

**FARMERS-HERDSMEN CRISIS AND FOOD SECURITY IN CROSS  
RIVER AND BENUE STATES, NIGERIA**

**BY**

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## CERTIFICATION

This to certify that this dissertation titled "Farmers – herders crises and food security in Cross River and Benue States, Nigeria" and carried out by Akah, Augustine Ugar with registration number PAD/Ph.D/18/023 has been examined and found worthy of the award of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in Public Administration (Public Policy).

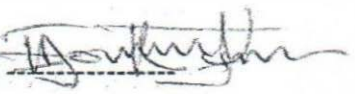
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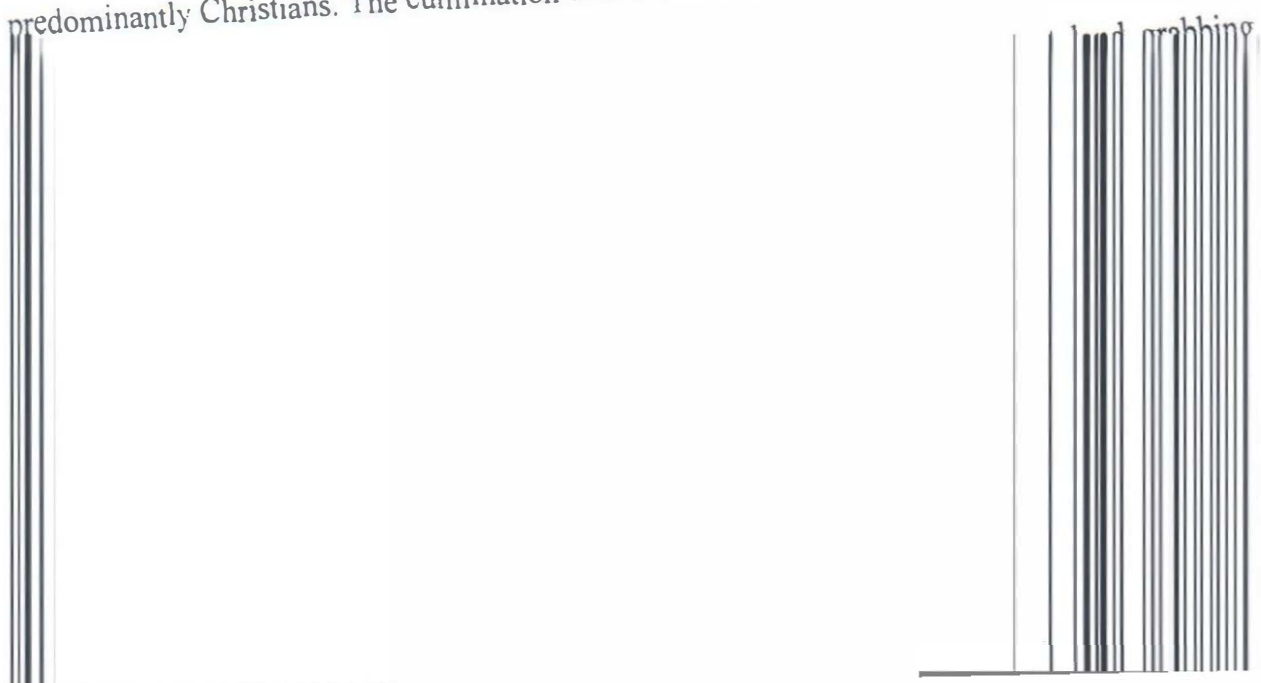


# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the study

In the last three decades, Nigeria has witness an exponential rise in tension, intolerance and crisis between farmers and herdsmen, the trend has remained palpable. The incessant violent crisis between farmers and herdsmen in some rural communities is one of the major challenges in the country. Recent reports and media narratives have indicated that the crises have extended to other parts of the country including the Middle Belt, Western and Southern regions particularly Enugu, Ekiti, Ogun, Imo, Bayelsa, Benue and Cross River State among others. The growing effects of climate change and desertification in the North coupled with the inhuman activities of Boko Haram in the North East has made cattle grazing difficult and has caused herders to migrate Southwest. The influx of herders to the South has led to struggle for space which has given rise to the prevalence of the crisis. Another interpretation of the remote cause of the crisis is ethno-religiosity. While the herders are majorly nomadic Fulani Muslims, the sedentary smallholder farmers are predominantly Christians. The culmination of these factors could make some persons believe that



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According to Olusola (2018), the local media covering the crisis has portrayed herdsmen often as violent perpetrators in farming communities. This has led to a public narrative associated with dangerous cattlemen. The inadequacy of the police to provide maximum security has led to the mobilization of other security outfit especially the Vigilante who constantly engages with the herdsmen who are seen as security threats to the communities. In retaliation, herdsmen have carried

out coveted attacks on residents, leading to the death of citizens and the destruction of farm animals and crops. In many of the affected rural communities, farmers are driven out of villages, ultimately becoming refugees in neighboring states. Those that remain in the villages are afraid to work in their farm lands due to fear of herdsmen attacks. The implication of the situation could be ominous on food production. Already, there are reports that prices of foods have increased in some of the affected States while refugee problems have escalated. For instance, people have migrated from their villages in Benue State to neighboring Nasarawa State, where the Governor has voiced his inability to cope with the spillage. The trend and situation is similar in other affected States in the country. Farmers and herdsmen clashes are feuds that have led to wanton destruction of lives and properties over the years largely across Nigeria (Ajibo et al, 2018)

The interrogation of the dynamics of the crisis shows that since the return to democracy in 1999, Nigeria has been grappling with diverse security challenges including insurgency, election violence, kidnapping and the farmers-herders conflicts among others, have plundered the country into a mess of Security Bridge. The struggle over grazing land and other scarce resources have over the years resulted in perennial and growing violent conflicts in terms of frequency, intensity and geographical scope. Underpinning the escalation in frequency of the crisis in Nigeria is a confluence of environmental and demographic forces. Apart from the understandable climatic factors responsible for herdsmen migration, some experts have argued that the crisis is also politically and ethno-religiously motivated as already stated.

The crisis has evolved from spontaneous reactions to provocations and now to deadlier planned attacks claiming more lives with hundreds of persons displaced and a caveat for ethnic, regional and religious polarization. As the herders migrate into the Savannah and rainforest of the Central and Southern States, they enter regions where large populations growth over the last four

decades has increased pressure on land. Not surprisingly, disputes over crop damage, water pollution, indiscriminate migration, invasion, cattle theft has become more frequent. Therefore, *some Scholars have affirmed that, with the decline of traditional mediation mechanisms, the benign neglect by the Federal government, the exacerbated religious tensions and the absence of mutually accepted alternatives simply means that the crisis is far from ending.*

According to Amnesty International Report of 2018, it has been observed that the Nigerian government has displayed what could only be described as gross incompetence and has failed in its duty to protect the lives of its citizens and end the intensifying conflict between farmers and herders. The report further affirms that the authority's lethargy has allowed impunity to flourish and the killings to spread to many parts of the country, inflicting great pains on residents who already live in constant fear and tension. Given the severity of the report, Amnesty International maintained that the Nigerian authorities must immediately initiate independent, effective and impartial investigations into all human rights violations and abuses perpetrated during the farmers-herder's crisis, whether by state or non-state actors.

Nigeria has experienced a considerable increase in natural resources conflicts since the early 1990s. The increasing conflicts between Farmers and Herdsmen have recently become a cause for worry, especially in the Middle Belt and North Central (Usman Leme, 2017). The attack by Fulani herdsmen in 2016 on Nimbo residents in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State, left 40 persons dead (Abiodun, 2016). These crises have exacted a heavy humanitarian toll with thousands killed and tens of thousands displaced. In Benue, one of the States under study and presumably the hardest hit, Governor Samuel Ortom reportedly admitted that more than 1800 people have been killed and thousands more displaced or forced out of their communities. For women and children, the impact is frequently magnified. Moreover, post- conflict economic and



who are food secure do not live in hunger or fear of starvation (Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), 2014). Food insecurity on the other hand, is a situation of limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire foods in socially acceptable ways. In addition, food security incorporates a measure of resilience to future disruption or unavailability of critical food supply due to various risk factors including droughts, shipping disruption, fuel shortages, economic instability, and wars (Boeing, Boeing & Colamesta, 2016). In the years 2011-2017 (FAO, 2017), an estimated 842 million people were suffering from chronic hunger (FAO, 2017). The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations identified the four pillars of food security as availability, access, utilization, and stability (FAO, 2009). The UN recognized the right to food in the declaration of human rights in 1948 (United Nations, 2015) and has since noted that it is vital for the enjoyment of all other rights.

The above understanding of food security and the efforts made by FAO and UN in ensuring access to food is commendable. However, violent crisis in Nigeria, like other parts of the world, have created a rift in human relations, caused serious threats to food security, among many other effects (Basil & Ekpeyemi, 2015). The crisis leaves us with various forms of retardation and underdevelopment resulting from the destruction of lives, farmland and property. Most of the conflicts are generally regarded as ethno-religious bigotry and antagonism. Apart from the loss of lives, crops and cattle, it has profound influence on residential relationships, leading to new trends in the polarization of communities.

As the violence persist and each day the attacks takes a different strategy, there is need for government and the respective actors to collaboratively proffer solution to the crisis and focus on achieving a sustainable food production that will meet the demand of the rapid growing population. As part of efforts to bring the impact of the crisis to limelight, this research is aimed at examining

the implication of the crisis on food security in Nigeria with particular focus on Cross River and Benue States respectively. The research is therefore timely and imperative.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Farmers- herdsman attack in Nigeria has taken on alarming dimension in the past few years, hardly a week passes without one form of attack or another in Nigeria. Thousands of people have died, tons of crops destroyed, livestock and farm animals wasted in several instances. Sedentary farming rural communities are often the target of the attacks because of their level of vulnerability. The profile of the attacks shows that the situation is even more terrible than what is often reported. According to Global Terrorism Index, the conflicts resulted in almost 8000 deaths. From 2016 to date, attacks have been launched at Agatu in Benue State and in the upper Cross River State region of Utanga, Becheve etc. In attempt to underscore the impact of the problem, let's look at some of the reported cases arising from the crises documented by Global Terrorism Index. In April, 2018 Fulani herdsman allegedly killed 19 people during an attack on a church and burnt down nearby houses, in June, 2018, over 200 people were killed in clashes between farmers and herdsman in Plateau State. Later in the same year, October 2018, gunmen suspected to be Fulani herdsman killed 19 people in Bassa and with total devastation a hundred and more people were killed in 2019 at Agatu and Gumer East Local Government Areas of Benue State. In upper Cross River, few persons have been reported dead and others kidnapped arising from herdsman and farmers clashes in the region.

Historical antecedents show that Nigeria has suffered from series of arm banditry, terrorist attacks in the past especially, the Gamboru Ngala, Bagga massacres in Borno State, the Kano bombing of 2014. Yobe school and church shooting, the killing of Biafran supporters etc. The above attacks claimed hundreds of lives but the destruction and damage reported about the reprisal



attacks carried out in Nigeria arising from Farmers-herdsmen conflicts are unprecedented. The impact is regrettable. At the local level, the attacks have become reprisal, it is now a serious issue of concern to all. Infrastructural development is absent as “local governance is saturated with high level of attitudinal depravity. The level of corruption is high and the hope of reduction is not in sight” (Agbor, 2013).

One of the biggest monster threatening Nigeria’s peaceful co- existence is farmer-herders conflict particularly in Benue with an impact in some parts of Cross River State. The Federal government has failed to come up with a reliable strategy to solve the crisis, the daily news and media outlets are littered with stories and gory pictures of ongoing attacks. While there are no exact details about numbers and types of weapons used in the instant of the crises, the most common weapons appear to be handguns and machetes. However, according to Attah (2012) reports states that raids by the police resulted in the collection of more sophisticated weapons like AK-47 and G3 rifles, Beretta and Browning pistols as well various types of ammunition. Large areas of farmlands have been abandoned with consequences for the local communities and the entire Nigeria especially on food security. These attacks have traumatized many in the local communities and have led to both farmers and herders fleeing to safer territories.

Preliminary investigations by Africa Conflict and Security Analysis Network showed that a total of 853 people lost their lives just in 2014, from the figure reported, herders claimed to have lost 214 in addition to 3200 cows while an estimated 633 Tiv people were killed excluding women and children who later died at IDPs, the victims here in Cross River State are also internally displaced or have migrated to seek shelter at neighboring villages. The nature of attacks appears to be beyond issue of contestation over environmental resources and grazing fields and includes the politics of Islamization driven by both religious and ethnic ideologies.

The institutional responses to the crises have to some extent been done by both state and non-state actors. State responses include efforts by security forces : deployment of security forces to conflict areas for peace keeping, relief responses which involve the immediate/short term provision of relief items to victims of violence; the establishment of commissions and panels of enquiry, government social programmes designed to stop hostilities and embrace peace/tolerance and the establishment of the institute for peace and conflict resolution to strengthen capacities for the promotion of peace and management of conflict. In similar vein, the efforts of non-state actors include sensitization campaigns against violence by NGO and the mobilization of community vigilante groups to curb the trend. Regrettably, most of the responses summarized above have so far failed to address the situation, incessant attacks, destruction of lives and damage to food crops and cattle are on the rise, hence this work is aimed at establishing reasons why these various efforts have failed and very importantly to examine the impact or implication of the crisis to the food security viz access to food and availability of food in both states under study.

The issue of extra judiciary killings in Nigeria has gotten international attention, Boko Haram for instance has been designated as the 4<sup>th</sup> most dangerous and deadly terrorist group in the world by the World Terrorist Index in 2019. Unfortunately, the attacks by herdsmen and farmers takes places in food producing regions. Benue State for instance is the food basket of the nation, Cross River State is also a leading food producing state in Nigeria. However, as argued by some scholars, the steady rise in the tension and conflict between farmers and herders is gradually affecting food production in the affected areas and both states will soon become unable to produce enough food to meet the population growth, and transporting such food products to other states will become history. In the light of the foregoing, there is need to address the situation objectively with the aim of finding solutions to the hostilities. Thus, the crux of this study is to critically

investigate whether the farmers-herdsmen crisis has an implication on food security in Cross River and Benue States respectively.

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between farmers-herdsmen crisis and food security in Cross River and Benue States. The specific, measurable objectives are:

- i. To investigate if there exist significant impact of farmers-herdsmen crisis on food security in terms of crops and livestock production in Cross River and Benue States
- ii. To investigate if there exist significant impact of farmers-herdsmen crisis on food security in terms of poor access to food and shortage in supply of food in Cross River and Benue States
- iii. To ascertain if there exist significant impact of farmers-herdsmen crisis on food security in terms of increase in the cost of food products in Cross River and Benue States.

### **1.4 Research questions**

In respect to the specific objectives above, the following research questions were considered:

- i. Is there significant impact of farmers-herdsmen crisis on food security in terms of crops and livestock production in Cross River and Benue States?
- ii. Is there significant impact of farmers-herdsmen crisis on food security in terms of poor access to food and shortage in the supply of food in Cross River and Benue States?
- iii. Is there significant impact of farmers-herdsmen crisis on food security in terms of increased cost of food products in Cross River and Benue States?

### **1.5 Research hypotheses**

In line with the above objectives, the following hypotheses guided the study

- i. Ho: Farmers-herdsmen crisis in Cross River and Benue States has no significant impact on food security in terms of crops and livestock production.
- ii. Ho: Farmers-herdsmen crisis has no significant impact on food security in terms of poor access to food and shortage of food supply in Cross River and Benue States.
- iii. Ho: Farmers-herdsmen crisis has significant impact on food security in terms of increased cost of food products in Cross River and Benue States.

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

It is a truism that crisis occurs whenever disagreements exist in a social situation over issues of substance or whenever emotional antagonisms create frictions between individuals or groups (Okoro, 2018). The substance may include resources such as land, water, trees, crops, crude oil, diamond, gold as well as rights such as grazing, farming and hunting rights. Crisis arising from the above perspective are resource based and according to Blench (1996) they are classified into two, namely, point resources conflicts and eco-zonal conflicts. The Fulani cattle herdsman have identified conflicts arising from land use as the 'most important' problem they face in their occupation (Van'tHooft, Millar & Django, 2005). During the peak of the rainy season, characterized by cattle breeding, more milk production and shorter grazing hours, cattle herding coincides significantly with arable crop production emanating in farmers-herdsmen crisis. The resultant increase in competition for arable land has led to serious issues of intolerance and social friction among the two groups. The crisis has not only heightened the level of insecurity but could exacerbate the problem of food insecurity in the affected regions and the country at large.

The reprisal attacks and destruction of crops, livestock, properties and human lives calls for immediate action to curb the situation and mitigate the consequences. Hence, this study is highly significant. It fills an important lacuna in the implication of herders and farmer's crisis in



Nigeria as it focused on the impacts of these crises on food security in Cross River and Benue States. Previous studies focused mainly on the political and ethno religious dimension of the conflict as well as the failed attempts to solve the crisis. The overall impacts of these crises on food security have often been treated with levity or neglected. It became important for the researcher to visit the crisis among crop farmers and Fulani herders with specific concern on food security.

On educational level, the study expands the frontier of knowledge in the area of farmers-herdsmen crisis and food security, it serves as literature bank for those who may be interested in carrying out similar research in the future. It is also a reliable source of information for all actors in security related discussions and the socio-economic implications, relevant points to sustain a debate on the crisis could be culled from this study.

On practical level, the study provides firsthand information about the crisis by bringing to bear the impacts, damages and difficulty experienced by the direct victims of the crisis especially those who have been displaced from their original communities. Also, very importantly, the reality of the effect of the crisis on food production, access to food and increased cost for food products were discussed. A practical, one on one interaction with the victims or the target groups at the field further provided the ideal situation in the respective communities, this target creates the needed awareness and place serious demand on the government to act especially, the federal government.

On theoretical significance, the study adopted a theory that explain security crisis in relation to survival and struggle for available natural resources. The idea of the theory could be used by scholars to buttress on insurgency, terrorism. Insecurity and other socio-political or ethno religious conflagrations in Nigeria and beyond.

In terms of policy significance, the study suggested pragmatic, workable policy recommendations that could help both state and non-state actors in the effort to proffer lasting solution to the crisis, the recommendations are the best possible measures based on both groups preferences as well as a doable strategy for the government. The policy that were suggested will also help the government to plan ahead, government will know exactly about the widespread/impact of the crisis and the actual number of victims which could help the government to distribute the necessary social and material relief as well as the target farmer's population to assist by supporting them with grants, appreciable loans, fertilizers and the required social security needed to improve the cultivation of crops by farmers and the production livestock by cattle herders.

### **1.7 Scope of the study**

The issue of farmers-herdsmen crisis has created humanitarian toll across many communities in Nigeria and in particular Cross River and Benue States. According to Aliyu (2015), the crisis is believed to have existed since the beginning of agriculture and either increased or decreased in intensity or frequency depending on economic, environmental and other factors. Idowu (2017) further reported that the violence between farmers and herdsmen has displaced more than 100,000 people in Benue and surrounding States and left them under the care of relatives or in makeshift Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps while many are still struggling to rebuild their lives or recover from the damages. This study therefore focused on the crisis and its implication on food security, our concern was to examine the relationship between farmers-herdsmen crisis and food security in the states and whether the crisis is responsible for the decline in the cultivation of crops, rearing of livestock, poor access to food and the hike in the prices of



food products. Extant literature covering the origin of the crisis, perceived causes, reported attacks, previous and current efforts from various stakeholders and lots more will be reviewed.

The study covered a period of five years, between 2014 and 2019. The preference for this period is as a result of the following reasons: Exponential increase in the number of attacks, overwhelming impacts, high level of damages recorded, occasional government interventions, regional/international attention, decline in food production, greater risk couple with the security gaps in the country and other political, religious factors.

The study focused on the most affected Local Government Areas and communities in both States. The identified areas were covered which enabled the researcher to obtain primary data, analyzed the data with scientific methods to reach the conclusion. At the end of the study, we hope to establish clearly whether or not farmers-herdsmen crisis has an implication on food security in Cross River and Benue States.

### **1.8 Limitations of the study**

In the course of the study, we experienced a number of challenges. Below is the summary of the challenges. Firstly, it was difficult to collate primary data because most of the stakeholders initially felt since it has to do with security, it could be wrong to give out some key information. When they were assured that the information will be treated confidentially and use only for the research purpose, they became willing to share. Secondly, it was difficult to obtain the necessary information on record time because majority of the victims of the clashes have been displaced from their original settlements. However, we were able to reach out to the targeted victims in both states.

Another challenge was the location and topography of some of the communities where the data were collected. Some of the communities like Kundeve and Becheve in upper Cross River State are located at the mountain, access to such communities required us to climb to the top of the mountains; the experience wouldn't have been easy, if we were not used to height. While, some affected communities in Benue State are located at the other side of the river, in which case, access was only possible by crossing the river. To surmount this challenge, we had to deal with the fear of being drowned since it was a local boat that took us across.

It was also problematic for some of the respondents to correctly fill the research instrument due to illiteracy. However, the researcher (s) had an orientation meeting with them and explained in details what they were expected to do. Moreover, the respondents were also guided on how to respond to the questions accordingly. The above measures helped us to conclude the research successfully.

### **1.9 Definition of terms**

**i. Farmers:** Group of persons who engaged in agriculture, raising living organisms for food or raw materials. *The term usually applies to people who do some combination of raising field crops, orchards, vineyards, poultry, or other livestock.* In simple terms, farmers are people who owns, work on or operate an agricultural enterprise, either commercially or to sustain themselves and immediate family. Historically, farming dates back to as far as the Neolithic era, the practice has existed for thousands of years. However, for the purpose of this study, farmers are herein referring to as peasant or subsistence crop cultivators (those who raised field crops)

**ii. Herdsmen:** They are owners or keepers of a herd of domesticated animals. In the context of this study, our concern is the Fulani herdsmen Fulani pastoralists who according to Iro (1994) are seen as nomadic or semi nomadic herders whose primary occupation is raising livestock. They

usually move their herds from one place to another in search of pasture and fresh water for survival. The Fulani originated from the Senegambia before spreading out into about 20 States across West Africa and the Sahel as well as Sudan and Central African Republic (McGregor, 2014). They are found in large number in Nigeria especially in the North but as a result of climatic and other factors, some of the herders have migrated to the South in search of better conditions for themselves and cattle. They are often armed and visibly move around with weapons like daggers, machetes, arrows etc. to protect themselves and livestock.

**iii Farmers-herdsmen crisis:** This is frequently occurring conflict between crop farmers and their counterparts who are generally called nomads or pastoralists, involve in rearing of cattle, goats and other domesticated animals. The conflict is attributed to struggle over land and other natural resources. According to Okoro (2018) herdsman-farmer or herder-farmer crisis are conflicts occurring between peasant farmers or subsistence cultivators and nomadic or transhumant livestock keepers. In the same vein, Hagmann (2003) affirms that there exist differences between herder-herder conflicts and farmer-herder conflicts. He opined that farmer-herder conflicts are often crises between famers and nomadic or transhumant livestock keepers that arise between receiving groups over their territory's resources and incoming groups searching for water and pasture, and cattle raiding. Meanwhile, Hussein et al (1999) concluded that farmer-herder conflicts comprise different types of conflicts including ethnic conflicts, interest conflicts, resource disputes, political action, evictions, killings, cattle raiding and cattle rusting.

**iv Food security:** According to the United Nations Committee on World Food Summit (1996), food security means that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life. This implies that all nations and countries around the world must ensure that food

is sufficiently available for all. However, the changing climate, growing population, environmental stressors and other factors have an impact on food security and these factors are some of the identified causes of farmers-herdsmen crisis in Nigeria. Indeed, adaptation strategies and policy responses to global change including water allocation, land use patterns, food trade, postharvest food processing, and food prices and safety should be given priority.

The World Food Conference (1974) defined food security in terms of supply. They agreed that food security is the availability at all times of adequate, nourishing, diverse, balanced and moderate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices. Food security incorporates a measure of resilience to future disruption or unavailability of critical food supply due to various risk factors including droughts, disruption, economic instability, terrorism and clashes.

In the context of this study, food security is a situation where all citizens of both States have access to, and can afford the require quantity of food to feed themselves, family households as well as import such food items to other States in the country. The study was anchored on production, access/supply and the cost of food; these factors are inextricably tied to the pillars of food security which according to Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations are availability, access, utilization and stability. The discuss on food security cannot be undermine, it is very imperative. Thus, the United Nations recognized the right to food in the declaration of human rights in 1948 and has since affirmed that it is vital for the enjoyment of all other rights. The World Summit on Food Security (1996) also declared that food should not be used as an instrument for political and economic pressure. In 2012, food insecurity was reported as a global concern as 1 billion people are suffering from starvation and malnutrition. In sub-Saharan Africa, the number of people suffering from hunger is estimated at 239 million, and this figure could

increase in the nearest future if attention isn't given to the disturbing reports responsible for poor production, poor access and increased in the prices of food.

### **1.9 Organization of chapters**

This study titled Farmers-herdsmen crisis and food security in Cross River and Benue States, Nigeria is organized and arranged incrementally, it is designed to present empirically the implication of the crisis on food security in both states and the country at large. The study is divided into six chapters with a focus on the key issues and the methodology for the research.

Chapter one begins with a copious introduction or background of the topic, it lays the foundation for the study and buttresses on the wide spread of the problems arising from the crisis. The core objectives which focuses on production, access/stability and cost were stated with related questions and hypotheses and definition of terms.

Chapter two presents a thematic review of relevant literature and the suitable theoretical framework. Here the works of various researchers were studied and summarized, issues like historical antecedent of the Fulani herdsmen crisis, remote causes, previous and current efforts, profile of attacks, impact on farming, political/ethno religious underpinnings and lots more were discussed.

Chapter three focuses on the method adopted for data collation, presentation, analysis and interpretation of results. Research design, study area, study population, technique for sampling, instrumentation were considered.

Chapter four highlights the overview of the issue of farmers-herdsmen crisis and the implication on food security in Cross River and Benue States which are some of the highest food producing States in the country make it easy to understand the situation of the crisis in these areas.



Chapter five of the study considered the systematic presentation and analysis of data gathered from the field with the required instrument. Tables, charts were used to further illustrate the representation of the data, each study objective and the peculiar responses from respondents were analyzed as well as hypotheses testing

Chapter six brings the study to a logical end with summary and conclusion in line with the study and valid recommendations were made based on the findings of the study, the demands from the victims and strategic, reliable ways of managing the crisis to save lives, protect properties and reduce the problems associated with food security.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1 Conceptual analysis

In this section, our focus is on the conceptual explications of scholarly views as it relates to Farmers-herdsmen conflicts and food security in Nigeria and in particular in Cross River and Benue States. The conflict between arable crop farmers nomadic, pastoralists and cattle farmers in Nigeria has over the years been regarded as one of the key threats to the peace and security of Nigeria especially in the States under study. Scholars at all levels viz sociological implications, political inquiry, ecological consequences, security discourse and the likes have attempted to analyze the situations. However, our concern is the implication of the conflicts on food security and to examine if the protracted conflict affects cost of foods, access to foods and availability of foods. Nigeria as a state has attempted to resolve the conflicts, promote the mutual coexistence of its citizens, defined strategic formulas or principles for the sharing of competed resources, yet these attempts according to Scholars and Stakeholders are futile and fruitless. This is why Fiki and Lee (2004) reasoned that the failure of the state, for example to resolve the 'settler/ 'indigene' identity and the inherent struggles over resources can be adduced to have brought dangerous dimensions of economic and political elements in the Fulani pastoralists and farmers' conflicts. We argue on the affirmative in line with the above thought because one of the primary reasons for government is security of lives and property and the provision of basic welfare including food for survival. Therefore, ideally, government should place serious priority on the resolution of the conflict. Issues bordering on food security, safety, rural development should be sacrosanct for the government as well as efforts to decrease the agitation for control of resources and the protection

of the rights of others. Again, local resistance to state policies is central in resource-use through strengthening of community capacity to manage resources and deal with conflicts.

According to Alhassan (2013), periodical struggle for scarce ecosystem resources has degenerated into violent conflicts in between Fulani herdsmen and farmers. These conflicts have become more intense, widespread and destructive. Most of the herdsmen do not own or possess any piece of land because they move from place to place seeking for pastures and rearing cattle. Therefore, they depend completely on available land and pasture to feed their cattle which become a consequence of intense pressure on the land and damage to crops cultivated by the local farmers hence the incidence of conflicts.

Bagu and Smith (2017) opined that farmers and herdsmen have lived in relative harmony, benefiting from symbiotic partnerships in order to keep cropland fertile and cattle well-nourished. Idowu (2017) added that farmers and herders both benefited in the exchange of grain for dairy and crop residue for manure. However, recently the relationship has been replaced with mistrust, hatred and the lies. The conflict has degenerated into killings, destruction of crops and animals. The reoccurrence of clashes between farmers and herdsmen in most parts of Nigeria is one of the greatest threats to food security. The increased in farmers-herdsmen conflicts resulting in resource degradation and scarcity is currently a source of concern to everyone. This is according to Alahji (2019) due to the negative socio-economic consequences of the conflicts. There is no absolute conclusion on which group experience most damages, the challenges of arable crop farmers who constitute a greater number of the crop production population in Cross River State and Benue State are unbearable. Therefore, they are unwilling to return to farming and most of them have fled their original settlement for fear of the attacks. Many have argued that the prolong conflict is responsible for the shortage of food in the states and by extension the entire country.

The conflicts do not only have a direct impact on the lives and livelihoods of those involved, but they also destroy and threaten the sustainability of agriculture and pastoral production and invariably the sustainability of livelihoods of rural communities (Ukamaka, Danjuma, Mbolle, Achonam, Mbadiwe, 2017, Moritz, 2010). The conflicts reinforce circles of extreme poverty and hunger, and destroy social status, food security and affect mostly the most marginalized groups that include women and children (Ikezue & Ezeah, 2017). Farmers and herdsman crises especially in the utilization of agricultural land have become increasingly widespread in Nigeria, probably due to 'intensification' and 'extensification' of production activities that are necessitated by increasing human population (Fasona & Omojola, 2005; Gefu & Kolawole, 2002, cited in Adisa & Adekunle, 2010). To further justify the argument, the country has experienced an exponential rise in population density over the past years with over 50% difference compare to the population prior to the last census. This steady increase in human population has a direct impact on the demand and supply of food across the 36 States including the Federal Capital Territory. Thus, both farmers and pastoralists are pushed to expand production to meet the local demand for food. In doing this, there is massive pressure and competition for the available ecological resources with an alarming implication on food security. Indeed, Cotula, Toulmin & Hesse (2004) affirmed that conflicts involving lands have not only heightened the level of insecurity, but have also demonstrated high potential to exacerbate food crisis in Nigeria and other affected countries due to loss of lives, animals, crops and valuable properties.

Grazing lands in Nigeria have barely been demarcated, and this large sector of agriculture always suffer compared to crop farming or fruit plantation (FAO, 1985). Pastoralists usually graze over areas outside farm lands, and these have been accepted to be the norm historically. Their movements are planned and they look for pasture and water resources in a pattern that varies

seasonally or year to year according to availability of resources (FAO, 2011). The patterns of movement may be controlled by seasonal climate variations. However, increase in population, drying of waterholes, shifting in rainfall pattern and a number of other factors have affected cattle rearing. At the same time, smaller and local agricultural production systems are becoming more and more integrated into the global economy, pushing up land values (Muhammed, Ismaila & Bibi, 2015) and encroaching into farm lands especially in Benue and Cross River States.

Nigeria is battling with conflicts of grave extents among some ethnic identities across the states. These conflicts are dynamic in nature, based on the causes of the conflicts, whether there are locally generated or externally influenced, unfortunately, they have huge consequences on the food security status of the country. In his response to conflict or crisis, Momale (2013) asserted that crises occurred between identical resource users or clusters of users in a community. He further cited an example of crises that occurred between foresters and farmers, and herders and farmers. Some have argued that Nigeria experience several ethno territorial conflicts due to the multiple of ethnic and racial identities that exist. Adisa (2012) reported that the farmer's and herdsmen's clashes have remained the foremost dominating resources use clashes in Federal Republic of Nigeria. This has caused a lot of setbacks especially in Cross River and Benue States in the area of food production and in the agricultural sectors in general. Many cities have been destroyed as a result of clashes, and many households have been frustrated from farming because of intrusion of herdsmen into limited and scarce resources (Adebayo 1997; Breusers 1998; Bermadet 1999; Ofuoku and Isife 2010). Whenever the clash occurs, food production of the particular area is reduced, thereby reducing the gross domestic product (GDP) of the nation.

According to Abbas (2009) the contention for land was the most important cause of clashes between the Fulani pastoralists and farmers. Also, Coser (2000) examined the urgency of clashes



among the Fulani herders and farmers. He emphasized on the availability of resources and community differentiation. In all scenario, scholars have agreed largely on the causes and effects of the crises on national development and the need to urgently resolved the issues with strategic engagements and control. However, this research is particularly significant because it focuses on the impact of the conflicts on the food security of both states and by extension the entire country, little has been done in this direction, so this research will answer the questions of whether farmers-herdsmen conflict has an implication on production of foods, access to food and cost of food specifically in Cross River and Benue States as well as recommend ways to tackle the protracted conflicts.

### **2.1 1 The Historical antecedent of the Fulani people**

An attempt to underscore the historical antecedent of the Fulani people usually lead to scholarly debate which is tied to ethnic identity that arose the interest of social scientists. Ethnic identities or racial groups are religious or political groups that exist primarily to attract benefits for members. Thus, their social organization, as well as interest, will change over time giving the dynamics of the society. Our focus in this section is to conceptualize the Fulani identity on the basis of empirical historical antecedents and briefly summarize the factors that characterized the Fulani identity and how their socio-economic endeavors influences them to continuously struggle for scarce resources. History has it that the Fulani people often regarded as herdsmen or pastoralists migrated to Senegal in West Africa from the North and East. It is certain that they were a mixture of people from northern and sub-Saharan Africa and by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they had already spread across some of the countries in the tropics and the West Africa sub-region.

The preference for Islam made the Fulani people to be accepted and integrated into the cultural and religious enclaves of the host country, and that integration became a major ethno



territorial bond. The social and political relevance and significance of ethno territorial factors and territoriality have been emphasized by many authors (Anderson 1998; Ardrey 1967; Coakley 2003a; Coakley 2003b; Cornell 2002a; Dijkink & Knippenberg 2001; Dostál & Knippenberg 1992; Ghai 2000; Gottman 1973; Knight 1982; Knippenberg 1996; Knippenberg & Dostál 1979; Murphy 1989; Rezvani 2010; Roessingh 1991; Sack 1986; Storey 2001; Toft 2003). A territory may stimulate ethnic bond and nationalism in some ways. First, a territory may give recognition to outsiders, like it is with the Fulani people, in most instances even in Benue and Cross River States, the host communities recognized the pastoralists and allowed them to settle in either for a specific period of time or for some pecuniary benefits. Secondly, as a consequence of the universal acceptance of the ideology of the nation-state, a territory is an asset for any ethnic group trying to preserve its distinctiveness as a group. Next, a territory may serve as a focus of identification for the ethnic group itself, by providing a homeland or “fatherland” and control over territory means an advantage for mobilizing resources, whether they are human or material resources. The above points on the ethno territorial bond shared by the Fulani people and the host communities further justify why the Fulani people seemingly want to have the resources available in the territories viz land, water, green vegetation, grazing sites etc. For instance, the Toroobe, a branch of the Fulani, settled in communities and mixed with the ethnic groups, they gradually became outstanding Islamic clerics, attaining the highest ranks of the exponents of Islam, along with the Berbers and the Arabs. It is almost normal having reached such religious leadership positions for the people to push for what is appealing to them.

The Fulani movement especially in West Africa is akin to a set pattern. Their first movement into an area tends to be peaceful, local chiefs allocate lands to them, give them access to grazing field and allow them to sell their produce in the market, their dairy products, including

According to Wikipedia, "The Fula is an ethnic group of people spread over many countries in West Africa, from Mauritania in the northwest to Cameroon in the east. In Nigeria, others, and literature, usually calls them Fulani." A publication from the University of Iowa described the "Fulani people as nomadic peoples who have been influential in regional politics, economics, and histories throughout western Africa for over a thousand years. They played a significant role in the rise and fall of the Mossi states in Burkina and also contributed to the migratory movements of people Southward through Niger and Nigeria into Cameroon. They were also responsible for introducing and spreading Islam throughout much of western Africa. A further inquiry into the origin and existence of the Fulani people seems to begin with the Berber people of North Africa, around the 8th or 11th century AD. It is assumed that as the Berbers migrated down from North Africa and mixed with the people in the Senegal region of West Africa, the Fulani ethnic group emerged. They spread out over most of West Africa into some areas of Central Africa and occupy as far as the western borders of Ethiopia. As they migrated Eastward, they encountered and conquered different African tribes who were comparatively less powerful and defensive. Thus, some of the Fulani people abandoned their traditional pastoral life for sedentary existence in towns or on the farm land of the communities they have conquered. Although, they remain the largest group of pastoral people in the world.

In terms of physical appearance, the Fulani people are reportedly taller, slimmer with lighter skinned than many other Africans. Fulani men are often seen with a long cloth wrapped around their faces, with walking sticks across their shoulders while resting their arms on it. They are easily recognized because they have ethnic, tribal marks on either side of their faces and/or on their foreheads. On the other hand, the Fulani women are very enterprising, they are seen with milk products and what is popularly called 'Fura' stacked in tiers on their heads in calabash bowl.

### **2.1.2 Migratory drift and pastoralism of the Fulani people: Benue and Cross River States experience**

An account of the origin and historical antecedent of the Fulani people as summarized in the previous section shows that they are mainly pastoralists with a fast-growing population, currently spreading to all States in the North Central and Southern regions of Nigeria. Certainly, the understanding that the Fulani people are predominantly found in the Northern part of the country is perhaps a false assumption as it stands. Although, the migration pattern hasn't change but more territories have been occupied and there is a conscious effort to have complete ownership of the areas they occupy. In some local communities like Agatu, Okpokwu in Benue and Utanga, Becheve in Cross River States, the presence of the Fulani reportedly increased in the past ten years. Prior to the conflicts and massacre at Agatu and the periodic tensions in Becheve, the Fulani people live and interact with the villagers who are mostly peasant farmers. They participate in the local market of buying and selling, pay some designated royalties to the local chiefs and move around with cattle for grazing. However, our concern in this section is to focus on the Fulani migration to Benue, Cross States, the cordial co-existence previously enjoyed by both ethnicities and the current struggle for resources. In doing this, we shall address the relevant perspectives in the next paragraph.

Hogben (1930) reported that in Nigeria, "the Fulani people may be sociologically divided four categories: first, the ruling dynasties of most of the Northern Nigerian Emirates established during the holy war of 1804-30. Second, the settled Fulani who fill a range of occupations in Northern Nigerian society – court officials, judges, scribes, entrepreneurs, farmers and so on. Third, the semi-sedentary Fulani who are primarily farmers but who maintains herds of cattle for which pasture has to be sought at a distance. Fourthly, the pastoral Fulani who depends completely

on their herds of zebu cattle for subsistence, and whose lives are turned to continuous transhumance, migratory drift and periodic migration". The later categorization, the protracted conflicts with local farmers and how the conflicts affect food security is the key subject of the research. There is no consensus or logical conclusion on when and how the Fulani people migrated towards the North Central and the South in particular Benue and Cross River States. However, there are several reasons responsible for the migration. From the wide literature available on the subject, the reasons are inextricably link to ecological and climatic factors. For instance, at the earliest, the advent of irrigation in crop cultivation around the savanna belt, the increasingly harsh climatic condition and the attendant reduction in green vegetation and an exponential rise in human population in the north, compelled a good number of the Fulani people or pastoralists to prioritized migration to the coastal region viz North central and Southern Nigeria where there is abundant rainfall in search of pasture, favorable climate and water; a movement called transhumance (Blench, 1994). Albeit, this migration was initially seasonal, as such, after the wet season in the coast, they returned to the far North, this was the trend for quite a long period of time. However, as time goes by, reports indicates that the continuous depletion of grazing and pasture land in the North led to more influx of the pastoralists to the coastal region without a second thought or contemplation of returning to their previous settlement.

In the years preceding to the Nigerian civil, it is documented that a group of Fulani herdsmen in their numbers arrived the Idoma axis of Benue with their cattle and other domesticated animals from Awe, Doma in the present day Nasarawa State and Donga, Jukun in Taraba State war. They said to have flared after community clashes broke out among their host communities. They settled at Gumer and the Northern part of Markurdi after the River Benue. In Cross River State, the situation is similar with the Benue experience especially, the Northern part of Cross



River State which significantly forms part of the delimited area of this study as will be shown in the next chapter, is a rain forest savannah zone with green vegetation and favorable climatic condition for the zebu cattle rearing. Hence after the adventure of the Fulani people in the Coast, they became attracted to the zone. Blench & Dendo (2003) reported that the Pagayen clans were the first to arrive Ogoja from Makurdi and Wukari. Akah (2019) affirmed that the first set of Fulani herdsmen to step into the pasturage of Cross River arrived Becheve Mountains (Obanliku Local Government Area) in the late 1940s. He further stressed that the “group led by Alhaji Alah migrated from Bamenda highlands in Cameroon through Kalumo village into the Mountains. The second group led by Alhaji Baba arrived Becheve Mountains from the Republic of Cameroon shortly after the establishment of the Obudu Cattle Ranch in 1954”. The migration and settlement of the Fulani people continued in both States until the outbreak of the civil war in 1967, since they were Muslim and the war had an ethnoreligious perspective. However, they began to return gradually in small numbers shortly after the war and by the 1970s, there were Fulani settlements in almost all communities in Northern Cross River State.

Understand that at the inception of the Fulani migration drift to Benue and Cross River States, the relationship with the local communities was harmonious and peaceful. During this period as argued by some Scholars, the herdsmen ensured cattle do not graze into farmland or areas that have been cultivated, the farmers on the other hand depends on the cattle wastes and apply them to their crops as manure. Unfortunately, the reverse became the case, the relations between Fulani herdsmen and crop farmers in both States began to change from cordiality or cooperation to crises and conflicts in the late 1990s. By 2015, reports indicated several cataclysmic violence between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in the States that resulted to loss of lives, animals and crops as well as damage to valuable properties. Akah (2019) observed that “in March 2012, over 3,000



Fulani herdsmen fled from Katsina-Ala in Benue State to Utanga in Obanliku Local Government Area of Cross River State, following conflicts between them and the local people. They arrived Utanga in truck loads along with their women and children as well as thousands of their livestock. Although some of the herdsmen were repatriated by the Cross-River State Government as a response to the public outcry and protest by the people of Utanga, some of the Fulani people escaped being repatriated and have continued to swell the ranks of herders in Utanga". The migration of the Fulani herdsmen from neighboring Taraba, Nasarawa and the Republic of Cameroon to Benue and Cross-River States is often seen as the reason for the rising hostilities in the States. The reprisal attacks, killings and destruction of animals and farm lands, orchestrated by farmers and herdsmen in both States have led to growing anti-Fulani sentiment across the States and there exist a great possibility of the conflicts getting more escalated if there is urgent intervention. We contend that any migration, agrarian or urban, that involves a sizeable population from one geo-cultural location into another would most likely generate conflicts over space, land, water and other essential resources, which will culminate into socio-political circumstances except otherwise there is a prompt response to address the situation. This research is to accentuate the conundrum and to examine whether there exists any significant implication of the conflicts on food security.

### **2.1.3 Cattle rearing and arable food crop farming in Nigeria**

Nigeria is abundantly blessed with natural resources that aid the rearing of cattle and the cultivation of arable food crops. The presence of favorable climatic condition like sufficient rainfall is an added advantage to agricultural practices in the country. Benue and Cross River States are among the major food producing States in the country and Benue for instance, has the appellation of 'food basket of the nation'. The people are predominantly farmers who engaged in

largely on subsistence cultivation for consumption and exchange for some money equivalent. Cattle rearing on the other hand is the primary occupation of the Fulani herdsmen, they own and manage cattle in herds and profit from it. However, let's examine the status of cattle rearing and arable crop farming in both States and relate it to the consequences of the farmers-herdsmen conflict as well as show the implication of the situation on the food security in the areas under study.

