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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE METHODS OF MANAGING CONFLICT BETWEEN PASTORALISTS AND FARMERS IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE METHODS OF MANAGING CONFLICT BETWEEN PASTORALISTS AND FARMERS IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

BY

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B.A. (PHILOSOPHY), M.A Peace and Conflict Studies (PCS), IBADAN

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MARCH, 2013

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the thesis titled: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE METHODS OF MANAGING CONFLICT BETWEEN PASTORALISTS AND FARMERS IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA, submitted to the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D), is a record of original research carried out by ANTHONY OGHENEVWOKE AGBEGBEDIA.

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DATE

SUPERVISOR
DR. E. U. IDACHABA
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UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, IBADAN.

DEDICATION

This thesis is posthumously dedicated to the loving memory of my beloved elder sister-late Miss. Philo Eserighotite Agbegbedia who taught me that, “To be is to be human and to be human is to be humane!”

Also,

To all the victims of this conflict in Benue State, Nigeria, and to Almighty God.

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Praise the Lord, my soul! All my being Praise His holy name! Praise the Lord, my soul, and do not forget how kind He is. Psalm 103:1-2.
I will always thank the Lord; I will never stop praising Him. I will praise Him for what He has done. Psalm 34:1-2

To begin with, I am most grateful to the Almighty God for making me an existing being in His image and likeness. I thank Him for His love, wisdom, guidance and protection; for giving me the undying determination, priceless health and the immeasurable grace, courage and the zeal to undertake and complete this study. Secondly, I would like to register my profound gratitude to my late beloved sister, late Sr. Philo Agbegbedia, for her interests and encouragement which made me embarked on this programme and made it a realized dream. You could not live longer to reap what you have sowed before you met your untimely demise in the cold hands of death. May your gentle and inspiring soul rest in perfect peace. ADIEU BIG SISTER.

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ABSTRACT

Conflicts between pastoralists and farmers often caused by destruction of farmers' crops by pastoralists' herds and resource scarcity are rampant in Benue State, Nigeria, mainly because, the people are predominantly farmers. While existing literature in the fields of agriculture, geography and environmental studies have explored the causes and consequences of this conflict in Benue State, little has been done to assess the methods of managing it. This study, therefore, carried out an assessment of the methods of managing the conflict between pastoralists and farmers in Benue State.

Theories of political economy and environmental resource scarcity were adopted for the study. The study adopted the survey research design. Data were collected through primary and secondary sources. Five communities comprising Katsina-Ala, Abinsi, Gbajimba, Agila and Igumale were purposively selected for the study. In-depth interviews were conducted with 20 Key Informants comprising community leaders and four (4) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) conducted with pastoralists and farmers. In addition, a total of 480 copies of questionnaires were administered to 140 resident pastoralists, 140 farmers, 100 security agents and 100 community leaders from selected communities. Secondary data were collected from published books, journal articles and the internet. Quantitative data were analysed using narrative and descriptive techniques such as frequency and percentage distribution while the qualitative data were content analysed.

Two recognised methods were adopted in managing pastoralists and farmers' conflicts in Benue State, namely, the indigenous and the formal methods. The indigenous method includes *ela otumin* (mediation) *epo oloche* (traditional courts), *orka o' oka* (informal discussions) and *ojojira ko ole* (community meetings) while the formal method includes court of adjudication, arbitration, litigation and security agents. The indigenous method was much preferred by the respondents and proved to have settled more conflicts than the formal method. This is because the method is cheaper, faster and makes justice more accessible. Mediation was used to settled 81.3% of the cases; traditional courts, 87.4%; informal discussions, 73.7%; community meetings 91.6%; adjudication, 15.1%; arbitration, 11.9%; litigation, 14.6% and security agents, 27.4%. Also, while the indigenous method employed the use of persuasion and reconciliation, the formal method aimed at legal and technical rationality in deriving its solution. The indigenous method provided a win-win dimension while the formal method provided a win-lose dimension. The indigenous method was used to

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manage 78.6% of the cases investigated while the formal method, only 34.8% of the cases investigated. In all, 73.5% of sampled respondents preferred the indigenous method, while 26.5% preferred the formal method. However, inability to accept the decisions by the more aggrieved parties undermined the indigenous method while mutual distrusts undermined the formal method. Findings from FGDs showed that most pastoralists and farmers have adopted social behaviour as a way of living to enhance peaceful co-existence among them in the communities.

The indigenous method is more effective in managing conflicts between pastoralists and farmers than the formal method in Benue State. However, the government should collaborate with the different community leaders for an agreeable format and allocation of lands for pastoral purposes.

Key words: Conflict management, Pastoralists, Farmers, Benue State
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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the study

Since inception, humans have depended on the environment for food, raw materials and for survival. Humans began as hunter-gatherers, and then moved to secure more reliable sources of food for this survival. Hence, humans have lived on natural boundaries of land. However, these natural boundaries continually become scarce due to pressure from the growing human population. Humans, thus, resorted to domestication of plants and animals and therefore, began their transition from a primitive hunter-gatherer occupation, to a more sustainable occupation, 'agriculture'. For about 10,000 years, humans have lived on agriculture, as it remains one of the oldest occupations of humankind on earth. Thus, one can define agriculture as the science of cultivating crops, and rearing of animals, for the use of man.

By nature, human beings exhibit differences not only biologically or physiologically, but also, socially and psychologically. Even identical twins that may be very much alike physically, develop different personalities and orientations, and perceive assets or develop resources as well as socio-economic problems differently. Differences between individuals and groups are natural, but the divergent perceptions and manipulations, or exploitations of these differences with reference to assess to scarce resources for individual or group advantages are man-made. This condition constitutes a premise for conflict.

According to Coser (1956), social conflict is 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 rivals. Such conflicts may take place between individuals, groups or between individuals and groups; inter group as well as intra group conflicts, which are perennial features of social life. This however, is the case of the conflict between the pastoralists and farmers in Benue State, Nigeria, where the conflict is very rampant. It is obvious from the above definition and from our existential conditions that conflict is endemic in plural societies. One of the permanent features of the social life and the inter and intra group relations in multi ethnic societies is conflict. Its consequence is social change.

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Although, there has always been a mix of conflicts and cooperation between pastoralists and farmers, conflict has become increasingly likely due to several historical, social and environmental factors. During the pre-colonial era, the subsistence and small surplus peasant modes of production of Fulbe herders and West African farmers were often intertwined in a mutually beneficial fashion. The changes in land tenure laws during the colonial period increased commodity production and the environmental degradation that often results from it. The adoption of new irrigation techniques and the sedentarisation schemes for transhumant pastoralists that accompanied the introduction of capitalism to West Africa disrupted the production symbiosis of Fulbe and farmers, in addition to increasing the likelihood of conflicts between them.

Research has shown that, there is a decrease in the exchange of relationship between the farmers and the pastoralists, and this has created a cultural gap between them. This is reflected in extensive sedentarisation and an increase in conflicts with each other claiming rights of ownership to the land (resource use). Of recent, the frequency of violent clashes has increased with a further widespread communications, which are exacerbating the gravity of conflicts. These have been increasingly interpreted as religious, political and ethnic, even though the underlying factors may be competition for access to resources.

Majority of the people in Benue State earn their living through farming as most of the Fulani who migrated to the state rely on the land for their pasture. This is because land is a major factor of production which requires the introduction of a legal and institutional framework for proper management. Beatie (1964) once notes that land in African context is a communal resource, but has a means of private investment. In essence, land serves as a factor of production, a store of value or wealth, a status symbol and a source of social and political influence. Land becomes relatively scarce as more people continue to see the importance and value of it. Nevertheless, as the demand for land increases, the relative value of it rise, and as such, land becomes increasingly a source of conflicts among economic demand social groups in the community. Thus, daily influx of immigrants, mostly the Fulani, increased demand on land and this often leads to conflicts between the farmers who are regarded as the

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indigenous owner of the land, and the pastoralists who are seen as the strangers or settlers of the land.

Most of the difficulties and questions regarding conflicts are mirrored in the wider literature on African natural resource conflicts. The predominant causes of the conflict between the farmers and pastoralists include environmental scarcity and damaging of crops among others. The notion that conflicts are related to resource scarcity has drawn many attentions which must be treated with caution. Conflict can arise when people place multiple and competing demands on a resource, yet, such circumstances do not always result in tensions or disputes (Hussein *et al.*, 1999). Besides, poverty is sometimes treated as an obvious cause of conflict, yet, when and why poor people decide to support confrontation and violence is unclear or not yet convincingly established (Justino, 2008).

Widespread changes in production systems and socio-political landscapes created conditions that enabled the likelihood of goal incompatibility, and heightened the potential severity of strife between pastoralists and their farmer neighbours in West Africa. This assessment implies that conflict mitigation between pastoralists and West African farmers requires systemic, institutional, and/or structural changes to address the root causes. The current analysis explores the historical, structural and various cultural factors that led to the emergence of conflict between these two groups.

In line with what Adams and Hollings (1993) say of the Hadeja-Nguru, the Benue floodplain wetlands have a strategic ecological and economic importance out of all proportion to their size, and have a central role in the regional economy for centuries. Pastoral populations have developed specialized range management strategies to utilize the natural resources which these wetlands provide, and it is claimed that the pastoralists have developed a symbiotic relationship with the settled farming communities (Stenning, 1995). This interdependence as it is argued has been a key factor in maintaining intensive and continuous cultivation in a region which by rural African standards has a very high population density. However, it is often suggested that modern systems of agricultural production and the extension of market relations in the regions appear to have developed in a direction contrary to the requirements of migratory livestock pastoralists and that, the widespread promotion of

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inorganic fertilizers has caused many farmers to abandon their customary arrangements with livestock pastoralists.

According to Zakari and Umar (2006), agricultural activities are daunting, thus, the need of specialised farming becomes glaring, and the general dichotomisation of the conventional practice into crop production and animal husbandry becomes necessary. In the Northern part of Nigeria in particular and West Africa in general, we have the Fulani cattle rearers who are traditionally referred to as "*Bororo*" or "*Fulbe*" who have forfeited and resisted the pleasures and hazards of modernity and instead, taken to conservation and glued to their animals in the bush. The grazing appetites of their animals dictate their place of abode. This explains their mobile and nomadic status (Zakari & Umar, 2006:27). Fulani livelihoods as highly dependent cattle rearing communities are often mobile in search of fresh grasses and suitable grazing areas that are disease and tsetse fly free. The social interaction of the Fulani pastoralists with their host communities is sometimes not cordial because of their different cultural and religious norms. Limited access to formal education particularly for women and girls also creates a barrier. The issues of different cultures and poor education attainment marginalise the Fulani community resulting in the feeling of insecurity in any local farming community they find themselves.

