

## The Fulani in Nigeria and their Herding System: Is it an Agro-Business or a Culture?

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<i>Abstract</i>	<i>Journal of Policy and Development Studies (JPDS)</i>
<p><i>The Fulani ethnic group is a Nilo-Saharan language spoken over a large area of west-African countries (Nigeria, Guinea Bissau, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Cameroon and Senegal). The Fulani have long history of herding and in Nigeria; the practice is enmeshed in their culture. This study seeks to investigate the Fulani culture and their herding system; is it an agro-business or a culture? The study being a non-experimental research adopted survey research design. Data were elicited from array of documentary facts drawn from both published and unpublished materials. The study revealed that herding is supposed to be subsumed as an agro-business but it has been enmeshed in the culture of the Fulani's herders in Nigeria. The study also found that the policies of Nigeria government on herding seem to treats the Fulani herding system as more of a culture and most of the policies of the state on herding are not properly planned and do not augur well with other users of land resources. The study recommends among others the need to introduce modern herding practices among the Fulani herders and they should be educated to embrace modern realities of the 21 centuries (urbanization, population outburst, intense increase on land resources, climate change, etc.) modern practices of herding (Ranching, Cow colony, Fattening, etc.).</i></p>	<p><i>Vol. 15. Issue 1 (2024)</i> <i>ISSN(p) 0189-5958</i> <i>ISSN (e) 2814-1091</i> <i>Home page</i> <i><a href="https://www.ajol.info/index.php/jpds">https://www.ajol.info/index.php/jpds</a></i></p> <p><b>ARTICLE INFO:</b></p> <p><b>Keyword:</b> <i>Fulani ethnic group, Fulani culture, agro-business, Arable farmers and conflict</i></p> <p><b>Article History</b> <i>Received 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024</i> <i>Accepted: 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024</i> <i>DOI: <a href="https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jpds.v15i1.8">https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jpds.v15i1.8</a></i></p>

### 1. Introduction

The Fulani also known as the “Pulo”, “Fula” and “Fulbe” is an ethnic group in the Sahara, the Sahel and West Africa; they are widely dispersed across the region. The Fulani Ethnic group inhabits many countries – Nigeria, Cameroon, Central Africa, Sudan, Mali, Senegal, Burkina

Faso, Chad, Gambia, Niger, Guinea – Bissau, among many others (Adams& Hollis,1987). The approximate number of *Fula* people is unknown, due to clashing definition regarding Fula ethnicity; various estimates put the figure between 25 and 40 million people worldwide. In Nigeria, their population estimate is 15 million, which is 6.6% of the country population. They are predominantly in Sokoto, Katsina, Bauchi, Gombe, Adamawa, Taraba, among many other states (Ismaila, 1993).

The Fulani people speak *Fulfulde* and their ethnic group has the largest Nomadic Pastoral Community in the world. Majority of the Fulani are semi-sedentary people as well as non-sedentary settled farmers, scholars, artisans, merchants and nobility. As an ethnic group, they are bound together by the language and their history. The Fulfulde language is closely related to the languages of Senegal and this suggests the possibility that their ancestors migrated from the Middle-East through North Africa to Senegal and they later spread eastward, reaching present day Nigeria by around the 14th Century (Shalangwu,1995).

Traditionally and historically, most of the Fulani have been cattle herders, through the centuries and many settled down and turned to politics and successfully establishing a series of kingdoms. They conquered the Hausa Ethnic group in the later part of the 18 century and held much of the Northern Nigeria in subjection until it was defeated by the British in the early part of the 19 Century (1900-1906). The religious beliefs of a large percentage of the cattle herding Fulani in Nigeria are animistic, although many of the political oriented ones are and often justified their conquest on religious grounds (Cinjel, Musa& Umaru, 2018).

The name Fulani in Nigeria has become synonymous with grazing and cattle ownership. They are sometimes called *Fulbeness* and *Pulaaku* because of their involvement in herding. Majority of the Fulani herds and that is why it is seen as their primary occupation. Crop farming is a secondary work and they take advantage of the abundant rain and manure to plant food crop such as corn, millet, sorghum, and home gardens in their backyards. Having raised livestock for centuries, the Fulani have evolved a herding system that has withstood time, weather, social change, and government intervention (Aliyu, 2015).

Several issues over the years have evolved as a result of the inability to define the culture and the agro-business in the herding system of the Fulani in Nigeria. The most common ones are: Urbanization, population explosion, increasing pressure on land by the Pastoral farmers, encroaches on cattle route and many others (Anderson, 2016). The aforesaid factors have made land a scarce commodity and the principal thing that mostly steer up the conflict between herders and farmers in Nigeria; there is no part of the country that has not witnessed this type of conflict. The protracted occurrence and commonness of the clashes between farmers and herders has led to several debates as in whether the Fulani herding system is a culture or an agro-business (Cinjel & Akende, 2015).

