



CROP FARMERS-HERDERS CONFLICT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR SECURITY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Crop farmers-herders conflict has occurred in many parts of Nigeria, especially in Ogun, Oyo, Benue, Kaduna, Enugu, Ebonyi, and Plateau States, resulting in wanton destruction of lives and properties, hence affecting the economic wellbeing or security of the people in farming communities in Nigeria. The paper was underpinned by the ethnic competition theory which is vital in the understanding of the role scarcity of land resources play in driving the crop farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria. The aim of this paper is to examine crop farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria with a view to determining its implications for the security of Nigerians. Data for the paper was collected from secondary source and analysed using content analysis. Findings from the paper revealed that crop farmers-herders conflict in the country has resulted into destruction of lives and properties of both parties to the conflict, which ultimately have negative implications for economic development, wellbeing, and social capital in Nigeria. The conflict has been poorly managed by both the federal and state governments in Nigeria, hence the difficulty in combating it. Among other things, making a national policy on ranching of livestock in Nigeria was recommended.

Keywords: *Crop Farmers, Herders, Conflict, Security, Ethnic Competition*

Introduction

Security is dynamic, and it has continued to change from one epoch of development to another epoch. Before the Second World War, security was focused on the protection of the state and its territory from attacks, especially from external actors. However, after the Cold War, security has changed, targeting on the protection of the individuals and the state from attacks. From

this epoch, security threats have equally changed from solely state actors to security threats such as poverty, hunger, marginalisation, deprivation, discrimination, scarcity of resources, unemployment, and climate change, which could make conflict possible at diverse levels in the society (Adeleke, 2021).

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) (as amended) stated that the primary responsibility of the government is the welfare and security of the people, but the governments at all levels in Nigeria have been largely unable to ensure that the welfare of the people and their security is adequately protected. This shows that protection of the grazing areas as well as the crops of farmers should be part and parcel of what security should cover in the country, but the government, over the years, have mainly devoted it's time to combating insecurity caused by crop farmers-herders conflict by deployment of security forces to shoot or arrest offenders.

More so, crop farmers-herders conflict has occurred in many parts of the country especially in Ogun, Oyo, Benue, Kaduna, Enugu, Ebonyi, among other places, resulting in wanton destruction of lives and properties, hence affecting the economic wellbeing or security of the people especially those that live in the farming communities in Nigeria. Crop farmers-herders conflicts have huge impacts on the livelihoods of people because the conflict hinders the capacity of people to carry out agricultural production the way they should have done. Crop farmers-herders conflict equally affect the interdependent relationship herders and farmers have developed over the years (Muhammed & Abdulkadier, 2019).

There is natural relationship between crop farmers and herders. Crop farmers need animal dungs to grow their crops, while herders need residue from crop harvest to feed their herds, showing that both crop farmers and herders have co-existed for many years before their conflicts. On the other hand, crop farming can reduce the quantity of land available for rearing of animals, and animal can feed on farmlands and destroy the crops, hence reducing the revenue that would have accrued to the farmers (Enwelu, Dimelu & Asadu, 2015).

The government at the various levels of governance have come up with many strategies aimed at solving the problem created by crop farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria. According to Kwaja and Ademola-Adelehin (2018), the federal government has responded to this conflict by creating Grazing Reserves, establishment of National Commission for Nomadic

Education, deployment of security operatives to douse the tension, and equally proposed the establishment of National Grazing Reserve (Establishment) Bill 2016, and establishment of Rural Grazing Area (RUGA). However, the conflict between crop farmers-and herders have continued unabated. Therefore, this paper is geared towards the examination of crop farmers-herders conflicts and its implications for Nigeria with particular reference to security of the people and the state.

Conceptual Review

Concept of Crop Farmers-Herders Conflicts

Before reviewing the general concept of crop farmers-herders conflict, it is better to first review crop farmers, herders, and conflict separately. The idea here is to situate the independent variable within the context of the paper. According to Muwanga, Onwonga, Keya and Komutunga (2020), farming is one of the ways of ensuring household food security. Crop farmers in Nigeria are mainly sedentary farmers, who carry out their farming activities in defined location on a permanent basis. Crop farmers are mainly located in the Southern part of Nigeria, where Christianity is the prevalent religious practice. Given this situation, crop farmers-herders conflict usually take ethnic and religious dimensions in the country. Though the author captured the fact that crop farmers are mainly subsistence farmers, who are located in the villages, but did not capture the level of attachment of crop farmers to their ancestral land as Okoli (2021) succinctly captured.

