



Land resource governance and farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examined land resource governance and farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria. The allocation of land resource is posing a great conflict between farmers and herdsmen across various communities in Nigeria. The inadequacies in land resource governance and laws have also contributed to the conflict between these two major groups. The study adopted a qualitative approach by employing the use of secondary data as well as primary data through the conduct of key informant interview on the various groups involved in conflict in Nigeria. The data collected from secondary source and the key informant interview were analyzed through the aid of narrative analysis. It was revealed that the existing land resource governance laws are inadequate in curbing the menace of violent attacks on farmers by herdsmen in Nigeria. It was further revealed that the cause of the violent conflict between farmers-herders in Nigeria are the negligence on the part of the government to have good policies that govern cattle rearing in Nigeria; the destruction of crops by herdsmen; no enough grasses for cattle to graze on thereby resulting in migration; community leaders, elders/ village head collecting money from herdsmen before they are allowed access to grazing land; and lack of sincerity/ commitment on the part of the government to implement/ enforce existing laws regulating resources/ possession of firearms in Nigeria. Majority of the key informant affirms that resource governance (i.e. inadequacy in laws regulating resources) is a contributing factor or reason for the conflict between farmers-herders in Nigeria. This study recommended, amongst others, that appropriate laws regulating the activities of herdsmen/ farmers should be established in areas where these conflicts are rife and implemented to the latter.

Keywords: land, resource governance, conflict, farmers, herdsmen, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Land is an important natural resource. The significance of this natural asset, land to man on earth through all ages can hardly be overstressed (Opafunso, Bruno-Imokhai and Akinbosade, 2015:1) ^[12]. This is because “land, though represents only about one-third of the earth’s surface, provides a platform on which man’s activities ranging from shelter, food, industrial activities and movement are based” (Opafunso, Bruno-Imokhai and Akinbosade, 2015:1) ^[12]. It can be asserted that man and human society the world over is greatly dependent on

land and its resources. Thus, it is the importance of land to man and the society that influenced the state intrusion into property legislation in order to ensure adequate and efficient land management technique for the benefits of the greatest number of the members of the society (Otubu, 2007:127) ^[11]. There are categories of land tenure in Nigeria, according to Adeniyi (2013) ^[1], these categories of land tenure in Nigeria are state/public, private, and communal lands, and are summarized in the table below:

Table 1: Typologies of land tenure in Nigeria Land

Type	Total Land Area	% Total Land Area	Total Population	% Total Population
State/Public	138,565-184,754 km ²	10-15%	14-21 mil.	15-20%
Private	644,638-692,826 km ²	70-75%	105-112 mil.	75-80%
Communal	92,377 km ²	5%	7 mil.	10%

(Source: Adeniyi, 2013) ^[1]

Due to the importance given to land resource and the conflict it generates among individuals and groups in society, there have been the issues of land resource governance. In Nigeria, land resource governance is one issue that government (both at federal, state and local level) have invested time, efforts and resources on. There have been various efforts aimed at enacting laws and establishment of institutions enforcing these laws for the purpose of resource governance in Nigeria. Some of these laws enacted and institutions established include Land Use Act of 1978 ^[5], Ekiti State Anti-Grazing Law of 2016 ^[9],

Ministries of Land and Urban Development, the Police, Vigilante groups, community heads etc.

Resource governance has been a very critical issue generating serious concerns in Nigeria. This is as a result of the recent and incessant resource conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria over grazing land. Okeke (2014) ^[8], confirmed the above statement when he noted that “there is an ongoing grassroots war in the central and southern states of Nigeria between Fulani herdsmen and farming communities”. Thus, it is an old age problem, but it has escalated in the last

decade and has assumed a very deadly dimension (Okeke, 2014:67) ^[8]. This is as a result of unavailability of grazing land resource. Grazing land resource has generated conflict between these two agricultural groups (Farmers and Fulani herdsmen) which have resulted in the murder and rape of farmers and women in their farmlands in various communities in Nigeria.