The government in the time past and at the contemporary moment has set up several Panels, Committees, Commissions, among others to find a lasting solution to the issue but to no avail. None of the panels, committees, and commissions of inquiry has ever come out to discern on which dimension is the Fulani herding system. There were several attempts by the administration of Murtala/Obasanjo, Shehu Shagari, Yar'Adua/Goodluck, the Buhari administration, among others to redesign the Fulani herding system. These mentioned administrations introduce reforms such as land use act, the rural grazing reserve area (RUGA), the Nomadic Education, Open Grazing system, among many others(Cinjel& Akende, 2016). The essences of these reforms were not only to boost the production but to preserve the herding system of the Fulani as a culture rather than an agro-business.

It is on this note that this study wants to investigate the Fulani herding system to see whether it is a culture or an agro-business and as well sees how the discernment can help to curb the incessant attacks and clash between herders and arable farmers in the country. The study believes that the more the society understood and discerns the differences between the culture and agro-business in the Fulani herding system, the lesser will be the chances of the conflicts.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

There were several debates over the years as in where to subsume the Fulani herding system in Nigeria. Some were of the view that it is a culture of the Fulani ethnic group while others were of the view that it should be treated as an agro- business; Animal husbandry just like in the case of Poultry, Fishery, Piggery, Bee production, among others. The Panels, Commissions and committees of investigation set up to investigate the underlying causes of the herder – farmers’ conflicts were also unclear in most of their reports as in where to define the herding activity. The Fulani see it as their culture and any attempt to define it as a business activity is seen as an encroachment on their culture.

The Nigerian government has introduced policy such as rural grazing reserve area (RUGA), nomadic education, the importation of special grasses from Brazil, among others. The essence of these reforms is not only to boost production but to provide a clear perception on the cultural aspect of the activity and also helps to mitigate some of the challenges associated with herds and arable farmers’ conflicts in the country. Agro-business activities like Crop Farming, Poultry, Bee production, Piggery, Fishery and many others are clearly defined and treated as agro-business. The owners do not have attached privilege like the case of the former. This probably could be because the former is linked to a particular ethnic group and they are known with it for centuries. It is within this purview of subsisting ambiguity in classifying the activity and its influence on the herder – farmers’ conflict that the researcher is undertaking this investigation.

### **1.2 Research Questions**

The following questions were advanced to guide the study:

- (a) What is the nature of Fulani Herding System in Nigeria
- (b) How can the dichotomy on the cultural and Agro-business dimension of the Fulani Herding System helps to mitigate Herders – farmers’ conflicts in Nigeria.
- (c) To what extent has the culture-Agro business divergence on Fulani herding system impacted on the arable farmers-Herdsmen conflict in Nigeria?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to examine the ambiguity associated with the cultural and agro-business dimension of Fulani herding system and its influence on Herders – Farmers conflict in Nigeria. The specific objectives set to be achieved are to:

- (a) Examine the nature of the Fulani Herding System in Nigeria.
- (b) Determine the influence of the ambiguity associated with the cultural and agro-business dimension of the Fulani Herding System and its impact on farmers – Herders conflict in Nigeria.
- (c) Assess the influence of the culture-Agro business divergence on Fulani herding system on the arable farmers- herdsmen conflict in Nigeria

### **1.4 Hypotheses of the Study**

- (a) The nature of the herding system of the Fulani in Nigeria has significant influence on the arable farmers – Herders’ conflicts in the country.
- (b) The ambiguity associated with cultural-Agro business dimension of Fulani herding system has significant influence on the Herders – arable Farmers’ conflict in Nigeria.
- (c) The culture-Agro business divergence on Fulani herding system has significant influence on Arable farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria

## 2. Concept of Agro-Business

An agro-business is also known as agribusiness. It is a farming, management, production and marketing of agricultural commodities such as livestock and crops. The agricultural business fields include resources management, farming and conservation, ranching and sales. According to Smith (2010), it is the economic aspect of agriculture such as supply and demand, pricing, policy and analysis. He went further to state that it is different from agribusiness. He sees the agribusiness as the business of agriculture such as production, marketing and finance.

In another parlance, Sanni (2016) sees agro-business as the process of producing and the management of agricultural values such as livestock, fishery, forestry, crop production, etc., for business purposes. In the same vein, Ango (2014) defined the concept as commercial agricultural activities from production, processing and marketing to distribution. From the foregoing definitions, we can deduce that agro-business is the production and management of agricultural produces by a farmer, group of farmers or an industry in a larger proposition and also to generate profit.

