reported that;

“In this community, we have experienced several farmers and herders conflict. These conflicts are majorly caused by the destruction of crops and trespasses of farms by the herders. Just last week we experienced the same issue in one of our neighbouring community”.

Similarly, the Vigilante officer in the study area stated that:

“Destruction of crops and trespasses of farms by the herders are the causes of farmers and herdsman conflict in this Local Government Area. Even though, there are other causes like blockage of grazing route and contamination of streams by fishermen”.

This point was further buttressed by a statement made by Chairman Farmers Association of the Local Government Area who said:

“We (farmers) have suffered a lot in this area. The major causes of our problem with the herdsman are the destruction of our crops and trespasses into farms by them. In fact, it our major challenges and what will continue to cause the conflict between us”.

In addition, an interviewee who is the Ardo (Head of the Herders) affirmed that:

“We (Fulani) are brothers with farmers. We have had issues with them in recent time. Destruction of crops and trespasses of farms by our children are the causes of conflict between us. Sometimes it is not our making our grazing routes are blocked so we find it difficult to control our cattle which will lead to the destruction of crops and trespasses of farms”.

**Table 4.2** Implications of Herdsmen and Farmers conflict in Doma LGA

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Loss of lives	153	40.2
Loss of properties	82	21.5
Displacement of farmers	46	12.1
Population migration	49	12.9
Reduction in food and animals production	49	12.9
Rise in social vices	2	.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

In table 4.2, it was revealed that loss of lives is the most important implication of herdsman and Farmers' conflict in the sampled population with 40.2 percent of the total respondents in the Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Also, loss of properties, displacement of farmers, population migration, reduction in food and animals' production, and rise in social vices are effects of herdsman and farmers conflict in the sampled population of the study.

During the in-depth interview (IDI) the Osabonya (Assistant Chief) and Chairman Farmers Association pointed out the loss of lives in the study area is the chief effect of the conflict. They explained as thus:

“Herdsmen-Farmers conflict has caused loss of lives in this community. My people were attacked several times which led to the loss of lives and properties. This experience is heart touching we are really in trouble”.

“We have lost so many members (Farmers) to this unending conflict between us and herdsmen. Our people are afraid to go to farms because of attacks. Many were attacked and killed in their farms. It is seriously affecting us”.

**Table 4.3** Whether there has been any effort by Herdsmen and Farmers in the area to resolve their conflict

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	241	63.3
No	140	36.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.3 shows whether there has been any effort by Herdsmen and Farmers in the area to resolve their conflict with a larger percent of the total respondents in the sampled population acknowledging that there has been an effort on the ground to resolved Herdsmen and Farmers in the area. This was established by 63.3 percent of the total respondent in the study area.

**Table 4. 4** Effort put in place to resolved Herdsmen and Farmers conflict

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Negotiation	59	15.5
Compensation	81	21.3
Sanction	123	32.3
Regular stakeholders meeting	91	23.9
Tolerance	27	7.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.4 indicates the effort put in place to resolve the Herdsmen and Farmers conflict. Data in the table shows that sanction is the effort put in place to resolved Herdsmen and Farmers' conflict in the sampled population in the Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. This was affirmed by 32.3 percent of the total respondents in the sampled population.

This attracted strong support from interviewees during an in-depth interview (IDI) conducted in the sampled areas. An overwhelming proportion of the interviewees accepted with one voice that sanction is the effort put in place to resolve the Herdsmen and Farmers conflict. An interviewee, the Ardo (Head of the Herders) captured the general position of the interviewees' thus:

“On our part, we sanction our members (Herdsman) who go contrary. This is the effort on the ground and it is yielding positive results for us. We will continue to do that for peaceful co-existence in the area”.

**Table 4.5** Effort put in place by the government in finding a lasting solution to the Problems

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Enabling law	54	14.2
Provide security	140	36.7
Provide ranches	62	16.3
Regular meeting with herdsman and farmers	74	19.4
Advocate peaceful co-existence between herdsman and farmers	42	11.0
Provide extension services	9	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 4.5 shows the effort put in place by the government in finding a lasting solution to the Problems. Information from the table indicates that providing security is the effort putting in place by the government in finding a lasting solutions to the Problems of herdsman and Farmers in the sampled population of Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. This was confirmed by 36.7 percent of the total respondents from the study area.

This was corroborated in an in-depth interview (IDI) conducted where interviewees confirmed with clear agreement that government has provided security in the area in finding a lasting solutions to the issue of Herdsman and Farmers in the sampled population. One of such interviewees (Osabonya) had this to say:

“Government has tried in the provision of security in this community. If not government effort in providing the security you will not see anybody here. Today we can sleep with two eyes closed. We want the government to do so”

**Table 4.6** Ways in which herdsman and farmers conflict can be tackled

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Create an awareness programme on the negative side of the conflict	80	21.0
Provide security	125	32.8
Prosecution of offenders	45	11.8

There must be tolerance between herdsmen and farmers	54	14.2
Constitute conflict resolution committee	34	8.9
There must be enabling laws	43	11.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 4.6 demonstrates ways in which the Herdsmen and Farmers conflict can be tackled in Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. The data revealed that providing security will assist in tackling Herdsmen and Farmers' conflict in the area of study. This was affirmed by 32.8 percent of the total respondents in the sample areas of the study.

### Discussion of Findings

This section contains discussions of the major findings of the study. Relating to the causes of Herdsmen and farmers conflict in Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, the study finding revealed that destruction of crops and trespasses of farms were the most important causes of Herdsmen and Farmers conflict in the study area. Even though there are other causes of Herdsmen and Farmers conflicts like theft of cattle, contamination of streams, disregard for traditional authority, Government ineffective environmental policies, blockage of grazing routes, light arms proliferation and lack of conflict resolution mechanisms. This was corroborated by Tenuche and Ifatimehin<sup>29</sup>, a high percentage of conflicts arising from the destruction of crops, trespasses of farms, and land disputes have to do with land matters and conflict between Fulani herdsmen and farmers over grazing land. As a result of population explosion and the invariably scarce nature of the land we have continued to witness massive encroachment into farmlands by herdsmen in search of pastures for their cattle.

