Civil-Governance and Rising Dimensions of Conflict in Nigeria: Analysis of Peace-Building Policy Strategies against Farmer-Herder Conflict

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Abstract
This paper examines the challenges of civil-governance and the causes or dimensions of conflict in Nigeria with specific references to the peace-building policy strategies against farmer-herder conflict in the country. Employing Frustration-Aggression Theory with Elites' Preference Approach, the paper adopts a mixed-method research where largely qualitative and some elements of quantitative data were combined to delve into the analysis of the challenges of civil-governance that often result to the causes and dimensions of conflict in Nigeria. The major findings reveal thatcivil-governance in Nigeria continues to face deep-rooted challenges resulting to the various dimensions of conflict in the country with socio-political and security implications that clearly cripple good governance in the country. Analysis of peace-building policy strategies against farmer-herder conflict in parts

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of Nigeria reveals lessons and efforts at good governance for peace, security and development in the areas covered for this study and beyond.

Key Words: Civilians, Governance, Challenges, Conflict, Farmers, Herders, Security, Development, Peace-building Strategies, Nigeria.

Introduction

Conceptual Framework of Analysis

There is a clear distinction between conflicts and disputes as many of the things we refer to as conflict are not really conflict but disputes, because conflicts occur over deep-seated human needs such as security, identity, access, participation and cannot be resolved unless those needs are met appropriately(Burton,1990). Conflicts which are inevitable in any society can be heightened by feelings of differences in religious and cultural practices as different actors form alliance along similar religions and when they compete with each other, tensions can rise, leading to violence.

Moreover, Best (2011) further explains the argument of Instrumentalist, on the other hand, that although, religion may aggravate conflict once it has occurred and been caused by other factors but religion is hardly a cause of conflict, let alone violent conflict. This implies that religion and ethnicity in themselves are not the cause of conflict but the influence of self-interested political actors who mobilize loyalties into violence using either religion or ethnicity. In Nigeria, in particular, theories linking religion and conflict have been debated in existing literature with implicit assumptions that these conflicts are religious even though the analyses may end up pointing to issues that are not religious.

According to Mangvwat (2011), in Northern Nigeria, religious conflicts can be dated to 1900 when the Northern protectorate was established by the British because every religion believes and recognizes only itself as the correct or true religion which implies that other religions represent falsehood. More so, in the process of recruiting converts, they portray others as false and even make uncharitable remarks on the others; every religion has the inherent desire to stamp out others through persuasion, coercion or combination of both. This implies that most conflicts in Northern Nigerian are religious conflicts involving Muslims

versus Muslims themselves in form of intra-Islamic conflicts; Christian versus Christian conflicts; Muslims versus Christian conflicts, and others. This shows further that conflict is inevitable in any social setting, even among people of the same faith, culture or religion.

As a background to herders/farmers crisis, Beetseh (2018) argues that for a few years, there has been a raging battle between herdsmen and crop farmers of Nigeria's Middle Belt states of Benue, Plateau and Taraba which if left to continue can discourage tourists from visiting the different places. Benue state, for instance, is regarded as the food basket of the nation; it is an agrarian state because of the fertile soil which makes agriculture very important for the livelihood of the people in the region. The fertility of the soil and the accompanying almost ever-green grasses and availability of water in the Benue valley attracted herdsmen to Benue and other Middle Belt states such that the crop farmers consider the wanton ravaging of their lands as a destruction of their source of livelihood. At the end, therefore, as buttressed by Akinkuolie (2018) and Blench (1984), conflict becomes a battle for survival between cattle herders and crop farmers/producers in almost all regions in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework of Analysis: Frustration-Aggression Theory and Elites' Preference Approach

Frustration-aggression theory was propounded by Fererabend&Feirauben, (1972) and captured in a monograph by five scholars in Yale Institute of Human Relations in 1939. They defined frustration as an interference with the occurrence of an instigated goal response at its proper time in the behaviour sequence (Dollard et al., 1939). The interrogations and disputations that the perspective generated led one of the proponents to intervene with some modifications of the central thesis.The major assumption of the model is that aggression is always a consequence of frustration, and frustration results from individuals' inability to attain their goals (Dollard, Miller, Doob, Mowrer, & Sears, 1939; Fererabend&Feirauben, 1972).

However, Miller (1941) notes that it was too general to assume that frustration must always lead to aggression or that aggression is always propelled by frustration. His

intervention led to the second lap of the hypothesis which reflected a more acceptable reality that frustration produces instigations to a number of different types of response, one of which is instigation to some form of aggression. Thus, some years later, a significant modification came from Berkowitz (1989) who argued that aggression can be driven by inherent personal benefits to the aggressor and not necessarily by past wrongdoings and that people are more akin to attack when they discover that they are willfully sabotaged or denied what is legitimately theirs than when the interference is an accidental occurrence. He argued that frustrations are aversive events and generate aggressive inclinations only to the extent that they produce negative effect (Berkowitz, 1989).

Frustration-Aggression Theory is relevant only in analysis of causes of conflict but not its management or peace-building efforts as banditry, cattle rustling and related conflicts are products of aggressive behaviour which result from frustration on the part of parties involved in the conflict, coupled with related issues such as poverty, environmental degradation and unemployment, among others (Maureen & Blessing, 2018; Adegoke, 2019). Thus, the increasing attacks of pastoralists on crop producers and vice-versa across communities in Nigeria are largely driven by frustrations and struggles to generate economic assets. The alarming acts of banditry such as cattle rustling, physical attacks on crop producers and encroachments on farm lands by pastoralists are bred by frustrations (Uche&Iwuamadi, 2018). The need for grazing land and water by pastoralists and same for farming land and water by sedentary crop producers turn into fierce competition for the available limited land and water resources in the country. The struggle for power and control over these resources by crop producers and pastoralists is considered the major form of frustration that causes conflict which occurs as both crop producers and pastoralists attack each other in their interaction in the society to attain or obtain the resources and prevent the opponent from attaining or obtaining same. Nevertheless, frustration-aggression theory only aptly explains the causes of conflict without mention of policy options or preferences by stakeholders or elites at managing or resolving the conflict. This takes us to explore the Elites'Preference approach as a framework of analysis of the peace-building efforts at conflict management in the next segment of this paper.

