



ADRRJ JOURNALS ([www.adrri.org](http://www.adrri.org))

E-ISSN: 2343-6891 VOL. 16, No. 6 (4), February, 2019

**Exploring the State of Human Insecurity in Nigeria: The Root Causes of The Farmers-Herdsmen Conflict in Benue State and Its Manifestation on The Livelihood of Rural Farmers and Pastoralists.**

David Suaka Yaro <sup>1</sup> and Tobias Tseer <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Development Education Studies, University for Development studies, Tamale, Ghana

Email: [davidsuaka37@gmail.com](mailto:davidsuaka37@gmail.com)/[dyaro@uds.edu.gh](mailto:dyaro@uds.edu.gh)

<sup>2</sup>Department of Social, Historic and Political Studies, University for Development studies, WA, Ghana. Email: [christ4me002@gmail.com](mailto:christ4me002@gmail.com)

<sup>1</sup>Correspondence: [geraldmunyoro@hotmail.com](mailto:geraldmunyoro@hotmail.com)

Available Online: 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

URL: <https://www.journals.adrri.org/>

[Cite article as: Yaro Suaka, D., and Tobias, T. (2019). **The Significance of Capital Formation on Agricultural Entrepreneurship Development in Zimbabwe: A Case Study of A1 Farmers in Mashonaland West Province.** ADRRI Journal of Arts and Social Sciences, Ghana: Vol. 16, No.5 (4), Pp.60-98, E-ISSN: 2343-6891, 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2019.]

**Abstract**

Benue state is one of the states in Nigeria, which is wrapped up in conflicts. The intermittent clashes between herdsmen and farmers in the state prompted the researcher to investigate the causes and effects of the conflicts in the state. To arrive at these, a mixed method approach was used where both qualitative and quantitative data was collected. Respondents were drawn from nine local governments which were affected by the conflict. Simple random sampling was used to select ten heads of communities from each Local Government. The total sample size stood at ninety (90) persons. The data gathered and analysed revealed that the rapid climatic changes, cattle rustling, religious and ethnic dichotomies and the scramble over cultivable and grazing fields were the main causes of the conflict which resulted in the death of over four thousand people, displacement of over half a million persons, gang rapes, rapes and the abduction of women as sex slaves. It was therefore recommended that the state should help farmers and herdsmen revitalize customary conflict resolution systems that made them co-existed peacefully prior to the advent of the conflict, and that the state should ensure human security through education, job opportunities and the increased physical presence of law enforcement agencies throughout the country.

**Keywords:** conflict, herdsmen, farmers, banditry, open-grazing

## INTRODUCTION

Conflict is found in every society (Collier and Boswinger, 2011). Nigeria as a nation has been a host to many conflicts. From the civil war of 1967 that nearly ripped it apart, through the woes of *Boko Haram* terrorism to the most recent Farmers-Fulani herdsmen altercation, there is nearly no one in Nigeria who has not experienced the bitter taste of war.

The wars in Nigeria are so confusing that sometimes one wonders who is fighting who. Apart from the civil war, which was a clear battle between regular armies and the Biafran rebels, other wars have had no clear-cut opponents but rather take the semblance of terrorism or insurgency. *Bokom Haram* had the agenda of Islamizing Nigeria but attacked some Muslims and destroyed mosques. Niger Delta Militants claimed to be fighting for a greater share of the oil resources that they host most of the wells, but remained impoverished for years but later resorted to rampant killing of civilians and kidnapping of expatriates for handsome ransoms instead. In North Central Nigeria, what began as a Christian-Muslim conflict later spiraled into a Fulani-Taroh conflict; (Taroh people are a minority tribe in Plateau state, North-Central Nigeria). The situation is so confusing. Sometimes it looks as if the attack is targeted at Muslims or Christians, other times, it looks as if the attack is an ethnic cleansing of one ethnic group by another, and other times too it looks like a selective murder of individuals along religious and ethnic lines. The most recent one however, is a clear clash between farmers and Fulani herdsmen, but has some religious undertones as the Fulanis are mostly Muslims and the farmers Christians.

Nigeria is federated by thirty-six states. About 186 million people occupy its vast land of about 923,768 square kilometres. The major tribes in Nigeria are Igbo,

Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba. The major religions in Nigeria are Islam, Christianity and African Traditional Religion. The Hausa-Fulanis are mostly Muslims and occupy the northern part of Nigeria while the southern part is Christian dominated. Central Nigeria has a mixture of Christians and Muslims. Over two million people died in the last decade from communal clashes between Muslims and Christians. From the deadly *Boko Haram* insurgency to the Fulani herdsmen's massacre, the number of casualties has been voluminous. The Christian-Muslim conflicts and the *Boko Haram* insurgency found fertile grounds in the North, while the farmers-herders conflict was scattered over the country but concentrated in Benue state.

Benue state has a population of about 4,253,641 (National Population Commission, 2010). The land is surrounded by water from one of the largest rivers in Nigeria. Its fertile land coupled with the availability of water all year round makes the state attractive to both farmers and herdsmen (Adamu and Ben, 2017). Benue state happens to be one of the states in central Nigeria that host a lot of agricultural activities. Its inhabitants call it 'The Food Basket of the Nation'. About 80% of Nigerians living in Benue state are employed in the agricultural sector. Many are farmers while others are pastoralists (Gangum, 2018). In the past, these two groups co-existed without any problems. In recent times, however, the hitherto harmonious co-existence became acrimonious.

Benue state has been wrapped in a series of conflicts since the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorate zones by the colonial masters in 1914. Initially the region itself was divided into North and South (Adamu and Ben, 2017). It is noteworthy that Tiv people have been involved in other fights with their neighbours in states that border Benue. The recurrent fight between Tiv and

Jukuns saw some attacks launched in some villages in Benue State. Tiv people have also been involved in fights with other ethnic groups like Alago, Mada, and Migili all in Nasarawa State.

The most recent fracas involving Benue indigenes (mostly Tivs) and another group is the Farmer-herders conflict. There have been fierce and bloody attacks and reprisal attacks between these two groups. Fulanis accuse local farmers of blocking their grazing routes and cultivating their grazing fields. The Farmers also accuse the Fulani herdsmen of destroying their farmlands, raping their women and destroying their sources of drinking water by allowing their animals to drink from the same rivers that they drink from. These accusations and counter accusations have led to fierce clashes between the two groups. On March 12, 2016, Agatu stole the headlines of many dailies in Nigeria. About 500 people were massacred by Fulani herdsmen and 7000 others displaced (Punch, 2016).

