
STATECRAFT AND THE PERENNIAL FARMERS: HERDER CLASHES IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *Farmers and Herdsmen, in sub-Saharan Africa have being coexisting and doing their vocation amicably. In northern Nigeria for instance, both of them have being using and benefiting from the nation's ecology without much conflicts. In recent times however, this legendary mutual cooperation has soured resulting in to needless, avoidable wanton destruction of lives and properties. This paper therefore examines statecraft and the perennial farmers – herder clashes in Nigeria .the paper adopted library based documentation analysis as its major methodology since bulk of the data were sourced from secondary source. The paper revealed that: population explosion and land hunger, governmental policies ECOWAS protocol, climate change, communication breakdown, weak punitive measures against previous offenders, as Democratization and mainstream and social media dominance among others, are some fundamental factors that generated and ignited the incessant Farmers-Herders; which caused several setbacks on the socioeconomic development of the country such as decline in production and supply , inflation in prices of staple, destruction of lives and properties, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, growth in refugee and displacement of persons as well as food shortage and scarcity. The paper recommends among other Robust socioeconomic and psychological education/orientation of both the farmers-herders for peaceful coexistence, governmental investments in and provisions of basic necessities/infrastructures favorable for these agriculturalists and disciplining of offenders are some of the panacea to halt the incessant clashes.*

KEYWORDS: state craft, farmers, herders, conflict

INTRODUCTION

One of the major pre-occupation of most sovereign state globally is the task of nation building or statecraft project. Many countries particularly the most developed nations of the northern hemisphere have passed through this process adopting different modalities through different phases of history. Today, there is hardly any single sovereign state that abhors statecraft because of its indispensable linkage with development. Development in its classic characteristic remains the most cherished state of affair towards which every nation state strives. To achieve such condition however requires certain human and material resources; of particular significance is Soil resource which is one of the best gifts from divinity to humanity. The significance of land in in the developmental prospect of every nation Nigeria Inclusive is invaluable as land resource has direct bearing on man's socioeconomic and political activities. The land serves as the structure upon which all other human activities are either build or support

the structure man puts on it. Yet this land resources and its components has remain the major sources of conflict globally. One of the age long usages of land is for agricultural purposes which encompass all forms activities, like farming, rearing of animals, fisheries among others. The places of agriculture within the context of global developmental matrix in general and state craft in specific terms remain invaluable as it among others: boosted food security in the state, it also serves as sources of employment for the citizens, especially in Nigeria. It is estimated that 97% of the rural dweller practice one form of agriculture or the other. Agriculture also serves as source of income and foreign exchange to the state in terms of exporting some of the locally produced goods either as raw materials or finish good to foreign countries, in addition to provision of raw material for constructions and other developmental projects.

In view of the importance of agriculture to both individual farmers, herders and state's development, the Nigerian state has in the past come up with plethora of good agricultural policies like Operation Feed the Nation, National Food Accelerated Development Programme, Back to Land, Green Revolution etc. to boost agriculture. Consequent upon the aforementioned, the state invested heavily on agriculture, provided the needed facilities like fertilize, tractor, threshers and build some storage facilities. Some farmers and pastoralist were given loan to boost their vocation. There were movement route for the cattle to make them have easy access to good drinking water and good places for grazing (Obiadi, 1985: 211). The rationale behind all these reforms is to create enabling environment with the view of fast racking the nation's process of nation building.

However, it is a glaring fact that in the process of statecraft, every country has a distinct story to tell especially related to the challenges with which its nation building process is surrounded. Although most of the third world countries are faced with similar nation building obstacles, each country's challenge is more explicit within its local peculiarities. Nigeria as one of the third world countries, and the most populous black nation in the world is no doubt confronted with the challenge of statecraft embedded in the Nigeria national question and many of these national questions that arrested Nigeria nation building prospect have remained unresolved. One of these plethora challenges is the issue of insecurity of particular interest is the perennial crises between the farmers and the herders.

These farmers and herders in the olden days have enjoyed relative peaceful coexistence and symbiotic relationship as they both compliments and supplement each other by providing the protein and other nutritional needs for survival. But this age long symbiotic interaction has sour in recent times with painful experiences. This recent resurging phenomenon has seeming dire consequences on the prospect of the economy and corporate existence of Nigeria as a nation.

Today, the issue of farmer – herders' conflict has assumed a monstrous proportion so deadly that every conflict in Nigeria is situated within the context of these farmers – herder's conflict. This situation has been worsening as a result of the alarming sensation among both mainstream and the social media. For instance, the perpetual negative narration by large proportion of the nation's populations that analyzed every conflict especially clashes between the farmers and herders as a reborn of 19th century Jihad and an attempt by the Fulani oligarchy to Islamize the country and establish Fulani hegemony throughout the nations. This revisionism has

continuously weakened the fabric of national cohesion and integration among the various ethnic nationalists that made up the nation.