The conflict between the pastoralists and farmers are always prevalent during the dry season when farmers burn grasses preparatory to farming and hunting while the Fulani pastoralists burn in order to induce the growth of fresh grasses for their cattle. Grass burning by local farmers and water scarcity during this period impels the pastoralists to graze in the valleys where they can still find grasses and water for their cattle. During the grazing process, they cross the paths of farmers who find fault in the destruction of their crops by these animals. This usually encroaches on farmlands, causing the potential destruction of crops. This often results to serious conflict or outright bloodletting. It is during the dry season that short-term agreements are entered into between the communities and the Fulani with arbitrary fees charged.

In 2001/2002, there was a conflict between a Fulani pastoralist (herdsman) and a Tiv farmer in Benue State. This encounter was itself part of the uneasy relationship between the pastoralists and the farmers. There is ample documentation that all over the

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country the two are regularly in conflict (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2003; Usman, 1999; Imobighe, 2003). Usman (1999) states that over 69 deaths and 99 injuries were recorded between 1993 and 1995 and that this pattern of conflict runs through the entire country from the Sahel to the forest belt of Imo State. A more recent publication has shown that there is a keen contest over access to, and control of the wetlands, the Fadamas, between farmers, anglers, pastoralists and hunters. This conflict has resulted in several explosions of conflicts in Nigeria's North Central Region (Blench, 2004). In this region, this conflict takes the form of the Fulani pastoralists accusing the Tiv who are mainly farmers, of raiding and indiscriminately killing their cattle and men. The Tiv farmers on the other hand, accuse the pastoralists of their herds destroying their farmland during grazing. Farmers complain about animals wandering on the cropland at critical growth periods. Besides, the trampling of the soil by these animals compresses it and makes tillage in the next planting season difficult. When farmers and pastoralists live in the same geographical space, violent clashes occur over trespassing. More so, migrating herd brings unwanted birds and biting flies that destroy food crops.

Although, the consequences of pastoralists and farmers' conflict in Benue State seem to have been so obvious to many both within and outside the state, there is not yet much detailed literature on the conflict. The necessity for research in this area is all the more urgent, since the state has been associated with pastoralists and farmers' conflicts and violence. It would be a significant contribution to knowledge to attempt, to comprehend and understand the various methods of managing conflicts between pastoralists and farmers in Benue State, mostly from the perspective of multi disciplinary approach underpinning the current research.

Against this background, the study assessed the various methods that have been adopted in managing pastoralists and farmers' conflicts in Benue State. The justification for this research is based on the fact that Benue State has witnessed a lot of pastoralists and farmers as well as communal conflicts among the states in the Central Region of the country. There has thus far, been little identification and evaluation of the methods for managing the conflict as well as the historical dynamics of pastoralists and farmers' relations and the impact of the conflict on customary arrangements of mutual benefit. This leaves many questions unanswered. To what extent do gender, age,

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wealth, class, ethnic origin and locality influence customary relations? How important are pastoral-farmer linkages as food and income sources to pastoralists and farmers? What is the impact of societal and policy change on relations? Under what conditions are relations suspended or disbanded? Which villages are prone to incidences of conflict and why? What impact does conflict has on the food security and socio-economic status of the different stakeholders? What policy incentives, if any, are required to support customary relations? Looking at the magnitude and prospect of the above raised issues, this work in addition, examined the root causes of this conflict for its better understanding in Benue State, Nigeria, where this ugly scenario between the pastoralists and farmers have claimed more lives.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Evidence of systematic research on the prevailing dynamics of pastoralists and farmers' conflict and on the assessment of the methods of managing it in Benue State is quite scanty despite its obvious consequences on peaceful co-existence between the pastoralists and farmers in the state. This does not however suggest that scholars have not engaged in the general description of the causes and consequences of pastoralists and farmers conflict in Nigeria (Awogbade, 1983; Albert, 2004). Specifically, several scholars and conflict analysts have carried out research works on land and other communal related conflicts in Benue State (Kwanga and Kerenku, 2007; Zakari and Umar, 2006). The existing body of literature had also attempted to dissect some conflictual situations within the geographical entity of Benue State. For instance, Alubo (2006) Ayua (2006) and Angya (2006) among others have differently worked on the historical context, and changing nature of communal conflicts in the Middle Belt region, as it affected peaceful co-existence in the state. Indeed (IDP, 2004; Akwaya, 2007) convincingly established the link between unresolved historical pastoralists and farmers' conflict among the Tiv, Fulani and Idoma communities in the state. However, none of these studies has undertaken an assessment of the various methods of managing the conflict between the pastoralists and the farmers in the state.

Conflict between pastoralists and farmers often caused by destruction of farmers' crops by pastoralists' herds and resource scarcity are no doubt, rampant in

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Benue State, Nigeria, mainly because the people are predominantly farmers. While existing literature in the field of agriculture, geography and environmental studies have explored the causes and consequences of this conflict in Benue State; little has been done to assess the methods of managing it. This study, therefore, carried out an assessment of the methods of managing the conflict between pastoralists and farmers in Benue State, Nigeria.

Against the backdrop of environmental degradation, resource scarcity, demography change and political instability, the state perhaps demonstrates element of anarchy and conflicts. Farmers and pastoralists conflict is one of the core manifestations of these conflicts, and this is deeply rooted in the history, ecology and political economy of the state. Livestock is the major means of livelihood for over five million people in Benue State, while over two million people in the same state also rely on livestock and livestock related enterprises for their livelihood as well. The state livestock sector is dominated by traditional systems of production, processing and marketing; and the nomadic and semi nomadic pastoralists hold the large proportion of the cattle, camel, sheep and goats. These pastoralists operate within an expansive geography oscillating between their major base in the dry places during the rainy season and the wetter area during the dry season. Throughout the state, the nomadic and the semi nomadic pastoralists move within and across communities, principally in search of pasture and water for their herds, and in the process, contact with settled crop farmers is unavoidable.

In the first instance, the pastoralists have to move across and graze on farmlands that belong to crop farmers. Secondly, pastoralists require the calories produced by crop farmers, much as the crop farmers also, often require the protein and dairy products produced by the pastoralists. According to Monod (1975), no nomad can exist for long without coming in contact with sedentary people. He also notes that even the Tuareg nomads of the Sahara maintain contact with oasis dwellers. Thus, pastoralists and crop farmers are intertwined, sharing land, water, fodder and other resources. Due to this, several conflicts are bound to occur on the relationship between farmers and pastoralists, foremost of which is the perennial conflict over resource use. As a matter of fact, conflict between crop farmers and pastoralists has become particularly acute in

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recent years in Benue State. However, it has been a recurring social problem for many decades but in recent years, the activities of pastoralists who move with arms usually in large groups and who commit intentional crop damage, has added another dimension to the conflicts.

Therefore, the present study is designed to assess these methods in Benue State with a view to determining how effective these methods are, towards managing the conflicts in the state. By assessing these methods of conflict management in Benue State, the present research aims to critically examine the different methods, their weaknesses and strengths in managing the conflict in the state. Evidence reviews that pastoralists and farmers' conflict in Benue State, mostly between 2001 and 2010 were not only unprecedented in the historical annals of the Middle Belt region, but also, continue to assume more alarming proportions and progressive intensity in the region, to the extent that the state is regarded as one of the states with highest number of pastoralists and farmers' conflict as well as land and communal conflicts.

Considering the historical account of pastoralists and farmers' conflict in the country in general and the Middle Belt in particular, the study becomes more imperative due to the salient fact that unassessed conflict management methods at the state level can snowball into an intensive conflicts, which may in turn have greater impact on the larger society. The study therefore advances that inadequate and untimely assessment of these various methods by stakeholders and parties pose a threat to peaceful co-existence among the people in the state. The project also explored the context and highlighted the peace and security implications of the persistent resource use conflict in the state. Though, the project drew from specific relevant instances across the state, its objective presented a more generalized synthesis of the problem, considering the similarity in the ecology as well as the pattern of farmers and pastoralists interaction in the state.

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1.3. Research questions

Based on the above identified problems, the following research questions assisted us in arriving at a logical conclusion in this study.

1. What are the causes of pastoralists and farmers' conflicts?

2. What are the implications of these conflicts to the people and the development of these communities?

3. What are the methods employed or institutions involved in managing these conflicts in the past and present?

4. How effective are these methods towards managing the conflict?

1.4. Objectives of the study

The objectives of this research have resulted from the main theme, which is 'an assessment of the methods of managing conflict between pastoralists and farmers in Benue State'. The objectives were investigated based on gathered information in a bid to ascertain how the conflict affect development and peaceful coexistence in the state. Due to the above, the objectives of this research include:

- Examine the dynamics of pastoralists and farmers' relations.
- Examine the underlying causes of these conflicts in this sub-region.
- Assess the various methods of managing pastoralists and farmers conflict in Benue State.
- Examine policy implications and recommendations for conflict between pastoralists and farmers in Benue State.

1.5. Justification of the Study

The outcome of this study is of great intellectual and practical value to a generation of stakeholders, academia, scholars and even role players involved in one way or the other in conflict management. The mechanisms of conflict management usually adopted in settling the conflicts between the farmers and the pastoralists were articulated in a body of research work for documentations and references for once. Consultants and researchers alike will also gain current data necessary for upgrading training facilities and programs designed to contain the advent and impacts of conflicts in the interest of political stability and development.

Impassioned analysis of the research study offered objective views of the causes of the conflicts, process of management and administration of justice in the affected communities. This alone goes a long way in resolving the intractable and endemic crisis in these communities. In fact, the result of this study will inspire result-oriented

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strategies for conflict management in Nigeria as a whole and in Benue State in particular. Besides, scholars intending to undertake theoretical construction of the themes of the traditional conflict management models will be availed with the data on which to make companions across geographical areas and politics.

1.6. Fieldwork experience and limitations of the study

Difficulties in various dimensions were encountered in the course of the study, mostly during the fieldwork. A relatively long distance from the University of Ibadan in Oyo State, to various communities in Benue State, coupled with bad network of roads in the country, constituted serious problems which contributed to the unnecessary prolongation of the study. Besides, reaching some of the chosen communities was not easy as means of transportation was quite difficult to get, and when available, the price charged was quite exorbitant. This was due to the poor network of roads in the state. Another problem was the initial attitude of the people towards visitors. In the field, there was general mistrust about the motive of the researcher in most of the communities visited and even by some government officials. The people misconstrued the intention of the researcher and had the erroneous assumption that the researcher was a spy or intelligent officer, gathering information for security agency to use against them. Others mistook him as a police or soldier or any other security agent. Consequently, it was difficult to get the needed cooperation from stakeholders for interviews in some cases, especially government functionaries, security operatives and some community and Fulani leaders. Nevertheless, a 'good Samaritan' came from nowhere to rescue the researcher in one of the communities visited and volunteered to assist the researcher throughout the period of the fieldwork, and even travelled with him to other communities apart from his home community.