The research therefore investigates the causes and effects of the farmers-herders conflict in Benue State. The research also looks at the open grazing prohibition and ranch establishment policy in Benue State and draws a correlation between the implementation of the policy and the escalation of attacks. The paper addresses the central question: what are the causes and the effects of the farmers-herders conflict in Benue State and its manifestations on the social and economic lives of the people of Benue State?

The central objective is to determine the causes and the effects of the farmers-herders conflict in Benue State and its manifestations on the social and economic lives of the people of Benue State in Nigeria.

### **Theoretical Frame Work**

Conflict occurs when two or more parties pursue different interests or goals through actions that the parties try to undertake or damage one another. These parties could be individuals, groups or countries. The parties' interests can differ over access to their ideology or identity and values, resources, the political control or traditional power. The dream of these needs and interests of people can lead to conflict. When two groups or individuals such as family different interests and needs which may be religious, cultural, political, economic, social, they can engage in conflict which can be violent and bloody.

The paper used the following theories to explain the nature of the conflict, frustration-aggression theory of Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, and Scars (1939) and the theory of identity politics by Mary Kaldor (2004) provides a framework for understanding the farmers-herdsmen conflict in Benue state. Frustration-aggression is briefly used in the Fulani and the farmers conflict in the Benue State in Nigeria as follows: the herdsmen see themselves to be frustrated in terms of the farmers rustling or killing their cattle without proper redress from the state or federal governments. This triggers aggression and creates a common feeling of revenge amongst fulanis who then identify themselves in terms of herdsmen line and resolve to fight back another group who identify themselves as farmers. This made the case to be serious and emanated to a full bloody conflict. Frustration can be illustrated as the non fulfillment of an expected gratification, the instigation to aggression produced by a frustration is an inclination to hostile or angry and not instrumental aggression. The objections to this theory holding their only subjective or illegitimate, frustrations produce aggressive reactions and that only controllable and intentional misdeeds give rise to anger are then

examined. Evidence is reported showing that frustrations can create instigation to aggression, even when they are not arbitrary or intentionally directed at the person(s). Frustrations produce aggressive inclinations only to the extent that they give rise to negative effects.

Identity politics is a movement that mobilizes around ethnic, racial or religious identity for the purpose of claiming state power. Identity politics refers to “the claim to power on the basis of a particular identity is it national, clan, religious or linguistic” (Kaldor, 2004: 6). In line with this, farmers also accused the herdsmen of destroying their crops, contaminating sources of drinking water, raping their women and young girls and inhabiting lands which do not belong to them. The herdsmen also accused farmers of cultivating on crazing routes, rustling or killing their cattle and cultivating grazing lands. This made both communities to be aggressive and Identified themselves in terms of Fulani community and the farmer’s community which led to the bloody conflict in the Benue State in Nigeria. An observation was made that farmers complained of crop destruction, contaminations of stream by the cattle, disregard for traditional authority, over grazing of fallow lands, sexual harassment of women by nomads (Fulanis) and theft of farm produce in Benue. These accusations and counter accusations led to fierce clashes between the two groups.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a mixed method approached where both qualitative data and quantitative data was collected. Quantitative data were collected through survey with the use of questionnaires while qualitative data was collected through interviews with the use of interview guides. The data for the research was gathered from both primary and secondary sources.

Primary data were obtained from a field survey which covered all the affected local governments in Benue state. Respondents were drawn from eight local governments which were affected by the conflict in Keana, a Local Government in Nasarawa was included because at the time of the study, many Fulanis (herdsmen) had moved there to stay following the implantation of the open grazing prohibition and ranch established policy by the Benue state Government. The inclusion of Keana brought the number of affected local governments to nine (9). A quota of ten (10) respondents was assigned to each Local Government. The List of affected communities from each local government was obtained from the Benue Sate Emergency Management Agency. The head of each community in every affected local government was a possible respondent. Simple random sampling was used to select ten heads of communities from each Local Government including Keana. The total sample size stood at ninety (90). The distribution of the respondents according to the nine local Governments is shown in the table below.

**Table 1. The distribution of respondents according to their communities and**

s/n	Local Government Areas	Affected Communities	Total number of Community Heads selected
1	Agatu	13	10
2	Buruku	3	10
3	Guma	12	10
4	Gwer East	6	10
5	Gwer West	1	10
6	Kwande	4	10
7	Logo	20	
8	Makurdi	2	10
9	Keana	NA	10
	<b>Total</b>		<b>90</b>

**Local Government Areas****Source: Author's Construct**

The table above shows that ten (10) persons were randomly selected from the affected Local Government Areas (LGAs) bringing the total sample size to ninety (90). Twenty-one (21) key informants (KIs) were purposively selected because they were perceived to have in depth knowledge about the subject matter; the Chairmen of Guma Logo Local Government, Five (5) members of the Benue State Chapter of Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MCBAN), Five members of the Miyetti Cattle Breeders *kautalHore* five (5) members of the Christian Association of Nigeria Benue Chapter, five (5) members of the Benue



All Farmers Association and the CEO of the Benue State Emergency Management Agency were interviewed.

Data gathered during the survey and interviews was complemented by extensive literature reviews on topics on herdsmen-farmers conflicts and conflicts in general. The review provided an inner understanding into the global and local dynamics of the problem. Relevant materials were also collected from the media.

### **Causes of the Farmers-Herders Conflicts**

#### **Cattle Rustling**

When one goes through media reports, one is likely to conclude that herders are just uncivilized, barbaric people who are just out to kill and destroy farmers in order to take over their farms for grazing fields. The findings of the study, however, contradict this popular notion fertilized and promoted by the media. The bias media reports against herders have pitched herders against so many people and warn them no sympathy at all because their stories hardly come to limelight. Jibrin and Kop'ep (2016) alluded to this fact when they condemned the media for skewed reportage and promoting hate speech. Cattle rustling came up strongly as one of the main causes of the intractable farmers-herders conflict. As soon as the relationship between the Farmers and herders became soured, criminal elements from both divide took advantage of the situation and began to rustle cattle. Many herders admitted to losing thousands of cattle to bandits. At the beginning, this began as a form revenge for defenceless farmers whose crops were destroyed by armed herders; however, with time it became sophisticated and served as a source of income for many.