Specific Assumptions of Elites' Preference Approach:

Elites' Preference theory assumes that policy measures emanate from few privileged people in a society at their own preferences. Scholars associated with this approach include Roberto Michels (1876-1936), Gaetano Mosca (1898-1944) and Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923). They believe that in public policy analysis, decision-making is a small group affairs (the minority or ruling class) and minorities are always protected. This, it is believed, is so because the masses are always apathetic, ill-informed and indifferent, hence incapable of auto-centric rule and decision making (Dye, 1972). The approach believes that all political systems are divided into two: The rulers (policy makers) who are the minority and the ruled (those for whom policies are made) who are the majority. This implies that in most cases, policy measures are direct reflections of the preferences of the few ruling minority, called the elites in the society. Therefore, policies such as the ones in the management of conflict in Nigeria are characterized by limited mass participation. Instead, there is domination of a small group of specialized or general leaders (stakeholders).

On their part, the ruling elites always argue that they are not anti-mass parse, but they as the leaders of their various factions have the right to determine the orientation of public policy. The mode of operation therefore is such that policies necessarily flow downwards. It is a top-down approach to decisions making. Consequently, this approach is characterized by limited number of actors and limited consultation in policy making process; there is a disproportionate control of scarce resources like wealth, power, statues, skills and information and the public policies under this approach do not reflect demands of the people but are borne out of the interest and values or preferences of the elites (Eneanya, 2014; Olaniyi, 2001).

Justification for the use ofElites' Preference Theory

Stake-holders and Governments at all levels (Elites) in Nigeria have always worked out policy preferences to find a middle ground at resolving conflict in the country. Thus, Federal Government of Nigeria, State Governments, traditional rulers, religious leaders and other Stake-holders play significant roles in the management of conflict in Nigeria.

Civil-Governance and Rising Dimensions of Conflict in Nigeria

As Best (2011) explains, there has been a tendency among many scholars of Marxist, positivist, realist, liberal and other traditions to devalue the explanatory weight of religion in conflict. This explains that religion plays a key role in understanding conflict and peace building efforts in any social setting. Best (2011) identifies three broad categories of theory to guide the understanding of the nexus between religion and violence to include primordialism, constructivism and instrumentalism.

> Primordialists argue that differences in religion and religious traditions help explain violent interactions between religious groups as different actors form alliance along similar cosmologies or religions….. When these compete with other cosmologies, tensions can rise leading to violence (2011, p. 30).

Best (2011) further explains the argument of Instrumentalist, on the other hand, that although, religion may aggravate conflict once it has occurred and been caused by other factors but religion is hardly a cause of conflict, let alone violent conflict. This implies that religion and ethnicity in themselves are not the cause of conflict but the influence of self-interested political actors who mobilize loyalties into violence using either religion or ethnicity. In Nigeria, in particular, theories linking religion and conflict have been debated in existing literature with implicit assumptions that these conflicts are religious even though the analyses may end up pointing to issues that are not religious.

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Audu (2008) identifies four perspectives on the Niger Delta conflicts in Nigeria with the first argument that much of the ill-feelings of the minority ethnic nationalities of the Niger Delta region are predicted on the fact that since the discovery of oil in 1956, the impact of oil production has been on all aspect of the Nigerian social structure and yet there is little to show for it in the oil producing communities. Thus, the rising frustration engendered by government repeated failure to meet the expectation of the people has so much strained the relationship between the oil producing communities and the rest of the Nigerian federation:

> The frequent violent agitations directed at both the federal government and the multinational oil corporations are largely ignited by the widespread perception of the appropriation of the federation's wealth by some … and the brutal exclusion of even the generators of the wealth (2008, p. 91).

The foregoing understanding creates conflicts of monumental dimension in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria with a lot of negative consequences on the national economic growth and development. Another perspective on conflict in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, according to Audu (2008), is the environmental degradation perspective in which the communities in the Niger delta have the feeling that their environment is grossly degraded as a result of oil exploration and production largely supported by the government but which tangible benefits hardly permeate to the people.

The psychological perspective to the Niger Delta conflict has been discussed too which focuses on the psychological component of the factors that ignite large scale conflict in the Niger Delta oil producing region of Nigeria. This explains that the frequency of the conflicts in the Niger Delta region is as a result of the growing consciousness among the peasantry of the degrading impact of oil exploration, production, refining and transportation on the environment of the producing communities. Consequently, the marginalization perspective to the conflict in the Niger Delta actually engendered the spate of organized violence against the

multinational oil corporations in the area. Incidentally, as Gurr (1970) observes in his classic text on why Men Rebel, three factors are identified as the development of discontent among a people sharing the same socio-economic and political experience; the politicization of discontent and the actualization of discontent through violent action against political objects and actors. Audu (2008) explains that development of discontent among people of the Niger Delta region in Nigeria, the politicization of such discontent and the actualization of discontent through violent actions manifested themselves in the early 1990s when Ken SaroWiwa engineered the formation of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) as a platform for mobilizing the Ogoni people to resist further environmental degradation and underdevelopment of the minority ethnic nationality (Audu, 2008).

According to Albert (2007), all the explanations on conflict point to the fact that conflict is an incompatible interaction between two entities which could be positive or negative. Conflict is said to be positive if it leads to positive change and development where the differences between the disputants enable them to discover new ways of doing things and relating with each other and that the conflict makes them to have better respect of each other. On the other hand, a conflict is said to be negative if it promotes or produces negative results like physical harms, deaths, destruction of property, and so on. A negative conflict is otherwise known as a destructive conflict whereas the positive one is known as a constructive or productive conflict (Albert, 2007). Implicitly, Albert (2007) cites other classical works on conflict with the argument that violent conflict can be ended in three possible ways to include the peace agreement entered into by the parties as they regulate or resolve their incompatible positions in the conflict; by victory or conquest which happens when one of the parties in the conflict eliminates the other and this takes place in the course of a violent conflict or as a result of an adversarial process and by cease-fire agreement where the parties agree to stop the violent encounter as a temporary measure for peace.

