

# Impact of the Farmers and Herdsmen Conflict on Food Security; Focus on Taraba State

Solomon, Binga Lezuya (Ph.D.)

*Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Rivers State University, Nkpolu-Oroworukwo, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria*

**Abstract:** One of the greatest security challenges in Nigeria in recent time is the increasing conflicts between crop farmers and herders. Today, the conflict has spread over wide geographical areas in Nigeria and Taraba State in particular. Taraba state is one of the state in Nigeria that have been greatly affected by conflict between farmers and herders. It is against this background that this study was carried out to examine the extent to which conflicts between farmers and herders affect food production, food availability, food stability, food utilization in Taraba state. The study adopted survey research method and sampled 285 respondents using multi stage sampling technique. The data for this study was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was generated from field survey carried out in the state. The study utilized data and infrastructure from study multiple policy documents in State Ministry of Agriculture, Jalingo. Data generated from the field was complemented by extensive review on the farmer herders conflicts. The data collected were analyzed using p-table and percentage, and Pearson Correlation used to test the hypotheses. The study findings revealed that the increasing incidence of the farmers herders conflicts has led to widespread distribution of food stuff, lives and properties and entrenched atmosphere of fair and insecurity in the rural communities. This has greatly affected crop farming and grazing activities, resulting in low productivity, food instability, low food utilization, food inaccessibility and inadequate availability of food in Taraba state. Based on the findings, the study recommended among others the need to assist farmers with zero interest credit facilities to boost production and strengthen ties between herders and farming communities to improve security in rural farming areas.

**Key words:** Farmers, Herdsmen, Conflict, Food Security, Taraba State, amongst others.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### *Background of the Study*

One major problem confronting world and national peace today is the manifestation of conflicts in different dimensions across the globe. From Europe to America, Africa to Asia, conflicts are common phenomena (Jeony, 2008, p.56). Since the return to democratic rule in 1999, Nigeria has faced and is still facing widespread violent conflict of horrific proportion among the various groups, communities, religion and political class across the country. These incessant and widespread conflicts significantly differ in dimension, process and the actors involved.

Momale (2003) identified conflict between some resource

user group such as between one farming community and another, between different user groups such as between herdsmen and farmers, between foresters and farmers. However, farmers – herder’s conflicts remain the most predominant resource conflict in Nigeria (Adisa, 2012, p.13). This is largely due to the fact that land related issues, especially on grazing fields, account for the highest percentage of the conflicts between the two groups. In other words, struggle over the control of economically viable resources causes more tensions and violent conflicts among, not only farming communities, but also between the herders and crops cultivators. This situation is not a surprise, because, land is one of the most important resources needed by man for his total existence. First, all human livelihoods and activities are directly or indirectly dependent on land at different degrees. Land means different things to the various groups that use land. For example, the meaning and use of land by road Construction Companies cannot be the same for house builders, fishermen, farmers, herders, miners and manufacturers. They all have varying specifications in their demands and the use of land for their respective productive services.

In all, crop production and other agricultural and related activities perhaps, exhibit the highest form of sophistication in the use of land resources. Justifying the high requirements of land for agricultural production, Rashid (2002, p.65) posited thus:

...Not only must agricultural land be capable of supplying crops-specific nutrients and water, soil temperature, structure, texture and PH levels are inevitable requisites in the choice of land for agricultural production activities.

He added, that land is a limited, some-what scarce resources with both artificial and natural access and usage barriers. These factor of specifications; multifarious uses of land and its limitedness have necessitated that various shades of competition for its utilization across the state to ensue. Thus, competition for land resources between and within various user groups has been the bane of mankind since time immemorial. Non- agricultural user groups compete with agricultural user groups on one hand, while there are various levels of intra-user group competition on the other hand. Indeed, competition for land resource use is becoming keener and fiercer, largely due to increasing human and animal populations (Hauna, 2011, p.43). It has been justified and

established that, population growth rate has continued to exert great pressure on available land resources with varying environmental and socio-economic implications (Fiki & Lee, 2004, p.78). Food and other agricultural production is the mainstay of Taraba State economy, even though there are other mineral resources. The suitability of agricultural activity in Taraba State economy requires strategic balance in the ecological and socio-economic activities as well as political consideration. However, the severity of farmers-herders conflicts has been an annual phenomenon since the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, but, in recent times, it has assumed a new dimension. Abbas (2012, p.32) found that, in Northern Nigeria, rainfall occurs seasonally with prolonged dry season. The seasonal rainfall and prolonged dry season bring about dynamics in the ecosystem and sour relationships resulting in a sharp division between the sedentary farmers and the nomadic pastoralists. This division between the groups brings tension and conflict.