Metaphorically, the issue has become so bad that the mutual suspicious and distrust among the minority ethnic nationalities and the Fulani counterpart with whom they have stayed peaceful for decade has assumed very dangerous dimension. This situation has become even more worrisome when the issue has become politicized: first in the build up to the 2015 General Election in which the herdsmen were continuously accused of killing indigenous ethnic nationalities who are predominantly farmers. The situation become amplified in the build up to the 2019 General Election especially against the background of media sensational reporting and ethnic profiling of the Fulani herdsmen as the sole perpetrators of all forms of violent crimes ranging from: killings, armed robbery and the monstrous evil called kidnaping. Among the most frequent quoted farmers – herders conflict are Benue State, Adamawa Taraba, Kaduna State and other parts of the country. This ugly development no doubt has gross implication on the nation’s corporate existence and the economy. It is against this background that this paper examines the causes of farmers – herders’ crises and its implication for statecraft in Nigeria.

Objective of this Study

The objectives of this paper are to:

- i) Examine the triggers of farmers – herders’ conflict in Nigeria.
- ii) Examine the implication of the farmers – herders’ conflict on statecraft in Nigeria.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The paper will rely mainly on the secondary sources of data. In this case, it is going to be purely library based documentation analysis where information is sourced from both published and unpublished literature, official gazettes and government reports

Conceptual Issues

Concept of state craft

State craft like every other social science semantics is conflated with nuances and applied differently in different settings, context and subject. The concept of statecraft is rooted in the works of Jim Bulpitt (1986) when he argued that the UK conservative party government under the leadership of Margret Thatcher was not motivated by ideological underpinnings rather by winning powers. What motivate politician he argued “was their objective of state craft”. Thus he defined state craft as: “The art of winning elections and achieving some necessary degree of governing compliance in office” (Bulpitt; 1986). Consequent upon this the concept of state craft came to be used as an approach to the study of political science and public administration to understand politics and policy making in a polity by focusing on governing challenges and strategic choice of leadership at the top of government .

The concept of state craft was later re-coined by scholars as a neo-statecraft approach which could be used to understand politics and policy making across many political system for instance former British prime minister Tony Blair and that of France Nicolas Sarkozy) . State

craft has also been used to explain how and why Elites change electoral laws (Toby; 2012) as well as to explain British policy towards the European Union (Buller; 2000).

The most recent neo state craft has a number of core Assumptions (Bulpitt ;1986 &Toby 2016)

1. The primary focus is on the political leaders of the state and their closest advisers. The group is referred to as the leadership court.

2. The court is a unitary, rational and self-interested actor with the governing objective of winning and maintaining power. Rather than seeking to achieve any ideological goals the court seek to achieve state craft.

3. In order to achieve state craft the court have to undertake five key tasks

- governing competence : government and leaders need to be seen as competent at managing the countries affairs particularly the economy

- party management ; this include the management of stake holders such as parliamentary back benchers , pressure groups and constituency associations carefully.

- Developing winning electoral strategy ; creating a sets of policies and images that creates momentum in the polls

- Political arguments hegemony ; winning the battle of ideas in elites debates

- Bending the rules of the games ; they will seek to tilt the political game by introducing constitutional reform that makes statecraft easier

- The court will find itself in a strategically selective context which might make statecraft more easier or more difficult to achieve (Buller & Toby ;2015)

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Within the context of this paper therefore, state craft simply denotes a sets of skills, ideas, ideologies strategy as well as human and material resources harmonized by national leadership or decision makers in position of Authority of a particular sovereign state with the vision and mission of either achieving nation building or state national interest among comity of national in the international system.

Concept of conflict

Conflict as a concept has many connotations that conjecture many images in the mind of many scholars and onlookers. This is because conflict means different things to different people depending on angle or individual perspectives from which it is viewed. From a generic point of view conflict is perceived as a psychological condition or state of mind in which either an individual, groups, or organization cannot decide the behaviour of others in a single direction. In some rare cases conflict result in people engaging in violence or shutdown between and among parties and groups, with each of these parties and groups developing strategies to meet the challenges of the other parties or groups and end up getting polarized into two warring groups as in the case of farmers and herdsmen. Conflict is defined as a clash between individuals and groups arising out of differences in thoughts process, attitudes, understanding, interests and even sometimes perception ([http://www. Management guide .com](http://www.Managementguide.com)).

According to Coser (1967), conflict is a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate the rivals. It is also defined from communication perspective as “an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce rewards and interference

from other parties in achieving their goals (Hocker and Wilmot, 1985). In his own contribution, Abiodun (2014) views conflict as a state of discord caused by the actual or perceived opposition of needs, values and interests between formal authority and power and those individuals and groups affected. There are subtle forms of conflict involving rivalries, jealousies, personality clashes, role-definitions and struggles for power and favour. There is also conflict within individuals – between competing needs and demands – to which individuals respond in different ways.