According to Bassey and Oshita (2007), an understanding of how to reach peace agreement in conflicts involves three important processes which relate to diagnosis, prognosis and therapy as is done in health studies because a situation of

conflict, in this context, is a state of illness and so the problem must be treated in order for the illness to go away. So, a conflict-ridden state is considered a sick state and to get such a state out of its sickness, the conflict situation must first be diagnosed. This implies that conflict-ridden states are considered sick and peace agreements are necessary to revive and revamp the states to be healthy. This further shows that there is need to invest more in preventing than curing conflicts. Most conflict management approaches concentrate on checking the destructive consequences of a given conflict but conflict resolution approach goes beyond working towards mitigating the consequences and deals in concrete ways with the substantive and relational root to the conflict with a view to putting an end to the entire problem (Bassy&Oshita, 2007).

Gyong (2007) explains the imperative of conflict in the society as society is impossible without conflict and that any attempt to totally suppress conflict can lead to anarchy just like total lack of control or management of it can also lead to anarchy. Thus, in order for society to attain its goals and develop, there is need for peace which can only come about through good management of existing conflicts in the society. Thus, conflict is normal, essential and desirable feature of any society (Alemika, 1998). Asuni (2007) cites John Paul Lederach, a known theorist and practitioner in the field of conflict transformation who posits that social conflict emerges and develops on the basis of the meaning and interpretation people involved attach to action and events such that people act eventually on the basis of the meaning that things have for them; for example, the importance attached to things like cross and the crescent which are symbols and the meanings attached to them with great importance to different groups of people in Nigeria. Consequently, perceived disrespect or denigration of these symbols has often had deadly consequences. Someone who perceives a cross simply as two intersecting lines or the crescent as a curved line has no knowledge of these symbols, which consequently have no meaning for him or her. Incidentally, Asuni (2007) summarizes the assumptions put forward by Lederach (1995) in the following manner:

> Conflict is a socially constructed cultural event. People are active participants in creating situations and interactions they experience as conflict. Conflict emerges through an interactive process based

> on the search for and creation of shared meaning. The interactive process is accomplished through and rooted in people's perceptions, interpretations, expressions, and intentions, each of which grows from and cycles back to their common sense knowledge (2007, p.122).

The foregoing argument implies that conflict which is inevitable in any social setting emerges through an interaction of people as they perceive, interpret, express and respond to social realities around them. Bassey (2007) expresses, therefore, that an appreciation of the management problems of conflict and violence in Nigeria will logically depend on the understanding of the structure of the conflict system in the country and this requires investigation into the overall level of conflict in the country in terms of shared assumptions, perceptions and images about what people in Nigeria value, their definition of friends or foes and the means which groups and individuals use to promote or pursue their goals. Above all, effective management of existing conflicts in Nigeria is key for peace and development in the country.

According to Abada, Okafor and Ofobuike (2018), in post-colonial African states, the meaning and characteristic nature of conflict has remained in vague and lacks vigor as a result of crisis of scholarship among security experts, writers and policy analysts. However, as a social action, conflict, according to Abada, Okafor and Ofobuike (2018), is a simultaneous occurrence of two or more mutually antagonistic impulses or motives. It can also be described as a struggle which involves ideas, values and limited resources. Conflict is an action that obstructs, prevents and renders ineffective another action with which it is incompatible. This means that conflict exists wherever incompatible activities occur; and it is perceived divergence of interest that the parties' current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously.

In the opinion of Schellendberg (1996), conflict is a simultaneous action and process that occurs where one party perceives that other parties negatively affect or are about to negatively affect something that the first party cares about which becomes part of the competition process that is basic to the survival and success of the parties

involved. Accordingly, as Abada, Okafor and Ofobuike (2018) argue, the conflict between Fulani pastoralists and the indigenous crop producers across Nigeria assumes a dimension considered as a better way to cope with limited resources due to fast encroachment of arid and desertification in the northern part of the country. It is observed that pastoralists migrating to the Savannah and rain forest of the central and southern states are moving into regions where high population growth over decades has heightened pressure on farmland; water pollution, and these incompatibility and disaster creates conflict between crop producers and pastoralists across communities in Nigeria (International Crisis Group, 2017).

Nomadic Pastoralism and Conflict with Crop Producers in Nigeria

Pastoralism essentially refers to specialization in livestock breeding and those with strong specialization in livestock breeding across the world are identified as pastoralists (Akerjiir, 2018). Some pastoralists are in South America in Bolivia and Peru, the Andean herders in Ilama and Alpaca while some are located in the West African Savanna, such as the Fulani cattle breeders (Salzman, 2002). Livestock can move, unlike land, water sources and mineral resources. Thus, pastoralism, which involves the use of an extensive resource, the natural pasture spread over the terrain, requires that the animals move from where there is no pasture to be exploited. The movement of herders and their flocks is due to the need of the exploitation of pasture for their cattle to survive and dependent on factors like temperature, disease and climate change. Akerjiir(2018) explains that:

> Nomadic pastoralism is understood as a social and economic strategy predominantly based in routines …seasonal migration and management of domesticated animals. It occurs in areas of the world where the growth of plants is discontinuous, and only occurs when rainfall and temperature allow. However, the exploitation of seasonal pasture land can just be done through migration … Nomadism and pastoralism or breading animals are seen as meaning the same thing (2018, p.16).

The foregoing argument implies that seasonal migration or movement of domesticated animals which occurs in areas of the world where the growth of plants is hindered and only occurs when rainfall and temperature cause conflicts

or clashes between sedentary crop producers and nomadic pastoralists. This further explains that one of the main reasons for farmers-herder clashes in Nigeria is the movement of cattle or herds from one region to the other in search of pastures, occasioned by seasonal changes in temperature or rainfall.

Scholars like Bernbeck, Bernard and Wendrich (2008) and Salzman (2002) use the word 'nomadism' and is associated with other mobility strategies like hunting and foraging and this makes the word or term nomadic to be commonly used to refer to movement or mobility, and pastoralism refers to a productive economic strategy involving raising animals done with interactive communication with and migration of pastoralists to other communities. The implication of the movement of herds to other communities in search of natural pastures is the consequent clashes that occur with crop producers over land use and other natural resources on the way as nomads move.