Farmers-Herdsman resource conflict had existed since recorded history. With the changing character and severity, farmers-herders conflict, has remained the most resource use conflict in Nigeria. Herders and farmers co-existed for a long period but such co-existence has never been without tension because it demands a condition of rural interests. Conflict can erupt when livestock is poorly controlled and when herds wander on to cultivated fields. This always occur at critical periods in the annual cycle, particularly during sowing when herds are late in leaving agricultural lands and during harvests, if they return too early, clashes occur when agricultural activities hinders the movement of herds and cut off their access to water or pastures (Shetuna & Usman, 2008, p.65).

Conflict offers a mixture of the good, the bad and the uncertain. This, is perhaps the reason, Ekong (2003, p.90) posited that conflict may have positive and negative effects. To this end, conflict brings to fore, certain nagging issues that exist. In this way, conflict leads to clear definition of issues. Once such issues have been identified, they can then be amicably resolved.

Farmers-herdsman conflicts have constituted serious threats to the means of survival and livelihoods. Both groups have co-existed for a long time. In Taraba State, however, the complexities over the land resources use system have dramatically changed and thus become the dependable variables in conflict between them.

The prevalent and persuasive incidents of confrontation between the two groups have been documented (Abbas, 2012, p.45). These works are plausible in their own merits. Yet, none of the misable to systematically approach the herders-farmers resource conflict from the premise that exposes its impact on food security. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the Impact of Resource Conflict with reference to Herders-farmers conflict and its impact on Food Security with focus on Taraba State.

Farmers and cattle rearers have been known to live harmoniously over the years and enjoyed mutual symbiotic relationship this mutual symbiotic relationship has been very beneficial to the two groups. The cattle rearers have often paid to graze on farmlands after harvest or in exchange for cow milk or other dairy products while the cow droppings have often enriched the farmlands with manure. However, increasing human and animal preparation has led to the shortage of cropland and grazing land. There by resulting into competition over valuable land resources. These increased competitions over land have resulted in encroachment of farmlands into grazing reserves and cattle routes.

The cattle rearers have often times intentionally or unintentionally allowed their cattle to graze on crop lands, thereby destroying the crops before harvest. This development has brought about conflicts between the cattle herders and crop farmers.

The conflict which started gradually and often mediated by local community authorities dimension the traditional conflict resolution mechanism that has helped resolved all forms of conflict between farmers and cattle herders in the past has pointed in recent times. This is mainly as a result of increasing distrust and suspicion among the two groups.

Today, the conflict has spread over wide geographical areas on the continents of Africa's Nigeria and Taraba State in particular. Taraba state is one of the states in Nigeria that have been greatly affected by conflict between crop farmers and cattle herders. It has been observed that since 2007 to date, no weak passes by without reported cases of conflicts between farmers and herders. These conflicts usually result in large scale destruction of lives and properties. These conflicts have contributed serious threat to the means of survival and livelihood. It is against his background that it becomes pertinent to carry out this study.

#### *Statement of the Problem*

Food security is national security and any household head that is unable to feed his household is not deemed responsible. By extension, any nation or state unable to feed its populace cannot be said to be responsible. Besides, recent estimates has put the number of hungry people in Nigeria as over 52 million, which is about 30% of the country's total population of roughly 200 million, and this figure 52% live under the poverty line (Ajayeoba,2010:23).

These are matters of grave concern largely because Taraba State which shared greater part of the 52%, was self-sufficient in food production and was indeed a food basket of the nation, as food were obtained from the state to other states especially the South-South and southcast.

Things changed dramatically for the worse following famers-herdsman conflicts. Resource competition-driven conflicts between farmers and herdsman have become occurrences in many parts of Nigeria. Abbas (2012, p.12) and Adisa (2012, p.78) observed that, there source-competition-driven conflict

between the two agricultural land user groups often turned into serious overt and covert hostilities and social friction in many parts of Nigeria.

