

Socio-economic Implications of Farmer-Herder Conflict in Nigeria: *Examining The Fulani-Agatu Crisis in Benue and Nasarawa States*

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Abstract

The conflict between sedentary farmers and transhuman pastoralists in Nigeria is a recurring phenomenon. In recent times, the conflict has taken a very dangerous dimension resulting in colossal loss of lives, wanton destruction of properties and displacement of a great number of individuals in the country. This ugly situation despite the governmental responses remains unabated. The study therefore, evaluates the Fulani-Agatu conflict in Benue and Nasarawa States by carefully ascertaining the extent to which the conflict affects socio-economic activities of the people. The Economic Determinism theory was adopted as theoretical framework. Also, a survey research method was utilized with 350 copies of questionnaires randomly administered to respondents across the fourteen (14) affected council wards of the study area. In addition, Key Informant Interview and Focus Group Discussion techniques were equally employed to obtain empirical information. The secondary data was sourced from an array of published documents. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis were used to analyze the collated data. The findings revealed that the conflict has led to a monumental deaths and destruction of properties affecting the two warring groups as well as displacement of a great number of people living within the conflict areas. Also, there were recorded reduction in food production, out of school children, prostitution, destitution, joblessness, banditry, proliferation of small arms and light-weapons among others. Consequently, the study recommends that, the Federal Government needs to revive the erstwhile grazing reserves system with innovations for permanent settlements of the Fulani Pastoralists.

Keywords: Farmers, Pastoralist, Conflict, Socio-Economic, Transhuman.

Introduction

Conflicts relating to land particularly in the Sub-Saharan African countries remain the fiercest and have thus, become the greatest impediment to human security as well as socio-economic development. This is so because land in Africa, as elsewhere, serves as the engine room for

development considering its numerous imperatives to the material wellbeing of the people. For example, land is used for agricultural activities such as farming and pasture, construction of roads, factory buildings, and housings. Consequently Adisa (2012) asserts that, land is probably the most important resource needed by man for his day-to-day existence.

In a similar vein, Jiddere (2016) asserts that, land is indeed one of the most important resources needed by man and it is only second to water in terms of man's existence. This is because almost all human activities especially livelihoods depend on land resources. Thus, different people use land and its resources differently such as farmers, pastoralists, miners, builders and hunters among others. Unfortunately, while using the land, intense competition ensues over its ownership. While taking this necessity of land into account, Adisa and Adekunle (2010) opine that, of all resources land therefore, remains an overwhelming source of conflicts among various user groups as well as individuals at varying thresholds. Land is indeed central to the livelihoods of vast majority of people especially in Sub-Saharan African societies and as such remains a major source of conflict among its primary users such as sedentary farmers and nomadic pastoralists. In Nigeria, the land resource conflict between Farmers and Fulani Pastoralists were initially experienced only in the Sahelian states of Sokoto, Kebbi, Katsina, Kano, Jigawa, Yobe, Borno, Gombe, Bauchi, Adamawa and Taraba in the western and eastern zones of Northern Nigeria and later extended to some states in North-Central Nigeria. According to Abdullahi Smith Centre for Historical Research (2014), the conflict then, hardly received much attention in the media and by both state and Federal Governments. However, today the conflict has become so pervasive and ubiquitous threatening the corporate existence of the state.

The prevalence of the clashes in the recent years is quite alarming with high rate of occurrence in the North Central Region of the country. Perhaps the reason has to do with the strategic location of the region in terms of natural endowment such as abundant grass-land, wet land or Fadama and waters. By and large, states in the region such as Plateau, Kaduna, Nasarawa and Benue are the ones mostly affected. Corroborating this information, the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (2017, p30) asserts that:

Cases of farmers-herders conflicts have been widespread in Nigeria in recent times. Conflicts resulting from cattle-grazing actually accounted for 35 percent of all reported cases between 1991 and 2005. Out of reported 389 incidents of herders and farmers Conflicts from 1997 to 2015, 371 had occurred in the Middle-Belt, otherwise known as the North-Central. The North-Central states of Benue, the Federal Capital Territory, Kogi, Nasarawa, Niger, Kwara and Plateau, are the most affected areas in the country. There is no clear consensus on whether the farmers or the herders are worse hit.