Agro-business is divided into the following types:

- a. **Crop production:** This is one of the types of agro-business. It is a common agricultural practice that involves the growing and production of crops to be used as food or fire. Crop production cover wide ranging issues such as cereals (wheat, corn, sorghum, rye, barley, bean, rice, etc.), fruits (oranges, apples, prunes, banana, tomatoes, black berries, etc.), tuber and roots (yam, cassava, sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, etc.). Crop production can be done during wet season (monsoon or rainy season) and during the dry season in the form of irrigation.
- b. **Animal production (livestock):** This is also another type of agro-business. It is the production and management of animals for consumption such as meat, eggs, milk, fur, leather and wool. Example of animals that are kept for livestock are: cow, pig, goats, sheep, birds, donkeys, mules, buffalo, oxen, hyenas, Carmel, among many others.
- c. **Aquaculture:** This is also another type of agribusiness. Aquaculture is the controlled cultivation of aquatic organism such as fish, crustaceans, mollusks, algae, and other organism of value such as aquatic plant.
- d. **Forestry:** This is also another type of agribusiness. It is the science and craft of creating, managing, planting, using, conserving and repairing forests and woodlands and other associated resources for human and environmental benefits. It can be practiced in plantations and natural lands.

### Culture and Fulani Herding in Nigeria

The Fulani in Nigeria are known with grazing and cattle ownership for ages. It is because of these features that the Nigerian Fulani are called *Fulbeness* and *Pulaaku*. The Fulani ethnic group in Nigeria is like the *Masai* and *Karimajong* ethnic group in Mali and Senegal. The only thing that differentiates them is their complexion and diet (Saleh, 2001)). The Fulani in Nigeria are mostly fair in complexion, wan and not that too muscular by their structure and they do not solely depend on cattle products, although it form a large portion of their menu (Moses, 2015). The *Masai* and *Karimajong* are darker in complexion, tall and hefty in their structure. They do

not care much on grain such as corn, millet, sorghum, cassava nuts, etc. like the Fulani in Nigeria. They do not eat meat but they value blood and milk more than all types of food (Obateru, 2000).

Among the Fulani in Nigeria, the household is the simplest, full-time and cattle breeding unit. The herding responsibilities are shared among different age and gender groups. The tasks are discharged on specific pastoral calendar that runs on a one-year cycle. The herding pattern is design to suit the climatic and vegetal cycles (Sanni, 2016). Every member of the household must contribute and benefits from the raising of animals. The family owns the herd and every animal has a designated owner right from its birth. The Fulani in Nigeria practices labour differentiation. Men specialize in herding and every male child from the age of 5 must learn herding skills. The menfolk are grouped into 3. The first set is the aged group, which mostly is the father of the house who is old and has retired from herding due to old age (Sanni, 2016). They can herd within the camp; they are the chief adviser and also good traditional veterinary medicine. The group takes care of sick cows, nursing cows and sometimes takes food to the younger ones in the field. They design the calendar for herding and coaches younger on how to herd. The youth do most of the herculean task in the camp. The youth takes animals to long distance pasture land. They are the ones that find fodder, dig wells and makes weapons such as guns, knives, swords, herding sticks, and bow and arrow, build camps and fence and also perform soil and water test (Stephenson, 2016). The last group is the children grade which comprises children from the age of 5 to 13 years. This group works hand in hand with the aged group. At the age of five (5), they must be trained on skills of herding and they do stay or walk with the aged group to learn the skill of herding and they will only be allowed to herd when they are 12 or 13 years (Stephenson, 2016).

Culinary responsibility falls on the women who process and cook the food. Girls that are not yet married and women (mother and married) weave mats, spin cotton into tread, make household decorations, and collect herbs and vegetables. The womenfolk buy food at the market, prepare milk, churn the milk (madara, salla & kindirmo), and make the butter (mai ). The Fulani women also sell the milk and the butter and do craft work such as decorating calabashes. The women grow vegetables, raises poultry and non-ruminant stocks (Moses,2016). They also clean the compound, fetch water, collect firewood, collect wild food, helps in making temporary shelter, bear and nurture the children.

Among the Fulani and also in their culture, everyone and all the men precisely must own a cow. Anyone with less than 20 cows is considered a poor person and a Fulani woman with six cows is seen and considered rich. A Fulani that has no cow is seen as someone that is either too wretched or someone that has gone astray (an outcast or a deviant). The animals (cow) belong to the individual family member and they are tended together (Cinjel & Akende, 2015). All the men in a single or individual family assume the de facto rights of all the animals. Herding time tables is designed by the aged father of the whole house and the cows irrespective of their designation of ownership right from birth can never be shared as inheritance until the demise of the overall father of the house. The inheritance of things like cow and properties are only men-concerned. When a man has no male child, the husband of the daughter automatically becomes the heir apparent (Cinjel& Akende, 2015).

The Fulani knows all the cows in their collection (Kraal) and to whatsoever number. They know when a cow is missing and the present of a strange cow in the *kraal*. The Fulani knows each of their cow; the cows have names (*Nore, Tonga, Nardi, Baleri, shegir, Wagumari,etc.*), and are recognizes by their colours, spots, patches, twist of the horn and shape of the breast, etc. The Nigerian Fulani gives cows names and each cow knows its name. The cows also know

their owner and they do recognize their owner by their footstep, clothe, body odor and by voice. The Fulani uses cane, sign languages and verbal command when they are herding or when they want to drive the animals to a certain place. During the herding, the Fulani has skills and ability to instruct the animals to lie, slow, swim, sleep or stand still. Whenever they are on a journey, they put the healthy and stronger cows at the front row and the aged, weak and the nursing ones at the back (Cinjel, et al, 2018).