Agriculture is the cultivation of crops and rearing of farm animals for economic gains, the origin of the practice is traceable to the early beginning and it has developed from the primitive, agrarian stage to a full-scale mechanization stage through efficient use of productive resources. Agriculture has contributed significantly to the socio-economic development of Nigeria particularly during the pre-oil era. At the moment, countries that have completely diversified the economy with a priority shift towards agriculture is gaining the dividends, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Asian Giants are getting a considerable input from agriculture as a result of the support they give to mechanization. Unfortunately, "the adoption of modern agricultural inputs has been considered slow in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) including Nigeria (Awotide, Ikudaisi & Ajala 2015). They further argued that among other lack of access to complimentary inputs is one of the constraints. Such constraint become more binding if farmers lack access to efficient market for various inputs so that surplus inputs can be traded with deficient inputs. Although, inputs markets are imperfect with high transaction cost for irrigation pump (Takeshima et al, 2010). While, we acknowledge lack of input as one of the major challenges to agricultural practices, we think that the struggle over inadequate resources is mostly paramount, it is the leading cause of the conflict between farmers and herdsmen. Firstly, cattle rearing is very significant in many ways, in Nigeria, it is use for hides/skin, meat and dairy. The aspect of meat production is the most common as it

occupies the highest level in the production/consumption chart while dairy is next. Nigeria dairy industries comprises of milk, cheese, yogurt, ice cream, butter and infant formula. Milk is the largest in the industry accounting for 61% turn over according to report. That means we need more cattle farmers that will go into dairy production which is a vital aspect of agriculture with so much gain. About 70 percent of the cattle population is found in the semi-arid zone and mostly owned by pastoralists yet local production of cattle is far below the country's demand, hence the steady importation of beef and cattle derivatives. Therefore, changing the situation for the best requires a strategic institutional response that can incentivize cattle rearing especially in the rural areas, protect the livelihoods of nomads, improve resource use efficiency at all levels of the value chain, minimize environmental and health hazards, and tackle the root causes of the current face-off between farmers and herders which is the core of this study. Cattle rearing is categorized into two approaches; zero grazing (stall fed approach) and pasture-based approach. Our concern is on the later because it uniquely characterizes the Fulani approach to cattle rearing in Benue and Cross River States. Sizeable cattle need about 20kg worth of feeds daily which is equivalent to some good bundle of pastures. They feed on green grasses, vegetable and if not control on food crops. On the other hand, arable crop farming is a type of crop cultivation that produces several of annual crops for consumption, commercialization and export purposes. This implies, the crop life cycle, from cultivation to maturity, is often completed within a year. Some example of arable crops commonly cultivated in Benue and Cross River States include: yam, cassava, millets, maize, rice, barley, vegetables, tomatoes, lentil, beans, peas, groundnut, rapeseed, soybean, potato etc. These crops constitute major sources of foods for the people as well as the main exchange resources. In Nigeria, agriculture is still the most remarkable sector of the economy in terms of employment, it has the highest labor force. Albeit, several constraints have led to a decline in agricultural

production especially livestock and food crops. For instance, FAO (2020) estimated that Nigeria has lost USD 10 billion in annual export opportunity from groundnut, palm oil, cocoa and cotton alone due to continuous decline in the production of those commodities. Other than the farmers-herdsmen conflicts, other factors undermining production include reliance on rain fed agriculture, smallholder land holding, and low productivity due to poor planting material, low fertilizer application, and a weak agricultural extension system. FAO (2020) further reported that “Nigeria is the largest producer of cassava in the world, with about 50 million metric tons annually from a cultivated area of about 3.7 million ha. Nigeria accounts for cassava production of up to 20 per cent of the world, about 34 per cent of Africa’s and about 46 per cent of West Africa’s. The national average yield of cassava is estimated at about 13.63 MT per ha, as against potential yield of up to 40 metric tons per ha”. From the above statistics, it has been reported that about two-thirds (66 per cent) of total production is in the southern part of the country and some States in the middle belt. In Cross River State, all the local government in the Northern parts produces cassava to a reasonable extent, likewise, the local governments under study in Benue States. Although, in both States, cassava is mainly cultivated by small scale farmers for family consumption and local sale. Large scale mechanized cultivation is rare and if available, it is owned by the State government or group of companies like the Godilogo Cassava Farm in Bebi, Obanliku, Cross River State. In the next paragraph, we attempts to relate the implication of farmers-herdsmen conflicts to cattle rearing and arable crop farming as well as the security of food in Cross River and Benue States.

Agricultural practices particularly, cattle rearing and farming are very vital for a State to achieve food security which in the context of this work, it is measured by access, supply, availability and affordability. Any State characterize with famine, hunger or starvation and lack of adequate food supply is a ticking bomb. In 2009, FAO reported that there are about one billion



people who are not food secured globally. It is a disturbing report giving the possibility of an increased in the number by 2050. In furtherance of FAO report, Conway (2012) and Swaminathan (2012) affirmed that majority of the people who are food insecure live in the developing countries like Nigeria. Ordinarily, Nigeria shouldn't make the list of food insecurity from the global view but the challenges militating against food production are enormous. Thus, until the country makes conscious effort to harness its human and environmental resources and ensure that same resources are peacefully coordinated for a collective good, the food shortage situation will persist. In other words, "the efficiency and effectiveness of food production in any nation determined the extent of food security status level that the nation can attain" (Obaniyi et al 2020). In Cross River and Benue States where there are serious cattle rearing and crop farming, the region is currently face with protracted conflicts and ethno territorial violent leaving the local farmers and herdsmen in fear of continuing with farming and pastoral practices. The crises have been reported to have a huge implication on the food security status of the region. Momale (2003) noted that "crises occurred between identical resource users or clusters of users in a community. He further cited an example of crises that occurred between foresters and farmers, and herdsmen and farmers". This shows that the reprisal attacks on each group of the farming population by the other is one of the major consequences to food security in the region. "Many cities have been destroyed as a result of clashes, and many households have been frustrated from farming because of intrusion of herdsmen into limited and scarce resources" Adebayo 1997, Breusers 1998; Bermadet 1999; Ofuoku and Isife 2010). Some scholars have accentuated the causes of the conflicts, drawing to limelight several factors that could be responsible. For instance, Tonah (2006), Ukaegbu and Agunwaba (1995) had reported that the scarcity of grassland was the result of drought and non-availability of land for grazing, which led to overgrazing and other socioeconomic factors. As a result of these



scarcities, the Fulani herders always move from one geographical area to another zone, especially to the Guinea savanna zone. This movement has been reported to have resulted in several clashes among the arable crop farmers and the herders. Also, since the 1980s, when there was border adjustment and relocation of an oversized range of pastoralists into the perimeters of the forest zones of the geographical area, there has been an incessant increase in crop farmers–herders clashes and these clashes have had devastating effects on the food bank of both States and the economy of the country at large. Meanwhile, other social scientists and researcher like Abbas (2009), have argued that, “the contention for land was the most important cause of clashes between the Fulani pastoralists and farmers.” Similarly, Coser (2000) examined the urgent response to the clashes between the Fulani herders and farmers. He suggested the availability of resources and community differentiation as the way forward in curtailing the conflict. Most of the literature available on the farmers-herdsmen conflicts focuses mainly on the causes, the possible remedies and the nature of the conflicts. In this research, we extend the existing knowledge by focusing on the implication of the crises on food security in Cross River and Benue States particularly as it concerns access, distribution/supply of food, availability of food and cost of food.

#### **2.1.4 Factors responsible for crop farming and pastoralism in the States**

Several factors account for crop farming and pastoralism in Benue and Cross River States, we shall briefly review these factors to justify why farming is the major occupation of the local residents and if the migration of the Fulani people or pastoralists to some areas in the States especially during the post-civil war era is inextricably linked to these factors. We have earlier stated that both States are major food producers in Nigeria, with periodic rainfall in the wet season and the availability of green vegetation. First, the location of both States is critical to farmers and herdsmen. Benue State is located in the middle belt with a total landmass of

34,059 km<sup>2</sup> (13,150 sq. mi). It has been reported that about 65% of the landmass is arable, fertile enough for the cultivation of crops and the natural growing of pasture. It is politically situated in the North Central including FCT, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa and Plateau. It has a major boundary with Nasarawa and Taraba States which historically constitutes the main migration route of the Fulani people into the State. Cross River State was created on the 27th May, 1967 from the former Eastern region, it is one of the South-South geo-political States with a very rich arable land totaling 20,156 km<sup>2</sup> (7,782 sq. mi). Each senatorial district in the State has a local government that shares boundary with Cameroon; Bakassi in the South, Ikom in Central and Obanliku in the North which alongside Obudu is bounded to Benue State. Some of the Fulani people migrated into the State from Cameroon while, others arrived the Northern part of the State from neighboring Benue. Both States are surrounded by rivers (the Benue river which is the second largest in Nigeria, the great Qua river in Calabar which flows around the State, the Ikom river as well as other smaller rivers, streams and waterfalls) are clear evidence that both States do not experience difficulty in irrigation, crop farming is very common among the people. Similarly, the common boundaries with major Fulani settlements (Cameroon, Taraba and Nasarawa States), the proximity and the accessibility to Benue and Cross River States is a valid reason for the justification of the influx of the Fulani people to the area.

Second is the factor of climate and vegetation and this is very essential in the context of the study. In line with Koppen climate classification, both States are found within the AW Climate which means, they have two different seasons, the Rainy season and the Dry seasons. The first extend from April to October with annual rainfall of possibly 100-200mm. The later usually starts in October/November and ends in March. In each case, temperatures vary between 21 – 37 degrees Celsius depending on the time of the year. However, the Northern part of Cross River State

especially the Obanliku-Cameroun mountain area, has a cooler climate similar to that of Plateau State compare to Benue State. Although, in both cases, the land is generally low lying (averaging 100m-250m) and gently undulating with occasional hill, ridge or small stones. Again, at the boundary area with Cameroon, Obudu, Obanliku and Boki Local Governments Areas in Cross River State and Kwande and Oju Local Government Areas in Benue State have hilly terrain with a fine relief. The appreciable relief, vegetation and climate account for the people's interest in arable crop farming and the attraction of the Fulani herdsmen to the States.

Next is socio-economic factor. The main occupation of the rural settlers in both States is crop farming and other small-scale agricultural practices, hardly can you find a family that has no farm or piece of land for cultivation. White collar jobs are only available in the big cities or capital like Makurdi, Gbogo, Otukpo in Benue and Calabar, Ikom, Ogoja in Cross River and the jobs are limited, available to only few persons. So, the vast majority of the populace in the rural areas engages in cultivation. They feed on the produce, sell some in the markets, in most cases, rural-urban business men and women buys from the farmers usually at affordable rates and sells to the people in the cities with so much profit margin. This exploitative business approach is a great disadvantage to the rural dwellers but they are left with no choice but to sell the produce at cheap rates because they are confronted with several challenges including lack of good roads or access to markets, absence of government support through agricultural extension, loans and grants. To further compound the problem, Agbor (2019) in his scholarly article affirmed that "Rural Nigeria harbors over 80 percent of its citizens under life threatening conditions. From the perspective of participant observer, rural infrastructure is weak leading to poor accessibility of local areas. The setback has always been that farm produce from local areas hardly find their way to the urban market for better value. The pricing of local commodities has always remained low because

movement in and out of the producing locality has always been hampered by poor road infrastructure. This obviously affects the rural economy and makes the rural people constantly poor when compared to those persons who attempt a living in the urban areas.” The implication of Uno’s observation as stated above is reflected in the poor standard of living occasion by poverty among the rural dwellers. On the other hand, Nwagboso (2012) blamed the widening social-economic gap between rural and urban dwellers on the approach, he believes that “why the quest for rural development has remained elusive particularly in the developing countries is largely due to up-bottom approach currently adopted by countries... this strategy has not only resulted to abject poverty in most countries, but also failed to achieve food security among individuals, families and communities around the globe.” However, since the viable choice to livelihood at the rural areas is farming, the rural dwellers give so much attention to it with a committed effort towards protecting their farmlands. On the other hand, the Fulani people long understood the value of socio-economic development, they rear cattle basically to sell as meat, milk diary or hide/skin. The market demand for these cattle products and other farm animals is higher in the States that aren’t predominantly Muslim States; Benue and Cross River inclusive. This is because, most of the household in the core Muslim or Northern States engages in the business of cattle rearing, so the demand and value for the products is comparatively low. Therefore, they realized the need to move Southwards where they can have better profit incentives for cattle rearing. After all, the access to these areas, the location, the climate and vegetation were favorable to cattle rearing. Thus, socio-economic reason is seen as one of the key factors that justify farming as an occupation for rural dwellers as well as the migratory drift of the Fulani people to Benue and Cross River State.



The last factor to be considered is the natural hazards. There is absence or minimal natural hazards in both States. The incidence of landslide, bush fire, prolong heat arising from high sunlight, drought, land tearing and the outbreak of human, animal and crop diseases as often reoccurring in the core Northern States is very minimal in the States under study. Although, Benue State do experience flood but it happens not regularly and it can be control. Since the above conditions are mild, farmers do not have cause to worry about their farmlands and crops, they rarely experience destruction of farmland by landslide or damage to crops by diseases. Similarly, this factor influences the Fulani people to continuously migrate to the States, so they will be free from the frequent natural hazards particularly the ones mentioned above that characterize some States in the North. Some scholars have argued that the above factors are some of the reasons for farming and pastoralism in the States. However, our concern is, at the end of this study, we should be able to further justify the arising conflicts from farmers-herdsmen interactions and whether or not these conflicts have implications on access, supply, distribution and cost of foods in both States.

## **2.2 Objective review and analysis**

In this section, we focus our attention on reviewing scholarly works that are related to the objectives of our study. The essence is to clearly identify what previous researchers have discovered or reported on the issue under discuss. We look at empirical examples and scientifically proven hypotheses that support the claims. We hope this review provide us with a background knowledge of the situation and help us to have a comprehensive discourse on the impact of the farmers and herdsmen crisis on food security in Cross River and Benue States respectively. As explicitly stated in Chapter one, the main objective of our research is to examine the relationship between farmers-herdsmen crisis and food security; the specific objectives are to investigate the



access to food and the supply of the required quantity of food. In most cases, the ripple effect is also felt in the unprecedented increased in the cost of food. Indeed, Abughdyer (2016) stated that a total of 664.4 hectares (56.4%) of farmland have been destroyed in three local government areas viz Agatu, Guma and Logo in Benue State between 2010-2014 as a result of farmers and herdsmen crises. The situation is almost similar in the counterpart Cross River State where cash crops have been destroyed and there are reported cases of cattle rustling and killings. The situation portrays a great challenge for food security in Nigeria since Benue State for instance is the food basket of the nation and Cross State on the other hand is one of the leading food producing States in Nigeria.

Also the decline in the availability of foods is due to a number of factors that are related to the crisis situation. One, human labor has reduced drastically particularly for subsistent farmers who depends on such labor for their farming and this reduction is as a result of the threat of attacks on farmers on their way to the farmland. The farmers and laborers are afraid of attacks on the farms or on the roads to farms, they already understand that ambushing on the road to the farm is one of the ways that the herdsmen attack farmers. So, to avoid been maimed or killed, a lot of farmers have abandon their farm, the laborers to have opted into another occupation like carpentry or artistry work. The implication of the foregoing is that the farms will be consumed by weed, the crops will be attacked by pests which will lead to a serious shortage in the quantity of food in both States. The situation is further worrisome when we look at the thematic report made by the Assessment Capacity Projects (ACAPS) (2017). It says approximately 132,818 are said to be facing IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) levels of food insecurity in Benue, 167,561 in plateau and 212,348 in Kaduna states as at December 2016, with 12,063 in Phase 4 in Plateau state. More than 46,000 are projected to face crisis of food security conditions in Benue, Cross River and other States. At the IDPs camps, the major complain is about lack of adequate food supply because the crises led to

the destruction of food banks and other storage centers and there is no commensurate production to cushion the effect.

The crisis has hindered a lot of other economic activities in the country as a whole, bringing serious hardship to the farmers and the herdsmen who depends on their produce for economic survival. As noted by Nformi et al (2014), agro inputs are rarely found as a result of the conflict because marketers have taken to their heels, crops on the farm lands destroyed, most farmers especially those whose lives have not been exterminated have taken to their heels. One greatest consequence of this is that the economic base and activities of especially the people of Benue State have been greatly affected arising from the abandonment of their various communities by the farmers for their dear lives. Similarly, the findings made by Fajonyomi, A., Fajonyomi, M. & Ambali, T (2018) on the crisis is crucial. Let's review some of the contentions. Firstly, they argue that the relationship between farmers-herdsmen crisis on food security is complex and dynamic, conceding that the conflict has exacerbated the problem of food insecurity as millions of citizens do not have access to food and even the available food products are very expensive which is an additional burden on the vast majority of the people who are already shackled by the menace of poverty. In furtherance of the above claim, Oti, Onyia and Umoinyang (2017), Anyabe, Atelhe & Sunday (2017) argued that farmers-herdsmen conflict has resulted in food scarcity due to destruction of farmlands, attack on farmers' homes by herdsmen and migration of people away from communities to IDPs camps. They further argued that the killings and destruction of farm land, crops, animal etc. has drastically affected food supply within and outside the region and resulted into a high level of food importation into the country. While, some scholars argued that farmers-herdsmen conflicts have resulted in food shortage and disability, loss of lives and properties as well as the growing cases of humanitarian crises due to the destruction of farmlands,

and ineffective mechanisms for conflicts resolution and management among others by the government. These conflicts have promoted serious constraints to the means of survival and livelihoods of both the farmers and herdsmen.

These conflicts as opined by Eje, Angai, Abdullahi, Wudaba, & Ishaku (2017) have demonstrated high potential to worsen the insecurity and food crisis particularly in rural communities where most of the conflicts are localized, with reverberating consequences nationwide. Farmer-herders conflict in Nigeria has persisted and stands out a threat to national food security, livestock production and eradication of poverty with farmers often regarded as the most vulnerable according to Dimelu, Salifu, Enwelu & Igbokwe (2017). Although, we think that both parties have suffered several losses, farmers are not the most affected. Herders have a share of their own pains as well. This is simple, overtime, the disagreements among citizens in a pluralist State like Nigeria like the case of rural farmers in Benue or Cross River State and the Fulani herdsmen who are migrating pastoralists have resulted in hostility and violent crises due with little or no pragmatic ways of resolving the conflict. Therefore, as argued by the scholars we have cited here, there is significant relationship or correlation between farmers-herdsmen conflicts and food security in the affected States and by extension the country at large.

### **2.2.2 Crops and livestock production in the face of the crisis**

Arable crops, food and livestock production is reportedly below average in Cross River and Benue and States. The conflict has affected output with a negative impact on households who face additional strain in accessing food produced from crops and livestock due to their scarcity. Food crop constitute a greatly to the economic development of the country, livestock for instance as according to World Bank (2009), contribute about 30% of agricultural Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in developing countries. In Nigeria, arable crop farming and livestock production are very

vital to the economy that has agriculture as its lifeline given the current fluctuation in oil and gas transaction yet the demand is exponentially growing and it is expected to rise to 3.2 before the end of 2021 as a result of increase in population. Unfortunately, United Nation (UN) (2014), reported that the increased in demand is currently not synonymous with the growth in local production within Africa. In the same vein, Otte and Knips (2005) contends that in sub Saharan Africa, productivity remains low and average yields per animal are lower than those in other developing regions (Otte and Knips, 2005). Agricultural sector particularly crops and Livestock sector is 'plagued by several challenges such as lack of adequate supplies of quality feed and pasture, diseases, weak market network, unavailability of adequate water and poor veterinary services' (Kassam et al 2009; Peeling and Holden, 2004; Mutibvu et al., 2012). Pelli, Haapala & Pykäläinen (2017) added that the sector is constrained by 'institutions, markets and policy as well as technical issues'. However, in recent time, farmers-herdsmen conflict has become the most devastating challenges confronting crops and livestock production in Nigeria.

According to Dimelu, Salifu, Enwelu & Igbokwe (2017), conflict between pastoralist and farmers in agrarian communities presents a formidable challenge to crops and livestock production in Nigeria. They declared that the situation is associated with both structural issues like population, cultural, political and ethnoreligious differences as well as unproductive conflict behaviors and struggle for livelihood survival by the disputants. Since both farmers and herders resources viz human, physical, social, agricultural, economic are negatively affected, a better output and consistent production will be compromised. Therefore, the government and all stakeholders need to swiftly take action to end the crisis by initiating ideas that will promote peaceful coexistence and define appropriate formula for the utilization of the available resources. Again, policy need to be enforced to ensure compliance to grazing reserve and migration routes to tame the protracted



conflict arising from struggle over land, ecological resources and other attitudinal factors responsible for the conflict as explained earlier.

### **2.2.3 Availability and access to food in a conflict prone environment**

Availability of food and access to food supply are very cardinal in determining the food security status of any given State or country. All relevant documents released by various authorities including UNO, WHO, FAO, NAFDAC etc. have all reported that one of the major consequences of the ongoing farmers-herdsmen crisis is a decline in the quantity and quality of food available as well as lack of access to food. Empirical researches conducted on the same subject have largely supported the narrative. For instance, Abur (2014) cited the release from Federal Ministry of Agriculture (2010) which estimated that over 53 million people in Nigeria are hungry, which is about 30 percent of the country's total population of roughly above 150 million; and 52 percent live below the poverty line. If this report is anything to go by, it means the percentage of citizens who lack food must have double in the past ten years because the last decade in Nigeria has been inundated with crises and conflicts involving a large number of casualties who are reportedly farmers. Consequently, food production has declined and accessibility to food is a challenge. Just recently in Borno State, 43 farmers were slaughtered while working at a rice farm by either herders or Boko Haram terrorists as the media claimed. The owners have abandoned the farm for fear of being killed. This will have an unprecedented implication on food security. At the crux of it all, the government will have no option but to opt into borrowing for the importation of food to meet the demand of the citizens. Reports suggest this is the current situation and it is very unfortunate for a country that was self-sufficient in food production in the 1950s and a net exporter of food to other countries.



To determine availability and access to food in the face of crises or in a conflict prone environment like Benue and Cross River States where farmers-herdsmen crisis is very common, it is also important to consider expert opinions on the subject in relations to food security and whether the conflict is responsible for the inherent problem. Very crucially, food security has been defined by the World Bank (1987) as a condition where everyone has access to sufficient food to eat and live a healthy and productive life. What this means is that people shouldn't only have access to food but the supply of food must be sufficient, in right quantity and quality to satisfy the demand of the people at a given time. Therefore, for such condition to be met, there must be absence of occurrences or factors drought, ecological problems, disease outbreak and most especially crisis that threatens food production or limit access to food. Similarly, the Africa Bureau of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID, 2015) as cited by Henry (2017) sees food security as a situation where everyone has physical, social and economic access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs, produce and stay healthy. Again, this implies that the absence of hunger/famine or fear of starvation and hope of having food for consumption at the appropriate time by all household is what could be regarded as food security and it involves availability, accessibility, sufficiency, adequacy and stability of supply at all times and in all places.

Some stakeholders have also affirmed that the crisis between farmers and herdsmen in both States has led to a great deal of food insecurity, majority of the people do not have access to sufficient food to live a healthy life and the major towns have to compete for the small quantity available since they are unable to meet target consumption levels at least annually. As argued by Egobueze et al (2020) people without physical, social and economic access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs to enable them to produce and stay healthy suffer from food scarcity and insecurity... when people have food, but not enough in quantity and quality, they are still food-

some attestation from a few people who agreed that the cost of food has double in the last few years and prices remain extremely high in other parts of the country and are expected to continue increasing due to the protracted conflicts.

Following the availability of expanse of arable land and a predominant farming population, Cross River and Benue States in Nigeria are regarded as some of the food hubs of the country. Benue in particular is identify with an appellation phrased as 'food basket of the nation'. Unfortunately, according to report, the incessant crisis between farmers and herdsman has plunged both States into food insecurity. It is more problematic because apart from the understanding that both States plays a key role in Nigeria's agriculture sector, they cultivate and produced the country's staple foods and commercial crops such as tomatoes, rice, fruits, soya beans, yam, cassava, maize etc. In both States, farming activities takes place in rural villages where Fulani herdsman and farmers often clash due to the destruction of farmlands by the herders' livestock or the rustling of cattle by the farmers. The dispute has lasted throughout much of Nigeria's post-independence era, but it is now more devastating than ever. The farmers-herdsman crisis has altered a lot in terms of crop cultivation and livestock production leading to an unprecedented rise in the cost of food and bearing in mind that the threat of Boko Haram still persists in many North Eastern States where agriculture thrives, many have argued that the possibility for a steady rise in the prices of food exists.

Recently, Nigeria government announced plans to begin yam exportation to the United Kingdom. Yam is one of the many food crops produced in large quantities by farmers in Benue and Cross River States, therefore, both States could be the major suppliers. But, the farmers-herdsman crisis may cause a stall or inhibit the achievement of the plans because yam production

in both States is declining. Again, this decline in food production which account for the hike in food prices will further impoverish the people and make life unbearable.

## **2.3 Empirical review**

In this section, our priority is to review or examine the empirical findings of Scholars who have conducted research in the area of our focus. Our discourse here will reference other Stakeholder's opinion on the crisis between farmers and herdsmen and whether such crisis has an implication on food security. Therefore, the focus of this empirical review is based on verifiable observation or experience rather than theoretical underpinnings or logical construct. We attempts a copious review of reported cases of farmers-herdsmen attacks, the consequences and implications of the crisis, the nature and strategy of the conflict and the efforts towards the conflict.

### **2.3.1 Reported cases of farmers-herders attacks**

There is an unprecedented rise in the number of farmers-herdsmen attacks and the number of casualties respectively. Both local and foreign media platforms have been overwhelmed by the report and stories about the attacks. Each zone in the country has experienced directly or indirectly the consequences of the attacks. It is more prevalent in the North East, the Middle Belt and some States in the Southern part of the country. Despite the wide reportage, there is no specific true reflection of the number of casualties especially those who have been killed as result of the violence. This is because, in most cases, the dead bodies are not found, others are floated away by the rivers while, some are buried without any trace of their unplanned tomb. The crisis is demystify following cattle grazing on the farms of farmers and farmers in retaliation or revenge attacks the cattle and the herdsmen themselves. The herdsmen embark on a reprisal attacks on the farmers, crops and properties largely because they value their cattle immensely.

In this section, we review the representation of the attacks and the destruction or damage in Cross River and Benue States, where our priority lies. Understand that this representation has both primary and secondary sources. The documentaries and individual's opinions who have experienced the crisis are taking into consideration. It is important to note that the representation of the documented attacks is not absolute or exhaustive. However, it captures some of the recent attacks in Benue and Cross River States. First, we referenced Gbaradi (2018) who showed that the herdsmen killed 3,780 Nigerians in attacks across the country excluding the injured and abducted. On the other hand, farmers have killed scores of cows and Fulani herdsmen in reprisal attacks for the destruction of farms and farm produce by cows. For example, from the records of Gbaradi, herdsmen invaded 2 villages in Agatu LGA in Benue State killing 8 villagers allegedly in retaliation for the killing of 12 cattle.

Pieces of information about reprisal attacks are scattered everywhere on secondary publications. Let's examine some from the general perspective before we can narrow the representations of the attacks to the specific States we are concern with. Our chronicle begins with the Global Terrorism Index whose report is specific and clear. It stated that conflicts resulted in over 800 deaths by 2015. The year 2016 saw further incidents in Agatu, Benue State. In April 2018, herdsmen allegedly murdered 19 people during an attack carried out in the church, afterwards they destroyed a lot of nearby homes. In June 2018, over 200 people were killed and 50 houses were burnt in clashes between farmers and cattle herders in Plateau State. In October 2018, herdsmen killed at least 19 people in Bassa. Later that same year, bandits reported to be herdsmen attacked a village in Jena'a during a wedding feast, 15 people were killed and 24 others seriously injured. In February 2019, Adara settlement in Ungwar Bardi was besieged by suspected Fulani herders, 11 residents were killed. In retaliation, the Adara settlement attacked the Fulani



people killing at least 141 while, 65 were reported missing until this day. At the dawn of the new decade, about 10 persons were killed in an attack and reprisal attacks involving herders and local farmers in Numan Local Council of Adamawa State. Shortly afterwards, over 400 herdsmen attacked four villages of Lamurde, Bang, Bolk, Zumoso and Gon in Numan and Lamurde Local Councils of Adamawa State killing 15 people. Meanwhile, in Demsa village, Adamawa State, 21 people were killed by herdsmen while, 32 Christians were murdered in an on a church by Fulani herdsmen.

As regards Cross River and Benue States, it is unarguably that we have seen more of the attacks and reprisal attacks with significant impact in Benue than its Cross River State counterpart. Reasons for this are not far fetch; the proximity of Benue State to other States like Nasarawa, Plateau, Taraba and other hotspot areas in the Middle Belt, the influx of herdsmen and their cattle to Benue following unfavorable climatic conditions in the North and the predominant farming population in the State. In particular, Local Governments like Agatu, Logo, Guma, Kwande have had to deal with reprisal attacks with severe implication. On the other hand, only few cases of attacks involving few casualties and mild consequences have been reported in Cross River State especially at the Northern part of the State that share boundaries with Benue and some part of Cameroon from where some of the herdsmen migrate into settlements like Becheve, Utanga, Bebi and other communities in the Northern part of the State. However, the table below is a summary of some of the documented attacks in both States, indicating the place the attack was carried out, the date, number of casualties and other damages caused.



**Table 2.1: Documented cases in Benue State**

<b>Place</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Casualties/Damages</b>
Agatu LGA	27-1-2015	17 persons killed
Logo LGA	30-1-2015	9 persons killed
Agatu LGA	15-3-2015	90 persons killed
Guma LGA	27-4-2015	28 persons killed, houses and farms burnt
Kwande LGA	11-5-2015	5 persons killed, 5 injured
Logo LGA	24-5-2015	100 persons killed
Kwande LGA	7-7-2015	1 person killed, multiple injuries
Buruku LGA	5-11-2015	12 persons killed, 25 injured
Buruku LGA	8-2-2016	10 killed, 300 displaced
Agatu LGA	2-24-2-2016	500 killed, 700 displaced
Agatu LGA	29-2-2016	11 killed
Agatu LGA	5-3-2016	Houses burnt
Logo LGA	9-3-2016	8 persons killed
Agatu LGA	10-3-2016	2 persons killed
Tarka LGA	13-3-2016	6 persons killed
Ohimini LGA	24-1-2017	15 persons killed
Gwer East LGA	2-3-2017	10 persons killed
Logo LGA	8-3-2017	3 persons killed
Buruku LGA	11-3-2017	7 persons killed
Logo LGA	13-5-2017	8 persons killed
Agatu LGA	20-2-2019	17 persons killed
Gwer West LGA	2-3-2019	16 persons killed
Guma LGA	19-3-2019	5 persons killed

Source: Researcher's compilation (2020) with excerpts from Chiluiwa and Chiluiwa (2020)

**Table 2.2: Documented cases in Cross River State**

<b>Place</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Casualties/Damages</b>
Obanliku (Becheve)	Feb, 2015	Cattle rustling and damage to crops
Obanliku (Bebi)	August, 2015	2 people stabbed
Obanliku (Amanda)	July, 2016	Destruction of farmland and crops
Obanliku (Kundeve)	October, 2016	1 person killed, cattle stolen
Obudu (Alege)	February, 2015	Clashes and destruction of seedlings
Obudu (Utugwang)	March, 2016	5 cattle killed
Obudu (Bette)	September, 2016	Tension between farmers and herdsmen
Bekwarra (Etekpa)	July, 2016	Destruction of rice farm
Bekwarra (Ijibor)	January, 2017	2 abducted
Bekwarra (Gakem)	May, 2017	Destruction of vegetable farm
Ogoja (Nkim-Ibor)	December, 2017	Life threatening attacks and destruction of Fulani settlement
Ogoja (Ekajek)	April, 2018	12 cattle killed and Fulani settlements destroyed
Yala (Oloko)	June, 2019	Destruction of crops and farm settlements
Yala (Ugaga)	November, 2019	Community clashes and displacement of cops and settlements
Odukpani (Obio)	April, 2019	10 persons killed, community raided
Yakurr (Nko)	May, 2019	Fulani settlement destroyed

**Source:** Researcher's compilation (2020).

for fear of being killed. On the other hand, Okereke (2012) asserts that this unfolding violence have become so alarming that there is no gainsaying the fact that Nigeria is at a crossroad and gradually drifting to a conflict society. Similarly, several factors combined have made Nigeria to remain economically disproportionate in the face of the crisis. Economic effects. Loss of produce in storage, displacement of farmers, decline in output and income of farmers/pastoralists, high demands for food couple with high cost, lack of farm products, damage to houses and properties; low revenue generation/GDP, impact on household resources, destruction of infrastructures and social facilities are apparently economic factors growing out of the crisis.

Secondly, the crisis has spark up a lot of socio-cultural challenges and impediments. This recent wave of violence in Nigeria as observed by Kasarachi (2016) has disrupted socioeconomic, religious and educational activities, political instability and threatened the national unity in Nigeria. These extra judiciary killings have forced thousands of people to abandon their homes and farmlands for safety. The social-cultural effects are but not limited to rape/sexual harassment of women, destruction of cultural sites, increase in kidnapping and social vices, proliferation of small weapons/arms, loss of social value life and disruption of social-cultural activities like festivals and traditional ceremonies. Again, Ajebefun (2918) noted that Nigeria is seriously threatened by Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis and therefore, considered to be a main threat affecting the social and economic activities of the nation. Fulani herdsmen and farmers clashes seem to have become a major problem to the security and development of Nigeria, the frequent occurrence of Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis appears to have left adverse effects on socio-cultural development of the States. Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis no doubt have negative impact on social-cultural heritage in Nigeria and if necessary actions are not taken. Recently, in Oyo State, herdsmen ambushed a successful farmer, killed him without any good reason according

to media report. In revenge, the youths of Oyo State led by Sunday Igboho mobilized themselves and went after the herdsmen, destroying their settlements and chasing them away. Consequently, the media has reported different reactions to the crisis from the government and stakeholders.

The third dimension of the implication of the crisis is humanitarian. Far above the number of casualties/damages shown in table 2.1 and 2.2, the farmers-herders crisis has claimed more lives than the actual number reported cases. Since the crisis took a twist especially in Benue State, not fewer than 2000 human lives have been killed, young folks have been buried, destiny have been cut short. The humanitarian impact of the crisis is the most devastating, more than 10,000 persons have been displaced, they now live as refugees at the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps with very harsh and unfavorable conditions, battling with infections, overcrowding, famine and lacks. In some terrible instances, the entire village eventually becomes extinct as all the people relocate out of the village for safety. Reality check shows that most of such villages and the infrastructures therein are now moribund.

The challenge with the humanitarian dimension is that it open up ways for further implications. They are children who have long been separated from parents or vice versa, a number of women are now widow, female children have taken into the streets as prostitutes to provide for self and families. Some have travelled out of the territory with no plans of returning, social relations have been broken, cultural artifacts and traditionally symbolic sites have been destroyed. Up until now, the people of Agatu and Bukuru in Benue State are living in fear, humanitarian activities are carried out with so much fear and tension because the concern of a possible attack occupies their minds. Agatu yam market that is usually filled up with people engaging in buying and selling, is very scanty nowadays.

in which case, the famers-herdsmen crisis is not an exception. Conflict theory argues that the human society is a domain for fierce competition for scarce resources. The introduction of the conflict is often associated with the works of Karl Marx who noticeably categorized human society into social classes, the survival of the class is dependent on the struggle and competition among individual members over socio-political, material, climatic and environmental resources. Such competition eventually lead to conflict and protracted violence couple with loss of lives and destruction of private/public properties. The adverse effect undermines the entire State and social institutions like the government, education, religion and the economy. Marx himself contends that it is problematic when the system is structured in a way that allows few individuals or some groups to possess or have absolute control over resources at the expense of others. Such scenario is what incite conflict and violence. This is because the supposedly 'controllers' of the resources would do everything in their human nature to either frustrate or exploit those who do not have ownership or control advantage of resources. The desire to push back and resist the exploitation has always been the primary cause of violent conflict. Several theorists suggested variations on this basic theme.

The basic assumption of the theory as highlighted by Karl Marx has been extended to either explain a broader perspective or context specific ideas in conflict and crisis. According to Irving (2007), Ludwig (2006) expanded on Marx's ideas by arguing that war and conquest are the basis of civilizations. He believed that cultural and ethnic conflicts led to states being identified and defined by a dominant group that had power over other groups. This extension is synonymous to the position of the realists who argues strongly that societal development is a consequent of war and conflict. We think the problem with this argument is that it support the continuous exploitation that Karl Marx argues against. Moreover, civilization isn't completely a product of conquest



particularly in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. On the other hand, Max Weber agreed with Karl Marx when he argued that inequalities of political power and social structure are linked with conflict. His extension focuses primarily on the socio-political dimension of conflict. Weber noted that different groups were affected differently based on education, race, and gender, and that people's reactions to inequality were moderated by class differences and rates of social mobility, as well as by perceptions about the legitimacy of those in power... (Horkeimer 1982). More recently, inequality based on gender or race has been explained in a similar manner and has identified institutionalized power structures that help to maintain inequality between groups (Peluso and Ribot (2019).

From the premise set above and by implication, the conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria could be understood in the context of the theory. This is particularly relevant because most of the victims of the herdsmen conflicts are convinced that the conflict has an ethno-political and religious undertone. Thus, they have accused the present government of negligence, suggesting that they are complicit in the crisis. Others have argued that the conflict is secretly aided because the interest is to achieve the Islamic agenda. There are different strands of accusations which indicate that the conflict is political as agreed by Marx and the scarcity of resources affecting both groups is another huge implication that incites the conflict. Again, the limited resources like land, water bodies etc. has a significant impact on crop cultivation and cattle production which has adverse effect on food security.

However, as it is with other theories, the conflict theory has been rejected by various schools of thought especially the neoliberalists. They observed that the theory doesn't explain other significant dimensions of conflict. For instance, the underlining issues that incite and escalate conflict are not given consideration as it concern rural farmers and herdsmen. The theory is said to be conflict centric and offer no suggestion for peaceful co-existence. Similarly, the assumption

that civilization or technological growth is only aided by conflict is not logically conclusive because there are evidence that shows that nations have risen to a great height of civilization without experiencing the nature and magnitude of the conflict that the theory emphasized. It is against this backdrop that we now turn our attention to resource access and eco-violence theories to enable us understand specifically the crisis between farmers and herders

#### **2.4.2 Resource Access Theory**

This is another theory we adopted to help us understand and explain the central focus of the research. The resource access theory was introduced in the 1970s, popularized by two scholars, Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald R. Sananak (1970) who contends that conflict has always been a recurring issue in the history of the world. Such conflict is often as a result of competition and struggle for scarce resources in the human race. Sikor & Lund (2009) agreed to this when they observed that access to natural resources is often contested and rife with conflicts at many levels. This implies as long as resources become scarce and not adequate for everyone, the chances of rivalry among individuals and groups within a particular location becomes high. The theory further assumes that, resource control and utilization has a strong correlation with human conflict. Resources like land, water, vegetation and other ecological resources have been identified as the sources of crisis among various user groups at different levels. Ikezue & Ezeah (2017) affirms that the theory sees access to a resource as the main cause of conflict and violence. This is true because, the Fulani herdsmen are restricted from access to grazing areas which incidentally are farmlands for cultivation, this situation is responsible for why they often go into crisis with host communities and farmers in Cross River and Benue State. Usually, the counter reaction of the herdsmen to the restriction place on them is to take the laws into their hands by deliberately allowing their cattle to graze into farmlands which lead to the destruction of crops at the nursery and the main field. On

the other hand, farmers will resist the herdsmen by staging reprisal attack against them, killed their animals and destroy their huts- the chain continues.

The theory of access exposes us to the types of relations to resource access among the control group and the group responsible for maintaining such resources. They engage in cooperation, negotiation, likewise competition and conflict. To control the access to the resources as observed by Hall, Hirsch and Li (2011) is to mediate the access of others and includes the power to exclude. To maintain access to the resources can be achieved with a deep relations with those who have the capacity to control the access. The nexus between access control and maintenance of resources provides a new way for us to understand multilateral social/communities hierarchies as which is partly the situation in Nigeria. Such hierarchies as well as webs of powers, or ethnic cleavages and interest always lead to the formation class rivalry and other forms of social dislocations which results into conflict.

Several scholars have attempted to justify the assumptions of this theory and relate the access, control and maintenance of resources to discourse. For instance, Sikor and Lund (2009) in their article on the relation between access and the production authority affirmed that access and authority are mutually constitutive. This means having access to a resource can give a particular group an authority or legitimate power to legislate over such resources. This authority further gives them the influence and power to coordinate, allocate, enforce, and control the access to resources. While, appreciating the significant contribution by Sikor and Lund, Ribot and Peluso (2003), who continue to see access relationships as creating more complex hierarchies of authority, with property rights representing only one means by which to gain access. This theory was applied by Spierenburg (2013) in South Africa to describe the interconnection of identity and hierarchies/control of resources. The findings shows that when black laborers in South Africa got

control access to white farmers' resources by giving their human labor for a shelter, the laborers remained in the fixed resources (land). It became clear later that the black laborers started gaining control of the land couple with the introduction of new land reforms. White farmers refused to use any black worker, they transported blacks to townships from the rural area, and violently evicted the blacks from farmers. This led to a great controversy and conflict between the white farmers and the black laborers. This is very typical in the ongoing tension and conflict between crop farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria.

The theory has a political underpinning and most stakeholders have taken advantage of it to gain control of the available resources at the expense of all. In Benue State particularly, the people have resisted the steady influence of the herdsmen. They believe that the herders are interested in taking control of the resources in the rural communities especially farmlands and water bodies. Such resistance has led to several confrontations between the people and the herders. The spillover effect is experience mostly in the Northern region of Cross River State. The theory is highly focus on control access for resource. However, no attention is giving to the character of those who desire to have such resources. Again, it fails to explain why the feelings of deprivation or the lack of access to resources are transformed into collective action which eventually becomes the group interest and rationale for resorting into conflict. The resource access theory contributes significantly to the understanding of farmers-herdsmen conflict. However, some assumptions of the theory are heavily criticized. Hence, let's consider the eco-violence/survivalist theory which is the most significantly related theory to the scope of the research.

#### **2.4.3 Eco-violence/survivalist theory**

Eco-violence theory is a theoretical foundation introduced by Thomas Homer Dixon in 1999. It is aimed at analyzing social issues like population growth, environmental or climatic crisis



and violence. Therefore, the theory is relevant to our understanding on farmers-herdsmen conflicts, since the remote cause of the conflict is within the context of the aforementioned factors. The theory sees the exponential rise in population density and the potential scarcity of both natural and renewable resources as factors that incites intrastate and transboundary crisis. Homer-Dixon (1999) asserts that large populations in many developing countries are highly dependent on four key environmental resources that are fundamental to their livelihood: fresh water, cropland and forests. The lack of adequate availability of these resources as a result of misuse/over-use, depletion or degradation, population growth, climatic change lead to competition over the scarce resources among communities, and may under certain situations set off conflicts.

Similarly, Onuoha (2007) agrees with the assumption of the theory that the competition over scarce ecological resources engenders violent conflict. This is so, given the confrontation and agitation over ecological resources particularly between farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria. The scarcity of resources has led to desperation among the affected groups to protect the resources available and to collectively defend their common interest in the face of fierce competition couple with the myriad of challenges and attendant consequences. Such action as argued by the proponents of the theory makes the community to resist any attempt by individuals or ethnic groups who tries to gain control of the resources. This is responsible for the reprisal attacks between farmers and herdsmen in Cross River, Benue and other States in Nigeria. Adeoye (2017) captures it rightly when he uses the theory to affirms that population growth, a decrease in the quality and quantity of renewable resources, and resource access act singly or in various combinations to increase the scarcity, for certain population groups, of cropland, water, forests, and ash. The competition and struggle for scarce environmental and ecological resources is a precursor to violent conflict. The increasing hostility between farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria is principally



driven by a dire struggle for survival and collective sustainable livelihood. The farmers need the land to cultivate arable crops, while the herdsmen need the land and green vegetation for cattle grazing and rearing of other farm animals. Hence, both parties resort into violent to gain control of the resources. Tonah (2006) asserts that the ultimate cause of the conflict between farmers and herdsmen lie in the general degradation of resources and the increased competition for access and resources.

