

Mwaghavul Arable Farmers – Fulani Herdsmen Conflict and Socio-economic Development in Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State

Cinjel, Nandes Dickson¹ and Kefas Matakhitwen²

^{1&2}Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Management, Federal University Wukari, Taraba State

Corresponding Author: ncinjel@yahoo.com

Contact: 08065444172

Abstract	NG-Journal of Social Development
<p><i>Arable farmers and the Fulani herdsmen conflict is a societal malaise that is bedeviling most societies in Nigeria. The scenes were more prevalence in the North-central geo-political zone of the country. In Plateau State, the incidence cut across different local government areas in the state. This study therefore examined the conflict between the Mwaghavul Arable farmers and the Fulani herdsmen in Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State. The study adopted a mixed method research design. Data were elicited from documentary facts The main instruments for data collection were questionnaire, in-depth interview and observation; they were subjected to face and content validation. Focus group discussion and in-depth tinterview were used to corroborate the quantitative analysis. We used Pearson chi-square and ANOVA to test the hypotheses of the study at 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study revealed that the conflict was triggered by the damages of crops of the Mwaghavul arable farmers by the herds of the Fulani herdsmen. The study also found the conflict has adverse on socio-economic development (schools, businesses, mutual trust, agricultural production, etc.). Based on the findings, study recommends the need to modernize herding system in Nigeria, need for civic education, moral probity, among others</i></p>	<p>Vol. 13 Issue 1 (2024) ISSN(p) 0189-5958 ISSN (e) 2814-1105 Home page https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ngjsd</p> <p>ARTICLE INFO: Keyword: <i>Arable farmers, Fulani herdsmen, Conflict, Crop damage</i></p> <p>Article History Received 26th February 2024 Accepted: 8th March 2024 DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ngjsd.v13i1.6</p>

1. Introduction

Several states in Nigeria have witnessed the menace of herders and arable farmers' conflict. The menace was common in the North Central geo-political zone. Mangu local government is one of the local government areas in Plateau State that is engulfed with the conflict. In Mangu local government area, the conflict is chiefly between the Mwaghavul arable farmers and the Fulani herdsmen (Bello, 2019). The Mwaghavul people are predominantly situated in Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State. They are the largest ethnic group in the Local Government Area and are also among the predominant ethnic groups in the state. They are chiefly arable farmers and they produce agricultural products like maize, Irish potatoes, cow pea, sweet potatoes and millet, among others in large quantity. Apart from crop farming, significant numbers of them domesticate animals like pigs, goats, and local birds (ducks, chickens, turkeys, etc.). The Mwaghavul people have 13 districts and these districts have several villages and wards (Bello, 2019).

The people are known for peace and do have good relationships with their neighbouring ethnic groups. Traditional history has it that the people are warriors and good hunters; this is symbolized by the horse in their national motor and the displays of horses during their traditional festivals. The recorded history of conflict that involved the Mwaghavul people was the *Mwaghavul-Ron* conflict of 1994 and *Mwaghavul-Pyem* conflict of 1998. Apart from these two conflicts, it has no record of conflict; even in 2001 that most Local Government in State boils as a result of the 2001 Jos North conflict, the Local Government Area was among those that were not affected (Cinjel, Musa & Umaru, 2018).

The predominant religion in the Local Government is Christianity and Islam. The indigenous people profess Christianity. Only few of them professed Islam and other traditional religious practices. The Hausa groups that settled in the local government live in the heart of the town; mostly at the road side and commercial areas. Apart from the Hausa group, there are other ethnic groups like the *Igbo*, *Yoruba*, *Igala* and other Plateau state's tribes (Cinjel, Musa & Umaru, 2018). The Fulani in the local government area mostly lives in the outskirts and remote villages where they can easily have access to open space, hay and folders for their animals. It is only few of them that have no cattle that live among the Hausa group inside the town. Apart from these Fulani, there are nomadic groups who do come during dry season and leave during raining season. There is no any historical record of conflict between the Mwaghavul people and the aforesaid ethnic groups. What started as conflict began in the later part of 2022 when kidnapping rear up its ugly face in the local government area; and most of the culprit that were caught were mostly the Fulani youths. The malaise kept reoccurring despite the several interventions of the security apparatus in the local government. It was the prevalence of the malaise that breeds ground for mistrust and subsequent hostile relationship between the Mwaghavul ethnic group and the Fulani herders in the local government area (Stephenson, 2024)

The well-known conflicts in the state were the conflict between the Berom and the Fulani in places like Barkin Ladi, Jos South and Riyom Local Government Area. In Mangu Local Government Area, there was no any history of conflict between the Fulani holders and the Mwaghavul people until April 2023 when what started as a dispute between a Fulani herder and a Mwaghavul farmer transcended to a widespread conflict that led to the death of several persons, destruction of several properties and the displacement of thousands of person. This study intends to find out the actual

causes of the conflict between the arable Mwaghavul farmers and the Fulani herders and determine its impact on socio-economic activities in the local government (Stephenson, 2024).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

There are several claims on what actually were the causes of the conflict between the Mwaghavul arable farmers and the Fulani herders in Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State. Several persons have different view and narrative on what actually culminate into the conflict in the local government area. There are groups who linked it to competition for land resources between the Fulani herder and the indigenous people who are chiefly arable farmers. Another variance is the increasing cares of social malaise like kidnapping, armed robbery and phone snatching which were allegedly linked to the Fulani herders. Another version was that it is politically motivated. There are some who also linked the conflict to ethnic and religious sentiment. The several variances were among some of the things that incite and necessitated this study; it is believes that unless the cause of a scene is found, a solution could be proffered.