Herding is a monumental task for the Fulani; it is something that they must do; they must do it to get the best grazing condition. Contrary to popular beliefs that moving with the animals is the delight of the pastoralist. Their movement of Fulani varies and the movement is dictated by individual circumstances and also because of pastoral resources which are not static and access to them requires movement. Some other factors that determine their movement are: avoidance of harmful insects, abominable weather, livestock's thief, tax assessors, and hostile environment (Moses, 2015). The Fulani are non-sedentary but they do have a place they consider as a permanent home. The movement among the Fulani has made them vast in the knowledge of geography, astrology and climate science. An average Fulani knows the path and route that linked states in the country and Nigeria with other countries. They are also good in traditional medicine. They know the movement of winds and what each wind movement means. They mingle with all ethnic group and they easily married women from different ethnic group but hardly allow their own daughters to marry a different ethnic group. They practice close marriage (cousin and cousin) and among family friends. The Nigerian Fulani are sound and acclimatize easily; any place they go, they learn and speak the language of the native at ease. The Nigerian Fulani also contract herding to any person that is trusted and is ready to comply with their term and conditions such – one year for a male cow and two year for a female cow or on monetary worth of such value (Aliyu, 2015).

Before a child is allowed to herd, he must be trained and be exposed to certain basic things. He must know how to put a cow in a *tether* and as well knows how to free it from the tether. The child must know how to milk; the time to return the animals to the camp for milking and watering and the time to take them for a grazing until sunset. The child under training is also educated on types of grasses to herd on, types of trees and shrubs to avoid (poisonous types). He is also taught how to notice a sick cow and how to herd it from the healthy ones. The child is also taught how to kill wilds and chase them away from the animals (Aliyu, 2015). The child is also taught the cattle route, the kilometer to cover and the time to leave a particular spot. Other things that must be learned are the natural method of knowing the time through the sun and the change in weather.

There is gender imbalance in the composition of the cow with the preponderance of female stock at a ratio of 4:1 on an average stock; the female species constitutes 60 to 73% in each herd type. The advantages of keeping more female vary in the herd though the most obvious is for procreation. Only few males are preserved for procreation seek and for meat production. The male cows that are kept are into two categories. The first type are the ones that are strictly kept to impregnate the female cows. These types must have basic features such as- big in size, huge and strong. The other types are those that are not seen as good for reproduction and must be castrated to be huge in size for meat production and also not to spoil the breed (Aliyu, 2015). The aged group or the father of the family must handle the castration. He does that by crushing the scrotum with a stone or metal. The male cow that is castrated must be tied before the task and can only be released after some days of nursing. The Fulani in Nigeria believes that any female cow that has stayed for a period of five years without displaying any sign of being

pregnant is either a bad specie or a sterile female cow. This type along with the sick, weak and the castrated male were the ones that are taken out for sells in the market.

The Fulani culture is fused with their herding system. Their culture cannot be separated from how the herd and any attempt to separate it is what is making the herders-arable farmers' conflict a recurrent decimal in the country. The Fulani in Nigeria sees some of the policies that were introduced by the government on herding as something strange to their culture. There is no society is static; it is moving and also advancing – population increases, there is increasing demand for land to build, increase for food and for agricultural purposes, urbanization and many others (Aliyu, 2015).

**Policies of Nigerian Government on Fulani’s Herding System**

- a. **Nomadic Education and National Commission for Nomadic Education:** This is a type of education that is not tied to a specific location or a traditional school setting. The nomadic education is clearly captured in the National Policy of Education. The national policy states the objectives of the nomadic education as follows:
  - i. Exposing the nomadic child to formal education
  - ii. Inculcating the spirit of humanity and make the nomadic child realize himself as a member of the Nigerian society
  - iii. Enabling the nomadic child take part in the development of his immediate environment and country.

The National Commission for Nomadic Education uses several approaches to achieve its goals. Some of the approaches are: On site schools, the shift systems, school with alternative intake, and Islamiyya school to provide literacy education to the nomads.
- b. **Imported grass:** This is also another reform that was initiated by the Buhari Administration. Grasses like *Chris Nagaya* and *Super Naipa* were imported from Brazil and some were planted in the abandoned grazing reserve.
- c. **Rural Grazing Reserve Area (RUGA):** This is a herding policy that was introduced by the Buhari Administration in 2016 to help to mitigate arable farmer and herders conflicts. The policy intended to build a settlement where the Fulani and their herds would stay and be provided with basic amenities such as school, hospital and modern ranching facilities. The policy was suspended at the implementation stage when it received backlog of criticisms.
- d. **Free and open Space Grazing:** This is the open grazing and herding in the open space and along cattle routes. In the system, the herder move around with the cows in the open space and feed them on grasses, shrubs, herbage and leaf of trees. The practice is age long. It is the protracted conflicts between the herders and farmers that made several states in the southern part of the country and the middle belt to introduce anti-open grazing law to checkmate the practice of the open grazing.
- e. **Cattle Grazing Reserve:** This is a land area that is set aside as a reservation for herding. The country has six grazing reserve and this are: Kachia and Kukar (Kaduna State), Gujba (Borno State), Udobo (Bauchi State) and Garkida and Sorau (Adamawa State). It is only the Kachia grazing reserve that is occupied.