Language was another constraint experienced during the field work as speaking the language (that is, Tiv, Idoma and Hausa-Fulani) was quite difficult because they are so deeply divided by dialects. However, with the assistance of key informants and research assistants who were indigenes of the communities and fluent in English language and the local dialects, the people gradually started to feel free and in fact, became friendly and helpful throughout the period of the research.

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Some corrections were made in the process of drafting and pre-testing the research instruments to ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments based on the objectives of the study. However, the study was limited to pastoralists and farmers conflict, thereby neglecting other conflicts in the communities. This limitation was inevitable given the available scarce resources at the disposal of the researcher and the amount of data that a single researcher can effectively manage within the time allotted to the doctoral programme of the University of Ibadan, where the thesis would be accepted.

However, with patience and perseverance, these limitations were overcome and did not affect the outcome of the study negatively. Instead, they increased and improved the quality of the study since the researcher saw them as challenges and not obstacles.

1.7. Definition of terms

For the purpose of the study, clarification of some major concepts used, helped us to understand their functions in this study. These concepts include the following.

1.7.1. Conflict management

The unavoidable nature of conflict in every human society creates the room for mitigation of conflicts and its management at least, if not completely resolving them when they occur. Those who believed that conflict is difficult to either settle or resolve, thus, coined the concept 'conflict management'. Their argument is that, it is more reasonable to conceive of managing or controlling conflict rather than resolving it. Conflict management is thus, the process of reducing the negative and destructive capacity of conflict through a number of measures, and by working with and through the parties involved in that conflict (Shedrack, 2006). This term is often used synonymously with conflict resolution, conflict regulation, conflict prevention and even conflict transformation. However, conflict management covers the entire area of handling conflicts positively at different stages including those efforts made to prevent conflict by being proactive. It encompasses conflict limitation, containment and litigation. In the words of John Burton, this may include conflict prevention (Burton, 1990). The term 'conflict management' is an admission of the reality that conflict is

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inevitable but not all conflicts can always be resolved; therefore, what practitioners can do is to manage and regulate them. According to Lederach (1995), differences and conflicts cannot continue to exist without some adjustment in the positions held by the parties in conflict. For him, conflict management may be perceived as a wider concept which involves conflict resolution and transformation when necessitated, and it is more of a long-term arrangement involving institutionalized provisions and regulative procedures for dealing with conflicts, whenever they occur.

According to Wikipedia, conflict management means the long-term management of intractable conflicts; a label for the variety of ways by which people handle grievances, that is, upholding what they consider right and rejecting what is wrong. It equally remarks that those ways include such diverse phenomenon as gossip, ridicule, lynching, terrorism, warfare, feuding, genocide, law, mediation and avoidance (www.wikipedia.com, retrieved October 15, 2009). For Miller and King (2005), conflict management means the interventionist efforts towards preventing the escalation and negative effects, mainly violent ones, of ongoing conflicts. Conflict management when actively conducted is therefore a constant process. In essence, it refers to the measures that limit, mitigate and or contain a conflict without necessarily solving it (Swanstrom and Weissman, 2005:25). In line with the above opinion, Thomas (1991:90-94) asserts that, our basic conceptualisation of conflict influences how we manage it. When we feel that conflict is never productive, we ignore it, and this can result to anger and resentment.

In another development, Imobighe (2003) views conflict management as any form of intervention in a dispute by an actor, who is not a party to it, with the aim of altering the parties' perception of the situation in order to facilitate a solution by inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration or adjudication. As Lund (1997) posits, conflict management refers to the act of transforming the violent conflict into something less harmful or looking for ways to prevent its escalation. However, conflict management should not be seen as a simple, linear or structural process. Those charged with such a task should avoid an intensely chaotic situation. Conflicts are frequently managed directly by the society in which they occur. According to Raczmany (1998), conflict management involves the use of dialogue to assist opponents or parties, not

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only to have agreements against hostile images or actions, but also, to comply with earlier agreed resolutions and strategies. Since end of hostilities in a conflict situation does not entails peace for the conflicting parties (Nnoli, 2006:215), and also bearing in mind that, the most critical period is when a conflict is in the process of being addressed and resolved, considering when mistake could be costly, there is thus, always need to manage conflicts very well. In fact, Imobighe (2003) develops a workable approach to conflict management. This he calls 'integrated conflict management circle', which involves three interacting types of activity, which are;

(i). Conflict prevention, peace promotion and consolidation

(ii). Conflict control and abatement.

(iii). Conflict resolution.

The diagram below is used to expound the integrated conflict management circle.

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Conflict prevention, peace promotion and consolidation

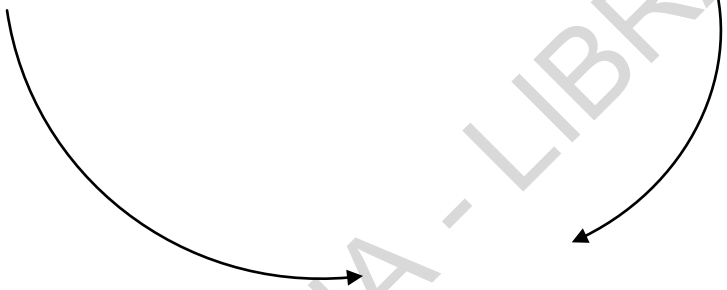
Possible responses

- Democratic practice
- Behavioural code
- Confidence building
- Integrative activities

Conflict control and abatement

Possible responses

- Passing resolution
- Making appeals
- Using neutral forces to keep parties apart.



Conflict resolution

Positive responses

- Use of mediating organ
- Conciliatory activities
- Intensive negotiation

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Source: Imobighe, 2003:2

The above information means that constructive management of conflict entails participatory mechanism by all the stakeholders (both government and non government). This involves good leadership style that puts in place, approaches for early warning signals to conflict escalation, structural and strategic preventive diplomacy. In essence, it has been confirmed that conflict cannot be said to be completely resolved. Instead, what obtain is to manage the conflicting situation in a constructive way that is capable of preventing re-occurrence of such conflict to violent

proportions that can hinder the process of socio-economic cum political development of a given society. Thus, a process spans through conflict phases of prevention through outright resolution. Shedrack (2006:95) defines conflict management as:

> The process of reducing the negative and destructive capacity of conflict through a number of measures and by working with, and through the parties involved in that conflict. It covers the entire area of handling conflicts positively at different stages including those efforts made to prevent conflict by being proactive. It encompasses conflict limitation, containment and litigation.

This means that conflict management should be handled with either utmost care as the process can make or mar. In essence, conflict could escalate if mishandled. That is why it employs 'Track One Diplomacy' to ensure the disputants understand the process and accedes willingly. Hence, for Akpuru-Aja (2007:34-35), it assumes an intervention mechanisms consisting of monitoring and evaluation of conflict behaviours and the degree of compliance to resolution on ending violence, demobilization of arms or effecting concessions and remedies which are important in easing tensions by all the concerned parties to the conflict.

Shedrack (2006:93) further points out that the nature of conflict management is a sensitive one. In essence, it does not impose rigid conditions, it allows free flow of information and communication and it is impartial and gives a lot of opportunity and relevant concessions when necessary to achieve the desired peace. It could also involve either unilateral or bilateral actors. Above all, dialogue is required as the medium for arriving at the solution of any conflict in terms of management.

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1.7.2. Conflict resolution

This term has been often times misjudged and misrepresented. It has been occasionally treated synonymously with conflict management. However, there are some similarities between the two concepts. While conflict resolution represents a theoretical design, conflict management discuses the operational and implementation mechanisms and processes. Conflict resolution therefore, refers to efforts to increase co-operation

among the warring parties in order to deepen their relationship by addressing the factors that led to the dispute, fostering positive attitudes and allaying distrust through reconciliation initiatives and building or strengthening the institutions and processes through which the parties interact. It also helps to reduce the chances of violence or to consolidate the cessation of a violent conflict in order to prevent re-escalation (Shedrack, 2006).

Conflict resolution deals with peaceful means of terminating confrontations which resulted from differences. In other words, conflict resolution sets agendas for assisting parties in conflict to establish a common ground for peaceful co-existence. The principles, rules and regulations help disputing parties to operate within the principle of international law and diplomacy. Resolution assumes that the result of third party mediation or conciliation on the side of the conflicting parties will be to satisfy the needs of all concerned parties. Laue (1992) agrees to this when he posits that full resolution by joint agreement satisfies the underlying needs and interests of the conflicting parties, and does not sacrifice any of their genuinely important values. Moreover, if it has to be enforced, it is no longer a true resolution. Maluwa (1989) buttresses the above point when he says that:

> Conflict resolution involves changing reality, either by reducing scarcity of a disputed value or resource or by changing the causal factors that have made for antagonism and confrontation in the past. It also consists of changing the demands of the actors so that a distribution of values is found that is subjectively acceptable to both the actors and therefore agreed to.

The implication of the above is that, the fundamental essence of conflict resolution is to ensure an atmosphere of mutual relationship built on problem solving paradigm that is capable of unifying the conflicting parties in a constructive framework, rather than a destructive one. As Nwolise (2003) rightly observes, conflict resolution means removing the root causes of the conflict, transforming relations between the parties in restorative and socially harmonizing patterns; and bringing about justice and fairness in the whole gamut of affairs and interests of the parties. Concurring to this, the

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International Alert (1996) states that conflict resolution includes building bridges between hostile communities, working to clarify issues that represent points of confrontation between them, creating chances for developing new relationships based upon a process of peaceful change and grass-root level reconciliation. Galtung (1996) goes further to name six approaches to conflict resolution which include resolving the incompatibility (transcendence), compromise, deepening, broadening, integration (fusion union) and disintegration through decoupling (for example, non co-operation).

Conclusively, conflict resolution could be possible, only when efforts are made to address the issue of injustice that necessitates the conflict and its escalation to violence. It assumes that, the conflict has been dealt with in such a way that its deep-rooted sources have been removed, the attitude and behaviour of the conflicting parties are no longer hostile and the structures of the conflict have been changed totally. Thus, both the wound and scars produced by the conflict has been removed. However, it should be noted that some peace scholars are of the view that conflict resolution is a goal that is easy to set but difficult to attain. According to them, the conflict wound can be healed but the scars will remain. Hence, the concept resolution is always used with care.

