

History of West African Civilization and the Implication for Farmers-Herders Conflict in Northern Nigeria: Providing Workable Policy Suggestions

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Abstract:

This paper is an attempt to appraise West African civilization and its implication for the farmers-herders conflict in Northern Nigeria. Relying on secondary data, the paper reviewed the farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria historically and assessed West African civilization and its implication for the conflict. The paper revealed that civilization and value systems affected West Africa and Nigeria especially the area of the Farmers-herders conflict in Northern Nigeria. The paper thus, recommends creating forest and grazing reserves, as well as the National Food Security Council to ensure harmonious relations between farmers-herders in the phase of civilization.

Keywords: Civilization; Conflict; Farmers-Herders; Policy; Nigeria

Introduction

Civilization in West Africa can be traced to the pre-colonial era when the sub-continent was growing at its pace before colonialization. Studies have shown that kingdoms, empires, and city-states in West Africa existed independently and grew at their own level. The pre-colonial West African societies had their own mode of self-rule, governance structure, and ruling process, and the judiciary system was geared toward peacemaking, sustenance, and guaranteeing peaceful co-existence of the people (Arowolo, 2010). Though colonialists often tend to view the continent as one entity lumped together as Africans or West Africa, forgetting that Africa is the second largest continent in the world with many sovereign entities (Falola and Fleming, 2009). Thus, the generalizations of the continent tend to oversimplify civilizations in West African and Africa as a whole, it as well underrated the continent's diversity, with an inherent human and mineral resource with huge adaption to the environmental differences and civilization. Civilization in West Africa flourished in most empires in the sub-continent

such as the various empires/kingdoms in Nigeria, Ghana, Sudan, Mali, and Songhai (Falola and Fleming, 2009). The use of iron tools in the pre-colonial societies in West Africa was a remarkable moment in the history of civilization on the continent because the iron tools mainly served as a form of machine for the management of the dense forests, farming, and weaponry against the enemy trying to invade their communities (Falola and Fleming, 2009). Historians have discovered that people after people in the ancient world adopted and used iron, in what they are referred to Iron Age, which African generally to be commonly used in the Nile Valley, traced to 600 BC, while the people of West Africa embraced the Iron Age after 300 BC (Basil and Buah, 1965). According to Basil and Buah (1965), Nigeria in West Africa was the earliest in the sub-continent to embrace iron, the scholars put thus: Nigeria is the primary source of evidence regarding the early usage of iron in West Africa. Iron was first used by people in the area of the Niger and Benue Rivers more than 2,000 years ago, according to scientific research. The evidence of ironworking that these people left behind, along with their expert modeling in baked clay,

has allowed them to prove this.

While the empires in Mali, Songhai, and Ghana succeeded, others were replaced by empires that had varied structures, beliefs, values, and cultures, thus accepting more suitable environments, and the social and political situation across West Africa (Falola and Fleming, 2009). In fact, market centers lay in Ancient Ghana, which lies between Niger and Senegal Rivers, were placed in the grasslands to the north of the upper waters of the Niger and Senegal Rivers with substantial commercial activities, which Basil and Buah (1965) promptly captures thus: They were in a great commercial position. They were located at the southernmost point of the trade routes that led from North Africa over the Sahara. However, they also occupied the northernmost point of the trade routes that led north from West Africa, a nation that produced gold. These market centers' traders purchased gold and ivory from West African traders and then sold them to North African traders in return for North African products and salt from the Sahara. They needed to be powerful in government in order to be powerful in trade.

The marketing activities that took place in Ancient Ghana, especially along the Niger River in the north-western part of the sub-continent also happened across the neighboring area of West Africa such as the Futa Toro region, Gao area of Niger River, Sila, and Takrur this trading activity was one of the many stages of civilization in the sub-continent of West Africa (Basil and Buah, 1965). During this period the people of Western Sudanese and their Guinea neighbors had much long-distance trade relation, while Sudanese in particular used camels as a means of reaching out to other nations because of the nature a camel when compare to horses in a sandy desert area of the Sahara, thus these among others led to increase in production and exchange in West Africa and across the region and beyond (Basil and Buah, 1965). The pre-colonial communities were not isolated as an interaction between and across regions and outside of West Africa was prominent for diplomatic, migration, commercial (such as trade routes and a quest for fertile land), and marriage these reasons promoted interface across the continent and beyond (Falola and Fleming, 2009). However, in recent times the lofty development of West African civilization, especially the Nigerian experience has shown that conflict may arise as a result of civilization. An example of such conflict is the farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria.