Farmer- herders conflict despite its dire consequences has received little attention in the burgeoning violent conflict literature in Africa and elsewhere (Engels and Gentile , 2005; Lind & Sturman ,2002 ; Richards 2006). This according to Moritz (2010) is rooted in the reality that herders–farmers conflict is often seen as local, endemic and low intensity conflict and not wars. From his on trajectories Sandole (1999) hybridized structural and procedural approach to conflict in his analysis where he clearly distinguish between what he termed conflict as a startup condition and conflict as a process. To him while the former denotes structural dimension underlying or fundamental causes, the later on the other hand refers to situation (state of affairs) under which conflict is in full swing and become a self-perpetuating and self-stimulating process.

This was aptly captured in the words of Porto (2002) who argued that within this context or framework conflict as a start-up condition are necessary but not sufficient for conflict to escalate and the primary goal of such conflict is to identify the proximate cause of escalation. In like manner, Blench (2003) opined that the pastoralist/farmer conflict began in earnest in the 20th century with two major changes: the introduction of affordable veterinary drugs that allowed pastoralists to increase the health of their cattle and thereby herd size and land requirements for grazing; and increased farming due to increasing population pressures. Furthermore, Blench (2010) points out four major factors affecting conflict between pastoralists and farmers, three of which can be categorized as land issues: the collapse of the traditional *burtali* system of cattle routes, the declining importance of dairy production, migration and disease, and the intensification of agriculture in riverine areas known as Fadama cultivation.

Richards (2005a) avers that farmers – herder's conflicts not only have direct impacts on the lives and livelihood of those involved but rather by extension disrupt and threatened the sustainability of agriculture and pastoral production in West Africa. He cautioned that it is unwise therefore to ignore the clashes because in spite they appear local in nature it may escalate into real wars. Furthermore, Brunnschweiler, (2007) identified as the principal causes and factors aggravating escalating conflicts are : climatic changes (frequent droughts and desertification); population growth (loss of northern grazing lands to the expansion of human settlements); technological and economic changes (new livestock and farming practices); crime (rural banditry and cattle rustling); political and ethnic strife (intensified by the spread of illicit firearms); and cultural changes (the collapse of traditional conflict management mechanism). A dysfunctional legal regime that allows crime to go unpunished has encouraged both farmers and pastoralists to take matters into their own hands

Moritz (2010) outlined an analytical framework that examines herders -farmer's conflict as a dynamic process to explain the variables outcomes of farmers –herders' conflict in particular conflict escalation. According to him:

Once a conflict begins the parties are engaged in an interaction that unfolds as a sequence of moves, each in response to the immediately prior moves within this sequence escalation may or may not occur. The immediate reason(S) why the parties escalates the conflict as well as the reason(s) why they resolved it peacefully are to be found within the conflicts as it unfolds (2010; 139)

Moritz (2010) draws his analysis upon conflict theory as represented by the scholarly works of conflict experts such as: (Kriesberg ; 2007; Mitchell ;1981, Pruitt & Kim 2004) as well as inspiration from processual approaches from Anthropology :(Bailey 1969 & Barth 1959) in order to identify the variables that contribute to the escalation of farmers – herders conflicts . To realize this objective his processual approach was analysed using two ethnographic case studies of farmers –herders' conflicts.

UN Environmental Programme, (2011) link the perennial conflict between farmers – herders to over dependence on natural resources. In their view, competition for access to and control of these resources remains a real issue, which is at the root of recurrent conflicts that threatens peace and disrupts development. To them Natural resources seem to have been more a curse than a blessing for many countries Natural resources play a major role in the preservation of peace and social security as most West African economies rely heavily on agriculture and natural resources for a significant share of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP), national food needs, employment and export revenue According to the views of Fabusoro (2011), Fulani struggle to pursue their way of life in regions where land is contested; as one scholar notes, the Fulani way of life is becoming increasingly difficult or nearly impossible for lack of access to land in the wake of degrading grazing resources, geographical differentiations as a result of farm encroachment and lack of policy support to protect grazing routes It is obvious from all these developments that the Federal Government's intention to diversify Nigeria's economy to agriculture will only be a wishful thinking if urgent solutions to this menace are not quickly proffered.

According to one pastoralist from Plateau state as recorded by Odoh & Chigozie (2012),

Our heard is our life because to every nomad life is worthless without his cattle. What to do you expect from us when our source of existence is threatened? The encroachment of grazing fields and routes by farmers is a call to war. Wherever we turn, we find the land reserved for our cattle to feast, taken over by farmers. It becomes difficult for our heard to move and gaze without veering into crop fields. Once that happens, the farmers confront us and we have no option but to fight back.

Odoh further stated that on the part of the farmers, the complaints are similar in nature. One farmer from Sokoto state said “in the past the migration used to be more in the middle of the

dry season and after harvest but nowadays it is throughout the year. Worst of all during planting season, they (Fulani herdsmen) walk on seeds planted and in most cases a lot of the seeds fail to germinate. This has caused huge loss to us. The damage is usually the cause of our conflicts with the Fulani herdsmen. It is a yearly battle between us" (Odoh, 2012).