Kyari and Alimba (2013) observed that in February of 2013, not less than twenty-three thousand herders were displaced into Cameroun by Bandits after rustling their cattle. Bandits syndicated, attacked and rustled cattle rustled from herders who were unprotected and defenceless. Many alleged that there was a ready market in Makurdi, the capital of Benue state for rustled cattle. Egwu (2016) argued that cattle rustling is a lucrative 'business' across the globe and there are often ready markets for them. Jibrin and Kop'ep (2016) observed that in 2014 alone about 300 herders were killed and 700 cattle rustled while a thousand others displaced. These acts of banditry are made possible and easier because of the massive proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Africa. Statistics on such issues is often difficult to come by in Africa, but the Center for Democratic Development (CDD) in Abuja; Nigeria managed to discover that there are about seven hundred to eight hundred million small arms and light weapons in West Africa alone and the majority of them find themselves into Nigeria (Egwu, 2016). This makes criminals acts such as banditry and armed robbery easier. It also accounts for the numerous ethno-religious clashes that has become a basic characteristic of the Nigerian weak state or perhaps has contributed in weakening the state. The herders were sometimes attacked at night or during the daytime as they shepherd their herds and were either killed or beaten and their herds rustled away. To ensure security for themselves, the herders began to arm themselves as they shepherded their flocks. They resorted to self-defence; this can be deduced from the response of one of the KI who was a Fulani.

*They attack and kill our people and rustle our cows without any reasons and we are being treated as if we are not Nigerians and as if livestock rearing is least important than*

*farming thus our resolve to defend ourselves. The media is also silent on the casualties suffered by the herdsmen. They look at us as animals, the state government and the farmers and the media are all teamed against us. Just last week the Military attacked and killed six of our men and 350 cows along Gwer local government of Benue state. No one has said anything, but if a Fulani kills a single farmer, the story will be everywhere”*

The phenomenon of cattle rustling is not new but has become sophisticated. In the past, pastoralist raided each other to replenish herds which were depleted by drought, endemic or other natural disasters (Adam and Pkalya, 2005). The phenomenon, however, received a boost as Nigeria headed into recession and means of livelihood became leaner. It is said that desperate times call for desperate measures, but not at the expense of another right to life and property. The Fulanis who constitute 90% of Nigerian herders do not see the herds just as a means of livelihood but also as representative of their economic, social and cultural identities. Losing their herds means losing their social status and their identities. Kyari and Mohammed found out in 2016 that many of those who lost their herds to rustlers became physically sick, died or suffered from one form of mental illness or the other. The twist is that herders did not quite differentiate farmers from armed bandits because they felt the bandits were fighting for the farmers, so when bandits attacked and rustle their cows, they attacked and killed farmers without discriminating between farmers and bandits. Benue State became their targets for varied reasons. Apart from the fact that they felt Makurdi, the capital of Benue State provided ready markets for their rustled herds, herders were irked by the apparent threat of been displaced from Benue by the implementation of the anti-open grazing policy formulated by the Benue

State government. These made Benue state the epicenter of the farmers-herders conflict. According to the National Secretary of the Miyetti Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria, that herders had lost over two million cows to rustlers in the last two years and most of which ended up in trucks to Makurdi to be transported to the southern part of the country. The media remained mute on some of these. See also Egwu (2016).

### **Nature of the Conflict**

The conflict started between herders and farmers on a low key. It spawned and ebbed within varied times. Initially, the traditional system of conflict resolution in such villages was functional. Conflicts were therefore settled using the customary systems of conflict resolution which often took the forms of reparation and retribution. As time passed, the institution became weak. Egwu (2016) thinks the breakdown of this customary governance institution created way for bandits to come in and perpetrate their agendas. Banditry was once seen as a show of bravery and love for one's nation. People who felt discriminated by a system could come out and fight not just for themselves but for their entire nation or clan. Hobsawn 1959 cited in Alimba and Kyari (2015) called this social banditry. It was from this concept that the modern banditry which is terroristic, thievery and destructive sprout out. The group began to attack the Fulani herdsmen in the name of defending farmers. The attacks increased in scope and frequency with the passage of time as decent means of livelihood became shirked due to a declining economy. The attacks occurred in rural areas where the presence of regular security personnel is almost absent. Bandits attack herders at dawn when all the herds have been assembled at a point after grazing the previous day. They come with heavy arms which outweighs those of herders. They shoot

and kill those who try to resist and rustle their cattle away. Survey results revealed that Bandits rustled mostly cattle may be because they are easy to control and fetch more income as compare to goats or sheep. The absence of security in these rural areas makes it easy for bandits to operate with free hands. Sometimes bandits would attack herdsmen in the field as they shepherd their flock and rustle the cattle away. These attacks often sparked revenge attacks. The revenge attacks are always targeted at local farmers. Herders attacked and killed indiscriminately, young and old, men and women disabled and abled without recourse to the laws of the land. The table below summarizes the spates of attacks by herdsmen in Benue State alone between 2013-2018.

**Table 1.0: Number of people Killed in Benue State by Fulani Herdsmen between January 2017 –July 2018**

Date	Village	LGA	Nature of Attack	Attackers	Victims	Number of people Killed
24/1/17	Ipiga	Ohimini	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	28
2/3/2017	Mbahimin	GwerWest	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	10
11/3/2017	Mkovur	Buruku	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	7
12/3/2017	Mkovur	Buruku	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	7
13-19/3/17	Mkovur	Buruku	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	50
4/4/2017	Nzaar, Ikyogwen,Alaba,and Moore	Kwande	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	10

21/4/17	Tse-ugbaUker	Gwer West	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	3
8/5/2017	Tse-Akaa,Tse-Orlalu	Logo	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	10
16/7/17	North-Bank	Makurdi	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Residents	7
10/8.17	Akpagogbo	Otukpo	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	3
2/1/2018	Ayilamo, Gambetiev,Turan	Logo	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	50
6/1/2018	Ayilamo, Gambetiev,Turan	Logo	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	16
6/1/2018		Guma	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	7
18/1/18		Guma	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	6
25/1/18		Guma	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	2
4/2/2018		Guma	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	2
9/2/2018	Anyiin	Logo	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	3
12/2/2018	Kasseyo	Guma	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	2
5/3/2018	Umange	Guma	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	5
5/3/2018	Okpokwu	Otukpo	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	26
15/3/18		Guma	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	3

