

# Correlation between Drivers of Belligerent Fulani Herders' Criminality and the Probability of Dying in Plateau State, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

This paper examined the probability of dying by the crimes of belligerent Fulani herders in Plateau State, Nigeria. The study adopted the Rational Choice theoretical framework of analysis. The study was conducted in Plateau State, Nigeria, with a 400-person sample size, and data were collected using a survey method. The findings revealed a correlation between the factors that led belligerent Fulani herders in Plateau State to conduct crimes and differences in the likelihood of dying due to those factors. This article recommended: the deradicalization of primordial religious ideologies, the return of displaced people, and the revision of grazing reserve law.

**Keywords** – Belligerent Fulani Herders; Criminality; Fulanization; Jihad; Land-grabbing; Proliferation of SALW

## INTRODUCTION

The Fulani herders' crimes are not contemporary as they predate the existence of many modern African countries, particularly nation-states in West Africa and the Sahel region – like Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, and Guinea. The motivations of Fulani insurgency globally from times past have been over the control of land resources and Fulanization, systematically done through the replacement of other existing Governments or authorities with the Caliphate system (Enor & Magor, 2020). In Plateau state, the center of the Middle Belt, Nigeria, the increased criminality has profited from the tremendous rise in ethnic animosity and violence between the Plateau people and herders for roughly 20 years (Bagu & Smith, 2017).

Belligerence is considered heroic and noble in some climes (Navera, 2020). Quintessentially, the Fulani enshrined it in their fundamental philosophy of heroism (Musa, 2018). Belligerence is two folds; a belligerent person could be perceived as an aggressor, and another, a freedom fighter (Emmanuel, 2021). As a result, belligerent pomposity may be an ideology that values coercion, including acts of violence against the helpless in a given society, for some reasons (Navera, 2020; Zaini & Abdul, 2020). In 2015, the Global Terrorism Index classified the belligerent Fulani herders as the fourth deadliest terrorist group in the world (Chinwokwu, 2019). It is important to note that Plateau State was one of the most peaceful states in Nigeria (Obaje, 2018; Okoro & Avosetinyen, 2018) until 2001, when violent conflict erupted between the majority Christian indigenes and majority Muslim Fulani/Hausa settlers.

As claimed by the Fulani herders' leadership, the justification for these onslaughts is that the Government of Nigeria failed to yield to their demands to recover demarcated grazing routes and reserves, provide water for their livestock, and security against cattle rustlers. (Ekpo & Tobi, 2019). On the other hand, the Plateau

people and other Nigerian farmers often claimed that the Nigerian Government did not adequately resolve the cause of their clashes with the Fulani herders, especially when the herders killed them and destroyed their farms. In the quest for self-help, some Fulani became belligerent in Nigeria and commenced acts of criminality in Nigeria, especially in Plateau State. These crimes carried out by the belligerent Fulani herders manifest themselves in the loss of lives and properties, community attacks, genocide, terrorism, banditry, rape, arson, kidnapping of individuals or group(s) of individuals like school children, miners, passengers, and the forceful displacement of the indigenes from their ancestral lands(Anaele, 2020b).

Plateau State has the slogan: home of peace and tourism(Segun & Jegede, 2013); it was peaceful until 2001 (Obaje, 2018; Okoro & Avosetinyen, 2018) when a young woman was denied passage on a street in Jos during a Muslims Friday prayer (Musa, 2018). Since 2001, Plateau State has had occasional pockets of ethnoreligious clashes(Yusha’u et al., 2020). Farmers (mostly indigenes) and herders (mostly Fulani) were dissatisfied with the Government’s handling of the conflicts (Danladi & Sule, 2019; Musa, 2018). The Government’s inability to manage the conflict propels some aggrieved herders to resort to criminality: killing, kidnapping, and land-grabbing, as a means of self-help (Yusha’u et al., 2020). In 2010, the operations of the belligerent Fulani herders became clear through open-grazing, damaging farm products, driving farmers from their communities, and killing farmers (Okanlawon, 2019).

On the other hand, the indigenous people of Plateau State accuse the Federal Government of complicity in the violent Fulani herders’ forceful taking over of their farms and communities (Lenshie & Jacob, 2020). The lawlessness advanced by aggressive Fulani herders transformed into full-blown criminality motivated by land-grabbing(Ekpo & Tobi, 2019; Ezirigwe, 2021; Li, 2018) and the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (Afolabi, 2020; Dismas, 2020). On March 7, 2010, the belligerent Fulani herders maimed over 500 indigene farmers in one night and destroyed property worth hundreds of millions of Naira in Dogo-Nahawa, Jos South LGA(R. E. Okoro & Avosetinyen, 2018). On July 8, 2012, the Fulaniherders criminals killed 52 and over 200 the next day during the burial of the 52 deaths in Ropp and Rinji of Barkin Ladi LGA. Besides, the belligerent Fulaniherders’ criminality claimed thousands of lives and displaced more than 62,000 people from their indigenous communities in Plateau State (Okoro & Avosetinyen, 2018). Table 1 below shows some deaths recorded due to the Fulani herders’ criminality in Plateau State.