This theoretical framework has developed over the decades, firstly, it can be trace to the idea popularized by Thomas Malthus in his magnum opus titled 'The Principle of Population in 1798'. He noted that, the population will grow exponentially, and if unchecked, there would be more pressure on scarce resources which will lead to violence or war. He further argues that food insecurity will be high as food production cannot match the rapid population growth in the world (Malthus in Atwi, 2017). Contemporary development of the theory is tie to the generational knowledge that emerged in the early 1980s, and argued that environmental issues must be considered or included in any security analysis or the concept of security. It was towards the end of the 1990s, the supposedly second generation that Homer-Dixon emerged with an ideational critique but an extension of the previous knowledge. The basic idea was to shift the research on the crisis over environmental resources from focusing on "conceptual polemic to base research on logically empirical ground". The inquiry here was more empirical as compared to the previous strands, and it was based on this approach that the causal links between environmental scarcity and conflict was established. Very crucially, Homer-Dixon eco-violence theory has become very significant in explaining environmental scarcity-conflict. He noted that, decreased in quality and quantity of renewable resources, population growth and resource access combine in various ways to produce scarcity of arable land, water supplies, forests, grazing lands and fish stock. The able

people in the community often captures and control the little available resources, resulting in unequal access for the least powerful groups. It can reduce the economic advantage and productivity of the affected weaker group, who may be forced to move elsewhere in search of new arable lands for farming/pastures. Those who move to new lands often face similar opposition from the indigenes, which result in violent conflict.

By implication, we adopted the eco-violence theory because it is most suitable and offer us an understanding of the nature and dynamics of farmers-herdsmen crisis in the area under study. Okoli and Atelhe (2014) observed that the conflicts have been driven by the desperation of the affected groups to protect and advance their livelihood interest in the context of an ever shrinking ecological space, characterized by resource scarcity, population expulsion, and resource competition. The influx of Fulani herdsmen from Cameroon and neighboring States into Nigeria in search of pastures has doubled the population of resource users in both Cross River and Benue State. As population increases, the demand for land and water for crop cultivation and cattle rearing within the area inhabited by indigenous farmers/ migrant herdsmen have increased. It is this struggle for land and water resources between the two groups that are inciting the conflicts. We understand other theories may be useful in explaining the subject matter of farmers-herdsmen crisis, but the eco- violence theory is remarkably suitable. Although, critics have argued that the main theoretical assumption of the theory is that resource scarcity is the only factor responsible for increasing farmers-herdsmen conflicts in the South and Middle Belt regions of the country. They believe that other underlining factors are also responsible for the incessant attacks. Although, while we agree with the critiques, we think the remote cause of farmers-herdsmen crisis is the struggle for fixed and scarce ecological resources. The extent at which the theory clearly

emphasize this struggle makes it context specific and comparatively more relevant to the scope of the research than the conflict and resource access theories.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Design

The study adopted the non-experimental design. This type of research design is categorized into three dimensions, single-variable research, correlational or quasi-experimental research, and qualitative research. It emphasizes the statistical relationship between variables. However, it avoids the manipulation of an independent variable, random assignment of participants to conditions or orders. This type of design has to do with the internal validity, because the control groups may not be comparable at baseline. This enabled us to obtain data through questionnaire and interview. It is the scheme that guides the process of generating, analyzing and reporting data (Manheim & Rich, 1986). Therefore, this design is considered most appropriate for this study, it is reliable in the collection of data to explain the crisis, describe the study area and the data will help us understand farmers-herdsmen crisis and food security in Cross River and Benue States.

#### 3.2 Study Area

The study area is Cross River and Benue States in the South-south and North-central geopolitical regions in Nigeria. Both States share a common boundary and they are major producers of food crops in Nigeria. Here we described the States by summarizing the basic information about each State, the climatic condition and ecological resources which is the main attraction to herders, the cultural heritage, agricultural activities especially crop farming and other details about each State that are relevant to the scope of the research. Also, at the end of this section, we identified the specific areas and local governments in each State that the research was carried out and such the areas were selected purposefully.



Cross River is a Southern State created on the 27<sup>th</sup> May, 1967 by the then Military Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon. It was named after the 'cross river' commonly called the Great Qua River which flows through the State. It was formerly part of the Eastern Region, located in the coastal zone of the Niger Delta and covers 20,156 square kilometers. It is bounded with Benue State to the north, Ebonyi and Abia States to the west, Republic of Cameroon to the east and to the south by Akwa Ibom State. The major urban centers are Calabar, the headquarters, Ugep, Ikom, Ogoja and Obudu. Meanwhile, it is divided into 18 local government areas for administrative convenience and to ensure that government becomes closer to the people especially at the rural centers. The State has been governed by military heads, administrators and three democratically elected governors including the incumbent, Benedict Ayade who was reelected for a second term in 2019. Cross River is composed of numerous ethnic groups, it is multilingual. Although communities in some of the local governments particularly in the central and northern districts speaks different languages, but the popular languages, widely spoken across the state are Efik and Ejagham. The State has the appellation 'the People's Paradise', it ecologically lies between latitudes 5°32' and 4°27' North and longitudes 7°50' and 9°28' East. The climatic condition is favourable for farming and pastoralism. It is tropical-humid with wet and dry seasons occurring at different period, with an average temperature ranging from 15°C - 30°C, and an annual rainfall of 1300 -3000mm.

In terms of agriculture and crops cultivation, Cross River State contributes significantly to Nigeria's economy. It is one of the major producers of the country's food crops or basic staples of cassava and yams. It also plays a major role in the production of important cash crops like rubber, palm oil, cocoa, which is an important tree crop and can be incorporated within viable agro-forestry systems. The State has a deep forest reserves, it is the second largest timber producer in the country,

and its coastal mangroves provides a good advantage for fishery. About 90 percent of Cross River State indigenes especially those who resides at the rural communities are involved in fishing, subsistence farming and local trading. The fishing activities are carried out in the mangrove creek, the estuary and nearby coastal zone including rivers, streams and other water ways. The State's economy is basically agricultural which is made up of the public and the private sectors. The private sector is dominated by peasant farmers while the public sector is run by the State government and focuses on mechanization and plantations farming. The rich biodiversity and natural vegetation in the State attracts herders who migrate into the State to access pastures. Also, the forest harbours some species of primates, migratory and resident birds including Africa's rarest trees, such as mahogany, ironwood, iroko, gmelina, obeche, camwood and mimosup. The State also has one-third of Africa's primate species - the most endangered gorillas, drill monkeys are found here, hippopotamuses, chimpanzees, elephants, grey parrots are found in some of the forests. According to Forest Sector Strategy (1994), all of the Nigeria's remaining primary rainforest watersheds, covering about 7,000 km<sup>2</sup> are located within Cross River State. A total of 6,202 square kilometers within Cross River State is covered with thick forest and accounts for about 32 percent of the landmass area of the state. It constitutes the largest Tropical High Forest remaining in Nigeria and largest remaining rainforest in West Africa (0.85 million hectares). However, the density varies across the State's three political and ecological zones. The rich biodiversity and ecological features in the State remains an ideal tropical habitat for plant and animal. Among other factors, this is one of the factors that attract herders to the State.

The State has a great aesthetic value, it is divided into 18 local governments. For the purpose of this research, we focused on three local governments located in the Northern Zone of the State. Among other reasons, we are interested in these local governments because they either

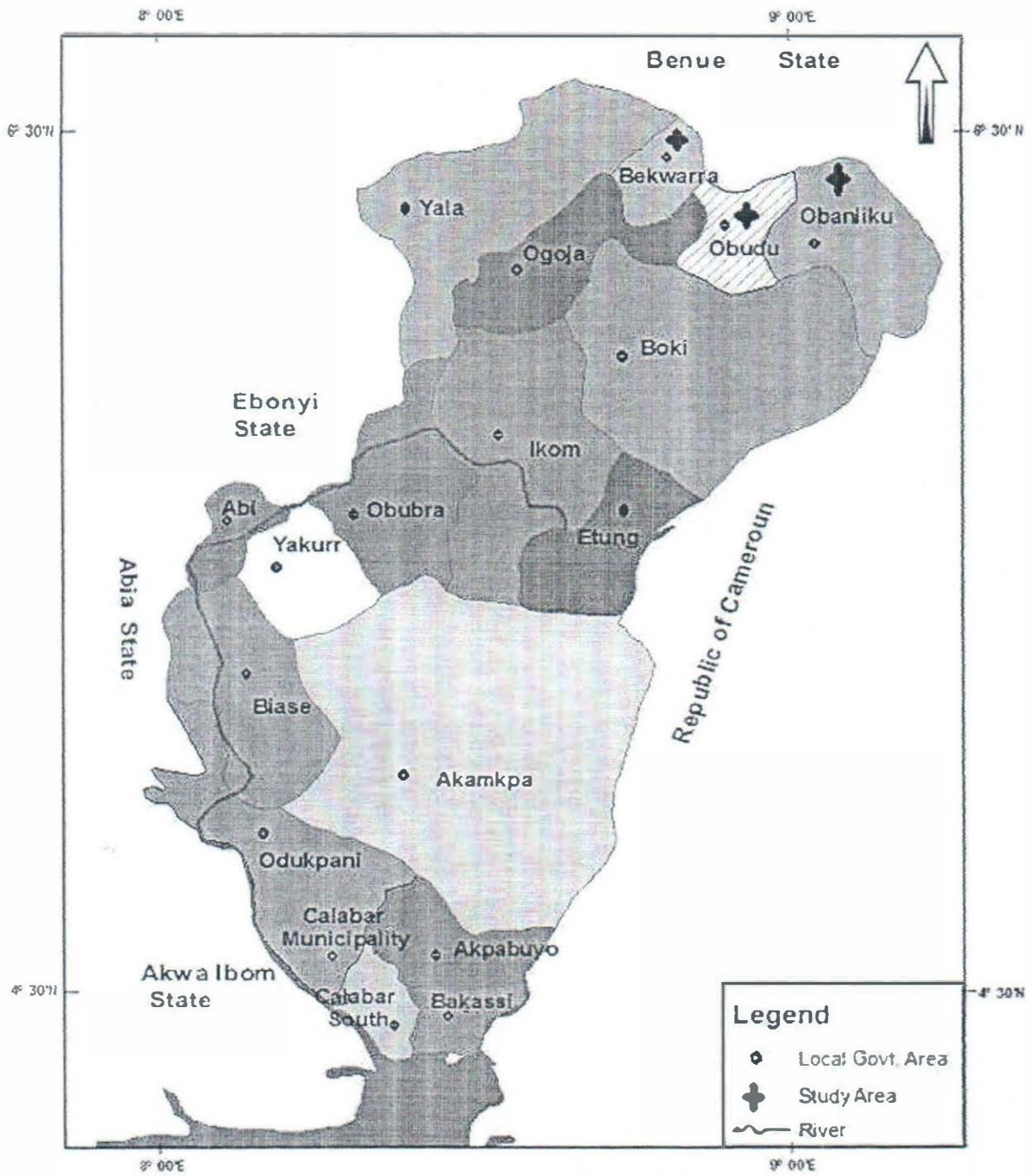
shears boundaries with, or are located very close to Benue State and the Republic of Cameroon where antecedents reveals that Fulani herdsmen migrate from into the State. Moreover, the few cases of clashes between farmers and herdsmen in the State can be easily traced to this region. See table 2.2 above for details. Again, a good percentage of the population in the region are farmers who engaged in crop farming. It has a favorable climatic condition for cattle rearing which encourages the herdsmen to migrate into some of the forest from Cameroon around the Utanga or Becheve axis or through Benue from the Obudu or Bekwarra axis. Therefore, our priority in this research includes Obanliku, Obudu and Bekwarra LGAs in Cross River State. According to UNESCO Report (1979), Cross River State is described as one of the finest places in the world. This is attributed largely to the serenity of the surrounding especially at the Ranch which is located in Obanliku local government area. The high plateau experienced climatic conditions which are markedly different from the generalised dry and wet period in the rest of the State. Temperatures are 4°C - 10°C lower due to high altitude than in the surrounding areas. Similarly, the annual rainfall figures are higher than in areas around them, particularly on the windward side. This keep the grasses fresh all season and very suitable for cattle grazing.

As regards food security, Cross River State like its Benue counterpart is predominantly an arable food producing State. The Northern zone of the State contributes significantly to the food bank of the State. However, some have argued that the farmers-herdsmen crisis has led to an unprecedented decline in food production. The government attempts to remedy the decline has not help, the embargo on the importation of foods as a strategy to curb the decline has not solve the challenge. Similar efforts including the provision of farming incentives to improve production has been introduced, yet many contends that food insecurity is the consequent of the ongoing farmers-herdsmen crisis. Price deregulation has increased output in communities, which is intended to

increase incentives to support production efforts in the community; Apart from this, the activities of the herders particularly, the violent killings in some parts of the countries and the competition for resources has contributed to increased pressures on ecologically fragile areas.

Find below the map of Cross River State showing the specific Local Government Areas for the study.





Source: Cartography / GIS Unit, Dept. of Geography & Environmental Sc., Unical

Figure 3.1: Geographical Map of Cross River State Showing Location of Study Areas

Source: GIS Unit, Dept. of Geo. & Environmental Sc., Unical (2020)

Let's now turn our attention to Benue State which is one of the most affected States in Nigeria as far as the crisis is concern. The attacks and damages in Benue State are more devastating than some States in the North-eastern region of the country where the crisis and banditry started. Benue State is one of the Middle Belt States in Nigeria with a population of about 4,253,641 according to the last census conducted in 2006. The natives are the Tive, Idoma, Igede and Etulo peoples, the major languages they speaks include Tiv and Idoma. The State was created out of the protectorate of northern Nigeria at the beginning of the twentieth century and became an independent State from the previous Benue-Plateau State in 1976. The territorial space was formally called as Munshi Province until 1918 when it was named after one of the biggest rivers in Nigeria-the Benue River. The State is currently been administered by Samuel Ortom who was reelected for a second term in 2019.

The State suffered a lot of human loss during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. However, it is 9th most populated State in Nigeria. It is mostly rural, with communal settlements in form of compounds or homesteads, whose population range is about 600 people, most of whom are peasant farmers, surviving through arable crop cultivation. In terms of population, Benue towns can be categorized into three groups. The first group consists of those with a population of 80,000 to 500,000 people. These include Makurdi, the State Capital, Gboko and Otukpo the "headquarters" of the two dominant ethnic groups (125,944 and 88,958 people respectively). The second group comprises towns with a population between 20,000 and 50,000 people and includes Katsina-Ala, Zaki-Biam, Ukum, and Adikpo, Kwande. In addition, there are communities with low population density, such as Guma, Gwer, East, Ohimini, Apa, Logo and Agatu respectively, each with about 70 persons per km<sup>2</sup>. While, Vandeikya, Okpokwu, Ogbadibo, Obi and Gboko have densities ranging from 160 persons to 200 persons per km<sup>2</sup>. The male population are 49.8 percent of the

total population while females constitutes 50.2 percent. The third category comprises towns with a population of 10,000 to 19,000 people. Examples are Vandeikya, Lessel, Ihugh, Naka, Adoka, Aliade, Okpoga, Igumale, Oju, Utonkon, Wannune, Ugbokpo, Otukpa, Ugba and Korinya. The three major commercial cities in Benue State are Makurdi which is the headquarters, Gboko and Otukpo. They are amongst the busy towns in the State and are growing at a much faster rate than other towns. The State currently has 23 local government areas, which are administered by local government councils.

Socio-culturally, Benue State has a rich and diverse cultural heritage and social formations which include specially designed cloths, masquerades and dance troops, typical music and renowned traditional dance groups like Ange, Swange, Anchanakupa and Ogirinya. The people have various festivals which they celebrate at stipulated periods, such events are often characterized by several cultural performances. For instance, the Alekwi ancestral festival of the Idoma people, is a glamorous show and performances by masquerades since the festival reminds the people of the bond they have with their ancestors. Similarly, the Igede-Agba is an annual Yam Festival, celebrated in September by the people of Igede and Oju in Obi local government area. Other very culturally significant events are traditional marriages and dancing contest.

In terms of climatic condition, it lies within the geographical coordinates of longitude 7° 47' and 10° 0' East. Latitude 6° 25' and 8° 8' North; and shares boundaries with Nasarawa State to the north, Taraba State to the east, Cross River State to the south, Enugu State to the south-west and Kogi State to the west. It also has a common boundary with the Nord-Quest Province, claimed by both Ambazonia and the Republic of Cameroon on the South-east. It is one of the States that is located at the center or middle of Nigeria with an estimated landmass of 34,059 square kilometer. The State annually experiences the dry and the wet seasons. The wet season which is

predominantly rainy period begins from April and ends in October with annual rainfall in the range of 100-200mm. The dry season often called hot period begins in November and ends in March. The temperatures fluctuates around 21-37 degrees Celsius depending on the time of the year. The south-eastern part adjoining the Obanliku-Cameroun Mountain, where the Cattle Ranch Resort is located has a cooler climate similar to what is prevalence in Plateau State. The territory is low lying (averaging 100m-250m) and softly undulating with some laterites and knolls etc. Although, the area around the boundary with Cameroon and Obanliku is hilly with relief. The topography here has high relief, deep valleys and slopes. One of the most prominent features of the State is the Benue River which is one of the largest in the country. Other smaller rivers or water bodies are found in Loko, Konshisha, Aya, Ombi, Apa, Duru, Okpokw etc including swamps and streams. This is one of the advantages that encourages the herdsmen to migrate to the State, so the cattle can have access to water especially during drought which is much more terrible in the North.

For the purpose of this research, we focused on three local government areas, they includes Agatu, Logo and Buruku. The reasons why we purposefully situated the study in these Local Government Areas are: The areas are the most affected by the crisis, each has suffered herders attack at least three times accompanied with devastating consequences and damages (See table 2.1 above for emphasis). The second reason is that these areas are either border communities or they are located close to Nasarawa and Taraba States from where the herdsmen migrate from. Next is that, the vegetation around these areas is good enough for cattle rearing, the people are majorly farmers and live in communal setting. There are fresh pasture scattered around the communities, all these are some of the factors that attracts herdsmen to these communities and Local Government Areas.



In terms of food production, agriculture and farming which ensure food security, these areas are very rich in different types of food crops. Benue in entirety has a great vegetation, it constitutes forests, which yield trees for timber and serve as a suitable habitat for different species of animals. The land is fertile for crop farming and cultivation. The State produces varieties of arable crops including tubers like yam and cassava. Hence, it is a major source of food in Nigeria, it is popularly duped with the appellation 'Food basket of the nation'. Agriculture is the major strength of the Benue State's economy, about 75 percent of the people engages in farming and crop cultivation. The government provides agricultural subsidies like farm inputs , fertilizers, improved seed, insecticides and other facilities to boost food production that meet the local demands and export and that of surrounding States. The common cash crops produced in the State are palm oil, cashew, mangoes, melon, flax, groundnuts, African pear, pepper, tomatoes, peanuts citrus etc. While, food crops include Yam, Sweet potato, Cassava, Rice, Beans, Maize, Millet, Guinea corn, Water melon, Soybean, Sorghum, Sesame, Cocoyam, Vegetables etc. The state accounts for over 70% of these crops in Nigeria. Animal production include, Pork, Poultry, Rabbit, Goat and Cattle which is largely kept and reared by the Fulani herdsmen are settling in various communities in the State.

Find below the map of Benue State showing the specific Local Government Areas for the study.



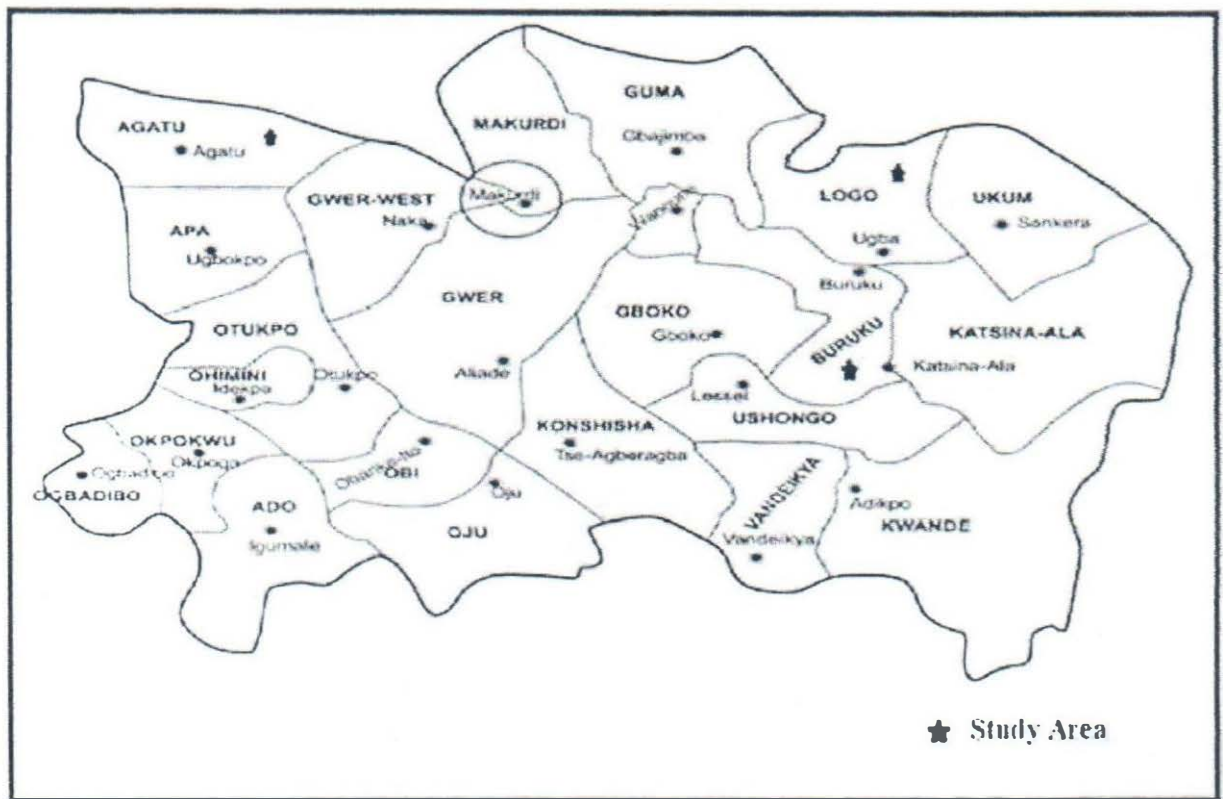


Figure 3.2: Geographical Map of Benue State Showing Location of Study Areas  
 Source: Agada (2012). Retrieved from research gate.net

### **3.3 Population of the Study**

The population for the study is 2,892,988 (Cross River State) and 4,253,641 (Benue State). However, the specific population of the areas selected for the study in Cross River State are as follows: Obanliku (109,633), Obudu (161,457), Bekwarra (105,497). While, the areas in Benue, are Agatu (115,597), Logo (169,570) and Buruku (206,215). These figures are based on the 2006 population census (NPC, 2006).

### **3.4 Sampling Technique**

The technique adopted for this study is the probability sampling technique known as stratified random sampling. In doing this, the Local Government Areas in the respective States that have experienced the crisis were sampled. Specific communities where the conflict occurred were selected. In cases where the indigenes of the communities have been relocated to IDPs camps, the location of the camps were considered. Meanwhile, interview particularly through phone calls was done. This helped us to obtain data from some pastoralists who have been displaced from the communities or have move back to the neighboring States as a precautionary measure to avert the damaging consequences of the crisis. A total of 900 respondents from among the population of the 6 communities, 3 from each State were selected. This was done using the purposive sampling technique which is very imperative and appropriate for the study because it helped us to select respondents who have the in-depth knowledge and information related to the issues under study. Nachmias (1996) noted that the purposive method helps us to explore the quality of the data not the quantity. Similarly Dane (1990) affirms that the essence of it, is to enable the researcher to focus on the people who have the basic information. Therefore, purposive sampling technique helped us to obtain reliable and credible information, since the respondents are well informed

of the issue. This justify the consideration given to the Local Government Areas/communities that were sampled.

### **3.5 Sample Size of the Study**

The sample consists of the Local Government Areas and the selected communities located within the States. However, the total sample consists of 900, selected using the Taro Yamani model and formula. The 900 respondents were purposively drawn as follows: 450 from Cross River State, which include 150 from Obanliku, 150 from Obudu and 150 from Bekwarra. Meanwhile, within each Local Government Area, priority was given to the communities that have suffered from the crisis. On the other hand, 450 were purposively drawn from Benue State, which include 150 from Agatu, 150 from Logo, and 150 from Buruku. Similarly, consideration was given to the communities that have had reprisal attacks in Benue State. The Taro Yamani model was deployed to calculate the sample size because the research work involves a large population of people. Since we can't meet with all the population, we selected a sample size (900) that would represent the population. The Taro Yamani formula is given as:  $n = N / (1 + N (e)^2)$ . Where n signifies the sample size, N is the population under study, e is the margin of error (in this case, 0.5)

The above sample size distribution was done on the basis of purposive sampling as already stated. This is because the population of the study is heterogeneous. We represented the relevant units in the sampling; bureaucrats, traditional rulers, youth leaders, cattle breeders representatives and other stakeholders. The essence of this was to ensure that we get the accurate data for analysis and hypotheses testing. As Patton (2002) observes, the approach meets multiple interests and needs.

### **3.6 Methods of Data Collection**

The study used survey and documentary methods for data collection. The first source involved the use of questionnaire (instrument) and interview. While, the secondary source has to do with the examination of policies, laws, executive orders, documentations in form of published works, books, journals, academic papers, internet, periodicals, etc.

The questionnaire and interview were categorized into sections A and B. Section A emphasizes the demographic data of respondents such as sex, age, occupation, religion. Section B has to do with the respondents' perception or opinion on the main issues or objectives of the study. The questionnaire and interview were designed in a closed ended form which gives respondents options to choose or answer to the questions subjectively.

#### **3.6.1 Validation of research instrument**

Validity is the process of collecting and analyzing data to assess the accuracy of research instrument in addressing the research questions. It is the extent to which a research instrument measures what it is expected to measure. In other words, it implies the degree to which a test measures what it purports to measure (Denga & Ali, 1998: 179). Research validity is also the extent at which the instrument measures the right elements that need to be measured. In simple terms, validity refers to how well an instrument measures what it is intended to measure.

Research validity can be divided into two groups: internal and external. It can be specified that "internal validity refers to how the research findings match reality, while external validity refers to the extent to which the research findings can be replicated to other environments" (Pelissier, 2008). The groups are further categorized into six types; face, content, constructed,



criterion-oriented, formative and sampling validity. However, for the purpose of this study, we shall focus on the contents validity methods.

However, Phelan and Wren (2006) observed that content validity ensures that the instrument has a wide coverage of the subject matter under study. In achieving this, we issued copies of the questionnaire to the research Supervisors and other key stakeholders who are grounded in the crisis between farmers-herdsmen and the implication on food security. They scrutinized the contents of the questionnaires to ensure that it is valid. The necessary corrections were made before the questionnaires were administered.

### **3.6.2 Reliability of research instrument**

Reliability of research instrument has to do with the consistency of the instrument. It is concerned with verifying if the instrument consistently measures what it is intended to measure when assessed over time. Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008) noted that reliability approximates and assess the consistency of instrument. In other words, an instrument is reliable if the variables are in line with the basic assumptions of the study with a given period of time. Reliability is also the degree to which an instrument yields consistent results. The most applicable measures of reliability include internal consistency, test-retest, and inter-rater reliabilities. Our interest lies in the test-retest reliability.

Test-retest is apply to determine the correlation between the results from one administration of the research instrument to another, usually within an interval of 2 weeks in order. It involves using certain forms or versions of an instrument to verify if all the different versions will yield consistent results. Again, a test-retest reliability is a measure of dependability achieved by running the same test more than once to a group of individuals over a period of time. Both

results are compared to determine the consistency, if the results are same regardless of the difference in time such instrument is adjudged to be reliable. Therefore, we conducted a pilot test with 50 respondents drawn among key stakeholders. The opinions and responses were noted, a retest was conducted on the same respondents using the same instrument. The result shows no significant difference in the information provided by the respondents in both tests. The instrument was seen to be reliable enough for the study. The sample of the reliability test is shown below:

**Table 3.1: Test-Re-test Reliability**

Test Survey (1 & 2)	R	p-value	N	dF	% correct
	0.88	0.05	50	48	0.88%

Source: Author, 2020

### 3.7 Administration of Instrument

The administration was done with the help of two others who are youth leaders and are familiar with the crisis and location of most of the respondents. More so, they speak the local language fluently and are knowledgeable in the subject matter of the study. However, we gave them a proper orientation about the questionnaire, the distribution and the completion respectively.

### 3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The data that were collected for this study were presented and analyzed using quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitatively, the demographic data of the respondents were analyzed with descriptive statistics such as percentages, pie charts and frequency distribution tables. Meanwhile, the method was used to analyze the connection between the dependent and the independent variables based on the opinion of the respondents. SPSS, Version 21 was used for the descriptive and Chi-Square statistical analysis. We preferred Chi-Square among other methods

because it can be used to determine whether observed frequencies are significantly different from expected frequencies. More so, the data for this research were categorical not parametric and as a result of individual differences, the respondents were not expected to have a unanimous opinion on every issue raised in the questionnaire. Therefore Chi-Square was most suitable because it measures the existing relationship.

Chi-Square is represented as shown below:

$$x^2 = \frac{\sum(f_o - f_e)}{f_e}$$

X<sup>2</sup> is Chi-square

f<sub>o</sub> is observed frequency

f<sub>e</sub> is expected frequency

∑ is summation

Meanwhile, qualitatively, information that were provided by respondents were described, interpreted and explained accordingly. Asika (2008) refers to qualitative analysis as a summary of information generated to further discover the relationship among variables.

The methods of analysis discussed above was used, which makes it easy to examined the different opinions of the respondents on the farmers-herdsmen crisis and food security in Cross River and Benue States.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### OVERVIEW OF FARMERS-HERDSMEN CRISIS AND FOOD SECURITY

#### 4.1 The nature and dynamics of farmers-herder's conflicts in Nigeria

The farmers-herdsmen conflict has become very pervasive in Nigeria particularly in the middle belt and some areas in the Southern part of the country. The nature and dynamics of the conflict varies with time, the place of the attack as well as the situation. Reports from media and empirical studies shows that, the conflict has escalated from fighting with primitive tools like sticks, hoes or wooden knife to a 'middle level counter attacks' involving small and light weapons; cutlasses, daggers, arrows to a full scale ethno territorial or eco-violence with sophisticated, long range riffles, AK47 and other weapons that are considered advance, which only the military should ideally have access to. Hence, Agbor and Eteng (2018) argued that, "in Nigeria, communal conflict takes different dimensions, primarily manifested in ethnic conflicts and herder-famer conflicts. Ethnic conflicts in Nigeria are attributed to those opposed to each other along cultural or religious lines and identities. It has taken the form of clashes between neighboring contiguous communities as well as religious violence between Muslim and Christian communities. The herder-farmer conflicts involve altercation between cattle herders of mostly Fulani origin and crop famers of the Tiv and Tarok nationalities." As a result of the dynamics of the conflicts, both parties would always prefer to acquire such weapons in readiness for any attack. The problem is aggravated following the proliferation of weapons in the country with no pragmatic approach so far taken by the government to check and regulate weapons sales. Sadly so, aftermath of the conflict places a big moral burden on the government as more lives are maimed, cattle/livestock killed, food crops damaged and public/private properties destroyed in dozens and increasing number of citizens are forced into makeshift settlements like internally displaced camps, destitute centers where they have



to survive against all odds and experience serious emotional and psychological trauma, with almost no hope of returning to a normal and free life in their respective communities of origin. To understand whether the conflict has an impact or implication on food security, we believe it is essential for us to attempt an explanation of the nature and dynamics of the conflicts with reference to the opinions of other Scholars. Therefore, in the next paragraphs, our focus shall be on that.

Prior to the emergence of farmers-herdsmen conflicts, the country was relatively peaceful, both parties had a mutual relationship, depending on each other and sharing the available resources like land, water, grazing field with cooperation. This communal relationship contributed significantly to the development of agriculture which is usually seen as an alternative to oil. The rural dwellers in both States had interest in crop and livestock farming, there was no reason for abandoning farmlands or migrating Northwards for fear of attacks. Unfortunately, the reverse is the case today, there is serious tension in several communities in both States arising from competition for land and environmental resources between crop farmers and cattle keepers. The nature of the conflict differs in each case but mostly, it begins when herdsmen negligently or carelessly allow cattle to graze on the farmlands or cultivated sections, destroying crops in nursery or already transplanted field and farmers in retaliation attacks the cattle, killing and taking hostages of some. The herdsmen stage a comeback or revengeful attack on the farmers and rescue their cattle. For instance, Gbaradi (2018) reported that “Fulani herdsmen killed 3,780 Nigerians in attacks across the country excluding the injured and abducted. On the other hand, farmers have killed scores of cows and Fulani herdsmen in reprisal attacks for the destruction of farms and farm produce by cows”. The reprisal attacks go on and on with no hope of a compromise, according to reports, the government hasn’t done much to mediate, resolve or de-escalate the conflict and

whether the protracted conflict has an implication on food security or not is what we hope to find out.

However, the argument about the nature and dynamic of the conflict is straight forward, it is imperative to understand that the conflict has caused great destruction to both lives and properties. The majorly affected communities particularly in Benue State is currently deserted, it is more of a cemetery than a settlement, you see evidence of burnt houses and properties all over the place with fewer people who live in fear and frustration. According to International Crises Group (2017, Gambari, et al, (2018) & Bello (2013) the conflict has led to the destruction of lives and properties; it has also affected the economy adversely, the destruction of farm produce and killing of cows have not fared well with the economy, psychological trauma of victims and survivors of the attacks have been distorted adversely. The nature of farmers and herdsman conflict in Nigeria has intensified over time and it is a challenge to national unity and cooperation. It is now regarded as an ethnic territorial conflict that is rooted in the division and struggle over resources. Some have argued that apart from socio-economic implication, the conflict is responsible for the decline in food and livestock production in Nigeria, we would see if that is justifiable as we progress with the research. On the interim, let's examine these causes.

#### **4.2 Causes of farmers-herdsman conflicts**

In most of the available literature and discourse on farmers-herdsman conflicts, scholars do identify a number of factors responsible for the protracted conflict. Usually, the factors are generally listed or widely explained with less attention given to the context and scope of the research. In this section, we clearly discuss the causes of the conflict particularly as it relates to Benue and Cross River States, we attempt to emphasize pertinent issues like the conflict trigger clause in each of the factors discussed, the socio-cultural/political and the ecological/ attitudinal

causes of the conflicts. We believe a clear categorization of the causes of the conflict following the perspectives above will further help us understand the implication of the conflict and whether or not such implication is reflected in the food security of both States.

### **Socio-cultural/political causes**

#### **a. Government policy, action and inaction**

This is one of the leading socio-political causes of the conflict, government policy approach especially towards land usage at federal and state levels hasn't been clearly defined. The Nigerian Land Use Act has some clauses that makes it open for constitutional or legal challenge. This is particularly evident in the arguments surrounding open grazing and the establishment of ranches. Since 2015 to date, local media in Nigeria has been inundated with the grazing laws rhetoric and debate, the federal legislative houses are divided on the issue and most of the States in Southern and middle belt region particularly Benue State has repeatedly criticized the presidential directive on the establishment of ranches at some strategic locations in the country. A situation that has led some stakeholders to conclude that the President's directive delegitimizes the position and constituted authority of the State Governors while, others believe that the directive could further exacerbate the hostility between farmers and herdsmen. Onwubiko (2017), Dimelu, Salifu, Enwelu & Igbokwe (2017) have extensively criticized the directive. Accordingly, Onwubiko (2017) wrote "How has the dissatisfaction with state governments' anti-open grazing orientation fed the frustration and thirst for nihilistic violence? Through the politicking of Fulani lawmakers and the powers of Fulani lobbying, the Grazing Bill is being pushed in the national assembly, and thus, will forcibly dislocate people from their lands. This has been one of the main point of resistance by the affected States to the establishment of ranches, the action will displace people from their original communal heritage, it will give the herdsmen the privilege to monopolize the resources in

the area, the violent relationship will be more problematic to manage because, the host communities could regroup, attack the herdsmen whom they see as intruders or vice versa. Popular reports indicate that the authority have acted with sentiment over the issue, there is no conscious effort in tackling the crisis, politics is at no at the center of it. The former Minister of Agriculture, Audu Ogbah who hails from one of the most affected State (Benue) was quoted to have said the conflict has reach the level it is because previous regimes failed to give consideration to Fulani herdsmen and cow farming. He was quoted by Dimelu, Salifu and Igbokwe (2017) to have said the establishment of ranches for cattle is the best bet and the federal government has begun demarcating grazing lands in some states. His opinion has been widely criticized especially by his kinsmen in Benue State who believe he wasn't bothered about the killings in some communities in the State, he was accuse of being interested in some favors from the Presidency as well as trying to merely sound politically correct as the legality of land allocation for ranches by the Presidency without consent from the State was interrogated and questioned. Folami (2010) in attempting to show how the Presidential directive negate the provision of the Nigerian constitution stated that... Federal-instituted grazing reserves are not realistic because land rights and; license, insurance reside with the state governments right from colonial period down to contemporary times, in line with the land use Act. On the issue of ranches in the country, it is yet to be known how the federal government intends to deploy public funds to establish ranches for private herd owners, when entrepreneurial groups such as local farmers have never been put under consideration for consistent funding support from the federal government.

In his remark on the issue, Ehiabhi (2012) specifically made reference to the Nigerian constitution, Section 42 (1), he asserts that the policy of using public fund to set up ranches for Fulani herdsmen breaches the constitutional provision against discrimination, though the private



ownership of ranches is in itself a good practice in the world today. This is particularly important because the authority failed to give a consideration to the provision of the constitution as regard control and ownership of land which is directly under the State. Nigeria policy actors have also failed to be very sensitive to the issues, the idea of formulating grazing policy and the establishment of ranches at designated States across the country is a one-sided solution to the conflict between farmers and herdsmen. To this end, some Scholars have condemned the policy, there is a call for the government to readdress the grazing laws. For instance, Sapru (2012) stated that 'if policy goals are unclear or are not specified in any measurable form, to determine the extent to which they have been achieved becomes a complex and cumbersome task, while officials such as legislators and administrators who are in different positions in the policy system may be uncertain about the accomplishment of the programme', 'even when the goals are clear, specifying such goals and putting them into effect would require further political action within the organizations'. By implication, a public policy should necessarily be an action that is result-oriented aimed at solving an identified problem, it should be devoid of uncertainties, specific and widely endorsed or supported

We believe the conflict requires a pragmatic approach from the government, it shouldn't only be about grazing policy which in and of itself is incoherent and lacks the merit to resolve the tension. We have seen some scholars argued that the best approach to decisively resolve the conflict is to pay attention to the peculiarities of the victims. A good number of rural farmers and citizens have been killed or displaced as a result of the conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Benue and Cross River States. In Benue for instance, affected rural farmers have not been commensurately compensated for their loss rather the federal government is more interested in possessing substantial grazing land belonging to the Benue people for the benefit of the pastoralists



especially in the Idoma ethno territory of the State. Ibrahim (2014) the appeasement strategy and execution by these two states administration is classical case of organized confusion. The action of the federal government as regard the grazing policy is considered by several people to be unrealistic and could further fuel up more tension, disunity and division between the farmers and herdsmen as well as the South, Middle Belt and Northern regions of Nigeria. Moreover, Higazi (2016) captured it correctly when he opine that “the new wave of Fulani herdsmen violence can be considered a premeditated strategy for the federal government, given its current stance of inaction in the face of obvious massacres and land grabbing, aimed to intimidate sections of the population from posing any challenge to the revived wave of Fulani herdsmen hegemony in the Nigerian state.

#### **b. Insecurity trend**

The trend of insecurity in Nigeria is worrisome. There is a steady rise in ethnic conflict, insurgency, extra-judicial killings, disregard for the value of lives and intra State hostilities. The volatile situation is detrimental to national peace and progress. Some reports allege that there is a strong tie between the herdsmen and the Boko Haram, as they are said to be collaborating for the achievement of Islamic agenda in the country. Whether the allegation is correct or not is not our focus, we believe that the trend of insecurity in Nigeria could be one of the socio-political causes of the crisis between farmers and herdsmen. The violent parties have shown deep commitment and strong will in attacking each other, most unfortunate is the lack of punitive measures given to the perpetrators. As long as there is no deterrence which could dissuade the attackers from engaging in violence, the situation will persist and the consequences will be devastating. Insecurity poses serious threats to the coexistence of the farmers and herdsmen in Benue and Cross River States, it creates an enabling environment for people to bear arms and blatantly use such arms for ill motive.

Security experts have observed that the situation in Benue is a serious threat and if control measures are not taken, the impact of the conflict will become unbearable. Marietu and Olarewaju (2009), warned that “the collapse of a state can hardly occurs spontaneously, or at once. If and where it happens, it is likely to be initiated by violent clashes ridden processes of deterioration, decline and erosion of functions. What this means is that Nigeria is sitting on a gun powder, it is breeding insecurity by its benign neglect and the lack of the interest shown by the federal and state governments to effectively meet ethnically-based demands.

One way the Nigerian government can fight insecurity is through social security incentives. Federal and state governments could responsibly and sincerely tackle the issue of social inequality and support the herdsmen with perhaps pasture and the local farmers with agricultural subsidies. The problem with this demand is the unwillingness of government at all levels to act and implement. Our democracy is characterized by systemic corruption and misappropriation, this character further retards our progress as a nation which is far from the expectation that followed the return to democracy in 1999. Indeed, Odoh and Chigozie (2012) were right “the return of democracy was preceded by high expectations that some of the problems besetting the country, chief of which is official corruption, will be addressed. However, contrary to expectations, the new democratic order has been plagued by corruption, that surpasses even the military era”. Similarly, Nwagboso (2018) affirmed that “internal security challenges have not only been difficult to address by the National Security Policy, but have also impacted negatively on the country's desired socio-economic development in the 21st century”. The consequences are evident in the gross underdevelopment of the Nigerian state, economic instability, violence and insecurity to mention but a few. Secondly, if the fight against banditry and farmers-herdsmen killings must be won, the country must learn to patterned security in a way that all ethnic divisions and tribes are the primary

focus in security policy formulation. Sentiment, prioritizing one's ethnic interest and cleavages should be jettisoned.

**c. Proliferation of small and light weapons**

The increasing spread and possession of small and light weapons across the country could be regarded as one of the reasons for the protracted conflicts between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in Benue and Cross River States. In most cases, according to report, these weapons are smuggled into the country by arms dealers who bribed their way at the borders or compromise custom laws for personal gains. For example, it was reported in 2019 that the government discovered in a hidden warehouse a total of 3500 sophisticated rifles smuggled into the country from neighboring countries. Similarly, the Immigration Department discovered about a thousand four hundred and ninety-seven illegal routes along the Nigerian border. This clearly shows that, the borders are not properly secure, proliferation of small and light weapons is indeed an issue of concern. The poor security architecture at the Nigerian borders allows the movement of weapons in and out of the country, the government is yet to adequately take measures to check mate the situation and improve border security. In 2017, a group of young men who identified as herdsmen were traced to locations outside Nigerian borders (Premium Times, 2017), yet, the government has failed to tackle insecurity challenges at the borders. Shettima and Tar (2008) summarized the situation as stated "Nigeria's security institutions are very loose, and weak to check the infiltration of foreign visitors who are mercenaries in Nigeria's incessant herdsmen-perpetuated killings, especially regarding the involvement of the nationals of neighboring countries such as Cameroon, Benin Republic, Niger, and Chad. Some Scholars have also argued that these countries constitute escape routes for the armed Fulani herdsmen either after an attack or when they are engaged in combat by military men. However, our concern is not to justify whether or not the farmers – herdsmen attacks are

carried out by foreigners or terrorists from neighboring countries, we contend that the lack of control over the increasing presence of weapons in Nigeria consequent upon poor border security account for the violence, both groups have access to weapons, they could illegally acquire weapons without trace and use same to maim and kill each other during the attacks.

The number of small arms in circulation in Africa has increased over the years. Hence, Okeke and Orji (2014) reported that there were over 640 million small arms circulating around the world, 100 million were in Africa and 8 million were in West Africa at the time. Most intriguing is the fact that 59 percent of these arms were in the hands of civilians. Several conflicts, tensions and terrorist attacks like the Arab spring, the Lybian political crises, the Rwanda genocide, the Boko Haram insurgency, the Tuarage rebels in Mali and in particular the herdsmen crises could be responsible for the circulation of small weapons in the region. This is so, because such weapons are sizable, easy to smuggled, affordable but capable of enormous destruction of lives and properties. To curb this trend some scholars have suggested that the government should negotiate with the holders of these weapons who have been allege to be terrorists. However, Abumbe et al (2018) believe such negotiation should remain as the last resort and negotiation process should commence only when every other options have failed.