Abbass (2012) situate this herder's - farmer's conflict from the political; economy prism, according to him the continuing Fulani pastoralists' militancy for the survival of their cattle makes fierce struggle and violent conflicts with farmers inevitable. As farmers continuously encroach into the grazing routes, they leave the Fulani with no alternative to neither retreat nor surrender. The traditional practices that focus on the close integration between rising of livestock and enhanced farming have posed serious dialectics in the dynamic relationships between pastoralists and farmers in Northern Nigeria.

Furthermore, pastoralist in Nigeria faces challenges and these hampers the productivity that consequentially affect the Nation's economy, 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, and embedded within these are growing form of capitalists land' tenure and delay in the justice system that exacerbates the situation (Muhammed, Ismaila & Bibi, 2015).

To corroborate the above view Abbass (2012) further opined that the expansion of Fulbe pastoralism into Nigeria is unknown but the conflicts between pastoralists and farmers have existed since the beginning of agriculture and increased or decrease in intensity and frequency depending on economic, environmental and other factors. For example, increases in the herd sizes due to improved conditions of the cattle compelled the pastoralist to seek for more pastures beyond their limited range. Similarly, Climate change has constituted a great threat by putting great pressures on the land and thus provoking conflicts between them. However, improvements in human health and population have enhanced a much greater pressure on land. Since the 1980s there has been a marked expansion of cultivation of the Fadama areas. This means that both the farmers and the pastoralist have engaged in fierce struggles for access to such valuable lands which, more often than not, result in increased conflicts and violence.

Audu (2013) is of the opinion that freshwater scarcity in northern Nigeria has increased the prevalence of conflicts in certain parts between farmers and pastoralists because they are among those whose source of livelihood are most threatened. He went Further to observed that the crops grown by the farmers are at the feeding paths or stock route of the cattle this causes interference of cattle on crops, especially those ones that have nutritious value for the cattle. In most cases this results into crop destruction and thereby engenders conflict. In addition, cattle herders look for where there is sufficient grass or crop residue for their animals to eat. In a situation where leftover crops are eaten by cattle, creates conflict with the farmer.

Nigeria in recent times have experienced and has continued to experience series of farmers/herders conflicts, leading to serious human and material losses thereby aggravating the security situation in the country. Major causes of farmers/herders are that most times, the Fulani herdsmen wander into the fields during cropping season while their herds eat or trample on the crops due to the herdsmen's lack of attention or the cattle's stray movement, hence tension rises (Ofem, 2014)

Mikailu (2016) posits that disagreements over the use of essential resources such as farmland, grazing areas and water between herders and local farmers are said to be the major source of the fighting. Fulani herders can travel hundreds of miles in large numbers with their cattle in search of pasture. They are often armed with weapons to protect their livestock. They frequently clash with farmers who consistently accuse them of damaging their crops and failing to control their animals.

In Nigeria, conflicts between farmers and migrant cattle herders have become not only a national security issue but a national question in recent times. Owing largely to its plurality and ethnic divide, environment –induced migration creates volatile contact and competition between groups of highly confiding natural resource – dependents livelihood systems. In the case of farmers and pastoral herders is a further strain by already tenuous national fault-lines and fuels insecurity (Amusan, Abegunde & Akinyemi, 2017).

. From similar but slightly distinct trajectory Stefan H,(2017) maintained that Propelled by desertification, insecurity and the loss of grazing land to expanding settlements, the southward migration of herders towards Nigeria's borders is causing violent competition over land with local farmers. Furthermore, the changing practices among both farmers and pastoralists have also strained relations. Over the last three decades, some cattle herders have gradually adopted sedentary lifestyles, leaving cattle herding increasing to young men or boys who often lack the civility and maturity to resolve disputes amicably. Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs) in the 1970s encouraged the use of water pumps while National Fadama Development Projects (NFDPs) have helped farmers exploit wetlands for dry season irrigated agriculture since 1993. More fertile, well-watered land, coupled with improvements in rural-urban transportation and an expanding urban market, has boosted farmers' incomes and dry season employment (Stefan Heunis, 2017).

According to Chinwokwu (2017), violent conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen is common due to environmental factors, climate change and exploitation of scarce resources. They believe that global climate change and desertification has reduced green grass areas thereby compelling pastoralists to move southward in search of pastures for their cattle. In addition, capitalist tendency in acquiring land for farming has also reduced the land space available for cattle grazing. This is worsened by government indiscriminate allocation of grazing lands for government layouts or reserve areas without alternative provision of grazing lands for pastoralists.