The escalating attacks by herdsmen on the natives and villages remain very brutal and the invasion of farming communities affects not only the farmers and the women and children in states across the country. The worst affected states are in the Northern region (Durojaiye, 2014). The recurrent farmers-herders conflict in states such as Plateau, Benue, Edo, Ebonyi, Kogi, and other parts of the North has continued to remain a threat to the national security of the country. The farmers-herders conflict in these states, especially the North region has destructed the sources of livelihood of the people. A report from the WANEP.

National Early Warning System (NEWS) shows that 5,281 farmer-herders-related deaths have been recorded over from January – 16th March 2018. This figure suggests

that the frequency of the farmers-herders conflict has increased dramatically, and the intensity and geographical scope of the conflict are spreading faster than expected. And the humanitarian, socio-economic, and political consequences are alarming. The conflict has been attributed to scarce resources such as land for grazing and water which was further worsened by climatic change as well as the increasing conditions of Global Warming (WANEP, 2018).

The farmers-herders are ideally supposed to work in a mutual manner. Ogebe and Ligom (2019), in their study of "Land Use Conflict between Farmers and Herdsmen in Gwer West Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria", capture the events that often lead to conflict thus: When grazing cattle are not properly managed and graze on host communities' produced crops, such as cassava, maize, rice, and other cereals, communal disputes between Fulani herdsmen and host communities typically result. When the owners of these farms try to file a complaint against the Fulani herdsmen's cattle destroying their food and cash crops, they are always fiercely opposed, which leads to intercommunal strife. Sometimes, host communities express their complaints by limiting the movement and grazing of cattle in specific regions and using coercive means that they have mandated to enforce compliance. The order might involve putting stray cattle to death or apprehending and prosecuting defaulters. The Fulani herders typically become violent and assault the host community, sometimes with the help of hired mercenaries, when the villages try to control their activities or ask them to leave. The host is more exposed because the attack frequently takes place at midnight.

The farmers need the herder's protein coming in the form of dairy products required for the day-to-day fertilization and consumption of the farmland, the herders the farmers to provide the finished product from the farm fields that have no negative implication for their produces. The herders' survival is formed under continuous interaction with farmers (Monod, 2018). Hence, the interaction between the farmers-herders seems interdependent linkage because the group requires water, land, and fodder, while the other needs the land for their economic activities, however, the relationship over the years has been truncated by conflicts arising across the country with widespread death, internal displacement and violence (Akerjiir, 2018). Most often farmers and herders contacted in Nigeria resort to conflict, which is attributed to fighting for the control of scarce resources, some belief systems, and a divergent value system, the movements of herders in search of waterlogged coastal environments (Olabode and Ajobade, 2010; Onyima and Iwuoha, 2015). The arable crop farmers and cattle herdsmen conflicts are now re-occurrences happenings in Northern with about 40% of the households surveyed having experienced agricultural land-related conflicts and indeed many parts of Nigeria (Ogebe and Ligom, 2019). The conflicts between these groups over agricultural land for the farmers for crop production and herdsmen for their cattle to graze, accounted for 35 percent of reported conflict, while ethnoreligious and political-related conflicts were less frequent (Ogebe and Ligom, 2019).

An assessment of West African civilization

According to Falola and Fleming (2009), as many as ten thousand kingdoms and states existed and civilization in the continent varied in structure and size before the arrival of the colonialist. These various structure scholars divided into centralized and decentralized communities or societies, while the centralized structure or societies was managed by rulers or monarchs who run the day-to-day activities in their various kingdoms with stable growth in trade and agriculture, the decision-making duty bestowed on the monarch. While in the decentralized civilization in West Africa like the Igbo society in the Southeastern part of Nigeria the kingdoms are divided into groups such as the age group system, while the elders provide leadership getting suggestions and opinions of the general population (Falola and Fleming, 2009).

The socio-cultural and political domain of Africa generally began to witness the creeping of Western civilization when the European contact the continent in the aftermath of the Berlin conference century ago in their quest for natural resources in West Africa and Africa in general, supported and strengthened by the wave of globalization that was sweeping across the globe (Arowolo, 2010). The arrival of the Western and colonialists in West Africa distort the reading tempo and pace of the civilization and growth thus raping off the political, socio-economic, and cultural to the benefit of colonialists as well as paving way for the colonialist form of civilization while relegating the existing traditional West African civilization which later was to be termed archaic and primitive (Arowolo, 2010).