Table 1: List of deaths by Belligerent Fulani herders’ criminals in Plateau State from 2010 to February 2022

Date	Place/LGA	Deaths	Source
Jan.-Dec. 2010	Kuru Karama and Dogo Nahawa/Jos South	? 857	Enyinnaya (2019)
27/11/2011	Barkin Ladi/Barkin Ladi	39	Enyinnaya (2019)
08/07/2012	Rinji and Ropp/Barkin Ladi	252	Obateru & Umoru (2012)
08/07/2012	Bachit/Riyom	52	Duke & Agbaji (2020)
08/04/2013	Barkin Ladi/Barkin Ladi	20	Anaele (2020)
08/04/2013	Bokkos/Bokkos	22	Anaele (2020)
08/04/2013	Matol and Mangu/Mangu	20	Anaele (2020)
03/06/2013	Barkin Ladi/Barkin Ladi	8	Anaele (2020)
03/06/2013	Gwande/Bokkos	8	Anaele (2020)
05/03/2014	Rim/Riyom	100	Duke & Agbaji (2020)
0//05/2015	Riyom Local Government	10	International Crisis Group (2019)
08/03/2017	Nzharuvo/Bassa	11	International Crisis Group (2019)
15/10/2017	Nkyie Dohrow/Bassa	60	Duke & Agbaji (2020)

20/01/2018	Majiankhai/Barkin Ladi	1	International Crisis Group (2019)
24/01/2018	Bokkos/Bokkos	7	Anaele (2020)
24/01/2018	Hukke/Bassa	8	Ebeku (2018)
26/01/2018	Huke/Bassa	3	Ebeku (2018)
12/03/2018	Dundu, Kwall/Bassa	25	Ebeku (2018)
20/01/2018	Maiyanga/Bassa	1	Duke & Agbaji (2020)
26/01/2018	Hukke/Bassa	3	Anaele (2020)
28/01/2018	Miango/Bassa	2	Ebeku (2018)
08/03/2018	Miango/Bassa	5	Ebeku (2018)
08/03/2018	Gada/Riyom	6	Duke & Agbaji (2020)
08/03/2018	Izharuvo /Bassa	11	Okoro (2020)
13/03/2018	Dundu village, Kwall/Bassa	25	International Crisis Group (2019)
14/03/2018	Rafiki village/Bassa	2 Soldiers	Ebeku (2018)
14/03/2018	Miango/Bassa	4 Soldiers	Ebeku (2018)
08/04/2018	Miango/Bassa	4	International Crisis Group (2019)
18/04/2018	Jebbu-Miango/Bassa	4	Ebeku (2018)
23/06/2018	Gashish villages/Barkin Ladi	? 150	Anaele (2020)
25/06/2018	11 communities of Jos south, Riyom, and Barkin Ladi	?200	“
02/10/2018	Jol Village/Barkin Ladi	14	Ebeku (2018)
03/10/2018	Ariri Miango/Bassa	19	Ebeku (2018)
27/05/2019	Dangwal/Jos South	6	Anaele (2020)
27/01/2020	Kurra-falls/Barkin Ladi	17	European Asylum Support (2021)
01/04/2020	Ancha/Bassa	3	European Asylum Support (2021)
08/04/2020	Miango	4	European Asylum Support (2021)
14/04/2020	Hura, Kwall/Bassa	9	European Asylum Support (2021)
05/05/2020	Ghana Ropp/Barkin Ladi	4	European Asylum Support (2021)
24/09/2020	Kaduna-Vom/Jos South	5	European Asylum Support (2021)
05/10/2020	Wereng/Riyom	6	European Asylum Support (2021)
06/10/2020	Ancha/Bassa	2	European Asylum Support (2021)
01/12/2020	Gwa-pana/Jos South	3	European Asylum Support (2021)
03/02/2021	Dutsen-Kura/Bassa	12	European Asylum Support (2021)

07/02/2021	Ri-Bakwa, Miango/Bassa	3	European Asylum Support (2021)
07/02/2021	Zirshe, Miango/Bassa	1	European Asylum Support (2021)

Source: Researcher’s compilation, 2021

The drivers of the aggressive Fulani herders’ criminality studied in this paper – among many others – are Land-grabbing, Jihad/Fulanization, and the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). Therefore, this paper aims to achieve two objectives. Firstly, to assess the effects of crime committed by the belligerent Fulani herders. The second objective is to investigate the connection between each driver of the belligerent Fulani herders’ acts of criminality and the frequency of death caused if motivated by a particular driver in Plateau State, Nigeria.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Among the biggest threats to Nigeria’s security is the belligerent Fulani herders’ criminality; others include Boko Haram and banditry(Nwankwo, Ike, Officha, Obi & Peters, 2019). Belligerence rhetoric strengthens support for the philosophy of rescuing society from the ills surrounding it, whether real or imagined (Navera, 2020). Often, the public expresses its need for revenge against those who have mistreated them through aggression; it is bloodthirsty, elevates the self while demeaning the other, and elevates those who offer rapid relief as heroes (Navera, 2020). When disputes come from organized groups like the Fulani (Olonade, George, Imhonopi, Egharevba & Kasa, 2022), they are considered war crimes committed during peacetime. The conflict might be seen as a source of danger and resentment since they include the unlawful use of force or violence against an outsider.(Putra, 2020). This article likened the criminality committed by the belligerent Fulani herders to terrorism, which originates from a sovereign government and means intimidating actions carried out with the support of an established government against a segment of its population, institutions, or another foreign government.