Nevertheless, as Akerjiir (2018) rightly observes, the strategy connected with herding has continuously changed due to risk and opportunities presented by a political, social and economic interaction between pastoralists and the communities they find themselves. Pasture lands to the pastoralists for the utilization of livestock breeding are natural because the grasses and bushes are not planted or tended by people which makes scholars like Salzman (2002) to argue that pasturelands in some regions are planted and maintained for grazing feeds for livestock which can therefore yield financial rewards for sedentary crop producers who exchange their agricultural produce with herders.Salzman (2002) further argues that pastoralists are the breeders of livestock in West Africa Savanna and they are well known in Nigeria as breeders because they make a living from it and are good at it. However, as Akerjiir (2008) explains, sthere are different kinds of pastoralists based on their social organization:

> … tribal pastoralists … live as members of a political unit, with collective responsibility and provide protection and are obliged to each other. Individual herder, the tribe is the maximal governmental entity to which he or she has loyalty and with the rule of law and the customary law applies. Peasant pastoralists..live in a complex society governed by an institution

> (who) pay taxes and submit to state imposed laws and regulation (2008, p. 17).

The implication of the foregoing submissions is that there are different kinds of pastoralists such as the tribal pastoralists who live as members of a political unit and are loyal to constituted authority of the land. There are also peasant pastoralists who live in a complex society governed by an institution and who pay taxes and submit to state imposed laws and regulations. According to Khazanov and Wink (2012), nomadic pastoralism is better organized when mobility is periodical and complies with pastoral economic demand within grazing territories. Here, specialized herdsmen handle the management of herds and their paramount form of economic and grazing is oriented towards subsistence and commercial needs. This implies that cattle herds can be moved to places in search of pasture in a country without conflicts with crop producers if well-organized with mobility being periodical and based on pastoral economic demand within grazing territories.

HiredPastoralists and Conflict with Crop Producers in Nigeria

As observed by Bassett (1998), hired pastoralists are not new as the practice is not alien in cattle management, most especially in West Africa where there are hired pastoralists or herders whose roles in the management of herds can never be underestimated. Scholars have documented the usage of hired pastoalists by wealthy men of high echelon in the middle Belt of Nigeria and the Maasina region of Mali who have large cattle herds but lack the manpower to manage the herds and as such employ herders to guard their livestock. For Akerjiir:

> Typically, the hired herders are from a poor background who are left with no other option to provide for their households other than to seek employment in cattle management or herding. Even with the level and the increasing demand for hired herders in West Africa, very little is being known about them and how this influences the management of herds (2008, p.21).

Thus, the management of herds is being entrusted to a labor surplus household, or most time there is the agreement of exchange of milk. Consequently, Stenning

(1959) argues that there is an imbalance between livestock owners and labor supplies among herders' households. The relationship between livestock owners and labor-surplus households is a long-term commitment towards caring for the cattle. Nomadic pastoralists move based on the quest for pastures for their livestock, from the Sahel region to the down Southern part of Nigeria. Thus, the search for pastures by the nomadic pastoralists constitutes an encroachment on the crop producers' farmland, without due compensation when the property is destroyed.A sharp distinction is made between hired herders who sometimes are not citizens of Nigeria, who are referred to as those that have labor capacity and are responsible for the search for pastures, protect the cattle and grazing livestock. On the other hand, the owners are, traditionally, recognized to be persons who own the cattle herds. Thus, it is argued that these two groups or categories of persons (hired herders and cattle owners) need a stable interface regarding social and community relations (Akerjiir, 2018). Unfortunately, however, as argued in Akerjiir (2018), the compensation received which allows the cattle herders to continue grazing is not well accounted for or disseminated among the crop producers in the concerned or affected communities. Consequently, lack of awareness of the affected farmers of the compensation received by the village heads prompts the farmers to prevent further grazing on their land:

> Farmlands of indigenous farmers are continually encroached upon by the Fulani herdsmen due to the growing demands of pastures for their cattle. Unfortunately, in carrying out the responsibility of providing pasture by the herdsmen for their livestock, they do adopt guerilla warfare approach by invading farmlands of farmers (2018, p.23).

Implicitly, the hired herdsmen who are most heavily armed do not hesitate to release fire on their aggressors leading to the death of high numbers of victims and mass displacement of the affected persons or communities in Nigeria. However, as Akerjiir (2018) explains, the hired herdsmen are just one of many other factors responsible for the increase in conflict between pastoralists and crop producers in Nigeria.

Perspectives onPeace-building Policy Strategies against Farmer-herder Conflict in Nigeria

In some parts of northern Nigeria, the crisis between pastoraists and villagers or the crop producing communities are fuelled by the activities of cattle rustlers and bandits. Thus, in recent decades, various conflicts in northern Nigeria and climate change have been said to have also displaced herders southward. These conflicts are often linked to poverty, inequality and religious extremism. Crisis Group Africa (2017), therefore, found that there is easy access of the herders to small arms, including assault rifles which makes the situation more dangerous. The implication is that the State in Nigeria has not been able to control illegal possession of arms or weapons by herders, rustlers and other criminal gangs in the crop producing communities across the country and hence the inability of the State to equally stem the tides of the conflicts between crop producers and pastoralists. In most recent times, government functionaries are accused of being compliant in arming certain non-State actors against other civil or ethnic groups (The Guardian 19 December, 2025). More so, in Nigeria, over the years, there is erosion of traditional mechanism for effective dialogue between herders and crop producers. Disputes over wandering stock or damaged crops typically were resolved by village Chiefs and herders' leaders and those that defied the decision of these community-level mediators were referred to local authorities. This system started crumbling in the 1970s, partly undermined by the environment of the police and courts:

> Pastoralists hated these new institutions (as) corrupt police at times extracted fines and bribes while alien and protracted court processes immobilized their herds. Furthermore, local political leaders have tended to favour sedentary farmers, whose votes they crave, over itinerant herders, who may not be around at election time. Consequently, herders feel increasingly marginalized and are largely distrustful of local political leaders as local conflict mediators (2017, p.6).