The rising incidence of conflict between pastoralists and farmers in Nigeria is often attributed to the increased seasonal southward movements of Herdsmen from their usual fixed points to the riverine and Fadama areas in search of pasture and water -a movement known as transhumance. According to the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (2017), the main cause of the conflict is the environmental resource scarcity-induced movement of herders from the northern part of the country southward. Some scholars such as Okoli et al., Odoh & Chigozie as well as Abbas, cited in Muhammed et al. (2015, p. 24) shared similar opinions which relate the conflict with "global climate change and the contending desertification and aridity that has reduced arable and grazing lands, forcing pastoralists to move southwards in search of pasture for their livestock". Similarly, Academic Staff Union of Universities (2018, p.1) posited that "severe changes in climatic conditions which triggered a large hunger for land and consequently, hardship in the availability of feed for cattle was a significant causal factor". Accordingly, in a closely related narration Gambari et al (2018, p. 10) states that:

The demographic increase has led to an expansion in the farmland and a reduction in available grazing land for pastoralists characterized by competition over dwindling resources. In the far North, the impact of desertification as well as the crisis of energy,

which has resulted in deforestation, coupled with climatic uncertainty and lower rainfall have made it more difficult to sustain increasing populations, pushing many farmers and pastoralists with livestock southwards. This has happened gradually over a period of decades-with an apparent increase over the past decade-and has added to pressure on land and water in central and southern Nigeria.

Equally along this same chain of explanation, Bashir (2018, p. 10) asserted that:

When the environment is destroyed through its abuse by all land users, the pastoral nomad inclusive, it is progressively incapacitated to meet the needs of all land users, thus compelling the pastoral nomad to transform from transhumant lifestyle to long distance extensive, intensive and sometimes aggressive pastoral nomadism. In this process, the pastoral nomad comes into conflict with people of different life style, the sedentary people generally but particularly the farmers.

Substantiating the preceding views however, according to Eromo cited in Idowu (2017) an official report in Nigeria indicates that more than 35 percent of the land area of 923,768 square kilometers is threatened by desertification affecting the livelihoods of more than 40 million people. Besides changes in climatic conditions, which is seen as a natural phenomenon, also, there are Man-induced factors such as weak government policy and institutional frameworks particularly the case of Land tenure system in Nigeria, increased large scale agricultural investment, increased land occupation by private individuals due to population increase which have therefore combined to make land not just scarce but competitive. Tenuche and Olarewaju, (2009) opine that essentially, the land tenure system in vogue in Nigeria is a precipitating driver of farmers-herdsmen conflict. Consequently, ASUU (2018, p. 2) maintains that, the farmers-pastoralist conflict is an outcome of a combination of environmental ecological crisis, and socio-historically derived problems which the ruling class of Nigeria, in its different wings, has been manipulating to suit its economic and political goals.

The conflict, therefore, constitutes a threat to the nation's economy, as well as human security. Its attendant consequences greatly have adverse effects on the national productivity most especially in the area of agricultural production since farmers are directly affected as well as the pastoralists. According to Adeoye (2017, p.130) "Farmers/herdsmen conflict in Nigeria has demonstrated a high potential to exacerbate insecurity and food crisis, particularly in rural communities where most of the conflicts occur, with reverberating consequences nationwide". The two conflicting groups are apparently relevant to the productive sectors of the economy in the words of (Blench, 2004, p. viii) "both are food producers and both compete for a similar resource". According to Idowu (2017) the incessant clashes has widened the scope of the conflict with deadly incidents being increasingly reported in the affected areas of the country, raising fears that the violence could widen ethnic chauvinism and threaten the brittle unity that exist among Nigeria's diverse ethnic groups.

The Nigerian government has therefore, made several attempts to mitigate the problem from the root. One method involves the coordination of the National Grazing reserves by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development which unfortunately, the annual budgetary provisions by the ministry do not seem to achieve the desired objective due to lack of proper policy implementation. For instance, in the 2020 appropriation bill, a sum of two billion thirteen million naira (2.013 bn) was budgeted for grazing reserves development by the Ministry (Okechukwu, 2019). It is therefore, against this background that the paper out of the numerous farmers/herdsmen conflicts in the North Central region, seeks to assess the socio-economic effects of the conflict between Agatu farmers and the Fulani herdsmen in Benue and Nasarawa States.