Okello(2014, p.23)and Abbas(2012, p.54) posited that, the conflicts have intensified due to dwindling natural resources and land availability. They agreed that the ongoing escalation in conflict between the two groups centre around land related issues, especially, over-grazing fields, and this account for the highest percentage of the conflict. In other words, struggle over the control of land resources cause more tension and violent conflict among herders, farmers and between farming communities.

Conflict between farmers and herdsman has continued to assume a threatening dimension to human survival and economic livelihood. The incidence of serious resource conflicts for survival between the two groups have led to the loss of lives, and herds, while others have experienced dwindling productivity in their crops and herds. In most of these encounters, citizens are regularly killed and the destruction or loss of property leaves an already endangered populace even poorer. The frequency and scale of these conflicts have not only become alarming but have also produced adverse consequences in the destruction of villages, settlements, crops, irrigation facilities, human and animal lives.

The Taraba State government, in the spirit of addressing herders-local farmers' conflict came up with anti-grazing law. All these were done to strengthen the relationship between the two groups, but the relationship keeps on degenerating. Over a period of four days 17 – 20 June, 2017, several farming areas on the Manbilla Plateau of Sarduma Local Government Area of Taraba State came under attack by armed herders and 732 people were killed. On January 30, 2018, herders living in the Leme Community, a village in the Membilla Plateau in Taraba State were killed in vengeance attack.

The same occurred in Gareji Village on January 17, 2018. On April 10, 2019, similar attack took place in Dori, Mesuma, in Gashaka Local Government of Taraba State. Various cases of conflict in Taraba between the herders and farmers involved significant variables in land resources. As pointed out, the livelihood of farmers and herders in Northern Nigeria, which Taraba is part, is threatened by decreasing access to land resources. In areas of stiff competition for grazing land and land farmers, the intensity of the conflict is high. Abbas (2012, p.89) asserted that, in Taraba State, for example, areas mostly affected include Ibi, Bali, Wukari, Takun local government areas among others.

This conflict has caused loss of lives of farmers and cattle herders as well as innocent citizens. Regrettably, no study known to the researcher has been carried out on this problem confronting farmers and herders in the area of food security in Taraba State. This, therefore, necessitated this study with a view to ascertaining the Impact of Farmers-Herders Conflict on Food Security in Taraba State.

### *Aim and Objectives of the Study*

The aim of this study is to assess the Impact of the Conflict between Farmers and Herdsmen on Food Security with focus on Taraba State. The specific objectives of the study include:

1. To determine the extent of effort of farmers and herdsman conflicts in food production in Taraba State.
2. To access the extent of accessibility to food supply to both rural and urban population in Taraba State.
3. To identify the challenges the government of Taraba State faces in dealing with food insecurity

### *Research Questions*

The study investigation rests on the following research questions:

1. What is the extent of effect of farmers and herdsman conflict on food production in Taraba State?
2. To what extent did farmers and herders conflict affect accessibility to food supply in Taraba State?
3. What has been the effort of the state government towards resolving the conflicts between herders and farmers in Taraba State?

### *Hypotheses*

*Ho1* There is no significant relationship between farmers and herdsman conflicts, and inadequate food production in Taraba State

*Ho2* There is no significant relationship between farmers and herdsman conflicts, and food availability in Taraba State

*Ho3* There is no significant relationship between farmers and herdsman conflicts, and ineffective government response approaches in Taraba State

### *Significance of the Study*

The increasing number of reports of farmers-herders resource conflict makes understanding of its effects on the society an urgent task particularly Taraba State with no empirical study. We need to know not just why the herders-farmers conflicts occur but how they impact on the society. Therefore, the findings of this study will be useful to policy makers. From the study findings, the policy makers will have knowledge on how both groups, their various community and even the state viewed such conflict and the strategies put in place to resolve them until the sources of such conflicts are clearly identified, understood, managed and resolved such incidence will continue to occur at the slightest provocation.

Besides, the findings of the study will add to existing literature on global conflicts with specific emphasis on land resources use conflicts. In this way, it will serve as referenced materials for others who will have interest in this field of study.