In addition, crop farmers are largely restricted to their ancestral lands where they cultivate their crops either for consumption or for commercial purposes. They are largely attached to their land, and would not easily relinquish it to people from different ethno-religious afflictions with them for fear of domination. For some of the crop farmers, the land on which they farm was inherited from their ancestors, while some others are community land (Okoli, 2021).

Therefore, crop farmers can be defined, in this paper, as sedentary farmers who are land owners and are restricted to specific portions of land in order to carry out agricultural production and enhance their livelihood. Crop farmers are largely from the Southern part of Nigeria, where there is pastures for grazing of animals.

Having reviewed the concept of crop farmers, it is crucial to examine the next concept which is herders. The issue of herders have been understood

and defined by scholars. Cattle rearers are referred to as herders in Nigeria. Herders mainly originate from the Northern part of Nigeria, and they are mainly Fulanis (Enwelu, Dimelu, & Asadu, 2015). The definition of herders by the authors did not capture the different levels of development existing among the Hausa and Fulani ethnic groups that largely form the bulk of herders in Nigeria as captured by Gursou (2019).

According to Gursou (2019), herders have, over the years, integrated with the Hausa, forming Hausa-Fulani. They are mainly Muslims. However, Hausa-Fulani are more advanced and politically aware compared to nomadic Fulanis. This shows that herders, just like crop farmers who are mainly from the Southern part of the country, are mainly from the Northern part of the country. Though the author expatriated on the preceding definition, the reason for rearing livestock was not captured which would have shown the importance of herding to economic development of Nigeria as captured by Tshering and Thinley (2017).

Tshering and Thinley (2017) noted that rearing of livestock is an important source of livelihood for rural communities in developing states. Herders rear livestock in order to generate dairy products, animal dungs, and meat. This shows that herders perform very crucial role in the development of agriculture in Nigeria because of its contributions to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as well as rural income in the country. During the day, herders rear their livestock in nearby bushes or forests.

In view of the foregoing, herders are defined, in this paper, as Fulanis who rear livestock, especially cattle by moving them from one location to another in search of pastures. Herders are mainly nomadic or pseudo-nomadic in nature, whose major means of livelihood is rearing of livestock. In order to protect their livestock and themselves from danger, herders are armed with weapons like daggers, machetes, and arrows. However, the definition did not succinctly capture the origin of conflict, which is vital in the understanding of crop farmers-herders conflict.

Conflict has been defined by many scholars in several ways. Jeong (2015) examined the origin of conflict and link it to the beginning of human history. According to the study, conflict is an inextricable part of the history of man, pointing out that types of conflicts are civil wars, and interstate conflicts, because of the high level of violence that is associated with it. Conflicts can lead to loss of lives and properties to the individuals, even though conflicts can still be non-violent. Non-violence is usually associated with struggle for

preservation of cherished values as well as struggle over limited resources. It is important to define conflict to reflect the source of discontent, which is vital in conflict resolution. Resolving a conflict would largely be determined by the degree of understanding of the causes, nature, and dynamism of the conflict. Nevertheless, the study did not capture the inevitability of conflict in human existence or the fact that there are diverse parties involved in a conflict.

According to Bercovitch (2014), conflict is defined as inevitable in human society because of its possible connection with distribution of scarce resources, role differentiation, power relations, and division of functions. According to the author, conflict is a situation where two or more parties have incompatible goals. The definition of conflict by the author is vital to this paper because it highlighted the role of incompatibility of goals or interests of diverse parties in driving conflicts between herders and crop farmers. However, the author did not capture the different categories of conflicts as captured by Udezo (2016).

Udezo (2016) defined conflict as a struggle or contest between two or more groups that have contradictory needs, beliefs, ideas, values, and goals, which they seek to pursue. Conflicts can be violent or non-violent. Conflict is dynamic and occurs in cycles. Conflicts can be destructive, and can equally bring about the transition of a society from one level of development to another level. However, this definition of conflict is aligned to crop farmers-herders conflict.

Conflict is defined, in this paper, as disagreements between crop farmers and Fulani herders over land and its resources. Fulani herders are perceived as settlers, while crop farmers are perceived as land owners. In this paper, crop farmers-herders conflict has huge implications for security of lives and properties of people of Nigeria.