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1.7.3. Pastoralism

According to Azarya (1996), pastoralism refers to an economy that is based on raising livestock which could be undertaken by sedentary or nomadic groups. Nomadism on the other hand depicts the extent of spatial movement of the groups in question. Thus, it is acknowledged in the literature that the question of pastoral production is conceptually different from the extent of residential mobility. Analysing this line of argument further, some researchers like Salzman (1980) have affirm that it is possible to have multi resource nomadism. This entails mobile groups who may combine cultivation, hunting gathering, sale of labour as well as livestock herding. On its part, pastoralism involves management of domesticated animals from which food is extracted and it can be carried out from a fixed location. While nomadism and pastoralism are not necessarily mutually inclusive, it is also necessary to note that nomadism represents an integral social, political and environmental dimension of

pastoralism. It represents the technique and technology of pastoralism since it is a movement among others; to avoid wide range of hazards in the social and physical environment, an option not normally available to agricultural people who are tied to the agricultural lands and their stored agricultural products. Pastoralists may move with their herds to avoid insects and diseases in order to reduce competition with other groups; and to avoid would be authorities (Dyson-Hudson and Dyson-Hudson, 1980:17-18).

1.7.4. Crop farming (sedentary crop farming)

Sedentary farmers are those farmers who live permanently in settlements, gaining their livelihoods mainly from crop production, with domestic animals providing supplementary income and practice crop farming (Hussein, 1998). Thus, lowland dry farming systems are crop livestock production, occupying about ten percent of the worlds' dry lands and supporting ten times, the number of people that live under pastoral production systems. In such environments, unpredictable rainfall often creates acute shortage of food and unless livestock are few and integrated closely with crop production, overgrazing may occur and add to environmental degradation (UNRISD, 1997). It must however be noted that sedentary cultivators are also 'stock breeders' or 'herders'; and just as many stock breeders or herders are also to some extent, farmers. In essence, the links between 'farming' and 'herding' is a continuous rather than a separate one. Besides, while it may appear paradoxical, the emergence of pastoralism as a specialised economic activity was actually enhanced by the development of agriculture (Galaty and Johnson, 1990). Abba and Usman (2008) concur to this when they state that agriculture made it possible for the development of a regional system of complementary exchange between pastoralists and farmers.

1.7.5. Resource use conflict

This is a core concept in this study. The concept has been variously defined and debated by different scholars from different fields of studies. Resource use conflict between farmers and pastoralists for example, is by any definition, 'a social conflict'. Social conflict generally entails an interaction between groups in competitive setting and such interaction need not be 'violent' or transformed into a 'war' before it is

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considered as a conflict. According to Hocker and Wilmot (1985), conflict is the interaction of interdependent people who perceive incompatible goals and interference from each other in achieving these goals. In this context, resource conflict is simply operationalised in this study as the interaction between two or more interdependent resource users; in this issue, between crop farmers and pastoralists over common environmental resources including land, pasture, crop residues, livestock passages and water points such as boreholes, drainages, wells and streams. Resource use conflict springs from competition and conflict of interests and can be violent or non-violent. Hussein *et al.,* (1999:401) define violent conflict as conflict with violence of a physical nature in order to distinguish it from non-violent which also manifests from conflict of interests and competition. In this conceptualisation, non-violent outcomes of conflict of interests and competition over resources, consist of institutional rules defining classes of inclusion and exclusion to natural resources; migratory avoidance strategies adopted by herders to keep away from zones of intense competition with farmers, and both farmers and herders diversifying into multiple sources of livelihood. Other results include, agreement building between farmers and local herders to check resource exploitation by external actors and litigation action taken to define use rights and or obtain compensation for crop damages.

Blench (1997; 1999) on his part provides a very broad and useful classification of resource conflict in semi arid Africa. He bases his classification on two general arenas of conflict, namely; point and eco-zonal resources. Point resources are defined as resources such as mines, large farms and reserves while eco-zonal resources on the other hand, refer to the patchy resources of the semi arid region. Conflict between pastoralists and farmers is a classic example of conflict over eco-zonal resources. According to him, this conflict is the most geographically spread and dominant in the literature. Other sources of resource conflict may be locally important, but are tied to point resources such as mines, game parks or infrastructural projects.

1.8. Study area

Benue State is one of the states in North Central Nigeria. Its capital is Makurdi and it is named after the Benue River. It lies between longitude 7^0 40' and 10^0 00'E and

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latitude 6^0 30' and 8^0 24'N. It had a population of about 5.1 million (National Population Commission, 2006). Benue State shares borders with Nasarawa State to the north, Taraba to the east, Ebonyi and Cross River to the south and Kogi State to the west. The state was created on February 13, 1976 from the former Benue-Plateau State and part of Kwara State. The State is divided into twenty three (23) Local Government Areas: Ado, Katsina-Ala, Oju, Agatu, Konshisha, Okpokwu, Apa, Kwande, Otukpo, Buruku, Logo, Tarka, Gboko, Makurdi, Ukum, Guma, Obi, Ushongo, Gwer-West, Ogbadibo, Vandeikya, Gwer East and Ohimini.

The state has a land area of about 31,400 sq kilometres. The land is generally low lying with occasional inselberg and lateritic mesas. The strip of land on the Nigerian-Cameroonian border of the state is hilly. The hills are an interjection of the Cameroonian ranges into Nigeria. The river Benue is the major river in the state, others include those of Katsina-Ala, Aya, Amile Tamen, Amile Kiriki, Gwer, Mkomun, Loko, Michihe, Lafa, Konshisha, Okpokwu, Oyongo and Obi Ochefu. These rivers and streams flow into the Benue Katsina-Ala system, Cross-River and the River Niger. These rivers and streams constitute the drainage system of the state (Kwanga and Kerenku, 2007:2-3).

The climate of Benue State like the rest of Nigeria is influenced by two major air masses which in turn give rise to two winds. These include the tropical continental air mass located in the Sahara desert and the tropical maritime mass located in the Atlantic Ocean. These masses give rise to the North East Trade Winds (N.E Trades) and South West Trade Winds (S.W Trades) respectively. These winds converge at the Inter Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ), which pulsates north and south of the state and indeed, the whole of Nigeria with the apparent movement of the overhead sun. Associated with these are the two seasons experienced in the state namely, 'the wet and dry seasons'. The wet season starts from April to November (that is, seven months). The total annual rainfall ranges from 1500mm-2000mm. The mountainous strip along the Cameroonian border which receives a total annual rainfall of about 2000mm is the wettest part of the state (Kwanga and Kerenku, 2007:3).

Kwanga and Kerenku go further to state that the dry season on the other hand starts from December and last until March. During this time, Benue State is under the

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influence of the North East Trade winds which are dry and dusty, thereby causing harmattan. As it is the norm with tropical locations, Benue State generally has high temperatures. Makurdi the state capital records a maximum of 35^0C and 21^0C respectively. The relative humidity is very high mostly in the wet season because of the thick cloud cover. The state is said to lie in the Southern Guinea Savannah characterised by tall grasses and scattered trees. Because of the seasonal nature of the climate, the vegetation is said to be deciduous, shading leaves in the dry season to conserve water. However, the true vegetation in its natural form only exists in forest reserves while the rest is sub climax vegetation created upon incessant clearing for farming activities.

Benue is a rich agricultural state, full of rivers, and could be called 'the breadbasket of Nigeria'. Thus, it is acclaimed to be the nation's 'food basket' because of its rich and diverse agricultural produce which include yam, rice, beans, cassava, potatoes, maize, soya beans, sorghum, corn, millet, coco-yam, potatoes, guinea corn, flax and beniseed. The state also accounts for over 70 percent of Nigeria's soya beans production. It also boasts of one of the longest stretches of river systems in the country with potential for a viable fishing industry, dry season farming through irrigation and for an inland waterway through irrigation. The state is blessed with abundant mineral resources. These include limestone, gypsum, anhydride, kaolin, natural gas, salt, petroleum oil, lead and zinc, barites, clay, coal, calcite, gemstones and magnetite.

Many of the ethnic groups that inhabit Benue State today were associated with the rise and fall of Kwararafa Kingdom. The ancient Kwararafa Kingdom under Jukun leadership was a confederacy of many ethnic groups that co-opted in a number of ways to lay the foundation of present day Benue and the neighbouring states like Plateau, Taraba and Cross River States. This great empire lasted until about the seventeenth century when it collapsed after suffering severe military attacks from the emerging Borno Empire. It is from this confederacy that the Idoma, Igala, Igbirra and Etulo are believed to have emerged at various times in history. It should be noted that the minor ethnic groups in the state such as the Etulo, Abakwa and to some extent, the Idoma, settled in the present day Benue State before the Tiv who happened to be the dominant people today arrived. Wars of conquest ensued and some of the groups were displaced

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to their various present locations. By 1800, all the people in the area to be known later as Benue State had arrived in the area and had learnt to co-exist with one another (Kwanga and Kerenku, 2007:3).

However, the study area is Benue State in general, but special attention is given to some communities (towns/villages) in the Guma, Katsina-Ala and Ado Local Government Areas, where the conflict between the pastoralists (nomads) and farmers and other conflicts are frequent. These selected local governments equally spread across the three (senatorial) zones being zones A (North East), B (North West) and C (South) that made up Benue State in a bid to obtain or achieve a broad base and equitable results. These local governments were also selected due to the frequent occurrence of communal crises and not just because they represent the three zones. It should be noted that there are currently so many unsettled land disputes as well as conflict between farmers and pastoralists in the areas pending before the courts, traditional councils and commissions of inquiry set up by Benue State Government. The first two local governments are found within the Tiv speaking area and speak the Tiv and Jukun languages while Ado is located within the Idoma speaking area. However, the Fulani (pastoralists) are also found in all the local government areas chosen for this study.

In essence, the subject matter was examined within Benue State with particular reference to the pastoralists and farmers' conflict. In the first instance, we focused on the conflict between pastoralists and farmers and the various methods of managing the conflict were assessed. Secondly, the implications of the above issues were examined in order to ascertain how they affected the communities in particular and the state (Benue) in general.