The violent Fulani herders’ criminality in Plateau State, especially those perpetrated by the Bororo Fulani ethnic extraction, is about land-grabbing, as they claim non-representation in the Nigerian political scene Awotokun, Nwozor & Olarinwaju (2020). The Bororo of the Fulani ethnic group has the most quest for land-grabbing because they are seldom represented on the Nigerian political scene. This category of belligerent Fulani herders took over the Plateau people’s ancestral lands and annihilated them. The Plateau people have repeatedly pleaded with the Federal Government of Nigeria to end the hostilities, but the Government’s efforts had little to no success.

It is concerning that the violent Fulani herders continue to justify their act of land land-grabbing in Plateau State and other parts of the country on farmers’ encroachment on their grazing reserves (Shehu, 2018). In the 1960s, the Nigerian Northern State promulgated “the Northern Region Grazing Reserve Law of 1965”(Johnson-Odusanya, 2019; Kwaja & Ademola-Adelehin, 2018),establishing grazing reserves and transhuman routes.

However, development annexed these reserves and the transhuman routes meant for the passage of animals(Danladi & Sule, 2019). Consequently, belligerent Fulani herders claimed that the inability of the Government to implement and sustain the grazing reserves and the transhuman routes is a major cause of their hostility; out of 4,125 grazing reserves, only 1,872 are in use, while development and farming activities overtake the remaining 2,253(Danladi & Sule, 2019).

Jihad/Fulanization of Nigeria is another driving factor for the belligerent Fulani herders ‘criminality in Plateau State, Nigeria. The genealogy of the concept of Fulanization is that the root word is “Fulani,” and

the suffix “ize” means to convert to or provide a specific character or form (Taiwo & Donte, 2020). Therefore, Fulanization in this context means to displace and replace other cultures with that of the Fulani; it means also to bring other people into the Fulani people’s domination, control, and influence. The former Head of State, and the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, General Olusegun Obasanjo, made the concept famous when he alarmed in 2019 that “Boko Haram is for West African Fulanization, “African Islamization” (Onifade & Kolade, 2020; Sahara Reporters, 2019).

The Fulanization concept is intertwined with Jihad (Adichie & Justice, 2021; Allison, 2021). Allison argued that the unhealthy relationships that climaxed Violent Fulani herders’ criminal attacks in Nigeria could be traced to the negative turnarounds between the Fulani and the Hausa tribes. These ethnic nationalities lived peacefully until Usman Dan-Fodio waged his Jihad of 1804 that brought about the Fulani’s dominance, control, and the installation of Emirs (of only Fulani descent) in all the Fulani conquered regions of the regions in Nigeria (Anaele, 2020a; Duruji, 2012; Okanlawon, 2019; Tukur, 2018). Even after the 1804 Jihad, the Fulani, in the quest for expansion, brought their Fulanization agenda nationally through the Northern Nigerian Government by establishing cattle routes and grazing areas.

There is agreement among researchers that the proliferation of SALW is one of the drivers of criminality committed by the hostile Fulani herders in Nigeria (Afolabi, 2020; Clarke, 2020; Sambo, Sule, Deribe & Ahmed, 2020; Sule, Mikail & Yahaya, 2020b). About a 640 million SALWS were estimated to be in circulation globally, 100 million in Africa, and a 30 million in Sub-Saharan Africa (Olamide & Emmanuel, 2018). Furthermore, 50% of these SALWS were in the hands of civilians (Genyi, 2017). Besides, Boko Haram (BH), Islamic State of West African province (ISWAP), banditry, weak governance, insurrection, violent electoral conflict, communal conflicts, and militancy are some factors that aggravated the proliferation of SALW in Nigeria (Afolabi, 2020). Other global factors responsible for the increase in SALW are the Arab Spring and the globalization of Islamic Fundamentalism (Aborhey, 2019; Nelson et al., 2019).

Some research discovered that the armorers of the Nigerian military and security agencies engaged in illicit activities by stealing or selling the State’s fire (arms) to criminals (Sambo et al., 2020). For instance, the Nigeria Police reported the missing 1,748,459 firearms and ammunition (Abolade, 2022); the assertion is that criminal groups in Nigeria are surviving on the stolen weapons and ammunition (Reinl, 2019). Again, the producing countries of SALW have the quest for easy profit and money-making, which encourage the illegal supply of SALW to Africa and other vulnerable countries (Sambo et al., 2020). The producing SALW producing countries do not care about the users’ intent because they are making billions of dollars from their business. Still, some scholars observed that the volatile nature of African politics is another causal factor for the circulation of SALW. The politicians sponsor ethnic militias and thugs by arming them with weapons to help them win elections by unleashing violence and terror to intimidate their opposition (Sambo et al., 2020). The aftermath of thuggery after polls is that it becomes impossible for the politicians to mop up the arms in the hands of their thugs. Consequently, the political thugs continue using the weapons for illegal operations, including banditry, kidnappings, burglary, ethnic cleansing, and robbery, as obtainable in many African states today (UN Institute for Disarmament Research, 2008) Sambo et al. (2020).