1.1 Statement of Problem

Not until recently, there has been peaceful coexistence between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in various communities in Nigeria. But since the last two decades, there has been an alarming, incessant and renewed violent conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen over grazing land. This conflict has taken a new dimension as it has resulted in killings of farmers as well as Fulani herdsmen and due to the sophisticated weapons used by herdsmen in these violent attacks. Many scholars and literatures have attributed the cause of the conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria to various trends (see Olugbenga, 2017; Musa, Shabu, and Igbawua, 2014 ; Idowu, 2017; Osimen, Oyewole and Akinwunmi, 2017etc) ^[9, 6, 4, 10]. Some have attributed the cause to environmental scarce resources or climate change. While others have attributed the cause to globalization or urbanization. These scholars and literatures have failed to discuss the extent to which land resource governance affects the conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria. These have created a wide gap in the literature on the conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria and this work sets out to fill these gaps by answering the following questions: What are the laws governing land resource in Nigeria? What are the institutions enforcing resource governance and laws in Nigeria? And to what extent is resource governance the cause of the conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria?

2. Conceptual Clarification

For a clear understanding of this paper, certain concepts need to be vividly explained. These concepts include Land, Resource Governance, Conflict, Farmers and Fulani Herdsmen.

2.1 Land

Land refers to the part of the earth's surface that is not covered by water. It can also be referred to as ground or soil used as a basis for agriculture.

2.2 Resource Governance

It can be stated that “the concept of ‘resource governance’ has emerged from an area of study that developed during the 1990s, and that is perhaps best represented by the work of Elinor Ostrom” (Reeve, Marshall and Musgrave, 2002:1) ^[13]. The concept of resource governance have been used or defined by various authors. As used by Ostrom and others, the concept refers to the process by which collective decisions are made about access to natural resources when there is more than just a single government agency involved when, for example, multiple agencies, interest groups and individuals take part in decisions (Reeve, Marshall and Musgrave, 2002:1) ^[13]. However, resource governance refers to collective

decisions or laws made in respect to the access to natural resources especially when there are multiple agencies, interest groups and individuals involved in such decisions or laws.

2.3 Conflict

The term conflict has been defined by different authors and in several perspectives but having the same connotation that conflict is an enduring aspect of social existence. It is believed that wherever a community of individual is found, conflict is basically a part of their experience (Musa, Shabu, and Igbawua, 2014) ^[6]. According to Idowu (2017) ^[4], conflict is usually the product of the existence of incompatible goals, interest and pursuits in which the actors involved may employ the use of violence or not.

2.4 Farmers

Farmers are persons engaged in agriculture, especially one who engages in crop farming.

2.5 Fulani Herdsmen

Fulani herdsmen are persons belonging to the Fula tribe who watches over a herd of cow, sheep, etc.

3. Methods

This study is basically qualitative in approach. In this study the researchers adopted primary and secondary data as the sources of data. Thus, in the collection of primary data, a key informant interview of about 200 persons were conducted comprising a special categories (i.e. Farmers, herdsmen, community leaders, youth leaders, law enforcement agents) living in Odighi and Odigute communities in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State with the aid of a judgmental sampling technique drawn from the accessible population in order to ascertain the cause and solutions to the conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in the community in particular and Nigeria in general. Also in the collection of secondary data, the researchers made use of already completed works of other researchers and scholars in the field. Thus, data were derived from journals, newspapers, Acts, statues etc. However, the data collected from secondary source and the key informant interview are analyzed with the aid of narrative analysis. Narrative analysis is a type of qualitative analysis that transcribed experiences and events of individuals, groups or society.

4. Land Resource Governance and Farmers-Herders Conflict in Nigeria

With the recent happenings, it is perceived that resource governance is a major cause of the current conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria, due to the inadequacies and insufficiency of relevant laws that governs how land should be acquired and used.

This section is an analysis on resource governance and the conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria and also an analysis of key informant interview conducted by the researchers. This section has four (4) sub-topics; first, an attempt is made to give an overview of the various laws governing land resource in Nigeria; second section discusses the institutions enforcing resource governance and laws in Nigeria; and the third section it analyzes the conflict between

farmers and Fulani herdsmen over grazing land resource in Nigeria; and the fourth section analyzes the key informant interview conducted by the researchers. However, the sub section below is an overview of the various laws governing land resource in Nigeria.