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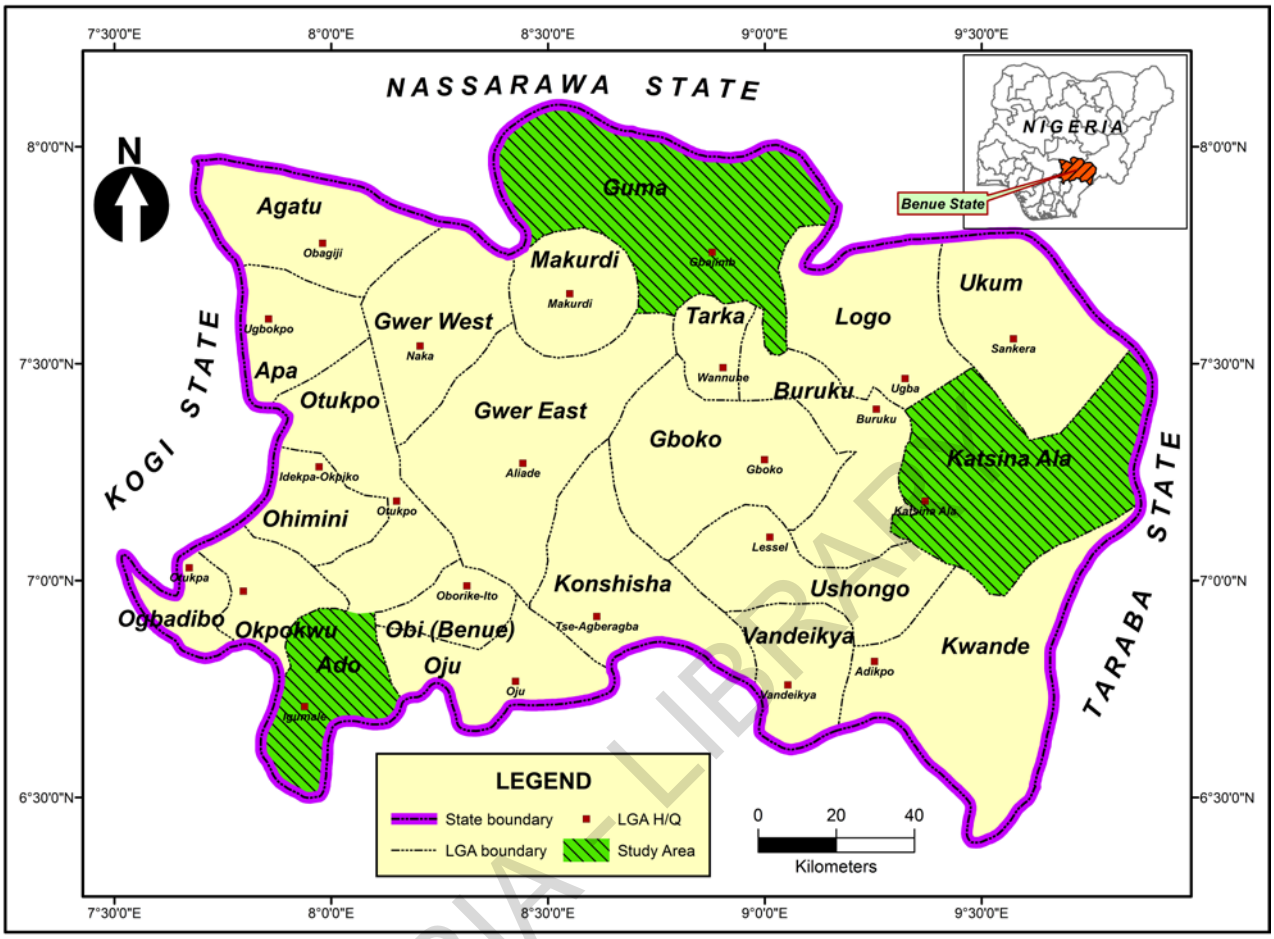

Figure 1.1 Map of Benue State, Nigeria, showing the 23 Local Government Areas.

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1.8.1. The Tiv ethnic group

According to Ker (2007), Tiv land occupies an area of about 29,300 square kilometres. It falls within 60^0 39^0N and from 80^0N to 100^0E. The Tiv people occupy most of the Middle Belt valley and constitute one of the major ethnic groups in the Central Region of Nigeria. However, their greatest concentration is in the present Benue State, where they are regarded as the largest ethnic group in the state with a population of about two million (National Population Commission, 2006). They are found in the following Local Government Areas: Katsina-Ala, Kwande, Ushongo, Gboko, Guma, Gwer, Gwer West, Buruku, Konshisho, Makurdi, Vandeikya, Ukum, Tarka and Logo. To the North, they co-exist with Alago of Doma, the Awe of Nasarawa State as well as Goemai of Shendam in Plateau State. Their border to the west is shared with Idoma (Varvar, 2002). Going further, Varvar notes that the Tiv historically traced their descent from a common ancestor.

The Tiv are national minority but the largest ethnic group in this region. Hagher claims that the Tiv are now the 'fifth largest ethnic group' in Nigeria (Hagher, 2002:25). According to anthropological sources (Moti and Wegh, 2001; Makar, 1994; Denga, 1995:11), the Tiv, a Bantu stock, migrated from Central Africa into Nigeria through the Cameroons. This movement from the Cameroons was said to be triggered by three factors which include; hostility of neighbours, desecration of the Tiv deity '*Swen Karagbe*' and the need for arable land (Iyo, 2003; Makar, 1994). This search for farmland which brought the Tiv into Nigeria has remained a vital factor in their life as well as major considerations in relations with the different Tiv clans and with other ethnic groups. There is no exact date of their arrival and this has often led to a lot of controversy. Some accounts claim that the Tiv has settled south of the Benue river in large numbers by 1830 (Moti and Wegh, 2001:14). According to Gbor (1979), the Tiv migrated into their present location from Swem in Western Cameroon. On their arrival, they met the Etulo, Alago, Idoma and Ogoja people who had dispersed from the Kwararafa kingdom, which had been defeated by the Fulani Jihadist.

For Iyo (2003), the migration of the proto-Tiv from the Cameroons into the lower Benue valley was in four phases/periods. The first phase was occasioned by the collapse of the Swen cradle land; and this occurred in the period 1475 to 1535AD. The

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second phase covered the period 1535 to 1595AD. The third phase covered between 1595 to 1775AD while the fourth phase covered 1775 to 1790AD. These migrations were not orderly nor did they follow contiguity in settlement patterns according to clan relationships. As a result of this, the 'sons' of Ichongo are found in the midst of 'sons' of Ipusu. In fact, this could be the reason why there are cases of duality or even more in lineages scattered all over Tiv land today. Therefore, the Ucha can be found among the Iharev of Gwer West and in Ukum Local government Areas. This incidence is also reflected in the ubiquitous *"shay ya"* and *"shin tiev"* for Shangev and Ikurav respectively (Okpeh *et al.,* 2007). This movement seemed to take place long after the Kwararafa and the Jukun Empires were already established. There is therefore this evidence that:

> The Tiv migrated into Benue valley from Cameroon in the 18th century by which time the Kwararafa kingdom has been a dominant political kingdom in the region for centuries albeit with diminished political significance. Its fame was highest in the 17th century when Kano was fought and defeated. An attempt was also made at Katsina (Shedrack, Idyrough and Shehu, 2001: 89).

From this Benue valley stronghold, the Tiv made further push to neighbouring territories in all directions, primarily in search of arable land to support agriculture, their major economic activity (Hagher, 2002).

The Tiv are agriculturalists and reputed for hard work. They are farmers growing particularly yam, corn, rice, soya beans and tree crops like mangoes of varying species, peas, ogbono (bush mango) and several other food crops. Until the introduction of western culture, the Tiv who are hardworking people believed in deriving their fortune and greatness from the soil through farming. As such, great men are regarded to marry many wives who assist the husbands in the farms. There is therefore, a huge pressure on land, a factor that evokes envy and migration to other parts of the country where land lies fallow (Denga, 1995; Hagher, 2002). This often leads to the conflicts between them and the Fulani pastoralists as well as other ethnic group in the region.

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Furthermore, land in Tiv cosmology is freighted with loads of symbolism and meaning such that:

> The Tiv do not conceive their land simply as a tract of the earth on which they live. For them, land is sacred. It is the land of their ancestors. When one considers what it took them to acquire the land-the treks, the wars, then, it is understandable that they are usually serious about their land. They are always on the guard against encroachment on their land, and they take every measure to protect the land (Moti and Wegh, 2001:15).

Markets are considered vital institutions among the Tiv people. However, the market periodicity varies from northern Tiv where markets have a cycle of seven days to the southern parts where the cycle is five days. In Gwer West, there are markets of four days periodically. The growing demand for commercial activities has increased the number and sizes of markets in the Tiv region, partly due to the increasing population and the growth in the number of people engaged in trading as an occupation.

The Tiv are known by their social organisation which is referred to as 'segmentary opposition' also known as the mobilisation of the kin group to the defence of an assailed relation. Due to this oneness, the Tiv easily arise to defend each other such that, if a Tiv man met his fellow Tiv man fighting a non-Tiv, he would join forces with the Tiv man unquestioningly to fight the non-Tiv. He would consider it unnecessary and a waste of time to ask who was at fault (Denga, 1995:15). This strong sense of solidarity among them is expressed as *Ka se Tiv* that literally mean 'we, the Tiv'. In essence, they believe that the fortunes of one should be fortunes of all, and all share the destiny of one.

The Tiv also had early contacts with Christian missionaries like other parts of the Central Region, and through this, western education was instilled in them. Today, the Tiv have a range of professionals in all fields and highly positioned people in the state and federal civil services, the Armed Forces, politics and in business (Jibo, 1993). The overwhelming majority are however farmers, a means of livelihood whose predominant search for arable land brings them into contacts and conflicts with

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themselves and neighbours. Due to this search for fertile land, large numbers of the Tiv are found in Taraba, Adamawa, Nasarawa, Plateau States, the Federal Capital Territory and parts of Northern Cross River State. Since the late 1990s, they have been moving to Lapai, Agaie and Paiko Local Government Areas of Niger State (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2003:134). Unlike the other states that share boundaries with Benue, Niger does not. It entails that, they moved into Niger from the FCT which is contiguous with Niger State. By 2004, a Tiv community has emerged around Obajana, the site of huge cement factory in Kogi State (Alubo, 2006). The bulk of the Tiv are however in Benue State which many regard as their ethnic homeland. However, they are also in huge numbers in Wukari (Taraba State) and in Southern Senatorial District of Nasarawa State. They are therefore, considered as a threat perhaps by smaller ethnic groups in these states.

This migratory process is conceived by these other ethnic groups as expansionism, and brings important dynamics to ethnic relations in the Middle Belt (Adamu, 2002; Alli and Egwu, 2003). Most of these other ethnic groups regard themselves as the 'son of the soil', the 'indigenes' and the immigrants are regarded and treated as 'strangers' or 'settlers'. In many instances, the Tiv now have the absolute majority, a fact vigorously disputed by the Idoma and Jukun but which no less, makes ethnic relations in the area volatile. The Tiv has a paramount chief with the title "*Tor Tiv"*.