Implicitly, the absence of effective mediation mechanism and sustained community-level dialogues in the regions across Nigeria encourage violence between crop producers and pastoralists in the country. Over time, therefore, it is observed that both cattle herders and crop producers have lost confidence in the

ability of authorities to mediate and conciliate as aggrieved parties often turn to violence to seek redress or revenge. These conflicts have heavy consequences and humanitarian toll with thousands displaced among other consequences. To end crisis between crop producers and pastoralists in Nigeria, Crisis Group Africa Report No.253 (2017) recommends that there should be improved security for cattle herders and crop farmers as the federal government needs to strengthen police capacity to curb rustling and banditry in affected states:

> Some State governments such as Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto also have negotiated peace agreements with the bandits, inviting them to lay down their arms and return stolen cattle in exchange for building roads, hospitals and schools in their communities and grants of cash and lands to individuals (2017, p.15).

The foregoing argument explains the efforts of some state governments in northern Nigeria and the Federal Government to initiate joint efforts against conflicts arising from the activities of cattle rustlers and bandits which often a times create conflict between crop producers and pastoralists in some parts of the country. Incidentally, part of the recommendations of the Crisis Group Africa (2017) is improvement in livestock tracks; prevention of attacks on crop farming communities; support for community-based conflict resolution mechanisms in the country; establishment of grazing reserves and encouragement of ranching activities; combating desertification and strengthening regional cooperation among other measures in order to curb the phenomena of incessant farmer-herder conflicts in Nigeria.

In the words of Adeoye (2017), conflicts between crop producers and cattle herders in Nigeria have claimed many lives and properties and a number of conflict resolution meetings and solution-based researches have taken place but it appears not much has been achieved with regard to identifying the origination of the conflict and the most effective methods of resolving the conflict. Conflict between pastoralists and crop producers has existed since the beginning of agriculture (Daramola, 2006; Tonah, 2006), but as Adeoye (2017) argues, the prevalence of tsetse and low settlement densities kept the incidence of clashes at a low frequency until the twentieth century. Besides, improved human health has increased overall population and thus pressure on arable land with consequent increase in conflict.

Thus, one major cause of conflict between crop producers and pastoralists in Nigeria has been the pressure on land and the use of it which has constantly brought the pastoralists and the arable farmers into violent conflict, claiming many lives and properties. Other scholars have equally shown interest in the causes of farmers-herdsmen conflict. Ayeni (1983), for instance, found that the continuous overlap of interests within the Kainji Lake Basin, Nigeria, resulted in conflict between land users such as the nomadic Fulanis, peasant farmers and wildlife of forestry conservation authorities which affected agricultural development in the area. Changing resource access rights in Nigeria is partly responsible for the underlying causes of farmers-herders conflict in the country, occasioned by inadequacy of grazing resources and a decline in internal discipline and social cohesion. Incidentally, as DeHaan (2002) observes in Adeoye (2017), there appears to be no consensus among farmers-herdsmen regarding the causes of their conflicts:

> … by the farmers, the destruction of crops by cattle and other properties… by the pastoralists were the main direct causes of the conflicts. On their part, the pastoralists traded the causes of the conflict to the burning of the range lands and the blockage of stock routes and water points by crop encroachment. Besides, an increasing rate of cattle theft was another cause of the conflicts (2017, p.129).

The foregoing argument shows or implies that there are antagonistic perceptions and beliefs among crop producers and pastoralists themselves which equally compounds the conflict situation between them in the country, especially occasioned by failing institutions and fierce competition for resources (Adeoye, 2017). Adisa (2011a) on his part attributes conflicts between crop producers and pastoralists to inequitable access to land, diminishing land resources, antagonistic values among user groups, policy contradictions non-recognition of rights of indigenous people. However, Abass (2012) argues that the major source of tension between pastoralists and crop farmers is economic, with land related issues accounting for the majority of the conflicts which could then be situated within the broader context of the political economy of land struggles that are traceable to a

burgeoning demography with fierce competition for fixed space to meet the demand of the growing population.

Nevertheless, in spite of the Federal Government's efforts to resolve the problem of incessant conflicts between crop producers and pastoralists, Al Chukwuma&Atelhe (2014) notes that the conflict remains unabated while other studies have indicated that the nomads reside in secluded homesteads in Nigeria and are sometimes portrayed as aggressors and instigators of the conflicts in the country (Adeoye, 2017; Adisa, 2013; Olayoku, 2014). However, from a methodological point of view, conflicts between crop producers and pastoralists are not well reported due largely to the location of the occurrence of the incidents in rural and, sometimes border areas that are neither easily accessible nor attractive to reporters or researchers (Adeoye, 2017). Accordingly, for us in this study, we had examined the phenomenon of conflict and its management between crop producers and pastoralists with reference to the situation as it occurs in Katsina state of Nigeria. The motivation arises from the fact that most of the states in northern part of Nigeria are currently faced with monumental dimension of conflicts, at one point to the other, Katsina state inclusive. Meanwhile, available works in the literature so far have often centered on the conflicts in the central region or southern Nigeria.Although there are reported cases of farmer-herder conflicts in the northern states like Kano, Kaduna, Yobe, Borno, Zamfara, and others, the issues as they occur in Katsina state, predominantly inhabited by both crop producers and pastoralists, remain scarce in the available literature. Aderinto and Achem (2019), for example, provides a theoretical appraisal as regards the phenomenon of herders' and farmers' clashes in north central Nigeria, especially Benue and Nasarawa states, using qualitative discourse, grounded on secondary sources. Aderinto and Achem (2019) examines the historical roadmap to nomadic exploration, encroachment of old cattle routes and its implicating effects on land use in contemporary harder-farmer conflicts. Factors such as climate change and desertification necessitate the movement of herders down south and across middle-belt zones of Nigeria in search of pasture for their herds (1ro, 1994; Abbass, Olaniyan, Francis and Okeke-Uzodike, 2015). As the population of migrating cattle cannot be tamed from increasing, similarly, the population of humans is also progressing with 51.9% increase in the past decades

(Worldometers, 2019). This increase in human population necessitates the increase in the interest on the land usage per person. The fact that the land area does not seem to expand while the population grows, conflicts on land use abound. Other findings in the literature on farmer-herder clashes in Nigeria indicate that in Benue state, for instance, the first noticeable conflict between the crop producers and pastoralists originated when the Cattle herders diverted from the old cattle route which came from Awe through Akaahena to Torkula, then west wards to Ortese and out to Doma district (UNDP Report, 2012; Aluko, 2017). According to Aderinto and Achem (2019),

> This route clearly was away from the Makurdi north due to the absence of the flood plains in the north Bank area of Makurdi town in Benue State. The population of the cattle made the Fulani herders to seek other routes which could lead them to areas close to Makurdi … (which) are all rich and evergreen arable land suitable for pasture (2019, p.38).