In this study of the challenges and prospects of change in the continental tradition and governance Mimiko (2010), opined that the coming of the colonialists devastated the existing values and cultural progression thus introducing a new governance system and elites will overall target subjugating the quest of the resource which the underlying reasons for colonialism. The scholar Mimiko (2010), stated thus: A new culture of violence was ingrained, and the social fabric was totally destroyed. Traditional African dispute settlement methods were destroyed, and nothing was provided in their stead. The authoritarianism of colonialism ruthlessly overthrew the democratic process, which, despite its primitiveness, had enormous potential like all human institutions. In order to continue the art and act of subjugating the majority of people in the service of colonialism, a new crop of elites was born, raised, and weaned on the altar of violence and colonialism. They were then equipped with the contemporary state's structures.

It is imperative to note that after many decades of colonization in West Africa the values of which this part of the continent was known witnessed retrogression as it was robbed of numerous opportunities for self-development, opportunities of self-civilization, opportunities of self-styled developmental strive and pace and importantly opportunities of self-government which is crucial for civilization, they practice their own pattern of democratic principles before the imposition of the wider principles of liberal democracy of the western world which subsequently submerged typical West Africa or Africa democratic process (Arowolo,

2010). According to O'Brien (2005), city-states and kingdom were already existing in West Africa autonomously. The Yoruba and Igbo kingdoms existed autonomous in Nigeria, while the Hausa states in the Northern part of Nigeria stretched across central Sudan and sub-Saharan Africa (O'Brien, 2005). As early as the 9th century AD, the Kanem-Bornu Empire and the Gao people of Ghana were growing at their pace of civilization before it falls to the Mali Empire in the 11th century (O'Brien, 2005).

Civilization in West Africa grew independently without the influence of the Western world. Bronzes, for instance, were popular with the Nri Kingdom of the Igbo land in the Eastern part of Nigeria as far back as the 9th (Oliver and Anthony, 1994; Arowolo, 2010). The Nok Culture was also popular during the Iron Age, the Nok are found in the central part of Nigeria, named after the Nok village that provided the needed evidence decades ago and iron was so important to West Africa not only the central part of Nigeria because it serves as a unique tool and weapon, especially the iron-point spears and the iron-headed axes, which were used in place of stone or wood and to fall trees respectively (Basil and Buah, 1965). Iron facilitated increased food production, which hence easy access to deep forests through these iron tools and spears, and serve as a defense tool against wild animals and perceived enemies (Basil and Buah, 1965).

The Malian city of Djenné was equally known for its highly educated citizens with a considerable number of medical doctors responsible for performing operations such as the remover of cataracts which were not known to many nations including a few European and Arab countries at then (Anta Diop, 1974). The city also has a technological school of medicine whose responsibility is to produce qualified physicians and surgeons (Anta Diop, 1974). According to Leo Africanus (2002), Timbuktu in the great city of Mali centuries ago not only have clerics a number of judges, and doctors on the ground and amongst the people, but they also received salaries from the king himself because of the respect accorded them. Timbuktu in West Africa was a center of religion, commerce, and learning which attracted scholars across the world because it was the largest center of education having universities known the scholars in the medieval period while many of the Muslim teachers and scholars in Timbuktu were busy teaching in this institution at the time (Shallal, 2004).

Judicial, civilization in West Africa and herders-farmers conflict in Nigeria's historical overview

The Songhai Empire presented a functional judicial system while the empire took shape in the mid-fourteenth century, and the empire remained independent until Sonni Ali Ber captured most part of the Malian empire and other territories (Dalglish, 2005). The Songhai Empire in West Africa was the largest West African civilization in terms of land mass and it was famed for its educational institutions, which taught majorly accountancy, mathematics, Islamic law, geography, art, poetry, and grammar (Walker and Millar, 2000; Dalglish, 2005). The Songhai Empire had a well-organized and functional judicial system to deal with the issue of

justice which Dalglish (2005:60) specifically states thus: There were two distinct legal systems: The Cadi's and the king's. The king appointed the Cadi, who handled common-law offenses and conflicts between citizens and foreigners or between citizens. The Cadi oversaw the tribunal that was used to decide the disputes. The Cadi also held the authority to offer sanctuary or pardon. Since the Cadi was a Muslim head judge, Sharia law—the common law of the Qur'an—would seem to apply in this situation.