4.1 An Overview of the Various Laws Governing Land Resource in Nigeria

Land resource is a free gift from nature. In Nigeria, Land is a viable resource that is mostly used by individuals for agricultural and other purposes. Land resource especially allocation and uses has resulted in individual, communal and agricultural conflicts. Due to the conflicts generated from the ownership, allocation and use of land resource, various laws have been put in place to govern land ownership, control and uses. Various laws governing land resource that has been enacted both at federal and state government level include: the Land Use Act of 1978^[5]; the Ekiti State Anti Grazing Law of 2016.

a) The Land Use Act 1978^[5]

The Land Tenure law of 1962 was repealed and replaced by the Land Use Decree (now Act) of 1978 (Udoekanem, Adoga & Onwumere, 2014:185)^[17]. The Land Use Act was formally a Decree No. 6 of 1978 to govern and regulate how lands were owned, acquire and use. Land Use Act No. 6 of 1978 was promulgated into law with effect from 29th March, 1978 as the nation's land policy document (Udoekanem, Adoga & Onwumere, 2014: 185)^[17]. And "since then, it has remained so in the country till date" (Udoekanem, Adoga & Onwumere, 2014:185)^[17]. The Land Use Act of 1978 is "an Act to Vest all Land compromised in the territory of each State (except land vested in the Federal government or its agencies) solely in the Governor of the State, who would hold such Land in trust for the people and would henceforth be responsible for allocation of land in all urban areas to individuals resident in the State and to organisations for residential, agriculture, commercial and other purposes while similar powers with respect to non urban areas are conferred on Local Governments". As section 2, subsection 1 (a) and (b) of the Land Use Act of 1978 puts it that "all land in urban areas shall be under the control and management of the Governor of each State; and all other land shall, subject to this Act, be under the control and management of the Local Government, within the area of jurisdiction of which the land is situated". That is to say all land in urban areas are under the control and management of the governor of each state, while all other land is under the control and management of the local government, within the area of jurisdiction of which the land is situated.

In the area of grazing and agricultural purposes, Section 6, subsection 1(a) and (b) of the Land Use Act 1978 asserts that "It shall be lawful for a Local Government in respect of land not in an urban area: to grant customary rights of occupancy to any person or organisation for the use of land in the Local Government Areas for agricultural residential and other purposes; to grant customary right of occupancy to any person or organisation for the use of land for grazing purposes and such other purposes ancillary to agricultural purposes as may be customary in the Local Government Area concerned". And section 6, subsection 2 of the Land Use Act 1978 makes it

clear that "No single customary right of occupancy shall be granted in respect of an area of land in excess of 500 hectares if granted for agricultural purposes, or 5,000 hectares if granted for grazing purposes, except with the consent of the Governor". As reflected in its major provisions, the Land Use Act of 1978 was enacted to nationalize land ownership in Nigeria as well as facilitate effective state control of the use and development of land (Udoekanem, Adoga & Onwumere, 2014: 186)^[17].

In an attempt to halt the contrasting land tenure systems the country and the attendant litigations, fraudulent practices, and difficulty being experienced by various governments in accessing land for public good that the Federal Military Government promulgated the Land Use Decree (now Act) of 1978 (Atilola, 2010:6)^[2]. The federal government through the promulgation of the Land Use Decree (now Act) of 1978 had to harmonized the various contrasting land tenure systems in one single land policy document in order to check the attendant litigation, fraudulent practices, and difficulty being experienced by various governments in accessing land for public good.

b) Ekiti State Anti-Grazing Law of 2016

In Nigeria, due to the incessant conflicts between farmers and Fulani herdsmen, some states have enacted Anti Grazing Laws in order to curb the farmers and Fulani herdsmen crises over grazing land. One of such state is Ekiti State. In 2016, the Ekiti State House of Assembly passed into law the Ekiti State Anti-Grazing Bill, which was later assent to by the Governor of the state, Ayodele Fayose. This saw "the 'Prohibition of Cattle and other Ruminants Grazing in Ekiti State Law, No. 4 of 2016' against the background of incessant attacks by itinerant pastoralists (or herdsmen) on farmers and host communities in different parts of Nigeria" (Olugbenga, 2017:72)^[9]. Thus, "the Ekiti State Grazing Regulation Law 2016 was a direct outcome of and response to the challenges of violence and attacks by itinerant Fulani herdsmen and the failure of the federal government to initiate or support any measure aimed at addressing the menace in a sustainable manner" (Olugbenga, 2017:80)^[9].