There were several reports on the effects of the conflicts in the area. It was said that several properties (houses, business, cattle, cars, among others) were destroyed. There were this view that several persons were kills, thousand person displaced and many others. This study intent to find the effect of the conflict and how it affects socio-economic development in the local government area

1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions were posited to guide the study:

- (a) What are the actual cause of the Mwaghavul arable farmers-Fulani herdsmen conflict
- (b) What are the consequences of conflicts on socio-economic development?
- (c) What mechanism can be put in place to help to resolve the conflict?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to examine the Mwaghavul arable farmers -Fulani herdsmen conflict and its effect on socio-economic development in Mangu Local Government Area. The specific objectives which the study seeks to achieve are to:

- (a) Identify the causes of the conflict between the Mwaghavul arable farmers and the Fulani herdsmen in Mangu Local Government of Plateau State
- (b) Ascertain the effects of the conflict on socio-economic development
- (c) Provides ways that would help to curb the conflict and its effect on development

1.4 Hypotheses of the Study

The study hypothesizes that:

- (a) The destruction of the crops of the arable farmers by the herds of the Fulani herdsmen is the principal cause of the conflict the *Mwaghavul arable farmers* and the *Fulani's herdsmen*
- (b) The Mwaghavul arable farmers -Fulani herdsmen conflict has significant effect on the development of Mangu Local Government

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study covers the period of seven years (from 2017 to 2024). The justification for the selection of the period is that, it was during these periods that the conflicts were more pronounced in the local government area.

2. Review of Related Literature

Concept of Conflict

Conflict arises from the pursuit of divergent interests, goals and aspirations by individuals or groups in defined social and physical environments. Change in the social environment, such as access to new political position, or perceptions of new resources arising from development in the physical environment, are fertile grounds for conflicts involving individuals and groups who are interested in using these new resources to achieve their goals. By thus, recognizing the inherent nature of conflict in heterogeneous and competitive situations, people, more or less compellingly, sustain their societies as ongoing social system through the resolution, transformation and management of conflicts (Cinjel & Akende, 2015).

One of the most quoted traditional definitions of conflict regards it as “a struggle over values claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals” (Coser, 1999: 10). In the same direction, Park and Burgess (cited in Abdu, 2010) argue that “conflict is designed to resolve divergent dualism and achieve some kind of unity even if it is through the annihilation of one of the conflicting parties”.

Conflict may not be regarded only in a negative light of dysfunctional or disjunctive process and a breakdown of communication as some scholars tend to suggest (Lundberg, 1999; Clark & Dear, 2004). Conflict is a conscious act involving personal or group contact and communication. Together with, though distinct from competition, struggle, and contest, etc. conflict is a normal process of interaction particularly in complex societies in which resources are usually scarce. Although, conflict may generally exist “wherever incompatible activities occur” (Deutsch, 1999:156), and may result in a win-lose situation; the resolution, transformation and management of conflict may produce a “win-win” outcome.

Hence Coser (1999: 10) elaborate definition of conflict becomes a useful clarification:

Social conflict may be defined as a struggle over values or claims to status, power, and scarce resources, in which the aims of the conflicting parties are not only to gain the desired values but also to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rival. Such conflict may take place between individuals, between collectivities, or between individuals and collectivities. Inter-group as well as intra-group conflicts are perennial features of social life.

Conflict can hardly be discussed outside the concept of pluralism. As Smooha (cited in Abdu, 2010) points out, both pluralism and conflict are related in complex ways. Furnivally (1999) subscribed that plural societies are vulnerable to conflicts and this is as a result of divergences in goals. He used the “Medley people” , a society in *Burma* and *Java*, where *Europeans*, *Chinese Indians* and the indigenous groups were perceived to “mix but, do not combine,” to depict a situation of co-existing diverse and cultural arrangements involving dominance and subordination in the same social setting. This idea of pluralism was picked up for systematic and serious analysis by several scholars, for example, Gluckman (cited in Ibrahim, 2007) and various contributors. Recent and current ideas of pluralism regard it as multidisciplinary and multidimensional, and defined it in the context of cultural diversity and social segmentation of an encapsulating society.

A plural society is thus, characterized by co-existing but distinct cultural diversities and compulsory social institutions which determine and guide the individual and group behaviour of the incorporated people. As we shall examine later in this study, Nigeria and Plateau State in particular, the setting for this research work is a plural society.

Here, there are group intercultural encounters in the process of fostering specific interests and aspirations in view of the limited common resources. In Nigeria, like in other plural societies, it is necessary to direct the analysis of conflicts to involve various cultures and strategic social institutions in the society. In this way, we can more comfortably and assuredly assist parties in conflict to identify and eliminate systemic problems in the course of the resolution, transformation and management of conflicts.

Therefore, conflict can simply be defined as an intrinsic and inevitable part of human existence and often occurred as a result of the pursuit of incompatible interest and goals by different groups. It takes place in the course of interaction between individuals and groups. Conflict mostly takes place because individuals and groups are seeking to achieve goals and objectives, or to fulfill certain desires which may be scarce and which others are also seeking or are reluctant to share with others

Concept of Development

All available evidence as shown in the literature on development portends the concept as nebulous, hence it has different meanings in different contexts and sometimes even in the same context. Consequently, several schools of thought, models, paradigms and theories have emerged to explain the concept (Nnadozie, 1986).