**Table1: Distribution of Cows in Nigeria**

S/N	State	Cattle
1.	Abuja	7000
2.	Anambra	64,000
3.	Bauchi	1,732,000
4.	Benin	47,000
5.	Benue	146,000
6.	Borno	2,727,000
7.	Cross River	10,000
8.	Adamawa	1,503,000

9.	Imo	13,000
10.	Kaduna	998,000
11.	Kano	999,000
12.	Katsina	626,000
13.	Kwara	563,000
14.	Lagos	3,000
15.	Niger	1,165,000
16.	Ogun	27,000
17.	Ondo	9,000
18.	Oyo	296,000
19.	Plateau	1,054,000
20.	Rivers	3,000
21.	Sokoto	1,769,000

Source: Researchers' Survey, 2023

## 2.1 Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on *clash of civilization*, a thesis that people's culture and religious identity will be a primary source of conflict in the post-cold world war. It was propounded by *Samuel P. Huntington* in 1992 and it further developed by scholars such as *Francis Yoshihiro Fukuyama* (1996), *Basil Mathews* (1996) and many others. Huntington argued that future wars would be fought not between countries or ideology, but between cultures. He proposed that while the age of ideology had ended, the world had reverted to a normal state of affairs characterized by cultural conflicts. In the thesis, he argued that the primary axis of conflict in the future will be along cultural lines. As an extension, he posits that the concept of different civilization, as the highest category of cultural identity will become increasingly useful in analyzing the potential for conflict. In addition, the clash of civilization for Huntington represents a development of history.

The major tenets that are derived from the thesis are:

- (a) When culture and modernity meets, there will be conflict
- (b) Different perception on an issue can be a source of conflict
- (c) Before civilization emerge, there must be clash from different identities
- (d) Modernization encroaches on culture
- (e) When a culture is fused with certain identity, separation is difficult

### Justification for the Adoption of the Theory

1. It is the best theory that provide clear explanation on the mix of a culture with modernization
2. It is the only theory that provides explanation on the fusion of culture and different activity.
3. The theory tries to provide understanding of cultural resistance and conflict
4. The theory attempts to define the influence of modernization on culture
5. The theory provides thorough understanding on culture, perception and conflict

### Relevance of the Theory to the Study

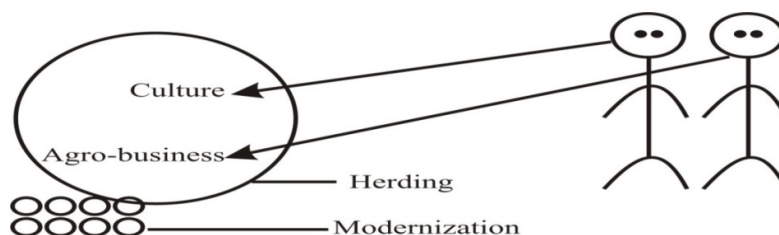
- i. The theory has helped to create an understanding between the culture of the Fulani and its fusion with herding
- ii. The theory has also helped to create a connection between what the Fulani sees as herding and the perception of the outside world on the Fulani herding as an agro-business.
- iii. The theory sees the herders-farmers clashes as clash between culture and modernization



## The Application of the Theory

The theory is applicable to the study on the following spheres:

- (a) **Culture versus Modernization:** The Huntington thesis states that whenever a culture meets with modernization, conflict abound. The Fulani see the Fulani herding system as a culture and not an agro-business. They resist any policy that will make them to deviate from the ancient practice. The attempt by the Nigerian government to reform and introduce some changes in the form of introducing nomadic education, ranching system, fattening of animal is never welcome. The advancement of the society in the form of urbanization, population outburst, and increase on arable farming, among many others is seen by the Fulani as a threat to their herding system; a system which they see as their culture. It is seen by them as a threat because most of their cattle route were affected, what they often used to graze their animal is affected by urbanization and the continuous expansion of arable farming and irrigation in the country.
- (b) **Fusion of a culture with an activity:** The Huntington thesis warns about the separation of a fused activity with a culture. The herding is supposed to be an agro-business, a separate activity; distinct from a culture but in the case of the Nigerian Fulani and the Fulani in other countries, it is no longer an activity. It means more than an agro-business and to them, it is their way of life. Any attempt to treat it as nothing short of a culture will be rebuffed without resistance. The Nigerian government is in the middle of the web. It does not know where to classify the herding of the Fulani. If it treats it as an agro-activity, the clash between the Fulani herders and the arable farmers will not end and if it is treated it as a culture, the arable farmers will continue to protest and see it as, it is taking side with the Fulani herders. It is on this context that it tried to introduce several reforms so it could have a soft landing for all but all to the contrary.
- (c) **Encroach of Modernization on culture:** Huntington in his thesis warned that there can never be modernization without an encroachment on culture. He emphatically stated that it is the encroachment that ignites conflicts. In the Nigerian sense, the urbanization, the expansion in arable farming, the growth in irrigation, the use of unused land and many others have affected the Fulani herding system. The Fulani herders have to compete with the arable farmer on water and land to feed his cows. The Fulani herders believe that herding must not be sedentary; they will always want to move with their cows and will also want to follow their normal route that is encroached by several activities as a result of modernization.
- d. **Variance in Perception and Conflict:** Huntington also states that lack of discernment on issues can lead to conflict. The clash of the herder and the farmer in Nigeria is boiled down to perception issues. The Fulani herder sees his herding as his culture and classifying it as a business is a way to look for his trouble. The arable farmers and other farmers on the other hand sees the Fulani herding system as purely an agro-business that should be distinct from a culture. It is the variance in the perception that often leads to conflict.



The figure above is an illustration of how the Fulani herding is being seen. The Fulani herder (A) sees his herding as a culture. The farmer (B) on the other hand sees it as an agro-business. It is the differences in the perception that mostly lead to the protracted conflicts. Besides the variance, modernization is fast spreading. This has left the Fulani herder in the middle; he is battling with the arable farmer and at the same time with the forces of modernization.

### 3. Methodology

We used a non-experimental research design for the study. Emphasis was given to a survey research design and a cross sectional research design precisely. The choice of this method was predicated by the nature of the data and the fact that the design will enable the study to identify the relationship between the independent variable (demographic) and dependent variables (situational factors). The population size of the study is 32,432,691 i.e. the six states that were chosen from the 6 geo-political zones. These states are: Gombe, Kaduna, Plateau, Cross River, Enugu and Oyo. This can be seen in the table below

**Table 3.1 : Population Distribution**

Geo-political Zone	State	Population
North East	Gombe	3,623,462
North West	Kaduna	8,324,282
North Central	Plateau	4,400,974
South West	Oyo	7,512,855
South-East	Enugu	4,396,020
South-South	Cross River	4,175,020
<b>Total</b>		<b>32,432,691</b>

We used Krejcie and Morgan table (1970) of sample size determination to determine our sample size which is 420. The samples were distributed using Bourdley allocation formula. The respondents for the study were selected using purposive sampling techniques which we used certain pre-determined set of criteria to select those adjudged to possess some good knowledge on crop farming, herding and Fulani culture. The Bourdley proportional allocation can be seen in the table below.

**Table 3:2 Sample Distribution**

	States	Scientific Determination	Allocation
a.	Gombe	$\frac{3,623,462}{32,432,691} \times 420$	47
b.	Kaduna	$\frac{8,324,282}{32,432,691} \times 420$	108
c.	Plateau	$\frac{4,400,974}{32,432,691} \times 420$	57
d.	Oyo	$\frac{7,512,855}{32,432,691} \times 420$	97
e.	Enugu	$\frac{4,396,098}{32,432,691} \times 420$	57
f.	Cross River	$\frac{4,175,020}{32,432,691} \times 420$	54
<b>Total</b>			<b>420</b>

The questionnaire we used for the study consisted of 15 closed ended items and it was set on the 5 point Likert type scale. We subjected the work to face and content validation. We used

internal consistency test of reliability test. We used  $RK_{20}$  and the coefficient index found was 0.87 on the rater scale of 1.

**Table 4: Ambiguity on the Agro-business Dimension**

S/No	Questions	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
1.	Herding is an agro-business	300	50	5	35	10	400
2.	The culture of the Fulani has diffused in their herding system	300	50	10	20	20	400
3.	The policies of government herding treats Fulani herding as a culture	350	20	2	8	20	400
4.	Different model can be developed to distinct the Fulani herding from their culture	300	50	10	20	20	400
5.	It negate principle of inclusivity	350	30	0	10	10	400
6.	Herding system in Nigeria can be developed like it is in other countries	350	30	0	10	10	400
7.	Indistinctness associated with culture-agro business of herding system of the Fulani contributes to herder-farmers conflict	350	30	0	10	10	400
<b>Nature of the Fulani Herding System and Herder Farmers conflicts</b>							
8.	The fusion of Fulani culture and herding spurs the conflict	360	10	10	10	10	400
9.	The herding of the Fulani has a long history	360	10	10	10	10	400
10.	The herding of the Fulani is in their migration folklores	380	5	5	5	5	400
11.	Herding is common with all the Fulani in the country	380	5	5	5	5	400
12.	Herding among Fulani is transmissible	380	5	5	5	5	400
13.	The herding of the Fulani is guided by a prevailing attitude	380	5	5	5	5	400