Ogo-Oluwa (2017)^[7], gave a brief summary of the contents of the law:

"Ekiti State Anti-Grazing law, this is the Prohibition of Cattle and other Ruminants Grazing in Ekiti State, the law states in part, that "no person shall cause or permit any cattle or other ruminants belonging to him or under his control to graze on any land in which the Governor has not designated as ranches, no cattle or other ruminants shall by any means move or graze at night and that cattle movement and grazing are restricted to the hours between 7:00 am and 6:00 pm". Anyone caught grazing on portions of land or any farmland not allotted by government shall be apprehended and made to face the law. Any herdsman caught with firearms and any weapons whatsoever during grazing shall be charged with terrorism. Any cattle confiscated shall be taken to government cattle ranch at Erifun and Iworoko Ekiti community in the state. "Any farm crop destroyed by the activities of any apprehended herdsman shall be estimated by agricultural officers and

the expenses of the estimate shall be borne by the culprit. Any herdsman who violates any of these rules shall be imprisoned for six months without option of fine,”

From the above, it can be argued that the Ekiti State Anti Grazing Law prohibits grazing on farm land and carrying of firearms and weapons by herdsmen. The Ekiti State Anti Grazing Law is an attempt to protect farmers against attacks from herdsmen in the state. It was a response by the state government to address the menace of violent herdsmen attacks on farmers in Ekiti State. With the emergence of the Ekiti State Anti-Grazing Law, some other states like Benue State, have also taken similar measures to tackle the menace of violent attacks by herdsmen on farmers by also passing into law Anti Grazing Bill. How far these measures will curtail the conflicts between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in these states and Nigeria in general remains the focal point of this study. However, the sub sections below attempts highlight of institutions enforcing resource governance and laws in Nigeria.

4.2 Institutions Enforcing Land Resource Governance and Laws in Nigeria

There are no specified institutions enforcing resource governance in Nigeria. However, there are certain institutions that enforce land resource and laws in Nigeria. One of such institutions as specified by the Land Use Act of 1978 is the Land Use and Allocation Committee with the responsibility of advising the Governor on any matter connected with the management of land. Also, in various states in Nigeria there is the establishment of the Ministry of Land, Survey and Urban Development, that is in charge of issuing rights of occupancy on behalf of the governor of such state. Another institution is the Law enforcement Agency such as the police, enforcing laws relating to land use and allocation. These institutions have no doubt been very crucial to the governance of land resource in Nigeria as it has ensured the enforcement of laws relating to land use and allocation.

4.3 Conflict between Farmers and Herdsmen over Grazing Land Resource in Nigeria.

The recent escalations of conflicts between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria have attracted both local and international attention. The conflict between these two major actors (Farmers and Fulani herdsmen) over the federal government policy of establishing grazing land for cattle has been in existence for a long time. Some scholars (Olugbenga, 2017^[9]; Osimen, Oyewole and Akinwunmi, 2017^[10]; Falana, n.d) are of the opinion that the conflict was as a result of grazing routes, others are of the view that it was as a result of scarce resources in the Northern part of the country that made the Fulani herdsmen to migrate to the Southern part of the country/region while others pointed out that climatic change and desertification spur the migration of Fulani herdsmen looking for greener pasture and grazing fields for their cattle. Its germane to know that the conflict between famers and Fulani herdsmen usually arise when the former invade community farmland with their cattle as the latter have accused herdsmen of trespassing on their farmland to graze. These cattle were unrestricted and allowed to graze on both

cultivated and uncultivated land thereby destroying valuable food and cash crops which are the mainstay of the host communities. When the communities try to resist them and request their exit, the Fulani herdsmen become violent and attack the community sometimes with the aid of hired mercenaries from the neighbouring countries like Chad, Niger, Mali and Cameroon (Falana n.d).

Similarly, there have been reported attacks by Fulani herdsmen who brutally kill indigenes of the invaded farming communities in various states across the nation. The Fulani herdsmen armed with sophisticated weapons usually attack their target communities at the time they are most vulnerable such as mid-night or on Sunday's killing people indiscriminately, mostly women and children, burning houses and looting properties. The herdsmen were also involve in other forms of criminal activities such as; armed robbery, rape, kidnappings and killings by the nomads (Osimen, Oyewole and Akinwunmi, 2017)^[10]. So disturbing is the way and manner in which these Fulani herdsmen carry out the unwholesome act without regard for the law of the land and sanctity to human life.

The conflict between famers and Fulani herdsmen have resulted in the loss of lives and properties thereby causing havoc in some states across the country which includes; Benue, Plateau, Kaduna, Enugu, Edo, Yobe and Anambra state respectively. Hence, Benue, Taraba, Nassarawa, Plateau, Kaduna, Katsina have been the worst hit of late having tasted the devastating attacks by the Fulani herdsmen with heavy toll in human lives and property as the communities/villages in the states are still counting their loses. Most worrisome is the brutality which the assailants operate without regard for the law of the land and the sanctity of life coupled with the inability of the security agencies to defend the victims mercilessly slaughtered in their homeland (Falana n:d).