The implication of the foregoing to this study is that the absence of grazing reserves and routes engenders and facilitates the conflicts just like encroachment on available grazing routes, which have often been blocked by crop producers (UNDP, 2012; Adeoye, 2017). As recorded by Kwaja and Ademola-Adelehin (2018), therefore, violent clashes between crop producers and pastoralists have become a defining feature of inter-group relations among communities in the middle Belt region of Nigeria:

> The instability and displacement have resulted in extensive loss of crops and cattle in an area considered to be the "food basket" of Nigeria. The Federal and State governments, civil society, religions groups and communities have responded to the different manifestations of this conflict in a variety of ways, but key gaps and opportunities remain to better prevent violence and improve inter-communal relations (2018, p.5).

This implies that the good relationship that hitherto existed between crop producers and pastoralists has changed to bad and violent one with cycles of attacks and the consequences that follow, especially in the middle belt region of

Nigeria. The current responses and attempts by the federal and state governments in the region include the establishment of grazing reserves. Nevertheless, keeping livestock in one place in the reserves increases their vulnerability to disease and banditry, making herders to always keep moving outside the boundaries of the reserves. Meanwhile, the federal and state governments have not been able to properly keep the reserves to meet the concerns of crop producers and pastoralists. Moreover, the federal government established the National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) in 1989 through Decree 41 which is presently known as Nomadic Education Act, Cap No.20 Laws of the Federation with the main goal to economically and socially integrate nomadic pastoralists into the normal life, through the provision of relevant, functional and mobile basic education and livelihood skills provision. However, the program on nomadic education currently suffers from dilapidated infrastructure and human resource deficits, due largely to inadequate funding from the federal government (see Kwaja and Ademola-Adelehin, 2018).

While conflict is considered a normal and inevitable outcome of human relationships, the concern here is the devastating implications of the conflict as well as its impact on national development. For Nwakanma and Boroh:

> Whereas a number of factors have been adduced for this growing violence ranging from climatic transformations, deteriorating environmental conditions, desertification, soil degradation; political and ethnic strife; breakdown in traditional conflict resolution mechanisms; proliferation of arms in the country and a dysfunctional legal regime that neglects justice (2019, p. 28).

The foregoing submissions suggest that despite the efforts to resolve the conflict arising in the relationship between crop producers and pastoralists in Nigeria, there has been continued devastating socio-economic, political and environmental implications of the conflict between the two groups with serious impacts on socio-economic and national development in the country. In short, as observed by International Crisis Group (ICG) (2017), Erondu and Nwakanma (2018), Nwakanma and Boroh (2019), the violent conflicts between nomadic cattle herders and sedentary agrarian communities in the Central and Southern Zones of Nigeria

have escalated in recent years and have assumed various dangerous dimensions threatening the country's security and stability.

International Crisis Group (2017) finds that the spread of farmer-herder conflicts into southern states in Nigeria is aggravating already fragile relations among the country's major regional, ethnic and religious groups. Nwakanma and Boroh (2019), for instance, argue that the attack carried out by the herders on perceived hostile communities are seen as systematic ethnic cleaning. Meanwhile, the majority Christian communities in the southern part of Nigeria resent the influx of predominantly Muslim herders, portrayed in some narratives as an "Islamization" programme of the north and these narratives actually tend to provoke ethnic, religious and political crisis in the country.According to Nwakanma and Boroh (2019), therefore, there are diverse trends and drivers of herders-farmers conflicts in Nigeria which have increased exponentially with a lot of factors adduced as the causes to include the introduction of new irrigation technology and modern farming techniques into Africa through development projects which allow for the expansion of agriculture into the relatively arid regions that causes many farmers in the Sahel to expand into semi-arid regions traditionally used by the cattle herders as grazing lands.

> Within Nigeria, industrialization, urbanization, climate changes, expansion of farms as well as the advancement of the Sahara Desert has blocked many traditional grazing routes used by herders moving south as the Sahara Desert advances in Northern Nigeria. Environmental change in neighboring countries, such as the shrinkage of Lake Chad, have also caused a migration of foreign herders whose lack of familiarity with Nigerian populations often escalate violent misunderstandings (2019, p.32).

The implication is also that foreign herders from neighboring countries, such as Chad, Cameroon, Libya, Niger, Mali, Central Africa, have equally contributed to escalating violent clashes with crop farmers in Nigeria while migrating into the country. As Nwosu (2017) notes, most of the attacks allegedly perpetrated by herdsmen in Nigeria can be traced to foreign transhuman pastoralists and many

other armed groups especially from Libya, who move around unregulated offering services as war mercenaries, bandits and armed robbers:

> Though Nigeria has no direct boundary with Libya, some quarters have linked escaping rebels trained by Muammar Gaddafi to the spate of killings across Nigeria. These new trends have further expanded the concern on how best to tackle this challenge and create a safe environment for Nigerians in the face of the various factors capable of escalating violence in Nigeria including the problem of population overshoot (2019, p.32).

The foregoing implies that in addition to the other factors causal to farmer-herder conflicts in Nigeria, the influx of foreign herdsmen from neighbouring countries, especially Libya, where the foreign pastoralists and many other armed groups move around unregulated in Nigeria to cause or create troubles to indigenous crop farmers and other herdsmen in the country. Such troubles so created by foreign herdsmen vary from banditry to armed robbery with telling consequences on the livelihood of crop producers and indigenous herders alike.