## **RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY OF CRIME**

This study employed the Rational Choice Theory by Stein and Raymond in 1967, one of the deterrence theories of crime (Mjoset, 2001; Okwara, 2021). It originates from the field of economics (Ritzer, 2011). The scholars investigated the economic effects of crime. According to the theorists, criminals calculate the desired outcome of their actions as they work toward their predetermined goal(s) before committing them (Ahmad, Hussain, Akbar & Rehman, 2022; Nyongesa, 2019). Some rationalist theorists (Lohmann, 2008) highlight that the theory predicts the outcome and pattern of choices rather than describing the process. They contend that before carrying out an attack, criminals often do “cost-benefit analysis and

restricted utility maximization.” The argument that terrorists seek to minimize costs helps us understand the choices of weapons and personnel deployed in a terror attack (Nyongesa, 2019).

The belligerent Fulani herders are human beings who commit crimes by the reasoned ideology derived from primordial beliefs that they are meant to dominate (Anaele, 2020b; Sangare, 2019). Sometimes, people presumed the belligerent Fulani herders as inhumane and irrational. However, Rational Choice Theorists posit that criminals typically conduct a cost-benefit analysis and constrained utility maximization before attacking. The belligerent Fulani’s choice of lethal firearms for their attacks displays rationality to achieve maximum benefit. The connection between this theory of Rational Choice and the phenomenon under study is exuded in the belligerent Fulani herders weighed the benefit of attacking in Plateau State – taking over farmlands belonging to the indigenous people – and understood that the benefits outweighed the choice of no trading attacks in the State.

## METHODOLOGY

The data employed in the study were primary and secondary. The primary data were sourced through a survey on belligerent Fulani herders’ criminality in Plateau State, Nigeria. The survey method was conducted through the administration of questionnaire in four purposively selected Local Government Areas (LGAs) as they are the most affected by the violent Fulani herders crime: Barkin Ladi, Bassa, Jos-South, and Riyom; and the study population consisted of both the indigenes, Fulani, and other settlers of the selected LGAs of the State. The four chosen LGAs have a population of 1,059,500, and a sample size of 399.85 (approximately 400) was determined using Yamane Taro’s population size formula. Copies of the google forms questionnaire (find the questionnaire on this link: <https://forms.gle/tu96ZDwP85e8JsGu8>). The justification for using Google Forms in this study is that it changed the questionnaire’s coding from utterly manual to semi-automatic, decreasing the possibility of mistakes. Because the intended number of copies (400) of the questionnaire was tracked in real-time, the google forms also lessened, if not eliminated, the challenge of not returning or collecting copies of the questionnaire.

Forty-one (41) Federal Electoral Wards (FEWs) are in the four selected LGAs for this study. Thirty-two (32) FEWs were selected out of the 41 FEWs for the questionnaire administration. Copies of the questionnaire were administered to eight FEWs in each of the four selected LGAs. However, these FEWs nominated for dispensing the questionnaire were within the selected LGAs. Copies of the questionnaire were administered in five FEWs of each of the four LGAs, culminating in 20 FEWs, as mentioned earlier. Twenty (20) copies of the questionnaire to a FEW ( $100/5 = 20$ ). The FEWs distributions according to the LGAs are at this moment listed, First, Barkin Ladi LGA – Gindin Akwati FEW, Marit/Mazat FEW, Gassa/Sho FEW, Heipang FEW, and Kapkwis FEW. Second, Bassa LGA – Gabia FEW, Kimakpa FEW, Ta’agbe FEW, Tahu FEW, and Zobwo FEW. Third, Jos South LGA – DuFEW, Gyel ‘B’ FEW, Shen FEW, and Vwang FEW. Fourth, Riyom LGA – Attakar FEW, Sopp FEW, Ta-hoss FEW, and Riyom FEW.

The choice of eight FEWs in each of the identified LGAs was influenced by the sample size of 100 for each LGA of the State under study. Therefore, it was easier for the researcher to manage 20 copies of the questionnaire in a FEW. In addition, distributing a maximum of 20 or fewer copies of the questionnaire in a FEW permitted broader coverage of the questionnaire administration. Hence diverse views were enhanced on the subject matter. The respondents were purposefully chosen for the survey based on their maturity age in Nigeria, which is 18 years and more, and their degree of knowledge on the topic under investigation.