The western liberal scholars see development as a total transformation of a traditional or a primordial society into the type of technologies and associated social organization that characterize advanced economically prosperous and political stable nation of the Western world (Todaro & Smith, 2003). The above definition implies that there is one average or normal path to development which countries have followed in the past and which they are obliged to in the future (Stevenson, 2012)

The scholars of Marxist philosophical persuasion, found the above conception of development grossly deficient, because it has not led to real development, instead, it enhanced the progressive underdevelopment of most third world state (Bello, 2013). Thus, they see development as socio-economic transformation which man engenders as he, jointly with his fellows, interacts with the natural environment through labour power. In a similar vein, Okoli and Onah (2002) define the concept as a human issue which should involve the total full mobilization of a society. Espousing a similar view, Nnoli (2003) conceives of development as a dialectical phenomenon in which the individual and society interact with their physical, biological and inter human environment, transforming them for their own betterment and that of humanity at large and being transformed in the process. It can be construed from the above mentioned definitions, that development implies the capacity to secure and sustain a better life to human kind in the society. The striving to elevate human life and comfort from a given level considered unsatisfactory to a better and perhaps, more comfortable level.

Apparently piqued by this lack of an all-embracing definition of development, Seers (1972:47) poses three (3) basic questions, about the meaning of development when he asserts:

The question to ask about a country's development is therefore: What has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, especially if all three have, it would be strange to call the result development even if per capita income has soared.

But the phenomenon of development or the existence of a chronic state of underdevelopment according to Todaro and Smith (2003) is not only a question of economics or even quantitative measurement of incomes, employment, and inequality. It is a real fact of life for over three (3) billion people in the world. To them, development must therefore, be conceptualized as a multidimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes, and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality, and the eradication of absolute poverty. Most importantly, development must represent the whole gamut of change by which an entire social system turned to the diverse basic needs and desires of individuals and social groups within that system, it moves away from a condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory and towards a condition or situation of life regarded as materially and spiritually better.

Guolet (1990) defined development as the enjoyment of good things of life. He mentioned three basic values that should necessarily serve as a conceptual basis and practical guideline for understanding the inner meaning of development. These according to him are life sustenance (food, shelter, health, and protection), self-esteem (sense of work and self-respect of not being used as a tool by others for their own understanding, dignity, respect and recognition) and freedom from alienation of material condition of life and from social solitude to nature, ignorance, other people, misery, institutions and dogmatic beliefs.

Rodney (1972) sees development as a many sided process. He stressed further that at the level of the individual, it implies increased skills and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being, and at the level of the social group, it implies an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationships. Development therefore to Rodney is when members of a society jointly increase their capacity for dealing with their environment.

What is discernable from the above definitions is that development is man-centered and can be seen as a multi-dimensional process involving the fundamental transformation of society in its totality (economy, polity, culture, etc.). In other words, development implies growing in self-reliance, both individually and collectively. The basis for a nation's development must be its own resources, both human and material fully used to meet its own needs.

Nature and History of Mwaghavul Arable Farmers-Fulani Herders Conflict

The history of the Fulani herders and Mwaghavul ethnic group has no precise date; the conflicts have their basis from several factors and at different period. In the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, what mostly leads to minor dispute between the two ethnic groups is when the herders' animals damage the crops of the Mwaghavul arable farmers due to either negligence or carelessness. These disputes at the time were not common and were easily managed by traditional institutions and the police force; it was never seen as an issue that will later result to conflict (Cinjel, Musa & Umaru, 2018). In 2007, there was a dispute between a Mwaghavul man and a Fulani man over a land. The

Mwaghavul man claimed that his father was a friend to the father of the disputed Fulani man and that his father before his death temporarily gave his said friend (the father of the disputed Fulani man) a portion of land on mutual trust. The parties later on pass away and the son of the Mwaghavul man returned home after retirement from active service with the Plateau State government and wanted to retrieve the possession of the land but the other son of his father's friend (the disputed Fulani man) dispute the fact and this led to a tussle. The Mwaghavul youth in *Diaka* angrily went and set the house of the Fulani man ablaze; and they forcefully ask him to leave the area. The aggrieved Fulani took the case to the C Division of the Nigerian police in Jos. All the Mwaghavul youth that participated in the act were reprimanded and were ordered to pay the acclaimed money and properties that the Fulani man claimed to have lost as a result of the tussle (Cinjel, Musa & Umaru 2018) .

In the 2000s, there were high incidents of armed robbery in places like *Bwai, Ncha, Chisu, Alogom, Giambos, Shimilang* and *Daika* areas. Several of the people that were caught by the police in the act were mostly the Fulani youths in the mentioned areas. In 2021, 3 police officers were killed during a clash with the robbers along *Bwai* road and the culprits found were the youths of the Fulani herders in the community. The proactivity of the police, vigilante group and the association of hunters help to nip the incident to its bud (Stephenson, 2024).