In Cross River State, the situation isn't different. Some of the local government areas particularly Obanliku, Boki, Ikom and Bakassi in the South are bounded to the Republic of Cameroon. The boundaries are not clearly demarcated in some of the areas especially in the Northern part of Cross River State as a result of the hills, swamps and very difficult topography. Thus, Bonchuk (2010) affirmed that the situation is further compounded by the lack of Nigeria border post and constant patrol in the area which has resulted in illicit trade in contraband goods and influx of aliens to Nigeria. Security operatives from both countries are restricted to areas where



patrol vehicles can access while, the arms dealers will conclude their dealings and possibly move to the communities through different route. Ayang (2018) had argued that, this route, over the years has become a safe heaven for illegal arms dealers smuggling thousands of rifles and ammunition into Nigeria from Cameroon and vice versa, especially during this period of fighting between separatist group and Government forces in Cameroon. Some Scholars like George Ganyi (2014), Wegh (2017) and others have argued that this development encourage armed Fulani herdsmen from the Republic of Cameroon who arrive communities in Cross River and Benue States with the anticipation of crises or with the intention to incite violence against residence or local farmers who question their activities or try to prevent livestock from grazing on farmlands. George Ganyi (2014) observed that one important dimension to the contemporary conflicts between Fulani pastoralists and farmers in Nigeria is that, the Fulani involved in the conflicts have been fully armed upon arrival either in anticipation of crises, or with the intention to ignite one. In the past, Fulani herdsmen arrives local communities with their families, cattle, machetes, locally made guns for hunting, and sticks for guiding herds and rudimentary defense. However, since 2000, Fulani herdsmen do arrive communities with AK-47 guns, poisonous daggers and other weapons dangling under their arms. In this situation, their herds are often intentionally driven onto farms, while, they lay ambush to attack farmer or anyone who attempts to intervene. Wegh also noticed that the presence of an AK-47 wielding herdsmen brings fear to their local host. The sight of such a weapon in the hands of herdsmen conjures the mental agony and fear of another night attack by killer herdsmen as was the case in the Middle belt. Documentaries from witnesses of the Agatu massacre in Benue State were all similar; prior to the attack, they observed herdsmen with rifles moving around and letting cattle to graze around open field. The night of the same day, the attack was launched, lives were taken in horrendous way, properties were destroyed and survivors



who flee for safety were rendered homeless. In Bishiri village, Obanliku in Cross River State, Akah (2019) reported that according to an informant, in January 2018, two Fulani herdsmen were sighted with two AK-47 rifles in the bush around the boundary between Buya and Bebi. Security men and local vigilante were immediately mobilized into the bush in search of them but to no avail, they were not found. The matter was reported to Alhaji Baba the chief of Fulani community in Obanliku, he promised to investigate the issue. It is most likely that the herdsmen escaped through the Cameroon border, since their mission and target wasn't known, the villagers are still living in fear of an unprecedented attack especially giving the situation in the neighboring Benue State. We believe proliferation of weapons; handling of unauthorized weapons and arms deal without adequate control is one factor responsible for the increase in herdsmen and farmers conflict in the States.

#### **d. Protracted violence and terrorism across Nigeria**

Contemporary Nigeria is face with different layers of violence and terrorist attacks. Some of the conflicts are ideological while others are ethno territorial arising from identity crises and ethnic differences. The conflict has escalated in recent time and it is said to be one of the reasons that account for farmers-herdsmen crises in Nigeria. This is could be so, because some reports have closely linked Fulani herdsmen to Boko Haram in the North East to be the sponsors, influencers and supporters of the herdsmen. They supply the required ammunitions, recruit and train fighters and provide backup where necessary. Therefore, in most cases as witnessed by local residents, the herdsmen that carry out some of the attacks are different from the actual nomads that rear cattle. This further suggest that the herdsmen receive massive funding for arms and even physical support from Boko Haram and its allies during attacks. Over 25,000 lives have been lost with over 150,000 internally displaced people as a result of terrorist attacks particularly in the

North-East region. Several villages have been destroyed and the residents left in pitiable condition. In most cases, the killers take possession of the village, use the hide out to plan further attacks. Ojomovela (2016) observed that Fulani herdsmen, after attacks, occupy the lands from which they violently and murderously evict the local farmers, and that security forces and the government thereafter, take steps to secure the Fulani possession of the occupied lands.

The ripple effect of terrorist activities, extra-judiciary killings and wanton disregard for human life has exacerbated the conflict between farmers and herdsmen. Akah (2021) argued that “in most cases, these conflicts becomes protracted and brings about extreme violence, insecurity and human casualties”. It is an unfortunate trend; the government has been accused of failing in its duty to protect lives and properties. Some of the reports in media and literature about the killings and destruction are very devastating. For instance, Ovuakporie and Agbakwuru (2016) reported that, on the 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2014, 10 people were murdered in conflicts between neighborhood ranchers and Fulani herders in the Pilagani Street of Langtang, North Local Government of Plateau State. According to Premium Times (2016), on the 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2014, more than 50 individuals were killed in Pilagani region of Marakun Local Government Area, Zamfara State in a related clash. In May, 2015, about 100 villagers were murdered in outcast camps situated in Ikura, Benue State by presumed herders. Stein (2016) further disclosed that, more than 1,042 inhabitants have been murdered in Benue State because of the ceaseless conflicts. In 2015, around seven towns were invaded by Fulani herders in Agatu Local Government, seven famers were executed in Ikpele and Okpopolo regions of the State and up to 6000 inhabitants were displaced. Similar report confirmed that about 15 Local Government Areas out of 23 in Benue State had been invaded by the herdsmen, killing thousands of residents, destroying homes and farmlands, and raping the wives and daughters of men in these communities (Opejobi, 2016). The Northern part Cross River State

especially around the Obanliku and Obudu communities are some of the areas that have experienced Fulani herdsmen invasion and crises. In Utanga, Bebi and Ipong, occasional conflicts and tensions between local residents and herdsmen have been reported. As farmers lament over the destruction of their crops by cattle, herders also accused farmers of cow rustling and deliberate application of poisonous chemicals to farmlands which are toxic to the cattle and other livestock. The blame game has continued as no party is willing to accept the blame or to hold an olive branch hence, the violence persist. According to Mercy Corps (2015), a global humanitarian organization funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), out of 163 countries analyzed in the 2015, Nigeria ranks 149th on the list of Global Conflict Index. This clearly shows that the country is experiencing an upheaval. The economic implication of the conflict between local farmers and Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria is highly significant according to Mercy Corps, a total of \$14 billion has been lost in the country's annual revenue and this is excluding the likely impact on food production which this research is aimed at.

**e. Large scale land utilization, mechanization and commercialization of crop farming.**

The advent of mechanization and large-scale cultivation of arable crops in Cross River and Benue States has been identified as one of the trigger clauses of the conflict between farmers and herdsmen in some of the communities. The scale up started following a number of reasons; the need to focus on agriculture as an alternative to oil as the country pushes towards diversification, the high demand for arable crops in other parts of the country and neighboring countries, access to agricultural loans, subsidies and investors amongst others. Consequently, interested individuals, organizations and governments that have the capacity started mechanized cultivation, acquiring large hectares of land to benefit the large-scale production. For instance, in Cross River State, the establishment of Songhai Farm in Abi which covers 500 hectares, the *Godilogo farms in Bebi*,

*Obanliku* measuring over 2000 hectares of land, the Cross-River State Government rice, cassava farms established by Sen. Prof. Ben Ayade's administration with an estimated area of over 1000 hectares of land. Similarly, the Ubur Nyam Farms at Makurdi-Aliade Road in Benue State with a size of about 32km, the Teragro Farms located at Ushongo in Benue State for the cultivation of citrus as well as other multiple large-scale private farms including introduction of Fadama development programmes in rural settings targeting cultivation at valley-bottom river banks. The above scenario has resulted in the reduction of land available for cattle grazing in both States as the sections initially available and assigned to herdsmen by the host community for cattle grazing have been taken over by the local farmers and the farmers do not permit strayed movement of cattle into farmlands. In some cases, the herdsmen pay and satisfy certain traditional obligations as recommended by the local chiefs before the land is assigned to them. Therefore, conflict often arises when the farmers occupy such allocated lands for cultivation, the herders suddenly feel oppressed and the tendency to fight back and reclaim the land will start gathering momentum until they have the capacity to launch an attack on the farmers and the local residents. This is one of the remote causes of the crises in both States.

#### **f. Ethno-religious, political and cultural differences**

Religiosity, cultural appropriation is a great deal in Nigeria and other pluralist societies. The farmers-herdsmen crisis is further compounded by the differences in religion and culture, there is devoid of tolerance and peaceful co-existence as each party identify with an opposing religion and way of life. The farmers are predominantly Christians, only very few are traditionalists. While, the herdsmen are largely Islam faithful. They have a different orientation, pattern of worship and characterizations from the local residents. The influx of the herdsmen into Cross River and Benue States have exposed them to communities with whom they do not share same history or culture.



These communities in turn are alien to the transhumance pattern of life just as the herdsmen have little or no basic knowledge about the character and farming regime in their new settlement. The situation becomes more difficult as a result of the religious differences. How is this so? We understand historically that the first herdsmen who migrated to the study area did not see the need to build Mosques, neither did they mobilize for prayers using speakers or engage in proselytizing. Their religious practice was demure which make the local community to see them as disguised Muslims who probably were involved in magic or Spiritism. Off course, with the display of amulets and magical wares, they usually appeared tawdry and diabolical hence, they were avoided. On the other hand, contemporary practice of Christianity in the study area and the entire country has gotten to the zenith, you could hardly go five to ten buildings without having one room or center for worship. Religious radicalism is now the new norm. As Ishaku (2015) observed ... 'religion has now become a polarizing factor in group relations in the study villages and the Fulani whose instinct for self-survival had been honed on his adaptability, now has to face cultural rejection or hostility from the locals. Others have argued that the difference in the pattern of worship makes it difficult for both parties to co-exist without acrimony as the ostentatious show of superior belief act as a breeding factor for a possible conflict.

In a phone conversation with a resident in Utanga axis, Obanliku Local Government Area in Cross River State, he noted that the Fulani are right now so concerned about establishing mosque in Utanga and propagating Islamic religion. According to him, this is entirely different from what use to be the norm associated with the first Fulani herdsmen who migrated to Utanga. In the past, very few practiced Islamic religion, they do this at individual level, they somehow go to Obudu for prayers on Friday while a good number were always in the bush with cattle and livestock. But today, almost all Fulani herdsmen in both Cross River and Benue States are Muslim and they are

zealous about converting some of the residents into Islamic religion. In some of the villages, they have built mosque and an Islamic school or learning center.

The ethno-religious and cultural differences between farmers and herdsmen is one of the dimensions in understanding the reasons for the crises and some Scholars have argued that it is one aspect that requires urgent attention from the government. Blench (1994) noted that since 1999, and the gradual adoption of the Sharia legal code in many Northern States, including those with Muslim political elites but a large proportion of non-Muslims in the rural area, natural resources conflict has been drawn into the politico-religious arena. The small clashes that typically occurred every dry season and were seen by both parties as about access to resource are now being everywhere re-interpreted in terms of the larger dichotomies in Nigeria society. Blench remark aptly explain the situation in the context of ethno-religious perspective and clearly shows the proportional attention in this dimension of the conflict. At the time when there is so much proliferation of religion and extremism, it becomes really difficult for both groups to live together with mutual respect and tolerance. It will take a rigorous reorientation for a peaceful coexistence to be achieved in communities that have had an experience of the conflict and the aftermath consequences.

#### **g. Inadequate response by the government to Pastoralism**

In Nigeria, pastoralism and the issues bordering on herdsmen doesn't get the attention it deserves. Past and present governments have shown benign neglect to the pastoralists, they have been treated with less regards and negligence yet they contribute greatly to the economy and the food security of the country. About 75% of consumed meat, eggs, milk, cheese, honey, butter, animal blood, poultry production are made available by the pastoralists. They also create

employment opportunities especially for those who are cattle traders, beef sellers and those working in slaughter houses.

Unfortunately, government has failed over time to respond to the needs and peculiarities of herders, there is no social welfare policy for them, no policy direction that will alleviate their conditions, they hardly access loans and other agricultural subsidies, no grazing reserves nor available ranches for the herdsman. They are left to take full responsibility for themselves and livestock. This is a bit different from the arable crop farmers who benefit from government programmes and farming palliatives like loans, subsidies, Agricultural extensions and rural farming support initiative, targeted at improving the living conditions of farmers. Bala Tukur as cited in Akah (2019) captures it rightly “Government intervention in the life stock sector is very poor. Unlike their crop producing counterparts, you hardly hear of any support to traditional livestock breeders particularly transhumance breeders in terms of inputs like livestock vaccination, fodder development and fodder storage facilities, market support and linkages. Transhumant pastoralists are hardly supported or even compensated in the event of natural disasters and land acquisitions. This creates an underdog spirit and superiority complex amongst resource users”. Again, government has not shown any serious commitment in protecting the ranches and making life easy for herders, it abolished the 1965 grazing laws with no alternative. Uzundu (2017) affirmed that the law was established to protect herders against intimidation and deprivation of access to pasture by farmers, cattle ranchers and intruders. However, this piece of legislation was not enforced and stock routes were subsequently blocked and disappeared into farmlands. Prior to the discontinuation of the law, the government wasn't sincere enough with the mandate in establishing grazing sites. At the earliest, 2.3 million hectares was surveyed as grazing areas representing with the plan to subsequently establish 28 million hectares, but only 225,000 hectares

was eventually established which is significantly inadequate considering the increasing number of herders. Worst case scenario is that at the moment, this landmass has been abandoned, the necessary conditions for the lands to serve as grazing sites are lacking. Hence, farmers have encroached and converted the lands to sites for crop cultivation.

The origin of the Obudu (Rightly Obanliku) Cattle Ranch in Cross River State is a justification of the situation of government lack of commitment to ranches and grazing reserves as buttressed above. The Cattle Ranch was established in the 1950s. Although, local residents have been living at the Ranch since the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Primarily, the Ranch was established as a reserve considering its ambience and green vegetation, for cattle grazing to enhance animal protein intake, the production of quality and healthy meat and dairy products for consumption and commercialization purposes. It was in recognition of the essentiality of this, that the Ranch reserve was made. Ranch at the time was the only site where pasture could be obtained even during the dry season. Thus, herders previously settled on the plateau throughout the season to avail their cattle of the fresh pasture. As time progresses, in the early 80s, the government of Cross River State through the State Agricultural Development Corporation made effort to let the National Livestock Production Company to manage the site for proper ranching development but it was unsuccessful. The Ranch remained moribund or in decline until it was transformed into a full-scale tourist site by the Donald Duke administration which span for 8 years (1999-2007). This development deprived the herders from using the Ranch as a grazing site for their cattle, they had to migrate to the communities at the bottom of the plateau. Government disregard for the establishment and management of Ranches in Cross River, Benue States as well as the entire country is one of the factors contributing to the periodic tension between farmers and herders, the struggle and competition for the available land is the bane of the crises.



## **Ecological and attitudinal factors**

### **a. Ecological and climatic changes**

The historical antecedent of the migration of the Fulani herdsmen is more intrinsically related to ecological and climatic changes especially the rise in drought, the intensity of the sun and the drying up of water bodies. The situation became worst following the drive for development and other human related activities that characterizes the Northern region from where the Fulani herdsmen first settled in Nigeria. Ecological and climatic changes is a global phenomenon and the impact is far reaching, the devastating consequences of global warming is one of the biggest threats to our collective existence. Several efforts have and are currently been put in place to remediate the dangers of global warming. The United States Department of Ecology (USDE) in 2004 reported that, "Rising levels of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gasses have warmed the world and already causing wide-ranging impacts, from rising sea levels, to melting of snow and ice, to more drought and extreme rainfall. Scientists projected that the trends will continue and, in some cases, accelerate, posing significant risks to human health, our forest, agriculture, and other natural resources that are vital to economy environment, and our way of life. The ozone layer is exposed to toxic chemicals released from different human and industrial activities which are harmful to the ozone molecules and responsible for its depletion. Nigeria has over the years experienced its share of the effects. It is partly responsible for the influx of the herdsmen to the middle belt and the southern States as a way of seeking for favorable climatic conditions. Ishaku (2017) observed correctly "Environmental changes, though not completely new; the cycle of drought in the north, notably (the 1970 drought), the increasing desertification of the Sahel, the drying of lake Chad have been well known to both farmers and pastoralist in the past but it has recently been deepened by the phenomenon of global warming". Among the most affected by the trend are farmers and

pastoralists as planting seasons are either altered or the period for rainfall becomes drought. Largely scale irrigation has become the alternative source of water for crops, the cost is always a huge burden for peasant farmers. On the other hand, the pastoralists would have to trek for long distances to access fresh pasture or streams during drought.

Global warming occasioned by drought is a major problem in Africa and the entire world. As it is in Nigeria, the Darfur region of Sudan has become a battle ground between farmers and nomadic population due to the decreasing availability of space for farming and grazing. To affirm this, Okoli and Altelhe (2014) agrees that “the conflict in the North and Middle Belt is also linked with the narrowing of both farming and grazing land due to the pressure of desert encroachment. While we agree that the changes in the climatic condition is not the only factors responsible for the conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Cross River and Benue States, we think that environmental factors are not the only and most crucial factors leading to the conflict. Other factors such as poverty and inequalities, between groups, the availability of weapons, ethnic tension external indebtedness, institutional resilient, state legitimacy and its capacity and willingness to intervene, seem to matter much if not more than environmental change. However, we think these composite factors are primarily institutional and have been addressed above, what is central in justifying the causes of the conflict from the ecological perspective is the changes we have experienced over time.

#### **b. Destruction of Crops**

This is one aspects of the attitudinal causes of the conflict, the destruction of crops by cattle lacking direction and control has caused farmers in Cross River and Benue States a great fortune. Some discourses attest that, this is one of the reasons for the decline in food production in the study area. Most of the arable crops are palatable consumables to cattle, often times according to report,

erring cattle run into farmland to feed on these crops. In some cases, the herders intentionally get the crops from the farmland to feed the cattle. This is often done when farmers have retired home. It is certain that when the farmers return to their farmland to see the level of destruction, they feel frustrated. More so, if the traditional rulers can't hold the herdsmen to pay compensations for the damaged crops, the farmers will most likely go for a revenge.

According to Akah (2019) in his interview with a Fulani herdsman reported that the herdsmen do admit that farm destruction by herds happens but quickly added that in most cases it is not intentional but because it is difficult to control the cattle. The interviewee also agreed that some Fulani herders consciously allow their cattle to destroy farms or harvested crops and remained unconcern, because cattle owners do not provide them with food, clothes, boots and other essential things needed to do their work. Secondly, he blamed such destruction on the migrating herders while exonerating the settled herders from the accusation. He noted that the migrating herdsmen stay for a short period, and have nothing to lose, unlike the settlers. So, they feed their animals with anything including crops, but when the farmers find out that their crop has been destroyed, they come straight to us. The deliberate destruction of crops and farmlands has aroused visceral reactions among farmers. In most communities particularly in Benue State, this situation has led to serious conflict involving killings and further destruction of properties. It is one of the trigger clauses to the farmers and herdsmen crisis in Nigeria as stated in the works of (Ishaku,16 & Bala)

### **c. Competition and rivalry over space for farming and grazing**

An increase in agricultural activities with mechanized operations covering wide hectares of land in both States has led to a reduction of farmland for both peasant farmers and herders. The resultant consequence which is often regarded as one the key causes of the conflict is serious

competition for the available land between farmers and herders. The system commonly practice is the open grazing where cattle are allowed to feed from an open filed and drink from streams, rivers and other water bodies. In some cases, the herders negotiate, provide the necessary requirements to acquire land from the traditional rulers who are the custodian of the communities. The problem here is, often there is no binding contract to protect such agreement, when there is tension, some traditional rulers could deny any previous dealing with the herders, the lands will subsequently be revoked and given to farmers for cultivation. The herders might feel exploited and mobilize to stage an attack in the community. This is most likely to happen because, herders do pay hugely to the traditional rulers to be allowed to graze on some portion of the land. Such payments come in form of money, farm animals and or other material items. Some of the traditional rulers who are very insatiable, take advantage of their position to exploit the herders. A typical instance was reported by Akah (2019) as part of the information he gathered during field work, he informed that in 2017, an immigrant Fulani herder bought a brand-new motor cycle for the clan head of Bebi West in Obanliku LGA, Cross River State, in addition, he gave him huge amount of money to secure grazing land in his domain. Ironically, the assigned land belongs to a farmer in the community, the chief action was condemned by the people and the issue almost cause friction between the Fulani community and the host community.

Similar incidence as captured above has led to serious blood bath in some communities in the Benue State. Farmers believe that the herders are non-indigenes, they shouldn't compete with them for available lands. On the other hand, the herders are always not willing to release the lands they have acquired, perhaps, they have established their kraals, homes, enclosures for prayers and there is easy access to pastures and water. Blench (1996) admitted this rivalry is one of the salient trigger clause and underlying reason necessitating farmers–herders conflict. Since herders' access



to land is hampered, depletion of the grass typically sets in, which forces them to go beyond their boundaries in search of pastures and water. Atwi (2017) added that during the dry season, it becomes more difficult for herders to find grasses and water for their cattle and they move to savannah areas where farmers also move to farm. The two groups then fight to control limited land in the savannah areas, which leads to violent conflict. The Agatu massacre in Benue State is a good example of the aftermath consequences of the competition between farmers and herders for land and water resources.

#### **d. Infestation and pollution of water bodies by herds**

In rural settlements, water bodies like rivers, streams or ponds are the major sources of water for the people. They depend the water for drinking, domestic purposes and for irrigation as they lack access to other artificial sources of water like boreholes and pipe borne water. Farmers have always accused the herders of deliberately letting cattle to drink from the available sources of water thereby infesting or polluting it and making it unsafe for domestic and agricultural use. In extreme situations, the cattle contaminate the sources of water by excreting while drinking or crossing over the water and making it difficult for the rural dwellers to cope. This challenge is one that I have personally experienced. While growing up in Sankwala, one of our major sources of drinking water was 'Arkan' that takes its source from the mountain and flows through Bisu, Bishiri to the North horn of Bebi. Back in the days, the water was naturally potable for drinking and cooking. During farming season, we had empty clay pots in the farm, so we just fill them for drinking. But nowadays you cannot use it anymore. It is full of cattle faeces and urine. So, if one is going to the farm, he must carry water from the house because the previous source of water around the farm is contaminated.

This situation become more terrible during the dry or severe harmattan season, when the alternative rain water and other smaller streams have dried up leaving them with no option but to depend on 'Arkan'. This justify why most of the attacks and hostilities as documented became either intensified or were occurred during the dry season.

#### **e. Bush burning by Herders and Farmers**

In most cases, both farmers and herdsmen have accused each other of deliberately engaging in bush burning as a strategic action to frustrate the other. As for farmers, the consequence of bush burning by herdsmen is that the fire is capable of setting up the entire farmland ablaze especially during the dry season which is coincidentally the period for harvest. The herdsmen do this because they need fresh foddors to feed cattle, so they believe the only way is to burn the dry bushes to make way for newer pastures. This has been a long standing strategy since they depend exclusively on this to keep cattle alive, it is one of the stimulants of the crisis between farmers and herders in Benue and Cross River States. In one of the discussion fora we had, one of the local residents in Agatu narrated his experience. He reported that in February 2016, the major forest that surrounds Obagaji was set ablaze by herders. They intentionally light up the forest with fire at night, it became uncontrollable and spread to unintended areas including farmlands, yam bans and local food storage sites, destroying the preserved crops and seedlings as well as burning some economic tress such as kola nuts, Banana, Plantain, Bush mangoes and pears. The incidence brought a lot of challenges to the farmers, they rarely had seedlings for the next planting season and the food bank was severely affected.

On the other hand, the Fulani herdsmen often deny any involvement in deliberate bush burning. They agree that during dry season, they are constrained by lack of sufficient pasture, so it will be out of place for them to burnt the available bushes as claimed by farmers. The herders

always exonerate themselves from blame and would rather accused the farmers of double standard; insisting that farmers often burn grasses during the dry season in preparation for farming and for hunting purposes. The accusation and counter accusation of bush burning has consistently been in the top agenda as one of the attitudinal causes of the crises between farmers and herders.

#### **f. Exploitation of Herdsmen by Traditional Rulers**

The arbitrary extortion and exploitation of herdsmen by local chiefs and host community leaders is considered to be one of the main attitudinal triggers of the ongoing conflict. Some traditional rulers are highly insatiable, it has been allege that the chiefs who are always on a position of advantage as local custodians collect monies and material items from herdsmen in return for approval to settle and graze within the community, often this transaction or understanding takes place without the knowledge of the entire community. It is not guided by any agreement, only verbal contract is made. The herdsmen, having satisfy the chiefs erroneously believe that they have the entire community authorization or they have acquired the right to let their cattle graze openly in the community, irrespective of whether the grazing is on farmland or cultivated sites.

Understand that for majority of the herdsmen, the settlement for grazing is an automatic condition for land ownership. Very unfortunately as already reported and documented is the operation of the herdsmen without consideration to the local boundaries and traditional land use system between their host communities and other neighboring communities. They allow cattle to graze without limit even across other communities. This often result to This often result to territorial conflict and boundary dispute between two or more communities. For instance, as reported by a local resident during our reconnaissance visit, for a long while now, herdsmen hosted in Ugboro do graze into Ishibori community causing serious damage to crops and polluting

streams/rivers. Both communities already have an age long tension over land, the Ishibori community from what we gathered had previously issued a strong message to the traditional rulers in Ugboro to restrain or control the herders accommodated in their community from grazing into the Ishibori land. Such strong message is perhaps predicated upon the understanding that the herdsmen have settled the Chiefs in Ugboro, so it is inappropriate for the Ishibori people to suffer losses consequent upon cattle grazing whereas, they haven't benefited from the herders settlement packages.

#### **g. Attacking, killing and rustling of Cattle**

This is one of the most widely reported claim and allegation levelled against farmers in both States by the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), which is the body that regulate and coordinate the activities of Fulani herdsmen. Farmers are often accused by the group for attacking, killing and rustling of cattle. While, quoting Kwaja, Ishaku reported that mostly cattle rustlers transport the animals to other region and sell them or rare them. This can be attributed to the emergence of an informal economy dependent on rustled cattle and the proliferation of small and medium arms in the hands of non-state actors in the face of dwindling state capacity to provide security which is a concern we have explained earlier. To satisfy the underground market, criminal network of cattle rustlers armed to the teeth with AK 47 and other assault weapons, on one hand and their buyers on the other, have sprung up all over the place. The consequence is huge deaths and population displacement. In critical situations, the armed gang could rustled an entire flock of cattle leaving the owners frustrated. Consequently, the herdsmen often blame the crime on their host community members, especially if their relationship with the community is already in jeopardy.



The local community sometimes take advantage of the vulnerability of the herders particularly their small population, they aggressively attacked cattle, killing and rustling cattle as a reaction to any report that suggest the herders have allowed the cattle to feed on their crops. Herders place so much value on their cattle and they will go to any length to revenge any act of rustling carried out by the farmers. Ideally both parties should report their concerns first to the Police or any competent law enforcement agency but the reverse is usually the case, as they easily take laws into their hands to cause mayhem and violence. Some few years ago, I experienced a similar challenge firsthand in Obanliku. The intervening Police officer's report as documented in Akah (2019) work wasn't different. He noted that, in one of the cases involving stolen cattle, the Police launched an investigation and found out that some youths in Bebi seized two cattle from Alhaji Guda's son in the bush over allege destruction of their crops by the herds. They drove the cattle to a nearby stream were they slaughtered them. The young Fulani boy who was alone in the bush ran home and reported the matter to the entire Fulani clan in the area. Thank God the Fulani's did not take the laws into their hands, they reported the matter to the police and the young men were arrested and prosecuted. This is probably one out of the few cases of cattle rustling in both States, the consequences of such action is the wanton killings, protracted conflicts, destruction of lives and properties and perhaps a decline in food security as we are currently experiencing in both States and the entire country.

#### **h. The use of herbicides, pesticides and other chemicals by Crop Farmers**

Another factor alleged to be responsible for the crisis between farmers and herdsmen is the use of herbicides, pesticides and other chemicals for weed and pest control around farmland. Nowadays, human labor available for subsistent farmers is limited or highly cost implicative compare to the past. The only alternative is the spraying of chemicals to get rid of weed or

criticized the Nigeria's government response to the crisis between farmers and herdsmen. While, some agree with the efforts of the government but blame the strategies adopted yet others believe that the government is doing all that it is expected to do to end the crisis. However, let's examine some of the efforts towards controlling the situation across the country. The efforts we shall discuss below are both the ones initiated during the military and the current democratic dispensation in Nigeria.

**4.3.1 Attempts on the establishment of grazing reserves at designated areas:** As far back as 1965, shortly after independence, the northern region, where herdsmen are predominant attempted to initiate the grazing reserves at specific areas as a counter respond to halt the farmers-herdsmen tension predicated on lack of adequate grazing field. Large hectares of lands were marked out and allocated to the Fulani herdsmen to be completely used for rearing to cattle and other farm animals. Unfortunately, there was no agreed legislations to validate the proposed grazing reserves. Therefore, several factors like development, mechanized farming, population explosion, urbanization etc. contributed to why the proposed plan got a benign neglect.

The second attempt by the government to resolve the crisis through the establishment of grazing is the initiation of the National Grazing Reserve Bill in 2016. The bill was enacted in 2016 by the legislators at the National Assembly to address the farmers-herdsmen crisis. There were reports that the bill was instigated by the President who is a Fulani by origin. The opposition party and other relevant stakeholders criticized the Bill quoting the provisions as enshrined in the Land Use Act of 1978 which unequivocally states that the executive Governor of the State is vested with all powers regarding the regulation of ownership, acquisition, administration, management and control of land. As long as the Land Use Act remain a binding

piece of legislation, the implication is that any Bill that seek to take the control of lands from the State Governors will face serious opposition, except the Land Use Act. The Federal government and the National Assembly will always be accused of usurpation of the powers of the State Governors with any Bill that contradict the provision of the Land Use Act.

**4.3.2 Creation of the National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE):** As part of the effort to control the herdsmen crisis, in 1989, the Federal government established the NCNE with a statutory recognition. The main objective of the Commission is to expose the pastoralists to basic education and enlightenment programmes. The Commission was also mandated to create a working platform for the sensitization of the herdsmen on issues like identity, tolerance, individual values and responsibility which will help the herdsmen to interact properly within the society and promote their nomadic ideas.

**4.3.3 Militarization and internal security intervention:** The Federal government has over the years deplored military troops to areas under attacked, a specialized military squad is usually mobilized to halt the escalation of such crisis. In most cases, the operation is tagged Joint Task Force (JTF) which is a combination of all category of the Armed Forces including the Police Force and other Para-military squads. For example, in 2001, the Federal government deployed a Special Task Force called Operation Safe Haven (STF-OSH) to tame the crisis between farmers and herdsmen. Also, the Operation Harbin Kunama II has been introduced in Southern Kaduna State and the operation Lafia Adole in the North-East with one mandate, to fight terrorism. Similarly, the Federal government deployed the military to Benue State and neighboring States in the Middle Belt to crack down on erring herdsmen and farmers, the incessant attacks especially in Benue State called for an overwhelming approach and the declaration of a state of emergency to check

the wanton killings and destruction of properties. However, most Nigerians have expressed dissatisfaction with the military intervention, accusing the Federal government and the Service Chiefs of complacency and compromises claiming that the military personnel deployed are under motivated and under equipped. The herdsmen are often seen parading weapons that are more lethal than what is giving to the operation squad, it is a situation that appears to be a double jeopardy. This is because, concerned Nigerians expect the Federal government and the Armed Forces to blacklist the herdsmen as a terrorist group and take drastic military actions to end the crisis, the same way the Indigenous People of Biafra's (IPOB) in the South-East led by Nnamdi Kanu or the Nigeria's Islamic Movement led by Ibrahim El Zakzaky and the respective uprising groups in other parts of the country were treated. The military was deployed in September 2017 in an operation code-named Operation Python Dance to crack down on the IPOB's agitation but the shadow boxing and passive military response against herdsmen is a great deal of concern to Nigerians especially the North Central and South West.

**4.3.4 Proposed Cattle Ranching System:** One of the primary factors responsible for the crisis is the lack of an organized ranching system in Nigeria, in our discussion on the causes of farmers-herdsmen conflict in the previous sections in Chapter two, we mentioned that the influx of herdsmen into the Southern part of Nigeria is as a result of harsh climatic conditions resulting to lack of natural green vegetation that could serve as pasture for cattle. Sadly so, there is no ranching system in place to cushion the effect of drought. Therefore, as an attempt to minimize the crisis and struggle for space accompanied by mass killings, in 2018, the government introduced a ranching policy titled 'National Livestock Plan' expected to run for 10 years at a budgeted cost of about 179 billion naira. The policy is



targeted at the establishment of 94 Ranches across 10 pilot States of the Federation. Again, State governments, especially in the South and North Central regions vehemently rejected the proposal blaming the Federal government of not having adequate consultation prior to the introduction of the policy. Governors claimed that the Federal government has no right to mark out hectares of land at State level for ranching. They have widely and unequivocally accused the Federal government of double standard and politicizing the farmers- herdsman crisis. The policy was initiated shortly after the Agatu (Benue State) massacre, the State Governor, Samuel Ortom relentlessly criticized the Federal government, referring to the APC administration as highly 'insensitive' and treating with kid gloves the ravaging scourges of the herdsman attacks in Benue State and other parts of the country. He refuted the Federal government ranching policy, insisting that the Benue State government under his leadership will not accept the Federal government plan to allocate land in the State for ranching.

**4.3.5 Legislation Prohibiting Open Grazing:** This measure was introduced at State level by the legislative assemblies as a strategy to tackle the crisis between farmers and herdsman. The Open Grazing Prohibition Bill is intended to criminalize open grazing which will bring to an end the destruction of crops by cattle and ultimately reduce the influx of herdsman into the States. In May 2017, Benue State became the first to enact the Bill tagged Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law (2017) and the implementation started in November, 2017. Ekiti and Taraba States have also signed Bills prohibiting open grazing in their States and the Bills are now in the official gazette of the States which means open grazing is a punishable offence by the provision of the State's law.

**4.3.6 Introduction of the Great Green Wall Agency by the Federal Government:** In compliance with the 2007 African Union Green Wall Initiative, the Federal government in 2013 introduced the Great Green Wall Agency to tackle desertification. The Agency was mandated to encourage the Federal and State governments to plant trees in at least 8000km to minimize the consequences of desertification. One of the major reasons for the migratory drift of herdsmen to the Southwest is unfavorable climatic condition and desert encroachment especially in the North. This challenge necessitated the introduction of the Green Wall Agency. However, most stakeholders have argued about the impact of the Agency, since the crisis itself has continued even until now and the herdsmen are steadily migrating to the South-west.

Having discussed the attempts by the government to tackle the crisis between farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria, the narrative today suggest that the government has not done enough giving the magnitude of the crisis and the ravaging consequences on lives, properties and territories. For instance, majority of the Southerners believe that the efforts from the Federal government over the years have focused on either improving the conditions for only herdsmen or protecting only the interest of herdsmen. While, their counterparts, the crop farmers have been neglected and let to make up for their losses or damages. The evidence is even clear going by all the efforts we have explained above. The only efforts that protect farmers and the cultivated crops is the law prohibiting open grazing which is at the level of the State, there is no clear Federal government support or encouragement for farmers since the inception of the crisis especially in Cross River, Benue and other States in the South. This concern is gradually crystallizing the narrative that the Federal government is complacent in dealing with the crisis.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 5.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

This chapter is concerned with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected for the study and the test of hypotheses. The findings of the study that emerged from the data analyses were also discussed. A total of 900 questionnaires were distributed and retrieved from the respondents respectively. Data collected from the questionnaires were all analyzed, and all hypotheses were subjected to testing at 0.5 level of significance. Firstly, the socio-demographic data of the respondents were presented, ranging from sex, marital status, age bracket, educational qualification, occupation to religion. Secondly, the data relating to the study objectives were presented. This was aimed at examining the impact of Farmers-herdsmen crisis and food security in Cross River and Benue States, Nigeria.

### 5.1.1 The Demographic Data of the Respondents

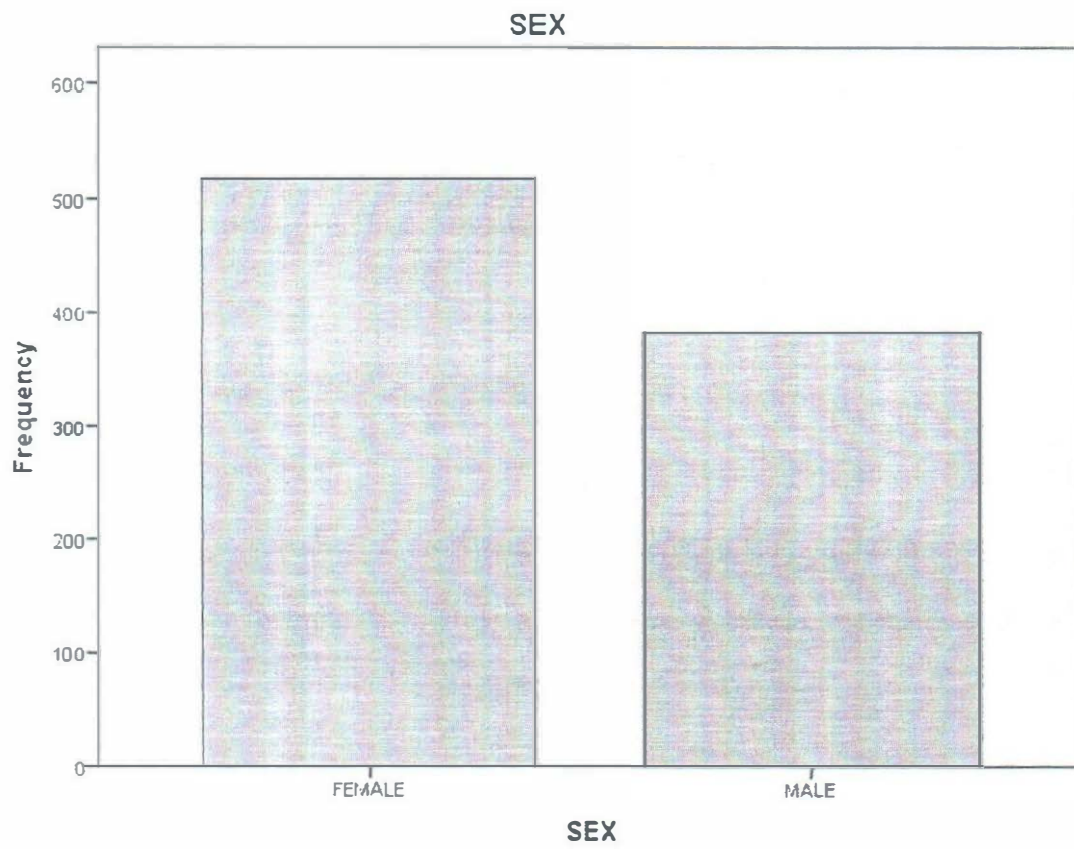
**Table 5.1.1**

**Distribution of Respondents by Sex**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Female	518	57.6
Male	382	42.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field work (2021)





**Fig. 5.1** Distribution of respondents by sex

Source: Field work (2021)

Table 5.1.1 and the corresponding Bar Chart of figure 5.1 shows that responses were obtained from male and female respondents. From the responses, 518 respondents representing 57.6 percent were females. While, 382 respondents representing 42.4 percent were males, making a total of 900 respondents and 100 percent respectively.

The above data shows that female respondents outnumbered the males counterparts. Hence, one could argue that peasant farming in the communities is dominated by females. Although, several factors could account for the high number of female participants in the survey. Firstly, the females were available at the time of the survey; secondly, most of them were interested in participating in the survey because they make a living from farming. Whereas, the males could have other jobs especially Local Government jobs in addition with farming. Moreover, the females are mostly engaged in farm activities like crop planting, weeding etc. Also, the females have suffered trauma as result of the conflict, most of them are widows and single as their husbands and or children have killed or separated from them during the crisis especially in Benue state where reprisal attacks have been recorded.

Table 5.1.2 and the corresponding Bar chart of 5.2 shows that the respondents were distributed across the marital status. From a total of 900 respondents representing 100 percent, 164 respondents representing 18.2 percent were singles and have never been married. While, 284 respondents representing 31.6 percent were married as at the time they participated in the survey. Meanwhile, 265 respondents representing 29.4 percent were widow/widowers. 108 respondents representing 12.0 percent were separated and 79 respondents representing 8.8 percent were divorced respectively.

The data summarized above indicates that 284 respondents were married, followed closely with 265 respondents who were widows /widowers. We could assume that the crises is one of the factors responsible for why a number of the respondents are left all alone. In most cases, husbands have been maimed or kidnapped, the wives have either been killed also, or they have been separated from their husbands and ancestral land. This invariably means apart from food security, the crises has an implication on the socio-cultural life particularly marriage and family relations.