			Viilage	herdsmen	Farmers	
26/3/18	Agatu	Agatu	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	5
22/3/18		Guma	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	2
5/4/2018		Gwer West	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	10
10/4/2018	Ukum	Logo	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	57
19/4/18		Gwer East	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	19
21/4/18		Guma	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	22
24/4/18	Ayar-Mballom	Gwer West	Attack on a Church	Fulani herdsmen	Two priests with 15 others	17
16/5/18	Ukem	Logo	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	3
18/5/18	Mbatombo	Gwer West	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	6
20/5/18	Tseke	Logo	Ambush	Fulani herdsmen	Travellers	2
21/5/18	Mchia	Logo	Attack on a Viilage	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	5
22/5/18	Markuid-Naka Road	Makurdi	Ambush	Fulani herdsmen	Travellers	2
20/5/18	Anyiin-Ayilamo Road	Logo	Ambush	Fulani herdsmen	Military	2
26/5/18	Tse-shitenger	Guma	Attack on a	Fulani	Local	2

			village	herdsmen	Farmers	
31/5/18	Anyiin-Akpana Road	Logo	Ambush	Fulani herdsmen	IMilitary	1
3/6/2018	Tse-Adough	Kwande	Attack on a village	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	8
8/6/2018	Adai	Guma	Attach on a village	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	15
11/6/2018	Tse-AuduAmo,Te- Akombo,Mobile Barracks		Attack on a Village	Fulani herdsmen	Local Farmers	5

**Source: Field Survey, 2018**

The table above revealed that most of the victims of the herdsmen attacks were local farmers. Militaries deployed to check the incessant attacks under the caption ‘Operation Whirl Stroke’ were occasionally attacked and killed. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of June 2018, herdsmen ambushed the Military in Guma LGA, shot and killed two personnel and injured the unit Commander (Duru 2018). Such attacks were occasional; those who were mostly attacked were local farmers. Most of the attacks were launched in the night or at dawn when farmers were asleep. Adamu and Ben (2017) observed that Hausa-Fulani herdsmen have used various weapons, tactics and strategies to kill, injure, abduct and displaced farmers from their homes. In Benue state alone, it was observed that between January 2017 to June 2018, 4194 farmers were killed while 24, 148 others were displaced.

From the respondents *“They connive with criminals and steal our cows, our cows are to us what their farms are to them so if they don’t want us to destr0y their farms, why steal our cows, between 2013 -2018, more than 10 000 of our cows have been rustled in*



*this state alone, close to 2000 herdsmen were killed in the attacks. No media reported this because we are not human beings. It is not only here that our cattle have been stolen. Herdsmen in Nasarawa, Plateau, Adamawa, Kaduan and the other surrounding states have suffered the same fate; Markurdi is the market for most of the rustled cows. To make things worse, the Benue state Government has started implementing the open grazing prohibition and ranch establishment law. This means no cow can graze freely in Benue state. They however know that our method of grazing cannot fit into what they are prescribing; they have just created a legal ground to exterminate us and our cattle. They are envious of our wealth. They know very well that Benue state is the route we pass to the southern part of the country. Many of our people are unaware of this law so they would just fall victim. The law in a way permits Benue people to steal our cows or kill them at will in the name of implementing the policy. We do not attack without first of all being unprovoked, when you hear of any attack, then know that it is a revenge attack”.*

Given as it may, the destruction caused by Fulani herdsmen to farmers is too obtrusive. The conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Benue has been asymmetrical. While Fulani herdsmen possess sophisticated weapons and ammunitions, farmers rely on locally manufactured guns and machetes that cannot match those of the herdsmen.

### **Effects of the Conflicts**

The causes of the protracted farmers-herders conflict are traceable to climatic and demographic changes, cattle rustling and religious and ethnic bigotries. The effects of these conflicts are however unquantifiable (Best, 2008). People are killed, children are slaughtered or orphaned, men and women widowed, wives separated from their husbands and husbands from their wives. Families are

rendered homeless and the youth hopeless. Besides, Benue State is arguably the food production hub of Nigeria. Many Nigerians who come from this region are directly or indirectly employed in the agricultural sector. Most of these attacks happen when people are in the farms or farmstead. If people fear to be killed while in remote locations, definitely, many would abandon their farms. This would definitely lead to unemployment, heightened poverty, hunger and famine. The data gathered revealed the following as the major effects of the Farmers-Herders conflict in Benue State.

- **Loss of Lives and Properties**

In any wars, casualties are always recorded. People are killed and properties destroyed. The case of Benue is particular worst because many of those attacked were relatively poor, economically deprived and socially isolated. Apart from their farms or cattle, they had no any other source of livelihood. Local farmers suffered the most casualties as they had no sophisticated weapons to match those of the herdsman and were mostly taken unawares. The table below reveals the number of casualties and houses that were razed down in each of the Local Governments.

**Table 3: Number of people Killed, houses Burnt and Cattle Killed or Rustled between 2013-2018 in Benue State**

LGA	No. of farmers killed	No. of herders killed	No. of Houses Burnt	No. of Cattle Rustled/Killed
Agatu	102	4	7,663	209
Guma	1501	2	63800	301
Gwer East	21	1	501	45

Gwer West	801	5	42,012	53
Katsina-Ala	102	0	11600	5
Kwande	81	0	21500	8
Logo	215	6	2901	23
Makurdi	501	4	25702	167
Keana	50	11	312	39
Tarka	52	0	67	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3426</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>176058</b>	<b>850</b>

*Source: Field Survey complemented by documents from the Benue State Emergency Management Unit, Christian Association of Nigeria Benue and Miyetti Allah cattle breeders of Nigeria; Benue state Chapter.*

About 3426 farmers were killed as compared to 33 herdsmen. Farmers also had about 176058 of their houses razed down. About 850 cattle were either killed or rustled. Guma local government suffered the most casualties. This is probably because Guma is one of the largest Local Governments in Benue state with most of its farmer population scattered in several farming communities. Their system of settlement makes them easy prey for the attackers because they are scattered in far removed farmsteads which makes it difficult to access even if security outpost is to be stationed there. Their houses are mostly thatch-roofed houses built with bricks. This makes it easily consumed by fires. Their income levels can hardly meet their demands let alone buying weapons for self-defense. When herdsmen attack, they are easily overcome. The study revealed that Fulani herdsmen used sophisticated weapons from hand-held rifles to Ak 47s. But sometimes they choose not to waste their ammunitions on defenceless farmers. They simply hack

them down with their double-edge machetes. Where they encountered any resistance, they resort to their sophisticated weapons and get the deed done.