The data were analyzed using the International Business Machine (IBM) Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25 and presented through cross-tabulation. The probability of dying based on the drivers of the hostile Fulani herders’ criminality was measured using binary logistic regression analysis. Secondary data from journal articles, newspapers, and other literature were also reviewed, especially on the drivers of belligerent Fulanicriminality and their effects in Plateau State, Nigeria. The justification for

obtaining secondary data is to enable access to the rich repository of records on the Fulani herders' criminality in Plateau State.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Effects of the Belligerent Fulani herders' Criminality in Plateau State

The first goal of this paper is to assess the effects of the criminality committed by the belligerent Fulani herdsmen.

Table 2: Effects of the Belligerent Fulani Herders' Criminality

Suggested Effects	Ranked	Yes	No	Total
Loss of lives and property	1 <sup>st</sup>	386 (96.5%)	14 (3.5%)	400 (100%)
Displacement of people to IDPs	2 <sup>nd</sup>	378 (94.5%)	22 (5.5%)	400 (100%)
Food insecurity	3 <sup>rd</sup>	360 (90.0%)	40 (10.0%)	400 (100%)
Schools closure	4 <sup>th</sup>	330 (82.5%)	70 (17.5%)	400 (100%)
Land-grabbing	5 <sup>th</sup>	289 (72.2%)	111 (27.8%)	400 (100%)
Cattle rustling	6 <sup>th</sup>	246 (61.5%)	154 (38.5%)	400 (100%)
Kidnapping	7 <sup>th</sup>	240 (60.0%)	160 (40.0%)	400 (100%)
Ethnic conflict	8 <sup>th</sup>	235 (58.8%)	165 (41.3%)	400 (100%)
Land dispute	9 <sup>th</sup>	143 (35.8%)	257 (64.2%)	400 (100%)

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table 2 above shows the responses on the effects of the Fulani herders' attacks on Plateau State communities, ranked from highest to lowest. Almost all the respondents identified loss of lives and property as the first significant effect of Fulani herders' attacks on communities. The following considerable effect is the displacement of the people, who must leave their houses and run for their lives before finally settling at the Internally Displaced (IDP) camps where available. Food security (90.0%) and school closure (82.5%) are the subsequent significant identified effects of belligerent herders' criminality (Table 1). While 72.5% of the respondents indicated land-grabbing as a significant effect, cattle rustling and kidnapping were mentioned by relatively 60% (Table 2). More than half (58.8%) said yes to ethnic conflict as the significant effect, but only 35.8% indicated land dispute as part of the effect of criminality, as shown in Table 2 above.

It is important to iterate that other findings bolstered the respondents' assertion: in 2010, Fulani herders mercilessly murdered at least half a million people in three villages of Jos South and Barkin Ladi LGAs of Plateau State (Ikezue & Ezeah, 2017). The next highest-ranked effects are IDP (Anene, Iyala & Nlemchukwu, 2020; Egbuagu, Ugwu & Ibeawuchi, 2018; Ezeonwuka & Oluchukwu, 2018), food insecurity (Alao, Shaibume, Taiwo, Alao & Ogunwemimo, 2019; Mac-Ozigbo, 2021; Okoro, 2020); school closure (Okoli & Ogayi, 2018; UNICEF, 2019); land-grabbing (Ahmadu & Ayuba, 2018); cattle rustling (Nwankwo, 2021); kidnapping (Abodunrin et al., 2020; Olayiwola, 2019), ethnic conflict (Chiluwa & Chiluwa, 2022; Ciboh, 2017; Cinjel, Joseph & Ayeni, 2020; Ezemenaka & Ekumaoko, 2018), and land dispute (Njoku, 2018).

Table 3: The Impact of the Belligerent Fulani Herders' Criminality

Impact of the attack	Frequency	Percent
Very high	324	81.0
High	76	19.0

<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.0</b>
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Source: Field survey, 2021

Table 3 above shows the impact levels of the Fulani herders’ criminality on Plateau State’s communities. The activities of the belligerent Fulani herders in Plateau state dramatically impacted the lives and livelihood of the Plateau people. Eighty-one percent of respondents indicated that the effect was very high, while 19.0% considered it relatively high. No respondent felt the impact as low. Overall, the primary data collated from the respondents validated other research findings on the adverse effects of the criminality perpetrated by hostile Fulani herders in Plateau State, thus: negatively impacting the economy and social life and reducing food security (Obi, Uzochukwu, Chukwuemeka & Domnic, 2018), and adversely affecting the lives and livelihood of Plateau State dwellers (Agbu, Musa & Zhema, 2020).

**Drivers of the Belligerent Fulani Herders Criminality on the Probability of Dying in Plateau State**

The second objective of this study is to analyze the likelihood of death frequency if the criminality is motivated by a particular driver of crime committed by the violent Fulani herders in Plateau State. It specifically provided insights on the frequency of death (Y) and if it could be predicted by the presence or absence of any of the drivers of the criminality (X).

Below is a typical binary logistic model for the analysis:

$$\text{Logit (Y)} = \ln \frac{\pi}{(1 - \pi)} = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_n X_n$$

Where π is the probability of (**dependent variable**), α is the constant value, and Y= outcome of a variable of interest (death). The X is the driver of the Fulani herders’ criminality (as indicated in this study).