Aside the incidents of armed robbery, kidnapping became more prevalence in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. It was frequently done in places like *Kantoma, Mangul, Mairana, Bungha-Dawo, Daika, Sabon Gari*, among others. A lot of persons were kidnapped and several culprits that were caught in the act were the youths of the Fulani herders in the mentioned community. There were several meeting and dialogue between the traditional institutions of the Mwaghavul people and Fulani's herders. Beside the mentioned vices, the destruction of the farmers' crop kept reoccurring. The destructions were mostly done in the night and on Sundays; when the arable farmer is not in the farm (Stephenson, 2024). Several reports were filed by the affected farmers at the different police stations in the local government area but there was no any record of arrest. It did not stop the destruction of crops; the cattle of the indigenous people were rustled in almost all the districts that constituted the Mwaghavul chieftdom in the local government area. The crops damage and cow rustling kept re-occurring despite the intervention of the Nigerian police force and the traditional institutions from both the divides. On 20th August 2022, a Mwaghavul arable farmer out of annoyance shut a Fulani herder whom he caught herding on his crops. The arable farmer was arrested by the police and later imprisoned. The traditional institution of the Mwaghavul ethnic divide sat with the leadership of MACBAN in the local government to discuss how a lasting solution could be found; to help put an end to the issue but all to the contrary (Human Right Watch, 2024).

On 5th of May, 2023, a Fulani herder (youth) was herding and out of negligence left the cattle and they went and damage the crop of a young Mwaghavul man. The young man came and found the herder and insisted that he must be compensated. In the process of the settlement, the herder rejected what he was charged by the arable farmer and he annoyingly slapped the herder for what he considered as an insult. The herder on his part angrily picked his herding stick and hit the crop farmer on the head. The crop farmer fell on the ground and collapsed; several attempts to revive him prove abortive and when he was taken to the hospital, he was declared death on arrival (DOA). The youths from where the deceased arable farmer came (Kiwes) were bitter and when after the herder. They went and the found out that he has left the community, they then projected their

aggression on his younger brother. On 8th May, 2023, the Fulani herder in the *Kiwes* villages carried out an attack at the area and in the attack, several persons were killed and properties worth millions of Naira were destroyed. On 10th of May, 2023, the Mwaghavul youth in *Kiwes* and those in the neighbouring villages launched a reprisal attack and in the attack, several Fulani herders were also killed along with their cattle (Human Right Watch, 2024).

On 15th May, 2023 and around 3 pm, 13 villages were attacked by the Fulani's herders in Mangu Local Government Area. In the coordinated attacks, several persons (men, youth, women and children) were killed; several houses, churches and agricultural produces were destroyed. The affected villages are: *Chisu, Mangul, Kibat, Jwakchom, Ting, Alogom, Kantoma, Tyop, Kombili, Changkal, Gwet, Njing, Dang Dai, Farin Kasa, Murish*, among others. In the attacks, several persons were displaced and a lot of communities were deserted. This was what led to other attacks in the local government area in 2023. The Fulani herders were forced out of the southern part of the local government; and a lot of the Fulani herders moved to the northern side and settled with the *Pyem* and the *Kwangka* ethnic groups. Some of the Fulani that have no cow went and settled among the Hausa communities living in *Sabon Kasuwa, Sohon Kasuwa, Angwan Pyemawa areas*, among others (Human Right Watch, 2024).

Dislodged and deserted Mwaghavul communities like *Tyop, Alogom, Changal, Washna, Kombili, Ndang Dai*, among others were farm produces like maize, irrigated Irish potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, among others were grabbed and were occupied by the Fulani herders.

Table: Chronological History of Clashes between the Mwaghavul Arable farmers and the Fulani herders

S/N	Year	Nature
1.	2007	The confront at Diaka
2.	May, 3, 2023	The first attack at Kiwes
3.	May, 7, 2023	Reprisal Attack
4.	May, 9, 2023	Attack at Chisu
5.	May 15, 2023	Coordinated Attack on 13 villages
6.	1 st June 2023	Clash between Muslim and Christians in Mangu Town
7.	24 December	Attack at some villages
8.	23 & 24 January 2024	Muslim-Christian clash in Mangu Town
9.	24 January	The massacre of all villages in Kwaghaslalek

Source: Researcher Survey, 2024

On 20th January, 2004, the Fulani herders attacked the *Sabon Gari* Village and inflicted injuries on 5 youths, they burnt several properties and left. In an attempt to retaliate, the Mwaghavul youths went and drove out all the Fulani herders in *Tyop* out of the area. At the hearing of the scene, the Hausa ethnic group residing inside Mangu town and precisely in *Sabon Kasuwa, Sohon Kasuwa, Angwan Pyemawa, Lahir, Angwan Malti*, among others became aggrieved; they came out and were setting the houses of the Christians living among them. The Christian in other side of the town (*Bungha, Dawo, Angwan mission, Angwan Sarki, Chichim*, among other also retaliated by setting the houses of both Hausa people and all Muslims living among them. Major roads were barricade; worship centres were burnt, several persons were killed and several shops were ransacked, among others. It was as a result of this, the state government declared 24 hours curfew in the town. Even with the curfew, *Kwaghaslalek*, a village that housed the *NYSC camp* was attack in the early hours

of 24th January 2024. In the attack, all the 30 persons living in the village were killed and this was what further deepens the crisis (Human Right Watch, 2024).