Concept of Security

The concept of security originated from two Latin Words "se" and "curus". "Se" means without, and "curus" means uneasiness. This shows that security originally means risks (Mesjasz, 2004). The origin of security as captured by the author is vital in the understanding of the history of security or insecurity in Nigeria, but did not capture the dynamism inherent in the definition of security as captured by Eme and Onyishi (2014), which is needed in this paper.

Security is dynamic, and this dynamism inherent in the definition of security has made Eme and Onyishi (2014) to perceive the concept from idealist perspective. Realist perspective to security covers individual security, food security, health security, financial security, collective security, economic security, political security, environmental security, and all other aspect of security. According to the authors, anything that constitute threat to the quality of lives of people is categorised as security issue, but it was added that human rights of the people could be violated in the pursuit of security by a state.

As succinctly captured by Eme and Onyishi (2014) that security is dynamic, Akbar (2012) made a distinction between realist and idealist perspectives to security. According to the author, realist perspective to security is focused on the protection of a state and its cherished values from attacks mainly from external actors (states). On the contrary, idealist perspective to security emerged after the World War II, and it is focused on the removal of everything that could harm the individuals, their cherished values, and the interests of the country at large.

Focusing on the idealist view to security, Ewetan and Urhe (2014) defined security as the protection of crucial state's political, economic, social, cultural, military, among other vital interests of a country from internal and external threats. This further shows that security is a holistic concept involving the protection of vital interests of a state and its citizenry from both internal and external attacks.

Looking at the concept of security from both the realist and idealist perspectives, Ngwube (2016) defined security as the capacity of a state to promote as well as cater for the basic needs and interests of both the citizenry and the state. The idea behind this is to protect both the citizenry and the state from political, economic, social, environmental, and other aspects of threats. The authors observed that security in the modern era is focused on the protection of the individuals and the protection of a state's sovereignty. However, the author did not expatiate on human security, which is the major driver of crop farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria s captured by Adeleke (2021).

Tanaka (Adeleke, 2021) defined security to include human security. According to the author, human security involves the protection of human rights of individuals focusing on their protection from diseases, poverty, violence, and illiteracy. Therefore, human security is focused on the

elimination of those things that constitute threats to the individual and their dignity. Though the definition of security by the author is vital to this study, it did not capture values to be protected, and diverse levels where conflicts can occur as captured by Annan (2021).

Annan (2021) noted that in defining security, adequate efforts should be made to describe the values to be protected, whose values to be secured, the extent of security required to ensure security, the character of security threats, and the cost of providing security. According to the author, security can be defined at individual and societal levels. At individual level, security means absence of threats to individual's cherished values such as diseases, natural disaster, crime, health, properties, and life. At the societal level, security means elimination of internal and external threats to a state's sovereignty.

From the conceptual review, security can be defined in this paper as the protection and safeguard of individual and state's interests from attacks or threats. Individual interests include elimination of factors that pose threats to crop farmers, elimination of factors that pose threats to herders, protection of the border of states from infiltration of criminals, protection of individuals livelihood, broadening of access to education, among others.

Theoretical Framework

Many theories can be adopted in the analysis of crop farmers-herders conflicts in Nigeria including conflict theory, theory of ancient hatred, elite theory, manipulative elite theory, and ethnic competition theory. Nevertheless, ethnic competition theory is adopted in this paper because it is best suited for the understanding of crop farmers-herders conflict and its implications for security in Nigeria. In the words of Blaton (2015), ethnic manipulation theory originated from the works of anthropologists such as Johann Gottfried Herder and Franz Boas during the early 20th century.

The basic assumptions of ethnic manipulation theory, according to Olzak (2019) are as follows: (i) the theory argues that when a group migrate to ethnically different environment is likely to obtain hostile response from the original inhabitants of the area; (ii) The theory places high value of economic competition among diverse ethnic populations because economic competition makes struggle over scarce resources more severe; and (iii) Competition among the diverse groups lead to conflicts in a defined geographical space.

Situating the paper within the context of the theory, crop farmers do not receive and cohabit with herders peacefully. This is because they perceive Fulani herders as posing threats to their economic survival as they would not like to compete with them for land resources, elective, and appointive positions with the crop farmers. The possibility of herders to introduce alien culture on crop farmers who have strong attachment to their ancestral land, values, and norms which they cherish. The resistance of crop farmers to open grazing by Fulani herders in Nigeria has usually resulted in conflicts. Nevertheless, the theory is weak in the understanding of crop farmers-herders conflict in the country, which is part of the drivers of the conflict.

