



## Effects of Herders-Farmers Conflict on Socio-Economic Development in Selected Rural Communities in Enugu State

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This research work focused on "Effects of Herders-Crop Farmers conflict on socio-economic development of selected rural communities in Enugu State. The study covered, Nimbo, Okpone, Amodu, Ajuona, Ogbo, Ahani, Amofu and Nkerefi of Enugu State which have experienced pronounced herders/ farmers conflicts over time which have affected not only the rural communities alone but the entire state. The specific objectives are to determine the effect of herders-crop farmers conflict on manpower development of selected rural communities in Enugu State, to ascertain the effect of herders-crop farmers conflict on the standard of living in selected rural communities in Enugu State and to find out if herders/farmers conflict in selected rural communities has any significant effect on the safety and security of lives and properties. The study was anchored on eco-violence theory as enunciated by Homer Dixon in 1998. A descriptive survey design was adopted with a population of 200 respondents drawn from the eight (8) communities under study. Data for the study was generated by means of the structured questionnaire. The findings of the research revealed amongst others that there is high rate of manpower loss and non-development due to herders-crop farmers conflict in selected communities in Enugu State. The paper concludes that reduction of incessant violent conflicts between pastoralist herders and farmers in the state will avert continued migration of the remaining manpower especially of the youth population from the rural communities to the urban areas where they seem to find at least maximum safety. Based on the forgoing, the study recommended that there should be proper review of the security apparatus to provide maximum security in the rural communities to ensure retention of the manpower in the rural communities to boost agricultural production. Furthermore, government should come up with adequate measures to improve the educational standards as well as facilities in the rural communities with adequate security to ensure participation for literacy level development in the rural communities and legislation to outlaw pastoralism and adopt ranching as a method of herding activities amongst other recommendations. Some implications of the study include the facts that strengthening of existing laws, contemporary legislations will help to overhaul the security apparatus especially at the rural communities with adequate peace education coupled with enforcing legislations outlawing open grazing to provide for more modern system of herding like the ranch and the cage system of keeping herds, among others

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ABSTRACT

**Keywords:** Herders-Farmers Conflict; Socio-Economic Development; Rural Communities; Enugu State

## 1. Introduction

Nigeria was formed on the basis of her heterogeneity in culture, origin and descent. This divergence has led to a lot of conflicts especially communal conflicts which seems to be hindrance to the socio-economic developmental index in the country. Historically, the problem of herders-farmers' communal conflicts has dated back from the pre-colonial period to the post-independence Nigeria. In the late 1880's the prosecution of the jihad by Usman Dan Fodio marked the migration of the Fulani herders with their cattle into the region occupied mainly by the Hausa and the Kanem people of the Bornu region. The conquest and the enthronement of Islam in the region coupled with the empire and enthronement of Emirs led to the heavy presence of the migrants in all the parts of the north area known as Northern Nigeria today. The status quo held until the amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates in 1914 to form what is today known as Nigeria by Lord Lugard, the British Governor General. With the administration of the country in region, the country got its independence in 1960 and as a Republic in 1963 making it possible for anybody to live and work in any part of the country without hitches as a citizen of same country. This gave rise to the migration of the Fulani herders down south for the pasture of their livestock which is their mainstay. It was in course of this movement that their livestock destroys the farms of the southerners which led to the conflicts between the communities of occupation and the herders. In most recent times these herders have come more heavily armed against their host communities leading to the burning issues today of herders-crop farmers conflict in almost all the states of the country.

Generally, conflict itself, is a reality of social relations. Otite (2012) notes that violent clashes have arisen from difference in interests, desires, goals, values and aspirations in the struggle for ownership of resources to meet the demands on social life in a defined socio-physical environment. Elaigwu (2015) avers that conflicts arises due to actions that lead to mutual mistrust, polarization of relations, and hostility among groups in competitive interactions. The frustrations arising from unsatisfied human needs which may include psychological, economic, physical, social and others forms; explosion of identity as groups begin to ask for greater participation and rights; seemingly cultural incompatibility among groups with different communication styles; perceived inequality and injustice expressed through competitive socio-political, economic and cultural frameworks.

Ibeogu, Abah and Ogo (2019) depicted that communal conflict is a situation in which the relationship between members of one ethnic community and the other is characterized by lack of cordiality and mutual understanding which is usually the result of suspicion, fear, and tendency of confrontation. The nature and composition of the state are very important and central to the nature of the relationship that exists within it and most importantly, the disposition of the government in handling the unfriendly relationship (conflict) wherever it exists. In communities that exists or evolved on platform of consensus and fair play, there is the tendency to have a serene domestic politics, but the opposite is case. The situation in Nigerians' communities is such that most often boycott of the due course of legitimization poses serious consequences on its stability at the present political dispensation. To rural communities' dwellers, communal restiveness has become despicable acts that are often seen as being perpetrated by a significant proportion of miscreants in various communities and seems no longer to be ignored. These unwholesome acts are usually the product of political influences; where wealthy and highly placed Nigerians anoint their protégé, unworthy and undeserved sons into positions of trust and responsibility (elected or appointed) violating the laid down rules and party guidelines for choosing and nominating candidates into governmental position.

Socio-economic development as a key variable in this research needs adequate attention in order to the identify its effect on rural communities. Socio –economic development may be seen as the transformation of a society with regard to social and economic dimensions.

Socio-economic development incorporates public concerns in developing social policy and economic initiatives. The ultimate objective of social development is to bring about sustained improvement in the well-being of the individual, groups, family, community, and society at large. It involves sustained increase in the economic standard of living of a country's population, normally accomplished by increasing its stocks of physical and human capital and thus improving its technology. Udu and Edeh (2019) citing O'Neil (1990) described the concept of socio-economic development using the indicators or the components such as gross domestic product (GDP), life expectancy, literacy

level, employment level, health level as well as the less tangible factors such as personal dignity, freedom of association, safety/security and, extent of participation in civil society.