Finally, the study findings on food security will guide civil society and non-governmental organizations in their response

to resource conflicts and measures to put in place to address observed problems.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Theoretical Framework*

#### *Karl Marx Conflict Theory*

The conflict perspective or conflict theory was derived from the ideas of Karl Marx (1818:1883). The great German theorist and political activist believed that society is a dynamic entity constantly undergoing change driven by conflict. According to Marx, men are always in the social production of their will, namely, relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production, the totality of which constitutes the economic structure of society. The fact that the dominant ruling class (the bourgeoisie) controls the social relations of production, the dominant ideology in capitalist society is that of the ruling class. Ideology and social institutions, in turn serve to reproduce and perpetuate the economic class structure. According to Marx, the real foundation upon which the super structure of social, political and intellectual consciousness was built, has been the exploitative economic arrangement of capitalism. Marx believes that any social setting based on exploitative economic arrangement generated within it the seed of its own destruction (Marx1971, p.67).

In general, this perspective views theory as made up of individuals competing for limited resources. Competition over scarce resources is at the heart of all social relationships. Competition rather than consensus is characteristic of human relationships. Broader social structure and organization reflect the competition for resources and the inherent inequality competition entails that, some people and organizations have more resources (i.e., power and influence) and use those resources to maintain their positions of power in the society (Marx, 1971). According to the conflict perspective, society is constantly in conflict over resources, and that conflict drives social change. For example, conflict theorists might explain the civil rights movements of the 1960s by studying how activists challenged the racially unequal distribution of political power and economic resources. As in this example, conflict theorists generally see social change as abrupt, even revolutionary, rather than movement. In this perspective, change comes about through conflict between competing interests, not consensus or adaptation. Conflict theory, therefore, gives sociologists a framework for explaining social change. All conflicts share common qualities. The first is that there is a kind of contact between the parties that are involved. Secondly, the parties in conflict perceive conflicting views and finally, one of the parties always wants to redress existing contradictions (Ofooko & Isife, 2009).

## III. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

### *Resource Conflict*

Conflict, like many other concepts in the social sciences, is

defined by varying differences in interests, ideas, ideologies, orientations, perceptions, tendencies, age, sex, religion, parentage, ethnicity, race etc. The differences in interests, perhaps convinced Schaefer (2000) to conclude that conflict, like cooperation, is an integral part of social existence and social progress which, can be found at all levels of social life namely, individual, group, institution, inter-personal, inter-group, inter-institutional, just as it exists also at the international level. Great philosophers like Thomas Hobbes and Karl Marx believed that conflict is inherent in human nature and therefore meritable in the human society, and particularly in the political system.

Berger(2000,p.20) described conflict as “deep rooted conflict”, intractable conflict” and “protracted social conflict respectively. Other scholars have attempted to explain the concept of conflict using level and scale of violence. Here, you have Manzi(2007) defining conflict as illegitimate and unauthorized use of force to effect decisions against the will or desires of others. In this context, conflict is violence, which Best(2009) agrees as unjustified use of force. This perception poses definitional problems because conflict is violence used in the garb of authority wielded by the state against the will or desire of its citizens. Thus, a state sponsored violence is nothing but terrorism, especially, if funded and controlled by those in power. This is not justified.

### *Herdsmen*

The Fulani indisputably represent a significant component of the Nigerian economy. They constitute the major breeders of cattle, the main source of meat, the most available and cheap source of animal proteins consumed by Nigerians. Okello et al, (2014) observed that, the Fulani originated from the Senegambia and migrated into over twenty (20) states within West Africa, the Sahel, Western Sudan and Central African Republic.

The Fulanis are found in greater number in Nigeria, though, a very good number reside in the cities or urban centres while huge number of them still live in the same nomadic settlement.

The expansion of the Fulani herders into Nigeria is unknown. It is suggested that Fulbe herders began to settle on the plains of Bauchi = Emirates transcending unto the Grassland of the Jos Plateau (Bibi,2003). The Fulani herders own over 90% of the nation's livestock population which accounts for one-third of agricultural GDP and 8.2% of the nation GDP (Emola,2010). Furthermore, the contribution of the Fulanito the local food chain and national food security cannot be overstressed.

The Fulani, with their dominance in the Sahel region, are the best known and most numerous of all the pastoral groups in Nigeria. The traditional and unique Fulani encampment (raga) consisting of temporary structures made of stalks, closely knit family members and livestock is the natural habitat of the orthodox Fulbe settlement. The fact of the foregoing is that,

both groups of Fulani (Rare Fulani and Semi Nomadic) engaged in raising livestock, however, the pure Fulani engages in random movement of cattle while the semi-nomadic make transhuman migration and return to their camps or homes. Bello (2013) perceived herdsmen as people, who are simply in constant search for greener pastures for feeding their herds.