The foregoing argument implies that the clashes between crop producers and pastoralists in communities across Nigeria has frequently caused a lot of damage or destruction of lives and properties of victims in the country which needs serious attention to prevent the spreading dimensions the conflicts take in Nigeria. Unfortunately, however, the cattle herders move around freely with arms across Nigeria without caution or arrest by the State authorities which has similarly become a source of worry for majority of Nigerians.Incidentally, as Beetseh (2018) further puts, the herdsmen/crop farmers crises pose a threat to democratic governance in Nigeria as the level of intolerance among the herdsmen and crop farmers in the country has deteriorated to unimaginable level of arms struggle, resulting in countless deaths among villagers with the attendant reduction in the population of the peasant farmers. The crop producers and pastoralists' crises also disrupt and threaten the sustainability of pastoral farming and crop production in the regions and thereby reinforce cycles of extreme poverty and hunger, destroying social status, food security and displacement of people in their places of abode (Adisa, 2012).

Shehu (2018) examines the causes and consequences of pastoralist-crop producers conflict in Nigeria with the argument that the conflict centers generally on access to and struggle for grazing land and water as the grazing land continuously shrinks and diminishes due to factors like climate change which leads to the take-over of arable lands by desert; global warming, which also causes available space water to dry up; the encroachment of grazing land by farmers, among others. Shehu (2018) further laments that the most disheartening thing in the farmer/herder conflicts is how some well-placed individuals and politicians seem to label the conflict with religions and ethnic coronation which is capable of fueling further crisis in the country.On the consequences of the conflict, on the other hand, Shehu (2018) observes that the conflicts have direct impact on the survival of those involved as the conflict destabilizes the production of food and raw materials for the manufacturing sector in Nigeria.

> Another consequence … is the general loss of lives and properties. The conflict also led to mistrust among people who lived together for so many years because some north Christian minority and southern politicians have started leveling the conflict as a deliberate attempt by the northern Muslim leaders to impose Islamic religion to the mostly Christian dominated states of north central and southern states (2018, p.359).

The implication of the foregoing argument to this study is that the conflict between crop producers and pastoralists in Nigeria has telling consequences on the living conditions or relationship of the people in different communities in Nigeria, including fueling mistrust among people who lived together for so many years.
Thus, Al Chukuma and Atelhe (2014) observe that the herder/farmer conflicts in Nasarawa state have essentially and particularly been informed by the desperate struggle for competitive survival and subsistence in an environment characterized by ecological scarcity and livelihood insecurity. Accordingly, the situation has been exacerbated by the phenomenon of climate change whose dynamics tend to have been aggravating natural resource conflicts across the world. According to Apuke and Omar (2020), it is more reasonable to understand the conflict victims' assessment and narratives on the reportage of herdsmen-farmers conflict in Nigeria as it was found that Nigerian media do not report actual narratives of conflict

victims as reporters often rely on secondhand stories and do not present themselves at the locations to gather news. Conflict victims, hence, claim that the Nigerian media suffers from lack of objectivity and high sensationalism. The conflict victims also found that excessive use of negative language, which often indicates blame game, contributes to the escalation of farmer-herder conflict in Nigeria.

> The stories reported in the media constitute a pertinent source of information for citizens about certain events in the society and this contributes to the societal structure of reality… the content of the media not only provides the unknown to the audience, but extends to the confirmation or disconfirmation of reality about what is already known and witnessed (2020, p.26),

The forgoing implies that the phenomenon of frequent conflict between crop producers and pastoralists in Nigeria has not been adequately publicized or captured in its reality. The media reportage of the clashes has often failed to present the happenings as they occur to the audience. This further means that there is serious need to do more scholarly works or research on the conflicts between crop producers and pastoralists in the country. According to Oluoku and Isife (2009), therefore, in Delta state, Nigeria, the causes of farmers-nomadic cattle herders' conflict include destruction of crops, contamination of streams by cattle, over-grazing of land, disregard for local traditional authorities, female harassment, harassment of nomads by youths of host communities, indiscriminate bush burning, defecation of cattle on roads, cattle theft and others. Meanwhile, the socio-economic effects of the conflicts in the area include reduction in crop yield and income of farmers and nomads, displacement of farmers, loss of lives and property as well as loss of products in storage.

In an assessment of farmer-pastoralist conflict in Nigeria using GIS, Muhammed, Ismaila and Bibi (2015) express that pastoralism in Nigeria faces challenges which hamper the productivity that consequently affect the nation's economy as available grazing lands are diminishing at an alarming rate and livestock pathways are blocked through land use, urbanization and frontiers:

> The old grazing routes that existed for centuries are almost gone. Only 2.82% of the grazing reserves have been acquired and these are poorly managed. The increase in population, drying of waterholes, shifting in rainfall pattern leading to drought as a result of the changing climate affects both pastoralists and farmers. Hence, they compete over land leading to conflict (2015, p.23).

The argument of land use conflict has been a major cause of farmer-herder or pastoralist conflict in Nigeria. Extensive livestock production in the form of pastoral livestock keeping is among the most suitable means of land use in arid areas of Africa because of its adaptability to highly variable environmental conditions. In Nigeria, most pastoralists do not own land but graze their livestock in host communities (Awogbade, 1987). While some pastoralists have adopted the more sedentary type of animal husbandry, the increasing crises between crop farmers and pastoralists presupposes that grazing is a major means of animal rearing in Nigeria as the sedentary type of animal husbandry also proves to be more expensive, difficult to manage and inefficient for the rapid growing market of an average growing or increasing population like Nigeria (Muhammed, Ismaila and Bibi, 2015).

According to Akerjiir (2018), so many factors are responsible for the increase in the conflict between crop producers and pastoralists in Nigeria. The various factors responsible for the escalation of the conflict, particularly in UkpabiNimbo community in Enugu state, are soil erosion caused by change in climate, destruction of farmlands caused by cattle grazing by the herdsmen. "More so, cattle rustling and cattle theft done by gangs and groups called 'Malaysian Boys' who are also raping and using the situation in the community to terrorize the people" (2018, p.111). This implies that apart from the manifestation of climate change over the years which has caused conflict between crop producers and pastoralists in most communities in Nigeria, Cattle theft by groups and banditry activities in some parts of Nigeria are also causal to the phenomenon of the conflicts between crop producers and pastoralists in the country

Peace-building Policy Strategies in Katsina State-Nigeria

In this section, specific consideration is given to analysis of data on the measures adopted towards managing conflict between crop producers and pastoralists in Katsina state, Nigeria. Specific measures sought for analysis in this section derived largely from the roles played by stake-holders in the management of the conflict in the area covered for analysis.