Rural development concept is key in order to be able to underscore the role communal conflicts play, especially in negatively affecting socio-economic development. Rural underscores an area is described as settlement which is depicted by rural communal style of life, occupational structure, social organization and settlement pattern (Desai 2015). Rural is noticeably agricultural, its settlement system consists of villages or homesteads; Socially it signifies greater inter dependence among people, more deeply rooted community life and a slow-moving rhythm of life built around nature and natural phenomenon; and occupationally it is highly dependent on agrarian, animal enterprises, tree crops and related activities. Thus, rural development means an ever-evolving process. It is a wholistic term which contains varieties of elements, social, economic, technological and natural spheres of human life and activities. Rural development describes noticeable changes in all these components. But such changes should take place in a mutually supporting relationship so as to generate organic and optimum development. Achievement of all these needs a peaceful atmosphere devoid of conflicts.

To Okoro (2018) farmers (also called agriculturists) are persons who engage in agriculture, raising living organisms for food or raw materials. The term therefore applies to people who do some combination of raising field crops, orchards, vineyards, poultry, or other livestock. Based on this description, crop- farmers and both the herdsmen who herd or keep livestock like cattle, goats and sheep, are farmers. However, for the purpose of this work, farmers are the crop farmers (those who raise field crops) also called peasant farmers/subsistence cultivators only. This implies that the growing of crops for consumption are their major concern.

In Enugu State, the affected rural communities include; Nimbo community was in flames in April, 2016 as a result of herders-farmers communal conflict, Okpebe Amodu, Ajuona-Ogbo in Uzo-Uwani LGA, OhaniAmofuNkerefi in Nkanu East LGA. These communities have all had fair share of the herders-farmers communal conflict and the tales are still far told. This also has led to set back in the attainment of socio-economic development in the affected rural communities. These issues that forestall the attainment of rural development of communities due to the herders-farmers' communal conflicts underscore the need for this research work aimed at finding a lasting solution to them and bringing about improvement in the socio-economic status of rural communities.

It is pertinent to note that prior to the inversion of the rural communities by the marauding Fulani herdsmen, the communities had very much relative peace within their environs as local herdsmen who kept farm animals have their animals contravened and taken to the village heads or even the Local Government Areas in terms of straying animals with fines paid to bail them. This has caused no harms and troubles as there continued to be peaceful co-existence between these local herdsmen and their fellow crop-farmers. The peaceful co-existence of the rural communities was jeopardized by the Fulani pastoralist and herdsmen. In Nimbo in Enugu state, the entire community and race were nearly sacked and exterminated due to the attack of herdsmen. This has since destabilized the rural community and the said community has been on the path of recovery since then after encountering casualties. These effects are adverse on the socio-economic status of the affected rural communities through the disruption in farming and agricultural activities which is the mainstay of the rural communities. Markets as well as educational activities too are also affected and these too takes its toll on the socio-economic lives of the rural communities. To alleviate the sufferings of affected people, government and relevant authorities have taken to the setting up of internally displaced camps as well as presence of the police and army security outfits in these rural communities even though at the expense of the rural dwellers who bear the brunt of associated inconveniences. It is in the light of this that this research aimed at investigating these issues has become imperative.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Herdsmen/ farmers violent clash is a product of unhealthy relations between two groups and has debilitating effect on the socio-economic development of rural communities involved. Several conflicts that have occurred brought untold hardship to the people involved and even surrounding enclaves. This could be seen in the dwindling economy of these antagonistic groups as hunger pervades the society with attendant increase in prices of food items, loss of lives of citizens and properties occasioned by loss of manpower. The result of these seems to be identifiable in the low per-capita income of the people and reduction of the standard of living of the people due to the disruption in

the economic activities in the affected rural communities. It equally appears that there is general insecurity as people live in fear. It does appear too that the health and general wellbeing of the people of the rural communities are also affected by the herders-crop farmers conflict in the rural communities. This brings in the diversion of focus by government to resolving the conflicts instead of engaging in the welfare programmes that will improve the lives of the people such as developmental projects like building of school facilities, health care facilities, electricity projects, roads and other facilities that leads to the attainment of socio-economic development in the rural communities.

Based on the foregoing, the research deems it pertinent to investigate the effects of herders/crop farmers' communal conflicts on the socio-economic development of selected communities in Enugu State with the view to proffering lasting solutions to ever destructive menace in the rural domain in order to bring about the needed transformation in the socio-economic lives of the rural communities in Enugu State.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The broad objectives of the study were to find out the effects of herders –farmers conflict on socio-economic development of rural communities in Enugu State.

The specific objectives sought to:

- i. determine the effect of herders-crop farmers conflict on manpower development of selected rural communities in Enugu State.
- ii. ascertain the effect of herders-crop farmers conflict on the standard of living in selected rural communities in Enugu State.
- iii. find out if herders/farmers conflict in selected rural communities has any significant effect on the safety and security of lives and properties.

### **Research Questions**

Based on the forgoing, the following questions are raised to find out the effect of communal conflicts on the attainment of rural development in Enugu State, Nigeria.

- i. What is the effect of herders/crop farmers conflict on manpower development in selected rural communities in Enugu State?
- ii. What is the effect of herders/crop farmers conflict on the standard of living in selected rural communities in Enugu State?
- iii. Has herders/crop farmers conflict in selected rural communities any significant effect on the safety and security of lives and properties in Enugu State?

### **Significance of the Study**

This research has two levels of significance, theoretical and empirical. Theoretically the work shall contribute to existing literature and knowledge in the study of herders-farmers' conflicts and its effect on the attainment of socio-economic development in rural communities in Enugu State. It will be a reference point to upcoming scholars who would wish to carry out studies on the issue of conflicts and socio-economic development and the emerging issues of peace education and peace building which is meant to foster peace and reduce conflicts in other to step up developmental strides in the rural areas. Empirically, in Nigeria and particularly in Enugu State, the research is not only hoped to impact on the level of reduction of herders-farmers conflicts in the rural areas of Enugu State but also help to address the emerging trends of violent threats and crises which affect socio-economic development of the rural areas. The study will be of use to government of Enugu State in finding out how to tackle the menace of herders-crop-farmers conflict and ensure socio-economic development of their rural communities in identifying how to avoid herders-farmers' communal conflicts and enhance socio-economic development in their rural communities through the peace education, peace building and conflict avoidance which if taken into consideration will go a long way to reducing conflicts and improving the run rate of socio-economic development in the rural communities of Enugu State. The study also sought to lend itself for use by international organizations, non-governmental

organizations and supporting agencies which seek to support socio-economic development at the rural communities of the states in Nigeria and of the south east geo political zone in particular.