#### *Farmers*

Farmers, also called agricultures are persons who engaged in agriculture, raising living organisms for food or raw materials. This then therefore, applies to people who do some combination of raising field crops, orchards, vineyards, poultry or other livestock. Based on this definition, farmers are both the herdsmen who herd or keep livestock like cattle, goats and sheep, and crop farmers. However, for the purpose of this work, farmers are the crop farmers (those who raise field crops) also called peasant farmers/subsistence cultivators only.

#### *Food Security*

Food security was defined in the Proceedings of the 1974 World Food Summit as: Availability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain steady expansion of food consumption...and to offset fluctuations in production and prices (UN, 1975, p.34). In 1983, FAO expanded its concept to include a third prong: 'Ensuring that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to the basic food that they need' (FAO, 1983). In an influential World Bank report on *Poverty and Hunger*, this concept of food security is further elaborated in terms of 'access to all people all times to enough food for an active healthy life.

#### *Empirical Review*

Tersoo (2016) assessed the impact of Farmers/Herdsmen conflict on food security in Taraba State, Nigeria. The paper examined how the conflict has impacted on food security in Taraba State. It adopted the theory of the tragedy of the commons which states that when a resource is group's collective interest, and thus ultimately destroy the resources. The paper used descriptive statistical tools to analyze is found that so many human lives were lost; farm lands, residences and schools were destroyed, leading to a decline in farm output (causing food insecurity) and human capital loss. The study therefore recommended strong government policy on the localization of the pastoralists in line with the world best practices to avoid further conflicts.

Dimelu, et al (2017) carried a study on livelihood issues in herdsmen-farmers' conflict among farming communities in Kogi State, Nigeria. The study assessed the causes and effects of herdsmen-farmers' conflict on livelihood of agrarian communities in Kogi State. The result showed that crop farmers were predominantly male (85.2%), married (85.9%) and with mean age of 51 years. They were small scale farmers with average farm size of 2.9ha and were engaged in the production of yam (97.8%), cassava (92.6%), maize (92.6%) and other arable

crops, mainly for income and household food supply. The farmers indicated that violation of laws/tradition; livelihood interference and cultural factors were the major causes of conflict between crop farmers and herdsmen. Consequently, the socio-economic life, production outcome and settlement of crop farmers are affected, cumulating to breakdown in livelihood assets of farmers. The study recommended that there should be strategic and regular orientation of resource users on the need for co-existence and adherence to regulations regarding use of resources and that multi-stakeholders' efforts exploring grass root participation should be promoted by government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in policies and strategies for management of conflict among others.

A related study was conducted by Olobatoke & Amusain (2017) titled, "effect of Fulani herdsmen intrusion on the economic livelihood of crop farmers in Yagba East Local Government Area of Kogi State, Nigeria". The study investigated the effect of Fulani cattle herdsmen intrusion on the economic livelihood of crop farmers in Yagba East Local Government Area of Kogi State. Results showed that majority of the crop farmers are males (91.00%), married (89.90%) and in their productive age of between 41 – 60 years (46.84%). Majority (51.90%) of the farmers had more than 20 years of farming experience but are still predominantly small scale farmers engaged in growing cash crops (51.90%) and arable crops (48.10%). All the crop farmers (100%) in the studied area agreed that there were intrusions of Fulani cattle herdsmen into crop farms particularly during the dry season periods of the year. Majority (97.4%) of the Fulani cattle herdsmen reported that they rear no designated cattle grazing routes in the study area.

Ajibefun (2017) conducted a study on economic and social effects of the menace of Herdsmen Crisis in Nigeria. He employed descriptive survey design and sampled 250 farmers and 150 respondents from the Fulani in the affected local Government Areas in the South East Nigeria. Findings from the study revealed that the major causes of farmers Herdsmen Crisis in Nigeria include destruction of food crops, disrespect for traditional authority, stray cattle, sexual harassment of women by nomads and indiscriminate bush burning and that of cattle. The major economic effects according to the study are loss of produce, reduction in farmer's income, shortage of food due to the displacement of farmers. This study is relevant to the present study. Both studies sought to find out food security implication of Herdsmen farmers clashes. The study, like the present study employed relevant statistical tools in the analysis of data generated from the field. Findings of both studies have policy implications.