Most recently, in the middle belt of Benue State 73 persons were murdered in cold blood on New Year's Day attack in Guma and Logo Local Government Area by suspected Fulani herdsmen. Those who were slaughtered in the attacks were mostly pregnant women, children and the elderly while several others sustained various degrees of injuries (This day newspaper, 2018)^[14]. Hence, the alarming nature of killings across the nation as these attacks have intensified with alarming devastation as perpetrators (Fulani herdsmen) were not apprehended neither were they prosecuted in the wake of the gruesome murder of members of the community.

In Ojan Odan community and other communities in Yewa and Iwoye in Imeko-Afon North Local Government Areas of Ogun State, these areas are the flash points of Fulani herdsmen attacks in the state. While several persons including men, women and children were either killed or maimed. Women who resisted being raped by Fulani herdsmen suffered severe machete cuts. The latest was the destruction of farm produce worth millions of naira which were not only destroyed but their food crops were also eaten up by cattle (The sun newspaper, 2017)^[17]. The situation is not different in Bali Local Government Area of Taraba State of Gazabu, Kungana, Tukun Ruwa, Utsua Daa and Kpenkpen villages where suspected Fulani herdsmen invaded the communities with heavy arms attacked and killed over 11 persons, scores of people injured, houses were burnt as no fewer than 15,000

persons were displaced in the herdsmen and farmers attack (The vanguard newspaper 2017) ^[17].

The killings in some parts of the country are becoming unbearable and there are some questions that still remain unanswered. Hence, what is the Federal Government and relevant security agencies doing to protect the lives of people and the properties in these communities? Since the protection of lives and property is the sole responsibility of the Federal

Government as enshrined in the Nigeria constitution why are the killings across the nation by Fulani herdsmen? Is there no compensation to the victims of this mayhem? There is danger ahead because some of the ethnic nationalities incessantly attacked by the Fulani herdsmen are of the opinion that if the government fails to protect them, they are left with no choice than to take up arms and defend themselves, (Osimen, Oyewole and Akinwunmi, 2017) ^[10].

Table 2: Incidence of Fulani Herdsmen and Farmers Conflict in Nigeria between 1999-2017.

S/N	Dates	Attacks by Fulani Herdsmen/Groups	Targets/Location	Outcome/ Occurrence
1.	July, 2009	Fulani herdsmen	Karim lamido villages, Taraba state	Undisclosed numbers of persons were Killed
2.	August 2000	Fulani herdsmen	Plateau state	Undisclosed numbers of persons were Killed
3.	October 2000	Fulani herdsmen	Cattle destroying crops and farmland in oyo north, Oyo state	Undisclosed numbers of persons were killed
4.	October 2001	Fulani herdsmen	Cattle destroying local farmland in Tarok Plateau state	Undisclosed numbers of persons were killed
5.	August 2002	Hausa Fulani and Tarok people	In maza	Undisclosed numbers of persons were killed
6.	March 1, 2003	Yungar people and Fulani herdsmen	Sony area of Adamawa state.	40 people were killed
7.	December, 2009	Fulani herdsmen with Jukun and Ebira mercenaries	Udeni-gida communities were attacked in Nassarawa state.	40 people were killed
8.	March, 2010	Fulani herdsmen	Beye and Batern villages.	13 people were killed, cattle and local farms destroyed.
9.	April, 2010	Suspected Fulani Herdsmen.	Beron village in Plateau state	Undisclosed numbers of persons killed
10.	May, 2010	Fulani herdsmen and suspected Beron youths.	Tusung village in Barkin LGA in Plateau state	3 people were killed.
11.	July, 2010	Fulani herdsmen	Attacked a Christian village, Mazah in Plateau state.	8 people killed and several houses burnt.
12.	February 2011	Fulani herdsmen	3 districts in Gowen LGA in Plateau state.	Scores were killed
13.	June, 2011	Fulani herdsmen	Guma L.G.A in Benue state	2 soldiers and 18 people were killed while more than 3,000 persons were displaced
14.	March 2012	Fulani herdsmen	Tse Abatse and Tse yoo in Benue state.	Undisclosed numbers of persons were killed.
15.	March, 2012	Fulani herdsmens.	Katsina-Alla (Benue) and fled to Utanga in Obaniku L.G.A (Cross-River).	3,000 Fulani herdsmen displaced from their settlement
16.	October, 2012	Fulani herdsmen	Benue state	30 people killed
17.	July 2012	Fulani herdsmen	Riyom LGA, Plateau state	50 people were killed
18.	April 23, 2013	Suspected Fulani herdsmen	Mbasenge community, Guma LGA	10 farmers were killed
19.	May 7, 2013	Suspected Fulani herdsmen	Agatu Community in Benue state	47 persons were killed
20.	May 14, 2013	Fulani herdsmen	Ekwo-Okpanchenyi, Agatu LGA	40 local Farmers were killed.
21.	July 5, 2013	Fulani herdsmen	Nzorov, Guma LGA.	20 people were killed
22.	July 28, 2013	Fulani herdsmen	2 villages in Agatu LGA, Benue state	Retaliation for the alleged killings of killing 8 villagers and 112 cows.
23.	August 2, 2013	Fulani herdsmen	Trok in wase LGA in Plateau state	Undisclosed numbers of person
24.	October, 2013	Fulani herdsmen	Ketu Ogun state	1 person killed
25.	October 7, 2013	Fulani herdsmen	Eguma settlement in Benue state Agalie LGA	6 people's property worth millions of Naira destroyed
26.	October 10, 2013	Suspected Fulani herdsmen	Kukek community in Barkin Ladi LGA in Plateau state.	Cows were stolen, 21 people including 9 members of a family and 12 herdsmen killed.
27.	October, 2013	Suspected Fulani herdsmen	Kaira local government, Kaduna state.	100 people killed.
28.	November 7, 2013	Unknown attackers	Ikpele & Okpopolo communities in Benue state	7 were killed while over 6000 inhabitants.
29.	November 9, 2013	Fulani herdsmen	Agatu L.G.A in Benue state	7 villages overrun while 36 locals killed
30.	February 4, 2014	Suspected Fulani herdsmen	Kirim, Zagar and Zandyan villages of Southern Kaduna state	Several people were killed and many displaced from their homes
31.	June 2015	Fulani herdsmen	Motokun village in Patigi L.G.A Kwara state, Oro-Ago community in Ifelodun L.G.A and Ninji and Ropp villages in Plateau state	27 people and 70 Christians were killed
32.	July 16, 2015	Fulani herdsmen	Plateau state	Some farmers were killed
33.	September 2015	Fulani herdsmen	Onitsha Ukwuani community in Ndokwa West L.G.A of Delta state	3 persons were killed