### Scope of the Study

The study focused on the effects of herders-farmers conflict on social-economic development of selected rural communities in Enugu State. Some selected communities that have had herders-farmers conflict in Enugu State includes; Nimbo community, OkpebeAmodu, Ajuona-Ogbo in Uzo-Uwani LGA, OhaniAmofuNkerefi in Nkanu East LGA, (Strategic Conflicts Analysis 2016 Report). The above shall comprise the scope in terms of areas and coverage of the study.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Conceptual Framework

#### The Concept of Conflict

Conflict is violent communal crises which are a product of opposed interests between two or more antagonistic forces or groups within the society. This implies that there is an issue that has more than one group desire hence the need for interests to arise. Diaz (2019) infer that disagreement occur naturally; clash of thoughts and ideas are parts of the human experience. This can be destructive if not effectively managed, however, it shouldn't be seen as something that can only cause negative occurrences. It is a way to come up with more meaningful realizations that can certainly be helpful to the individuals involved. These positive outcomes can be arrived at through effective implementation of conflict resolution methods. Clashes provide opportunity for learning and understanding our differences as well as the buffer to understanding what drives peace when it has eluded the people.

Ferdinand (2018) submitted that whenever two individuals or groups opine in different ways, a conflict arises. In a layman's language conflict is nothing but a fight either between two individuals or among group members. No two individuals can think alike and there is definitely a difference in their thought process as well as their understanding. Disagreements among individuals lead to conflicts and fights. Conflict arises whenever individuals have different values, opinions, needs, interests and are unable to find a middle way. Adetula (2014) opined that these violent clashes have resulted to the destruction of infrastructures, and killings bring adverse effects on the productive ability of the nation. With this departure, it can be seen that the major adverse effect according to Adetula (2014) is on productivity which is the bane of development in the rural areas. Any factor that destabilizes the tenets of the harmonious lifestyle in the rural area and short tracks the improvement in the factors that support growth and development is seen as very detrimental to positive growth.

Fatile and Adejuwon (2011) see conflict as what happens when two or more persons have opposing ideals over how resources that pertains to their development are to be shared while Hocker and Wilmont (2011) described conflict as a felt struggle between two or more interdependent individuals over perceived and incompatible differences in beliefs, values, and goals or over differences in desires for esteem, control and connectedness. This definition, points out several aspects of conflict which needs attention, a sensed struggle between two or more individuals and a result of incompatible differences. In all these descriptions and definitions by scholars, all point to the fact that there is a point of interjection which is the interest which can only be ascribed to one individual or group at every point in time hence the need for struggle to have it metamorphosing into conflict situations.

Conflict depicts variance between parties who perceive that they have non-conforming goals and needs. Conflict can ensue when interests, goals or values of different individuals or groups become incompatible with one another. Bloisi (2007) and Elaigwu (2005) submitted that every form of activities among human groups can spawn clash; it tests the state and creates the basis of future amelioration or adjustments. Conflicts beyond certain thresholds are detrimental to the survival of the state because they threaten the consensual basis of association. The problem of conflict is inability to absorb contradictions in society through arrangements and procedures that eliminate their negative effects and maximize their positive effects. These failures are inability of the conflicting units to accept the procedures and arrangements that have been worked out to resolve the conflict. In other words, conflict resolution boils down to the conditions that will enable conflicting forces to accept these arrangements and procedures.

Okeke, Okechukwu, Nnamani and Dibia (2018) infer conflict as violent crises involving struggle and enmity for interests to which individuals and groups attach importance. These objects can be tangible or intangible. The material objects include scarce resources like money, employment and position among political class, promotion etc. From the above, it can be seen that conflict is inestimably a factor that should be adequately managed for positive result. Ekong (2010) also restated that conflict is a form of social interface in which actors eliminate or weaken the other party to obtain a scarce recompense. Conflict simply suggests differences and disagreement, struggle and strife. It is an ever-present process in human relations which have no single practical definition; rather, different views exist on continuous basis. Conflict is an ill wind that does no one good, hence fanning the embers of conflict will always land in 'had I known' situations to all the affected sides of the communities that are involved in the communal conflicts. Hence, the scarce rewards that Ekong (2010) mentioned in his description about conflict may seem to translate to naught to both parties in the conflict.

In the words of Alimba (2014) violent crises arises out of non-compatibility of common interests in group relations which may end up bringing undesirable results. This can be in terms of loss of human lives as well as destruction of properties like houses, auto mobiles etc. Contributing, Okechukwu, Nnamani and Dibia (2018) submitted in their paper that conflict is also regarded as a providence of life that takes place when the interactions of people are marked with differences in goals, perceptions, attitudes, views, beliefs, values or needs. Furthermore, Robins (2018) detects that "conflict emerges whenever two or more persons seek to possess the same object, occupy the same space of the same exclusive position, play incompatible roles, maintain incompatible goals, or undertake mutually incompatible means for achieving their purpose. Ibeogu, Abah and Ogo (2019) posited that conflict refers to situations of disagreement between group or individuals over some collective goals, means of achieving such goals or the distribution and allocation of collectively owned resources. They added that conflict is an inevitable aspect of human interaction, an unavoidable concomitant of choices and decisions, while also stating that conflict occurs when two or more people or groups perceive that they have incompatibility of goals, and interdependence of activity.