1.8.2. The economy of the Tiv

Without mincing words, the Tiv regard farming as a special occupation bestowed on them by their legendary progenitor, called, 'Takuluku Anyamazenga'. According to Makar (1994), there is a version of Tiv oral tradition which states that Takuluku Anyamazenga had two sons, namely; Tiv and Uke (Hausa and Fulani). When he was about to die, Takuluku like the biblical Isaac, wanted to bless his most cherished son, Tiv, with the power to rule over all nations; unfortunately for him, like Jacob in the bible, his brother treacherously deceived their old and blind father to rob Tiv of his blessings. When Takuluku realized this act, he became angry indeed, but the blessings had gone. In order not to be left out, Tiv was told to bring his hoe and the father

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sprinkled sand on it saying 'with this you shall feed all nations' (Makar, 1994). This story may or may not be the reason why the Benue Basin, with the Tiv as its principal farmers, is today regarded as the 'food basket of the nation (Nigeria)' while the Hausa/Fulani have continued to dominate Nigerian politics since the departure of the British.

Whether the above story is true or not, the Tiv took to farming very seriously. Throughout their history, they have demonstrated an unflinching commitment to the fulfilment of their noble, traditional role of the 'nation's food producers'. Nevertheless, this commitment has tended to affect Tiv relations with their neighbours. As a result of this, they abandoned their farmlands in preference for improved ones, fought fierce battles in order to acquire or retain farmlands (Hembe, 1995:136). The continuous search for more and more fertile lands was indeed, what brought the Tiv into the Middle Benue Basin region. According to Erim (1981), the Tiv arrived in this region about 300 years ago (that is, between 1715 and 1745). According to Maker (1994), when the Tiv arrived, they met other ethnic groups such as the Ugee, Ugbe, Undir, Ukwese, Ulive, Utange and Iyon in this area. Avav and Myegba (1992:3) note that, groups like the Chamba, Jukun and Kuteb were also present at the time. The Tiv however, interacted with all these groups. Nevertheless, some of these groups such as Etulo, Nyifon, Jukun, Abakwa and host of others, were not interested in fertile farmlands as they were fishing communities who live on the banks of rivers Katsina-Ala and Benue. As such, the Tiv quickly made friends with them (Hembe, 1995:72).

Hembe goes further to state that these non-Tiv groups brought in the fish while the Tiv brought the yams that combined so well to provide the delicious pounded yam meals that were so mutually beneficial to the groups. This situation is said to be the reason why there are several pockets of non Tiv groups within the Tiv land today. The relationship between the Jukun and the Tiv then was said to be a cordial one, and the two groups spread throughout this region mostly in areas known today as Taraba, Nasarawa, Adamawa and Plateau States. So intimate was this relationship that, when at Ibi in 1854, the leader of the second royal Niger expedition wanted to know where the Tiv/Jukun boundary was, the informant simply inserted his ten fingers into each other,

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an indication that the two groups were thus mixed together as one people (Avav and Myegba, 1992:3).

Unlike their neighbours, the Idoma, the Tiv are not known for fishing, hunting or craftwork. On their part, they have had agriculture as their primary economic activity. The sustenance of the people has always been achieved mainly through agricultural production and over 90% (percent) of the population according to Toryina (2007:82) are found in the rural areas. This has over the years, emphasized the importance of land as the most essential economic resource for agricultural production. Thus, conflict over the possession and utilization of land has always been an inevitable aspect of human interaction among the Tiv.

1.8.3. The Idoma ethnic group

The story surrounding the origin and the ethnicity of the Idoma could be regarded as a complex aspect of the peoples' pre-colonial history. As such, several scholars and academia have over the years, engaged in consistent and critical research about it. They have written a lot on the Idoma ethnic group, feeding us with details about its origin, migration and settlement. Some of these scholars include Armstrong (1955), Erim (1981), Adejoh (1997), Okpeh (1991, 1994) and Ochefu (2000) among others. However, Armstrong (1955) and Ochefu (2000) make us understand the contemporary usage of the term 'Idoma' referring to a group of people, their language including the land area they occupy. According to Armstrong, the Idoma speaking people could be described as living in a number of disparate formations in the Benue Province. They include the Idoma, Alago, Yalla, Igede, Akweya, Yachi, Ukum, Etulo and Afur. However, he makes a distinction between those he calls the Idoma proper and the Igede and Ufia, both of which have separate historical traditions of origins different from the 'Idoma proper'. The Idoma ethnic group is the second largest group in Benue State today after the Tiv. Erim (1981:4) points out that the early history of the people indicates that the Idoma ethnicity is a contemporary phenomenon. This simply means that the heterogeneous groups which today bear the name 'Idoma' did not have a generally accepted ethnic identity before the coming of the colonial masters into the land. This factor led to the controversy, confusion and ambivalence the myths of origins

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and ethnicity of the people raised at the beginning of colonial administration in the 20th century.

Okpeh (2007:57) states that the earliest attempt to study the Idoma rests on their origin and ethnicity to the Akpoto (Okpoto), an ethnic group that is presently extinct. In other words, an ethnic group known as Akpoto once occupied most part of the land which is now inhabited by the Igala, Idoma and Ebira. However, the identification of these groups and the actual nature of their relationship with the Igala, Idoma and Ebira remains a mirage to analysts; evidence exists in support of their antiquity in the Niger-Benue confluence area. For instance, Armstrong (1955:91-93) argues that, due to the relatively wide application of the Akpoto nomenclature in this general area, it is possible that a kingdom or people who bored that name once existed. Okpeh on his part goes forth to reinforce Ukwedeh's submission that the Akpoto is conceived as autochthonous group which gave birth to, or played a basic role in the formation of modern Igala, Ebira and Idoma societies (Ukwedeh, 1986:22 quoted in Okpeh, 2007:57). One can deduce from the above that the Akpoto were the first settlers of the present locations of these peoples. However, the Idoma people always react to this name. They reject the nomenclature as insulting, insisting that it was the Igala of the Ankpa region (in present day Kogi State), that were known as the Akpoto and refers to themselves, their language and land, as 'Idoma'. It should be noted here that while what is insulting about the term 'Akpoto' still remains unclear, it has stuck to the people of Ankpa in the eastern region of Igala land. This is in accordance with the fact that, among those sections of the Idoma who often trace their origins to Igala land (those whom Erim regards as the 'western migrants'), the use of the term 'Akpoto' to describe them and their language appears to have persisted until relatively recent times.

In the context of the above analysis, whatever can be said about the Akpoto phenomenon, its position in the myth of origins of the people and the evolution of their ethnicity generally may well be conjectural. On the contrary, the term 'Akpoto' could be of a geographical application describing a kingdom of that name. This kingdom must have covered the whole area presently occupied by the different ethnic groups in the Benue valley region. In addition, these people must have been known and referred to as 'Akpoto'. Nevertheless, that this name exists until date among the Idoma and the

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Igala, could well be an alternative explanation of the wide ranging inter ethnic relationship between them. For, as Erim effectively points out, in the course of their migrations into their present location, some Idoma kindred groups sojourned and dwelled with the Igala in Igala land. This point concurs with Ochefu's conclusion that the greater part of present day Akpoto whom over the ages, did other groups including the ancestors of the Igala, Idoma and Ebira migrants originally occupied Idoma homeland accept. From the above suggestions, it could be possible that the Akpoto were either a proto-ethnic group, which gave birth to Igala, Idoma and Ebira ethnic complex or in fact, played an important role in the development of these polities.

Another viewpoint linked the ancestral homeland of the Idoma with the Sahara region. According to Okwoli (1973), Idoma, Igala and Ebira ethnic groups once occupied somewhere in the Sahara region. It further maintains that, these ethnic groups were forced to vacate the Sahara region for the Savannah sub-region following desiccation of the Sahara. This view of Idoma origin and ethnicity has been criticised for its obvious weaknesses. In the first instance, scholars have not accepted it because it appears to be an isolated view on the origin of the Idoma. In addition, it has failed to suggest any special geographical position in the Sahara region where the Idoma occupied, and as such, it has not been corroborated by the oral history of the people regarding their traditions of origin. In addition, the proponent of this view neither cites his source for possible cautious' inspection nor did he give any other lead from his version. This creates difficulty in testing the veracity and authenticity of his position. The outcome of all these is that, the view appears to make an attempt to link the origins of the Idoma, Igala and Ebira to those Nigeria's ethnic groups who claim they migrated from Yemen or Mecca in the Middle East. This postulation has however not been able to withstand the test of linguistic, ethnographical and archaeological investigations of scholars in recent times.

The Idoma people traditionally and unanimously trace their origins to Apa (Beipi), the erstwhile sub-kingdom of the Kwararafa empire, which prior to the 15th century, was under the Abakawariga (Adagba, 2002:33; Okpeh, 2007:64). That the confederacy of Kwararafa once existed within the Benue valley has been confirmed by several renowned scholars. According to Ochefu (2000:2), the collapse of the once

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powerful empire in the 15th century led to the breakaway of its kingdom. Similarly, it is said that, the Idoma were among the many ethnic groups that left Apa, due to the growing state of insecurity arising from the frequent warfare in the kingdom. It was noted by some scholars that due to her defeat in the hands of Ali Ghaji (1479-1503), Kwararafa could no longer give a good account of itself. In fact, an epoch of decline had set in, and this coupled with the dynastic tussles associated with the ascendancy of the Jukun on the corridors of power, worsens the already confused political condition. The outcome of these processes was the disintegration of the society and therefore, the beginning of the mass migrations of the Idoma and other ethnic groups such as the Igala and the Ebira (Erim, 1981; Okpeh, 1994:63-70). In the process of their migration and settlement, an ethnic identity was formed resulting to what could be referred to as 'Idoma' today. The main thrust of their present land is:

> A continuous belt of territory extending from southern bank of the river Benue bordering parts of Southern Nasarawa State, on the opposite bank where the Idoma inhabit to the Northern fringes of Igboland (Okpeh, 1994:42).

According to information gotten from oral traditions of the people and supported by available documentary sources, the Idoma began to spread out over large areas of the lower Benue, mainly south of that river at the beginning of the 16th century. The outcome of this mode of migration was that, after sometime, they became thinly dispersed over much of the territory now occupied by the Tiv, the Igala and the Ebira as well as the Idoma. Erim dates this first wave of Idoma migrations to between 1535 and 1625 (Erim, 1981:23). He is of the view that the Ugboju, Adoka and Otukpo constituted this category of Idoma migrants. These migrations began in their vigorous push into the Benue valley. The arrival of the Tiv ethnic group impacted tremendously on the Idomas during this era. For instance, it disrupted the peace and tranquillity that was gradually evolving. The collapse of the evolving 'new' Apa was, according to Erim, its consequences (Erim, 1981).

It could be stated that the Tiv migrants easily displaced the Idoma due to some factors. In the first place, they were politically fragmented compared to their Tiv neighbours. Besides, they were numerically smaller than the Tiv. This could be related

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to the nature and mode of the migration itself, for according to O'kwu, quoted by Okpeh, the Idoma were thinly spread over extensive territory (Okpeh, 2007:66). The effect of all these is that, the people were very weak to resist the Tiv encroachment, thus, their displacement from Apa. The force of Tiv migrations was such that they entrapped an Idoma speaking group, the 'Etulo' who did not move fast enough. Isolated from the main body of their Idoma kinsmen, the Etulo today form a coterie of non Tiv people in Katsina-Ala, the heart of modern Tiv land. On their part, Idoma and Keana also lost much of their territory and were progressively pushed farther north from the river Benue (Okpeh, 2007).