34.	September 2015	Fulani herdsmen	Edo state	Middle aged woman was rapped and killed
35.	October 2, 2015	Fulani herdsmen	Ogun state	Undisclosed numbers of person raped and killed residents and Farmers
36.	November 2015	Fulani herdsmen	Ulaja and Ojeh communities in Dekina LGA of Kogi State	22 persons were killed
37.	December 1, 2015	Fulani herdsmen	Oflagbe community, Isoko North council area of Delta.	1 person killed
38.	January 24, 2016	Fulani herdsmen	-	Nigerian police DPO and 29 others killed
39.	February 2016	Fulani herdsmen	Tom-Anyiin, Tom-Ataan, Mbaya and Tombu in the Buruku LGA	10 persons killed
40.	February 8, 2016	Fulani herdsmen	Tom-Anyiin, Tom-Ataan in Buruku LGA.	10 killed while over 300 displaced
41.	February 11, 2016	Fulani herdsmen	Abbi community in Uzo-Uwani LGA, Enugu state	2 people were killed while houses and motorcycles were burnt.
42.	February 29, 2016	Fulani herdsmen	Agatu LGA, Benue state	Over 500 locals killed and 7000 displaced
43.	March 9, 2016	Fulani herdsmen	Ngorukgan, Tse Chia, Deghkia and Nhumbe, Logo LGA.	8 residents killed
44.	April 5, 2016	Fulani herdsmen/farmers' clash.	Benue state	APC youth leader and 3 others were killed
45.	April 8, 2016	Fulani herdsmen	Ondo state	Chief Olu Falae's security guard was kidnapped and killed
46.	April 9 2016	Unknown assailant	Edo state	Fulani camp razed following the killing of a 64-year old farmer
47.	April 12, 2016	Fulani herdsmen	Dori and Mesuma villages in Taraba	15 people were killed
48.	April 19, 2016	Suspected Fulani herdsmen	Lagun village, Lagelu local council Oyo state	1 person killed
49.	April 25, 2016	Fulani herdsmen	Ukpabi Nimbo community, Enugu state	48 people were killed were 60 injured
50.	May 14, 2016	Fulani herdsmen	Binev council ward of Buruku LGA, Benue state	13 people were killed
51.	January 24, 2017	Fulani herdsmen	Ipiga village in Ohimini LGA of Benue State.	15 persons were killed
52.	March 2, 2017	Fulani herdsmen and farmers	Mbahimin community, Gwer East LGA of Benue state.	10 persons were killed
53.	March 11, 2017	Fulani herdsmen	Tiv community, Mkgovur village in Buruku LGA of Benue state.	7 people were killed
54.	May 8, 2017	Fulani herdsmen	Tse-Akaa village, Ugondo Mbamar District of Logo LGA of Benue state.	3 person were killed
55.	May 13, 2017	Fulani herdsmen	Three communities of Logo LGA of Benue state	8 people were killed