On this premise this research aptly hold that conflict is a disintegrating factor which sets in when two individuals or group fail to understand the concept that resources though scarce can always be managed and then goes into struggle as to who owns such resources at the particular point in time leading to violent crises in most cases. The failure of individual or groups to come to consensus over how a particular item, resources or issues of ownership is settled amicably to is what degenerates into conflict situation which is an ill wind that does no one good.

### **Concept of Socio-Economic and Rural Development**

Development is an ever-shifting paradigm which is always under the discourse of scholars, management experts, government policy makers to mention but a few. A lot of scholars have proffered opinions in an attempt to describe what development is and its antecedent in rural areas which have given rise to the much-discussed rural development objectives by both national and international governments, organizations and even private individuals. The concept of rural development came to popularity in the mid 1970's. Goodland (2001) defined it as a sustainable improvement in the quality of life of communities in rural areas (as defined by 'natural' landscapes, primary economic activities, scattered settlements, traditional societies that suffer hardship through poverty and where infrastructure is lacking and subsistence livelihoods dominate), through promotion of better access to social services, improved infrastructure, economic empowerment, reduced inequality (including gender) and skills transfer.

Barkey, (2014) posited that development has various meanings to different people and can be explained in different contexts. For example, the development needs of a starving population must be different from those where there is sufficient nutrition. Mahmoud, (2018) infers that development has often been confused with "economic growth as measured solely in terms of annual increases in per-capita income or gross national product, regardless of its distribution and the degree of people's participation in effective growth. Moseley (2017) captures it all on rural development when he asserted that improving the quality of life and economic well-being of people living in rural areas is rural development process of communities often relatively isolated with sparse population. Rural development has traditionally been preoccupied with the exploitation of land-intensive natural resources such as agriculture and forestry. However, global changes in production networks and increased urbanization have

changed the indicators of rural areas. Increasingly tourism, niche manufacturers, and recreation have replaced resource extraction and agriculture as dominant economic drivers. The need for rural communities to see development from a wider angle has created more focus on a broad range of development goals rather than merely creating incentive for agricultural or resource-based businesses.

To Vander (2010), rural development implies the production of new products and services and the associated development of new markets. It is also concerned with the new forms of cost maximization through the elaboration of new technological trajectories and the production and reproduction of specific associated knowledge bases, reconstruction of agriculture and the country side. The aim of rural development is to find ways to give meaning to the rural lives with engagement of the rural people themselves so as to meet the required needs of the rural area. In Europe, rural development actions also integrate environmental management as a core component (Emilio, Jose, and Juan, 2011). Rural development is, therefore, a strategy mapped out to improve social, political, economic and cultural lives of the rural dwellers. Paramount to this strategy is the meaningful participation of the people in the concept formulation and implementation of development policies, programmes and projects.

### **Herders-Crop Farmers Conflict in Nigeria**

It will not be a hype to say that herders-crop farmers conflict in the community is not new and an age long issue. The first issue of herders- crop farmers conflict seems to be recorded by the bible when the case of Cain and Abel arose. One was acknowledged as a farmer while the other was acknowledged as a herder of sheep. The rest are now stories but the grand factor was that there was a crossing of part that led to the killing in the holy book thereby recording the first herders-crop farmer's problem which have escalated over time and currently ravaging the south east rural communities, destabilizing the rural economy and increasing hardship amidst depressed socio-economic fortunes. Okoro (2018) averred that herdsman-farmer or herder-farmer conflicts are conflicts occurring between peasant farmers or subsistence cultivators and nomadic or transhumant livestock keepers. For Hagmann (2003), there exist differences between 'herder-herder' conflicts and 'farmer-herder' conflicts. He maintained that herder-herder conflicts are usually conflicts between nomadic or transhumant livestock keepers that arise between receiving groups over their territory's resources and incoming groups searching for water and pastures, and cattle raiding. Herder-herder conflict is a conflict that results from theft of cattle or other animals among the Fulani herdsmen. It is herdsmen rustling cattle of other herdsmen, or when un-experienced herders entrust their animals in the care of experienced herders under agreements, and when such agreements are breached conflict occurs within. The violent cattle raids among pastoralists in East Africa are examples of herder-herder conflicts.

Hussein, Samberg, and Seddon, (1999) see farmer-herder conflicts as comprising different types of conflicts, including ethnic conflicts, interest conflicts, resource disputes, political action, evictions, killings, cattle raiding and cattle rustling. Farmer-herder violent conflicts now take place in almost every part of the country. It is no longer news that the frequency of incidences has become the new normal. For Nigeria's rural community dwellers, the constant clashes lead to arsons and killings and have in the last five years taken a steady rise. Since the fourth Nigerian Republic's beginning in 1999 fair records holds that farmer-herder violence has killed more than 19,000 people and displaced hundreds of thousands more. It followed a trend in the increase of farmer-herder conflicts throughout much of the western Sahel, due to an expansion of agriculturist population and cultivated land at the expense of pasturelands; deteriorating environmental conditions, desertification and soil degradation; population growth breakdown in traditional conflict resolution mechanisms of land and water disputes; and proliferation of small arms and crime in rural areas. Insecurity and violence have led many populations to create self-defense forces and ethnic and tribal militias, which have engaged in further violence. The majority of farmer-herder clashes have occurred between Muslim Fulani herdsmen and Christian farmers, exacerbating ethno-religious hostilities.