Empirical Review on Herders-Farmers Conflict in Nigeria

Adams and Hollis (1987) conducted a study on *hydrology sustenance resources* and its impact on *herders- farmers' conflict* in Hadija –Nguru Wetland. They used a survey research design and the sample size drawn for the study was 350. The study employed a systematic and simple random technique to select the respondents of the study. The study generated data from both primary and secondary data. The study found that land and hydrological resources were at the heart of the conflict between Farmers and herders in Hadija –Nguru.

In 1993, Ismaila (1993) carried a study on *socio-economic basis of farmers-pastoralists conflict* in Jigawa State. The study employed a survey research design and used the sample size of 280 which was determined using *Krejcie and Morgan Formula*. Cluster and simple random sample techniques were exploited to reach to the respondents. Both primary and secondary data were used and were generated interview, observation, questionnaire and documentary facts. The study uncovered that the intermittent conflict between the herders and farmers have significant effect on development of the study area Shalangwa (1995) conducted a study on the importance of *adequate river flows* to the economy of *NEAZDP area*. The study used mixed method research design. Taro Yamane Formula was used to determine the sample of the study which is 453. Simple random and cluster sampling techniques were used to reach to the respondents. The study used *Bourdley (1964) Proportional Formula* to distribute the instruments to the clusters. In the study, the data of the study were generated from both primary and secondary sources of data collection. The study revealed that water and land resources have significant impact on the farmers-herders conflict in Northern part of Nigeria

Mkalachiwi(1995) carried a study on the dilemma of *sustainable water resources management* in *Komadugu, Yobe Basin*. The study adopted survey research design. The study used *Fishers' Exact Sampling Formula* to determine the sample size of the study. The sample size utilized was 420 and *simple random* and *purposive sampling* technique was used. The study also generates data from both the primary and secondary data. The study found that climate change has significant effect on farmers-herders conflict in the Yobe Basin

Bello (2013) carried a study on *herdsmen and farmers conflict* in Kano State in the North-Western Geo-political zone of Nigeria. In the study, *four –stage cluster random sampling* procedure was used to administer the research instruments. Out of the 44 local governments in the state, 31 LGAs were affected by the menace. In each of the 31 LGAs, five farming communities were randomly selected making a total of 155 villages. In the study, 10 arable farmers were randomly selected from each of the village, thus making a total of 1550. In each of the 31 LGAs, 250 cattle herdsmen were also randomly selected for data collection. They states that necessity to provide food crops and animals as well as raw materials for industry and export in order to meet the growing demands has contributed to the completion for the use of land resources and herders-farmers conflict in Kano State

Chinwokwu (2017) conducted a study on the glamorization of Fulani herdsmen's criminality and implication on national security in Nigeria. The study used mixed method research design and gives emphases on happening in the north central Geo-political Zone. Slovin formula was used to

determine the sample size of the study which is 430. Cluster and simple random techniques were used to administer the research instruments. The study also generated data from both primary and secondary sources. The study revealed that the inaction of the state and the security apparatus have significant influence on the criminality of herdsmen in the zone

Cinjel, Musa and Umaru (2018) carried out an empirical assessment of herders-Farmers conflict in Nigeria, from 2000-2017. The study used meta-Analysis and documentary research design. The documentary facts were extracted from array of published and unpublished materials relevance to the study. The primary data were collected from structured interview whose content comprised of open and closed ended questions. The primary data was generated using participatory method, which combines informant's interview with focus group discussion. The result of the study reveal that factors such as porous borders, population explosion, bad governance among others contributes to herders- Farmers conflict in Nigeria

2.1 Theoretical framework

The study is anchored on Cumulated Frustration and Reaction Theory of conflict. It is a new theory of conflict and it developed its basis from the Frustration Aggression Theory (FAT). The theory states that no matter how peaceful a person is, if he or she is pushed to the wall, he or she is bound to react (Cinjel, Musa & Umaru, 2018) . The theory believes that aggression is innate in the human nature and differentiating them is what is considered as temperament; some react slowly while some react fast and immediate. The theory did not totally condemn aggression, it rather sees it as natural and at times, it is an attempt to preserve life (first law of nature). The theory states that people who have low reaction temperature only react when they have accumulated the frustration; they vent out their reaction in form of aggression when the bad scene kept reoccurring.

The theory has the following tenets:

- (a) When a person is pushed to the wall, he or she is bound to react
- (b) One can only be aggressive when he or she is frustrated and not all aggression are all bad, some are in the form of self-defense and preservation
- (c) An accumulated frustration easily birth out aggression
- (d) Some people react to frustration easily while others slowly react to it

The Mwaghavul people of Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State are peaceful, loving and hospitable people. It is the only local government area in Plateau State that has no record of religious conflicts; in 2001 and 2007 when other local government areas, were boiling, Mangu Local Government was calm. In the local government area, different people professed different religion- Christianity, Islam, traditional religion, Eckanker, Gail Movement, among many others. It is one of the local government areas in the state that has accommodated diverse ethnic groups, both within and outside the state - *Igbo, Yoruba, Tiv, Idoma, Igala, Essan, Ibira, Ngas, Taroh, Mupun, Hausa, Fulani, Ron*, among others(Cinjel, Musa & Umaru , 2018) .