The judicial system was also responsible for settling immigration-related issues, especially among immigrant merchants through a special judge, while the royal justice focuses its energy on treasonable offenses (Diop, 1987; Dalglish, 2005). The judicial system was not only applicable to Songhai Empire ancient Ghana also has its own share, in almost all of the empires and kingdoms in Nigeria before the coming of colonists' well-managed judicial system was in place. Communities in West Africa did not just develop their judicial system to settle the dispute they developed a much more useful mechanism of governance between AD 1000 and 1600 which became a memorable period in the history of the sub-continent, and enforcing law and order was well organized even when some communities went without kings and chiefs or central government, while many others grew in wealth and size, with functional craftsmen, traders, soldiers, priest, scholars, and politician with a central government headed by a king (Basil and Buah, 1965).

Historically, the conflict between herders and farmers can be traced to many decades ago especially in the African Continent, West Africa, and indeed, Nigeria where the pastoralists are associated with Usman Dan Fodio's 1804 conquest sections in Northern Nigeria, with the intention of spreading his religion and territorial expansion (Blench and Dendo, 1994). The farmers-herders conflicts took different dimensions during colonialism as the struggle for limited natural resources such as land, water, and veterinary products (Onyima and Iwuoha, 2015). The farmers-herders conflicts also took the ethnoreligious dimension in Nigeria. The before between herdsman and farmers was first recorded in this part of the world in 1948, while the second such conflict was recorded in 1951 which led to the migration of Fulani Bororo to Sudan, and 1955 the recorded conflict led to the Sudanese Government issuing a quit notice to all Fulani Bororo to move to respective countries, in which majority of them are Borno, Sokoto and Kano States of Nigeria (Ogbette et al., 2018).

The conflict between farmers-herders as of 16th March 2018, has recorded the fatality of 149 mainly women and children through violent confrontations and a series of attacks in the Plateau, Benue, Edo, Ebonyi, and the Kogi States. The various attacks led to a series of injuries, houses burnt and abandoned ancestral homes to seek refuge in other states for fear of attacks and safety (News Quick Updates, 2019). The report of News Quick Updates (2019), further provides the incidents of attack in March 2018, thus: Four security personnel—two military personnel and two police officers—were reported dead and numerous others, including security operatives and local vigilante members, were

injured in violent attacks that took place in Plateau State's Bokkos and Bassa LGAs between March 2 and 14, 2018. According to some reports, the military personnel were killed by suspected herdsmen while responding to a distress call about a conflict between community members and herdsmen at Rafiki Village, Bassa LGA. But according to a counterstatement released by the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), more than 150 homes were set on fire throughout the State 5, and five (5) Fulani herdsmen were slain. Retaliatory attacks have been primarily blamed for claims of attacks and fatalities involving cattle rustling. Irigwe community ladies in Bassa LGA's Miango District peacefully protested these atrocities in response to the deaths of women and children in Miango Village attacks. Nzharuvo, Rotsu, Dundu, Rafiki, Dong, and Dutse Kura in Bassa LGA and Ganda village in Bokkos LGA are among the impacted communities in Plateau State.

The report further shows that on 3rd-14th March 2018, the conflict between the farmer-herders led to the death of 34 persons including security officers attacked by suspected armed herdsmen in local communities of Omosu-Edimoga community, Okpokwu LGA; Umenger, Tse Orogbo, and Tse Igbe communities in Guma LGA, Benue State. While on the 12th of March 2018, four persons including farmers, herdsman were killed and two sustained an injury in the Igbeagu community, Izzi LGA of Ebonyi State. Attacks by suspected armed herdsmen also touch communities such as Oganienugwu, Iyale, and Ikende communities, Dekina LGA and Abejukolo, Obakume and Agbenema communities, Omala LGA, Kogi State, and Northern Nigeria. The Kogi State example was not quickly different from other states in the Northern. Local governments such as Dekina, Igalamela/Odolu, Ofu, Omala, and Mopa Muro, of Kogi state have particularly, witnessed incessant herdsmen/farmers conflicts in the recent past, which led to killings, maiming, arson, and continuous invasion of communities (Ojomah et al., 2019). "The herdsmen/farmers conflict in Nigeria in the past few years, especially in the last five years or so, portends a very great danger and a serious security threat to peace, unity, and socio-economic development of the country and Kogi State in particular" (Idakwoji et al., 2018). This situation has created debilitating security challenges including a high incidence of crime, policy formulation, law enforcement, criminal justice, and economic problems for Kogi State and the country in general. In light of the foregoing, an empirical study situated in a valid theoretical grasp of these conflicts is appropriately imperative (Abraham, 2017).