### **Causes of Herders-Crop Farmers Communal Conflicts**

A lot of issues can be seen to be attributed to be the cause and causes of herders-crop farmers communal conflict on the attainment of socio-economic development of the rural areas of south east Nigeria. It is sacrosanct to admit that the south east is majorly agrarian in the growth of tubers and grain crops amidst the raising of herds by indigenous herders who rear goats and native cows to complement their farming. Adewambi (2018), Gyuse and

Ajene (2006), Oboh and Hyande (2006), all submitted that there are fundamental factors which have led to conflicts in Nigeria as it is too prevalent in the southeast Nigeria. These four causal agents they identified include but not limited to:

1. Background,
  2. Land conflicts,
  3. Climatic crises and
  4. Regional conflicts.
1. **Background:** In looking at background as causal factor of herders-farmers communal conflict he opined that the Fourth Nigerian Republic from 1999 has witnessed increase in farmer-herder violence. This has led to the death of more than 19,000 people and displaced hundreds of thousands more. It has followed a regular increasing trend in the herder-crop farmer conflicts throughout most of the southern part of Nigeria.
  2. **Land Conflicts:** On the issue of land as a major causal factor, it can be seen that land is of fixed quantity and not movable in any guise. It is on this premise that the pastoralist and herders which are majorly nomadic Fulani engage the farmers as the farmers cannot move crops out of the routes as the herds are seen creating routes even where there are none.
  3. **Climatic Crises:** The climatic factors have really posed a threat to general lives and living not only to pastoralist and herders, even the crop farmers globally seem to be on the eye of the storm.
  4. **Regional Conflicts:** The herders-crop farmers violent communal clashes have been taking place in regions which have been unstable since the 2000s. Majorly before the advent of democracy it was seen as urban conflicts in Jos and Kaduna which have been particularly violent and, despite violent clashes with the authorities, their causes have never been addressed politically. Herders- crop farmers' communal conflicts might not have been addressed adequately because traditional authorities have not been fulfilling their role in colonial-era settlements and this have escalated as the government seems not to be up with major insurgencies in the North-East part of the country ravaged by Boko-Haram not to talk of facing the factors of violent crimes by the herders.

Amongst these major issues as marshaled by Adewambi (2018) a lot of other factors which are traceable still to the major four are seen around as the factors that affect the herders- crop farmers communal conflict in the rural areas and in turn depress socio economic development in the rural area.

#### Effects of Herders-Crop Farmers' Conflicts

To Okoro (2018), Strategic Conflict Assessment (2016), Oji and Nwoba (2014) and Okibe (2008) attest and submitted that there are major effects of herders-crop farmers conflict in their works and inferred that these violent conflict between the two groups have been manifesting in form of bloody clashes. The effects of herder's farmers conflict culminate to the reasons why there are dwindling socio-economic status in the rural communities of South East geo political zone. The effects leave major scars on the economy, social, religious and other spheres of lives of the people of which the conflicts occur. These bloody attacks and counter attacks have created social or relational implications and adverse socio-economic effects which includes but not limited to the following as identified by the scholars:

1. **Loss of Human Lives:** Violent communal clashes between the herdsman and farmers have resulted to humanitarian catastrophe aggregating to human loss. The most recent herdsman attack on the Egedegede community in Ishielu Local Government Area of Ebonyi State have left sorrows, tears and blood as the community are still counting their losses of over 30 persons including women and children. This has adverse effect on the socio-economic status of the people as it is the people that drive the socio-economic process of the people. In 2016, Nimbo community in Enugu State witnessed near extinction due to the attack on them in one of the worst and most dreaded early morning attacks that lefts score of people dead and houses and other properties worth billions of naira destroyed.
2. **Displacement of Persons:** Reports of internally displacement of persons abound. Displacement occurs when herdsman and farmers clash. Crop-farmers especially women who stayed behind stop going to distant farms for fear of attack by nomads in the bush. Such displaced farmers have become liabilities to other farmers whom they have to beg for food for themselves and their families. This therefore has created a vicious cycle of poverty in such communities. Again, Ofem and Inyang (2014) identified that herders-farmers conflict has not only resulted to internal displacement of farmers in Yakurr Cross River State, especially women; but also led to reduction in finances and crops output.



3. **Threat to Food Security:** Chukwuma (2016) submitted that herdsman-farmers conflict is an obstacle to food security. The displacement of farmers from the affected communities has drastically reduced agricultural production. This has been amply demonstrated by relative shortage of farm produce in the rural and urban markets of central Nigeria. This is evidenced in the tremendous price hike of food commodities across the country.
4. **Destruction of Houses:** Clashes between herdsman and farmers are also not leaving houses untouched in most affected communities across Nigeria. For instance, the killing of Nimbo indigenes in Uzo-Uwani LGA of Enugu State where 40 deaths were recorded, also saw to the destruction of ten residential houses, a church, in addition to vehicles, motorcycles and domestic animals.
5. **Farmlands and Crops Destruction:** It is factual to say that most clashes between herdsman and farmers were triggered as a result of frustrations from farmers whose farmlands and crops were destroyed by herders. Ofuioku and Isife (2009) submitted that over forty (40) million worth of crops are lost annually due to marauding of cattle in the South-South region of Nigeria, especially Delta and Edo States. This has created an impediment to the survival of the host communities as many crop-farmers have abandoned their farm lands to avoid suffering in vain or being killed. Aliyu (2015) averred that the conflict has continued to lead to destruction or loss of properties and crops in Katsina State leaving an already endangered populace even poorer. The issue of food security and welfare of urban dwellers especially residents of Calabar that depend on these farmers for food supply has been negatively affected since the incessant clashes in Yakurr, which is predominantly a farming community and prices of available food supply skyrocketed
6. **Threat to National Security:** To Olaitan (2016),  
“the failure of government to address the situation of herdsman attacks decisively has several implications for Nigeria. The fact that herdsman now carry sophisticated ammunition with which they kill and maim perceived opponents at will constitutes grave danger to national security. This is because security personnel including the police have not been able to withstand weapon-wielding herdsman’s boldness and firepower”.  
The herdsman have sacked whole communities, abducted elder statesmen, burnt churches, killed church priests and other worshipers, killed Police officers, raped, looted and perpetrated heinous crimes while the government has done less to arrest the situation, which is a serious threat to national security.
7. **Distrust:** The conflict has created distrust between the two groups – farmers now see herdsman as intruders and vice versa. Burton (2016) submitted that a good number of the nomadic Fulani ethnic group which are solely pastoralists without connection to militant violence, even though peaceful, are largely viewed with suspicion and anger by the sedentary communities on whose land they take their cattle, largely as a result of the actions of the violent group. And because many of these herdsman do not understand the languages of their host communities, will always get provoked or frustrated at any movement or action of anybody within the community pointing at them, all because of the existence of distrust. This has altered the mutual relationship that has existed between the Fulani and most of their host communities. Furthermore, most members of the affected communities now see government and security agencies in bad light, as they feel that government is not doing enough to protect them, and therefore take laws into their hands in form of self-defense.
8. **Unemployment:** In terms of employment, agricultural sector has been leading in economic activities, as it accounts for one-third of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It remains the leading employment sector of the vast majority of the Nigerian population as it employs two-third of the labor force. In the view of Olatunji (2002), in Nigeria today, farming still remains the sources of employment of majority of the adult population, its productivity is the most important single factor influencing the standard of living of both the rural and urban centers. About 90% of the rural population is involved in activities related to the crop subsector which provides the bulk of agricultural income. However, the current herdsman-farmers’ imbroglio has continued to deny many farmers access to their farmlands – many community members deserting their farmlands and already cultivated crops in fear of being attacked by the herdsman. Many have abandoned their farming activities which are their means of livelihood and relocated to other places, while some have been displaced and confined in some IDPs camps. The above submission proved that the conflict has resulted to massive unemployment.