Table 4: Correlation between the drivers of Belligerence and the Probability of Dying in Plateau State

<b>Drivers of the Criminality</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>SE.</b>	<b>Wald</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Exp(B)</b>	<b>95% CI</b>
No (RC)						
Land-grabbing (Yes)	0.736	0.436	2.851	0.091	2.088	0.89-4.91
No (RC)						
Jihad/Fulanisation (Yes)	1.494	0.339	19.400	0.000	4.454	2.29-8.66
No (RC)						
Proliferation of SALW (Yes)	0.862	0.281	9.410	0.002	2.367	1.36-4.11
No (RC)						
Other drivers (Yes)	0.006	0.305	0.000	0.983	1.006	0.55-1.83

Source: Field survey, 2021

The result in Table 4 indicated that the drivers of the belligerent Fulani herders’ aggression a repositively related to the likelihood of death in Plateau State as shown in the correlation values (Beta or β) of land-grabbing (0.736), Jihad/Fulanization (1.494), the proliferation of SALW (0.862), and other forms of criminality (0.006) in Table 4.



## Land-grabbing and the Probability of Causing Death in Plateau State

The Exp(B) indicated that when the belligerent Fulani herders' act of criminality is motivated by land-grabbing, there will be 2.088 times more likely to lose lives (Table 4). Although the P-value of 0.091 indicated no statistically significant relationship between land-grabbing and the frequency of aggressive Fulani herders' criminally-induced death in Plateau State. The finding is supported by the fact that the massacre of more than 200 Berom in Plateau State under Governor Jonah Jang was motivated by a desire to acquire land (Ebeku, 2018) as the Fulani displaced Beroms from their villages and inhabited them. The killing was also characterized as genocide (Ebeku, 2018; Nanlong, 2019), yet the Government has not done enough to return the Plateau people to their ancestral homes. In a press release, Dr. Soja Bewarang, the President of the Plateau State chapter of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), stated that the indigenous people of Plateau State are particularly concerned about the country's pervasive insecurity (Cinjel et al., 2020). The displaced Plateau people are unhappy with the Government's conflict resolution mechanisms (Dickson et al., 2019). Significantly, the daily attacks and killings in their communities by armed Fulani herders, bandits, and criminals, despite massive investments in security agencies. The criminals are permitted to go free on purpose (Ebeku, 2018). It is even more concerning that in 2018, nearly 6000 people were killed in various attacks, mainly in the Northern and Middle Belt regions when Nigeria was not at war. There is no question that the primary goal of these belligerent attacks is ethnic cleansing, land grabs, and the forcible removal of Christian locals from their ancient lands and history (Nwankwo et al., 2019).

The Middle Belt Forum champions the interest of North-central Nigeria – including Plateau State – where the violent Fulani herders' criminality is mainly affected, arguing that the hostile attacks on the middle belt by the belligerent Fulani criminals are acts of Jihad/Fulanization (Oluka, Ativie & Efeosa-Temple, 2019). They supported their argument by citing the Government's inaction in ending the criminality, instead emphasizing the Fulani criminal elements. Again Nigerian Government's policies, like cattle colonies, deliberately encourage the importation of the Fulani from other parts of Africa to resettle them in Nigeria, especially in the North-central part of the country (Ekpo & Tobi, 2019). The act of Fulani importation and resettlement in the North-central is to alter its political, social, and economic demography. Again, President Muhammadu Buhari's administration is perceived as promoting a "Fulanisation" program (Meek, 2019). Furthermore, the Fulani cultural and ideological superiority buttresses land-grabbing (Nwofor & Obasi, 2020). As a result, many people have been slain, and millions of people have been displaced by armed Fulani land-grabbers, resulting in food insecurity, unemployment, poverty, marginalization, and growing intercommunal and interethnic violence.

## Jihad/Fulanization and the Probability of Causing Death in Plateau State

According to Exp(B) in Table 4, there will be a probability of 4.454 times more deaths to be recorded in Plateau State when the driver of the aggressive Fulani herders' criminality is Jihad/Fulanization. The statistic ( $\beta = 1.494$ ,  $p = 0.000$ , 95% CI [2.29-8.66]) in Table 4 shows a statistically significant relationship between Jihad/Fulanization and the chances of death during Fulani herders' criminal attacks is 4.454 more in Plateau State. It is argued that Jihadist and Fulanization movements play a profound role in Islam, especially the radical one (Aamoum, 2019). Most Islamic fundamentalists and radical Islamic groups (Al-Qaeda, ISIS, and BH) have their ideologies enshrined in "bello ergo sum (I fight therefore I exist)" to make themselves relevant in their Jihadist movements (Aamoum, 2019).

Contrary to the religious narrative that Jihad and Islamic fundamentalism doctrines support extremists' lawlessness, UNDP interviewed 350 extremists detained in Nigeria, Uganda, Somalia, Niger, Cameroon, and Kenya. The jihadist and Islamic fundamentalists claimed that their long periods of deprivation caused by their failed states, rather than their religious beliefs, are what drives them (Ojo, 2020). In the same study, 78% of extremists lack trust in state security organizations and their elected officials.