Cause of farmers-herders conflict in Northern Nigeria Grazing fields and climate change:

Land-related issues are the major sources of conflicts between the farmers and the Fulani pastoralists, especially overgrazing fields in Northern Nigeria. The struggles over who controls the grassing land have led to tensions and violent confrontations and conflicts among communities in Northern Nigeria. The destruction of farm produce, especially crops due for harvest by cattle often leads to confronta-

tion and conflicts according to the farmers, while the herders see the burning of rangelands and blockage of routes meant for cattle, and the blockage of the water points by the farmers' crop which is of importance to the pastoralists remains a big issue (De Haan, 2002). The expansion of agricultural land affects the grazing land field, thus increasing the already existing tension and conflicts between the farmers and herders in parts of the country (Kehinde, 2014). Aside from the expansion of agricultural land, the peaceful co-existence of the farmers and herders has been threatened due to population growth, increased commercialization of agricultural production, and advancement in technology (Fratkin, 1997). Another important cause of herders-farmers conflict is climate change. Climate change led to droughts, a decrease in the annual rainfall, and shortened wet season in the Northern Nigerian which has contributed to the intensity of the movement of Fulani southwards in search of pasture land led to conflicts in some areas as well as the destruction of human, farmland, and animals (Abbass, 2016).

Land-use act:

The multiple uses of land and natural resources as well as its limitedness have necessitated competition for its use and have been the center of conflicts over the decades in Nigeria (Ojomah et al., 2019). According to Abbass (2016), the land-use system has changed the peaceful co-existence of pastoralists and cultivators (farmers) for decades due to the complexities of the land-use system which have become the major reason for conflicts between herdsman and farmers. Tenuche and Ifatimehin (2009) opined that the conflicts around Benue Valley were a result of the loss of land which the people see as a social, economic, and spiritual necessity of their existence, thus, the conflict between Fulani herdsman and farmers can be attributed to grazing land in the area.

Cattle rustling:

Cattle rustling is one of the main reasons for conflict over time. Cattle rustling causes conflict in the farming communities of various parts of Northern Nigeria. The activities of some miscreants often lead to the killing of persons especially alleged rustlers in the host communities (Ogebe and Ligom, 2019). Thus, scholars have attributed the activities of cattle rustlers to have worsened the farmer-herder conflicts in the country. The demographic changes/expanded cattle production and cattle rustling, coupled with overgrazing compounded the crisis (Ogbette et al., 2018; Onimisi, 2018, 2020).

Implication of farmers-herders conflict in Northern Nigeria

One of the major implications of the farmers-herders conflict in Northern Nigeria is the loss of lives and the depletion of the population of the concerned states of the country. The lives lost unfortunately are often the breadwinners and family members are thrown into poverty especially when the other partners are not gainfully employed (Ojomah et al., 2019). Aside, from the loss of life and poverty, the farmers-herders conflicts bring the people psychological problems

that come along with it cannot be quantified. According to Ogebe and Ligom (2019), the conflict between the farmers-herders can lead to food insecurity in the land, the scholars capture it thus: "the death of farmers and herdsman also creates economic or food insecurity to the state and country, in terms of the fear and intimidation to engage in farming of crops or herding of cattle's created by the conflicts". The financial implication of the farmers-herders conflict on the government using taxpayer money to execute the fight is alarming. The fund that will have been used for infrastructural and other developmental amenities are now been a channel for creating and ensuring peace and prevention of conflict. The farmers-herders conflicts in Northern Nigeria have led to a proliferation of arms in a bid to defend themselves against a perceived enemy. The conflict between the farmers-herders has led to the proliferation of not just arms but the rebellious attitude of all. The conflicts between the farmers and herders disrupt and reduce agricultural production, which subsequently leads to increased poverty, which was adequately captured by Ogebe and Ligom (2019): Because farming was their only source of revenue, this led to a lower yield, which in turn affected their income. This tends to have a negative impact on their savings, ability to repay credit, food security, and economic well-being because urban inhabitants rely on these farmers for their food supply. Farmers and agricultural growth in rural areas are discouraged by this. Both ranchers and farmers were reported to have been displaced. Conflict causes nomadic herdsman to relocate within the host community. The host farmers who stayed behind, particularly the ladies, avoided visiting the far-off farms out of concern that the bush nomads might assault them. These displaced farmers are now a liability to other farmers, who must rely on them to provide food for their family. In certain places, this has led to a vicious cycle of poverty. However, farmers saw a greater loss of material resources. Farmers being displaced has the highest score, followed by income and output loss. Whether material or not, the herdsman's losses were negligible, suggesting that farmers suffered greater losses than the herdsman.