The Interface between Conflict and Socio-Economic Development

It is truism that no meaningful development can take place in an atmosphere of disunity, rancor and conflict. This is to say that there is a strong negative association between conflict and socio-economic development (Serneels and Verpoorten, 2015). However, a state that is riddled with different kinds of conflict may perhaps be deficient or handicapped in its economic performance hence conflict leads to poor economic performance (Serneels and Verpoorten, 2015). To this end therefore, conflict is considered to be inimical, antithetical and incompatible to development. Buttressing this further, Annan (1999) remarks that if war is the worst enemy of development, healthy and balanced development is the best form of conflict prevention.

A World Bank study (2007) on the economic and social cost of conflict in some selected African countries has clearly and empirically revealed how conflicts have impacted negatively on some of the African countries with an indication of decrease in their GDP profile. Find below GDP per capita of the studied countries before and after the conflicts.

Table 1: GDP Per capita of selected African countries before and after conflicts

Countries	Before	A,fter
Rwanda	306 US\$	181 US\$
Burundi	207 US\$	143 US\$
Democratic Republic of Congo	122 US\$	103 US\$
Guinea Bissau	240 US\$	176 US\$
Sierra Leone	214 US\$	150 US\$

Source: World Bank, 2007

The table above clearly illustrated that the above listed nation-states have had appreciable GDP per capita in their respective economies prior to the advent of conflicts but as a result of the conflict situations they found themselves, the GDP had dramatically declined as illustrated showing a significant reduction. The illustration therefore, shows a negative association between development and conflicts.

While these studies have documented national, region-wide, and probably more macro-economic indices, it is imperative to interrogate the specific impacts on individual and community-based activities. This is part of the task that the current study has set for itself. Therefore, it is obvious that conflict most especially the type that involves clashes between and among different groups has serious negative effects on socio-economic development at all levels of society and at both macro and micro levels of economics indices and indicators.

Conflict between Pastoralists and Sedentary Farmers: Causes and the effects

Conflicts between Farmers and Herdsmen have become a common feature of economic livelihood in West Africa (Tonah, 2006). According to Blench cited in Ofuoku and Isife (2009), the advancement of farming through irrigation and the increased pasture across the Savannah also extended the scope of conflicts, through transhumance, to the coastal zones which were more ecologically viable. In a similar vein, Nchi cited in Al Chwukuma and Atelhe (2014, p. 82) states that the conflicts between Farmers and Herdsmen have copious economic undertones. "These are clearly economic conflicts and are not sectarian in any way. You have migrant pastoralists on the one hand and sedentary farmers on the other hand fighting for pastures and farmlands which are decreasing as the population of humans and cattle increase". This shows that Farmers-Herdsmen conflict is a product of intense and fierce struggle over land resources between mostly the native and sedentary Farmers and the transhumant Pastoralists whose means of livelihood exclusively depend on the land. The fierce and often virulent nature of the struggles has found expression in a vicious circle of violence and mutual vendetta (Al Chwukuma and Atelhe, 2014).

Some scholars have suggested that conflict between Farmers and Herdsmen is the second greatest security challenge confronting Nigeria (Ubelejit, 2016). Accordin to Akevi cited in

Ubelejit (2016) apart from Boko Haram, one recurrent security challenge that confronts many states in Nigeria is the scourge of Herdsmen- Farmers conflict. This is so because in recent times the incessant clashes between the farmers and herders in Nigeria in general and North Central in particular is quite alarming and unprecedented. The North Central Nigeria indeed experienced the worst of the conflict taking cognizance of the richness of the zone in terms of renewable resources. Much of the very violent and heavy casualty communal conflicts triggered by Fulani Herdsmen and native farmers occur in the Middle-belt of Nigeria in general and Benue State in particular (Ubelejit, 2016). It is important to state here that North Central Nigeria is blessed with grass land and water resources. These resources were indeed the attractive spices behind the sedentary settlements and concentration of the high number of Fulani herdsman in the region.