Amusan, Abegunde & Akinyemi,(2017) maintained that from time immemorial, migration has been one of man's strategies for coping with his existential vicissitudes as challenges prompt him to move from one environment to another in search of better opportunities to meet his livelihood needs. While many factors shape human decisions on migration, the compelling roles of environmental factors have gained increasing attention in recent years. Man's decision to move and his choice of destination are often informed by his goals and experience in one environment, either by virtue of the limitations, which it imposes or the opportunities that abound elsewhere

The pattern over the past thirty year has been the steady migration towards the south by Fulani herdsmen, leading to competition; with farmers over land use. Conflict has been exacerbated by a population explosion while the availability of land for agricultural use is declining. As much as thirty-five percent of the land that could be cultivated, fifty years ago is now desert in eleven of the most northern of Nigeria's thirty-six states (Campbell, 2015). Climate change has had a damaging effect of the lives and properties on the people living some part of the country. Climate change has contributed to massive migration of Fulani herdsmen to the two regions. The change in climate such as depletion in the ozone layer have led to heat wave, dryness of the rivers and lack of pastures for cattle to graze amongst others and have made life uncomfortable for the people. The relative lack of adequate rainfall has made the land to dry, leading to inadequate pastures for the cattle and thus made the people to migrate to safe areas of the Eastern and Middle-Belt Region (Abugu & Onuba, 2015).

Climate change is fast becoming an issue of concerns globally because of its attendant consequence posed on the livelihood of humans, especially the migration of Fulani herdsmen from one part of the world to another. The migration of Fulanis from East and Central Africa into Nigeria through its northern fringes has caused grievous impacts on farming activities around the Middle Belt Region of the country. This is because individuals decide to migrate if the net benefit from migrating is larger than that from not migrating. Facing several possible destinations within and outside their countries, they choose the one that provides the largest net benefit (Reuveny, 2007). It suffices to say however, that drought caused by climate change has forced the migration of herders from Sahel region to Savanna region for the survival of their livestock. It is in the light of this that there are numerous farmers/herders conflicts in Taraba, Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa and Niger states where each struggle to compete for the limited or scarce natural resources such as water, land for grazing and farming.

Migration of herders from extreme northern parts of Nigeria to Taraba state is largely caused by sweeping climate change. Others migrate from Chad, Niger, and Cameroon and as far as Sudan and Senegal into Nigeria in search of grazing lands and water for their livestock. It is in the light of this that Odoh (2012) posits that climate alteration is a real concern for Sahelian people due to its adverse effects.

Onuoha (2010) further stress that when people no longer have access to basic necessities of life such as water, food, shelter or physical security critical for survival, they adapt by switching livelihood systems or migrating to greener pastures. According to Abugu & Onuba (2015), the

intensity of the drought in the Sahel region calls for worry and urgent attention. It must be recalled that the Sahel and the Sahara desert stretches across over fifteen countries from North, West and Central Africa and these areas are home for pastoralists, farmers, fishermen, traders, etc. The Fulanis in Nigeria occupies some parts of the drought stricken areas of the Sahel and to escape from the ravaging effect of the drought as well as to save their cattle from dying, they migrate down south and some areas of middle belt like Plateau, Benue, Nasarawa, Kogi, etc. In the main, the migration of these herdsmen has caused more harm than good in all these areas.

Drivers of the Farmers-Herders clashes in Nigeria

Farmer-herders are known to be staying together peacefully and doing their businesses respecting each other. Recently however, this earlier smooth relationship strained due to several factors:

Population explosions and Land hunger:

The growth in the population of human being due to high birth rate has made people to be more in number and land being a permanent item does not expands in commiserate with the increase of people. For instance, the 1962 census indicated that Nigerian population was 60.5 million. In 1973, the census figure was 79.8 million people. In 1991, the population figure stood at 88.9 million and in May 2018, Nigerian population is estimated 198million people according to the National population census projection. Due to population explosion, many people got involved in farming; structures are erected on soil (houses, industries, estates, recreation centres' etc.). The fact that human being must eat to survive, farmers goes around expanding their frontiers to enable produce food for subsistence there by exerting pressure on the limited existing land. Population explosion made people to be scouting for land and expand their building and land usage. This explains why even the initial cattle path or routes have been used to farm crops, erect houses or build industries. These have made access to or usage of land difficult for the herders. Therefore, the competition for this resource caused several farmers-herders clashes in Nigeria as most often than not herders have to find a land to graze and the process of searching for pasture for their herds often destroy crops and farmlands which is the only source of livelihood of the farmers. The farmers' herders' conflict under this scenario could best be described as the fall out of contest over the preservation of basic means of existentialism.

State creation and Governmental policies:

In the past there were regions and each region was mindful of the peculiarities and socio-economic activities of its citizen. The regional Government especially in northern Nigeria and the traditional rulers being powerful and close to the people, were able to ensure that the famers –herders live in peace, had their business premises clearly kept and avoided by the other. However, the subsequent creation of states and local Government has directly or indirectly affected the free lands that were exclusively reserved for such purposes under the watch of the traditional rulers. The state and local government officials became more powerful than the traditional political institutions and they went ahead to build structures anywhere they deemed fit and sold land to people for mechanized farming against the traditional farming system. Some local indigenes farmlands were forcefully taken by the government and allocated to some

capitalist elements or industrialists in the name of boosting the economy and developing the state. These make both the farmers and herdsmen to lack access to large arable land.