Sources: (Osimen, Oyewole and Akinwunmi, 2017 & the daily post newspaper, 2018) ^[10, 14]

There is no gainsaying that 90 percent of the attacks carried out by the Fulani herdsmen across the nation are on private individuals including famers, women, children and elderly in various communities' accounts for about 80 per cent of deaths and 52 per cent of displaced persons in different communities in which the attacks were carried out. Hence, the attacks have mainly been through different means ranging from kidnapped, raped, armed assaults, killing an average of about 11 people per attack (Osimen, Oyewole and Akinwunmi, 2017) ^[10].

Key Informant Interview

The researchers interviewed some key informant. The researchers conducted about 200 key informant interviews comprising of farmers, herdsmen, community leaders, youth leaders, law enforcement agents living in Odighi and Odiguete communities in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State. In the interview, one of the farmers gave the cause of the violent conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria as:

"Negligence on the part of the government to have good

policies that govern cattle rearing in Nigeria in the past and recently, it's a political issue where Fulani race wants to dominate every area they find themselves".

Another farmer in the community explains that the cause of the violent Conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria: "It's because the herdsmen are destroying the crops of the farmers this led to the conflicts between farmers and herdsmen in the community".

When asked how does the conflict between farmers and herdsmen affects them, one of the farmers posits:

It has affected me economically because my crops were destroyed".

Another farmer put forward that the conflict between the farmers and herdsmen affects her as a result of:

When asked if resource governance (i.e inadequacy in laws regulating resources) is a contributing factor or reason for the conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria, one of the

farmers affirms by saying "yes, to a large extent". While another farmer explains that:

"Yes, the inadequate law regulating resources is a major reason for the conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria".

One of the farmers in his opinion, suggested what the government (both at the Federal, State and Local levels) can do to solve the issue of inadequacies in resource governance laws and the farmers/ herdsmen conflict in Nigeria, that:

"A law should be placed by the government in power to stop them from grazing in our farm land; They should be arrested and prosecuted; They should be killed to put a total stop to all these problems".

While another farmer, in her opinion, suggested what the government (both at the Federal, State and Local levels) can do to solve the issue of inadequacies in resource governance laws and the farmers/herdsmen conflict in Nigeria, that:

"First of all, laws should be enacted and then enforced without bias. The greatest problem we have in Nigeria is the inability of government at all levels to enforce the laws they enact even if they enact laws".

Furthermore, in the interview, a community leader in the area saw the cause of the violent conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria, as:

"The unregulated way of cattle grazing on farmlands by relevant authorities especially the Federal Government of Nigeria".

On the other hand, a youth leader in the area, saw the cause of the violent conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria, from the dimension of resource scarcity, when he asserts:

"One of the causes is that there are no grasses for cattle to graze that is why they are eating our crops. If they enter our farm they eat all our crops. If we are not in the farm they enter our farms and harvest our cassava and yams for their cattle to eat. As we speak we don't have crops at all".

The youth leader also blamed the cause of the violent Conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria on:

"Our community leaders/ elders and Enogies were handsomely paid (they collected money from these herdsmen) before they were allowed to graze in the land. By so doing, the herdsmen are saying that they don't want to leave our community because our land belongs to them and that they owns it".

When asked how does the conflict between farmers and herdsmen affects them, the community leader explains that:

"It causes the shortage of food and cattle products which lead to increase of these commodities in the market".

While the youth leader explains that:

"The conflicts has affected us because we don't have food; They have invaded our farms so we have nothing and because of fear we always walk in groups so that they do not inflict, rape, harm and kill us".

Also, the community leader when asked if the resource governance (i.e inadequacy in laws regulating resources) is a contributing factor or reason for the conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria, he affirms that:

"It is one of the factors. Also political and religious issues are attributable to these conflicts".