Another source is of the view that the Idoma migrated from Igala in the present day Kogi State. This perspective sees the Idoma as an extraction of Igala which itself believed to be a sub group of the Yoruba and hence, distinct from the Akpoto. According to Baikie, before 1500AD, both the Akpoto and the Igala occupied territories around the Niger, the former on the east and the latter in the west of the Niger. However, by the first decade of the 15th century, the Igala were driven east of the Niger where they settled among the Akpoto. The Idoma according to this view, are a hybrid of the Igala and Akpoto fusion (Baikie, 1856:286-287 quoted in Okpeh, 2007:60-61). This view suggests that the Akpoto and the Igala were originally Yoruba speaking people and the present Idoma ethnic group is a synthesis of the two. This view gets reinforcement from lexicon statistic evidence which grouped the Idoma, Igala and Yoruba under the Kwa sub unit of the Niger Congo family of African languages. It must have been on this ground that Erim concludes that the Yoruba factor in both Igala and Idoma cultures cannot be completely overlooked (Erim, 1981:6-8). Various theses are of the view that the Idoma, Igala and Yoruba formed the same social complex within the Upper Valley region until about 6000 years when this group disintegrated (Armstrong, 1955:79). According to this hypothesis developed by Armstrong which was based mainly on glottochronology and lexicon statistical data, this proto society had the same ideology of time, worshipped a host of local gods as well as observed similar taboos and totems. This implies that the proto-group spoke a common language but with the split, its members dispersed into different areas where today, they speak

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dialects of the language. Therefore, the spatial distribution of the people involved would appear to correspond to the epoch of separate development.

These migrants form the core of western Idoma districts such as Otukpo, Orokam, Ichama and Ogbadibo. These migrants identified Apa as the home of their ancestors. Erim contends that, the bitter struggle that characterised the political ascendancy in the Igala state with headquarters at Idah, sent numerous migrants fleeing eastward into Idoma land between 1685 and 1951 (Erim, 1981:33). Towards the last quarter of the 19th century, the process of the consolidation of new territories in which the Idoma found themselves had been completed. However, this consolidation was at the expense of other numerically smaller ethnic groups such as the Igede, Akweya and Ufia, on whose territories the Idoma settled. They were merged to form the then Idoma native authority. While the Igede were pushed to the eastern fringes of the Idoma territory, the Idoma encircled the Ufia and Akweya, which today constitute a bilingual micro-nationality in the heart of Idoma land. Since the 1920s, these various groups have lived together under the same chieftaincy administration. Moreover, since the Igede formed part of the current Idoma administrative zone in the state, the area and the rest of Idoma land within the confines of Benue State have nine local government councils area (Adagba, 2002:33). This point to the fact, by the end of the 18th century, the Idoma ethnic groups had firmly established themselves on their present location. Ochefu aptly puts it this way:

> By the end of the eighteenth century, the process in incorporating social, political, religious and economic ideas that had been transmitted from their ancestral homelands with those that they had acquired during their (several decades of) migration, and the adaptations of these ideas to their new environment had by and large completed (Ochefu, 2000:13).

Drawing a conclusion from the above analysis on the origin and development of the Idoma ethnicity, one could infer that the people have been involved in migration from the Apa cradle to the present location. The migrations were complex affairs, stretched over nearly 2000 years. This makes migration an important aspect of the

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Idoma pre-colonial history. It is vital to note here that the uncertainty of both the historicity and location of Apa which in Adejoh's view, is a place that is larger than life, real but also shrouded in myth (Adejoh, 1997:13). In addition, it could be said that the people moved out of Apa from Kwararafa kingdom after its collapse, not as a cohesive body under a single leadership, rather separate leaders and these leaders according to legends, were referred to as the founders of the various clans and their chiefs in Idoma land. Above all, it could be observed that the people did not reach their present location at the same time as the settlement process continued until the last quarter of the 18th century. This implies that the people made contacts and interacted extensively with other Nigerian ethnic groups during the period of their tortuous migrations from Apa to their present location, and when they finally settled. These historically consideration perhaps, explain the fact that the contemporary Idoma society consists of a heterogeneous number of populations, mysteriously speaking the language.

Nevertheless, some Idoma historical scholars have identified some loopholes in this conception of 'Idoma' ethnicity. For instance, Erim argues that it is not entirely correct to synthesize fragmentary evidence as concerns enormously complex, historical developments with respect to the Idoma origins, society and culture (Erim, 1981:6-7). He further states that available evidence does not support the linguistic argument espoused for the Idoma, for on the contrary, indications point out that the ancestors of these groups have come from various sources and directions. This makes it analytically and historically difficult to lump every ethnic group as deriving from the Idoma tribe. Ochefu and Okpeh on their part point out the methodological defects inherent in lexicon statistical data, and the degree of valid inferences that can be drawn from anthropological linguistics (Ochefu and Okpeh, 2007:4). Despite these criticisms, Armstrong's contention that a proto Yoruba-Igala-Idoma societies gave birth to the Idoma still remains by and large, valid.

It is clear from the above analysis that scholars have diverse views on the origins of the people (Idoma). However, based on these divergent opinions, a number of conclusions can be arrived at from which a clear perception about the origins of the people could emerge. In the first instance, available linguistic and archaeological data

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have reviewed the antiquity of man in the Benue valley. For example, archaeological evidence indicates that iron-working peoples inhabited the Middle and Lower Benue valley some 2,500 years ago (Gundu, 1987). Similarly, ethnological and anthropological surveys have proved that the entire Benue valley was a great culture watershed for multiple African peoples (Armstrong, Forde and Brown, 1971:296-305). Indeed, its rich natural endowments coupled with its accessibility, encouraged many peoples, with the decisions of the predominance of multi ethnic social formations in the area. The view that the Yoruba, Igala and Idoma ethnic groups were the first settlers in the Middle and Lower Benue valley has been affirmed by available anthropological, ethnographical records as well as oral traditions of the people. However, according to Ochefu, we cannot say whether these three distinct groups were hitherto proto culture groups as Armstrong makes us believe. What is thus probable is that, intensive cultural, social, political and economic interactions between these groups tended to blur true and linguistic identities.

1.8.4. The economy of the Idoma people

As earlier stated, the economy of the Idoma people is hinged primarily on agriculture which is supplemented by hunting, trade and a variety of local crafts. In essence, agriculture remains the matrix in which the other economic activities are set. This entails that throughout Idoma land, farming was (and still is) the single most significant means of earning a livelihood. Indeed, the limits of farmlands as well as of hunting grounds determined the extent of a clan's territory (Okpeh, 2007:22-23). Land is therefore considered the most important means of production in the economic activities of the people, which gave room to how society should be organised, anchoring on the nature of land ownership, its control and use in the process of social production.

The method of land ownership in Idoma is said to be largely communal with each community recognising and ensuring the rights of its members to possess and use sufficient land to support their members (Horton, 1971:83-84). This implies that once a certain community or clan was regarded as the *de jure* user of a particular territory, that same community, *ipso facto*, had control over the territory. However, this exercise was

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vested on the elders of the sub-lineages and lineages of that community. Some factors could be attributed to this system of land ownership. Foremost of this is the determinants of territorial claims which included genealogical ties to the territory in question, and the limits of the farmlands and hunting grounds of its members. As such, each group came to be identified with a definite tract of land which developed into an integrative and cohesive force of its own which anthropologists refer to as genealogical Idoma. For a as Horton argues:

> Provides men with a social calculus, which is probably unique in its exactness, neatness and fineness of discrimination. Armed with an all-encompassing genealogy, a man can read off degrees or kinds of his obligations to his fellows with an unrivalled ease and precision. A society that has come to know the consequences of genealogical reckoning does not lightly drop it (Horton, 1971:83-84).

Another factor is that, this system of land ownership is completely based on usufruct, since it was proper for farmers to secure the general right to cultivate land within a specified area under the system of extensive agriculture such as shifting cultivation and rotational bush fallow. However, the actual ownership of a specific plot which was left to fallow for some years was not considered important.

The third point to note is that it is contradictory to Jewsiewicki's study of the pre-colonial societies of Equatorial Central Africa (Jewsiewicki, 1981:93-113) where there was individual ownership of land. In the Idoma society, land is communally owned, the ownership being vested on the elders and governed by complex regulations, which emphasized social responsibility and cohesion. Two types of farm are generally discernable throughout the Idoma land. The first is considered the main farm which is located far away in the bush. This is called '*Eho Adu*' meaning 'bush farm'. This type of farm is usually between two or four miles away from home. The availability of fertile soil which is believed to be easily obtainable far away from the home is considered a factor for this type of farm. The second type of farm is referred to as compound or household farm and is called '*Eho Ole*' meaning 'town farm'. The

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women mainly control this farm. It is intended to provide against hunger while allowing the main yam farm to mature fully before harvest (Ochefu and Okpeh, 2007:110).

The farming season is considered to start with the onset of the rainy season which begins in the months of April or early May. Every farmer decides for himself and household, when to start his farm work, thus, no formal festival to mark the commencement of the farming season. Yam is said to be their staple food crop and it is consider important that the size of one's yam plot, is an index of his wealth and prestige. Quoting O'kwu, Ochefu and Okpe affirm that, the Idoma sleeps on an empty stomach, unless he had pounded yam or yam flour for supper (Ochefu and Okpeh, 2007:110). Other crops planted by the Idoma include beans, melon, millet, groundnut, bambara nut, peas, cotton, beniseed, cassava, cocoyam, sweet potatoes to mention but a few.

Apart from farming, the Idoma also practice a variety of handicrafts such as hunting, which is usually in the dry seasons and after harvest, fishing and trading. They also indulge in woodcarving and manufacture items such as mortals, pestles, walking sticks, wooden masks and host of other articles. Furthermore, Armstrong (1955:91-119) and Angbo (1991:48-55) demonstrate in their different studies that iron smelting was quite skilled, and could make most parts of dane-guns, good iron traps, agricultural tools like hoes, cutlasses, axes, knives as well as anklets, wrist bands and weapons of war like spear point and arrows and a host of other household items. During an interview with a district head at Agila, a community in Ado local government area of the state, it was reported that in the past, elephants, leopards, lions, buffaloes, monkeys and a variety of other animals roamed about in the Idoma land. He said that until of recent, elephants were very common in parts of Idoma land and they were either hunted down or driven by Hausa ivory hunters. Going further, he opined that, two categories of hunting are recognised in Idoma. This includes, ordinary hunting organised by individuals who go into the bush in-group to hunt game. The second category is the annual big hunt which is organised as part of the earth cult ceremony or festival. The participants jointly eat animals killed during this festival (the researcher witnessed and experienced the first category during the process of this research and it was

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marvellous). The streams and rivers which criss-cross the whole of the Idoma land provide natural impetus for fishing activities. In essence, fishing is another economic activity of the Idoma people.