The implication of the farmers-herders conflict range from physical, and economic, to socio-psychological effects as well as a reduction in the production output and income of farmers of Northern Nigeria (Ogebe and Ligom, 2019). The implication of the conflict did just to stop crop destruction lives and family members were lost. The International Regional Information Network (2009), established that the conflict between farmers and Fulanis has increased over the decade in several parts of Northern Nigeria, especially in Benue state and Kogi State which has witnessed a series of such cases of conflict. According to (Kehinde, 2014). In some cases, the Fulanis, mainly herders were prevented from entering some areas, such as 2007 they were sent out of Bassa Local Government Area of Kogi state because of the conflict with the local farmers, and between 1996 and 2002, forty-nine cases of such conflicts were recorded; while crops estimated at over 1 million Naira were damaged the period (Ajuwon, 2004).

Policy suggestions

Creating forest and grazing reserves in Nigeria:

The creation of forest and grazing reserves in Nigeria will help to reduce the incidents of farmers-herders conflict in the Northern region and across Nigeria. The Federal government needs to revisit the federal livestock department and makes it more functional. The law guiding the federal livestock unit should be reviewed to capture the dynamic situation we have found ourselves in. And a need to put into consideration or factor in climate change in the federal livestock unit of the federal government, and in reviewing the federal livestock department in preparation for new guidelines and rules, all stockholders must be carried along.

National food security council:

The federal government in collaboration with the state government can establish National Food Security Council. The council will help to ensure food security in the country and in the event of conflicts. The council would also provide measures towards preventing frequent conflicts between farmers and herders in the country. The council would provide guidelines for effective collaboration between the farmers and herders toward food security in the country. Nigerian Police Force: The Nigerian Police Force should be provided adequate training on effective policing and modern policing skills to deal with the farmers-herders conflict. The police force needs to be fair to all sides in its work. The police need to be provided funds to acquire modern security acquirement for effective policing.

Civil society organizations (CSOs)/traditional institutions and community leaders:

Traditional institutions and community leaders, and civil society organizations can provide orientation to both farmers and herders on the need to live peacefully and go about their activities peacefully. The CSOs can be an agent of peace. The government needs to carry the Traditional institutions and community leaders and CSOs along especially in the area of providing policy alternatives that cannot be over-emphasized (Onimisi, 2020).

Conclusion

The pattern of civilization in West Africa before the coming colonialization was that of self-governance for peaceful co-existence among the members of the community and their neighbors. Kingdoms and empires in West Africa were developing at their own pace. The subsequent imposition of the Western civilization and value system affected West African self-styled civilization growth. West Africa an important part of the African continent had experienced its own civilization in the empires, states, and kingdoms that existed becoming the European to the continent as the empires or kingdoms were centers of attraction, learning of skills, trade relations, and culture. The farmers-herders conflict in Northern Nigeria has affected states such as Benue, Nasarawa, Niger, the Federal Capital Territory,

Abuja, Kogi, Plateau, and Kwara with a lot of casualties, and other section of the country that has experienced the conflict are Anambra, Delta, Ukpabi Nimbo in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State, Ondo, Oyo, Ekiti, Osun, Abia, and Edo states respectively. This paper concludes that climate change remains one of the leading causes of the farmer-herder conflict in Northern Nigeria. Environmental factor such as climate change greatly affects the farmers' production capacity and the grazing of herders, which, thus became a threat to the peaceful cohabitation of these groups. The farmer-herder conflicts are so intense, and destructive, and have led to food scarcity. Open land grazing is another leading cause of farmer-herder conflicts that must be revisited and reviewed. The implications of the farmers-herders on the security architecture of Nigeria will be grievous if concrete steps are not taken to end the menace, because overall national security is at stake.

Authors contributions

Authors have contributed equally in preparing and writing the manuscript.

Availability of data and materials

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, upon reasonable request.

Conflict of interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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