Empirical studies conducted between 2013-2016 on "Effects of Farmer-Pastoralist Conflict in Nigeria's North Central region on Households" and also "Effects of Farmer-Pastoralist Conflict in Nigeria's Middle Belt on State, Sector, and National Economies" have confirmed that decades-long violent conflict in the North-Central region of Nigeria between farmers and pastoralists have devastated local communities, drastically reducing both security and economic activity (Mercy Corps, 2016, p. 1).

Furthermore, other empirical studies such as (Adisa and Adekule, 2010, Ijirshar, Ker and Yange 2015) have investigated the socio-economic effects associated with Farmers-Herdsmen conflicts and came to conclusion that both farmers and Fulani herdsman have greatly experienced material losses in farm output as well as reduction in the number of heads of cattle. Also, the loss of jobs by significant members of community counts as a serious repercussion. Consequently, the negative effects of farmers-herdsmen conflicts as analyzed range from economic effects (such as loss of income/resources/yield) to physical loss (such as home/farm destruction, bodily injury or death of family member) and socio-psychological effects (such as emotional exhaustion or job dissatisfaction) (Adisa cited in Adeoye, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts Economic Determinism theory. Thus, theory of Economic Determinism is a philosophical and theoretical standpoint commonly associated with the Marxist postulation that social phenomena have their roots in the relations of production. The theory is premised around Marx's materialistic conception of history what is popularly known as "historical materialism". More often than not, Marx believes that the relations of production as a key economic determining factor constitute the base upon which other factors such as legal and political superstructure rests. Thus, "characterizing Marx as an economic determinist is based on some textual evidences. Perhaps the clearest and strongest statement of what is taken as economic determinism occurs in Marx's preface to his 1859 contribution to the critique of political economy" (Peter, 2005, p. 1). Hence, determinism is considered to be the doctrine teaching that a particular aspect or part of the social whole has a predominating influence on all the others (Bruno, 2018).

Thus, Marx asserted that the method of production of the material life determines the social, political and spiritual life process in general (Ferri cited in Charles, 1911). That the economic phenomenon forms the foundation hence, determines the conditions of all other human or social manifestations. Consequently ethics, law and politics are only derivative phenomena determined by the economic factor in accordance with the conditions of each particular people in every phase of history and under all climatic conditions. Ake (1981, p. 1) maintains that "economic need is man's most fundamental need. Unless man is able to meet this need he cannot exist in the first place".

Economic determinism therefore, is a theory implying that economic forces determine, shape and define all other aspects of human civilization such as political, social, cultural, intellectual and technological. The philosophy of economic determinism hence presupposes that economic is fundamentally determinative of all other social phenomena which suggest that a revolution in the economic life of society would mean an equal revolution in all phases of the social life.

Thus, “if economic conditions are wrong, consequently other social conditions are wrong; make economic conditions right and all other social conditions will be right too” (Ferri cited in Charles, 1911, p. 4).

The theory however, emphasizes that economic factors in the social life either determine the whole course of social evolution or condition in such a way that all other social factors are mediated and their expression ultimately determined by the economic factors. Consequently, biological and psychological factors in human social life are all mediated and ultimately determined in their expression by economic process (Ferri cited in Charles, 1911). This therefore, entails that one cannot understand society by focusing on the people, politics, legal traditions, war, philosophy and religion but instead society can best be understood by focusing on the material conditions such as economic activities especially in the area of wealth creation.

The theory of economic determinism therefore attributes primacy to the economic structure over all other structures in the development of human history hence economic laws determine the course of history. The whole pattern of human conduct must have been governed by the fundamental laws governing survival, a dialectical process between man and nature. This reasoning therefore leads to a conclusion that all elements of historical consequences result from economic determinism or man’s effort to survive (Dictionary of Sociology, 1998).

To Marx, environment itself arises from general economic condition. Thus, that the whole of human history is effectively powered by and influenced by the material substructure of society. Human society and history is not dictated by either human or divine reason, but it is created and furthered by the economic processes underlying the reality created by our own labour, which subsequently create our experience (Estelio, 2014). According to Bruno (2018), several authors hold that economic determinism reflects the idea of a linear causality of direct relations between a paramount economic cause and the effects that passively flow from it. Furthermore, due to the linear notion of causality, the economic base is necessary and in itself, sufficient cause hence economic determinism descends from the idea of a linear causal chain implying direct cause-effect relations.