Migrant nature of the pastoralists:

Unlike the farmers that settle in one place to cultivate the land, plant, weed and harvest their crops for either personal or commercial consumptions; the pastoralists or herdsmen are migrants in nature looking for greener pasture; this deny them formal claim of land like the farmers that are stationary. In the process of migrating by the herdsmen, their cattle's sometimes go astray to enter the crops of the farmers or sometimes, especially in the village, some of the herdsmen intentionally (or otherwise) allow the cattle's to enter peoples farm land claiming that the farmers have blocked their passage routes. These have caused clashes that led to the fatal loss of lives and properties in several states in Nigeria like in Taraba, Adamawa, Benue, Plateau, Kaduna, Enugu, Ondo, Oyo, Delta and Edo among other states in Nigeria and even across the border (Amnesty International, 2018).this position has been concritised by Adisa & Adekunle (2010) who revealed that in many parts of the developing world, human migration has been at the heart of many contestations and conflicts as those between natives and migrants over access to natural resources such as fresh water for native populations, arable land for farmers, or pasture for cattle herdsmen

Nigeria has an estimated population of over 15 million cattle domiciled in the country. Apart from these, several thousands of cattle migrate annually into the country from neighbouring countries. In recent years, the increase in violent clashes between herdsmen and farmers in Adamawa, Benue, Taraba State and other parts in Nigeria has been attributed to the influx of foreign cattle from Niger, Cameroon and Chad (Gbaka, 2011). The arrival of environmental migrants can burden the economic and resource base of the receiving area, promoting native emigrant contest over resources. Pressures are expected to rise with the number of migrants and residents, particularly when resources are scarce in the receiving area and property rights are underdeveloped. The excess demand for resources may also generate lateral pressure, expansion of economic and political activities beyond the region's or state's borders in order to acquire resources, which increases the risk of conflict (Reuveny, 2007). Abugu & Onuba (2015) noted further that naturally, Fulanis by their nature are migrants who leave their traditional abode in search of greener pasture for their flocks. The migration is caused by the absence of good and veritable land for their flock to feed on. For instance, the rate of desertification and deforestation in the Sahara desert is at an alarming rate and Nigeria is part of the countries of the Sahel region that experiences drought, desertification and deforestation, especially in the Northern Region. These climatic challenges forced the Fulanis who occupy the area to migrate down south for greener pasture for their cattle to graze. In the course of entering the shores of the Southern and Middle-Belt Regions of the country, their cattle cause great damage to farmlands resulting to conflicts and confrontation with the indigenes.

In adamawa farming communities of : Hong , Gombi , Maiha, Song, Geiri , Numan and Guyuk experience have indicated that these foreign Fulani migrants do not spare even the local Fulani and shuwa herdsmen that are enjoying peaceful mutual and symbiotic relationship with their host communities . The attitudes of these strangers sometimes portray them as merchants

of violence under the influence of drugs that on many instance attack, maimed and gang rape innocent farmers without cause. These often more than not led to indiscriminate reprisal attack by the farming communities on every Fulani there by escalating into full blown violence with unimaginable consequences.

ECOWAS protocol on freedom of movement:

The agreement among ECOWAS members for free movement of persons from one member state to another has made the Nigerian state border to be vulnerable to infiltration by the migrant pastoralists from other African states into Nigeria. Such alien pastoralists are not sensitive to the fragile peace nature of farmers and herders, some of them do not even understand the local language and the time which the farmers are through with their farming issue before the land is left for them. These misunderstandings have caused clash between the two groups.

Climate change:

Climate change due to the activities of man through emission of gasses that affected the ozone layer is said to be one of the factors affecting raining season and the volume of rainfall in other part of the continent according to Cheri and Kaku (2018)). Northern and North-eastern Nigeria have experienced the most dramatic effects of climate change through the steady encroachment of desertification; the loss of farmland and pasture. The rain that is not enough under this epoch, easily dry up in some of the rivers, valleys and lakes especially in sub-Saharan African region. For instance, several lakes like the Lake Chad and other rivers lack sufficient water to meet both human and animal needs. These forced the pastoralists to be moving from one place to another looking for grasses and water for their cattle's and sometimes breaking the farm fence or not waiting for the farmers to finish their harvest and leave the farm land for them; and fight ensued. Marietu & Olarewaju (2009) posit that the production potential of grassland and livestock in the arid and semi-arid regions are constrained by low and variable rainfall. Therefore there is a need for grazing movements to access pasture resources across regions in order to ensure food security for the herds. Hence, pastures, woody vegetation, water resources and land are taken as a common property resource. According to Majekodunmi, Fajinmi, Dongkum, Shaw & Welbum (2014), it is easy to see how the poor pasture and dwindling water supplies caused by the long harsh dry season force herders to move their cattle to areas where the dry season is shorter and its effects less severe.