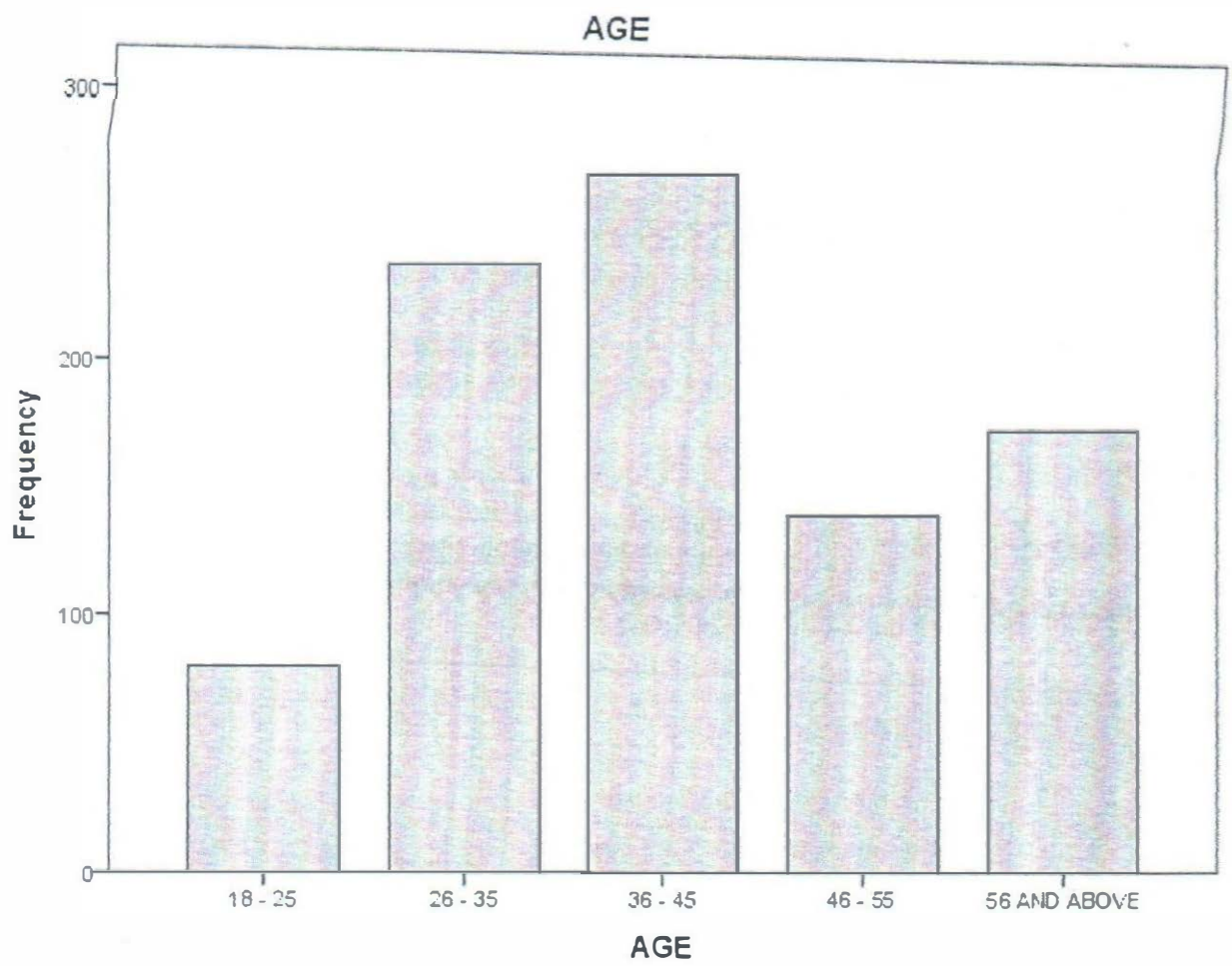
**Table 5.1.3**

**Distribution of Respondents by age bracket**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
18 – 25	80	8.9
26 – 35	237	26.3
36 – 45	272	30.2
46 – 55	139	15.4
56 and above	172	19.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

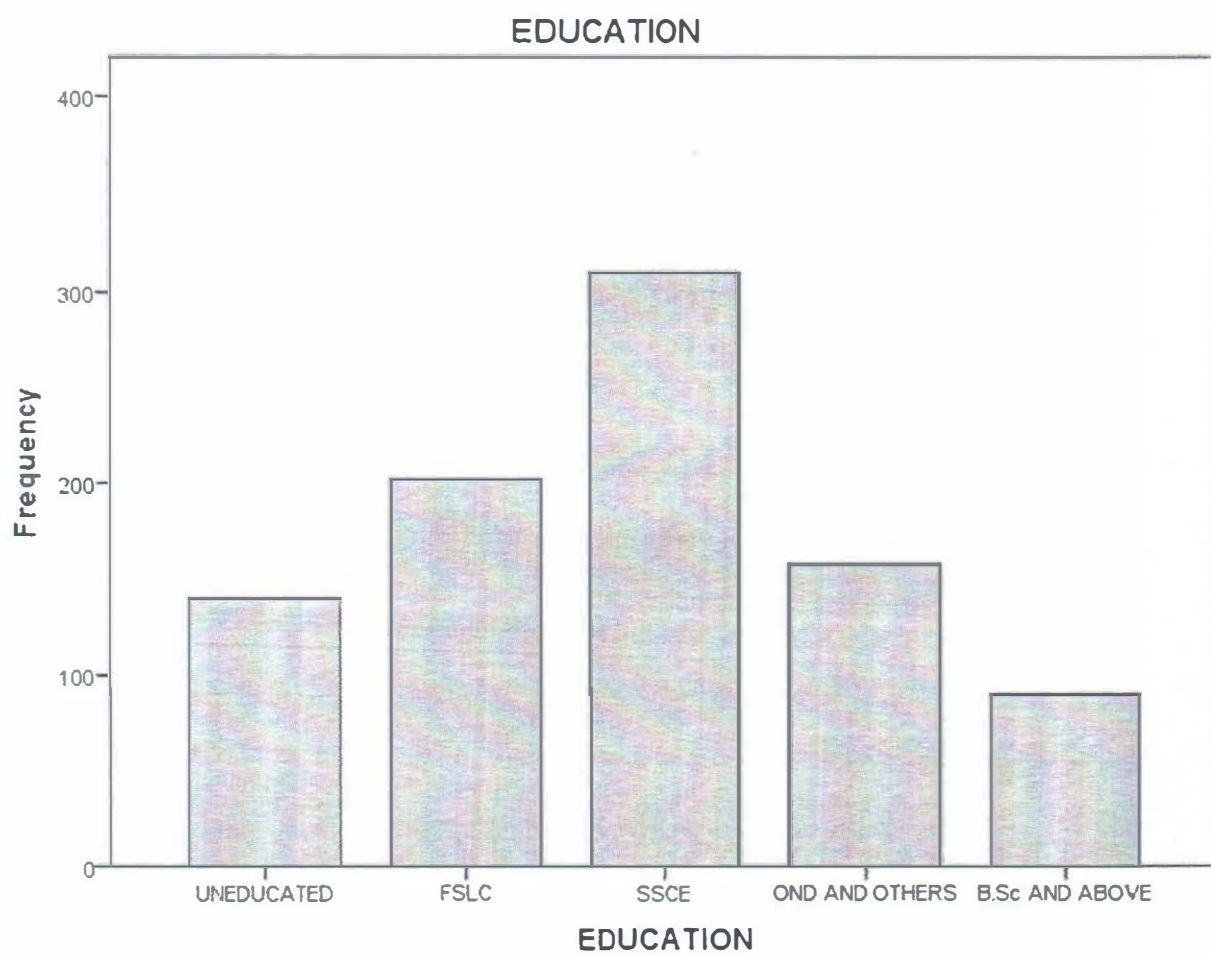
Source: Field work (2021)





**Fig. 5.3: Distribution of respondents by age**

Source: Field work (2021)



**Fig. 5.4: Distribution of respondents by educational qualification**

Source: Field work (2021)

Table 5.1.4 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Figure 5.4 shows that the respondents have different level of educational qualifications. 140 respondents representing 15.6 percent were uneducated. 202 respondents representing 22.4 percent were FSLC holders. Whereas, 310 respondents representing 34.4 percent were SSCE certified. While, 158 respondents representing 17.6 percent were OND Holders and 90 respondents representing 10.0 percent have obtained B.Sc. and other higher qualifications.

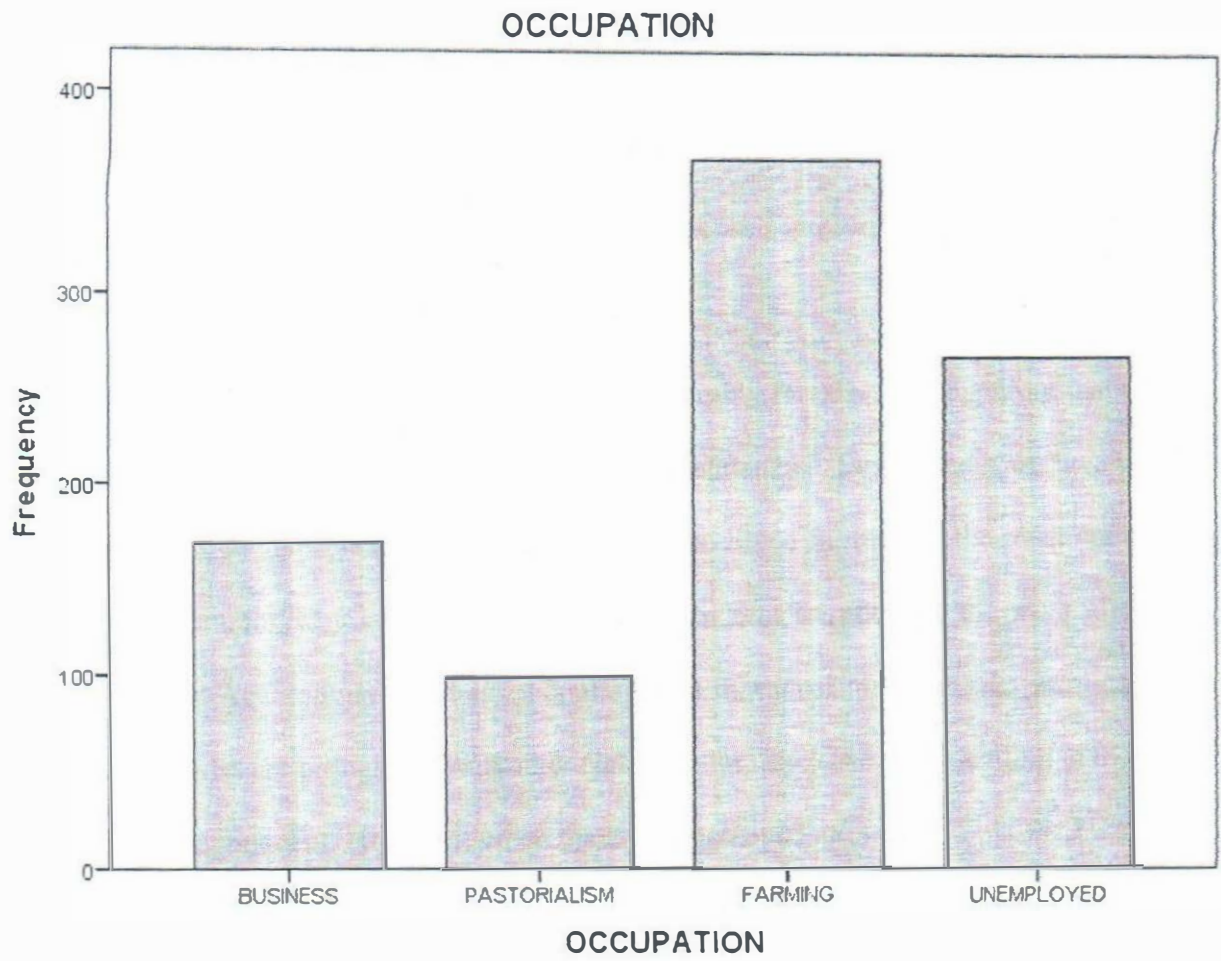
By implication, the above responses shows that majority of the respondents have attained Secondary School Education while, First School Leaving Certificate holders are second in terms of percentage. Since the study areas are primarily rural communities, the population are not well schooled. The most prevalent highest level of educational institution in the communities is secondary school. Also, it is possible that those who have acquired higher qualifications have migrated to the state headquarters (Calabar and Makurdi) and other big cities. Moreover, the occupation of crop farming and pastoralism at subsistence levels is often carried out by people who do not possess higher equivalent qualifications. This is so because, those who have attained higher levels are usually more interested in white collar job.

**Table 5.1.5**

**Distribution of Respondents by occupation**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Business	169	18.8
Pastoralism	99	11.0
Farming	367	40.8
Unemployed	265	29.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

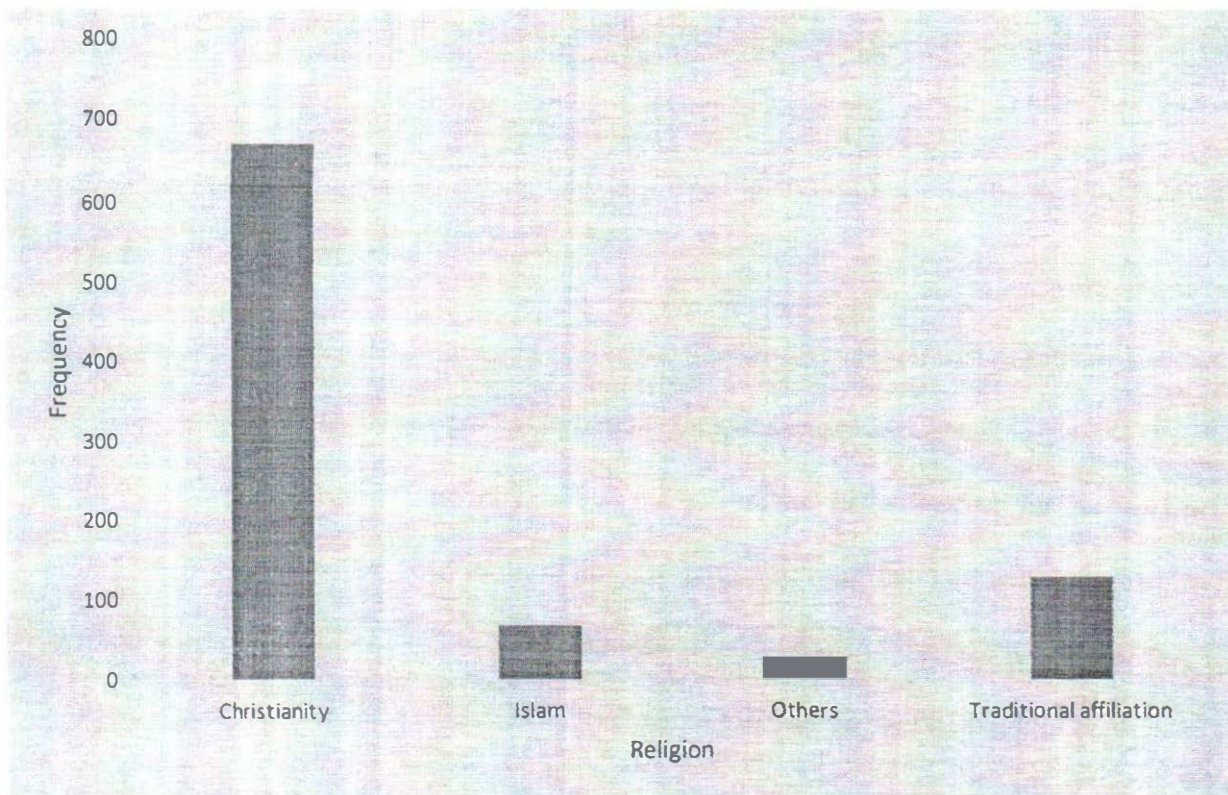
Source: Fieldwork (2021)



**Fig. 5.5: Distribution of respondents by occupation**

Source: Field work (2021)





**Fig. 5.6: Distribution of respondents by religion**

Source: Field work (2021)

Table 5.1.6 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Figure 5.6 shows that 669 respondents representing 74.3 percent were Christians. While 70 respondents representing 7.8 percent were Islam. 131 respondents representing 14.6 percent were affiliated to traditional religion and 30 respondents representing 3.3 percent practiced other religions that were not mentioned.

The above data indicates that in terms of religion, Christianity is the most dominant, followed by traditional religion. Islam is not well represented. This is probably so, because most of the Islamic people have migrated out of the study area as a result of the crisis between farmers and herders. While, others may not be comfortable to identify with any religion. The data is in line with the distribution of population by region in the country, the residents in Cross River and Benue States in Nigeria are predominantly Christians: Whereas, the Northern part of Nigeria is dominated by Islam. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why some analysts have argued that the crises is a deliberate attempts to depopulate the Christian communities in Nigeria, since most of the causalities especially in the Cross River and Benue zone of the crises are mainly Christians.

## **5.2 Analysis of Data related to study Objectives**

This section shows the analysis of the results on the variables as shown in the questionnaire. Simple percentage and frequency table of strongly disagreed, disagreed, agreed and strongly agreed was used to determine whether Farmers-herdsmen crisis has an implication on food security in Cross River and Benue States respectively. The questionnaire contains twelve (12) items arranged accordingly. Each section has four (4) questions that addresses each of the study objectives. All the questions were answered and the responses were presented as follows:

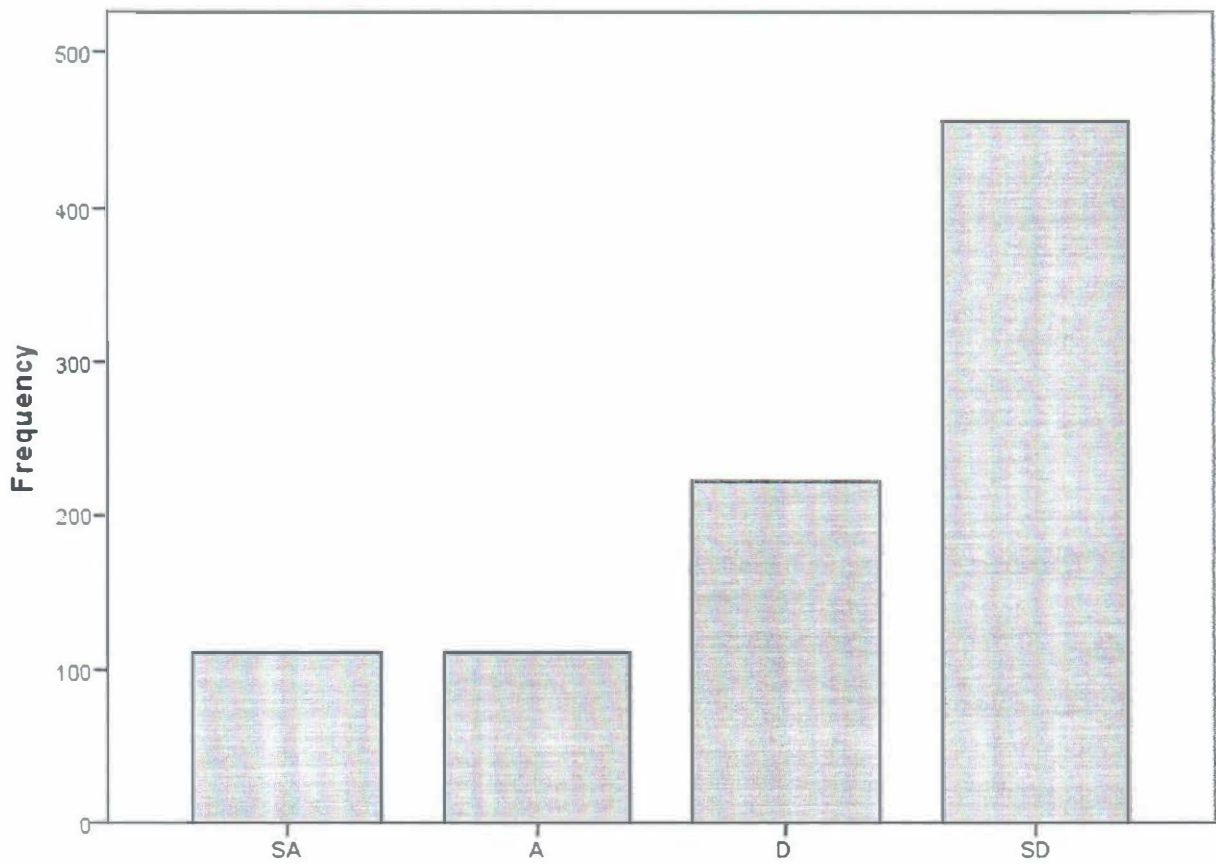
### 5.2.1 Analysis of Data related to study Objective one: Impact on food security

**Specific Issue 1:** The crisis has no impact on the production of crops and livestock in Cross River and Benue States?

**Table 5.2.1: Responses on whether the crisis has no impact on the production of crops and livestock in Cross River and Benue States?**

Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
SA	111	12.3
A	111	12.3
D	222	24.7
SD	456	50.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field work



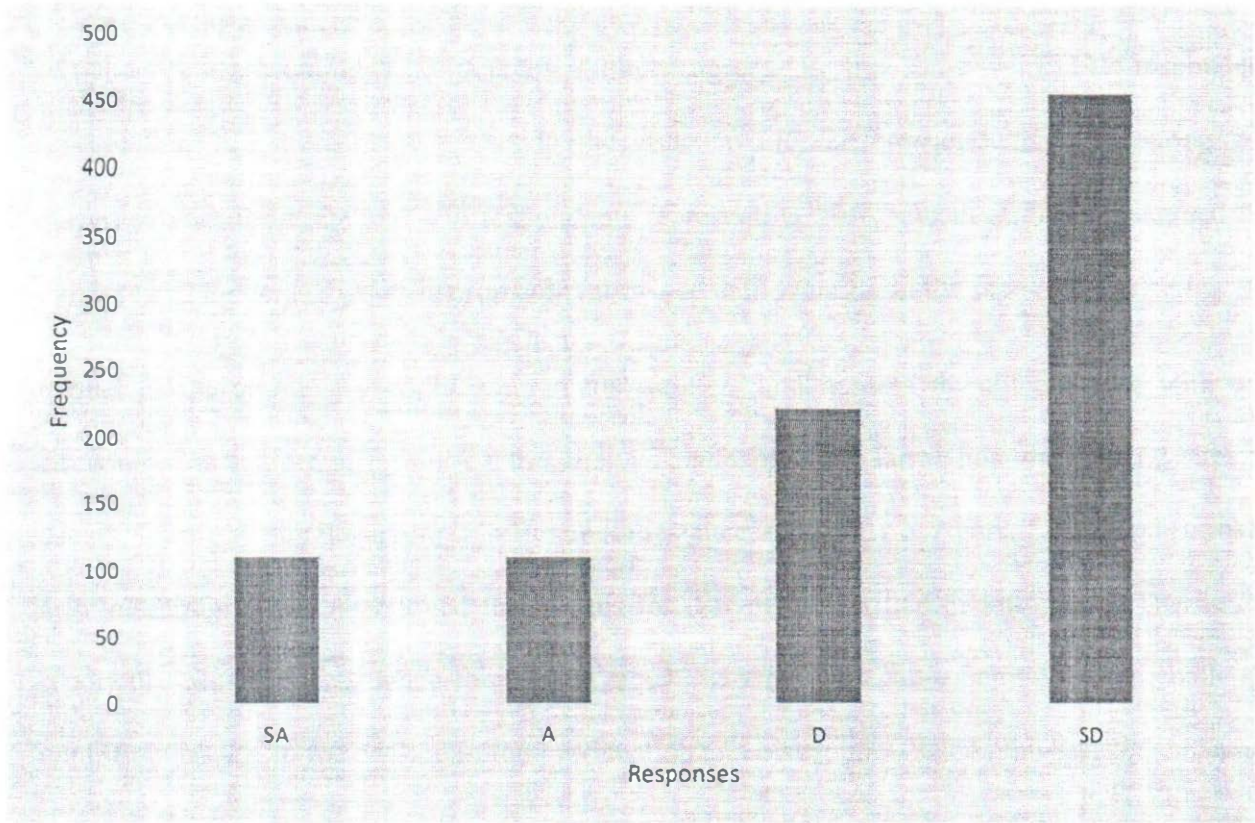
**Fig. 5.7: Responses on whether the crisis has no impact on the production of crops and livestock in Cross River and Benue States?**

**Source: Field work**

From the data presented in Table 5.2.1 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Figure 5.7, it is clear that 111 respondents representing 12.3 percent strongly agreed. Similarly, 111 respondents representing 12.3 percent agreed to the issue. While, 222 respondents representing 24.7 percent disagreed to it and 456 respondents representing 50.7 strongly disagreed to the fact that the crisis has no impact on the production of crops and livestock in Cross River and Benue States.

By interpretation, the above responses suggests that the farmers-herdsmen crisis has an impact or implication on crops and livestock production in the study areas. This invariably means food production in both States could decline as a result of the crisis and may become worst if the crisis is not resolved. Both farmers and herders in this context are faced with the consequences.





**Fig. 5.8: Responses on whether Farmers and herders engages in crop cultivation and cattle rearing in the face of the crisis?**

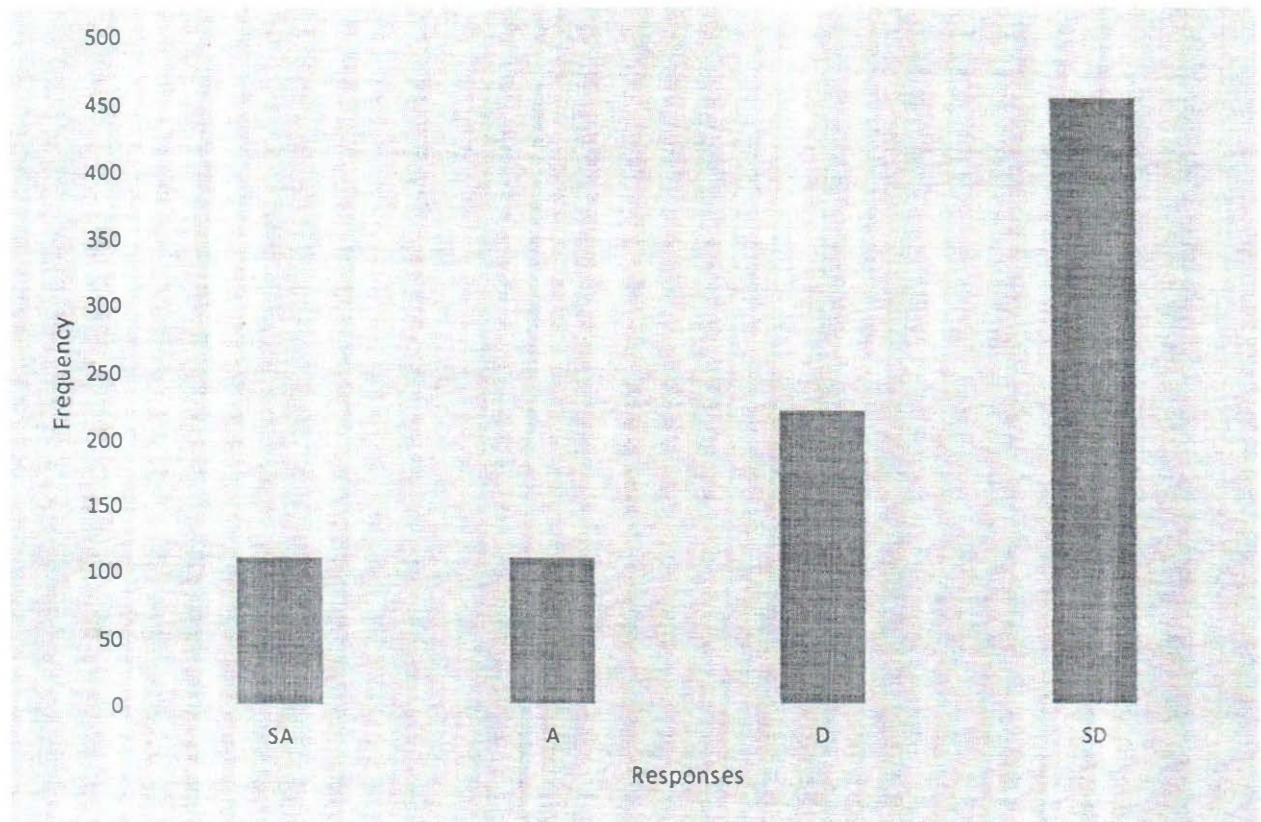
**(Source: Field work)**

**Specific Issue 3:** Since the inception of the crisis, the output of farmers and herders has not decline considerably?

**Table 5.2.3: Responses on whether since the inception of the crisis, the output of farmers and herders has not decline considerably?**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SA	111	12.3
A	111	12.3
D	222	24.7
SD	456	50.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Field work (2021)



**Fig. 5.9: Responses on whether since the inception of the crisis, the output of farmers and herders has not decline considerably?**

**Source: Field work (2021)**

Table 5.2.3 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Figure 5.9 reveals that 111 respondents representing 12.3 percent strongly agrees. The same number of 11 respondents representing 12.3 percent agrees to the issues. While, 222 respondents representing 24.7 percent disagrees with the issue and 456 respondents representing 50.7 percent strongly disagrees that since the inception of the crisis, the output of farmers and herders has not decline considerably.

Based on the above responses, it is safe to believe that the crisis has led to a serious decline in the output of farming and pastoralism. This is justify by the number of respondents that agrees to it. Cross River State and Benue State in time past were major producers of food and cash crops but since the advent of farmers-herders crisis, the quantity and quality of food produced has reduced. Both States can't even produce enough to feed the over growing population, exporting to other States is no longer an option for now. This is one of the consequences of the crisis.

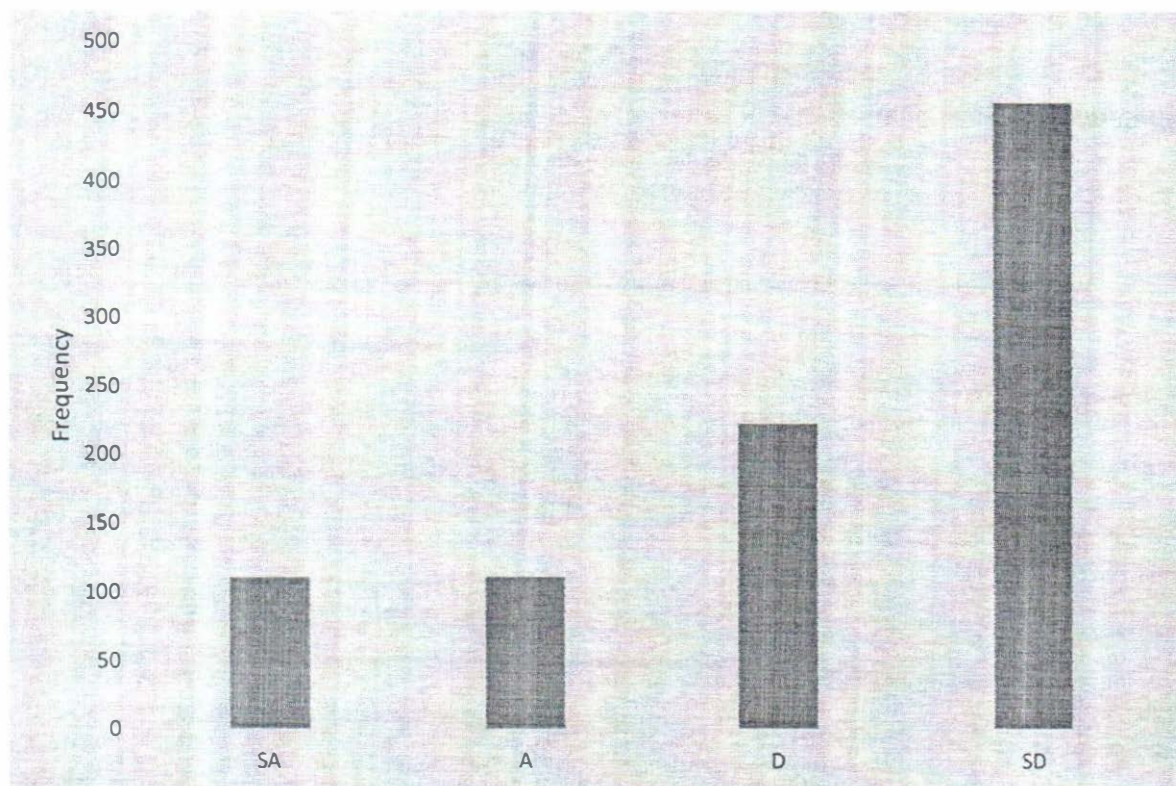
**Specific Issue 4:** The improvement of crop/livestock production and food security can be achieved despite the crisis?

**Table 5.2.4: Responses on whether the improvement of crop/livestock production and food security can be achieved despite the crisis?**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SA	111	12.3
A	111	12.3
D	222	24.7
SD	456	50.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field work (2021)





**Fig. 5.10: Responses on whether the improvement of crop/livestock production and food security can be achieved despite the crisis?**

**Source: Field work (2021)**

From the above, Table 5.2.4 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Figure 5.10 reveals that 111 respondents representing 12.3 percent strongly agrees to the issue. Also, 111 respondents representing 12.3 percent agrees. While, 222 respondents representing 24.7 percent disagrees and 456 respondents representing 50.7 percent strongly disagrees that the improvement of crop/livestock production and food security can be achieved despite the crisis.

From the foregoing, it implies majority of the respondents agrees that the crisis is a great limitation to food security in both States and by extension the entire country. Therefore, it is important for

the crisis to be properly managed to allow farmers continue with cultivation and production activities.

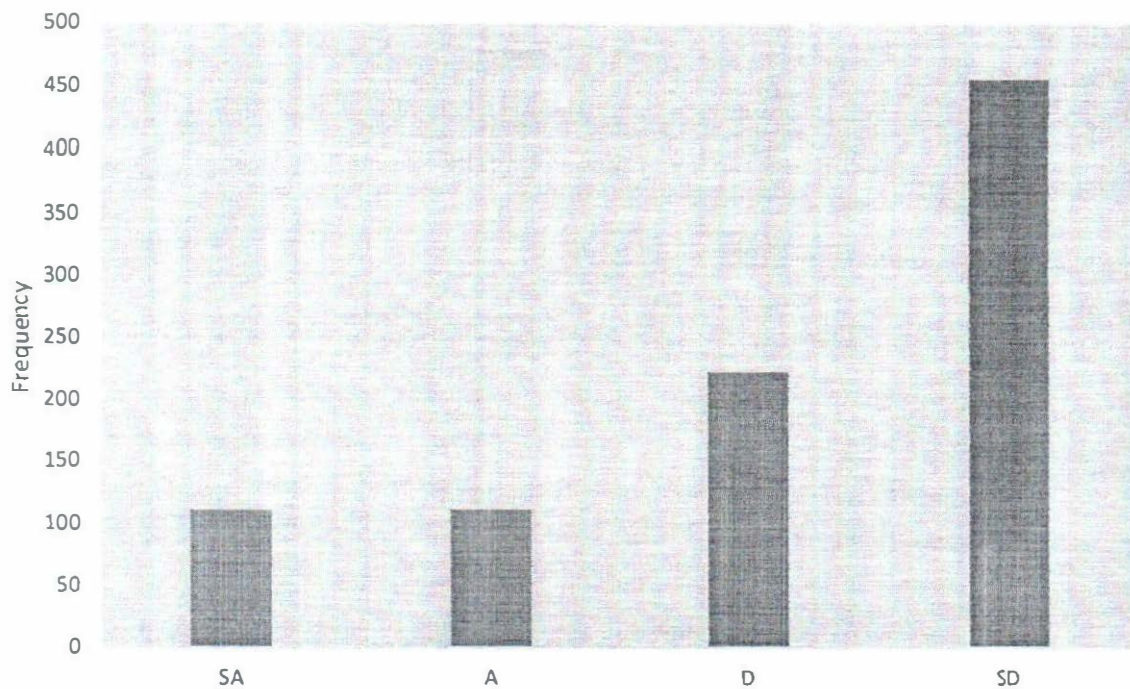
### 5.2.2 Analysis of Data related to study objective two: Poor access to food and shortage of food supply

**Specific Issue 1:** The poor access to food and shortage of food supply in Cross River and Benue States is not a consequence of the crisis?

**Table 5.2.5: Responses on whether the poor access to food and shortage of food supply in Cross River and Benue States is not a consequence of the crisis?**

Responses	Frequency	Percent
SA	111	12.3
A	111	12.3
D	222	24.7
SD	456	50.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field work (2021)



**Fig.5.11: Responses on whether the poor access to food and shortage of food supply in Cross River and Benue States is not a consequence of the crisis?**

**Source: Field work (2021)**

Table 5.2.5 and the corresponding the Bar Chart in Figure 5.11 shows that 111 respondents representing 12.3 percent strongly agrees. 111 respondents representing 12.3 percent agrees to the issue. While, 222 respondents representing 24.7 percent disagrees and 456 respondents representing 50.7 percent believes that poor access to food and shortage of food supply in Cross River and Benue States is not a consequence of the crisis.

The responses could mean the people generally believe that the lack of access to food and the decline in the supply of food is a consequence of the recurrent crisis between farmers and herdsmen. The appellation of Benue State is “Food basket of the nation” but the reality today is that the production capacity has dropped, the Cross River State experience could be similar. Other

factors may also be responsible for this decline. However, the most disturbing is the farmers-herders crises.

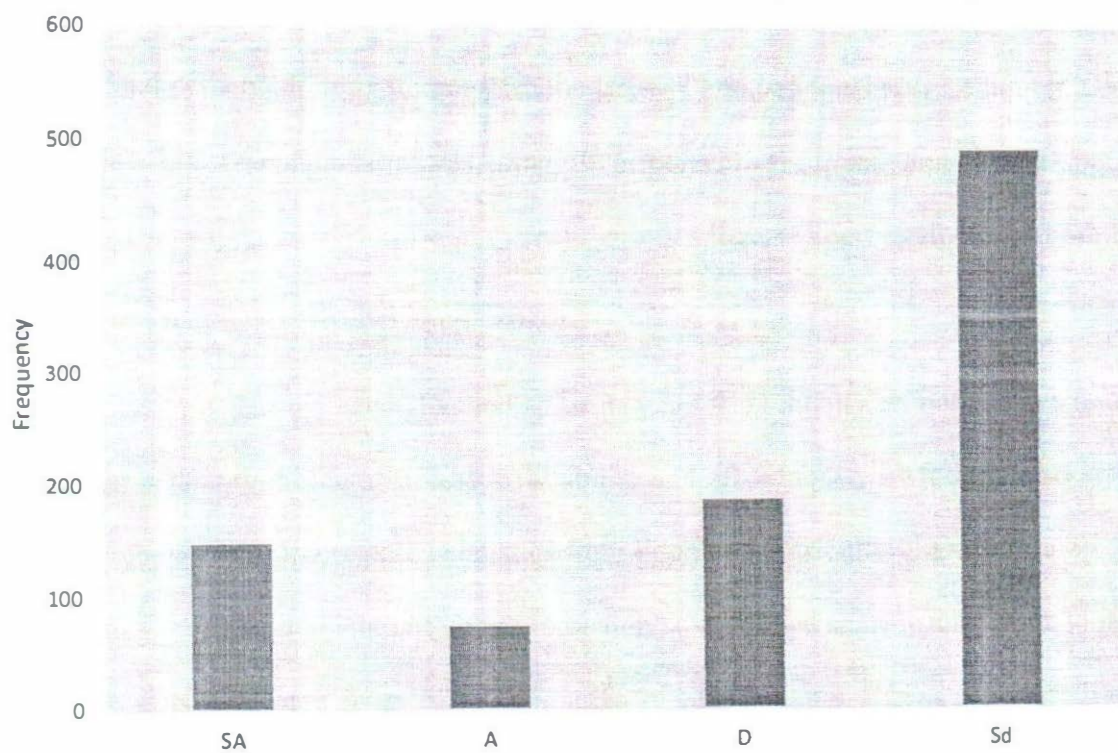
**Specific Issue 2: There is adequate food available in both States and the food security is not affected by the crisis?**

**Table 5.2.6: Responses on whether there is adequate food available in both States and the food security is not affected by the crisis?**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
SA	148	16.4
A	74	8.2
D	185	20.6
SD	493	54.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field work (2021)

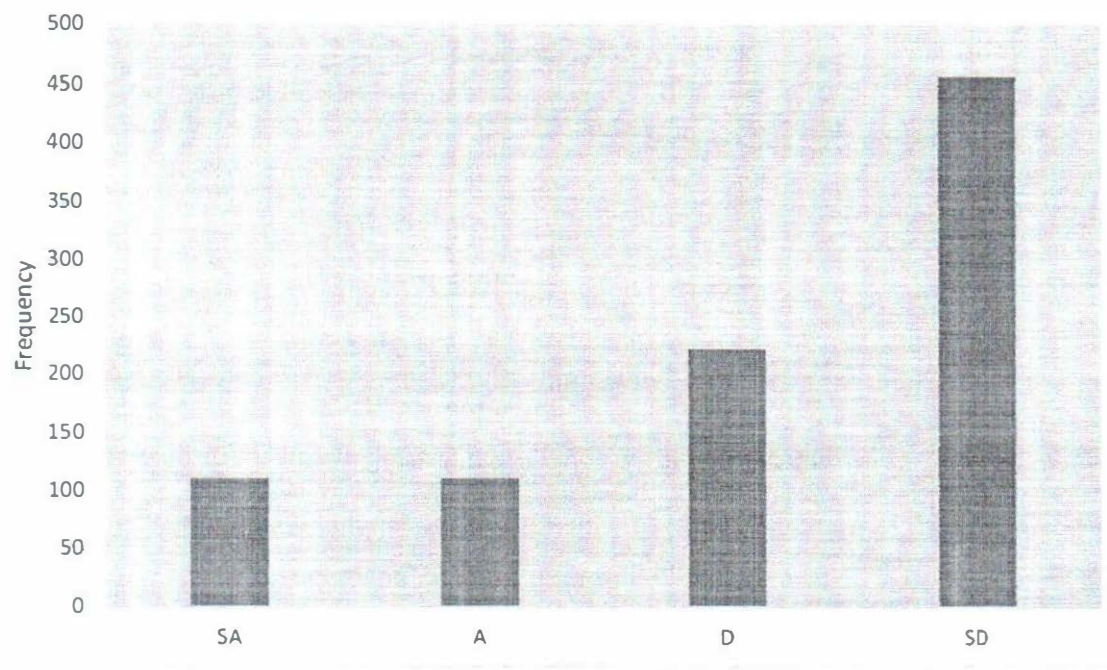




**Fig. 5.12: Responses on whether there is adequate food available in both States and the food security is not affected by the crisis?**

**Source: Field work (2021)**



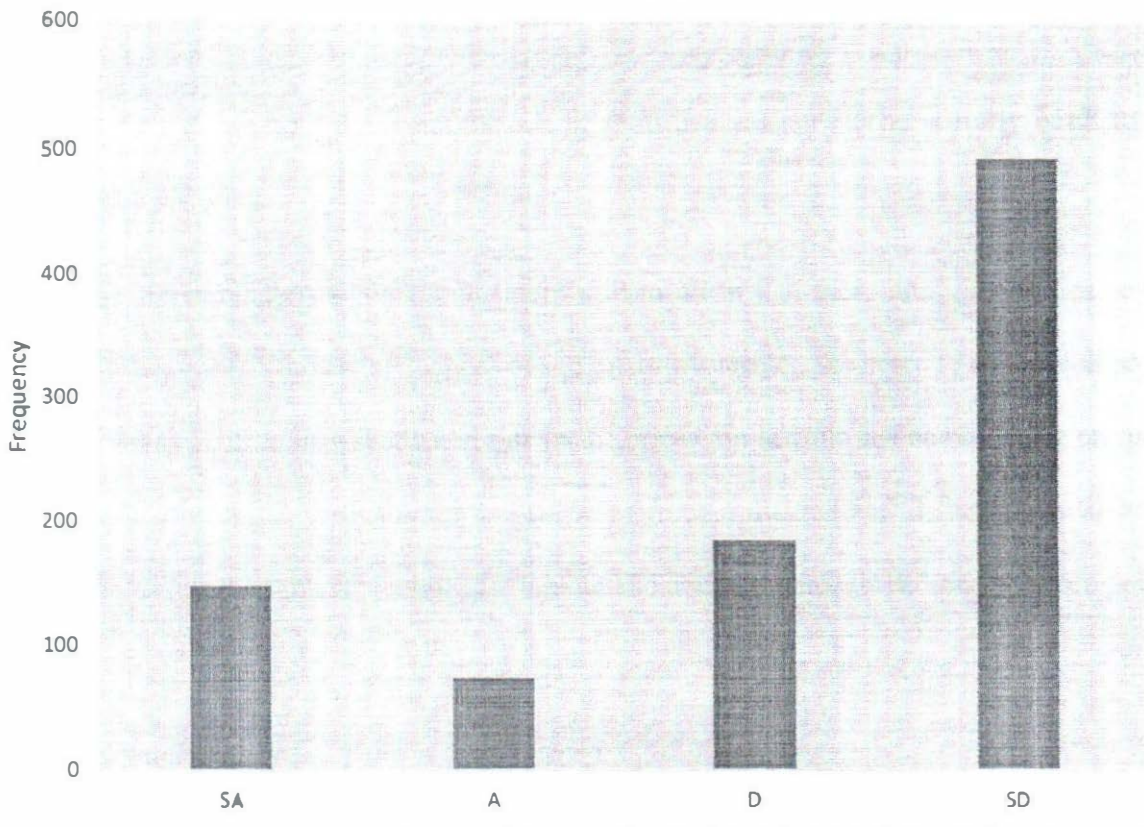


**Fig. 5.13: Responses on whether both States are currently among the major suppliers of food in the country and there is no decline in the quantity and quality of food crops and livestock available ?**

**Source: Field work (2021)**

In Table 5.2.7 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Figure 5.13, it clear that 111 respondents representing 12.3 percent strongly agrees with the issue, 111 respondents representing 12.3 percent agrees. While, 222 respondents representing 24.7 percent disagrees and 456 respondents representing 50.7 percent strongly disagrees that both States are currently among the major suppliers of food in the country and there is no decline in the quantity and quality of food crops and livestock available.

This implies both States are gradually becoming insecure in terms of food as the quality and quantity of food produced has decline particularly in the last two decades. The conflict has forced both farmers and herders to abandon farming, they have migrated out of the conflict areas to seek for safety and better opportunity elsewhere. In so doing, there is a reduction in the quantity of food across the States.