While the youth leader when asked if the resource governance (i.e inadequacy in laws regulating resources) is a contributing factor or reason for the conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria, he affirms that:

"Yes, it is a contributing factor because they said the land was bought by them; there should be proper laws in regulating these things because they are Boko Haram".

The community leader in his opinion, suggested what government (both at the Federal, State and Local levels) can do to solve the issue of inadequacies in resource governance laws and the farmers/herdsmen conflict in Nigeria, by stating that:

"Appropriate laws regulating the activities of herdsmen should be established in areas where these conflicts are rife and implemented to the latter; Those criminals involved in the killing and destruction of lives and properties should be arrested, prosecuted and appropriate punishment should be meted out to them; Grazing reserves should be established by government and private individuals for herdsmen in all the state of the federation".

On the other hand, the youth leader suggested that:

"The government by solving these problems should allow them to go to where they came from (North) and leave us alone. They should allow us to do our farm work and activities in peace so that we can get freedom".

Furthermore, in the interview, an herdsman gave the cause of the violent conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria, as a situation were:

"There are no enough grasses for our cattle to graze. This has made us to migrate to other parts of Nigeria in search of grazing pastures for our cattle".

On how the conflict between farmers and herdsmen affects him, the herdsman asserts:

"It has affected me because when we migrate to the Southern parts of Nigeria they do not allow our cattle to

graze and they also steal our cattle. So due to this we protect ourselves and the cattle".

Also, when asked if the resource governance (i.e inadequacy in laws regulating resources) is a contributing factor or reason for the conflict between farmers and herdsman in Nigeria, he disapproves by saying:

"No, there are enough laws regulating resources in Nigeria".

In his opinion, the herdsman suggested that in solving the issue of inadequacies in resource governance laws and the farmers/ herdsman conflict in Nigeria:

"Government should provide herdsman with lands for their cattle to graze on. Also law enforcement agents should protect us from been attacked and prevent the stealing of our cattle".

Furthermore, in the interview, a law enforcement agent with the Rank of a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) serving in the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), gave the cause of the violent conflict between farmers and herdsman in Nigeria as:

"The lack of sincerity and commitment from government to implement and to enforce the existing laws regulating resources and possession of firearms and weapons in Nigeria". When asked how does the conflict between farmers and herdsman affects him, the law enforcement agent posits:

"I am a law enforcement agent. So, I am part of those in charge of enforcing laws especially laws on land resource and the illegal possession of firearm, which constitute parts of the violent Conflict between farmers /herdsman in Nigeria".

When asked if the resource governance (i. e inadequacy in laws regulating resources) is a contributing factor or reason for the conflict between farmers and herdsman in Nigeria, the law enforcement agent, disapproves by saying:

"No, there are enough laws regulating resources. But the issue is the lack of implementation and enforcement of these laws by government/ law enforcement agencies in Nigeria".

The law enforcement agent, in his opinion, suggested that government (at both federal, State and Local levels) can solve the issue of inadequacies in resource governance laws and farmers /herdsman conflict in Nigeria by:

"Showing seriousness, sincerity and commitment in the implementation and enforcement of existing laws without taking sides in the conflict. And doing so will result in proper implementation and enforcement of existing laws on resource and illegal possession of firearms".

From the above interviews, it is revealed that the cause of the violent conflict between farmers and herdsman in Nigeria are the negligence on the part of the government to have good policies that govern cattle rearing in Nigeria; the destruction of crops by herdsman; no enough grasses for cattle to graze thereby resulting in migration; community leaders, elders/ village head collecting money from herdsman before they are allowed to graze in the land; and lack of sincerity/ commitment from government to implement/enforce existing laws regulating resources/ possession of firearms in Nigeria. Majority of the key informant affirms that resource governance (i.e. inadequacy in laws regulating resources) is a

contributing factor or reason for the conflict between farmers and herdsman in Nigeria.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The violent conflict between farmers and herdsman has been caused by so many factors. Resource governance is a contributing factor or reason for the conflict between farmers and herdsman in Nigeria as the inadequacies in existing laws regulating resources has contributed to the conflict. It is in view of the findings of this study that this study recommends that:

1. Appropriate laws regulating the activities of herdsman should be established in areas where these conflicts are rife and implemented to the latter.
2. Those criminals involved in the killing and destruction of lives and properties should be arrested, prosecuted and appropriate punishment should be meted out to them.
3. Grazing reserves (Ranches) should be established by private individuals who are owners of these cattle for herdsman in all the state of the federation because cattle rearing is a private business and cannot be funded by government as a result of the fact that proceeds from the business do not go into government treasury.

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