**Picture 1: Mass Burial of farmers killed by Herdsmen at Mballom, Gwer West**



**Source: Media reportage**

The fall of Libya opened the gate for arms to filter into other Africa countries particularly in West Africa. The Tuareg rebels who fought along Gadhafi later transported those arms into Mali, where if not for the intervention of the French troops, the whole of Mali would have fallen. Mali is home to many Fulani herders, some of whom often migrate into Nigeria. Survey results revealed that weapons are moved into Benue from Mali and other neighbouring countries by tying them up on cows or donkey backs in sacks and heavy clothing as the herders move along with their herds. They crossed unchecked because transhumance is normal with herders and so no security subjects them to checks when they crossing. This corroborates the findings of Adam and Ben (20170) when they found out that Fulani herders transported their weapons using

donkeys and cows and that most of those who attacked and killed farmers were not herders but mercenaries who came from other countries like Mali, Chad, Central African Republic. Besides fighting for arable land, the conflict later took religious coloration. Respondents who were Christians alleged that members of the deadly *Boko Haram* who were dislodged from the North by regular armies later infiltrated into the Fulani herders to help kill farmers in exchange for cash.



**Picture 1: Burnt Houses of Farmers in Gwer West**

Source: Field Work

- **Displacement**

The conflict has displaced many people and rendered many homeless. Herders were also displaced, but since they are transhumance by nature, most of them have resettled in neighbouring states like Nasarawa and Adamawa. One of the KI revealed this in an interview

*“Many of our people are forced to relocate from Benue. More than 10 million cattle have been moved to the neighbouring states because of the conflict. The Government has also passed a law if we don’t move they will use legal technicalities to kill our cattle. Some of them are envy of us. They just want to possess our possessions. We have left their lands for them but we shall be back”*

The survey also revealed that many farmers have been displaced by the conflict, over 300 000 people are believed to be living in camps set up for IDs in Makurdi and other part of the state. The table below summarize the statistics of internally displaced persons within Benue.

**Table 4: Number of people displaced between Jan 2015- July 2018**

LGA	No.farmers Displaced	No.Herders Displaced
Agatu	3212	217
Guma	1012	314
Gwer East	3466	122
Gwer West	4566	78
Katsina	2233	308
Kwande	4132	132
Logo	5320	123
Makurdi	4234	301
<b>Total</b>	<b>28175</b>	<b>1595</b>

**Source: Field Survey: 2018**

About 28175 farmers were displaced; some went to IDPs camps set by the government others too went to squad with relatives in some other places within and outside the state. Other people relocated completely with no hope of coming back. Ben and Adam (2017) emphasized the fact that sometimes the herdsmen unleashed terror on farmers so much so that they resolve never to return to their old settlement even though that is their ancestral home. More people were

displaced in Logo than any other Local Government. This is because Logo has few major towns most of the population is spread into the hinterland for farming purposes. This makes it difficult for any defense system to be mounted against the Fulani herdsmen. Farmers could not defend themselves let alone attacking the herdsmen. The few casualties suffered by the herdsmen were orchestrated by cattle rustlers and some security personnel who were deployed at flash points under 'operation whirl stroke' to curb the attacks on farmers. The 1595 herdsmen who were displaced were not displaced because they feared to be attacked by farmers alone. Most of them relocated because of the anti-open grazing policy which was being implemented by the Governor at that time. The policy prohibits open grazing and offenders were to be arrested and prosecuted. Fulanis are transhumance and cannot practice the ranch system which was being proposed by the law so most of them had to relocate to other places to be able to practice their free range system of rearing their animals. The implementation of the law was one of the things that angered them and they resolved to destroy Benue. A KI revealed this during an interview

*"Most of us were borne here. Our parents lived and died here. We grazed our animals here. All of a sudden, they are finding a technical way of driving us away. We were given till 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2017 to put our animals into ranches; ranches which were not given. States like Kaduna, Bauchi, and Oyo which attempted this type of law had established grazing reserves. In the case of Benue State, there was nothing like this. We were simply told to comply with the law or simply relocate. It was a grand plan to get us out. We left. I know families who lost half of their cattle to rustlers as they were relocating to other states. Some lost their family members in addition to countless cattle. All these must have*



*angered some of them who have now embarked on a revenge mission. If you ask me the cause of the conflict, my first answer will be that the state government”.*

Ahmed-Gangum (2017), however, contradicts this statement when his findings revealed that public sensitization and education on the scope of the open grazing prohibition and ranch establishment law was given and that in addition the state gave a six-month grace period for everyone to come to terms with the law before its implementation.



**Picture 2. Displaced Women Moving with their few Possessions to IDPs Camp in Makurdi**

Source: Field Survey

- **Violence Against Women**

The general breakdown of law and order that is associated with conflicts often exposed women to mass rape, military sexual slavery, forced marriages, multiple rapes and gang rapes, forced prostitution and the exchange of sex for favors like food, shelter or protection (WHO, 1997 cited in Adam and Ben, 2017). Violence against women has been a weapon of war in many conflict situations in Africa, see (walker, S. 2003, WHO, 2001, Ravindran S, 2007). That the Congolese Doctor, Denis Mukwege won the 2018 Noble Peace prize along Nadia Murad, a Yazidi activist, for campaigning against violence against women during wars shows just how pervasive the situation is. In the case of the Benue conflicts, women were subjected to various forms of violence from rape to torture and murder. The survey results revealed the various forms of violence which women were subjected to during the conflicts. Respondents were to choose between six options which were gang rape, multiple rape, assault, murder, forced marriage and abduction. Thirty-seven respondents mentioned that women were raped multiple times; another sixteen (16) mentioned that women were gang-raped; twenty-one others mentioned that women were abducted and subsequently killed. All ninety (90) respondents mentioned that during attacks, women and children were indiscriminately killed. The results of interviews with the KIs also revealed that there was no discrimination during raids; women and children were killed along with the men. Some of the women were raped to death while others were simply hacked down, some too were abducted and taken to bush and tied on trees and allowed to cry to death. The finding corroborates that of Ben and Adams (2017) even though they looked at it on one side only, they found out that Christian women were killed, raped, abducted and some

enslaved. Some were forced to carry the herders' cache of arms and follow them as they walked in the bush killing and abducting more women. Best (2018) also found out that young girls as young as twelve were raped and killed during attacks and some were abducted in their farms and taken away.