**Fig. 5.14: Responses on whether there is no genuine complains about lack of food in the States. The scarcity is artificial not a function of the crisis?**

**Source: Field work (2021)**

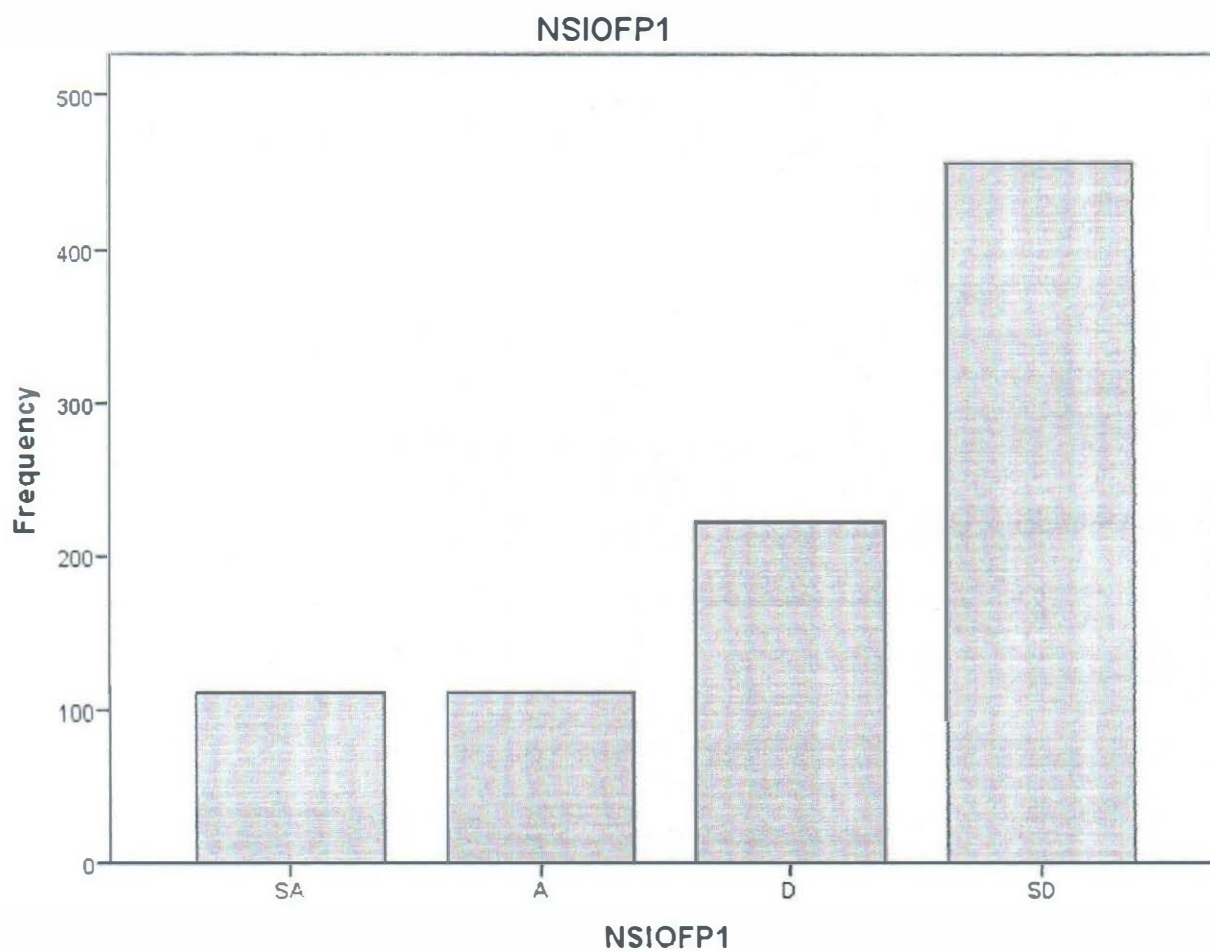
### 5.2.3 Analysis of Data related to study objective three: Increased cost of food products

Specific Issue 1: The cost of food in Cross River and Benue States has no relationship with the crisis?

Table 5.2.9: Responses on whether the cost of food in Cross River and Benue States has no relationship with the crisis?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SA	111	12.3
A	111	12.3
D	222	24.7
SD	456	50.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field work (2021)



**Fig. 5.15: Responses on whether the cost of food in Cross River and Benue States has no relationship with the crisis?**

Source: Field work (2021)



In view of Table 5.2.9 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Figure 5.15, it is clear that 111 respondents representing 12.3 percent strongly agrees with the issue, 111 respondents representing 12.3 percent agrees. Meanwhile, 222 respondents representing 24.7 percent disagrees and 456 respondents representing 50.7 percent strongly disagree that the cost of food in Cross River and Benue States has no relationship with the crisis.

By implication, the responses shows that the increase in the cost of food items in both States has a significant relationship with the crisis. The shortage of food supply caused by the crisis, accompanied by the high demand for food by a fast growing population is directly proportional to the exponential increase in the cost of food items in both States and the entire country.

**Specific Issue 2: Lack of government support to farmers, lack of ranches and struggle for land accounts for the increasing cost of food in both States?**

*Table 5.2.10: Responses on whether the lack of government support to farmers, lack of*

*ranches and struggle for land accounts for the increasing cost of food in both States?*

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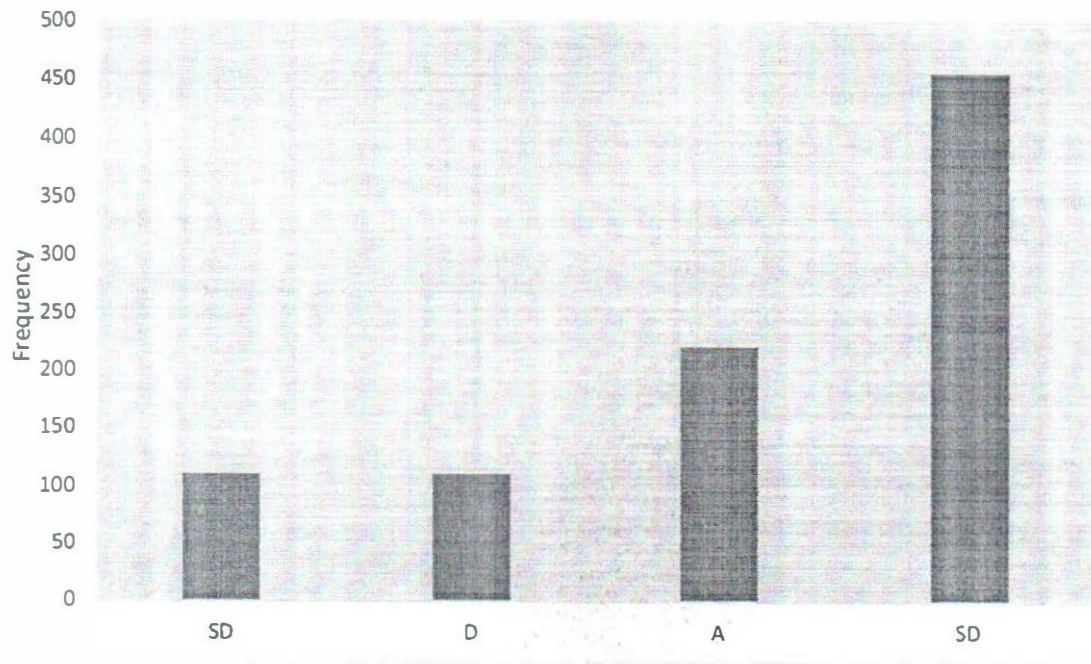
	Percentage (%)

**Specific Issue 2: Lack of government support to farmers, lack of ranches and struggle for land accounts for the increasing cost of food in both States?**

**Table 5.2.10: Responses on whether the lack of government support to farmers, lack of ranches and struggle for land accounts for the increasing cost of food in both States?**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SD	111	12.3
D	111	12.3
A	222	24.7
SA	456	50.7
Total	900	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2021



**Fig. 5.16: Responses on whether the lack of government support to farmers, lack of ranches and struggle for land accounts for the increasing cost of food in both States?**

Source: Field work (2021)

Table 5.2.10 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Figure 5.16 shows that 456 respondents representing 50.7 percent strongly agrees, 222 respondents representing 24.7 percent agrees to the issue. However, 111 respondents representing 12.3 percent disagrees and the same number of 111 respondents representing 12.3 percent strongly disagrees that the lack of government support to farmers, lack of ranches and struggle for land accounts for the increasing cost of food in both States.

The responses reveals that the increase in the cost of food could be trace to some factors including the lack of support to Farmers by the government, unavailability of ranches and the continuous struggle over land. Subsistence farmers especially in rural centers receive no incentives or support from the government for farming. The provision of agricultural extension programmes, distribution of fertilizers, provision of loans or subsidies etc. are some of the ways that the government could use to help improve crops and livestock production which inadvertently will help both States to achieve food security. Similarly, the provision of cattle ranches which is the modern practice in cattle rearing, it will help the herders to settle in one designated place and largely improves pastoralism. One of the advantages of ranches is to reduce the struggle for land between the farmers and the herders.

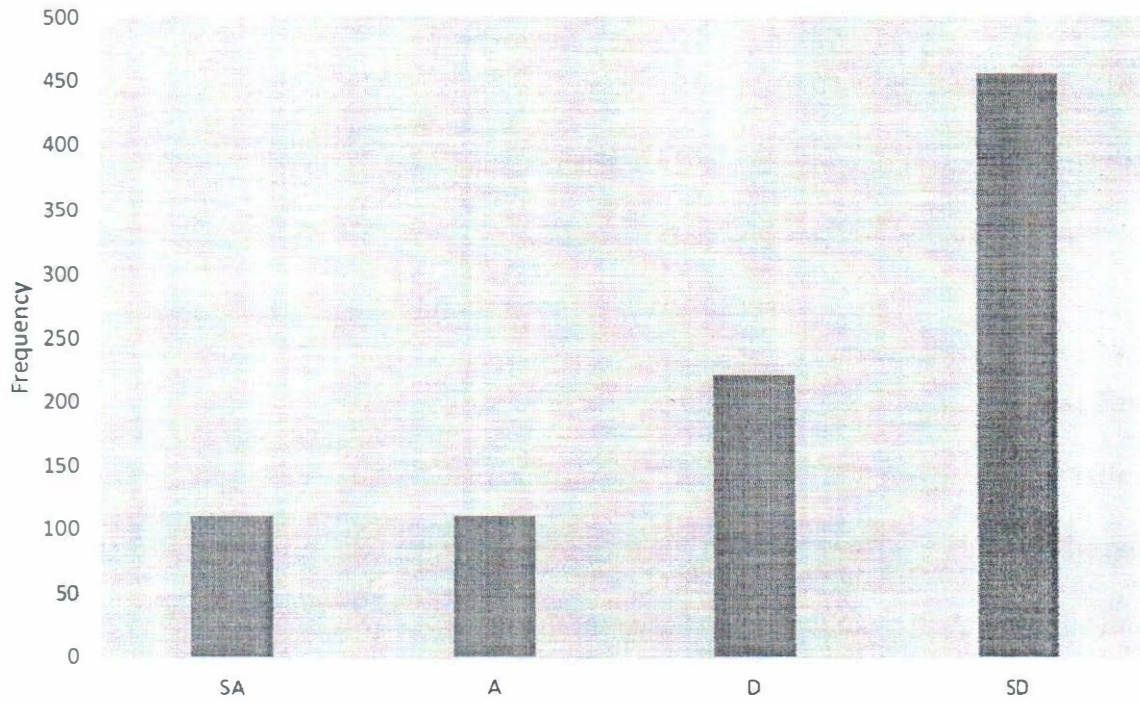


**Specific Issue 3: The cost of food crops and livestock products is as a result of lack of interest in farming or pastoralism not necessary due to the crisis?**

**Table 5.2.11: Responses on whether the cost of food crops and livestock products is as a result of lack of interest in farming or pastoralism not necessary due to the crisis?**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
SA	111	12.3
A	111	12.3
D	222	24.7
SD	456	50.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field work (2021)



**Fig. 5.17: Responses on whether the cost of food crops and livestock products is as a result of lack of interest in farming or pastoralism not necessary due to the crisis?**

**Source: Field work (2021)**

Table 5.2.11 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Figure 5.17 shows that 111 respondents representing 12.3 percent strongly agrees. 111 respondents representing 12.3 percent agrees with the issue. 222 respondents representing 24.7 percent disagrees and 456 respondents representing 50.7 percent strongly disagrees that the cost of food crops and livestock products is as a result of lack of interest in farming or pastoralism not necessary due to the crisis

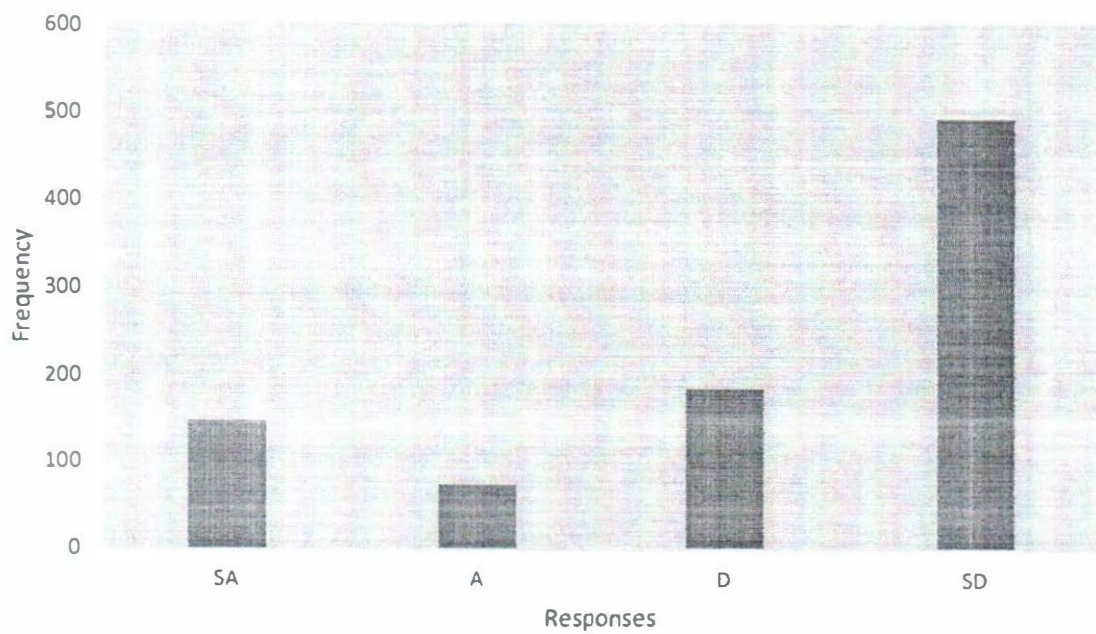
The responses in this section suggest that the increasing cost of food items in Cross River and Benue States is not directly related to lack of interest in farming and pastoralism, it rather has a significant relationship with the crisis. This implies if all conditions are favorable like the provision of incentives and the peaceful co-existence of farmers and herders, more people will be interested in farming and pastoralism. So, the respondents majorly agrees that the reason responsible for the steady rise in the cost of food items is as result of the crisis between the farmers and the herdsmen.

**Specific Issue 4: The government has done credibly well to manage the crisis and created better policies to tackle the cost of food in the States and the country at large?**

**Table 5.2.12: Responses on whether the government has done credibly well to manage the crisis and created better policies to tackle the cost of food in the States and the country at large?**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
SA	148	16.4
A	74	8.2
D	185	20.6
SD	493	54.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field work (2021)**



**Fig. 5.18: Responses on whether the government has done credibly well to manage the crisis and created better policies to tackle the cost of food in the States and the country at large?**

**Source: Field work (2021)**



From Table 5.2.14 and the corresponding Bar Chart of Figure 5.18, it is obvious that 148 respondents representing 16.4 percent strongly agrees. 74 respondents representing 8.2 percent agrees with the issue. Meanwhile, 185 respondents representing 20.5 percent disagrees and 493 respondents representing 54.8 percent strongly disagrees that the government has done credibly well to manage the crisis and created better policies to tackle the cost of food in the States and the country at large.

In line with the responses, it shows that majority of the respondents believe that the government hasn't done well enough to control the crisis situation between the farmers and herders. Also, there is no clearly define policy to remedy the increasing cost of food items. Such negligence by the government has led to more devastating consequences in Cross River, Benue and other States in Nigeria. Such consequences affect the government, the people, infrastructural facilities and it is generally an issue of socio-economic sabotage.

### **5.3 Analysis of interview data related to the study**

This section shows the analysis of the responses given to the interview questions. Simple percentage and frequency table of 'Yes' or 'No' was used to determine whether Farmers-herdsmen crisis has an implication on food security in Cross River and Benue States respectively. The questions contains six (6) items arranged accordingly. Each question is subjectively asked and purposefully decided to addresses the study objectives. All the responses were considered and were presented as follows:

### 5.3.1 Analysis of data collated from the interview questions

Specific question 1: Is the farmers-herdsmen crisis responsible for the decline in food crop and livestock production?

Table 5.3.1: Responses on whether the farmers-herdsmen crisis is responsible for the decline in food crop and livestock production?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
NO	222	24.7
YES	678	75.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field work (2021)

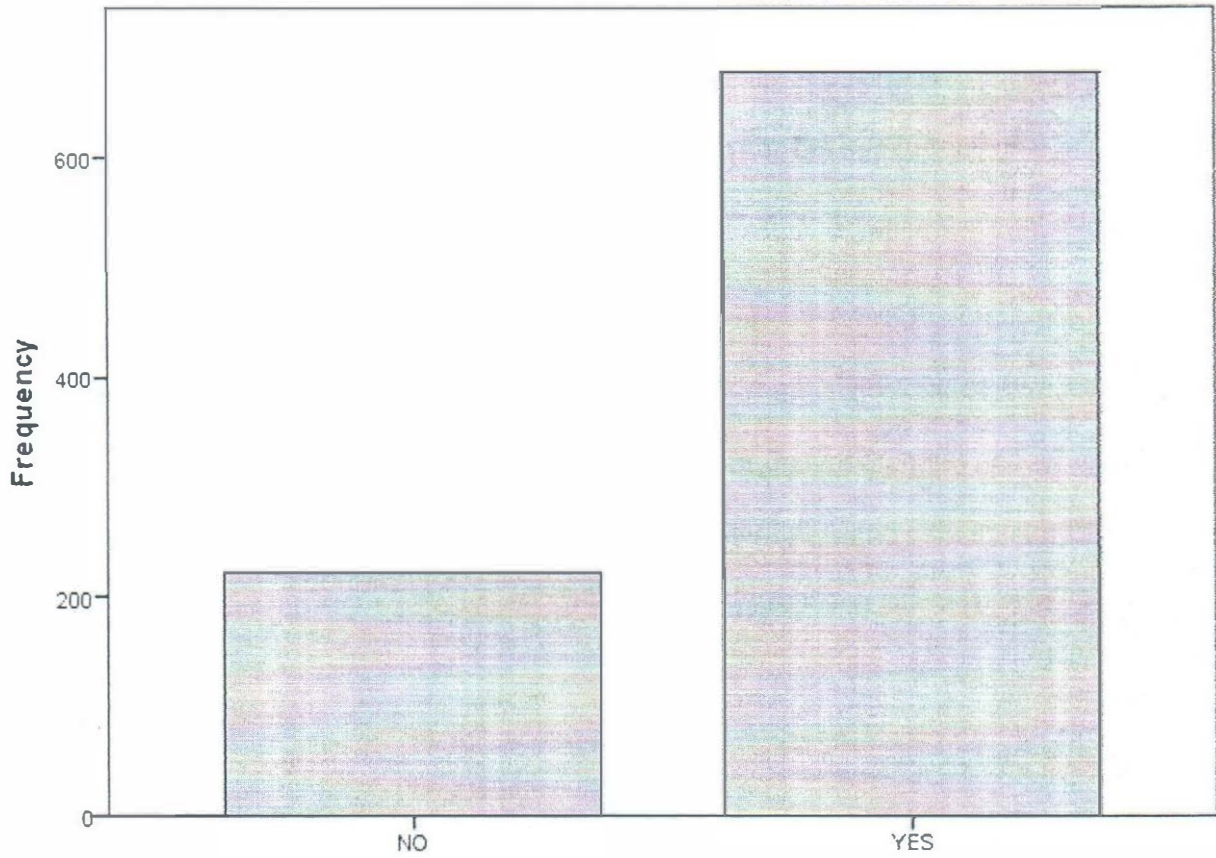
### 5.3.1 Analysis of data collated from the interview questions

Specific question 1: Is the farmers-herdsmen crisis responsible for the decline in food crop and livestock production?

**Table 5.3.1: Responses on whether the farmers-herdsmen crisis is responsible for the decline in food crop and livestock production?**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
NO	222	24.7
YES	678	75.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field work (2021)



**Fig. 5.19: Responses on whether the farmers-herdsmen crisis is responsible for the decline in food crop and livestock production?**

**Source: Field work (2021)**

Table 5.3.1 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Figure 5.19 reveals that 222 respondents representing 24.7 percent selected the 'No' option. While, 678 respondents representing 75.3 percent selected the 'Yes' option to the question is the farmers-herdsmen crisis responsible for the decline in food crop and livestock production?

From the responses, we could deduced that the respondents believe that the crisis account for the decline in food production in Cross River and Benue States respectively. Since over 75 percent of the sample population agrees to this, it is then imperative for the government and all stakeholders to find a way to resolve the crisis. Farmers and herdsmen will definitely abandon the occupation if their lives are under threat.

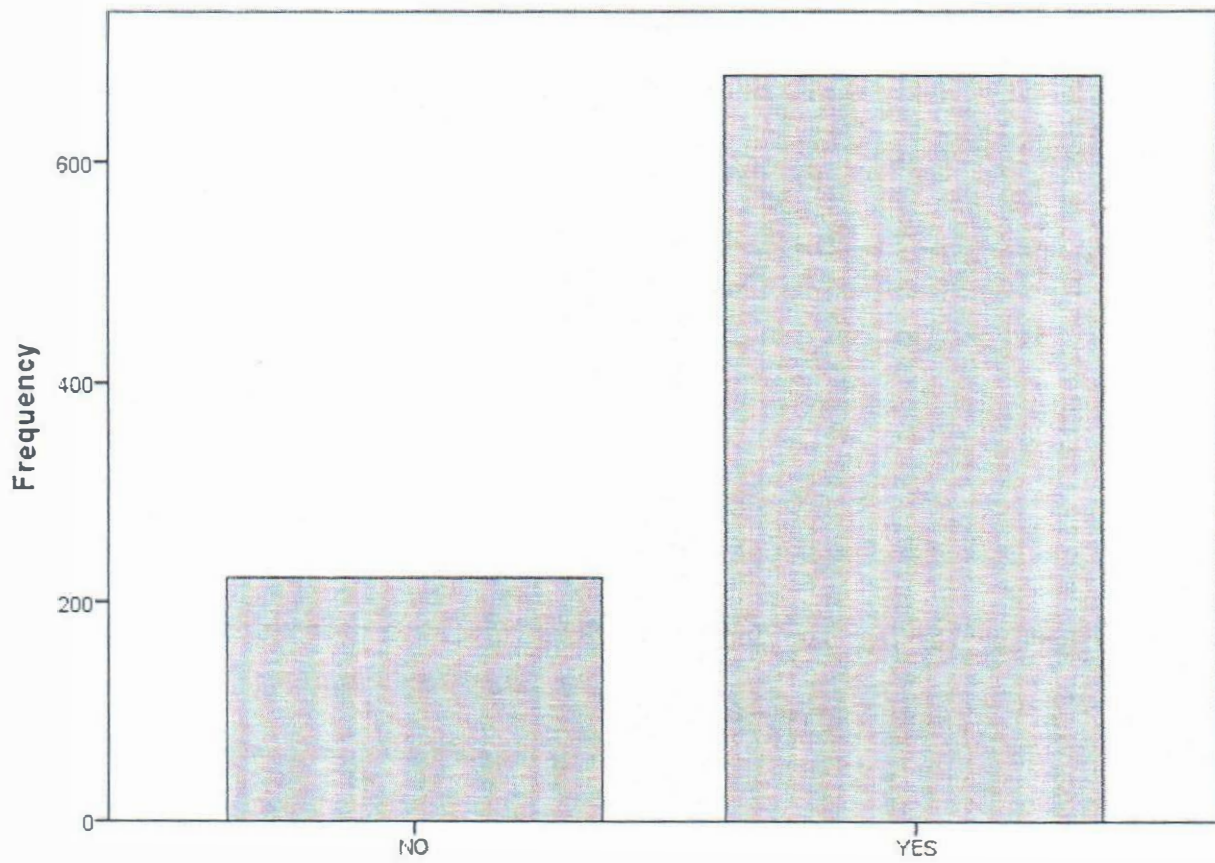


**Specific question 2: Do you think the crisis has an implication on the supply and availability of food in Cross River and Benue States?**

**Table 5.3.2: Responses on whether the crisis has an implication on the supply and availability of food in Cross River and Benue States?**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
NO	222	24.7
YES	678	75.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field work (2021)**



**Fig. 5.20: Responses on whether the crisis has an implication on the supply and availability of food in Cross River and Benue States?**

**Source: Field work (2021)**

Table 5.3.2 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Figure 5.20 shows that 222 respondents representing 24.7 percent selected the option of 'No'. While, 678 respondents representing 75.3 percent selected the option of 'Yes' to the question does the crisis has an implication on the supply and availability of food in Cross River and Benue States?

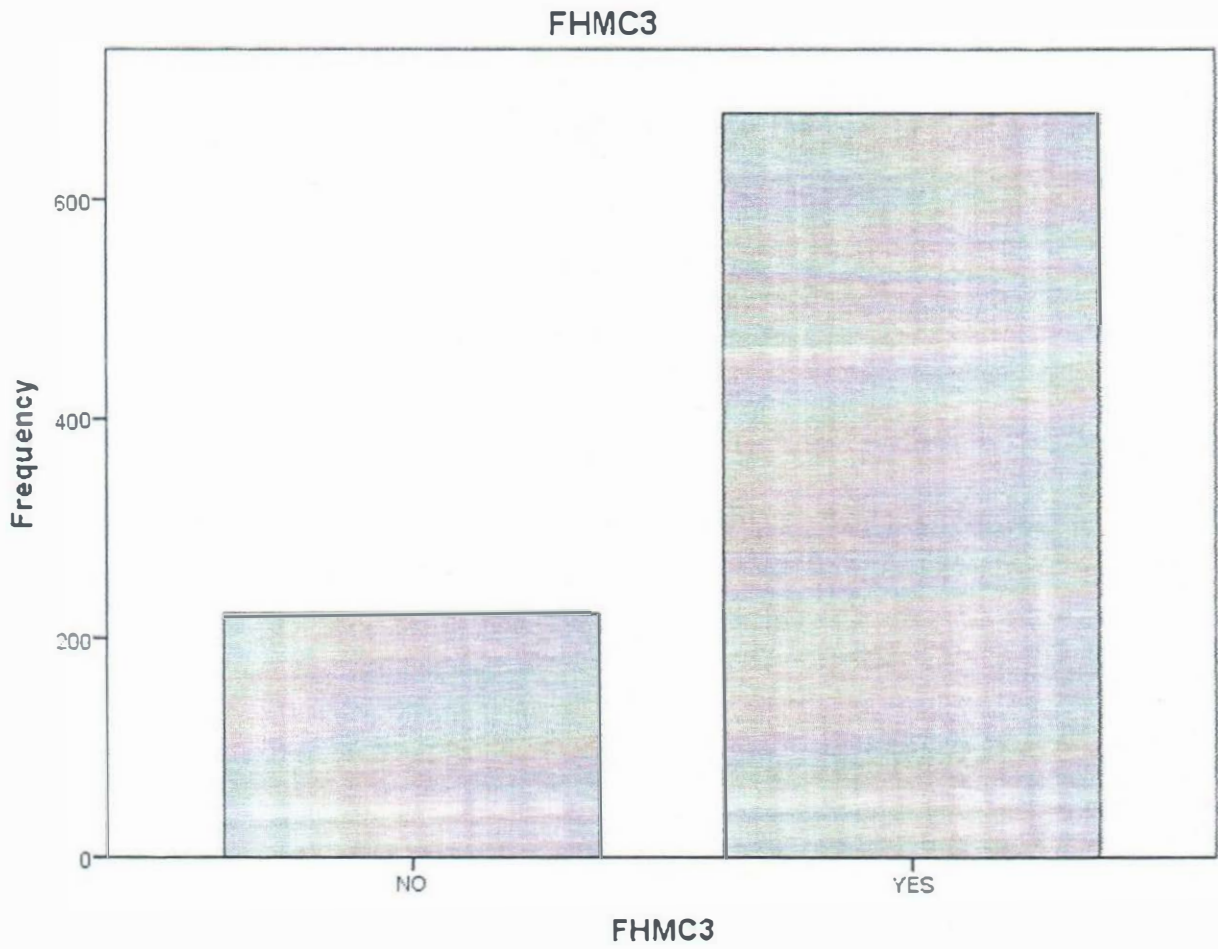
This means majority of the respondents believe that the farmers-herdsmen crisis has an implication on food security especially in terms of availability and supply in both States. Prior to the emergence of the crisis, both States were among the major food hub in the country. However, as the crisis escalate, farming is no longer a viable occupation for the rural dwellers, production capacity has reduced and food supply across the States has been constrained.

**Specific question 3: Has the cost for food increased in correlation with the sudden rise in the crisis?**

**Table 5.3.3: Responses on whether the cost of food has increased in correlation with the sudden rise in the crisis?**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
NO	222	24.7
YES	678	75.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field work (2021)**



**Fig. 5.21: Responses on whether the cost of food has increased in correlation with the sudden rise in the crisis?**

**Source: Field work (2021)**



Table 5.3.3 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Figure 5.21 reveals a similar response to the previous questions as 222 respondents representing 24.7 percent preferred the option of 'No'. While, 678 respondents representing 75.3 percent agrees with the option of 'Yes' that the cost of food has increased in correlation with the sudden rise in the crisis.

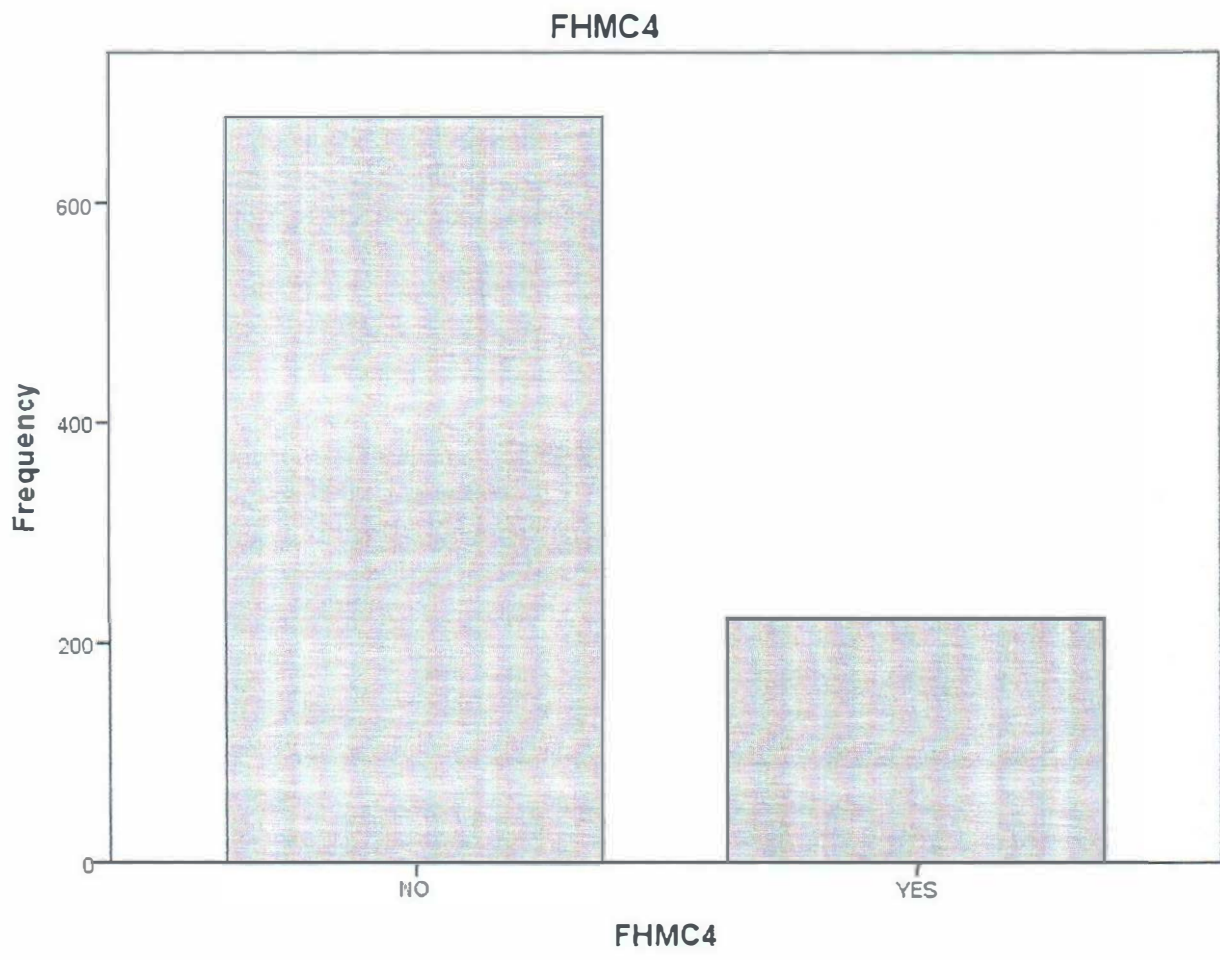
The responses here indicates that a higher number of the respondents observed that there is a correlation between the cost of food and the unprecedented rise in the farmers-herdsmen crisis. Since food supply is now inadequate and the demand outweighs the availability, the consequence is the rise in prices which is currently the situation in both States and the entire country.

**Specific question 4: Do you believe the government has done well to curb the reprisal attacks, damage to crops, cattle rustling and destruction of properties?**

**Table 5.3.4: Responses on whether the government has done well to curb the reprisal attacks, damage to crops, cattle rustling and destruction of properties?**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
NO	678	75.3
YES	222	24.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field work (2021)**



**Fig. 5.22: Responses on whether the government has done well to curb the reprisal attacks, damage to crops, cattle rustling and destruction of properties?**

**Source: Field work (2021)**

Table 5.3.4 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Figure 5.22 reveals that 678 respondents representing 75.3 percent selected the option 'No' meaning they do not believe that the government has done well to curb the reprisal attacks, damage to crops, cattle rustling and destruction of properties. While, 222 respondents representing 24.7 percent agrees with the question with a 'Yes' response.

From the data represented in the Table 5.3.4, it is clear that the government hasn't done well to resolve the underlining issues about the crisis. Some stakeholders and community leaders claim that the government has over the years has shown a benign neglect to the crisis. While, some have argued that the current administration is yet to take a decisive action to end the crisis and the rage between farmers and herdsmen.

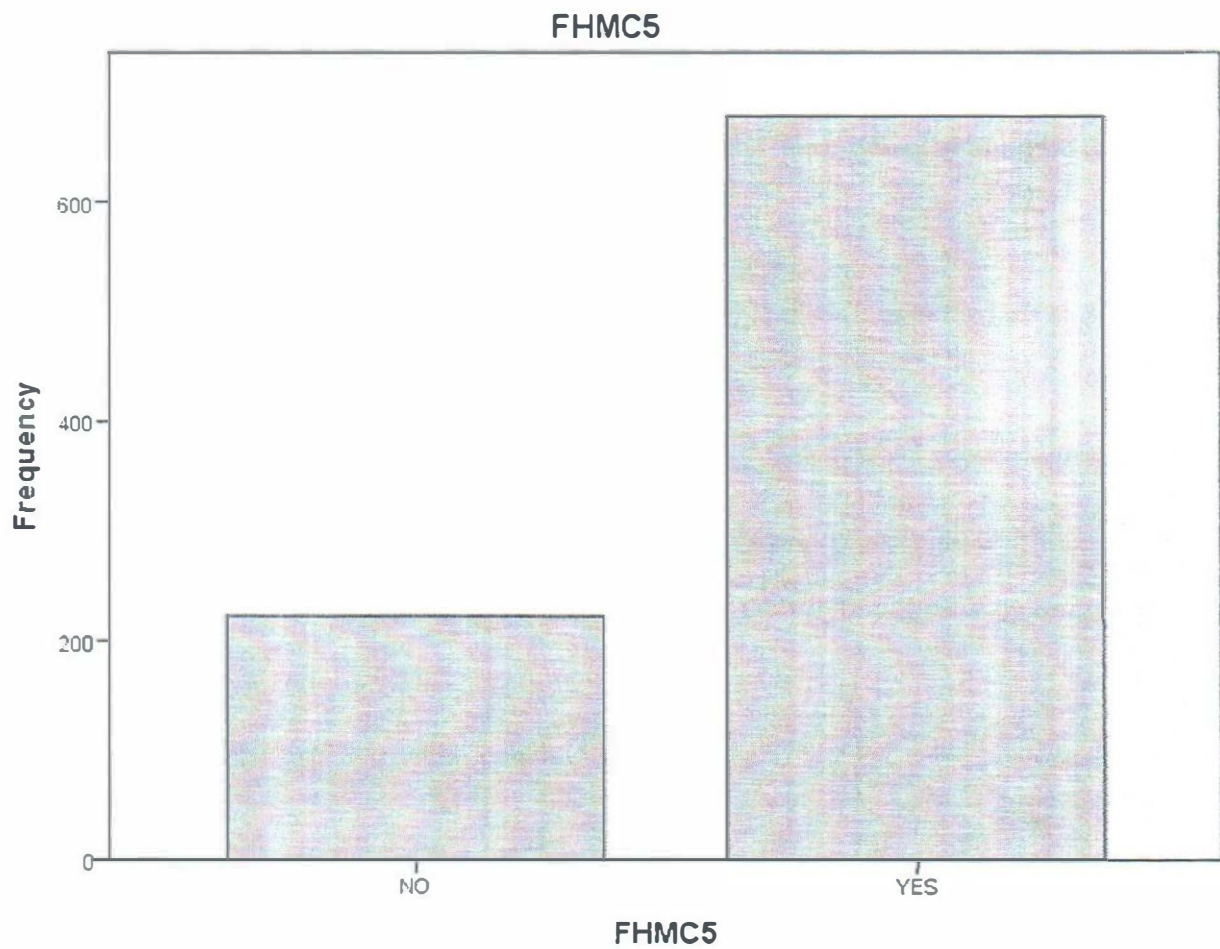
**Specific question 5: Is the struggle for land and ecological resources also responsible for the exponential rise in the crisis?**

**Table 5.3.5: Responses on whether the struggle for land and ecological resources are also responsible for the exponential rise in the crisis?**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
NO	222	24.7
YES	678	75.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field work (2021)**





**Fig. 5.23: Responses on whether the struggle for land and ecological resources are also responsible for the exponential rise in the crisis?**

**Source: Field work (2021)**

Table 5.3.5 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Figure 5.23 indicates that 222 respondents representing 24.7 percent choose the 'No' option as a response. While, 678 respondents representing 75.3 percent agrees with a 'Yes' response to the question is the struggle for land and ecological resources also responsible for the exponential rise in the crisis?

The responses reveals that most of the respondents agrees that the struggle for land and ecological resources are some of the topmost factors responsible for the rise in the crisis. The drought in the Northern part of the country makes it uncondusive for cattle rearing, so the herdsmen usually migrate southwards. Since they have no land or ancestral homes in the South or Middle Belt, they always attempts to occupy and gain control of the land in the communities they migrate into. In doing this, they face serious resistance from the indigenes of the communities. The situation usually escalates into crisis and social unrest.

**Specific question 6: Can both States achieve food security regardless of the ongoing crisis between farmers and herdsmen?**

**Table 5.3.6: Responses on whether both States could achieve food security regardless of the ongoing crisis between farmers and herdsmen?**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
NO	678	75.3
YES	222	24.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field work (2021)**

Table 5.3.6 and the corresponding Bar Chart in figure 5.24 shows that 678 respondents representing 75.3 percent selected the option of 'No' which means they believe both States cannot achieve food security in the face of the ongoing crisis. While, 222 respondents representing 24.7 percent selected the option of 'Yes' to the question.

From the responses, we observed that a good number of the respondents agrees that it will be difficult for both States to achieve food security as long as the crisis continues. This is because the crisis creates a tense environment, it disrupt the cultivation and allows for cattle rustling. All these are delimiting factors that could hinder the achievement of food security in Cross River and Benue States.

#### **5.4 Hypotheses-by-Hypothesis Test and Presentation of Results**

In this section, each hypothesis was tested in the null form. The variables were identified and the result of the statistical analysis carried out to test the hypothesis was reported. The 0.05 level of significance was used to test each of the hypotheses.

##### **5.4.1 Hypothesis one**

Farmers-herdsmen crisis in Cross River and Benue States has no significant impact on crops and livestock production.

The independent variable in this hypothesis was the Farmers-herdsmen crisis in Cross River and Benue States and impact on crops and livestock production was the dependent variable. The statistical analysis technique deployed to test this hypothesis was Pearson Chi-Square Statistical Technique. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance and a degree of freedom (df) of 1.

### **Decision Rule**

Where the computed Chi-square value is greater than the critical tabulated value, reject the Null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). Meanwhile, if the computed Chi-square value is less than the tabulated value, the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternate is rejected.



**Table 5.4.1**

**The Chi-square table of results for hypothesis one**

Impact On Crops and Livestock Production	Farmers Herdsmen Crisis		Total
	NO	YES	
No Impact On Crops and Livestock Production	222	0	222
	54.8	167.2	222.0
Impact On Crops and Livestock Production	0	678	678
	167.2	510.8	678.0
Total	222	678	900
	222.0	678.0	900.0

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	900.000 <sup>a</sup>	1	.000		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	894.627	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	1005.558	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				.000	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	899.000	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	900				

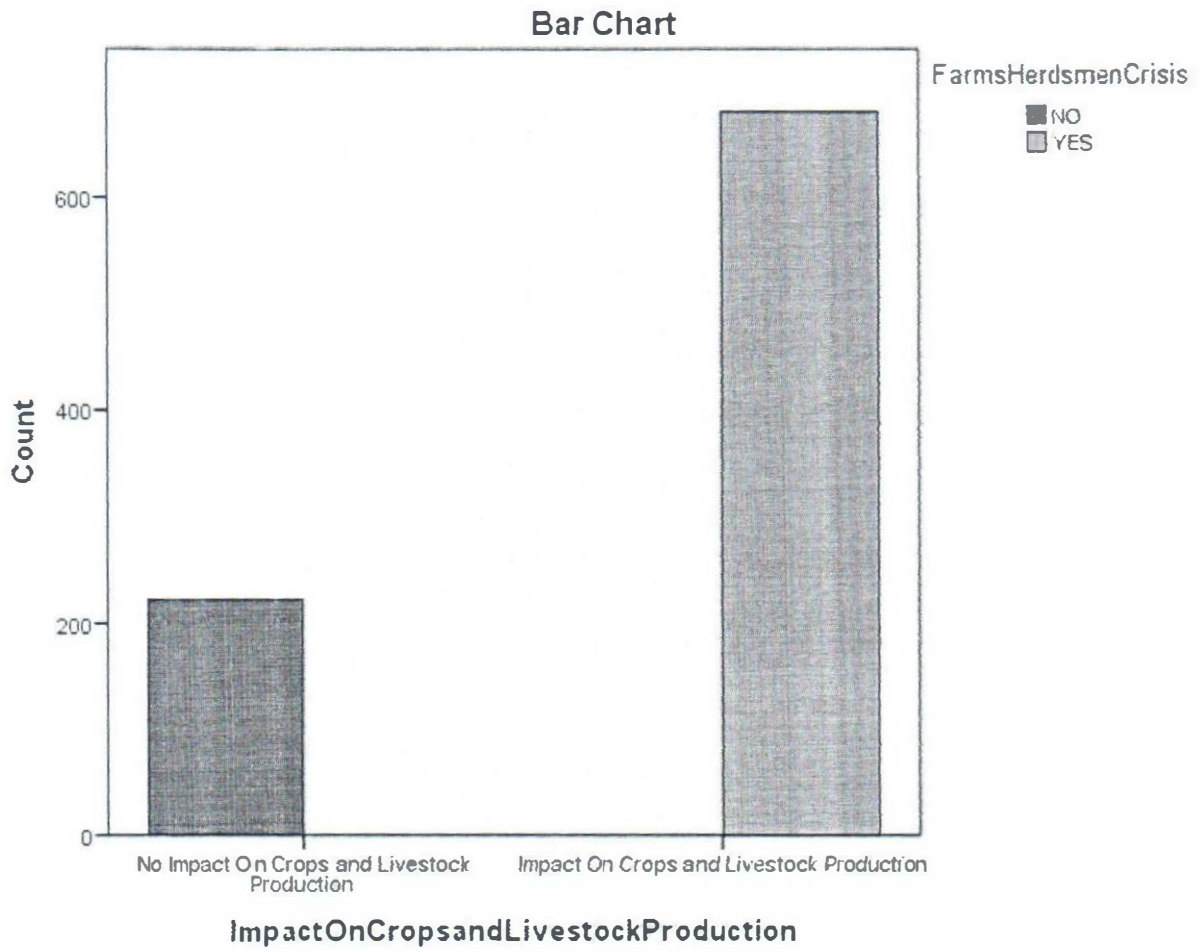
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 54.76.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

### Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	1.000	.000
	Cramer's V	1.000	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.707	.000
N of Valid Cases		900	

Source: Field work (2021)



**Fig. 5.25: Chi-square table of results for hypothesis one**

Source: Field work (2021)

Tables 5.4.1, 5.4.2, 5.4.3 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Fig. 5.25 above shows the Chi-square test results for hypothesis one which state that Farmers-herdsmen crisis in Cross River and Benue States has no significant impact on crops and livestock production. The tables shows the Pearson Chi-square value of 900.00 and the contingency coefficient of .707. However, the p-value of .000 is less than 0.05 probability value. The Pearson Chi-square value of 900.000 reveals a relationship that is statistically significant. Thus, since p-value of  $.000 < 0.05$ , the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate is upheld and concluded that Farmers-herdsmen crisis in Cross River and Benue States has a significant impact on crops and livestock production.