The Mwaghavul people accommodated the Fulani and the Hausa ethnic group among them for over a century; historical records have it that the Fulani and the Hausa ethnic groups were accommodated by the Mwaghavul people before the epoch of colonialism. Historical records also shows that they were not only accommodated, the Mwaghavul people gave them land to build and to herd, the Mwaghavul people even gave them their daughters hands in marriage and allowed even their indigenous people who wanted to profess the religion of the Hausa and Fulani to

profess. In the local government, the Fulani lives in the villages and outskirts where they would easily have access to open space to herd while the Hausa who were mostly traders do stay along the road side; where they can do trading with ease. There has never been any history of animosity in the pre-colonial and post-colonial period among the Mwaghavul people, the Hausa and Fulani people. It is till the later part of 1990s, that the relationship between the Fulani and the Mwaghavul people began to turn sour. It started with the issue of crop destruction; the herds of the Fulani damaging the crops of the Mwaghavul farmers. Internal mechanisms were used to resolve it and when it fails, the police would be involved. The issue kept reoccurring and it has reached a point that it is seen as a way of life; the Fulani herders do allow immature children to herd. The issue kept reoccurring and there were several cases of such issues in the court, police stations and with the traditional institution of the local government (Cinjel, Musa & Umaru , 2018).

Besides the issue of the damaging of crops, some of the youth of the Fulani's herders in the local government area were into malaise such as kidnapping, armed robbing and rustling. These issues in the local government were well known and there were several clashes between the perpetrators of such act with the police force in the local government area. There were several reports of persons who were killed, kidnapped and robbed; and the culprit mostly caught were the youth of the Fulani herders. There were several meetings between the traditional institutions of the Mwaghavul people and the Fulani herders, the Association of Mwaghavul Arable Farmers, the Nigerian Police and the MACBAN, on how to nip the issue to its bud but to no avail.

It was the accumulation of the frustration that began to manifest in 2023 and 2024. The conflict was in no way ethnic, it was caused by the negligence on the side of the herders who sometimes allow their smaller and immature children to herd and it the carelessness and negligence on the part of these armature herders that causes the cows of the herders to damage the crops of the Mwaghavul arable farmer (Cinjel, Musa & Umaru , 2018). The appearance of religion cloak and the subsequent involvement of the Hausa ethnic group was a religious instigation by conflict entrepreneurs and societal miscreant who sees it as an opportunity to buckle shops and loot. The involvement of the Hausa ethnic group has made the conflict to appear as if it was ethnic and religious; churches and mosques were burnt and religious citation and items (prayers, verses, amulet, among others) were used to define a person's identity during the period the conflict.

3. Methodology

We used a non-experimental research design for the study. Emphasis was based on survey research design and precisely, a cross sectional research design. The choice of this method was predicted by the nature of the data and the fact the design will enable the study to identify the relationship between the independent variable and dependent variables (situational factors). The population size of the study is 442,100. We used Krejcie and Morgan table to determine our sample size which we found to be 474. The samples were distributed using Burdley proportion allocation formula. We used purposive, random and cluster sampling to reach out to the respondents

Proportional Presentation of the Sample

S/N	Districts	Population	Sample Size
1.	Gindiri	10,311	15
2.	Chanso	6,810	7
3.	Langai	6,170	6
4.	Kasuwan Ali	9,130	9
5.	General	7,311	7
6.	Kadunu	6,701	7
7.	Jingir	6,101	6
8.	Ampang	32,001	31
9.	Kerang	26,811	26
10.	Kombun	22,180	21
11.	Bwai	25,319	25
12.	Panyam	21,032	28
13.	Mangu	180,022	118
14.	Mangu Halle	18,389	18
15.	Mangun	31,111	30
16.	Pushit	31,032	30
17.	Jipal	21,321	20
18.	Chakfem	21,022	20
19.	Bungha- Dawo	51,031	50
	Total	1458484	474

The main instruments we used for the study were questionnaire, interview and observation. The questionnaire we used for the study consisted of 18 closed ended items and it was designed on the 5 point Likert type scale. We subjected the work to face, content and predictive validation. We used internal consistency test of reliability test. The Internal Consisting reliability Test (ICT) was determined using RK20 and the co-efficient index found was 0.87 on the rater scale of one.

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

Descriptive statistical tool like table, percentage and frequency count were used to present the data obtained from the field. Chi-square and ANOVA was used to test the formulated hypotheses of the study. We administered 474 questionnaire and 450 were retrieved.

Bio-Data of Respondents

S/N	Descriptive	Category	Number	Percentage
1.	Sex	Male	250	56
		Female	200	44
2.	Age Distribution	18-30	100	46
		31-40	150	33
		41 & above	150	33
3.	Religion	Christianity	200	44
		Islam	200	44
		Other	50	12
4.	Ethnic Divide	Mwaghavul	150	33
		Fulani	90	20
		Hausa	90	20
		Others	120	27

Source: Researchers survey, 2024

The table above shows that 250 of the respondents representing 56% were from the male folk while 200 representing 44% were from the female folk. This thus, shows that there was fair representation of all gender. In the study, 100 of the respondents representing 46% were within the age bracket of 18 to 30, 150 representing 33% falls within the age bracket of 31 and 40 and 150 representing 33% falls within the age bracket of 41 and above. In the study, 200 respondents representing 54% professed Christianity and another 200 representing 44% professed Islam. In the study, 50 respondents representing 12% were adherers of other religions (ATR). In the course of carrying out the study, 150 respondents representing 23% were from the Mwaghavul ethnic group, 90 respondents representing 20% were Fulani, another 90 representing 20% were Hausa ethnic group and 120 representing 27% were from other ethnic divide in the local government area.