The theory however, has been faulted in some ways on the ground of the over abstraction of the economic from all other phases of the social life processes. The social life hence cannot be interpreted in terms of any one of its phases or in terms of a single set of causes, but can only be properly interpreted by a synthetic view which shall take into account all the different factors actually found in the social life process (Charles, 1911). The theory has been overly generalized and the views held by the proponents were really uni-dimensional.

Economic determinism theory is employed and modified here to stress and emphasize the centrality of economic factor in the conflict under study. The connection and linkage between the economic factors in terms of animal rearing for meat production and supply in the market and milk production and the crops production all for consumptions by the consumers within and outside Nigeria and the protracted conflicts between the farmers and herdsmen indicates a cause- effect relationship.

Consequently, to understand and comprehend farmer-herder conflict with reference to Fulani-Agatu conflict, there is need to look at the material condition of the pattern of interactions between the two user groups which entails the intense struggle by the parties for survival. Since the two parties solely rely on land resources for survival, the manner and the nature for the struggle for the land resources determines the outcome of the relationship whether conflictual or peaceful co-existence. In the case of Fulani-Agatu conflict, lands within the Agatu communities were no longer sufficient for grazing and farming and predominantly the people in the areas are farmers and pastoralists whose means of livelihood rest on the land therefore, the end product of interactions between the two groups is conflict that eventually greatly affects the livelihood of the people

Methodology

Data for this study were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. For the primary source, information related to the socio-economic effects of Fulani-Agatu conflict in Benue and

Nasarawa States were obtained from Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions conducted among all the categories of people such as Traditional Rulers of Agatu Community, Leaders (Ardos) of Fulani group, Local Government Officials, Women and Youth Groups. Three focus group discussions were conducted at Obagaji, Loko and Udeni-Magajji with Agatu group, Fulani group and a group of other tribes, fifteen people forming a group for each of the three categories. For the sake of convenience, registration areas were used to generate the population of the study which comprise eighty-three (83) in Agatu Local Government Area and one hundred and thirty-three (133) in Nasarawa Local Government Area totaling two hundred and sixteen (216) registration areas.

Hence, the minimum list of people on register in each of the registration areas was five hundred (500) people which was multiplied by two hundred and sixteen (216) to have population of one hundred and eight thousand (108,000). Thus, using Krejci and Morgan table, sample size of three hundred and fifty (350) was determined. Also, to strengthen the findings, field Household questionnaire survey was carried out only among the residents of the affected non-Fulani communities within Nasarawa Local Government and Agatu Local Government areas. This is because reaching out to Fulani on the household basis was very difficult to ascertain largely because, great number of them left the areas and the few ones around were interviewed and engaged in focus group discussions. The secondary data was sourced from an array of published documents such as reports, journals, and newspapers of which some were physically accessed and others retrieved online.

Agatu LGA has ten (10) Council Wards and Nasarawa LGA has four (4) affected Council Wards which include Loko, Udeni, Guto-Aisa and Tunga-Bakono. The above stated council wards are the areas where Agatu speaking tribes can be found in Nasarawa Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. Thus, twenty-five (25) questionnaires were randomly distributed among the respondents on household basis in each of the fourteen (14) council wards and all the distributed questionnaires were returned totaling three hundred and fifty (350).

The study adopts triangulation or mixed method of data analysis in which information obtained or collected from questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively while data obtained from Interview and Focus group discussion were qualitatively analyzed.

Results and Discussion

Table 2: Demographic Data of the Respondents

State		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Benue	250	71.4
Nasarawa	100	28.6
Total	350	100.0

Sex		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	321	91.7
Female	29	8.3
Total	350	100.0

Age

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18 - 30	121	34.6
31 - 40	123	35.1
41 - 50	57	16.3
51 - 60	43	12.3
61 and above	6	1.7
Total	350	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2018

Table 3: Loosing life of a family member as a result of the conflict

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	329	94
No	21	6
Total	350	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2018

This table above shows that 94% of the respondents have lost members of their immediate family as a result of the conflict while 6% of the respondents were fortunate enough not to have lost any member of the immediate family during the battle between the herdsman and the farmers in Agatu community as a whole since the inception of the crisis. Corroborating the above responses, the former Chairman of the Agatu Local Government Hon. Mike Inalegwu, in a key informant interview states that the entire Agatu community lost over 3,920 people between 2012 and 2017. Similarly, according to Ardo Buderu, the leader of Fulani in the entire Agatu community, many of their people lost their lives in the face off between them and Agatu people although he could not provide the exact number of the Fulani who lost their lives during the crisis.