#### **5.4.2 Hypothesis two**

Farmers-herdsmen crisis does not account for poor access to food and shortage of food supply in Cross River and Benue States.

The independent variable in this hypothesis was the Farmers-herdsmen crisis in Cross River and Benue States and poor access to food and shortage of food supply was the dependent variable. The statistical analysis technique deployed to test this hypothesis was Pearson Chi-Square Statistical Technique. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance and a degree of freedom (df) of 1.

#### **Decision Rule**

Where the computed Chi-square value is greater than the critical tabulated value, reject the Null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). Meanwhile, if the computed Chi-square value is less than the tabulated value, the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternate is rejected.

**Table 5.4.4: The Chi-square table of results for hypothesis two**

Impact On Access to Food and Storage of Food Supply	Farms Herdsmen Crisis		Total
	NO	YES	
It does not Account for Poor Access of food and storage of food Supply	222	0	222
	54.8	167.2	222.0
It Account for poor Access of food and storage of food Supply	0	678	678
	167.2	510.8	678.0
Total	222	678	900
	222.0	678.0	900.0

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	900.000 <sup>a</sup>	1	.000		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	894.627	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	1005.558	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				.000	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	899.000	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	900				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 54.76.

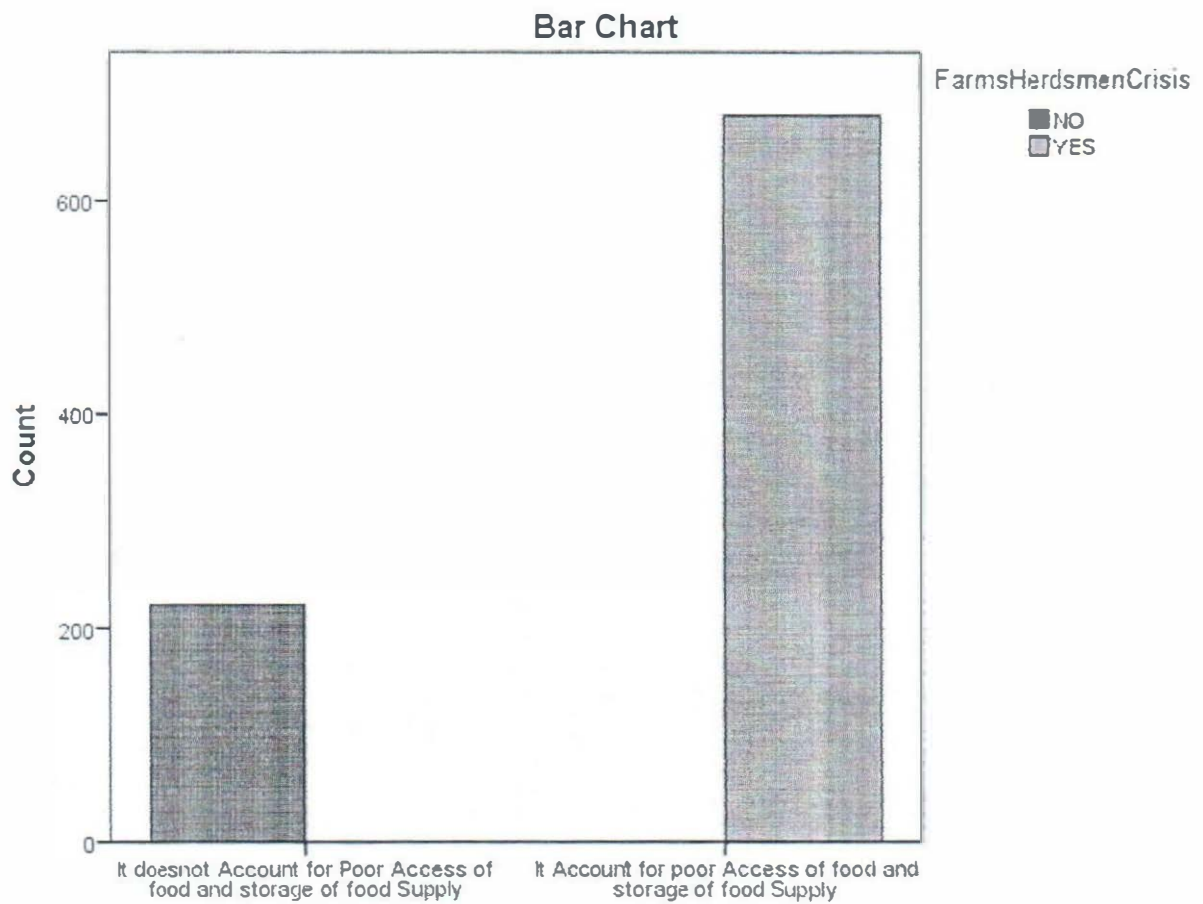
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table



### Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	1.000	.000
	Cramer's V	1.000	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.707	.000
N of Valid Cases		900	

Source: Field work (2021)



► **Fig. 5.26: The Chi-square table of results for hypothesis two**

Source: Field work (2021)

Tables 5.4.4, 5.4.5, 5.4.6 and the corresponding Bar Chart in Fig. 5.26 above shows the Chi-square test result for hypothesis two which state that Farmers-herdsmen crisis does not account for poor access to food and shortage of food supply in Cross River and Benue States. The tables shows the Pearson Chi-square value of 900.00, the contingency coefficient of .707. However, the p-value of .000 is less than 0.05 probability value. The Pearson Chi-square value of 900.000 reveals a relationship that is statistically significant. Thus, since p-value of  $.000 < 0.05$ , the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate is upheld and concluded that Farmers-herdsmen crisis accounts for poor access to food and shortage of food supply in Cross River and Benue States.

### **5.4.3 Hypothesis three**

Farmers-herdsmen crisis does not contribute to the increased cost of food products in Cross River and Benue States.

The independent variable in this hypothesis was the Farmers-herdsmen crisis in Cross River and Benue States and increased cost of food products was the dependent variable. The statistical analysis technique deployed to test this hypothesis was Pearson Chi-Square Statistical Technique. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance and a degree of freedom (df) of 1.

#### **Decision Rule**

Where the computed Chi-square value is greater than the critical tabulated value, reject the Null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). Meanwhile, if the computed Chi-square value is less than the tabulated value, the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternate is rejected.

**Table 5.4.7: The Chi-square table of results for hypothesis three**

No Impact On Food Production	Farms Herdsmen Crisis		Total
	NO	YES	
It does not Contribute to the increased cost of food production	222 54.8	0 167.2	222 222.0
It Contribute to the increased cost of food production	0 167.2	678 510.8	678 678.0
Total	222 222.0	678 678.0	900 900.0

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	900.000 <sup>a</sup>	1	.000		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	894.627	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	1005.558	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				.000	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	899.000	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	900				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 54.76.

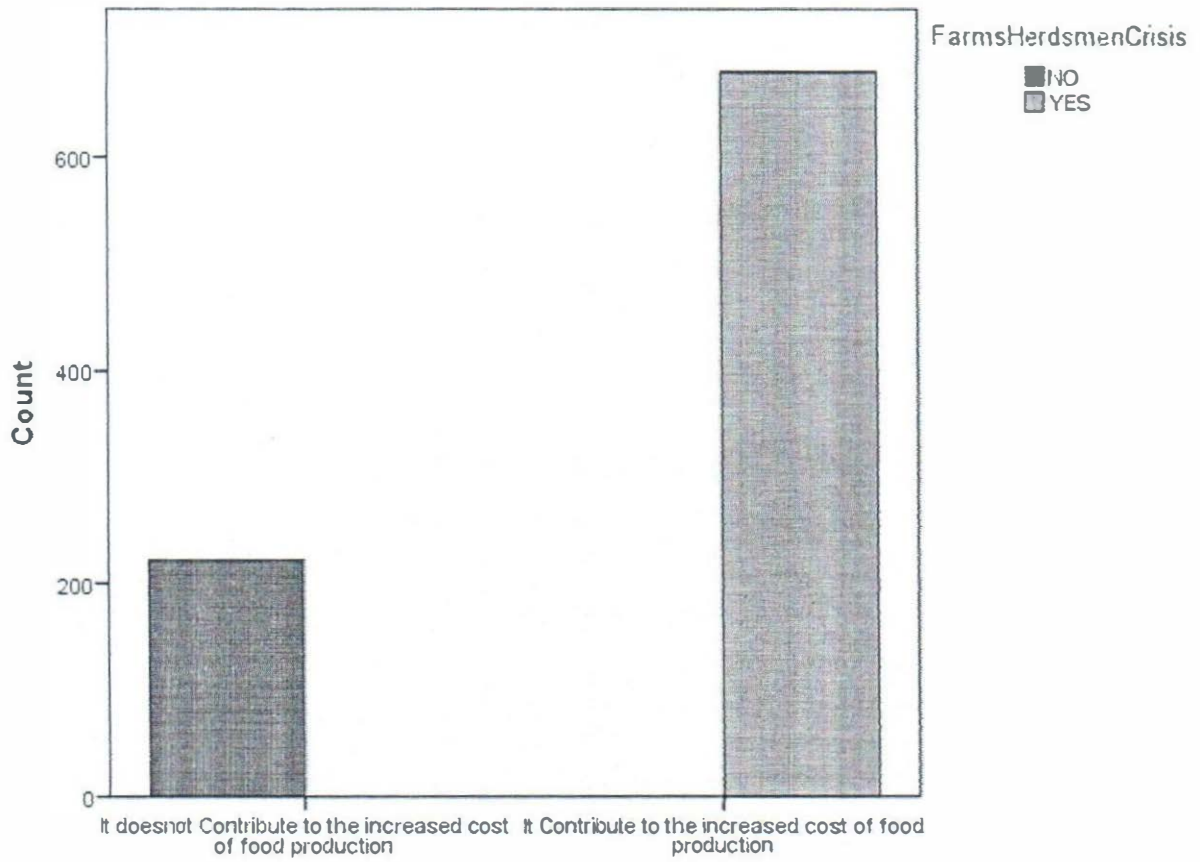
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

### Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	1.000	.000
	Cramer's V	1.000	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.707	.000
N of Valid Cases		900	

Source: Fieldwork, 2021





**Fig. 5.27: The Chi-square table of results for hypothesis three**

Source: Field work (2021)

Salifu, Enwelu & Igbokwe (2017) who reported that the conflict between pastoralists and farmers in agrarian communities presents a formidable challenge to crops and livestock production in Nigeria. They declared that the situation is associated with both structural issues like population, cultural, political and ethnoreligious differences as well as unproductive conflict behaviors and struggle for livelihood survival by the disputants. Since both farmers and herders resources viz human, physical, social, agricultural, economic are negatively affected, a better output and consistent crops and livestock production will be compromised.

Arable crops and livestock production is reportedly below average in Benue and Cross River States at least comparatively to the era preceding the crisis. In terms of individual's welfare, there is a negative impact on households who face additional strain in accessing food produced from crops and livestock due to their scarcity. In terms of economic development, food crops contributes greatly to the country's treasury. Livestock for instance, according to World Bank (2009), contribute about 30% of agricultural Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in developing countries. In Nigeria, arable crop farming and livestock production are very vital to the economy that has agriculture as its lifeline given the current fluctuation in oil and gas transaction yet the demand is exponentially growing and it is expected to rise to 3.2 before the end of 2021 as a result of increase in population. In the same vein, Otte and Knips (2005) contends that in sub Saharan Africa, productivity remains low and average yields per animal are lower than those in other developing regions (Otte and Knips, 2005). Agricultural sector particularly crops and Livestock sector is 'plagued by several challenges such as lack of adequate supplies of quality feed and pasture, diseases, weak market network, unavailability of adequate water and poor veterinary services' (Kassam et al 2009; Peeling and Holden, 2004; Mutibvu et al., 2012). Pelli, Haapala & Pykäläinen (2017), added that the sector is constrained by 'institutions, markets and policy as well

When this happens, some herders react or retaliate, it grows into full scale violence with pockets of attacks at various communities across the State.

Both responses as summarized above indicate that the crisis has an impact in the production of crops and livestock in Cross River and Benue States. Majority of the farmers and herders agree to the first findings we have established in this research. Although, each group is quick to exonerate itself from blame as evident in the interview responses. Farmers generally believe that the activities of herdsmen and their cattle are inimical to their lives and crops respectively. They attribute the decline in crop and food production to the herders. On the other hand, the Fulani herdsmen believe that the attacks are orchestrated by farmers who perhaps are responsible for the killing and rustling of their cattle, and since they place so much value on their cattle, losing one is like losing a human, hence they retaliate violently against the farmers. The debate about who is responsible for the attack or who is to be blamed has taken the central stage but our concern here is the impact of the crisis on the food security (crops and livestock) in both States.

As it concerns food security, our first findings buttress the contention of Akinsanmi (2005) who argued that Nigeria is confronted with food security challenges. 70 percent of the population lives on less than one US dollar per day, suffering from hunger and poverty. The country's agrarian economy with a corresponding increase in the Gross Domestic Product and the creation of jobs are also affected. Similarly, the findings agree with the report released by FAO in 2016. It stated thus:

The negative impact of conflict on food security has an uncontested and globally recognized relationship. Conflict is responsible for hunger and famine, it undermines food security in several ways: Destruction of crops, livestock and agricultural infrastructures, disruption of markets, human and animal displacement, the creation of fear, reduction in human capital and the

spread of diseases. Conflicts are direct threats to food security as they cause massive loss of life... loss of vital livestock and loss of land (FAO, 2016).

The impact of the crisis on crop and livestock production cannot be overemphasize, both farmers and herdsmen have suffered adverse consequences as a result of the crisis. Apart from lives that have been maimed, crops and livestock have been destroyed. In most cases, the crisis takes place during the dry season which coincides with the period of harvest. Therefore, the crops that are preserved for the next planting season are destroyed, it leaves the affected farmers with no option but to seek another means of livelihood, that is if he survive the crisis. The same way the livestock especially the cattle, sheep, goats and chickens are slaughtered and killed without recourse to the reduction in the number of the livestock. To make matter worst, the crisis has increased the number of both farmers and herdsmen at the IDPs camps, they have abandon their farmlands and pastoralism, to take shelter in such camps, only to survive and become completely dependent on humanitarian aids. The abandonment of agricultural occupation for fear of being killed during the crisis is responsible for the decline in crop, livestock production and food security in general. Scholars have further argued that displaced people as a result of conflict or crisis cannot be productive during the period of their displacement... Farmers who find themselves in Internally Displaced Centers have lost their crops and cattle and can only pray to stay alive.

During one of the interview sessions with some members of the Miyatti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria, they unanimously agreed that the crisis has led to sharp decline in the production of crops and the quality of livestock available. They reported that about 10 years ago, each of them had about 200 cows or cattle under their herd. They freely move around to source for food but unfortunately, nowadays rearing cattle and keeping farm animals has become a

difficult occupation; the risk of been killed and the chances of losing all herd of cattle in a day are comparatively higher than it was about two decades ago. They also complained that the demand for livestock products has increased in recent time without a corresponding increase in the number of livestock. What we deduced from this response is that both the farmers and the herders see their resources and products (land, crops, livestock) as indispensable, an attack on these products is enough reason for both group to stage an attack. This usually happens when a large movement of herdsmen with their herds leads to confrontations with crop farmers both of whom are competing for scarce resources to meet their needs. This is in line with the thought of Adoyiche (2016) on the food security impact of the crisis particularly in Benue State. He noted that Benue – *the food Basket of the Nation* has been the worst hit by the herders with lots of people killed and farmlands destroyed. Farmers are now scattered within secondary schools which are being used as makeshift and IDPs camps in the State and across the nation. Similarly, Tenuche and Ifatimehin (2009) agreed that apart from the decline in crop and livestock production, other consequences of the crisis include over grazing of the vegetation, pollution of water bodies, destruction of the soil, loss of soil fertility. These consequences affect crops cultivation and the rearing of livestock. To further buttress this point, Eyekpimi (2016) admitted that the crisis has led to other economic implications which include drastic effect on food security which has caused a loss of over four billion US dollars in three years... It has also impede trade practices, reduced crop yield, displacement of farmers and herders, loss of lives, loss of farm products and destruction of infrastructures.

The crisis has disrupted the agricultural value chain in a number of ways: it hinders farmers from going to their farmlands and deprive them from taking their farm produce to the market. Hence, it is difficult for farmers to have access to fertilizers, farm implements, extension services



and pesticides. This challenge further limit the chances of crop and livestock production and ultimately food security. This could account for why Okoli and Atelhe (2014) contended thus:

The attendant security and livelihood crisis threaten the collective subsistence and survival of the affected populations. It also leads to diminution of agricultural productivity and decline in household capital, all of which do not augur well for society and national sustainability. It suffices, therefore, to say that farmer/herder conflict is inimical to human security, and by extension, sustainable food security in Nigeria.

The findings clearly shows that the decline in the production of crops and livestock as a result of the crisis has further aggravated the problem of food stability and supply in Cross River and Benue States. The findings corroborates with the works of Oti, Onyia & Umoinyang (2017) and Anyabe, Atelhe & Sunday (2017) who argued that farmers-herdsmen conflicts has resulted in food scarcity due to destruction of farmlands, attack on farmers' homes by herdsmen and migration of people away from communities to IDPs camps. They further argued that the killings and destruction of farm land, crops, animal etc. has drastically affected food supply within and outside the region and resulted into a high level of food importation into the country. Meanwhile, Patience (2009) and Anyabe, Atelhe & Sunday (2017) argued that farmers-herdsmen conflicts have resulted in food shortage and disability, loss of lives and properties as well as the growing cases of humanitarian crises due to the destruction of farmlands, and ineffective mechanisms for conflict resolution and management among others by the government.

In an interview with one of the farmers (anonymous) residing at Abuochiche in Bekwarra Local Government Area of Cross River State, when asked about the impact of the crisis on his harvest, he lamented over the activities of herders around farmland. According to him:

Before now, I cultivate groundnut, cassava and yam close to Garkim which is a neighbouring community to Benue State. I often harvest ground nut in about 8-10 bags annually, 200-250 tubers of yam and about 10 wheel barrows of cassava which I do bring to Abuochiche (Ogidi market) for sale. He continued... It is from these harvests that I feed my family and raise money to pay my children school fees. But, since the conflict became serious, occurring more often, I have abandoned my farmland for fear of been killed or kidnapped. All I can do now is to cultivate the small piece of land behind my late father's compound.

The experience of this farmer is similar to others in various communities of Cross River and Benue States. What we could draw out of such respond is that the crisis has not only affected food security but it has a deep consequence on the socio-economic status of the people particularly the farmers and herders whose main occupation is agriculture (crop and livestock farming as the case may be). Unfortunately, since the herders migrate southwards giving the unfavourable climatic condition in the north, they now seek means of survival for themselves and their cattle at the expense of their host communities. Also, the farmers resist them especially when the cattle are allowed to encroach into farmlands to destroy the crops. What follows is a blood bath of attacks that are currently being experience across the entire country. The herdsmen believe they have the rights to open grazing. While, the farmers argues against such rights, affirming that the lands belongs to them and they have the right to cultivate it.

The crisis is now considered as one of the most devastating consequences of food security as both crops and livestock for consumption and commercial purposes are constantly being reduced in terms of quantity and quality. The problem is more compounded following the rise in population, it is estimated that by the year 2050, the country's population may reach half a billion, if the growth remain as fast as it is currently. The increase in population concurrently increases the

demand for crops and livestock, if such demands becomes higher than the available supply, Cross River, Benue States and the entire country will be heading into famine and extreme hunger. The attendant implications to this is social disorder, unrest, institutional collapse and systemic woes occasioned by violence and crimes; survival index will drop drastically.

Another dimension that could be inextricably tied to the first finding is the fact that crops and livestock constitutes the major food products and consumables in the household of the people of Cross River and Benue State; the most common foods like *eba*, *pounded yam*, *beef meat*, *chicken*, *potato*, *vegetable soup* – to mention but a few are all derive from crops and livestock respectively. It behoves on the government to rise up to the challenge and bring the situation under control; if the complacency as reported by most of the respondents continue, both States may likely become the hotspots for hunger and lawlessness. Since it is impossible for the attacks to take place without collateral damages; the destruction of crops, killing of farm animals and loss of lives, it is the responsibility of the government at all levels; local, State and Federal to find a lasting solution to the socio-economic problems associated with the crisis.

As the findings stated, the crisis has significantly affected the crops and livestock production, which invariably promote the socio-economic challenges inherent in both States. Therefore, the findings also corroborates with the study on “Farmers-Herdsmen Conflicts: A Factor Analysis of Socio-economic Conflict Variables Among Arable Crop Farmers in North Central Nigeria” carried out by Adisa and Adekunle (2010).

The above cited study held that the conflicts portend grave socio-economic consequences. It further contends that, there is no consensus or oneness on which group is face with greater damages, but the plight of crop farmers which constitute the highest population of agricultural production in Nigeria has attracted more research attention. Adisa and Adekunle further

investigated the variables associated with the crisis using a four staged random sampling techniques to select 300 respondents from communities with prevailing farmers-herders crisis. A structured questionnaire was used administered and subjected to factor analysis using descriptive statistical procedures. The result revealed that majority of the respondents experienced losses in material and non-material resources (crops and livestock inclusive). Hence, the socio-economic implication is incredibly huge. The work recommends among others the initiation of farmers-herdsmen conflict resolution programmes.

This already affirms that there is a growing impact of the crisis on crops and livestock production in both States and the consequences are also felt in other parts of the country. This is because a lot of States especially the neighbouring ones depends on the crops produced by farmers for consumption, same way the people also depend on the pastoralists for livestock. Benue State for instance is termed "*Food Basket of the Nation*". This appellation suggest that the State is the hub of agriculture especially in the area of crop cultivation. The presence of fertile soil, good climatic condition and wide spread farming population project the State in this light. Unfortunately, the findings here as well as other empirical reports shows that the State is gradually losing it grip as one of the top food producing States in the country, so if the crisis continues, the State's appellation might become questionable. On the other hand, Cross River State's food production capacity is also shrinking. Majority of the respondents in Obanliku, Obudu and Bekwarra agreed to this, which obviously led to the first findings we have reported. Some of the farmers in Obudu who cultivates vegetable crops like the ones they commonly called *Ugwu, Green, Pumpkin and White leaf* at the Obudu Dam attests that before the advent of farmers-herdsmen crisis, they usually cultivates vegetable crops twice annually. According to them, nowadays, we are only able to cultivate and harvest the vegetable crops just once in a year during



the raining season. This is because during the dry season, the Fulani herdsmen are often grazing around the Dam and sometimes the cattle encroach into our vegetable farms and destroy our farmlands. They further stressed that the herders move around with weapons like cutlasses and daggers, for fear of being attack, most time they return to the farmland to see the destruction and they are helpless about it because the perpetrators will be far gone. What this tell us is that scarcity of vegetable crops in Obudu is likely a possibility especially in the dry season. Therefore, the people will either eat without vegetables in the diets or they may have to improvise. The crisis accounts for this scarcity, and this is also applicable to other crops and livestock as well.

Indeed, our first findings, there is a significant impact of the crisis on crops and livestock production could be justified in all contexts. For instance, Hussaini (2018) noted that Fulani-farmers clashes have a direct impact on the survival of those involved, both the persecutors and victims. The conflict destabilizes the production of food and raw material for consumption and the manufacturing sector in the country. Cultivation of crops and rearing of livestock takes a herculean time but with crisis, the time needed will double because both farmers and herdsmen will only engage in the occupation when there is peace. When the reverse is the case, they will only be concerned about the safety of their lives, abandoning other responsibilities like planting or cattle rearing. The finding is also in line with the study of Dimelu, Salifu, Enwelu, and Igbokwe (2017) who opined that conflict between pastoralists and farmers in agrarian communities presents a formidable challenge to both food and livestock production in Nigeria. They noted that it is associated with structural issues like population, cultural, political and ethnoreligious differences as well as struggle for livelihood.

**The findings from the second hypothesis** concluded that the Farmers-herdsmen crisis accounts for poor access to food and shortage of food supply in Cross River and Benue States. This means



the crisis is responsible for the current decline in the quantity of food available and it has hindered the easy access to food in both States. Regrettably, the crisis does not only have direct impact on infrastructures and facilities of the affected areas but it is also a major threat to food security in the areas. Our second findings corroborates with the findings made by Fajonyomi, A., Fajonyomi, M. & Ambali, T (2018), they concluded that the relationship between farmers-herdsmen crisis and food security is complex and dynamic, conceding that the conflict has exacerbated the problem of food insecurity as millions of citizens do not have access to food and even the available food products are very expensive which is an additional burden on the vast majority of the people who are already shackled by the menace of poverty. On the other hand, Okoli & Addo (2018) in an article titled 'The implication of Fulani Herders/Benue Farmers crises on Food Security of Benue State of Nigeria' reported that communal violence or conflicts have serious implication on access and availability of food, since agriculture is the main preoccupation of rural population. Therefore, the areas that are prone to the crisis will be face with a tough task as it concern the supply of adequate food to meet the demand. The primary indices that could be used to measure food security are availability and accessibility to food, having the right quantity and quality of food supply in a given State. The crisis situations doesn't guarantee bumper harvest of crops, even the conditions for rearing of livestock is unfavorable in such situations. This is because, in most cases, the crops and animals are the targets of the crisis, when forages and pastures for livestock are limited, the cattle often graze into farmlands to feed on the crops which results into destruction and affecting the farmer's chances of preserving the crops for the next planting season.

To substantiate the findings, the Food and Agricultural Organization (2004) noted that, the conflict costs Nigeria over \$12 billion worth of agricultural production during the last quarter of the 20th century, given the importance of agricultural livelihood to overall economic wellbeing in

Nigeria, not only has the conflicts affected production of food, it has deny people access to food and the supply of the required quantity of food. In most cases, the ripple effect is also felt in the unprecedented increased in the number of people having difficulty in accessing enough food to satisfy their hunger. The situation is further worrisome when we consider the thematic report made by the Assessment Capacity Projects (ACAPS, 2017). It noted that approximately 132,818 are facing IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) levels of food insecurity in Benue, 167,561 in plateau and 212,348 in Kaduna states as at December 2016, with 12,063 in Phase 4 in Plateau state. More than 46,000 are projected to face crisis of food security conditions in Benue, Cross River and other States. The statistic doesn't tell well of a country that has rich soil and good weather condition for cultivation and pastoralism. The crisis has led to the displacement of many farmers who could have remain in the communities to maximize their farming potentials for ultimate good. Most of them have been taken away from their ancestral lands, separated from their families and are being hosted at Internally Displaced Camps with no hope in sight for their return to the normal way of life. Even at the IDPs camps, the major complain is about lack of adequate food supply because the crisis has led to the destruction of food banks and other storage centers and there is no commensurate production to cushion the effect. Major markets where food products are sold are largely empty, so the government and the management of the IDP Camps are sometimes unable to purchase enough food that will be sufficient for the people at the Camps.

During one of the interview sessions at the IDP Camp located at Nogo Secondary School in Makurdi, Benue State, one of the respondents lamented over the scarcity of food at the Camp. She reported thus:

This Camp accommodates about 2000 IDPs, about 200 men, 1200 women and children. My children and I were taken here by the security forces in 2018 after my community was attacked

by Fulani herdsmen. My husband was killed, our hut was set ablaze, and our yams were burnt. I have been at this Camp for three years now, we survive here by chance because the food is not adequate, we are only giving one meal per day, and we are expected to eat it and feed our children from it. We are face with a very difficult situation here and we have nowhere to go because our community has been destroyed. She further stressed that what they seriously lack is food and portable drinking water (Interview, 2021)

The scenario reported above is not just terrible but it is also one of the reasons why victims of the crisis may not completely recover from the consequences the crisis has exposed them to. Understand that people cannot exist for long without adequate and quality food, it's availability is crucial in sustaining the human race; the same way, it inadequacy could be problematic. The Global Food Security Index reported that food security is a complex, multifaceted issue influenced by culture, environment and geographic location (GFSI, 2016). Since food is an essential need, survival is greatly dependent on food intake. If the situation at the IDPs Camp in Benue remain as terrible as described, then surviving at the Camp will be slim. The Governor of the State, Samuel Ortom has been vocal about the excruciating situations that the victims are confronted with. He has repeatedly called out the central government, blaming the Presidency for the benign neglect over the food and other basic needs challenges orchestrated by the crisis. Majority of the respondents in both Cross River and Benue States agrees with the Governor. They believe the government is not proactive in dealing with the crisis and it appears adamant to the plight of farmers. As a result, several community based anti-pastoralists groups have sprang up in Benue and other States including Enugu, Delta and Oyo States. Most recently, the same movement in Oyo State headed by Sunday Adeniyi Adeyemo, popularly known as Sunday Igboho responded against herders attack in the State which led to the killing of a commercial farmer and destruction

of food crops and animals. According to media report, he mobilized the youths of the community who chase the herders out of the community and the State. Same group has strongly resisted the Federal Government plan to legalize open grazing at designated centers across the country. At the moment, Sunday Igboho's has been arrested and charged to court for treason and other crimes against the State. According to Channel News broadcasted on the 30<sup>th</sup> August, 2021, there have been several reactions and criticisms against his detention and many well-meaning Nigerians have called for his unconditional release. Others have openly supported his actions while accusing the Federal government of complacency in dealing with the herders who are allowed to have their field day whereas, most of the violent attacks were staged by them.

Apart from the displacement of farmers orchestrated by the crisis, another factor that could justify the second findings is the invasion and destruction of farmlands by the herdsmen. Most of the lands previously used for cultivation have been destroyed or taken over by the herders. Development and Urban expansion are encroaching into the remaining lands that were initially used for farming. Abughdyer (2016) stated that a total of 664.4 hectares (56.4%) of farmland have been destroyed in three local government areas viz Agatu, Guma and Logo in Benue State between 2010-2014 as a result of farmers and herdsmen crises. The situation is currently more serious than what Abughdyer reported, as we observed during the field work in Cross River State, where large plots, measuring 1000s of hectares of lands especially around water bodies have been destroyed and there are reported cases of cattle rustling and killings taking place. The situation portrays a great challenge to food security, since Benue and Cross States are among the leading food producing States in Nigeria. The importance of food security cannot be overemphasized, Saad (2000) noted that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 recognizes the right to food as a core right. In the same vein, FAO (2001) reported that food security is attained when



individuals, groups, households at local, national, regional and global levels at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for a healthy and active life. Meanwhile, the World Bank as quoted by Saad (2000) stated that food security is the 'access by all people at all time to enough food for an active, healthy life'. By implication, the term 'access' in this case connotes supply and demand. Therefore, a nation is food secured when the supply of food is commensurate with the demand and such supply can be afforded by all and sundry regardless of class, status and privileges. The crises in Cross River, Benue and other States have contributed significantly to the poor access to food as a good percentage of the population do not have the required, adequate and quality food for themselves and members of their household. Poverty has also been exacerbated by the crises, as many have lost their economic mainstay, making it difficult for them to be able to purchase food in the face of the crisis.

Two factors are sacrosanct in food security discourse, the findings established here clearly shows the opposite of these factors. First, food security underscores the factors that aid the adequate supply of food and the easy access to food. Availability itself could be determined by measuring some sub factors like sufficiency of supply, agricultural infrastructure, volatility of food production, farm support mechanisms and political stability. As a result of the crisis, there is inadequate supply, massive destruction of agricultural facilities accompanied by serious political instability and lot more. Therefore, food security in the context of access and availability is affected by the crisis. Secondly, food security also means the quality, safety and condition of the food available. This can be determined by focusing on conditions such as food safety, diet diversification, nutrient quality, nutritional standards and micronutrient availability. What this implies is that food security isn't just about one of the situational factors described above but both



availability/access to food and nutritional quality/safety of food must be in place for a State to be regarded as food secured. Unfortunately, as our second findings concluded, the crisis has made it difficult for Cross River and Benue States to have enough food that is nutritionally standard for at least all the people residing in the States. Again, since food security is attained when food production, supply and intake comply with the social, economic, environmental and particularly the human demands, it is therefore imperative for the remote causes of the farmers-herdsmen crisis to be addressed to guaranty survival. This aligns with the report from the High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE, 2016) on food security and nutrition. The report affirms that “food security is the system that ensures food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental basis to generate food security and nutrition for future generations are not compromised.

The second findings agrees with the position of Okoli & Addo (2018) who focused on the food insecurity which is the direct opposite of food stability or security. He categorized the former into three. He argued as follows:

Food stability measures the ability to obtain food over time. The opposite of this is food insecurity. Food insecurity can be transitory, seasonal and chronic. Transitory food insecurity is a time of momentary seizure in food availability which can be as a result of natural disaster or other exigent factors. Seasonal food security obtains from the cyclical time of food production arising from regular pattern of growing seasons in food production. While, chronic food insecurity on its own, is a long term or near permanence lack of adequate food. The danger is that endangered people under this circumstance are increasingly unable to acquire food to meet the needs required for their continued existence

The above three categorizations of food insecurity are common in Cross River and Benue States. The latter is a more serious situation and it shows the level of consequences that are associated with any State that experience food insecurity. Having interacted with the respondents and engaged with relevant stakeholders, we can conclude that the decline in the availability of foods is as a result of the crisis. However, the crisis itself has paved way for other factors to thrive in Cross River and Benue State. One of such factors is the lack of working force; human labor has reduced drastically, especially for peasant farmers who depend on such labor, the problem arises because the laborers are also attacked on their way to the farmland or while working at the farm. The farmers and laborers are victims of the crisis, they now understand that laying ambush around the farm is one of the attack strategies that the herdsmen uses. So, to avoid being abducted or killed, a lot of farmers have abandoned their farm, the laborers have also opted into another occupation like carpentry or artistry work. As a result, the farmlands are allowed to be consumed by weed, the crops often become attacked by pests and in the long run, the quality and quantity of the food crops in both States is affected.

On the other hand, the herdsmen have also accused the farmers of being insensitive and indifferent to them and their cattle. We gathered from one of the Fulani men who trade on cattle and was at a time the owner of the biggest Abattoir located at Obudu Main Market, Cross River State. We were able to get his opinion via a phone call. According to him:

The new farmer's strategy for attacking herders and their cattle is responsible for the recent reprisal violent attack. He continued... Farmers deliberately spray poisonous chemicals on their crops and farmlands. The chemicals killed the cattle when they go astray to feed on the crops. In one occasion at Guma Local Government Area, about 50 cattle died immediately. The situation triggered one of the deadliest attacks in Guma because the herders went on a revenge mission.

During the crisis, most of the herders flee with their cattle for fear of being killed. As a result, it is now difficult to have adequate cattle for my business. I was left with no option but to travel to either Zamfara or Kano State to buy cattle. The new approach was not profitable as the cost of transporting the cattle was unbearable for me. So the crisis has seriously affected my business and my livelihood.

Sequel to the above, the fact is, the crisis has hindered a lot of economic activities in the country as a whole, bringing serious hardship to the farmers and the herdsman who depends on their produce for economic survival. Indeed, Nformi et al (2014) contends that, agro inputs are rarely found as a result of the conflict because marketers have taken to their heels, crops on the farm lands destroyed, most farmers especially those whose lives have not been exterminated have taken to their heels. The problem here is that, the economic base and activities of the people have been greatly affected arising from the abandonment of their various communities by the farmers for their dear lives. Similarly, Oti, Onyia and UmoiMinistryang (2017), Anyabe, Atelhe & Sunday (2017) argued that farmers-herdsman conflict has resulted in food scarcity due to destruction of farmlands, attack on farmers' homes by herdsman and migration of people away from communities to IDPs camps. They further noted that the killings and destruction of farm land, crops, animals etc. has drastically affected food supply within and outside the States and has resulted into a high level of food importation into the country. The crisis is also compounded by loss of lives and properties as well as the growing cases of humanitarian concerns. These conflicts have promoted serious constraints to the means of survival and livelihoods of farmers and herdsman.

Furthermore, the findings agrees with the conclusion made by Eje, Angai, Abdullahi, Wudaba, & Ishaku (2017). They opined that the conflict has a high potential to worsen the

insecurity and food crisis particularly in rural communities where most of the conflicts are localized, with reverberating consequences nationwide. In what appears similar is the report made by Dimelu, Salifu, Enwelu & Igbokwe (2017). They argued that the farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria has persisted and stands out a threat to national food security, livestock production and eradication of poverty with farmers often regarded as the most vulnerable. Although, both parties have always claim to be the most vulnerable, farmers are not the only victims; the herders have a share of their own pains as well. Several approaches have been suggested for the resolution of the crisis as well as strategies for the enhancement of food production especially at local level. For example the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD 2010) identifies four ways to improve food production, namely: “expanding arable land, achieving higher levels of cropping intensity, increasing yields and implementing agricultural policy reforms.” Even after eleven years the resolutions were made at the conference and adopted by UN member countries including Nigeria, food production hasn’t improve as expected. The crisis as we have reported in our second findings is one of the most prevalent limitation to improve food security in Nigeria. Other related limitations are but not limited to soil degradation, lack of agricultural incentives including loans and subsidies, climate change, desertification, rural-urban migration with its concomitant displacement of human resources. These factors have link to the remote causes of the crisis, and there do not just weaken the production capacities of food but can affect people’s interest in agriculture and ultimately lead to food insecurity.

The second findings also agrees with several relevant reports released by some national and international organizations particularly UNO, WHO, FAO, FMA, NAFDAC etc. The reports unanimously affirms that one of the major consequences of the ongoing farmers-herdsmen crisis is a decline in the availability of food as well as the lack of access to food. For instance, the Federal



to sufficient food to live a healthy life, and the major towns have to compete for the quantity available, since they are unable to meet target consumption levels at least annually. Egobueze et al (2020) reiterated that people without physical, social and economic access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs to enable them to produce and stay healthy suffer from food scarcity and insecurity... So when people have food, but not enough in quantity and quality, they still have a challenge to deal with. When the number of people who lack sustainable physical or economic access to enough, safe, nutritious, and socially acceptable food for a healthy and productive life increases beyond the current level, the pressure will pile up on the government and it could lead to more chaos and social disorder. As long as farmers feel weary about going to the farm, herdsmen remain concerned about the safety of their lives and their cattle, resources are continually wasted, source of livelihood threatened, crops and livestock destroyed, there will be a decline in the availability of food and the attendant social, economic and political consequences will be severe.

**The findings from the third hypothesis established that the farmers-herdsmen crisis** contributes to the increased cost of food products in Cross River and Benue States. It affirms the findings made by Fajonyomi, A., Fajonyomi, M. & Ambali, T (2018), they observed that, the relationship between farmers-herdsmen crisis and food security is complex and dynamic, conceding that the conflict has exacerbated the problem of food insecurity as millions of citizens do not have access to food, and even the available food products are very expensive which is an additional burden on the vast majority of the people, who are already shackled by the menace of poverty. Cross River, Benue States and indeed the entire country has in the past two decades experience an unprecedented rise in the cost of food. Since the farmers-herdsmen crises took a violent swift, the cost of food has doubled. This is because the quantity of food produced has declined, yet the demand for food is getting higher by the day given the population size. Therefore,



food retailers have increased the prices, making it difficult for the poor citizens to avoid the quality and quantity of food needed to satisfy their demands. Thus, the challenge of poverty continue to remain widespread and the number of people unable to afford basic needs increases simultaneously.

There is a correlation between the three major findings established in this study, because each represent the impact of the farmers-herdsmen crisis on food security. So, the decline in the production of crops and livestock, the lack of available and easily accessible food as well as the increasing cost of food are inextricably tied to the crisis. The implication of the crisis for is that the farming, economic and social activities seem to be rapidly deteriorating. Also, a substantial part of the country's budget has been spent on the importation of food to meet local demands. All these seem to have affected not just Cross River and Benue States but the entire nation's economy. Consequently, Suleimann (2021) reporting via Vanguard Newspaper published on the 26th August, 2021 reported that "Nigeria has been faced with ruinous problems of late, but what posits as the height of it all is the unbearable hike in prices of food commodities". It is true that today's reality has led to a severe food condition and this has been a concern for all and sundry, especially the poor and the less privilege. The high cost of food has now pave way for other related tragedies including social disorder and humanitarian crisis and in particular nutritional deficiency.

The spiraling farmers-herdsmen crises across Nigeria account for the hike in the prices for crop cultivation, animal husbandry and ultimately the cost of food. Also, a rise in the cost of food has remarkably affect people's consumption, dietary and nutrition especially given the fact that in Nigeria, food takes the highest percentage of household or family budget. During our

reconnaissance research visit in Benue and Cross River States, we got some attestation from a few people we spoke who agreed that the cost of food has double in the last few years and prices remain extremely high in other parts of the country and are expected to continue increasing due to the protracted conflicts. The situation in Cross River and Benue States is not getting better in any way, in line with our findings, we believe that the incessant crisis between farmers and herdsmen has plunged both States into food insecurity. Apart from both States being key players in Nigeria's agricultural sector, they cultivate and produce the country's staple foods and commercial crops such as tomatoes, rice, fruits, soya beans, yam, cassava, maize etc. In both States, farming activities takes place in rural villages where Fulani herdsmen and farmers often clash due to the destruction of farmlands by the herders' livestock or the rustling of cattle by the farmers. The dispute has lasted throughout much of Nigeria's post-independence era, but it is now more devastating than ever. The crisis has altered a lot in terms of crop cultivation and livestock production leading to an unprecedented rise in the cost of food and bearing in mind that the threat of Boko Haram still persists in many North Eastern States where agriculture thrives, we believe the possibility for a steady rise in the prices of food exists.

During field work at the study area in Cross River State, we had an interview session with one of the respondents. We asked of his views about the implication of the crises on the cost of food? He responded aptly.

"In the past, like 7-8 years ago, we used to buy a bag of Nigeria made rice produced here in our community for 3,500 naira, now it is 10,500 naira. A sizable tuber of yam was 100 naira, but today, it is over 400 naira. How about a bowl of tomatoes that was initially just 150 naira, yesterday I bought it for 1,500 naira and at other places especially in the town, it is even higher. If you want to buy half basin of processed cassava (*garri*) then, you could get it for 2,000 naira, a

dozen of eggs was 300 naira, a gallon of palm oil could go for 1,000 naira but nowadays, the cost of these food items have skyrocketed. This is as a result of the violent crises between farmers and herdsmen which has culminated into food scarcity and hunger.” (Interview, 2021)

The above response is a clear expression of the situation in both States and the whole country. The prices of the food items mentioned by the respondents are far higher in big cities like Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt, Makurdi, Calabar etc. This means the poor in these cities will find it difficult to cope with the unbearable trend. Recently, Nigeria government announced plans to begin yam exportation to the United Kingdom. Yam is one of the many food crops produced in large quantities by farmers in Benue and Cross River States, but currently there is sharp decline in the production of yam. The government will have to find a way to end the crisis if she must maximize the proposed yam exportation plan to the UK.

The third and final findings corresponds with the conclusion made by Eme et al (2017) in a work titled: Economic Effects of Fulani Herdsmen-Farmers Clashes on Nigeria. They noted that “Before the March 2016 incident, Fulani herdsmen regularly attacked defenseless communities without provocation and slipped back into the bushes to celebrate their victory with traditional Fulani warrior dances. Attacks by Fulani herdsmen started in 2010, but it has become more rampant lately and it has taken a disturbing pattern whereby several people are killed almost every month or two, several houses and properties are looted or burnt and women, married or single are raped. The atrocities has already attracted international disapproval but has drawn little or no preventive government action except condemnation by officials... as no serious action is taken, prices of food increased correspondingly with the shortage of food production and supply.” For the past ten years, Nigerians especially rural dwellers have been living with the agony of this crisis;

many communities and infrastructures are at risks, families are excruciating pains, and a number of women and children are now taking refuge at IDPs homes with little or no chance of growing in dignity. In the most recent development, the increasing food prices in major cities across the nation are being reported with deleterious effects on household budgets.

According to Tunde (2021) in his economic report at SBM Intelligence Risk Consultancy noted that “Before the pandemic, Nigerians were already spending 60 percent of their income on food, but inflation has pushed that higher on average”. The most critical concern is, since food intake is what guarantees survival, people don’t have an alternative but to buy the food regardless of the exorbitant rates. The ripple effect is simple, when people spend that much amount in buying food, it becomes difficult for them to pay for other essentials like health care, house rent, education and utilities. In Benue State for instance, if our field work experience is anything to go by, it was obvious that some of the people are only surviving, as they eat whatever they can have; not what they really would have like to eat. Other essentialities like education and health care are no longer within their reach, as some of the victims have already dropped out from school. They now leave with serious humanitarian challenges couple with poverty.