Communication and ethno-cultural barrier:

One of the triggers of the farmers' vs herders' conflicts is the glaring lack of understanding between the indigenous Farmers and the migrating Herders. In most instances not only that majority of the Fulani herdsmen do not understand either the predominant lingua franca or the native languages of the indigenous farmers but they are also ignorant of the cultural norms values and belief system of the host communities. In the same vein, the inability of the pastoralists on arrival to new communities to visit the traditional/village head and explain their missions so as to establish social cohesion and mutual respect are often interpreted as an attempt to undermine the heritage and cultural values of the host communities especially in some states like Benue or some states in eastern/ western region in the country have created deep animosity and socio- cultural and mutual suspicion and distrust among the two divergent

parties . This situation in most cases serve as a window and impetus deteriorating coexistence between the migrants Fulani pastoralist and their host.

Political/government laxity:

The inability or lack of will on the side of the existing structures and system both the traditional/ political institution and the security operatives around to sanction the previous and present offenders between the farmers-herders during critical fracas, not only serve as a source of grievances but rather triggers for the escalation of tension into full blown violence as a result of reprisal attack by the dissatisfied group. This lack of lack of confidence in the existing systems and structures no doubt questions the legitimacy of these institutions. As a backlash the aggrieved parties has little option than to take law into his/their hand to revenge without reporting to the authorities. Some of the farmers do not have confidence in their traditional rulers, because they believe the pastoralists have ‘settled’ them in kind or cash, therefore reporting the herders to them will yield no positive results. Corroborating with the above, Amnesty International in its 2018 report, released on 17/12/2018 concur that impunity flourished in Nigeria and gave room to more killings between the farmers and herders (www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/12). Not taking a decisive measure against precious offenders to serve as deterrence to others by the authorities often led to jungle justice or instant revenge by any of the aggrieved parties.

Democratization and Dominance of Mainstream and Social Media

The end of cold war struggles has resulted in the growing gale of democratic revolution; this development has made democracy as a non-negotiable system government among countries that were hither to under the shackles of military dictatorship or absolute monarchy. This new system of government was accompanied by fragrance of freedom of expression and press. Complimenting this freedom is the media revolution especially the advent of social media which give the populace easy access to information and communication. The media space however has been taken over by yellow journalism and sensational reportage as well as the use of gutter language and hate speech. This sad development has been more prevalent on the social media with the deliberate spread of falsehood and criminal ethnic profiling directed on the Fulani herdsmen. These deliberate campaigns of calumny for politico economic gains was legitimized with the additional of the voices of the Nigerian elites; including former heads of states captains of industries and leaders of socio cultural associations and religious leaders. The implication of this revisionist perpetual negative narration is reprisal attack against the Fulani herdsmen by farming communities made up of predominantly ethnic minorities and counter reprisal attack by the Fulani herdsmen. This ugly trend did not only aggravate but sustained the tempo of violent clashes between farming communities and pastoralist with its dire negative consequences.

The Implications of Farmers-Herders Clashes on the State & Economy

The perennial Farmers-Herders clashes in Nigeria have unfortunate consequences on the agriculturalists, the Nigerian states and its economy. In other words, the effects of the clashes between members of the two crafts is challenging in a number of ways:

Decline Production and supply:

Owing to incessant Farmers-Herders clashes in especially northern Nigeria, this has affected farming activities, including production of food crops and the cattle from settling down to eat and produce more meat, milk, hide and skin for local consumption and for sell to other parts of the country and beyond. These craft men clashes led to lower production and supply of food crops and cattle to certain part of the country.

Inflation in the prices of Staple foods:

Farmer-Herders clashes affected the production of crops and meat in northern Nigeria with large arable land. Consequently, this has led to scarcity of the commodity and its supply to other parts of the country, thereby leading to inflation or high cost in the price of food crops and cattle geometrically.

Destruction of lives and Properties:

Perennial Farmers and Herders clashes have led to destruction of human lives and properties in several states in Nigeria. For instance, in a three years survey, Amnesty International (2018), reports that over 3,641 persons are killed in such conflicts, with several houses, farms, cattle, food stores, places of worships and other business premises were destroyed. The frequent loss of lives and properties on both sides, as a result of the clashes, is reducing the numbers of experienced people in that crafts and is discouraging prospective craft men into any of these agricultural sectors and others investors.

Proliferations of light arms and weapons:

The perennial Farmers-Herders clash has created an avenue for each member of the craft to see themselves as enemies. Consequently, they will be acquiring and carrying small arms and light weapons for self-defence in case of attacks. This could be one of the reasons why at the slightest provocation, between the two opposing agriculturalists, high casualties figures are recorded and sometimes either of them attacks the security operatives. The 2018 Amnesty report on farmers-herders clashes in Nigeria, states that weapons like machine gun and AK-47 rifles are used in some of the clashes. The porosity of the nation's borders has made each of them to arm themselves in readiness for eventuality, promoting insecurity of lives, properties and food among others.