Methodology

Historical research design was adopted in this paper. This involved data collection, data presentation, and data interpretation of secondary works on crop farmers-herders conflict, and its possible effects on the security of Nigerians, especially agricultural production, food security, and security of lives of farmers and herders. This helped the in the understanding of the previous issues regarding crop farmers-herders conflict in the country with a view to understanding and explaining the current situation, especially how it affects security of lives and properties of the people as with a view to making predictions about the future events. Data collected were analysed using content analysis.

Remote and Immediate Causes of Crop Farmers-Herders Conflicts in Nigeria

Herders- crop farmers conflicts have continued to worsen in Nigeria despite the fact that both parties had co-existed in the country for a long time even with the practice of open grazing by the herders. A number of scholars have adduced contradictory reasons for the increase in the conflict ranging from violation of grazing routs created by the Federal Government in 1964 aimed at enhancing access of grazing land to herders as well as safeguard grazing land from crop farmers and fear of ethnic domination, (Agbedo, 2021); hence creating confusion in this area of the study which requires further investigation and analysis.

A cursory examination of crop farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria showed that there are both remote and immediate causes to it. Historically, religious and ethnic variables are important in the understanding of the near

intractable nature of the crop farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria. In terms of religion, herders are predominantly Fulani Muslims from the Northern part of Nigeria, while crop farmers are predominantly Christians from the Southern part of country. Geographically, the availability of grazing land in the south attracts the herders down south, while the high level of desertification in the North is responsible for the massive movement of herders from the Northern to the Southern part of Nigeria. Today, there is competition between the herders and crop farmers over the use of land resources. Given that the herders are perceived as settlers, and crop farmers as indigenes, there have been claims and counter claims over land use and access to river banks, making the conflict seem unending (ReliefWeb, 2020). However, the foregoing remote factors do not trigger crop farmers-herders conflicts in isolation, except they are manipulated by the political elites in order to score some political points.

More so, Section 147 (b) of the 1999 Constitution encourages appointment by the President on the basis of indigenship, though the constitution did not clearly define who an indigene is or not (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). This gap created by the constitution creates an avenue for the political class to rely on the indigene clause and the federal character principles to manipulate crop farmers and herders into conflicts in Nigeria, which ultimately lead to economic competition amongst them.

In addition, there is fear among the crop farmers in the southern part of Nigeria that herders who are largely Muslims would dominate them and install an Emir in their ancestral land if they are allowed to live and graze their cattle in their domains. The political elites have continued to manipulate this diverse doctrinal positions which roughly correspond to the herders and crop farmers religious positions, which makes the two diverse groups compete vigorously for economic survival conflicts in Nigeria (Obiora-Okonkwo, 2017).

Many scholars have investigated the causes of herders-farmers conflict in Nigeria. Abass (2012) argued that the principal cause of farmers-herders conflict in the country is economic, with land related issues resulting in preponderance of the conflicts. This position can be clearly understood in the context of the political economy of struggle for land resources, which could be traced to the rapidly increasing demography in which there is stiff struggle for existing land aimed at meeting the demands associated with rapidly increasing population. Similarly, International Regional Information

Network (2009) noted that more than one-thirds of cultivable land 50 years ago is now desert across 11 states in the Northern part of Nigeria: Gombe, Borno, Bauchi, Jigawa, Adamawa, Kastina, Kano, Zamfara, Yobe, Kebbi, and Sokoto; a situation that further impinge on farming. Also, Nigeria has 415 grazing reserves, but only one-thirds of it are in use, while the remainder, 270 have been farmed or built upon, and this has worsened herders-farmers conflicts, and this corresponded with ethnic competition theory.

Closer examination of crop farmers-herders conflicts in Nigeria showed that the conflict is a social conflict affecting diverse groups in Nigeria. Crop farmers and herders have diverse social ties, which could make competition between the two groups severe. Also, the unequal distribution of resources and scarcity of such resources are dominated by the crop farmers, who are indigenes, making the herders struggle for to graze their livestock.

The immediate causes of crop farmers-herders conflicts include the manipulation of issues of land tenure system, open grazing, Rural Grazing Area (RUGA), cattle colonies, among others by the elites. The foregoing are designed to position one group over the other in the ensuring economic competition between them, which is ethnically motivated. This further acts as catalyst for crop farmers-herders conflicts in Nigeria as the government policies for combating the conflict largely help in positioning one group over the other in the competition for scarce land resources.