Another related study is Ahynet al (2018)'s research study. The study assessed the effect of farmers-Herdsmen conflict on National Integration in Nigeria. The study used historical descriptive research approach using this method, the study carefully analyzed farmers-Herdsmen crisis on regional basis such as South-West, North Central North-East, North West,

South East, South South. From the study analysis, it was found out that farmers Herdsmen crisis will have far-reaching consequences on National Integration in Nigeria if left Unchecked. Another finding of the study, that is most relevant to the present study is that, each region affected by the crisis suffer food crisis. This study is relevant in the sense that it lay credence to the fact that clashes between the two groups affected food production, distribution and quantity of food available for consumption.

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

This study was a descriptive survey and was carried out in Taraba State. The population of the study consisted of all residents of Taraba. According to the National Population Commission (2006), there are about 2,300,736 people residing in Taraba State which constituted the population of this study. The sample size for this study was 400 respondents. A multi stage sampling technique was adopted in selecting the sample for the study. Firstly, stratified sampling was used to determine the senatorial districts to be sampled, then simple random sampling technique was utilized in selecting the local government areas from each of the sampled senatorial districts for the study and finally, 3 communities were purposively selected from the sampled local governments areas to select respondents for the study.

Data for the study was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained through field survey, using structured questionnaire. A standardized questionnaire title, "Impact of the Farmers and Herdsmen Conflict on Food Security Questionnaire" was used as the instrument of the study. The instrument consisted of two sections; A and B. Section A elicited socio-demographic information from the respondents, while section B, information on the impact of the farmers and herdsmen conflict on food security in Taraba State. A total of 400 copies of questionnaires were administered to the respondents. While 385 copies were completed and retrieved, thirteen (15) copies of the questionnaires were not returned by the respondents.

Adopted questionnaire was subjected to face and content validation. The instruments were validated by the research supervisor and three experts from the Department of Political Science, Rivers State University. It was subjected to modification for the current study. To ensure the reliability of the instrument the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was utilized. After computation, a reliability coefficient for the instrument yielded 0.04. This is considered sensitive and good enough for the study. Data was collected and analyzed using the statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 23.0 using descriptive statistical tools were utilized to analyze the socio-demographic factors of respondents and answering the

research questions, whilst inferential statistical tool such as the Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient at 0.05 level of significance was employed to test the hypothesis.

#### V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

##### Section A: Socio-Demographic Factors of Respondents

Socio-demographic Characteristics	Frequency (F)	Percentage %
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	200	51
Female	185	49
Total	385	100
<b>Age</b>		
20-29	40	10
30-39	86	22
40-49	97	25
50-59	106	28
60-Above	56	5
Total	385	100
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	305	79
Single	35	12
Widowed	45	12
Total	385	100
<b>Occupation</b>		
Farming	200	51.9
Cattle rearing	85	22
Farming and cattle raring	100	25.9
Total	385	100
<b>Educational Status</b>		
No education	29	5
Primary	56	14.5
Secondary	100	25.9
Tertiary	100	25.9
Quranic education	100	25.9
Total	385	100

##### Research Questions

*Research Question 1:* What is the extent of effect of farmers and herdsmen conflict on food production in Taraba State?

Table 2: Effect of farmers and herdsmen conflict on food production in Taraba State

SN	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	SD	Decision
1	The struggle over land between farmers and herdsmen has not affected any production in Taraba State	53(13.8)	23(6.0)	131(34.0)	178(46.2)	1.87	±1.03	Disagreed
2	Conflict between farmers and herdsmen has not affected cattle rearing so much in Taraba State	41(10.6)	7(1.8)	170(44.2)	167(43.4)	1.80	±.92	Disagreed
3	The destruction of land and water resources during farmers and herders clashes are not such that enough food cannot be produced in Taraba State	65(16.9)	45(11.7)	146(37.9)	129(33.5)	2.12	±1.06	Disagreed
	Grand mean					1.93	±1.00	Disagreed

Table 2 shows the responses derived from the respondents in Taraba State on the effect of farmers and herdsmen conflict on food production in Taraba State. From the table, it was observed that the respondents disagreed to most of the items enumerated. Based on the responses, a grand mean = 2.31 was derived which is lower than the criterion mean = 1.93. This entails that the conflict between farmers and herdsmen has affected food production adversely in Taraba State. The highest proportion of each of the item showed that 178

(46.2%) of the respondents strongly disagreed to the notion that the struggle over land between farmers and herdsmen has not affected any production in Taraba State. Also, 167(43.4%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that the conflict between farmers and herdsmen has not affected cattle rearing so much in Taraba State.