#### 4. Test of Hypotheses

We used chi-square to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.05% level of significance.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** That ambiguity associated with culture-Agro business dimension of Fulani herding has no significant influence on Arable farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria

**H<sub>i</sub>:** That ambiguity associated with culture-Agro business dimension of Fulani herding has significant influence on Arable farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria

**Table 5: Chi-Square Test of Hypothesis One**

	f-value	Df	Asymp. Sign (2-sided)
Pearson chi-square	65.38	8	.0000
Likelihood Ratio	321.201	1	.0000
Linear by Linear Association	72.01	1	.0000
N of valid cases	400		.0000

Source: Field Work, 2023; SPSS (V23)

**Research Result:** From the computation above, Pearson chi-square calculated value or  $\chi^2_{cal}$  is 65.38 and the tabulated value ( $\chi^2_{tab}$ ) is 17.80 at 8 degree of freedom (df) and 0.05 alpha level (i.e.  $\chi^2_c = 65.38, p > 0.05$ ). This shows that the Pearson calculated value is greater than chi-square tabulated value. With regard to this, we reject null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis and conclude that ambiguity associated with culture-Agro business dimension of Fulani herding has significant influence on Arable farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria

#### Test of Hypothesis Two

We also used chi-square to test the second hypothesis of the study and this are:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** The nature of the Fulani herding system has no significant influence on the arable farmer-herders' conflict in Nigeria

**H<sub>i</sub>:** The nature of the Fulani herding system has significant influence on the arable farmer-herders' conflict in Nigeria

**Table 6: Pearson Chi-square Test of Hypothesis Two (2)**

	f-value	Df	Asymp. Sign (2-sided)
Pearson chi-square	109.21	8	.0000
Likelihood Ratio	331.01	8	.0000
Linear by Linear Association	62.101	1	.0000
N of valid cases	400		.0000

**Research Result:** From the computation above, Pearson chi-square calculated value i.e.  $\chi^2_{cal}$  is 109.21 and the tabulated value  $\chi^2_{tab}$  (i.e.  $\chi^2_{tab}$ ) is 17.80 at 8 degree of freedom (df) and 0.05 alpha level i.e.  $\chi^2_c = 109.21$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . This shows that the calculated value is greater than chi-square tabulated value. On this ground, we reject null hypothesis and accept  $H_1$  and conclude that the nature of the Fulani herding system has significant influence on the arable farmer-herders' conflict in Nigeria

### 5. Findings and Discussions

- a. Culture is a total way of life; it is the custom, the beliefs and values of a group. An activity can be termed as a culture when it has become a way of life. Every group has its own culture. An activity that has become part and parcel of a particular group can also be seen as its culture. The Fulani ethnic group is an ethnic group with spread across many countries in West Africa. They are predominantly in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, Guinea Conakry, Guinea-Bissau, among many others. The history of Fulani in Nigeria and other countries which their population spread can hardly be separated with herding. Historical and anthropological records abound shows that the Fulani have long history of herding. It is in the myths, tales and folklores of their evolution and migration. Herding is an agro-business that is practiced by different group; practices of cow herding are in many countries and it cut across individuals and groups. It is in Mexico, Brazil, Israel, Venezuela, Switzerland, among others. Experts in cultural studies such as *Hagerman*, *Stuart Hall*, *Pierre Boudeiu* and *Jean Baudrillard* once asserted that once an activity is known with a group and has become part and parcel of their life, it has become a culture and any attempt to force it out on them will lead to what they termed as cultural shock.

It is the shock that is manifested in the forms of protracted Fulani-herders attacks and many others. Herding in an ordinary sense of word is an agro-business and it is mostly practiced as a private business. In the case of the herding and the Fulani culture; it is fused in their culture and the Fulani as well sees it as a their way of life and any attempt to treat it as a private business as it is done in other country is what often lead to the cultural shock. It is the perception of the Fulani herders and the prism in which, it is being seen that often create ways for imbroglio like conflicts, attacks, among others.

- b. The protracted conflict between the Fulani herders and the arable farmers in Nigeria is a clash of culture and modernization. The Fulani herders believe that herding is their culture. The Nigerian Fulani have preserved a traditional way of herding which distinct their herding system from that of other groups and individuals. The Fulani herders see open grazing as something they have learned and have been practicing. They see open movement with cattle on open space and across town's route as something they have being doing and a right. The Nigerian Fulani also is used to watering his herds in the natural streams and rivers. They did not create margin of error for modern activities such as growth in human population, urbanization, industrialization, expansion and growth in irrigation and many other activities. The elements of modernization felt on the Fulani herders unaware and this has led to what cultural experts called shock. There were several changes in many spheres; the human population is building houses and settling on where was used to be open space and grazing site, urbanization is expanding and encroaching on areas which used to be grazing site and cattle routes, crops' farmers are now expanding and farming on areas which were not used in the past and some areas that use to be grazing areas and thus are competing with the herders on water which they do use for cattle. The sudden appearance of modernization and its resistance