Generally, the conflict between the herders and crop farmers have continued to deteriorate with increase in the level of desertification in the northern parts of Nigeria, and massive increase in population and unemployment, which have made the herders to migrate southwards, and most people in the southern part of Nigeria to embrace agriculture, especially crop farming as a way of getting their livelihood. Since the available land resources have not increased, instead reduced in terms of land available for either grazing or crop farming, the competition arising from this situation makes conflict inevitable between the two groups given their diametrically opposed interests.

Implications for Crop Farmers-Herders on Security in Nigeria

Crop farmers-herders conflicts have huge implications for the livelihoods of people because the conflict hinders the capacity of people to carry out agricultural production the way they should have done. Crop farmers-

herders conflict equally affect the interdependent relationship the herders and the farmers have developed over the years (Muhammed & Abdulkadier, 2019).

Crop farmers-herders conflict also have implications for the security of lives of the people in Nigeria. The impact of crop farmers-herders conflicts from 2001 to 2018 resulted in the displacement of over 300,000 people in Benue, Plateau, Taraba, and Nasarawa States. Given the fact that the areas are the food production hub, Nigeria became confronted with the risk of massive food insecurity (Reliefweb, 2020).

More so, increased pressure on land has basically made herders and crop farmers to be involved in more violent conflicts, which usually result in loss of many lives and destruction of properties worth millions of naira. For example, in Damsa Local Government Area, Adamawa State, 2,500 farmers were displaced, while 28 people were killed in the conflict between herders and crop farmers in July 2005. This impacted negatively on crop and animal production in the state. In Imo State, from 1996 to 2005, 19 people were killed, while 42 others were injured in farmers-herders conflict. In Plateau State, two days of conflict between herders and crop farmers resulted in the death of 3 people and destruction of settlements of herders in June 2009. On December 2, 2009, violent conflicts between herders and crop farmers in Nasarawa State resulted in the death of 32 people, destruction of massive crops and houses of people (Adeoye, 2017).

The increase in the spate of herders-farmers conflicts in Oyo State has worsened since 2013, and this menace has continued up to 2021 and even beyond, resulting in wanton destruction of lives and properties of both the farmers and herders (Agbedo, 2021). Farmers-herders conflicts in Oyo State, especially Ibarapa North Local Government Area of the state seem to have implications for economic development of the state given the level of destruction of crops, livestock and human lives in the conflict which, has resulted in reduction of income to both the farmers and the herders as well as affected their general economic wellbeing. In one of the attacks on 2021, 2 farmers lost their lives in Igangan, which is in Ibarapa North Local Government Area. On June 6, 2021, 20 farmers lost their lives in the same local government, and the death was attributed to herders-farmers conflicts (Ajayi, 2021).

Attacks in Ibarapa forced some of the students in the affected areas out of school for fear of being attacked or abducted, and this may have implications

for development of labour force in the state, which is vital in driving economic development. Also, many farmers are forced out of their farms due to fear of attacks by herders, and this could equally affect the economy of the state. Apart from loss of income to farmers and herders, loss of jobs emanating from decrease in the number of farmers that employ workers in their farms and individuals involved in agro-allied businesses largely hamper the local economy, and this has negative implications for agricultural development in the state.

Farmers in Ibarapa have lost 155 acres of cassava, yam, corn, and cucumber to herders, making farmers in the affected communities to develop phobia for going to their farms, a situation that is contrary to the efforts of the government the efforts of the government to create employment, reduce rural-urban migration and create food security in the state (Gbenga-Ogundare, 2019). In a related development, another farmer in the area lost ₦5 million worth of cassava in the state through herders-farmers conflicts (Oyero, 2021). This has continued to influence the level of economic development in the state.

The farmers-herders conflicts in Nigeria have demonstrated huge possibility of worsening the spate of insecurity and food crisis where most of the conflict take place, with reverberating implications for economic development nationwide. In response to this problem, the Federal Government of Nigeria created grazing reserves across Bauchi, Katsina States, and in Abuja, which is designed to cater for about 15 million herders. The plan equally involved demarcating 175,000 hectares of grazing land, construction of settlements for herders, and construction of veterinary service centers at the cost of \$247 million. The Federal Government equally demarcated a 1,400 km livestock route spanning from Sokoto State to Oyo State as well as additional route from Adamawa to Calabar (Adeoye, 2017). Despite the foregoing, herders-farmers conflicts have continued unabated in Nigeria, In Oyo State, 20 people were recently killed and cassava farms worth over ₦5 million was destroyed, a situation that has continued to threaten the development of local economy in the state (Ajayi, 2021). Similarly, Enwelu, Dimelu, and Asadu (2015) revealed that farmers-herders conflict reduced farm outputs, reduced income of farmers and herders, caused displacement of herders and farmers, and led to loss of lives and properties.