### **Government Efforts at Curbing Herders-Farmers Conflict**

Insecurity in the South East region in the most recent times seems to have heightened to a more dangerous position. It is also adjudged that herders-farmers conflict has contributed immensely to the rise in the level of insecurity in the zone over time. To this effect the government, both at the federal level and the state level in the zones, has made several efforts to curb the menace and restore peace to the rural communities of the South East zonal states. Open grazing seems to be the major issues that spark off these conflicts and it is on this premise that Vander (2000) also posited in his work that the efforts of the Federal government in the creation of grazing routes and reserves across the country to make provision for the herders to legally graze their animals and grow their business while contributing to the economy of the nation Nigeria have not yielded the desired result. Over 20 years now the Federal government has sought to create routes and reserves across the country with the objective of creating legal grazing rights.

It can be seen that the proponents of grazing routes as a solution to farmers- herders' clashes are oblivious of the provisions of the Land Use ACT,1978 which has also been incorporated into the 1999 Constitution. This core effort by the federal government to push open grazing through the constitution met a brick wall in the southern part of the country because the activities of herders against farmers in the southern part of the country majorly occupied by the South East, South-South and the South West geo political zones has continued to be resisted. Uwaifo Hannibal, the president of African Bar Association sees the grazing routes and grazing reserves resuscitation as a means of taking up people's land and installing the Fulani monarchy in the South. States in the South East zone of the country seem to key into the law as enunciated by the constitution but with the political will, instability and unstableness in the leadership in the states, those who had anchored on the law as a means of solving the problem of herders-farmers conflict has withdrawn with the axiom that they have no lands for grazing reserves and routes. It can also be seen that the National Grazing Reserve (Establishment) Bill 2016 conflict with farmers' inalienable right to property as entrenched in the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria (as amended) and protection of propriety rights in land under the Land Use Act. All these, the states had been trying to modulate so as to achieve peace and ensure reduction of herders-farmers conflict in the South East geo political zone of Nigeria.

Again, development of ranches and ranching has been suggested and legislated by states in the South East zone as a way of curbing the menace of herders-farmers conflict in the South East geo political zone. In Ebonyi State, the government has mandated that a certain hectares of land be mapped out in all the 13 Local Government Areas for the purpose of making lands available for the ranching as a way to collating all the herds in a place and putting an end to open grazing which is seen as a major cause of herders-farmers conflicts in the rural communities of the state. Keying into the National Livestock Transformation Plan (NLTP) is also a means that the states including the South East geo political zones have tried to solve this menace. The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Sabo Nanono, had recently announced that the Federal Capital Territory and 22 states had registered for the National Livestock Transformation Plan as part of measures to establish grazing reserves in their domains. He also announced that seven of these states had earmarked 400,000 hectares of land for the initiative, as the establishment of grazing reserves were currently ongoing in Nasarawa, Borno, Niger, Kaduna and some other states.

## 2.2 Theoretical Framework

The research work was anchored on Eco Violence theory. The theory was propounded by Homer Dixon in 1998. The basic assumptions of the theory according to Dixon is that eco-violence have typically focused on how adverse climatic conditions have created scarcity and unfavorable living conditions for herders, necessitating their migration into farming communities already constrained, resulting in conflict. It was further anchored on the background that aggression sparks off from the migration resulting to eco violence. The indices of the theory extend to the fact that groups of actors will resort to violence to address grievances when faced with increases in deprivation and favorable opportunities. In this circumstance, the herders have their right to migrate, live and transact their business which is their pastoralist activities while the farmers too have right to their land and crops which is their mainstay and source of livelihood and socio-economic development. Overtime there had been killing of farmers and destruction of their farmlands and crops by the herders in the course of their migration in search of greener pastures for their livestock and this has not gotten the necessary attention by the government on the method of attending to the issues that lead to the aggression by farmers in the communities such that they take to their self-defense.

Its relevance hinges on the interest of environmental scarcity, migration and conflict which plays out in the protection of farming arable lands and the sustenance of the cattle, which must graze on the pastures. Then there is disagreement on the possible way of restraining the animals from destruction of their crops which doubles as their means of livelihoods, fight ensues between them as a result of the migration activities. The disagreement manifest itself in wanton destruction of properties, lives, educational and market facilities to mention but a few.

## 2.3 Empirical Review

Oghubvu and Oghubvu (2020) studied farmers-herdsmen conflict: the case of Nigeria. The main focus of the study was to find out the major cause of farmers-herders clashes in Africa with that of Nigeria as a flashpoint. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and with 400 sample size. Pearson product correlation method was the analytical tool used. Findings from the survey show that their illegal invasion of farms has led to severe violent clashes between herders and crop farmers. The livestock cause harm to crops and fallow land left to replenish nutrients after long years of use as the issue of herders-farmers conflict has almost taken a new dimension in the rural communities of the country with a great threat to national security. The study recommended that urgent steps should be taken by government including the immediate release of legislation to check the herding system in Nigeria. This research work highly admits that the recommendation of the survey analysis is apt to be taken into consideration considering the most recent attack on the Egedegede community in Ishielu Local Government Area of Ebonyi State that that left scores of people dead including women and children. This has a lot of implications on the general security and welfare of the people of Nigeria nay South East if nothing urgent is done to check the issue.