Citing examples of religious fundamentalism-induced conflicts and crimes in Africa and Nigeria, the belligerent Fulani herders' criminality trajectories include the Jihad by Islamic crusaders in the 11th to 14th centuries (Enor et al., 2019). It also consists of the Sori and Karonke Ali in Guinea (the 1720s), Usman Danfodio in Northern Nigeria (1804), Seku Ahmadu in Mali (1818), and the radical Fulani herders terrorist organization (2015) also in Mali Enor et al.. These organizations claimed that the year 2015 was the start of an increase in herders attacks throughout West Africa, particularly in Nigeria. The pomposity of the Fulani herders organizations: the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders' Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) and the Miyetti Allah Kautol Hore Association of Nigeria (MAKHAN) are examples of the dangerous situation in Nigeria (Onifade & Kolade, 2020).

In addition, the former military Head of State and a former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, wrote an open letter to President Muhammadu Buhari, which gave more insight into the alleged Fulanization of not only Nigeria but the African continent (Okanlawon, 2019). The unfortunate criminality is perceived as a "Fulani" threat by the Fulani elite in different parts of the country. However, many Nigerians and non-Nigerians who are friends of Nigeria attach vicarious responsibility to the Fulani elite and the extant Nigerian President.

### **The Proliferation of SALW and the Probability of Dying in Plateau State**

The statistic ( $\beta = 0.862$ ,  $p \leq 0.001$ , 95% CI [1.36-4.11]) in Table 4 above shows that the proliferation of SALW has a statistically significant relationship with the likelihood of death in Plateau State. It further shows that when the proliferation of SALW drives the belligerent Fulani criminals in Plateau State, the possibility of dying is 2.367 more likely to occur. The Nigerian weak immigration laws and porous borders are some causes of the increase in SALW: Alhaji Ibrahim Abdullahi, the Secretary-General of MACBAN, noted that Nigeria has porous borders, encouraging all kinds of people, especially from Cameroon, Niger, and Chad, to immigrate into Nigeria, thus posing severe challenges to the nation (Njoku, 2018). He, however, mentioned that the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) protocol on the nomadic trans-human movement made it easy for the Fulani herders to migrate unhindered into Nigeria from other West African countries. Thus, Professor Jerry Gana noted that the receding of Lake Chad and its subsequent effects had forced herders out of their domain, leading to incessant clashes between herders and their host communities (Adetiba, 2019; Erondu & Nwakanma, 2018).

Illicit trafficking and the theft of firearms belonging to individuals, states, or organizations contribute significantly to the emergence of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in Africa: Africa is one of the continents with oceans, porous land, and water borders, and widespread deserts, making it easier for weapons trafficking (Sambo et al., 2020). Furthermore, locally produced firearms also promote the illicit trafficking of arms, thereby increasing the spread of SALW in Nigeria. In the 1980s, the level of local arms production in Africa was minimal. Recently, with the emergence of sustained protracted ethnic militias, ethno-religious crises, armed rebel groups, criminal gangs, terrorists, and religious terrorists, local production of SALW skyrocketed, fueling armed conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa (Sambo et al., 2020).

Epitomizing the argument that the proliferation of SALW fuels the criminality committed by the hostile Fulani herders in Nigeria: Fulani herders were known for using herding staff; however, they transitioned to possessing lethal weapons to guard their cattle. The transition negates their traditional use of a stick to guide herds (Njoku, 2018). The herders' use of sophisticated arms and ammunition, such as AK 47, began in the 1980s when some political and business elite in the Northern Nigerian States invested in the cattle business. These businessmen became cattle oligarchs; they ab initio supplied lethal arms to their cattle caregivers for protection against the rampaging activities of cattle rustlers.

### **Other Drivers of the Belligerent Fulani Herders' Criminality and the Probability of dying**

In the case of other drivers for the belligerent Fulani herders' criminality, as not investigated in this study.

Plateau State would be 1.006 times more likely to experience death. The statistic ( $\beta = 0.006$ ,  $p = 0.983$ , 95% CI [0.55-1.83]) indicated no statistically significant relationship ( $p$ -value of 0.983) between other drivers of the hostile Fulani herders' criminality and the likelihood of recording death in Plateau State (Table 4).

A research found two precarious situations regarding the crimes perpetrated by the Fulani herders in Nigeria (Oshita, Alumona & Onuoha 2019). First, despite the Nigerian Government's assurances that it will ensure the safety of its citizens and bring justice to those responsible for the various heinous crimes, it failed to address internal security challenges. Quintessential is the diurnal increase in criminality by non-state groups like the herders and farmers conflict since the restoration of democracy in 1999. Second, the Nigerian State either lacks the capacity or the political will to effectively control the actions of armed non-state actors, particularly in the cases of BH, the Niger Delta Movement (MEND), and the criminal activity of the Fulani herders. The research finding further revealed that Fulani criminality becomes pervasive, if not omnipresent, diminishing the coercive power of the Nigerian State. As a result, Nigerians have cast doubt on the axiom that the State is the sole guarantor of peace and security. The repercussion of the above statement is the increasing criminality by armed non-state actors, including the belligerent Fulani herders criminals.