Causes of the Conflict

Items	Responses					
	SA%	A	U%	D%	SD%	Total
5 Crop Damage	300 (67%)	100(22%)	10(2.2%)	20(4.4%)	20(4.4%)	450
6 Scarcity of land Resources	20(4.4%)	20(4.4%)	10(2.2%)	100(22%)	300(67%)	450
7 Religion	20(4.4%)	20(4.4%)	10(2.2%)	100(22%)	300(67%)	450
8 Ethnicity	20(4.4%)	20(4.4%)	10(2.2%)	100(22%)	300(67%)	450
9 Poverty	20(4.4%)	20(4.4%)	10(2.2%)	100(22%)	300(67%)	450
10 Unemployment	20(4.4%)	20(4.4%)	10(2.2%)	100(22%)	300(67%)	450
11 Political	20(4.4%)	20(4.4%)	10(2.2%)	100(22%)	300(67%)	450
Total	400	20	60	620	140	3150

Source: Researchers' Survey, 2024

The table above shows that 300 of the respondents subscribed to the view that the conflict was caused by the destruction of crops by the herds of the Fulani's herders. Other factors such as competition for land resources, religion, ethnicity, poverty and unemployment were not the actual factor that spurred up the conflict. It is the destruction of the crop that incites other factors like ethnicity, religion, poverty, unemployment, among others.

Effects of the Conflict on Socio-economic Development

Items	Responses					Total
	SA%	A	U%	D%	SD%	
12 It affects Agriculture activities	400 (89%) 10(2.2%)	20(22%)		10(2.2%)	10(2.2%)	450
13 It affects Educational activities	400 (89%) 10(2.2%)	20(22%)		10(2.2%)	10(2.2%)	450
14 It affects business activities	400 (89%) 10(2.2%)	20(22%)		10(2.2%)	10(2.2%)	450
15 It discourages a lot of investors from coming	400 (89%) 10(2.2%)	20(22%)		10(2.2%)	10(2.2%)	450
16 Several Houses were burnt	400 (89%) 10(2.2%)	20(22%)		10(2.2%)	10(2.2%)	450
17 Several persons were killed	400 (89%) 10(2.2%)	20(22%)		10(2.2%)	10(2.2%)	450
18 A lot of person were displaced	400 (89%) 10(2.2%)	20(22%)		10(2.2%)	10(2.2%)	450
19 Settlements were polarizes	400 (89%) 10(2.2%)	20(22%)		10(2.2%)	10(2.2%)	
20 It creates mutual distrust	400 (89%) 10(2.2%)	20(22%)		10(2.2%)	10(2.2%)	

Source: Researchers Survey, 2024

The table above reveals that majority of the respondents attested to the fact that the conflict has enormous effect on agricultural activities, schools, businesses, human lives and properties, displacement of person, the polarization of settlement, among many others.

Test of Hypotheses

The formulated hypotheses were tested using chi-square test and regression analysis

Hypothesis One (1)

We use chi-square to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significant. The test can be seen in the table below

Table 1: Chi-square Computed from Frequency Cross Tabulation

	F-value	Df	Asymp size 2 sided
Person Chi-square	35.34	8	.0000
Like hood Ratio	16.203	8	.0000
Linear: by Linear Association	50.110		.0000
21 of valid cases	450	1	.0000

Result: From the computation above, the Pearson chi-square (x^2_{cal}) is 35.34, while the chi-square tabulated (x^2_{tab}) is 16.203 at 8 degree of freedom (df) and 0.05 alpha level ($x^2_{cal} = 35.34$, $p < 0.05$). Thus, the Pearson chi-square calculated is greater than the chi-square tabulated ($x^2_{tab} = 16.203$, at

$p < 0.05$). On this basis, we can therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis and conclude that the destruction of crop by herds is the major cause of the conflict. Other factors like ethnic, religious, among others only precipitated the conflict.

Test of hypotheses Two (2)

Simple regression was used to test the second hypotheses of the study. The summary of the test is presented in the table below.

Table: Model Summary

Model	R	R-square	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of estimate	Durban water
1	.759	.673	.537	.503	1.165

Source: SPSS 23.0 computation

Table: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model	Sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	7.076	4	1.519	4.962	.001
Residual	84.208	275	.306		
Total	90.728	279			

Source: SPSS 23.

Table two above showed the summary of the model. The R² value of 7.076 which shows the goodness of fit of the model and it is statistically significant. The adjusted R² value of 0.532 is also statistically significant and indicates that after taking 54% of the variation on the effect of conflict on socio-economic development.

Table 3 above shows the analysis of variance of the model. The f-statistic which measure the overall goodness of fit and linearity of relationship in the model at 4.962 and its probability of 0.001 is statistically significant at all levels of significance. This indicates that there was a simultaneous linear relationship between the development variable (socio-economic development and all the explanatory variables (causes, and consequence of the conflict, combined).