- **Psychological Problems**

Besides physical problems like permanent injuries or disabilities, separation from parents, wives, children and love ones and the loss of cohesive social systems that existed prior to the wars, victims of war suffer varying psychological problems from depression to trauma. The sight of relatives being hacked down helplessly and that of helpless relatives being abducted, raped or beaten remain alive in victims' mind for long. This humiliating experience decreases self-worth and self-esteem. Some subsequently experience depression, trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder, and phobia among other mental conditions. Other psychological effects of war may be suicide, shame, mistrust, revenge, substance abuse and a complete withdrawal from society. Respondents admitted to have experienced some of these conditions. Fifty-five (55) respondents admitted that they experience phobia; they keep having a feeling that someone may attack them at any moment, even if there is no real possibility that such would happen. Another thirty-one (31) persons admitted to have gone through shame and guilt, depression, hopelessness, and general sense of defeat. Twenty-one (21) respondents admitted to have contemplated suicide and of this number, five actually attempted suicide. The psychological effects of conflicts are sometimes more devastating to society than the physical harm in itself. In male dominated societies like those of Benue, the continuous frustration of men may lead to increased domestic violence against women and children at home. The desire for

revenge may make such conflicts trans-generational; the economic and social consequences of which may be immeasurable. A KI narrates his ordeal as this;

*“They came at dawn, I was asleep with my wife and the children were also in their separate rooms. We have a system of keeping all the girls in one room and the boys too in another room. When we heard the gunshots everyone run out and we took different directions. They shot indiscriminately and killed two of my eldest children right before my eyes, they abducted my wife and she kept calling me. Some of the children managed to escape but were chased and shot dead. Some of the girls also tried to escape some made it but some could not make it and so fell to the bullet of the Fulani man. My two daughters were abducted raped and killed. My wife, till today I have not heard from her again. Of about twenty-two (22) family members, we are now nine (9) left. I have attempted killing myself several times but my brothers would not let me do it. Of what purpose is life to me? What is my used when I could not help my wife who was shouting my name as she was abducted by the marauding herdsmen?”*

### **Efforts Made by the Federal and State Government to Resolve the Conflict.**

Nigeria Practices a federal system of Government where powers are shared among the central, state and local governments. Fundamentally, federalism is about the sharing of public power; powers are assigned to the federal, state and local government by the provision of a constitution. Like Russia, the Nigerian federalism assigns more powers to the Federal government than the state and local government. When it comes to security, the federal government has exclusive control over the security services in Nigeria. No state has its police or military services. These are exclusively controlled by the federal government.

The local government is the nearest to the people. The customary governance institutions constitute part of the local government. The constitution makes provision for both the federal and local governments to protect the lives of citizens and safeguard their constitutional rights. Security of lives and properties is paramount if the state is to remain united and sovereign as provided by the constitution. For instance, section 17 (3) stipulates that citizens, without discrimination on any group whatsoever, have the opportunity of securing adequate means of livelihood as well as adequate opportunities to secure suitable employment'. This means that both farmers and herdsmen have the right to their livelihood. However, one's rights ends where another begins. The same constitution makes provision for the ownership of private property and so both farmers and herders have the right to the food crops and herds respectively.

The conflict between farmers and herders had always existed and was almost always settled by the customary institutions of governance like chieftaincy and traditional justice systems. The conflicts, however, rose above these customary institutions. As the institutions became emasculated with the passage of time, the farmer-herders conflicts in Nigeria rather became sophisticated and complex.

To tackle the farmer-herders altercation across Nigeria, the Federal Government (FG) established the National Livestock Production Project (NLPP) with support from the World Bank to facilitate the process of sedentarising herdsmen and reducing or obliterating transhumancy across Nigeria. A 121,762-hectare plot of land was ear marked at Jangali, in Kaduna for the establishment of a modern grazing reserve. Moneys were spent on demarcation, fire protection and water development (Awogbade, 1987). In 1976 the FG passed a grazing law to get

herders settled and acquire land titles, access education and health care services. The cost was shared in the ratio 50:25 between states that had grazing reserves and the Federal Government. Grazing reserves were later established in Bauchi, Adamawa, Oyo and Jigawa states (Awogbade, 1987 cited in Egwu, 2016). It was a nice initiative by the FG, but as observed by Egwu (2015), unlike what grazing reserves are in other African States like Tanzania and Kenya, the Nigerian grazing reserves lacked production units, financial support, dams, dips, veterinary clinics, drugs, laws against encroaching or setting reserves on fire, supplementary feeds, market outlets and accessible roads. The idea of a grazing reserve was excellent, but the implementation was poorly done. This failed to get herders sedentarising farmers as they continued to ply between the northern and southern zones rotationally; a movement largely dictated by ecological factors. The fertile lands along the Benue basins became particularly attractive to farmers and herders alike. The states along the Benue River also serve as a transitional route between the North and South. As herders moved along grazing routes which were not officially gazetted, they sometimes lost control of their herds which destroyed farmers beautifully sprouting crops. In retaliation, farmers attacked and killed their herds as a form of vengeance. Such incidences increased over time as the population soared and farms got expanded and grazing fields and routes taken or encroached. To curb the situation some states along the Benue River formulated the open grazing prohibition and ranch establishment policy; a policy which pushed the conflicts to its highest height from its start.