Nigeria's decline in food production is not driven by climatic factors alone. Even if climatic concerns are part of the problem, we believe the farmers-herdsmen crisis is primarily responsible. Annually, an estimated 40 percent of Nigeria's total food production is lost or wasted as a result of the crises and other insecurity problems in the country. The prevalence of banditry attacks, ethno-religious clashes, kidnappings for ransom and rampant killings in Nigeria have added to the nightmare which has kept people away from farming and pastoralism in Cross River, Benue and other agricultural States in the country. Since the North Central (Benue State) and the South-South



(Cross River State) is faced with these conflicts, the country would have depended on the North-East and North-West for food. Unfortunately, in recent time, heavily armed gangs terrorize rural settlements, looting and killing residents and carrying out mass kidnappings of children, students at schools, colleges and institutions of learning. The North-East in particular has been at the heart of a deadly conflict between the Military and the Boko Haram jihadist groups for more than 10 years, compelling more than three million people including farmers and pastoralists to flee from their homes and ancestral communities. Just a month ago, the Nigeria Defense Academy (NDA) was attacked, military officers and some cadets were abducted. The media reported that two of the officers were killed during the attack. The Federal government has only condemned the attack but no pragmatic measures have been taken to curb the violence and bring the attackers to justice. These reprisal attacks have created panic across the country, as no one or place is safe. Farmers in these regions have abandoned their farmlands, the next harvest season is almost here and the hope for a bountiful harvest is not in sight. Thus, hunger and lack is on the rise and the number of severely malnourished children has doubled at least compare to 8-10 years ago.

The series of crises bedeviling the entire nation, especially in the North-Eastern part and recurrent attacks in States like Cross River and Benue where most of the consumable food items for the nation come from, have indeed contributed to the rise in food products. From vegetables like spinach or pumpkin leaf to beef meat, potato, and common fruits, thus limiting consumers from having the chance to eat their choice diets. Empirically, it is clear that Cross River and Benue States, which are among the major sources of food chain to other part of the nation, have had their share of the crises with Benue State obviously the worst hit of insurgencies. The situation is not just a mere claim or lip chirping, as the prices for foodstuffs in cities has doubled almost by 100%. The negative impact of the crisis is already being felt in other States and regions, not only by the



farmers and pastoralists but those who depend on agricultural supplies from Cross River and Benue for their businesses. Again, the challenge to this business as expected is the high cost of foodstuffs, especially the 'every day' common food products which has reached a record high. Households now complain that their budget for food stuffs has doubled, as what they previously used is now inadequate. While, traders are scared to go to the crisis prone States, because of insecurity, farmers are worried about the possibility of marketing the foodstuffs. More so, farmers and pastoralists are fleeing away from their original land and moving to neighboring countries because of the crisis. It was on account of this, that the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in September 2013, warned that Sahel States in Nigeria are faced with severe food insecurity. The report stated that, "Poor families have used up their food stocks and are facing high food prices awaiting the next harvest.", it is estimated that over 1.4 million children in the region are at risk of severe malnutrition. According to World Bank's Food Price Watch (2014), "Food price shocks can be responsible for the origination and continuation of conflict and, more generally, political instability".

A quick example is the Ogidi market, Abuochiche in Cross River State and Wurukum market in Benue State. In these markets, food stuffs are gathered here and transported to other parts of the country on a weekly basis as vehicles, trucks and lorries find their ways to the markets to load farm produce, from cassava, tomatoes, pepper, fruits, onions, yams, potatoes, including goats, rams and cattle. Going by our findings, it is obvious that the high-priced of food produce have further yielded negative impacts on the farmers, pastoralists and traders as only very few buyers take the risk to travel to the markets to purchase food stuff for commercial purposes, a lot of buyers have quitted because of the increasing cost of food orchestrated by the farmers-herdsmen crises. These developments have implications on the lives and livelihood of the people of

in 2009, 20 people were trampled to death in a food riot in Pakistan. One of the respondents we interviewed, a food vendor at Obudu main market captured it rightly. Since the beginning of the year, prices of yams and cereals have gone up exponentially. She continued: “We cannot explain what is actually happening; all we see is that prices go up every day. You cannot predict what the price of anything will be by tomorrow, what you know is the last price at which you bought it. It was not like this in the past. Just yesterday, I had to buy only 25 tubers of yams which is less than the 50 tubers I usually buy in the past years because, my income can’t afford 50 tubers of yam any longer. Some traders have abandoned the business because of the high cost of food stuffs in the markets (Interview, 2021). This is a similar situation across the sub-region where farmers abandon farmlands for fear of being killed. For instance, Ekah et al (2014) stated that, in June 2014, the Chad Basin Development Authority reported that 10,000 hectares (24,700 acres) of rice paddies had been abandoned at the peak of harvesting season. Large-scale investments made into the farming and milling industries by private businesses are also in jeopardy, following Customs’ inability to protect the industry from the vagaries of smugglers. Small farmers consume most of the paddy produced in the nation on a sustenance basis. Several rice mills and other food processing centers in the country have been fully or partially shut down due to increasing cost of food materials, leading to job loss and decline in profit. Some of these factories include the Godilogo Farm in Obanliku, the Benue food bank, Olam Nigeria, Ebonyi Agro Industries Limited, Ashi, Mewa, and Umza rice processing mills etc.

Unfortunately, the inaction of the Federal Government seemed to have emboldened the attackers to strike more recurrently now than in the past at the nerve of food producing communities in many parts of the country. Many concerned Nigerians including the interviewed stakeholders in Cross River and Benue States have agreed that, the rise in Fulani ethnic militancy

and banditry should be seen as a national tragedy and placed among the priority security challenges facing the country, which requires prompt and immediate military action. This is crucial going forward because, most of the vulnerable people experiencing food insecurity live primarily in rural areas. They have little political leverage, live in scattered and difficult to reach areas, and are left to deal with extreme climate conditions and a fragile ecosystem (Erme et al, 2014).

The findings in this study are particularly important to all and sundry; the government, the farmers, the pastoralists, the traders and even the final consumers of food products as well as the end users are in one way or the other affected by the decline in crop and livestock production, the lack of adequate supply of food and the increasing cost of food products. If this is the case, then the farming and agricultural sector in general needs critical assessment. Apart from making effort to tackle the crisis, the fact that the farmers are under-incentivized, their operations are mostly subsistence; manpower is low. The most experienced farmers are passing on, it will be better if farming becomes a popular occupation among the youths. This is the most reliable way of transferring the interest in farming to the current generation and the preceding ones. Now that the country is beginning to take diversification seriously following the fall in oil price, agriculture remain the viable option for the survivability of the economy. Farmers need to be equipped with the best farming practices. It is also better when there is more information available to them, to enable them decide what to plant and provide information on soil texture/structure and the market value for the harvested products. There should be an urgent need to consider measures that would ensure a steady flow of foods to the market and have the current price increment reversed. The federal government need to step up to actualize these measures. The high prices should be scissor down and some of the cost-related factors that affects the availability and cost of food products should be addressed. All these efforts from the farmers and the government will in the

long run improve crop and livestock production, improve food supply and ultimately normalize the costs for food products.

## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 Summary

The study is aimed at examining the implication of farmers-herdsmen crisis on food security in Cross River and Benue States respectively. For the past fifteen years in particular, Nigeria has been grappling with several security challenges, prominent among them are insurgency, social violence like kidnapping, arm robbery and most especially, the farmers-herdsmen crises to mention but a few. The country has recorded thousands of deaths, destruction of crops/animals and displacements of people as a result of the reprisal clashes between rural farmers and herdsmen/pastoralists in several communities across the country. Cross River and Benue States have had their own share of the crises with Benue State being the most affected. For instance, in July, 2021 alone, media reports indicate that about 30 people were killed in an attack carried out by suspected herdsmen at Odugbeho community, Agatu Local Government Area in Benue State. As we have identified in this study, the remote causes of the crises are not far-fetched; the competition over grazing land couple with scarce resources, climate change, desertification and population explosion have over the years resulted in perennial and increasing violent conflicts in Nigeria. Expectedly, with the depletion of arable land for subsistence farming as a result of increasing urbanization and agricultural mechanization and the adverse effect of climate change, there is an increasing struggle between farmers and herdsmen. The recurrent attacks in the country have had a spill-over effect on the neighboring countries.

One of the major impacts of the crises which the study focused on, is food security. Having investigated the implication of the crises on food security in Cross River and Benue States, the



study identified three core consequences of the crises namely, the decline in crop and livestock production, the lack of adequate food supply occasioned by poor access to food and thirdly, the rising cost of food products in the States and the entire country. It is estimated that over 83 million people in Nigeria are hungry, which is about 40 percent of the country's total population of roughly 200 million; and 52 percent live below the poverty line. This is certainly not a good feat for a country that has once attained self - sufficiency in food production and became a net exporter of food to other regions of the continent in the early 1950s and 60s. The fall in food production as a result of the crises has led to increase in food importation to balance the excess demand over supply of food in the country. As long as the chain of importation continue, the country will remain a consumer, no effort will be made to maximize the potentials for a large production capacity. Thus, the ripple effect will not only be felt economically in terms of increase expenditure but it will also hinders agricultural development, widened unemployment gap, destroy local markets and the country's internal policy actions and programmes.

The study recognized that the impact of the crises and its consequences especially on food security is a veritable national security concern in the study area and the country at large. It is not only imperative but very timely to understand the nature, reasons, implications and possible solutions of the crisis, giving the unfolding trajectories and the series of reprisal attacks across the country. Therefore, the first chapter focused on the background to the study, where an overview of the phenomenon was given with the main focus of the research stated at the end. Meanwhile, the problem of the study is inextricably tied to the implication of the crises on food security in the States. Three fundamental research objectives were stated with a corresponding three research questions and three set of hypotheses formulated in null form. The is study primarily built on the

crisis and food security. The study elaborates on the nature of the crisis in Nigeria from pre-historical, colonial and the post-colonial eras as well as the socio-cultural and the environmental causes of the crisis. The essence was to access the origin of the crisis, the dynamics and the remote triggers of the crisis. In this case, we argued that the nature of the crisis varies with time, the place of the attack as well as the circumstances behind such attacks. The data obtained from the field via questionnaire and interview were analysed and interpreted accordingly in chapter five. In the first instance, the demographic and the specific data according to the variables obtained from the respondents were analysed using descriptive statistics with simple percentages, charts and frequency tables. To test the hypotheses, we used Chi-square techniques with the latest version of SPSS where the Chi-square computed value is the same as the Pearson Chi-square value as indicated in the table of results.

At the end of the statistical analysis, three major findings were revealed which established the null hypotheses in each case. The discussion of findings is clearly within the context of the findings made. First, the study upheld that farmers-herdsmen crisis in Cross River and Benue States has a significant impact on crops and livestock production. The decline in production is a consequence of the crisis, as both farmers and the pastoralists have abandoned their occupation for fear of being killed. Next, the study concluded that farmers-herdsmen crisis accounts for poor access to food and shortage of food supply in Cross River and Benue States. The crisis has impede local food production, lowering the supply capacity while the demand is doubling day by day. Hence, the country has to fall back to full scale importation which is detrimental to the economy and the indigenous production. Lastly, the study established that farmers-herdsmen crisis contributes to the increased cost of food products in Cross River and Benue States. Prices for food products has risen exponentially in the States and the country at large. The rise is almost 100 percent and it's has

herders who do not really care about the aftermath of taking up arms against, not just farmers, but the material properties of the country as a whole. While, arguments of discrepancies about who and what group to be blamed continue... both farmers and herders think they deserve to be exonerated but the Fulani culture of communality and historical antecedent of invasion, the highly polarized Nigerian society, current political circumstances, both of the current President being a cattle-breeder, and Fulani by origin provides some useful tips to believe the negligence of the government and the complicated nature of the crisis.

Apart from the conclusions made from the research findings as summarized above, the study also observed that the farmers-herdsmen crises have been pervasive in Nigeria for the past one decade. At the earliest stage, the crisis was domiciled in the North but in contemporary time, it has escalated to the South and South-eastern parts of the country. It became severe from 2014 with violence reported to have taken place in Anambra, Enugu, Delta, Cross River, Ondo, Imo and in particular Benue States. The pattern of the crises in these areas has often taken one strategy where the herders secretly strike a community either at night or at the least expected time. The study gathered that the crises has metamorphosed from common attacks with rudimentary weapons to full scale, lethal and the use of sophisticated weapons. Again, identity crises have been compounded, the existing fault-lines of primordial identity has been exploited

Furthermore, the study revealed that the crisis is not mono-causal, myriads of factors are responsible for the manifestation. It embodies the dialectics of demography, ecology, ethnic conflagrations, politics and religion. This implies an attempt to understand the intricacies of the crisis without recourse to these factors might be an effort in futility. Even making policy recommendations for the mitigation of the crisis requires an understanding of the remote causes or triggers of the crisis. Thus, this study recognized and discusses these factors from two perspectives;

the socio-cultural/political and the ecological/attitudinal. The former accounts for the insecurity trend, government actions and inactions while the latter is responsible for the increased transhumance and sedentary life as a result of desertification and drought. The study also explores the socio-cultural and economic effects of the menace of farmers-herdsmen crisis. Like previous works, we established here that the effects ranges from destruction of crops, harassment of herders by the youths of host communities, disregard for traditional authority, indiscriminate grazing, sexual harassment, and cattle theft or rustling. Severe effects includes; loss of human lives, proliferation of weapons, humanitarian crises, displacement and material/infrastructural damages to mention but a few.

Most crucially, while we recognize the significance of the above discoveries including the several arguments and explanations about the crisis, three issues addressed in this study, at least, remain sacrosanct, and may remain so for as long as the crises continue. The first pertain to the decline in crop and livestock production, the second is the poor access to food and shortage of food supply and lastly the rise in the cost of food products. The study observed that the crisis has a strong relationship with these issues and there are the main consequences of food insecurity across the country. The result of the findings indicates that the crises have both direct and indirect implications on food security. It has led to physical destruction/plundering of crops, and livestock, harvest and food reserves. Apart from this, it discourages people from engaging in agricultural activities whereas such activities contributes to food security, generate employments, increases Gross Domestic Product as well as overall growth and development of the country.

The implication of the crisis on food security has a far reaching consequences as revealed in this study. The federal government must introduce a functional and lasting solution to the



situation. The tripartite structure of governance; Local, State and Federal government must create an enabling environment for an increased food production to meet the daily demands in commensurate with the population. Decisive actions must be taken to curtail the trend of the crises, such actions must be realistic and strategically doable. These steps and the recommendations we provide in the next section will help to minimize the crises for food security to be sustained.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

Based on the foregoing, this study makes the following recommendations:

1. Farmers and herdsmen should be educated and re-orientated on the need to co-exist peacefully with mutual respect and tolerance. The National Orientation Agency should be mobilized to organize the orientation, especially at rural communities where the crises occur most frequently. The herders should understand that their right to open grazing is circumscribed by the right of farmers to live and sustain their livelihood. The orientation agency should work in collaboration with the community leaders, traditional rulers and all the herdsmen affiliated associations like Myetti Allah and Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria to achieve this.
2. The government should be more pragmatic in dealing with the crisis. A community-based conflict resolution mechanism should be set up and tailored around mediation, reconciliation and peace building approaches in villages, Local Government Areas and all the States affected by the crises. This approach could be very helpful in averting violence and rebuilding the communities. Farmers, pastoralists, vigilantes, the State security outfits and all stakeholders should collectively be alert to identify and deal with all security threats beforehand. This will not just repel future attacks, it will weaken the operations of bandits in and around the said communities.



should be mobilized, re-trained and equipped to repel and resist the attackers to enable farmers and herdsmen go about their businesses without fear.

7. The Federal government as a matter of urgency should set up a panel of inquiry in an attempt to understand the myriads of agitations across the country. Condemning violence attacks alone with press release is not enough, the government must take action. Placing value for human lives and protecting people and properties should be the cardinal focus of the government and no compromises should be made in this sense. The political leaders should accept dissenting views, be open to advice and disassociate from fora or networks that instigate parochialism, ethnic bigotry, religious sentiment and regional disproportionality.
8. The Judiciary and the Law Enforcement Agencies should be alive to their constitutional roles and be willing to prosecute anyone whose actions or plots are intended to jeopardize the peace and progress of the country. The administration of justice in this light shouldn't be selective but completely based on the principle of the rule of law and equality before the law. If those who have been charged to court and the investigations clearly established they are guilty, herdsmen and farmers alike, they should be punish in accordance to the framework of the law. This will serve as a deterrence to anyone or group of people who may be planning to cause mayhem.

#### **6.4 Suggestions for further studies**

Literature from extant studies on Farmers-Herdsmen Crisis in Nigeria has focused disproportionately on the Northern part of the country. This study takes a different path by focusing on two states located in the Central and Southern parts of the country respectively. More so, Scholars have extensively addressed the crisis and its implication on national security and socio-

economic development. This study rather considered the impact of the crisis on food security, particularly on the production, access to and the cost of food which is timely and significant in that it has introduced a new insight into the prevailing scholarly discourse on the subject and demonstrated the consequences of the crisis with an in-depth-case specific analysis. However, it is not exhaustive, as there is a dire need for empirical research on other very crucial aspects of the crisis. Therefore, for further studies, we suggest an investigation of the impact of the crisis on border countries that also major in food production and the introduction of policy recommendations that will substantiate what we have suggested on the best ways possible to resolve the lingering crisis in order to achieve sustainable food security in the country.

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**APPENDIX I**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

Dear Respondent,

I am a researcher from the University of Calabar. As part of the requirements for the completion of my program of study, I am conducting a research on 'Farmers-herdsmen crisis and food security in Cross River and Benue States, Nigeria.'

You have been considered resourceful enough to provide answers to the questions below, while, I solicit your cooperation, be assured that your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and used specifically for academic purposes.

Thank you in anticipation of your maximum cooperation.

Researcher.

## SECTION A: SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

### Part 1: specific information

Please fill in the answers correctly

1. Name of State: -----
2. Local Government Area: -----
3. Community of Residence: -----

### Part 2: Bio-data of respondents

Please tick (✓) appropriately as it relates to you

1. Sex: Male [ ] Female [ ] Others [ ]
2. Marital status: Single [ ] Married [ ] Widow [ ] Separated [ ] Divorced [ ]
3. Age bracket: 18-25yrs [ ] 26-35yrs [ ] 36- 45yrs [ ] 46-55yrs [ ] 56yrs and above [ ]
4. Educational qualification: Uneducated [ ] FSLC [ ] SSCE [ ] OND and Others [ ] B.Sc. [ ]
5. Occupation: Business [ ] Pastoralism [ ] Farming [ ]  
Unemployed [ ]
6. Religion: Christianity [ ] Islam [ ] African Traditional Religion [ ] Others [ ]

## SECTION B: RESPONSES ON QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Please tick (✓) appropriately the choice of your answer to the questions in the table below:

- Note:** SA = Strongly Agree  
A = Agree  
SD = Strongly Disagree  
D = Disagree



DKN = Do not know

**Part 1: Hypotheses test**

**Hypothesis 1:** Farmers-herdsmen crisis in Cross River and Benue States has no significant impact on crops and livestock production

RESPONSES							
S/N	Variables of Farmers-herdsmen crisis and the impact on crops and livestock production	SA	A	SD	D	DKN	
1.	The crisis has no significant effect on the production of crops and livestock in Cross River and Benue States						
2.	Farmers and herders engages in crop cultivation and cattle rearing in the face of the crisis						
3.	Since the inception of the crisis, the output of farmers and herders has not decline considerably.						
4.	The improvement of crop/livestock production and food security can be achieved despite the crisis.						

**Hypothesis 2:** Farmers-herdsmen crisis does not account for poor access to food and shortage of food supply in Cross River and Benue States.

S/N	Variables of Farmers-herdsmen crisis and poor access to food/shortage of food in Cross River and Benue States.	SA	A	SD	D	DKN	
1.	The poor access to food and shortage of food supply in Cross River and Benue States is not a consequence of the crisis						
2.	There is adequate food available in both States and the food security is not affected by the crisis						

3.	Both States are currently among the major suppliers of food in the country and there is no decline in the quantity and quality of food crops and livestock available.						
4.	There is no genuine complains about lack of food in the States. The scarcity is artificial not a function of the crisis.						

**Hypothesis 3:** Farmers-herdsmen crisis does not contribute to the increased cost of food products in Cross River and Benue States.

S/N	Variables of Farmers-herdsmen crisis and increased cost of food in Cross River and Benue States.	SA	A	SD	D	DKN	
1.	The cost of food in Cross River and Benue States has no relationship with the crisis.						
2.	Lack of government support to farmers, lack of ranches, and struggle for land accounts for the increasing cost of food in both States.						
3.	The cost of food crops and livestock products is as a result of lack of interest in farming or pastoralism not necessary due to the crisis						
4.	The government has done credibly well to manage the crisis and created better policies to tackle the cost of food in the States and the country at large						

## Part 2: specific opinions (Interview)

Please respond 'Yes' or 'No' to the following questions

1. Is the farmer-herdsmen crisis responsible for the decline in food crop and livestock production? Yes [  ] No [  ]
2. Do you think the crisis has an implication on the supply and availability of food in Cross River and Benue States? Yes [  ] No [  ]
3. Has the cost for food increased in correlation with the sudden rise in the crisis? Yes [  ] No [  ]
4. Do you believe the government has done well to curb the reprisal attacks, damage to crops, cattle rustling and destruction of properties? Yes [  ] No [  ]
5. Is the struggle for land and ecological resources also responsible for the exponential rise in the crisis? Yes [  ] No [  ]
6. Can both States achieve food security regardless of the ongoing crisis between farmers and herdsmen? Yes [  ] No [  ]

**APPENDIX II**



**Plate 1: Fulani settlement at Kundeve in Obanliku LGA, Cross River State**

**Source: Field work, 2021**





**Plate 2: Fulani settlement at Ugbe - Alege Village, Obudu LGA, Cross River State**

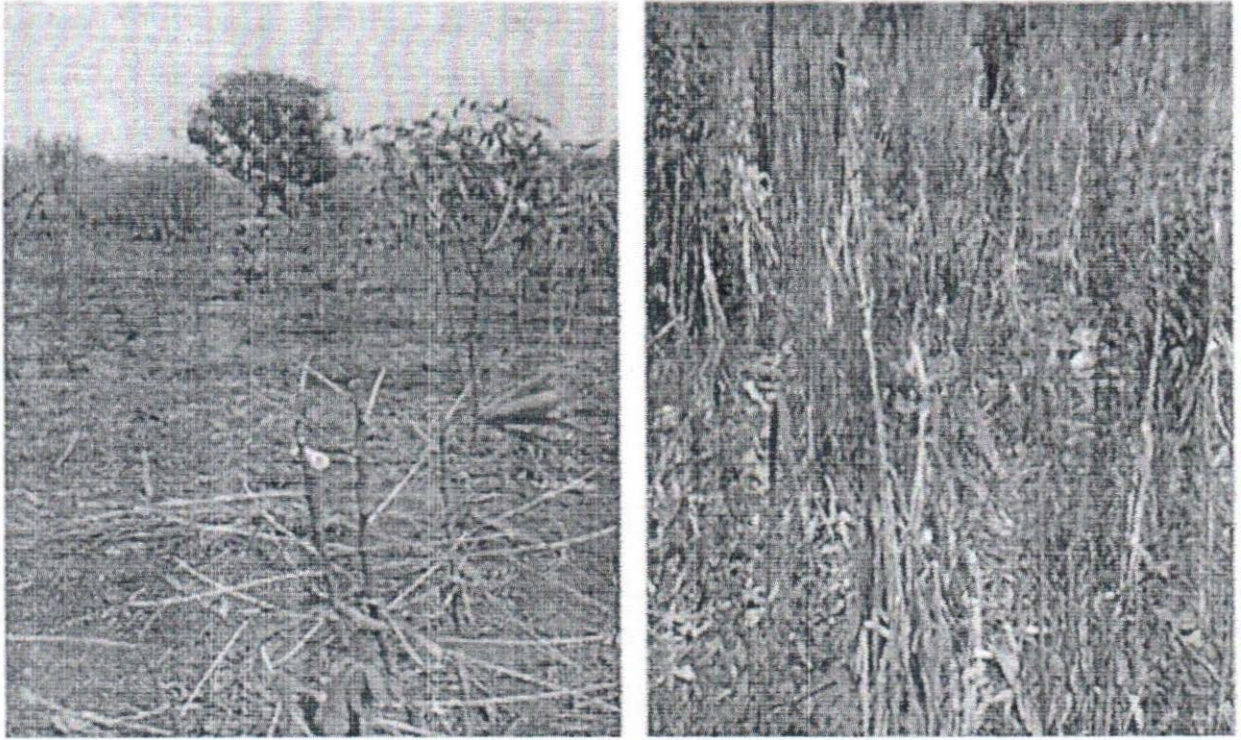
**Source: Field work, 2021**





**Plate 4: Farmers cultivating rice in Buruku LGA, Benue State.**

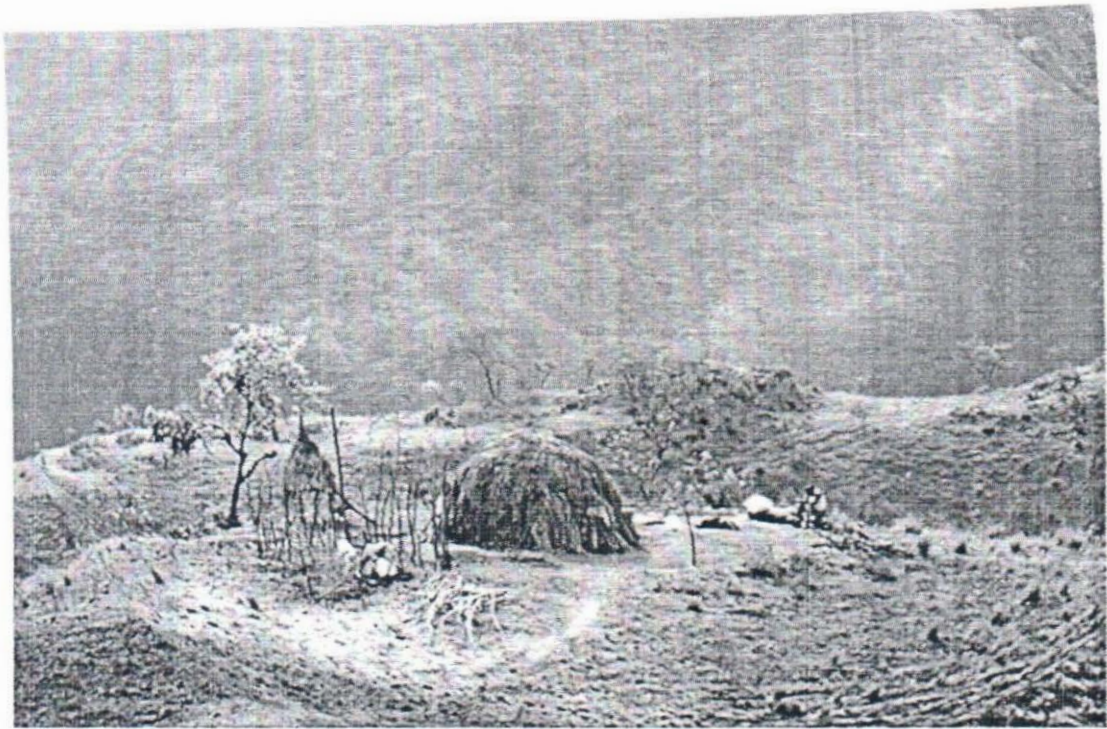
**Source: Google search, 2021**



**Plate 5: Destroyed farmland by Fulani herdsmen and their cattle in Obanliku LGA, Cross River State**

**Source: Field work, 2021**





**Plate 3: Fulani settlement in Anape Village, close to the Ranch in Cross River State**

**Source: Google search, 2021**



**Plate 7: Rural maize farmers**

**Source: Google search, 2021**

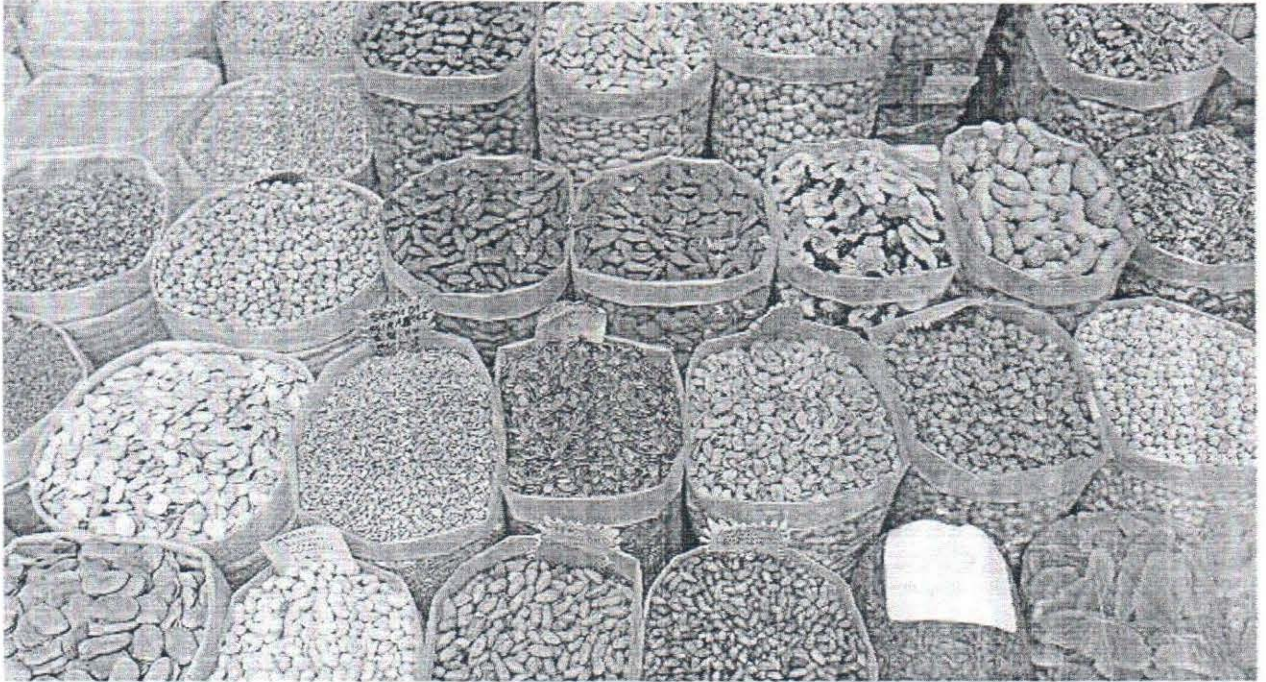




**Plate 8: A typical small group of peasant farmers**

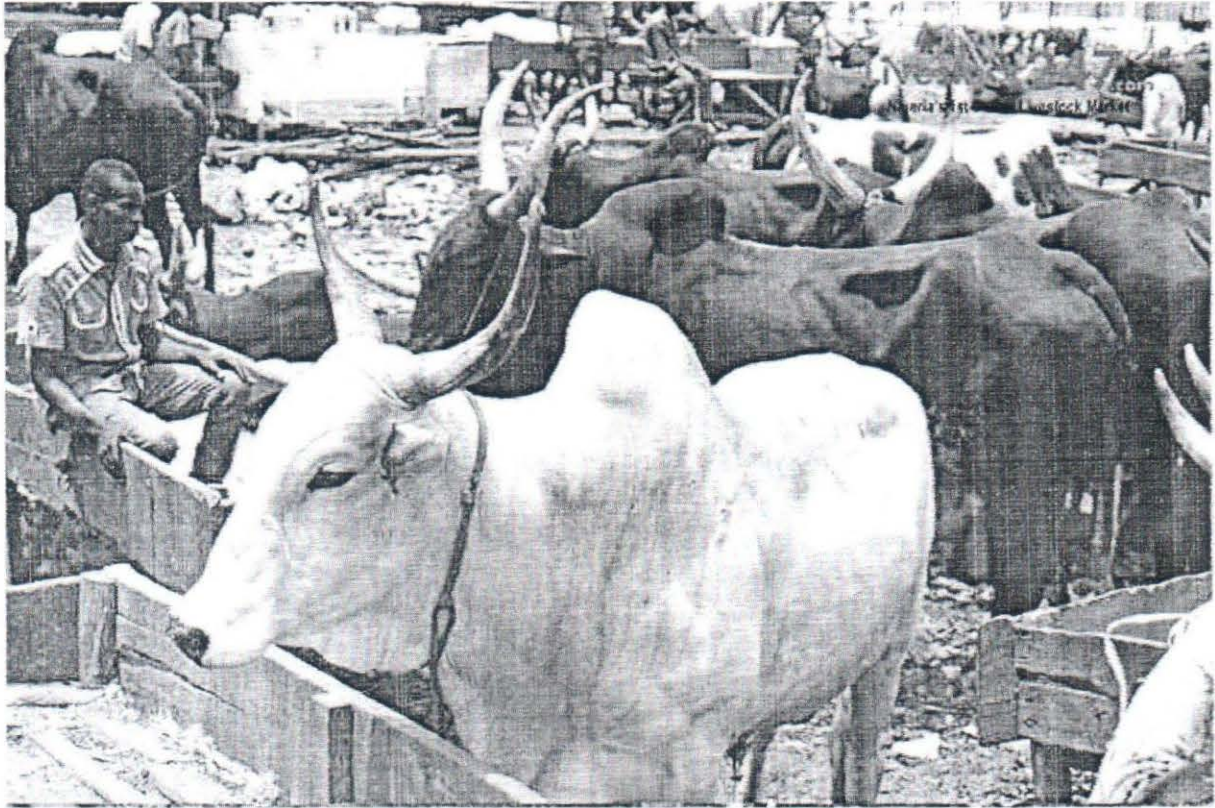
**Source: Google search, 2021**





**Plate 9: Some common food crops in Nigeria**

**Source: Google search, 2021**



**Plate 11: Cattle and livestock market**

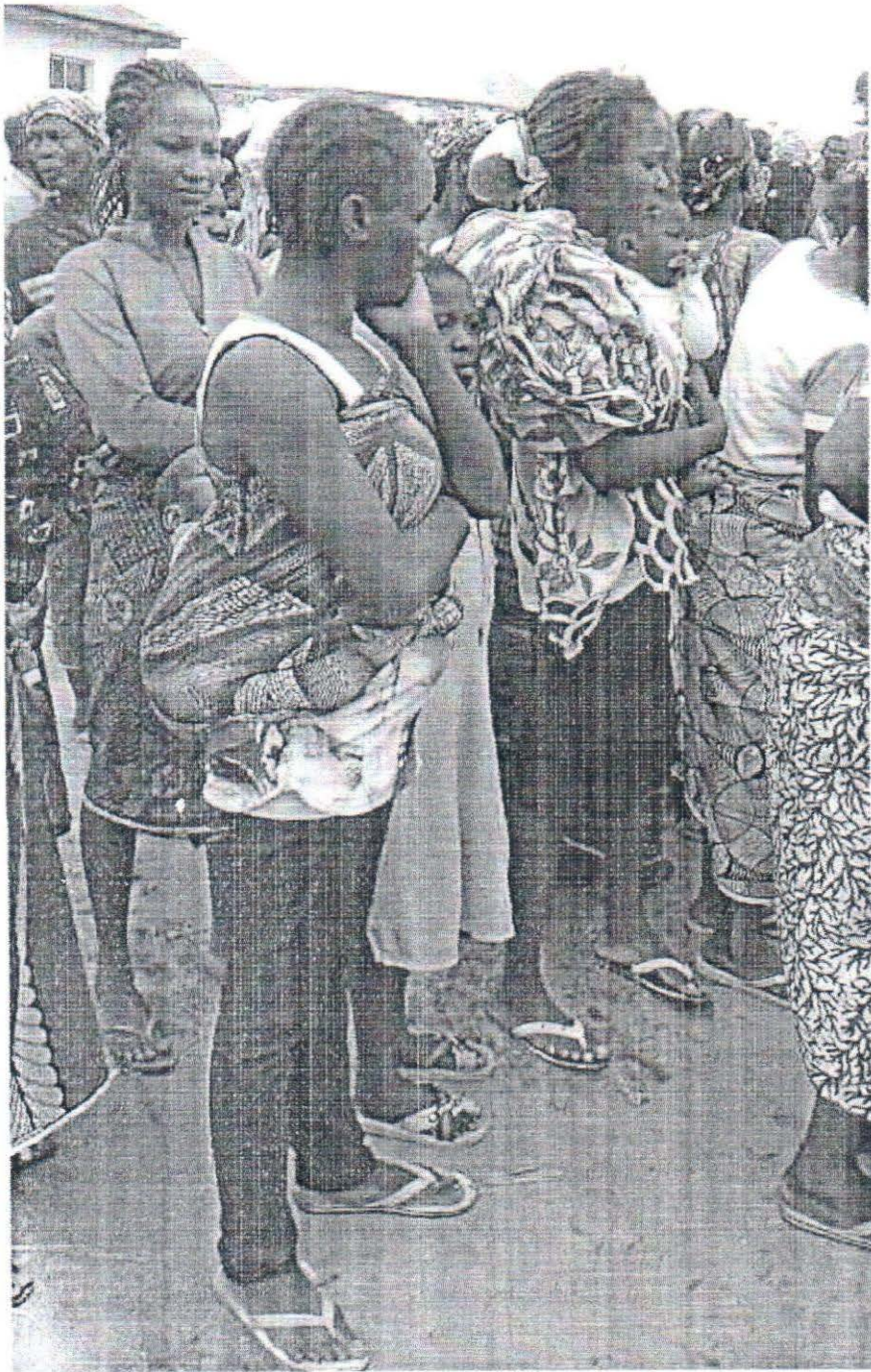
**Source: Google search, 2021**











**Plate 12: Internally Displaced Persons in Agatu, Benue State**

Source: Field work, 2021





Plate 15: Obanliku LGA Secretariat, Cross River State

Source: Field work, 2021



Plate 16: Obudu LGA Secretariat, Obudu, Cross River State

Source: Field work, 2021





Plate 17: Logo LGA, Ugba, Benue State

Source: Field work, 2021



**Plate 18: Journey for data collection in Benue State**

**Source: Field work, 2021**





**Plate 20: Bekwarra LGA Secretariat, Abuochiche, Cross River State**

**Source: Field work, 2021**



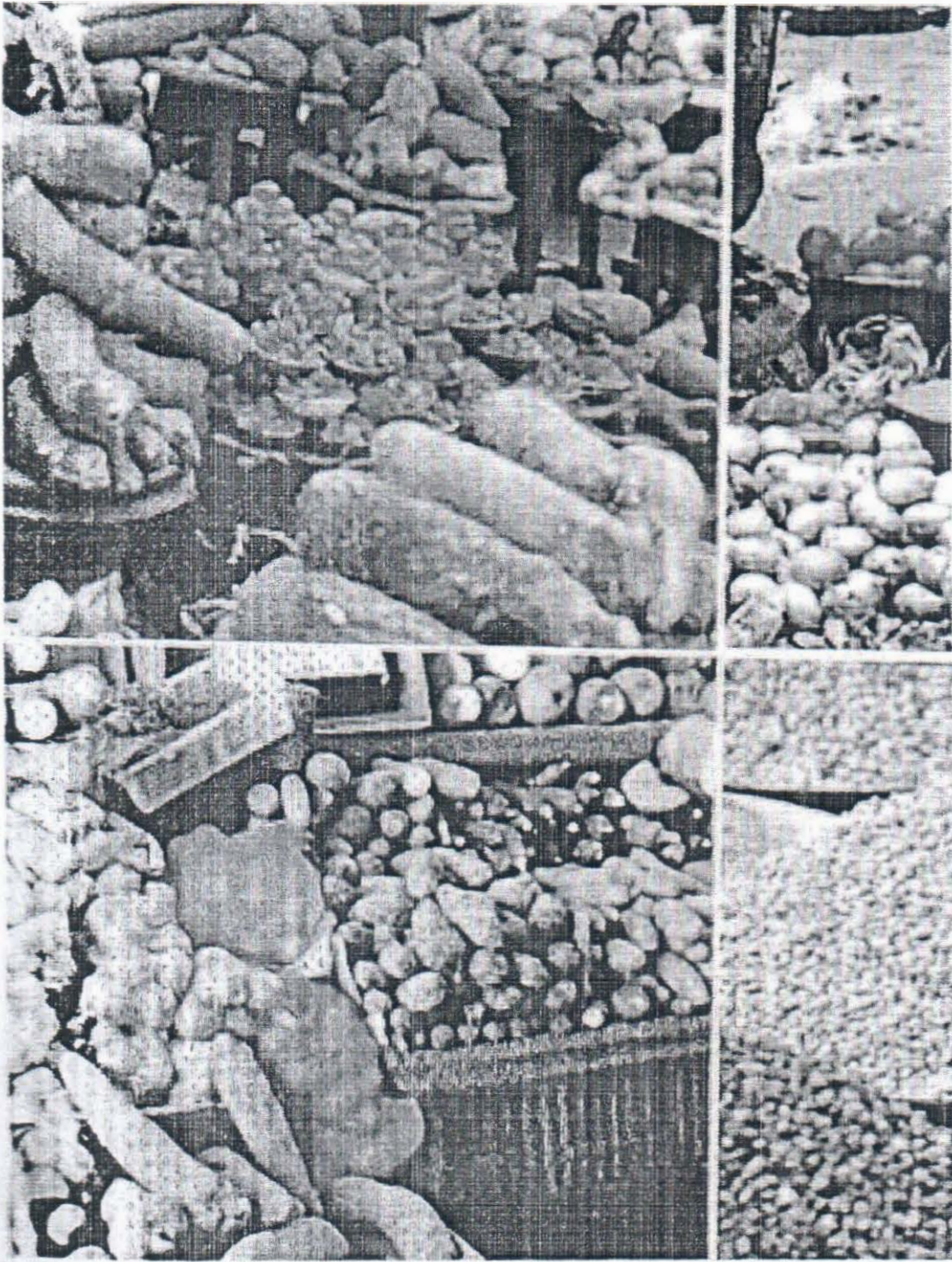


Plate 21: Food items at Ogidi Market, Abuochiche, Cross River State

Source: Google search, 2021





**Plate 22: Cattle breed at Becheve in Obanliku LGA, Cross River State**

**Source: Google search, 2021**



## OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF COUNCIL

BEKWARRA LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE, ABUOCHICHE  
CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

Our Ref: .....

23<sup>RD</sup> July, 2021

Your Ref: .....

Date: .....

All Correspondences to be addressed  
To the Secretary of Council.

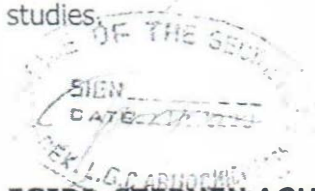
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The Head  
Department of Public Administration  
University of Calabar-Calabar  
Cross River State, Nigeria.

*Sir,*

**Re: AKAH, AUGUSTINE UGAR (PAD/Ph.D./18/023)**

With reference to your letter seeking the support of the Bekwarra Local Government Council to enable Akah, Augustine to conduct academic research in Bekwarra. I therefore, acknowledged that the Council accorded him the needed support which has enabled him in gathering data for his studies.



**EGIDI, STEPHEN ACHUEN**  
**SECRETARY OF COUNCIL**





**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**  
**OBUDU LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL**  
Cross River State, Nigeria

Date: 02-08-2021

To whom  
IT MAY  
CONCERN

**LETTER OF ATTESTATION**

I write to attest that Akah Augustine Ugar a PHD researcher in the Department of Public Administration, University of Calabar visited the Local Government Area for collection of data and needed information for the completion of his research work.

On behalf of the Executive Chairman of Council I give him the needed assistant and wished him the very best in his endeavour.

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Hon. Akah Augustine Ben

RANK / DESIGNATION: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary of Council



OFFICE OF THE  
**EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN**

**OBANLIKU LOCAL GOVERNMENT**  
Sankwula, Cross River State



*To Whom It May Concern*

**AN ATTESTATION LETTER**

I write to authenticate officially the humble and honest character of **Mr. Augustine Ugar Akah** who is currently undertaking a Ph.D research work.

I have known him for about ten (10) years. He is tactical, diplomat and a shrewd contriver of both human and material resources. His plans are quite cogent and logical. He seeks and accepts additional responsibilities which he always accomplishes with remarkable ease.

Above all, he can work independently with minimal supervision. I have no fear whatsoever, vouching for his character and amazing capacity to deliver on set goals. Please, kindly give him the necessary assistance he may need.

Accept my warmest regards and assurances.

Yours faithfully  
  
DATE 11/11/2021  
SIGN

**Augustine Ikwen**  
Hon. Secretary of Council  
Obanliku Local Government Area





**Plate 18: Journey for data collection in Benue State**

**Source: Field work, 2021**