*Research Question 2:* To what extent did farmers and herders conflict affect accessibility to food supply in Taraba State?

Table 3 Effect of farmers and herders' conflict on accessibility to food supply in Taraba State

SN	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	SD	Decision
1	The violent clashes between farmers and herders have greatly denied the people of Taraba State access to enough food supply.	111(28.8)	177(46.0)	20(5.2)	77(20.0)	2.84	±1.06	Agreed
2	The farmers food crops destroyed during dispute with herdsmen is not so much that the people in the state cannot have access to quality food supply	50(13.0)	36(9.4)	156(40.5)	143(37.1)	1.98	±.99	Disagreed
3	Violent attacks between farmers and herdsmen is responsible for lack of access to safe water, fish pond, and agricultural needs.	161(41.8)	134(34.8)	36(9.4)	54(14.0)	3.04	±1.04	Agreed
	Grand mean					2.62	±1.04	Disagreed

Table 3 displays the responses derived from the respondents in Taraba State on the farmers and herders' conflict on accessibility to food supply in Taraba State. From the table, it was observed that the respondents agreed to most of the items enumerated. Based on the responses, a grand mean = 2.62 was derived which is above than the criterion mean = 2.5. This entails that the emergence farmers and herders' conflict had affected accessibility to food supply in Taraba State between 2007-2018. The highest proportion of each of the item showed that 161 (41.8%) of the respondents strongly agreed to the

item which says that violent attacks between farmers and herdsmen is responsible for lack of access to safety water, fish pond, and agricultural needs, whilst 54(14.0%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that violent attacks between farmers and herdsmen is responsible for lack of access to safe water, fish pond, and agricultural needs.

*Research Question 3:* What has been the effort of the state government towards resolving the conflicts between herders and farmers in Taraba State?

Table 4: Effort of the state government to resolving farmers and herders' conflict in Taraba State

SN	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	SD	Decision
1	The state government use of military and other security personnel has helped to manage conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Taraba State.	208(54.0)	107(26.3)	14(3.6)	56(14.5)	3.21	±1.06	Agreed
2	The government use of state laws (anti-grazing law 2018) is not capable of resolving the farmer herders' conflict in Taraba State	43(11.2)	47(12.2)	159(41.3)	136(35.3)	1.99	±.96	Disagreed

3	The engagement of religious leaders by the government is an effective approach towards resolving the conflicts between farmers and herdsmen	94(24.4)	131(34.0)	47(12.2)	113(29.4)	2.54	±1.15	Agreed
Grand mean						2.58	±1.06	Agreed

Table 4 shows the responses derived from the respondents in Taraba State on the Effort of the state government towards resolving farmers and herders' conflict in Taraba State. From the table, it was observed that the respondents agreed to most of the items enumerated. Based on the responses, a grand mean = 2.58 was derived which is greater than the criterion mean = 2.5. This entails that the state government have initiated measures to curb the clashes between farmers and herdsmen in the state, although most of the procedures put in place by the government are reactive measures and not proactive measures. The highest proportion of each of the item showed that 208 (54.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the state government use of military and other security personnel has helped to manage conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Taraba State. Also, 131(34.0%) of the respondents agreed that the engagement of religious leaders by the government is an effective approach towards resolving the conflicts between farmers and herdsmen.

*Testing of Hypotheses*

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant relationship between farmers and herdsmen conflicts, and inadequate food production in Taraba State

Table 6: Relationship between farmers and herdsmen conflict, and inadequate food production in Taraba State

Correlations				
		Farmers and Herdsmen conflict	Inadequate food production	Decision
Farmers and Herdsmen conflict	Pearson Correlation	1	.008	Rejected
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.009	
	N	385	385	
Inadequate food production	Pearson Correlation	.008	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009		
	N	385	385	

\*S= Significant p<0.05

The result from SPSS analysis, shows the relationship between farmers and herdsmen conflict and inadequate food supply in Taraba State. Pearson correlation coefficient demonstrates a weak positive relationship between the two variables r=.008, indicating that there exists a weak positive relationship between farmers and herdsmen conflict and inadequate food supply in Taraba State. Furthermore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between farmers and herdsmen conflicts, and inadequate food production in Taraba State was rejected and the alternate hypothesis upheld [(P =.009) p<0.05].