- by the Fulani herders are among some of the factors that do translate into the conflicts. An average herder sees it as an attack on his herding system and a move to frustrate his long preserved system of herding. The clash between the Fulani herder and emergence of modernization was what *Huntington* and *Fukuyama* called the clash of civilization.
- c. The Nigerian government have tried in the time past and in the contemporary time to introduce reforms to help improve the herding system and as well to help to mitigate the clashes between the arable farmers and the herders' conflict. Most of the reforms see the Fulani herding system as a culture and they were tailored toward preserving them (nomadic education, open grazing, RUGA, grazing reserve, etc.). Some of the reforms were out rightly protested by the arable farmer who thinks and sees it as preferential treatment. A number of some of this policy action were suspended and some were not implemented at all ( RUGA, cow settlement, cow colony, ranching, importation of grass, etc.). The Nigerian federal governments have tried on its own part to reform the herding system of the Fulani's herders. The federal governments in the past and at the contemporary moment treat it as culture and not an agro-business or a private business and despite this, the reforms are not working; it either ends abruptly or will receive backlash of criticism from the public. The simple reason why the reforms and the policies are not yielding results is simply the approach and manners in which other users of the land resource are being oriented on it and not taken along. Sigmund Freud in his analytical theory emphatically talks about the human nature, change and implementation. He stressed that the human nature would resist any change or policy that is not planned and is implemented abruptly. He stressed that the human nature does not want to be rushed and if it is rushed with anything new (policy, reform, programmes, etc.), it can react. He went further to state that any change that government wants to introduce should be gradual, slow and steady, not rapid. This according to him will lead to acceptance, understanding, patronage and will also help to prevent revolt. Bentham Jeremy in his utilitarian theory also emphasizes the importance of inclusivity in governance. He categorically states that a policy cannot please all but the losers or those that are not going to benefit from it should be compensated. The federal government of Nigeria must at times introduce the herding policies haphazardly without taking cognizance of the human nature, change and reaction. Other land users are not only oriented on the policy but are not compensated.
  - d. The perception of the society and other non-Fulani herders on government reforms and policies on the herding system in the country is also another issue that kept contributing to the herders-farmers conflict in Nigeria. Other users of land and more precisely those in the agro-business see the reforms and policy of the government as unfavourable to them. They have made it known to the federal government in several panel of investigation that it is favouring the Fulani herders over the other users of land resources. The other users see herding as a private business just like other agro-business while the Fulani herders see their herding system as a culture which they must preserve. The federal government is in between; it wants to treat the herding system of the Fulani as a culture and at the same time wants to mitigate the herders-farmers conflict. It has failed to realize that the conflict lies in the perception and the utilities that the other group thinks it is lacking.

### **Conclusion**

The Fulani ethnic group is one of the ethnic groups under the Nilo-Saharan group. The language spread in seven (7) countries in West Africa. The Fulani in Nigeria and other countries are known with herding. This has made a lot of them to be nomadic and acquaintance with the knowledge of local geography within and outside the country. The herding of the Fulani in

Nigeria has a long history; it is in their history, it is their migration tales, it is also in their folklores and myth. The herding among the Fulani has enmeshed with their culture; you cannot talk about the Fulani's culture without mentioning herding. Ideally, they are two distinct activities that supposed to co-exist separately. Herding in a normal ground and as it is being done in other countries, is an agro-business. In Nigeria the herding of the Fulani ethnic group is treated as a culture and that is why all the policies of government in the past and at the contemporary time does not distinct the culture of the Fulani from the agro-business dimension.

The Nigeria government have introduces several policies such as national grazing reserve, nomadic education, RUGA, grass importation, among others to mitigate the arable farmers herders conflict in Nigeria but to no avail. The conflict kept re-occurring because the policies were not properly planned and were mostly formulated and implemented in a haphazard manner. Apart from the frailty from the policies, the arable farmers were not given much attention like the Fulani's herders. The herders and arable farmers' conflict in Nigeria can only be curbed when the Fulani herders are educated to understand that herding is an agro-business just like the arable farming and it should be done in such a way that it would not affect other users of land resources.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations were proffered:

1. The Fulani's herder need to be informed and be educated on the impact of climate change, population explosion and urbanization. This will help them to embrace modern forms of herding as it is practiced in other countries
2. The Fulani's herder in Nigeria should be taught to understand the need to distinct their culture from herding. Even though it has be enmeshed in their culture, the application of modern practice of herding like ranching, cow fattening, among many others can make it distinct as it is done in other countries.
3. The policies of Nigeria government on herding should be properly planned and be designed to ensure that all users of land resources are not affected
4. The Nigeria government should copy from other societies the modern practices of herding such as reaching, fattening, and cow colony, among others. This will go a long way to reduces herders- arable framers' conflict in Nigeria.

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