### **The Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranch Establishment Policy**

To check the incidences of clashes between farmers and herders, the Governor of Benue State in 2017 initiated a bill that will criminalize open grazing and push for the establishment of ranches across the state. The bill went through the state parliament and was subsequently passed into law in May, 2017 and was to be effected 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2017. According to the state government, adequate consultations were made before the law was passed, there was a public hearing and people were allowed to make inputs and recommendations were made to the House of Assembly before the bill was finally amended and passed into law (Gang-gum, 2018). The overall purpose of the law was to (i) to prevent the destruction of crops by herders through open grazing (ii) prevent sporadic clashes between herders and farmers (iii) protect the environment from degradation and pollution caused by open grazing (iv) maximize land use in the face of soaring population and increased acquisition of arable land for public projects (v) prevent and control the spread of livestock diseases so as to standardize the quality of livestock for international markets and (vi) to ensure large scale crop production. The implementation authority for the implementation of the law was vested in the Livestock Department of Benue State Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources. A special taskforce which was made of a group of volunteers known as the Livestock and Community Volunteer Guards was constituted to enforce the implementation of the Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranch Establishment Law 2017 (Kwaja and Ademola, 2017). The law provided that ranches could be established to replace the traditional system of open grazing which herders were already familiar with. The process of obtaining a license to establish a ranch was however made stiffer

for non-indigenes than indigenes. Indigenes could simply established ranches on their lands but a potential rancher who is not an indigene of Benue must submit an application to establish a ranch. This application must go through an environmental impact assessment and other assessments and must be approved by the landowner, the clans head or the head of the family and the Chairman of the Traditional Counsel in the Local Government which the prospecting rancher wishes to establish the ranch. When all these requirements are met, then the said application can be submitted to the office of the Governor for approval (Kwaja and Ademola, 2017). Approved applications remain privileges; the ranch owners have no land titles. The lands still belong to the governor of the state and that licenses for the operation of ranches are renewable annually (Gang-gum, 2018).

The law generated a lot of controversy. The Fulanis constitute 98% of herders in Benue state and they are mostly taken to be non-indigenes because they or their parents migrated to settle there. The interpretation being that the law, intentionally targeted this group of people to have them leave Benue State. The two main herders' association, the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders of Nigeria (MCBAN) and the Miyetti Allah *KautalHore* strongly opposed the implementation of the law citing the fact that it was discriminatory and against their freedom of movement. Kwaja and Ademola, (2017) also agreed that the law was discriminatory and had the potential of coming into to conflicts with federal legislation which recognizes the rights of citizens to settle and own properties wherever they desire within Nigeria. Gangum (2018) disagrees with then but uphold the position of the Benue state government that the free movement of cattle around Benue violates farmers right to property and safety as herders destroy food crops, drinking water, kill and rape innocent farmers. The Miyetti



Allah Cattle Breeders of Nigeria and the Miyetti Allah KautalHore argue that the implementation of the Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranch Establishment law was a recipe for anarchy. The results from the survey revealed that the attacks from herdsmen increased astronomically after the implementation of the law. Respondents were to select between among options to measure the frequency of attacks before and after the implementation of the Policy, these included 'number of communities attacked before 2018, number of communities attacked in 2018, number of people killed before 2018, number of people killed in 2018, and the number of people displaced before and after 2018. Fifty-seven (57) respondents indicated that more communities were attacked and more people killed in 2018 after the law came into effect than in 2017 before the implementation of the law. Another thirty (38) persons admitted that more people moved out of their villages in 2018 than in 2017.

Interview results corroborated the survey results. Most of the KIs admitted that Benue saw more blood in 2018 than in 2017. One of them puts it this way

*"...I think when they were forced to leave in compliance with the law, they went and hired mercenaries to come and kill local farmers. They law came into effect by November 2018, there was relative calm, but this was short-live. By March when farming activities were set to resume, the herdsmen began to attack and slaughter farmers in their homes, farms, during the funeral of a slaughtered relative and almost anywhere they could find defenseless farmers. As for this year, many people did not farm. Many of them in the affected communities are either with relatives or in IDPs camps. This year has been*

*terrible. If not because the Federal Government was pressured to deploy more troops, am sure half of Benue would have fallen to the terrorists”*

### **Negligence by the Federal Government**

The Federal Government initially opposed the implementation of the open grazing prohibition and the establishment of ranches law and rather proposed the establishment of grazing reserves and grazing routes instead. As noted by Adamu and Ben (2018) critics accused the federal government of taking sides in the farmers-herdsmen conflicts. In Nigeria, primordial identities remain very important. Critics felt because the current president of Nigeria is a Fulani so he was reluctant to intervene in the conflicts since the Fulani men were recording successes in their attacks. Some have alluded to the fact that the federal troops, which were deployed to ward off the herders were mostly Hausa-fulanis and they watch their clansmen attack and killed innocent Christian farmers with impunity. The criticism of the negligence of the Federal Government went beyond just the Benue state after the Inspector General of Police visited one of the affected communities and came on air to deny the protracted farmer-herders conflict but instead labelled it as communal clashes between farming communities. This denial irked many Nigerians and the traditional and social media was filled with angry reactions of Nigerians especially those who were Christians. The last attacked on Mballom where two priests and their congregants were killed attracted more condemnation both locally and internationally. Solidarity marches were organized across the nation as a mass burial was organized for the victims. Political opponents were quick to swipe in so that they could score political points. This necessitated the visit of the

president to Benue state and the subsequent deployment of more troops which were drawn from all the security services in Nigeria, the combined efforts of the forces has pushed the herdsmen out of Benue and calm is gradually returning to the state and people are searching their way back to their ancestral lands were they were forced to flee (Nwafor, 2018)