Another driver of the belligerent Fulani herders' criminality in Plateau State is the counter argument on whether the Government should execute the outdated policies of grazing land reserves – because development and population growth took over the grazing reserves. Either way, the policy is injurious to one of the parties in the contest. As such, it drives the criminally minded herders into criminality in Plateau State and Nigeria". The grazing reserve policy today, therefore, remains one of the most contending issues in the security questions in Nigeria. Apart from Plateau State, the Fulani criminality pervades Northern Nigeria – Nasarawa, Zamfara, Plateau, Jigawa, Katsina, Benue, and Kwara – tracked to the Jihadist movement of 1804 because, after the Jihad, the Fulani ceased power and control the Hausa and the multi-ethnic groups of the middle belt Nigeria (Allison, 2021; Kwaja & Ademola-Adelehin, 2018).

In examining the underlying reasons for the belligerent Fulani herders' crime in Plateau State, the purposeful attitude and behavior of the contending parties – the Plateau people and Fulani pastoralists – cannot be disregarded". For instance, pastoralists contaminate the water ponds of the indigenous people with their cattle. Similarly, farmers intentionally poison the water ponds with harmful insecticides to kill the livestock and prevent pastoralists from contaminating their water sources. Farmers burn forests to prevent pastoralists from getting grasses and fodder for their herds. Again, the Fulani herders often blame Farmers for blocking the 4,275,326 hectares of land in Nigeria carved for cattle routes and grazing reserves, gazetted under the National Grazing Reserve Law of 1965 (Ojukwu, Osuchukwu & Enemuoh, 2020; Okanlawon, 2019).

Global warming is another driver for the belligerent Fulani herders' criminality in Nigeria (H. J. Ahmadu & Ayuba, 2018; Genyi, 2017). Its effect pressures the struggle for scarce and highly contestable resources such as water and land between pastoralists and the people of Plateau State (Genyi, 2017). The Plateau people depend on subsistence farming while Fulani on cattle rearing. Consequently, the combination(s) of farming activities of the landowners, global warming, and desert encroachment resulted in the disappearance of grazing routes, culminating in the altercation between the indigenous farmers and the Fulani pastoralists in two ways. Firstly, the cramping of the soil by the cattle, thereby making the soil very hard and challenging to cultivate using traditional farming tools like a hoe. Secondly, the destruction of crops and farm produce affects the livelihood of the farmers, as survival is an inherent instinct of man.

According to some researchers, Dickson, Juliet, and Ibrahim, the hostile Fulani herders' crimes are also caused by poverty and poor governance Dickson, Juliet & Ibrahim (2019). In contrast, others identified religion and ethnicity as other causal factors of the belligerent Fulani herders' criminality in Plateau State (Igbokwe-Ibeto, Nnanji & Mac-Ozigbo 2021). They further noted that the founder of BH, Mohammed

Yusuf, preached two main ideas: Quarann forbids Western education and that it is a sin to work for the Government. Yusuf's group claimed to be the people committed to propagating Prophet Muhammed's teachings and Jihad or the Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-jihad. They countered the Modernization theory's position that with the increase in education and industrialization, societies would naturally transform the livelihood of the majority of its citizens, attenuating the potency of religious and ethnic ideologies prior held by ancient people. However, these ideologies in many African countries is reinforced as they are used to access society's scarce social and economic resources. These further vitiated the healthy coexistence and made ethnic and religious relationships harmful. Secondly, Fulani herders' criminality could be easily intertwined with religion because the Fulani herders' criminals in Nigeria are predominantly Muslims, while most of the victims are Christians(Ibrahim, 2020).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The effects of the belligerent Fulani herders' criminality found in this paper are loss of life and property; forced internal displacement; food insecurity; closure of schools; landgrabs; cattle rustling; kidnappings; ethnic strife; and land disputes. Although there was a correlation between the drivers of the crimes committed by the violent Fulani herders in Plateau State, the relationships between the likelihood of death in Plateau State when the crimes are motivated byland-grabbing and other drivers were not statistically significant. However, the probability of dying by the hostile Fulani herders' criminality was twice as high when the motive was land grabbing; four times higher when the driver was Jihad/Islamization; twice as high when motivated by the proliferation of SALW; and driven byfactors. Firstly, the relevant institution and authorities – like families, schools, churches, mosques, and social and main stream media–should discourage the primordial extremist ideologies of Jihad, Islamization, and Fulanization. Secondly, Plateau State Government should deliberately return the displaced and sacked people to their communities, as it will restore the people's confidence that one of their Government's roles is to protect them from crimes of aggression. Thirdly, the Government should be genuine in resolving the criminality of the belligerent Fulani herders by revising the 1965 Grazing Reserve Law, as development and population growth supplanted the reserved land. Lastly, the Nigerian Government should disavow any involvement in the criminal activity of the belligerent Fulani herders by not only arresting the bad actors in its security and military forces but also punishing them in accordance with its legal framework.

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