Table 1: Measures Adopted by Stake-holders in Katsina State towards Managing the Conflict between Crop Producers and Pastoralists

S/N	Measures Adopted Towards Managing the Conflict	Rating					TWV	MADI
		1	2	3	4	5		
1.	There is no problem of conflict between crop producers and pastoralists in our area	486	563	180	128	143	3, 379	2.3
2.	Creation of RUGA Settlements	517	593	195	101	94	3, 162	2.1
3.	Deployment of heavy security presence in the State	146	105	118	553	578	5, 812	3.9
4.	Ban on transportation of cattle trucks from Katsina State to any State in Nigeria	128	105	161	594	512	5, 757	3.8
5.	Prohibition of open-grazing in the area by traditional rulers	101	120	154	586	539	5, 842	3.9
	AMADI = $\frac{\sum MADI}{5}$	**AMADI = $\frac{16.0}{5}$ = 3.2**						
S/N	**Other Measures Adopted Towards Managing the Conflict**	**Rating**					**TWV**	**OMAI**
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**		

1.	Suspension of the sale of all animals (cattle) at some markets in Katsina State.	118	105	116	571	590	5, 910	3.9
2.	Establishment of dispute resolution committees across the State to settle conflicts between crop producers and pastoralists in the area	120	101	254	486	539	5, 723	3.8
3.	Prohibition of the use or possession of arms by pastoralists	571	590	116	118	105	3, 096	2.1
4.	Formation of Community Vigilante Forces to check the excesses of Pastoralists and crop producers in the State	450	375	368	164	143	3, 675	2.5
5.	Provision of financial support to both crop producers' and pastoralists' cooperative societies.	456	514	323	113	94	3, 375	2.3
	AOMAI = ∑OMAI / 5	**AOMAI = 14 .6 / 5 = 2.9**						

Source: Field Survey, 2022

As indicated on table 1, likert Scale of strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree were employed with the weight value of 5,4,3,2, and 1 assigned accordingly. The Average Measures Adopted Index (AMADI) is found to be 3.2 while the opinions of the respondents on the measures adopted towards managing the conflict between crop producers and pastoralists in Katsina state

indicate deployment of security presence in the State (MADI= 3.9), prohibition of open-grazing in some of the areas by traditional rulers (MADI= 3.9) and ban on transportation of cattle trucks from Katsina state to any State in Nigeria (MADI= 3.8). Table 4.7.1 shows, therefore, that the main measures adopted towards managing the conflict between crop producers and pastoralists in Katsina state include deployment of security presence in the State, prohibition of open-grazing in some of the areas by traditional rulers and ban on transportation of cattle trucks from Katsina state to any State in Nigeria.

As further shown on table 1, the Average Other Measures Adopted Index (AOMAI) is found to be 2.9 while the opinions of the respondents on other measures adopted towards managing the conflict between crop producers and pastoralists in Katsina state involved suspension of the sale of all animals (cattle) at some markets in Katsina state (OMAI= 3.9) and establishment of dispute resolution committees across the State to settle conflict between crop producers and pastoralists in the area (OMAI= 3.8), formation of Community Vigilante Forces to check the excesses of pastoralists and crop producers in the State (OMAI= 2.5). However, no such other measures were adopted towards managing the conflict in the area as prohibition of the use or possession of arms by pastoralists (OMAI= 2.1), and provision of financial support to both crop producers' and pastoralists' cooperative societies (OMAI= 2.3). The views of participants in the focus group discussions and oral interviews for this study were also that:

> Measures adopted towards managing the conflict between crop producers and pastoralists in Katsina state during the period of 2016 to 2021 were formation of Committees to resolve the conflict; deployment of security presence in the State; ban on transportation of cattle trucks from Katsina state to any State in Nigeria; prohibition of open-grazing in the area by traditional rulers; establishment of dispute resolution committees across the State to settle conflict between crop producers and pastoralists in the area; and formation of Community Vigilante Forces to check the excesses of pastoralists and crop producers in the State (Field Survey, 2022**).**

Implicitly, other measures adopted towards managing the conflict between crop producers and pastoralists in Katsina state were suspension of the sale of all animals (cattle) at some markets in Katsina state and establishment of dispute resolution committees across the State to settle conflicts between crop producers and pastoralists in the area and formation of Community Vigilante Forces to check the excesses of pastoralists and crop producers in the State. Efforts were not made at prohibition of the use or possession of arms by pastoralists, and provision of financial support to both crop producers' and pastoralists' cooperative societies in the area. Generally, it was found during the oral interviews and focus group discussions for this study that Katsina state embraces dialogue or negotiation to manage conflict between crop producers and pastoralists. Thus, what is unique about the management of the conflict in Katsina state involved: (i.) Establishment of Katsina State Livestock Development Agency to regulate and manage livestock activities in the State, (ii) Implementation of the "Katsina Model" which encouraged the development or creation of ranches and grazing reserves, livestock markets and herder settlement in the State, (iii) Emphasis on community engagement and dialogue by involving traditional institutions like the Emirate Council to resolve conflict and promote peace.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

Conclusively therefore, it is pertinent to note that all efforts made by States governments to resolve these conflict between the herders and crop farmers have failed and these conflicts continued. The country has witnessed damage to life and property and therefore the needs for a proactive measure and policies to curb this destructive trend.

For peace to thrive and harmonies living amongst herders and sedentary farmers especially we made the following recommendations:

- Like some other countries in West Africa, the Nigerian Government should design and implement policies that will regulate the inshix of foreign herders into the country.
- Ban on open grazing – The population of the country keep growing everyday and there is so much pressure on the land resource. This therefore, makes open grazing in the country practically impossible. To encourage modern live stock rearing the Federal government should elevate the open

grazing prohibition laws that operate at State levels to a national policy. Ranching should be adopted as a national policy for animal husbandry.

- The Nigerian State should monitor and "mop up" arms in the hands of non-State actors. This will reduce armed banditry especially in the rural areas.

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