## CONCLUSIONS

The Farmers-Herders conflict is as old as the first meeting of the two groups. That farmers cultivate food crops and herder rare herbivores animals makes it almost impossible that at some points or the other, red lines would not be crossed. In the past these issues were largely ignored or settled by the use of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. With large scale social disorganization, the customary governance institution has been broken down. Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms are now largely inadequate to address simple issues like herds eating up some portion of a farmer's food crops, cattle polluting drinking water, farmers encroaching grazing routes among others. Apart from increasing desertification and other climatic conditions which herders and farmers have no control over, the other issues like farm invasion and contamination of drinking water serve as vessels for people to vent out deep seated social, political and economic variance like religion, indigene-settler dichotomy and political affiliations among others. These are obverted by physical or verbal attacks, destruction of lives and properties, displacement of persons and a denial of rights and privileges as seen in the case of the farmers-herders conflict. The deployment of police and military to calm such situations is largely inadequate because political and religious commentators always capitalize on such situations to indoctrinate members and new converts with

ideas that cannot be neutralized by the power of the gun. The fear of been hit by a military bullet may end open confrontation, but it stops shy of ending the conflict itself. Benue state had been a host to many of such conflicts. From the pre-independence *atemtyo* through the Tiv-Jukun clashes to the marauding Fulani herdsmen; the common men, women and children are always at the receiving end. Since 2000, over 2 million people have been killed within Benue state alone (Adamu and Ben, 2017). While there are sincere efforts by some international and local agencies to end the conflicts, these efforts are sabotaged by some selfish individuals for ulterior motives. This makes it difficult for any efforts geared at resolving these conflicts to yield positive results.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Resolving the farmers-herders conflict hinges largely on the understanding between the two groups and not by the power of the bullet. The study recommends that farmers and herders should find ways of revitalizing the customary system of conflict resolution so that they may explore common grounds through these mechanisms and co-exist together for mutual benefits.

The federal and state governments should find adequate ways of ensuring human security through education, economic empowerment and poverty reduction. This will be better achieved if pastoralists are sedentarise by the creation of grazing reserves and gazette of grazing routes so that pastoralist could have access to education, modern technologies and can enjoy the rights and privileges that are due to every Nigerian.

The international community could also help to build strong and functional institutions in Nigeria so that selfish individuals would be unable to manipulate the system for their personal gains. This would prevent incidences where people

manipulate others by the use of primordial identities such as religion, ethnicity and tribalism. The government at all levels should sensitize its people on the need to go beyond ethnicity and religion and evaluate issues with objective lenses.

The state government should encourage a cluster system of settlement among farmers so that security can be provided to them. The herders should also be assured of their security and the security of their herds so as to reduce their dependence on arms and violence as a way of self-defence. This requires the strengthening of herder's civil associations like the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MCBAN) and Miyetti Allah *KautalHore* which would aggregate the needs and fears of herders and channeled them to the appropriate authority for proper action.

## REFERENCES

- Adamu and Ben (2017) Nigeria: Benue State under the 'herdsmen terroroism' Canada, world Watch.
- Adan, M. and Pkalya, R. (2005) Closed to Progress: An Assessment of the Socio-Economic Impacts of Conflict on Pasroral and Semi Pastoral Economies in Kenya and Uganda. Nairobi; Practical Action
- Ahmed-Gangum. W. (2018), Herders and Farmers Conflict in Nigeria, (edited) Journal of Public Administration and Social Welfare research (3) 1
- Adewoba A.K (2009) Towards Sustainable peace, Accra, Sahara Publishers
- Alubo S.O (2013) Citizenship Rights and Ethnic Contestations in Central Nigeria, Lagos, University Press
- Best. G. (2008) *Causes of Conflicts in the Sourthern Zone of Plateau*, edited by Egwu, Centre for Management and Peace Studies, Jos, University of Jos

- Bonkat L. (2008) *Effects of Conflict Escalations*, Jos, University Press
- Collier and Boswinger (2011), *Ethnic Conflicts*, *Journal of Peace Research* 45(1)
- Duru.P. (2018) 'Suspected Herdsmen Kill 2 Soldiers,injure Unit Commander, Raze Houses in Benue and Nasarawa'*Vanguard News* (online) available at [www.vanguardng.com](http://www.vanguardng.com). Accessed 25<sup>th</sup> August, 2018
- Ibrahim J. (1989) *Politics and Religion in Nigeria; The Parameters of the 1987 Crisis in Kaduna State*, available online at [ww.jst.org/stable/4006011](http://ww.jst.org/stable/4006011), accessed 10<sup>th</sup> November
- Ijere T.C. (2017) *Political Parties, Identities and Violent Conflicts in Nigeria*, *International Journal of African and Asian Studies*, vol.13.
- Egwu.S. (2016). *The Political Economy of rural banditry in Contemporary Nigeria*, Abuja Centre for Democracy and Development.
- Jibrin .I. and Kop'ep. D. (2016) *Rural Banditry and Hate Speech in Rural Nigeria*, Abuja, Centre for Democratic Development
- Kusa D. and Salifu. A. *The Effects of Armed Banditry on Women's Livelihood and Security: A case Study of Kaduna and Plateau States, Nigeria*, Abuja, CDD
- Kyari.M. and Alimba.C. (2016) *Social Impact of Rural banditry*, Abuja, Centre for Democratic Development.
- Kwaja. C.M.A and Ademola. B.A. (2017). *The Implications of the Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranch Establishment Law in Farmer-Herder Relations in the Middle Belt of Nigeria*, Washington D.C, Search for common Ground National Population Commission, (2006), *Population Distribution by Sex, LGA and Senatorial District, Priority Table Vol.III*, Available online at [www.population.gov.ng/index/php/benuestate](http://www.population.gov.ng/index/php/benuestate). Accessed 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2018
- Ngwodo. C. (2012) *Understanding Boko Haram; A Theology of Chaos*, Nsukka, University Press
- Nwolise.O.B.C (2005) *Traditional Mode of Bargaining Conflicts in Nigeria: Ethnicity and Religion*
- Nwafor . P. (2018) *Governor Ortom says Benue now Relatively Peaceful*, *Vanguard News*,[www.vanguardnewsngr.com/2018/09/gov-ortom-says-benue-now-relatively-secured/amp/](http://www.vanguardnewsngr.com/2018/09/gov-ortom-says-benue-now-relatively-secured/amp/)
- Ofem,O.O. Bassey,I. (2014). *Likelihood and Conflict Dimension among Crop Farmers and Fulani herdsmen In Mediterrean Journal of Social Sciences* MCSER Publishing, Rome-Italy Vol 5 No 8 May 2014

ISSN Punch News Online (2018) Herdsmen Attack Agatu Kill over 500, available online at [www.punchnewsonline.com/2017/05/herdsmen-attack-agatu-kill-over-500/amp](http://www.punchnewsonline.com/2017/05/herdsmen-attack-agatu-kill-over-500/amp). Accessed 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2018 Wolf S.(2006) Ethnic Conflicts; A Global Perspective, Oxford, Oxford University Press