Table 4: Respondents who abandoned their Economic activities such as Farming, Fishing and Trading as a result of the crisis

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	343	98
No	7	2
Total	350	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2018

The major occupation of the people of Agatu community is farming, fishing and sometimes trading particularly on agricultural commodities such as fish, yams, rice, mangoes, oranges. most especially by the women. However, the emergency management assessment conducted in Agatu shows that over ten thousand persons (10,000) flee their respective communities thus abandoned their occupations (see Appendix for Yahaya Marcus Ada, the Emergency Management Desk Officer). Corroborating this, the above table hence indicates that as a result of the conflict, 98% of the respondents had abandoned their occupation such as farming, fishing and the trading. Thus, only 2% of the respondents were able to sustain and retain their farms, fishing activities and trading. The simple explanation to this therefore, is the fact that these people must have been residing in a less confrontational and relatively safe areas such as Loko.

Also, narrations by the key informants on this issue however, supported the tabulated information that as a result of people abandoning farming activities for so long, the cost prices of the food items became very high particularly during the period 2013 to 2017. For instance, before the conflict a *mud* of rice was sold at 200 naira but during the conflict years, a *mud* of rice was sold at 400 naira in Agatu (Kulu Zubairu, market women Representative) but now

with the relative peace in the communities, those who hardly produced 10 bags of rice were producing 150 to 200 bags of rice which ultimately made a mud of rice selling at the rate of 250 naira as at the time of the survey in December, 2018.

Also, as pointed out by the Key informants, other effects of abandoning the economic activities as a result of the conflict were that, many people have become impoverished; the youth could no longer have respect for elders and could not see people of other tribes as human beings because of their exposure to arms and ammunitions hence they became vulnerable to robbery, bandits and banditry, rapping, assault, kidnapping etc.

Table 5: Respondents who were Civil Servants

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	182	52
No	168	48
Total	350	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2018

The above table indicates that 52% of the respondents were civil servants while 48% were not working with the Government. However, it is very common in the local areas that you find civil servants who are simultaneously farmers, fishermen and petty traders.

Table 6: Civil Servants whose official responsibilities were affected by the crisis

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	334	95.4
No	16	4.6
Total	350	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2018

The table above shows that all the civil servants working in Agatu communities were directly or indirectly affected by the crisis between Fulani herdsmen and the farming communities. The civil servants in the village in most cases combine office work with farming. The civil servants at the local level basically work with Local Government, Secondary schools, Primary schools and Primary health care centers in the various districts of the Local Government Area. Therefore, it is very difficult for these organizations to function smoothly amid insecurity.

While conducting a focus group discussion in some schools, the teachers admitted that they flee the communities to save their lives and most of the schools were burnt down by the attackers thus, the report of the Emergency Management Assessment indicates about 10,000 inhabitants who flee their areas of work and residence and 18 schools listed as being destroyed (Yahaya Marcus Ada, Desk Officer, Emergency Management Assessment Agatu L.G.A and a compiled list of destroyed schools by Audu Ejele, Head of Primary School Monitoring Unit Agatu L.G.A). Also, in a similar discussion with the Local Government staff at the Local Government Secretariat at Obagaji, the Local Government headquarters, the participants remarked that you hardly see 20 % of the staff in the office in the period 2013 to 2016.

Hence, the conflict has almost paralyzed the activities of the Local government and as well affected the most critical aspect of human life such as health and education. More worrisome is that, many children could no longer attend schools and many people were denied access to health care facilities all as a result of the conflict. This indeed has negatively impacted on the communities as rehabilitation always takes some time and delay this hence speaks the reason why still many people could not return homes.

Table 7: Respondents who own personal houses

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	315	90
No	35	10
Total	350	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2018

The table above indicates that 90% of the respondents own their personal houses and this should not appear surprising because it is very uncommon to see local people renting houses in their communities, virtually, every one owns a house no matter how bad condition the house may look like. Hence according to the table, it is only 10% of the respondents that did not own houses.