On the implications of herdsmen and farmer's conflict on food security in Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, the finding of the study unraveled that loss of lives and properties were the strong implications of herdsmen and farmers' conflict in the study area. This was supported by John (2016) that there is most likely that the present conflicts among herdsmen and farmers in the prevalently farming regions of the middle belt area have brought about the loss of lives and farmlands have become a major threat to the efforts to boost food production. From Nasarawa to Benue, Taraba, and Plateau in the North Central region and Zamfara State in the North West, clashes between farmers and herdsmen have left in its trail heavy losses of lives and property. These losses of lives have adversely affected farming activities and other related businesses and socio-economic activities. This has resulted in a drastic

<sup>29</sup> Tenuche, M.S. & Ifatimehin, O.O. (2009). Resource Conflict among Farmers and Fulani Herdsmen: Implications for Resource Sustainability: *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*. Vol.3 (9), Pp360 – 364



reduction in farm outputs, a development that has heightened the fear of hunger. Already most farmers in the affected states have abandoned farms for the fear of being attacked by the herdsmen. For the predominantly farming communities of Nasarawa and border communities of Benue and Taraba states, farming is no longer a business as usual. Several farmers have been displaced and dispossessed of their farms by armed men believed to be herdsmen.

Connecting to conflict resolution mechanism, the finding of the study discovered that sanction and compensation were the best conflict resolution mechanism in the study area. Also, there are other conflict resolution mechanisms adopted in the area, sanction and compensation were more effective conflict resolution mechanisms and are yielding positive results. This was confirmed by Best<sup>30</sup> that alternative dispute resolution, is about the search for, and application of, "non-conventional" peaceful methods of settling disputes and resolving conflict situations using the least expensive methods, and in ways that satisfy the parties, as well as ways that preserve relationship after a settlement might have been reached. African traditional dispute resolution, according to him, is a method used to resolve conflict by the use of the authority given to the traditional leaders. Africans use collaborative methods of conflict resolution. Another method is Western alternative dispute resolution, which is a process of conflict resolution without violent means. It is also collaborative. Grassroots community-based activities, good governance, collaborations, negotiation, reconciliation, mediation, arbitration, adjudication, and crisis management are all elements of western alternative dispute resolution<sup>31</sup>.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has explained that the conflict between Herdsmen and Farmers has occurred since time immemorial. Conflicts between farmers and herdsmen are widespread across the African continent and the reasons for their occurrence are varied, stemming from the incompatibility of livelihood patterns between farmers and herders, alterations of symbiotic relationship, resentment of pastoralists, destructions of farms by cattle and cattle rustling among others. Herdsmen and Farmers conflict has been accentuated by the global trend of climate change which has led to the shrinking of ecological space and resources, leading to intense pressure on, and competition for, the available resources. The spiraling migration of pastoralists from the far north towards the central part of Nigeria has resulted in a sort of dialectical relations between the herdsmen and the farmers. As this review has seen on account of Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, the present circumstance has been convoluted by the rising frequency of work uncertainty among the cultivating and crowding networks because of the diminishing biological fortunes of the district. This situation has prompted frantic, vicious battles for admittance to and control of scant natural space and assets, a circumstance that has caused critical compassionate, social, financial and monetary outcomes. The fierce and often virulent nature of these struggles has found expression in a vicious circle of violence and mutual blood feud. The herder/farmer catastrophe in Doma Local

<sup>30</sup> Best, M. (2009) "Udawas Return", DailyTrust Newspaper, Tuesday, January 18, 2005.

<sup>31</sup> Best, M. (2009) "Udawas Return", Daily Trust Newspaper, Tuesday, January 18, 2005.

Government Area of Nasarawa state has been essentially woeful in terms of its destructive impacts. In its apparent dynamics of deterioration and viciousness, the situation has given rise to a sort of pervasive Fulani militancy in the hinterlands of the Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. This has been the bane of sustainable peace and progress in most parts of Doma Local Government Area, Nasarawa State.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Grazing reserves should be properly gazetted and customary owners paid adequate compensation to avoid the taking over of land by force. Government should consider removing offensive words such as Cattle colonies||, anti-open grazing|| in policies and laws.
- ii. The fact that all cultures including that of Fulani are dynamic, and as a result of the increase in Knowledge, urbanization, and new technology, there are already cultural changes even among the Fulani people. That is, they changed from wearing leaves and animal skin to wearing clothes. In addition to moving on foot, they now use trucks to transports the animals. The in addition to using sticks for herding, they have begun to use dangerous weapons manufactured by the white man to name a few. Therefore herdsmen of all cultures should embrace the call for a change from the culture of open grazing to the culture of ranching or grazing reserve or ranching alias cattle colony in good faith.
- iii. A multi-stage conflict management framework is required to curb the danger posed by farmer-herdsmen conflict. The proposed framework should be statutory committees at community, local, state, and federal government levels. It should also include the relevant occupational unions. Traditional and local leaders should be well involved in finding solutions to farmer-herdsmen conflict. The committees proposed above must have representatives of the local leadership.
- iv. Farmer poverty is not only pervasive; available it is also on the increase, due to many factors that include farmer-herdsmen conflict. A lot of efforts have been put in place with no meaningful success. There is therefore the need for more concerted and deliberate policies and programmes on how to find realistic and practical solutions to farmer poverty.

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