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant relationship between farmers and herdsmen conflicts, and inaccessibility to food supply in Taraba State

Table 7: Relationship between farmers and herdsmen conflict and Inaccessibility to food in Taraba State

Correlations				
		Farmers and Herdsmen conflict	Inaccessibility to food	Decision
Farmers and Herdsmen conflict	Pearson Correlation	1	-.390	Rejected
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N	385	385	
Inaccessibility to food	Pearson Correlation	-.390	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	385	385	

\*S= Significant p<0.05

The result in table 7, shows the relationship between farmers and herdsmen conflict and inaccessibility to food in Taraba State. Pearson correlation coefficient demonstrates a weak negative relationship between the two variables r=-.390, indicating that there exists a weak negative relationship between farmers and herdsmen conflict, and inaccessibility to food in Taraba State. Furthermore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between farmers and herdsmen conflicts, and inaccessibility to food in Taraba State was rejected and the alternate hypothesis upheld [(P =.000) p<0.05].

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant relationship between farmers and herdsmen conflicts, and ineffective government response approaches in Taraba State

Table 8: Relationship between farmers and herdsmen conflict, and ineffective government response approaches in Taraba State

Correlations				
		Farmers and Herdsmen conflict	Government response approaches	Decision
Farmers and Herdsmen conflict	Pearson Correlation	1	-.181	Rejected
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N	385	385	
Government response approaches	Pearson Correlation	-.181	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	385	385	

\*S= Significant p<0.05



The result from table 8, shows the relationship between farmers and herdsmen conflict and ineffective government response approaches in Taraba State. Pearson correlation coefficient demonstrates a weak negative relationship between the two variables  $r = -.181$ , indicating that there exists a weak negative relationship between farmers and herdsmen conflict and ineffective government response approaches in Taraba State. Furthermore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between farmers and herdsmen conflicts, and ineffective government response approaches in Taraba State was rejected and the alternate hypothesis upheld [( $P = .000$ )  $p < 0.05$ ].

## VI. CONCLUSION

From the findings, socio-economic variables such as land resources have significant implication on the conflict. This is because of the fact that farming and rearing of animals are predominantly carried out by middle aged people who are energetic and therefore more willing to participate in violent conflict than the elderly persons. Also, a very low level of formal education is peculiar to the herder respondents, which is not healthy situation with regard to the conflict. This is because educated people are more likely to bring better understanding to issues than uneducated people. Despite the importance of education, many of the respondents have not embraced it. The major immediate causes of this conflict are crop damage and land environment.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. The government should ensure that members of both farmers and herder communities enjoy their human rights, including rights to land, water and pasture, which are at the heat of the crisis.
2. As it has been identified as a major issue in community food assessment done, farmers need to be involved in asset building projects by the accumulation of funds to argument income to buy food and support their productivities and expenses. The institution of viable cooperatives comes to play in this regard where farms can save and possibly obtain loans from their podded resources.
3. Given the nature of conflict and food crisis in the area, there is need for government to intervene in food production matters. Production inputs such as fertilizer, herbicides, pesticides and improved crops should be provided through institutional sources in good time, in enough quantities and affordable costs.
4. Farmers whose crops fields were destroyed should be assisted with compensation to enable them rebuild their farms. They should be encouraged to embrace improve food production technologies in line with complimentary practices in order their raise their current level of production and of course, their access to food for family consumption. This is because a

large part of food consumption of farm household is non-production. Therefore, any attempt to improve production will directly and positively affect the amount of food available to farmers, increasing their chances of food security.

5. Government should provide security to tackle criminality in the area. Jobs and skills should be provided in order to engage them and dissuade from criminal tendencies.
6. There is need to assist farmers with zero invest credit facilities, grants and non-cash subsidies such as free hybrid food crops seedlings, channels, pesticides to boost food production.

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