Table 8: Respondents whose residential houses were destroyed as a result of the crisis

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	223	63.7
No	127	36.3
Total	350	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2018

Looking at the information above, 63.7% had their residential houses destroyed as a result of the conflict. This shows that more than half of the residential houses were destroyed in Agatu Communities during the crisis period. Thus, the Emergency Management Assessment report on the conflict reveals that 3,465 houses were destroyed in the whole of Agatu L.G.A as a result of the conflict between Agatu farmers and Fulani herdsman (See Yahaya Marcus Ada, Desk Officer, Emergency Management Assessment). Responding to this issue in an interview session, the representative to the Local Government Chairman Mr. Augustine Ojotu Ogwola stated that houses were destroyed in all Agatu communities with the exception of Anicha.

Furthermore, according to the former Chairman of Agatu Local Government Area Hon. Mike Inalegwu, the conflict has virtually rendered Agatu people fugitives. Consequently, many of the community members became disenfranchised in the 2015 General elections. This is because they could no longer participate in the electoral process and as such, the voting power of the community became less before the state. This perhaps has serious implication politically as the riverine communities have a record of producing significant number of votes in the past. Thus, political meetings were no longer holding in Agatu land except in Otukpo a neighboring Local Government Area and Makurdi the state capital. Also, from the social point of view, the young girls of about 12 years above have become prostitutes in the cities such as Otukpo, Makurdi, and Abuja.

Table 9: Respondents who bear biological children

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	285	81.4
No	65	18.6
Total	350	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2018

The table above indicates that 81.4% of the respondents bear biological children while 18.6% bears no children. However, these children are also part of the community and can equally be affected in a manner in which their parents become affected.

Table 10: Respondents with enrolled children in school

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	244	69.7
No	106	30.3
Total	350	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2018

As clearly shown in the preceding table, out of the percentage of the respondents who bear children, 69.7% have enrolled their children in school while 30.3% have not enrolled their children due to reasons based known to them. However, the purpose why schools were established in many communities of Agatu was to get the children educated hence having these schools destroyed would have negative consequences on education in the community.

Table 11: Respondents whose children's education were interrupted as a result of the crisis

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	237	67.7
No	113	32.3
Total	350	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2018

Sequel to the preceding table which indicates the percentage of the respondents who have enrolled their children in different schools within the various communities, this table shows that the crisis between the Fulani herdsmen and Agatu farmers has interrupted the education or schooling of 67.7% of the pupils in the whole community. This figure is corroborated with the report of the Emergency Management Assessment which indicates 6,002 children who were affected as a result of the conflict. Accordingly, the key informants from the Agatu extraction mentioned that, many of the community members who fled during the crisis have not yet returned to the villages and many schools as earlier established have been destroyed. For instance, school structures were completely raised down in Ologba, Egba, Aku, Adagbo, Okokolo, Aila, Ugboju, Eminyi, Adana, Ogbayi, Olegege, Abugbe, and Ocholonya communities. Consequent upon this, many of the children can no longer go to school and cannot value education anymore because they don't have what to eat as presently many of them are in IDP camps in Otukpo Local Government Area of the state.

Conclusion and Recommendation

It is quite glaring inferring from the findings, the conflict has negatively impacted on the wellbeing of the two warring groups with many people losing their lives, residential houses and government facilities. The conflict has by and large crippled the routine socio-economic and political activities such as farming, fishing, grazing, trading and political meetings including elections in the affected communities of the two states. Consequently, the study recommends the following;

- ◆ The Government at Federal, State and Local level should continue to provide physical and social infrastructure in the affected communities with a monitoring team that would ensure judicious utilization of resources allocated to the affected communities. This would instill confidence in persons who fled to return to their native communities and continue with their usual activities.
- ◆ The Nigerian government should revert back to the erstwhile grazing reserve system with technological innovations for permanent settlement of the nomadic pastoralists. Doing this would indeed put an end to the south ward migrations of the herders as well as make them to have sense of belongings as the government integrates them into national life.
- ◆ The government should routinely review its resettlement programmes for improving

and bettering the lives of the internally displaced persons and this would build confidence in them for eventual return and reintegration with their native communities in no distance future.

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