Akorede (2020) studied implications of farmers-herdsmen conflict in Nigeria's cohesion. The objective of the study was to find out what the conflict between herders and farmers have done on putting a sword on Nigeria unity and cohesion of existence in the country. The study adopted a descriptive survey and studied a total of 560 respondents using questionnaire. The result from the data collected was analyzed using regression analysis of the values collated as the instrument for data collation. Result show that the incessant attack and killings by Fulani herders because of resistance by crop farmers on the destruction of their crops by their livestock is the cause of the non-cohesion that is threatening the unity of the country. Recommendation of the study amongst others show that there is urgent need to change the current herding method by the Fulani herders if there is going to be peaceful co-existence in the country and reduce tension in the land amongst other issues threatening the national cohesion. The implication is that if this is not taken seriously the government, the cohesion and peaceful co-existence of the country is at a very big risk. This study too toes this line of taught.

Johan and Elfverson (2019) in their work titled "Increasing violent conflict between herders and farmers in Sudan: has the objective of the study as finding out why there is incessant herders-farmers conflicts in Sudan rural communities which translates to deteriorating socio-economic development at the rural areas. The study adopted a descriptive survey with sample size of 360 respondents. Chi square was adopted as the tool for data analysis. Findings of the study show that multi tribe with interwoven Muslim herder and Christian farmers give rise to

conflicts. The study recommended adoption of alternative management method other than litigation to solving the problem. The implication is that there will continue to be crises in the rural Sudan if nothing urgent is done to reorient the Muslim herders and the Christians through peace education, the need to live together despite their multi tribes to do their different business which is complimentary to one another.

### **3. Methodology**

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. Descriptive survey according to Nworgu (2015) is aimed at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner the characteristics, features or facts about a given population.

The study was conducted in Enugu State. The people of the area are industrious and enterprising. The population for this study consisted of 200 farmers in some selected rural communities in Enugu State. There was no sampling as size of the population is small and manageable as recommended by Nworgu (2015) who stated that for some studies, the group of items to which the study relates may be small enough to warrant the inclusion of all of them. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by two experts in business administration department of Spiritan University Nneochi. The questionnaire has two sections, Section A and Section B. Section A contains items on the demographic data of the respondents while section B consists 3 clusters, B1 to B3. Cluster B1 to B3 contained 5 items respectively. Cluster B1 elicit information impact on the effect of herders/crop farmers conflict on manpower development of selected rural communities in Enugu State, cluster B2 elicit information on the effect of herders/crop farmers conflict on the standard of living in some selected rural communities in Enugu State while cluster B3 elicit information on whether herders/crop farmers conflict in selected rural communities in Enugu State has any significant effect on the safety and security of lives and properties in South East Nigeria. Section B is structured on a four-point rating scale with response options of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD).

The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha statistics. This procedure according to Nworgu (2015) applies to instrument that are scored on multiple bases (polytomously). Data collected and analyzed yielded reliability coefficients of 0.80, 0.78 and 0.73 respectively, with an overall reliability coefficient of 0.81, indicating a high-level reliability of the items in the instrument. The instrument was administered to the study sample personally by the researchers with the help of research assistants who were briefed on the purpose of the study. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in data analysis. Specifically, mean was used in answering the research questions, while standard deviation was used to determine the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents' mean ratings. Null hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics for non-correlated data. The probability alpha level for rejecting or accepting the null hypotheses was set at 0.05 level of significance, If the significant value is equal to or greater than the alpha value, the null hypothesis will not be rejected; otherwise, it will be rejected. The statistical analysis was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.

#### 4. Results

**Table 1: Mean responses of respondents on the effect of herders/crop farmers conflict on manpower development of selected rural communities in Enugu State**

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Larger percentage of manpower in the rural communities are domiciled in the rural communities	3.32	0.77	Agree
2	Herders-farmers communal conflict occur incessantly in some selected rural communities in most recent times.	3.34	0.81	Agree
3	Skill acquisition and inter communal skill exchange form part of manpower development schemes in some selected rural communities in Enugu State	3.51	0.59	Strongly Agree
4	Herders-farmers communal conflict affect skill acquisition and inter communal skill exchange in south east rural communities	3.09	0.82	Agree
5	Loss of lives occasioned by herders-farmers communal conflict affect manpower development in some selected rural communities in Enugu State.	3.31	0.76	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.35</b>		<b>Agree</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 1 show respondents mean rating on the effect of herders/crop farmers conflict on manpower development of selected rural communities in Enugu State. From the result, the respondents strongly agreed to item 3 and agreed to other items stated, a grand mean of 3.35 indicates that the respondents agreed herders/farmers conflicts affects the manpower development in some selected rural communities in Enugu State. The standard deviation reported indicated homogeneity of the respondent's response.

**Table 2: Mean responses of respondents on the effect of herders/crop farmers conflict on the standard of living in some selected rural communities in Enugu State**

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	SD	Remark
6	Herders/farmers conflict hinders the standard of living in some selected rural communities in Enugu State	3.83	0.77	Strongly agree
7	Herders-farmers communal conflict threatens security and peace of rural communities.	3.13	0.76	Agree
8	Disruption of trading activities in the market due to herders-farmers conflict affect standard of living	3.18	0.77	Agree
9	Destruction of crops and farms by herders' livestock affect improved standard of living.	3.72	0.79	Strongly Agree
10	Higher standard of living in rural community's attest to attainment of socio-economic development.	3.23	0.77	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.44</b>		<b>Agree</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 2 show respondents mean rating on the effect of herders/crop farmers conflict on the standard of living in some selected rural communities in Enugu State. From the result, the respondents strongly agreed with two items and agreed with three items. On the whole, the grand mean of 3.44 indicates that the respondents agreed herders/farmers conflict affects the standard of living in some selected rural communities in Enugu State. The standard deviation reported indicated homogeneity of the respondent's response.