Crop farmers-herders conflict has been blamed for food insecurity in the country today. The level of the conflict has made it difficult for crop farmers to access their farms given the degree of attacks they are exposed to and

damages herders cause to their crops and farm lands. The herders on their part have lost their livestock, amounting to millions of Nigeria. This situation is unhealthy for peaceful coexistence in the country given the multi-ethnic and multi-religious character of Nigeria. Within the realm of politics, crop farmers-herders conflicts reinforces primordial political culture rather than civic political culture on the psyche of the people. Ultimately, crop farmers-herders conflict could impinge on democratic deepening in the country. The country equally impinges on the social capital by reducing the level of commitment to trust, national values, respect for human rights, which largely impinge on societal development.

Management of Crop Farmers-Herders Conflict in Nigeria

To solve this problem, the Federal Government proposed the establishment of Rural Grazing Areas (RUGA), grazing routes, and cattle colonies, but the move has been largely rejected by the people and the state government through their preference for the adoption of Anti-Open Grazing Law (AOGL), which appears to conflict with the way of life of Fulani herders. The federal government has responded to the crop farmers-herders conflicts in Nigeria by creating Grazing Reserves, establishing of Natural Commission for Nomadic Education, deployment of security forces, proposed the National Grazing Reserve (Establishment) Bill 2016, while some state governments responded by creating state-level legislations prohibiting Open Grazing (Kwaja & Ademola-Adelehin, 2018). The manipulation of the issues involved in AOGL, RUGA, among others by the elites has continued to make the conflict difficult to manage.

A number of steps have been taken by the state government to combat herders-farmers conflict in the in the Southwestern States in Nigeria such as the use of Amotekun and conventional security outfits to mitigate the conflict. Banning of open grazing in the state has equally been done in order to minimise the conflict between farmers and herders, but all these measures have had limited success in addressing the conflict.

In the Southeastern States of the country, The strategy adopted were similar to those adopted by the Southwestern states. The governors banned Open Grazing and established "Ebube-Agu", a security outfit that looks like a vigilante group charged with the responsibility of protecting the lives and properties of the people in the geopolitical zone. Before the formation of "Ebube-Agu", the information in the public domain is that the Indigenous

Peoples of Biafra (IPOB) had already formed the Eastern Security Network (ESN) charged with the responsibility of combating the operations of militant herders in the geopolitical zone, but attacks on crop farmers have continued to occur in the zone with Ebonyi and Enugu States recording the highest number of such attacks.

From the foregoing, the government at all levels in the country have not addressed the fundamental causes of crop farmers-herders conflicts in the country. The federal and state governments have been tackling the manifestations of the conflicts such as killings and destruction of properties of people without reviewing the Land Use Act of 1978 to place the ownership of all land resources on the federal government contrary to the current system where land ownership is bestowed on the various states in the country.

Conclusion

The paper has been an attempt to interrogate the crop farmers-herders conflicts in Nigeria. The paper investigated the remote and immediate causes, implications for and management of crop farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria. Findings showed that crop farmers-herders conflicts have negative implications for security of lives and properties in Nigeria. The conflict has reduced the Gross Domestic Product of the country, impinged on the social capital, and retard democratic consolidation in the country. It was concluded that unless the root causes of crop farmers-herders conflict are addressed, food insecurity, loss of lives and properties would continue to impinge on Nigeria's security.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are found relevant in the paper:

- i. The federal government should immediately make ranching of livestock a national policy in the country;
- ii. Adequate legislations should be made by the federal government to support Anti-Open Grazing Bill in all states of the federation;
- iii. The federal government should delete sections of the 1999 Constitution, which promotes indigenes-settlers dichotomy in the country;

- iv. The federal government should convene a sovereign national conference with a view to giving the various groups in Nigeria the opportunity to discuss how best the country should be managed; and
- v. Government at all levels should adequately protect the Nigerian borders to ensure that foreign herders do not infiltrate through the border states to cause problem for the country.

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