Growth in Refugees and Displacement of people:

Perennial Farmers-Herders clashes in northern Nigeria have caused thousands of people to become internally displaced persons or refugee in their own country (Cheri; Kaku and Kele, 2018 and Amnesty International, 2018). Wherever and whenever they clashes, many families and loved ones are displaced and temporal refugee camps becomes inevitably created by government and other faith based organizations. This has happened in states like Adamawa, Benue, Taraba etc to accommodate the displaced persons (escapees or victims of the clashes) who have lost their home, food stuff and other belongings.

Food shortage and insecurity

Consequent upon the above unfortunate developments, the government has to source and obtain food stuff and meat from other places to meet its citizens' food, protein and nutritional needs at the detriment of developing other sectors of the economies or else, another crisis may occur. Since there are large numbers of people in the country, failure on the part of the states to meet the population's food and animals demands, may cause social crimes, insecurity, theft, unemployment, armed robbery, hostage taken and demand for ransom etc. These are not good for the economy and the image of the country.

Increase in Kidnaping, Cattle Rustling and Banditry

The rising tide in conflict between the farmers and the Fulani herdsmen has resulted in increase in kidnaping, cattle rustling and Banditry. Most especially in the Northwest and North central Nigeria with Zamfara, Sokoto, Katsina and southern kaduna being the main flash points. The security situation has become so bad that on daily basis there dozen case of kidnappings, cattle rustling and attack on several communities. Today the ever busy kaduna Abuja roads and kaduna Birnin Gwari road has become nightmare of commuters and passengers. The most worrisome aspect of this new dimension of this security threats is it attack on education as several secondary schools has been attacked and students and their teachers abducted by the bandits for ransom. The most recent of such cases were the abduction of students in government technical college kankara in Katsina State, the abduction of over 300 school girls in Government Girls secondary school Jegede in Talata Mafara zamfara state.

This situation is not much different in the Niger State and Kogi State in north central Nigeria as there are routine daily report of abduction of passengers and commuters on the highway and schools. There indication that most of these bandits and kidnapers are Fulani herdsmen that alleged the lost their herds of cattle and family members as a results of their clashes with the farmers and therefore have to acquire arms for self-defence and often use these arms for reprisal attack on communities perceived to be their enemies. These incessant attack on communities and wayfarers by the Bandits believes to be predominantly Fulani herdsmen has resulted in hundreds of deaths, destruction of properties worth hundreds of millions and displacement of several communities

The Panacea

In view of the quantum or magnitude of the effects of the farmers-herders clashes on the citizens and the nation's political economy, the state being the constitutional custodian of peace and security for its citizens and other nationals to do business and thrive, must do among other things:

Robust education: The Nigerian state should embark on proper education and orientation of the citizen and especially those engage in the two businesses to embrace peace and dialogue instead of outright conflict. The state can use the National Orientation Agency; the mass media, traditional rulers, political leaders at the grass root to intimate the "two enemies" to avoid taking law into their hands but report any breach to the constituted authority. Such education/orientation should be translated into various dialects/languages for everyone to hear

and understand; with strong warning that government will not tolerate any disobedience. This should be communicated to all ECOWAS states and seek their understandings.

Development of agricultural infrastructures: The state should develop portion of land in the northern region where there will be all year water through dams, irrigations or building of artificial lakes that will make the herders to settle in one place instead of migrating which is not good for them in this epoch taking good examples from other developed economies in Europe, Asia, Middle East doing similar business peacefully. Building of such infrastructures/facilities takes care of the climate change and its challenges. There should be established industries to purify the cattle milk, hide and skin, meat and other useful by-product for local consumption and external trade.

Persuasion instead of coercion: Pastoralists should be persuaded to settle in one place instead of their traditional migrant nature, taking advantage of the facilities provided like nomadic education centres and other social amenities. This will make them part and parcel of the community and to enhanced socio-economic development and peaceful co-existence without discrimination. Authorities are to positively persuade and use their leaders to explain the benefits of settling in a place instead of migrating on their health, children education, security of their lives, animal and the productivity of the stable cattle etc. If they understand these, they will oblige and it will reduce farmers-herders clash in the country.

Defending/protecting each business: Each of the agricultural business: farming, husbandry/livestock and other business should be protected by the state as every one of them is good and needful for food security and nutritional needs of the citizen. Authorities should therefore, where there are large or enough lands, especially in northern Nigeria, allocate some portion for grazing, and to avoid the temptation of promoting particular agricultural practices at the expense of the others for any primordial reasons.

CONCLUSION

Nigeria no doubt is one of the few lucky countries that have been blessed with vast land as well as human and material resources. These large arable lands, most especially in northern Nigeria notwithstanding, there seem to be incessant Farmer-Herders clashes. Such unfortunate development has affected peaceful co-existence; the economy of both the Farmers and the Herders; government's efforts to boost socioeconomic and other sectorial policies. This perennial violent clashes between farmers and herdsman has become a recurring decimal with scary features which if not checked will not only undermine the prospect of statecraft project but will serve as a lynch pin for the ultimate pillage of the Nigerian corporate existence and its very foundation.

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