**Table 3: Mean responses of respondents on whether herders-crop farmers conflict in selected rural communities in Enugu State has any significant effect on the safety and security of lives and properties.**

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	SD	Remark
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11	Non-attainment of socio-economic development is due to security and peace in rural communities	3.89	0.77	Strongly agree
12	Herders-farmers communal conflict threatens security and peace of rural communities.	3.13	0.76	Agree
13	Farmers-herders communal conflict led to migration of youth and affect local security personnel availability in rural communities.	3.76	0.77	Strongly Agree
14	Self-help projects in rural communities are truncated by herders-farmers communal conflict which affect socio-economic development	3.72	0.79	Strongly Agree
15	Herders/farmers conflict truncate peace process and endanger security of lives and properties in rural communities	3.23	0.77	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.49</b>		<b>Agree</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2021**

Table 3 show respondents mean rating of Table 3: Mean responses of respondents on whether herders/crop farmers conflict in selected rural communities in Enugu State has any significant effect on the safety and security of lives and properties. From the result, the respondents strongly agreed with three items and agreed with two items. On the whole, the grand mean of 3.49 indicates that the respondents agreed herders/farmers conflict affects the security of lives and properties in some selected rural communities in Enugu State.

#### **Discussion**

The findings of this study revealed that Herders/farmers conflict hinders the standard of living in some selected rural communities in Enugu State, it affects Skill acquisition and inter communal skill exchange form part of manpower development schemes in some selected rural communities in Enugu State, larger percentage of manpower in the rural communities are domiciled in the rural communities among others. Okoro (2018) corroborated the above findings from his study on violent crimes between herders and crop farmers which have metamorphosed to a near war situation in rural communities in Enugu State. This study found out that these bloody clashes, attacks and counter attacks have created social or relational implications and adverse socio-economic effects such as loss of human lives which directly translates to the loss of manpower by death while the remaining of these migrate to urban cities for safety and in search of means of survival since their means of livelihood has been concocted through the herders-farmers conflict. Hence this conflict has drastically affected the manpower development of rural communities in Enugu State.

From data analyzed from the second research question, the findings revealed among others that Herders/farmers conflict hinders the standard of living in some selected rural communities in Enugu State, Disruption of trading activities in the market due to herders-farmers conflict affect standard of living, Destruction of crops and farms by herders' livestock affect improved standard of living. These findings is in line with the findings of Odozi and Uwaifo (2019) which found out that herders/farmers conflict has an effect on attainment of socio-economic development of rural communities in rural communities in Enugu State. The study found that what herders/farmers conflict has done in exposing the economic and welfare of rural communities in Enugu State to disruption and suffering cannot be quantified laying credence to the poor and low standard of living occasioned by the conflicting situation in some selected rural communities in Enugu State. Also Ibeogu (2017) study on security threats; a hitch-up to socio-economic development in Ebonyi state corroborated this as he identified the low standard of living in rural communities as that which is occasioned by the herders –crop farmers conflict in the rural communities.

From the data analysis in research question three, the findings revealed among others that non-attainment of socio-economic development is due to security and peace in rural communities, Herders-farmers communal conflict threatens security and peace of rural communities, Self-help projects in rural communities are truncated by herders-farmers communal conflict which affect socio-economic development among others. This findings is collaborated by the study of Ibeogu (2017) on security threats as a hitch –up to socio economic development in Ebonyi State. It lays credence to the findings of this study when it discovered that what have led to the build-up of insecurity in Ebonyi

State and disruption to socio economic development in the rural communities was related to non- handling of security matters arising from attack on some rural communities in the state.

## **5. Conclusion**

The crucial role and critical position of rural communities in the rural communities of Enugu State and the country in general cannot be overemphasized. It is on this premise that this research sought to find out one of the major issues that have affected the rural communities in Enugu State from delivering on socio-economic mandate which herders/ farmers communal conflict which have actually deterred in the most recent times. According to the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, it is the basic duty and function of the government to provide security for the citizens of the country, it is rather unfortunate that the level of insecurity occasioned most recently in some selected rural communities in the Enugu State in the most recent times is caused by herders/farmers conflict against what the status quo has been now. Agriculture which has hitherto been the mainstay of the people of Enugu State has been nose-diving over time due to lack of manpower to embark on the venture. This seems to be made possible because of loss of manpower through incessant violent conflicts between pastoralist herders and farmers in the state. It can be viewed that this has further deepened and fast tracked the migration of the remaining manpower especially of the youth population from the rural communities to the urban areas where they seem to find at least maximum safety.

It is also observed that security and peace of the country is on heavy threat due to the activities of the herders/farmers conflict which have led to the formation of numerous ethnic and regional security organizations or outfits all in the fight against insecurity in the different regions especially in Enugu State due to the insecurity brought about by the activities of herders.

It is therefore very imperative that government should demonstrate serious and sincere commitment to their constitutional function of providing security to the citizens which if done effectively will provide the enabling environment for the rural communities to engage in different ventures which will help in the socio-economic development of their people especially non disruption of the academic system, uninterrupted farming and trading activities in the rural areas to mention but a few of the activities that promote socio-economic development.

## **6. Recommendations**

Consequent upon the findings, the research makes bold to recommend as follows;

1. There should be proper review of the security apparatus to provide maximum security in the rural communities to ensure retention of the manpower in the rural communities to enhance its adequate contribution to agriculture.
2. Adequate inputs should be made by both government and individuals to improve agriculture and other socio-economic activities in the rural communities to enable them have improved standard of living.
3. Improvement in the health system as well as the health facilities in the rural communities to contend with the increased transmission of diseases occasioned by the herders' livestock transmission in the rural communities.
4. The research strongly recommends that there should be legislation to the method/system of herding in the country to ensure that the menace of herders against farmers is checked to ensure safety and security of lives and properties in South East rural communities.

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