Discussion of Results

- a. In the course of the study, it was found that majority of the respondents subscribed to the fact that the conflict was triggered by the negligence of herders and how it do causes their herds to damages the crops of the Mwaghavul arable farmers. Other factors like ethnicity, religion, poverty, idleness of youth later resurfaced and made the conflict to look as if they were the major causes of the conflict. An interview with the president of the Nation Mwaghavul Youth Movement (NYM), on 22th February, 2024 shows that the local government has several records of the cases of crops being destroyed by the herds of Fulani herders. He went further to states that beside the destruction of crops, some of the youths of the Fulani's herders were into nefarious activities like kidnaping, armed robbery, and rustling of herds of the indigenous people and other Fulani herders in the local government.
- b. The study found that the conflict was not purely ethnic and religious as it was presented by the media. The conflict was chiefly caused by the negligence on the side of the herders which do result to the destruction of the crops of the arable farmer by the herds of the Fulani. Ethnicity and religion was cloaked inside the conflict to attract sympathy and

support. The Mwaghavul people were predominantly crop farmers and were mostly Christians while the Fulani were purely the herders and are predominantly Muslims. What led to the conflict of 22, 23 and 24 January 2024, was that some of the Hausa traders who lived in areas such as Lahir, Sabon Kasuwa, Sohon Kasuwa and Angwan Piyama and Kwata see the Fulani herders as their Muslim brothers and resort to the attack and the burning of the houses of Christians who lived among them as an act of religious solidarity. Another variance on the cause of the conflict was that it was politically motivated. A political Stalwart in an interview session states that:

The attacks were purely political; it is because the governor elected was a Mwaghavul man. It is just an attempt to distract his administration .Why is it that there have never been these forms of attack till now. The Hausa in the local government pretended to be our friends. They have never supported us and even during the last election, they did not vote for our son. They voted for somebody outside the local government; they celebrated that very day that the Appeal Court nullified the governorship election. We were not surprised when we saw them killing our brothers and burning the houses of Christians among them.

- c. Some were of the view that the destruction of crop was not the real cause of the conflict. *Chinbes Fwanshak*, the deputy chairman of the local government says that the conflict was a projection of accumulated frustration of a lot of wrongs in the past. He cited several malaises like kidnapping, robbery, phone snatching and several cases of crop damages that were perpetuated by some youth from the Fulani’s herders.
- d. The study found that several persons were killed, several houses were burnt and many persons were displaced. A police report by the Mangu Local Government Command shows that over 205 houses were burnt, over 350 persons were killed, 3000 cattle were destroyed, 305 cows were rustled, 35 churches were burn and less than 15 Mosques were destroyed. The police report also shows that 2500 persons were displaced, 1000 were camped at the Pilot Primary School Camp, Bungaha. The study also found that 108 shops were buckled down, 71 communities were deserted and 7 persons were declared missed.

Some of the Deserted Communities

S/N	Name	District
1.	Kwaghaslalek	Mangu Halle
2.	Jwakchan	Panyam
3.	Jwakchom	Panyam
4.	Alogom	Mangu
5.	Tyop	Mangu
6.	Kombili	Panyam
7.	Kwaghaskipangtlang	Mangu
8.	Ndang Dai	Panyam
9.	Kantoma	Mangu
10.	Mangul	Mangu Halle
11.	Changal	Panyam

There are other people who see the carnage orchestrated on the 23 and 24 January as an act of poverty hidden under the cloak of religion. A leader of the Igbo society in Mangu local

government-Igwe Chukwuma states that the conflict in no way has a link to ethnicity and religion. He went further to say that:

The carnage of 23 and 24 January 2024 was a handy work of mischievous youth who are lazy and who only wants to uses that door to buckle and loot peoples' properties for their selfish gain. If actually, it is ethnic, how comes the buckling of Igbo's shops. Are Igbos now Mwaghavul or is it because they are mostly Christians? And why is it that our shops were looted not burnt. We know that a lot of the youths, most especially those residing inside the town where our shops were buckled are lazy and do not want to be useful to them and the society.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The conflict between the Mwaghavul farmers and the Fulani herders began in 2023. Several issues precipitate to the conflict and these are: the issue of crop damaging by the herds of the Fulani, the increasing cases of kidnapping, robbery and rustling that was so common among the youths of the Fulani herders. The conflict was not ethnic and religious as at it was presented by the media; it was principally caused by the recurrent incidence of crop damage by the herds of the Fulani's herders. Religion and ethnicity was cloaked in side the conflict to attract sympathy and win support. The Hausa societal miscreants settled in the town hijacked the conflict to loot and amass properties of the victims; they burn religious centres and hide under religion colour to make the conflict look as if it was caused by religious factors. It is based on the background of the presentation and analysis, the following recommendations were proffered.

- a. Government should come to the aid of all those that were affected through the disbursement of micro-credit loans to farmers and other rural sellers who lost all their farm produce to the conflict and to artisans, women particularly the widows and orphans so that they can take care of themselves and their families to alleviate their suffering
- b. The Plateau State Government in collaboration with non-governmental organization should in partnership with each other promote civic education so as to inculcate in the people the method of settling issues in a non-violent manner and develop the value of mutual compassion for one another. This could be done through workshops, conferences and seminar.
- c. Community leaders, religious and ethnic leaders should be to exhibit a high sense of moral probity and effective commitment to service so that they too can effectively control the activities of people in their various groups and try as much as possible to encourage them to desist from acts that could spark up conflict
- d. Opportunities should be created to employ idle youths who are available tools for use in times of conflict so that they can be engaged
- e. The Nigerian government should adopt and promote modern form of grazing like the use of grazing reserve, fattening and cow colony like it is done in other countries. This will go a long way to control issue of crop damaging that is common and the sources of most of the arable farmer-herders 'conflict.

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