1.8.5. Land resources and its exploitation in Benue State

Land as an aggregate resource, consists of all the physical soil, natural resources such as water, trees, plants, animals, rocks, minerals, fixed structures and space above the land. However, the word 'land' means different things to different people. To the economist, land is thought of as the source of human wealth, the natural resource of raw materials needed by man for his daily production of food fibre and energy. Looking at the definition of land stated above, Benue State has a vast expanse of land area estimated to be 31,400 square kilometres (Kwanga and Kerenku, 2007:7) richly endowed with different types of natural resources. The land of Benue State is very arable and productive which makes most of the people go into farming. The soils in the zone are mainly tropical ferruginous soils with hydromorphic soils along the flood plains developed on the basement complex of sedimentary origin of the Benue trough. Nevertheless, the volcanic rocks, an extension of the Cameroon highlands into the Benue trough, influence the soil in the eastern part of the state. Though the soil varies from one place to the other characteristically, it ranges from sandy clay loam to sandy loam in the flood plains and most areas of the state. This according to Kwanga and Kerenku (2007:7) encourages many crops to be grown in the area.

The state water resources include primarily precipitation incident on the land of about 49.3km, numerous rivers, streams, lakes, ponds and underground reservoirs. The major rivers and streams in the state as mentioned earlier include Benue, Katsina-Ala, Aya, Amile, Tamen, Amile Kiriki, Gwer, Mkomum, Loko, Michihe, Lafa, Konshisha, Okpokwu, Oyongo, Obi Ochefu and host of others, which flow into the Benue, Niger and Cross River (Kwanga and Kerenku, 2007:7). The natural vegetation includes the guinea savannah type with giant grasses, trees, shrubs as well as palm bush. Solar energy remains the dominant energy resource in the state as it provides energy for the growth and ripening of the crops. Another vital energy sources is gotten from vegetation (that is, fuel wood).

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As stated earlier, the state has many mineral resources such as limestone, feldspar, wolframite, bauxite, kaoline, mineral salts, precious stones to mention but a few. However, many more mineral resources could be discovered mainly those associated with sedimentary rocks if adequate geological surveys are carried out. For a proper use of the natural resources, one must have the full knowledge of their compositions. A detail inventory of the types and composition of all the environmental elements are considered important for land use planning (Igbozurike, 1981), since the inventory will produce series of data maps grouped according to related environmental features. The problem with the rural areas of which the state is not excluded has been lack of basic understanding of the nature, and the associated environmental components of the land. As such, farming remains the major and only occupation of those in the rural areas. Additionally, their farming enterprises and land use as a whole are essentially small-scale operations and often indicate distortion in the allocation of rural land among other users. Few medium scale arable farming could be seen. It could be deter from the foregoing that the interplay between human and physical elements is complex and multi dimensional and as such, does not in any way portray a crude pattern of environmental determinism (Brookfield, 1962 quoted in Hudson, 1968). Therefore, the relationship between man and land at different locations may be satisfactory or otherwise, depending on a variety of physical, social, economic and political factors governing land use.

Furthermore, this could best be understood as interplay between the environment and human culture. This entails that resources, collectively or singularly, are a product of the interaction between the environment and culture. According to Zakari and Umar (2006), ‘resources are not, they become’, meaning it is only when the use and value of a thing or object is known that it becomes a resource. Culture which consists technology and religious beliefs among others, dictate the range, volume and method of exploitation and use of resources by any given human population. Making a reasonable livelihood from the land might involve adjustment that could be made to solve the crisis confronting the people when they are able to come to terms. For Mortimore (1972), achievement of balance in relationship between people and land may be observed in various ways. This could be that adjustment in agricultural

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practices, settlement pattern and land tenure are made to accommodate the needs for increasing number of people and the demand for cash crops economy. In Tiv speaking areas of the state for instance, there is a change in compound/village settlements to isolated hamlets settlement type in search for agricultural land; hence, this increases the territory for the use of land by the family. Thus, there is a fragmentation of farmland into family and individual ownerships. The outcome has been increase in communal conflicts in Tiv land for farmland space. Whereas, the pressure on land use in the Idoma speaking areas is less because they still maintain their village/compound settlement style and less competition for agricultural use of land and settlement.

The settlement pattern and land use among the Tiv could be explained using the Hudson (1968) ecological theory which is summarised into three processes of operation. First, as colonisation associated with the dispersal to a new environmental or into an unoccupied portion of old environment. Secondly, the speed characterised by increasing population density creating more settlements clusters and eventual pressure on the environment which could be physical or social pressure or both. The last process is the competition which tends to produce great regularity in the settlement patterns and in turn, produces one condition for the regular network of central places. The views of the authors signify the fact that, during the process of colonisation by the Tiv people, the pattern of settlements was regularly spaced. Due to continual reproduction, the pattern tends to cluster, especially after several generations. Presently, most of the areas in Tiv communities are experiencing the competition stage of the ecological theory, where there is struggle between settlements to hold their domain, and if possible, increase these domains. The incessant outbreak of communal land disputes in Tiv land is a pointer. Besides, competition for space occurs only under high-density conditions, and cases of land disputes are common in parts of Tiv land that are densely populated, and have settlements clustered together.

The colonisation witnessed among the Tiv is similar to clone colonisation used by Bylund (1956 quoted in Hudson, 1968) to describe the Lappish land in Sweden where only a handful of people appeared as pioneers and afterwards, colonisation was carried out by sons of the pioneers and their sons and the great grand children. The point of interest about clone colonisation is that spaces closer to the pioneer settlements

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are occupied as the sons choose to settle as near as possible to the new motherland. A new settlement is in position and competition for land from other pioneers coming from mother settlements also in progress. This could be said of the Fulani pastoralists who are drifting into the Benue valley from the core Northern region of the country. As the settlements increase so does the population increases.

The high increase in population posed some threat in many places and this upset the balance between population and resources which often depend upon maintaining soil fertility by systems of land rotation such as shifting cultivation and bush fallowing. Several areas in the state have their fallow periods reduced from five to three years or even less. In places like Ushongo, Gboko, Vandeikya, Buruku and parts of Konshisha and Kwande, fallow periods have been reduced to less than two years (Nyagba, 1993). The effect is that weeds have taken over soil fertility and yields have declined, erosion has set in, washing away the topsoil and making bare the red iron rich subsoil. The soils have become shallow in some areas while in others, they have become more sandy or worse still, more lateritic wasteland and covered with ironstone. Such areas now experiencing migration to other rural areas and towns are highly susceptible to communal wars and other undesirable social vices. However, in places where pressure of the population on land is high, there is a change in the general use of the land. Such places include Ushongo, Vandeikya, Kwande, Buruku, Konshisha and Gboko local government areas of the state, where land use is mostly tree cropping of citrus species. The tree crop farming yields a substantial income for the people that plant them in these areas.

General growth and expansion in the number and size of the markets and urban communities is also another effect of intensification of land shortage and land use changes in the state. The effects of this are change in occupation or increase in part-time activities other than farming and thus, change in the economic status of the people. The interaction between the rural and urban centres is on the increase due to changes in local economic and political life of the people.

Another event of change that could be noticed in the agricultural sector is the change in crop cultivated over time. Kwanga and Kerenku (2007:14) report that between 1930 and early 1970s, beniseed was the chief cash crop of the Tiv people and

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the people of the then Benue Province. However, there is a change from the cultivation of groundnuts, soyabeans and rice. The income realized from the sale of these crops and the ease with which work could be done on them made it possible for the change. There is also a gradual shift in crops cultivated from yam to cassava and sweet potatoes due to the pressure of the population on land and its loss of fertility. To check this in most cases, a system of crop rotation is practiced. In doing this, yams are first cultivated on a piece of land, followed by groundnuts and guinea corn or soyabeans and later, cassava or potatoes on the same piece of land. The increase use of crops such as cassava and potatoes is because they can do well even in poor soils (Kwanga and Kerenku, 2007). This could be the reason why most of the areas in the state are diverting to cultivation of cassava. The production of crops in Benue State varies from one place to the other. Due to the differences in soil features, social organisations and natural resource base, many of these areas may produce the same commodity more or less efficiently. Though, yam is widely grown in the state for subsistence and commercial farming, it can do well in few areas in certain parts of the state, mainly in Ukum, Katsina-Ala, Logo, Guma, Agatu and Apa local government areas. This is due to the low population density of these areas, less pressure on land and thus, allows large farms to be cultivated. Areas under consideration have natural and organisational advantage for the production of yam over others. Soyabeans and groundnuts are mostly grown in Buruku, Gboko and Ushongo areas of the state. On the other hand, rice is widely grown in the Kwande, Vandeikya and Katsina-Ala local government areas of the state. However, the rudimentary processes of slash and burning of vegetation remains means of clearing land in the state.

The vegetal resources are not only vital as fuel wood, but also, as a habitat for various games. In order to hunt for these animals, the vegetation is burnt yearly. The extraction of fuel wood and the burning of the bush bring about deforestation, which has had adverse effects on the soils and water supply. Forests, through their leaves and surface litter provide the perfect anti-erosion protection to the soil and through the network of roots, promote high infiltration of rainwater. Moreover, the use and exploitation of water by the people of the state is still minimal with total water resources of 49.3metres (Kwanga and Kerenku, 2007:16). There is no doubt that the

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area under discussion is endowed with surplus water resources, yet, little is known about its spatial and temporal variations. The available use of water resources in the state according to Kwanga and Kerenku (2007:16) are for drinking, cooking, washing and watering of kitchen gardens and for domestic animals. The agricultural use of water is gaining ground in some localities. Irrigation which is the basic agricultural water use, is practiced in Apa, Gboko, Buruku and Makurdi local government areas, using perennial streams and rivers in these areas. The type of irrigation practiced in rural areas is that where seedlings are prepared against the early rains for transplanting. Irrigation water is used for cultivation and watering of vegetation only in major towns and it is during the dry season. Other uses of water include industrial water use and for fishing by some people, who practice it as an occupation.

The sources of water supply apart from rainwater are rivers, streams, ponds, lakes, hand-dug wells and pipe borne water. It has been noticed that the geological structure of some parts of the state is such that yields little or no ground water at a depth of less than 30metres. This brings about a shortage of water supply in the dry season. Such places include Oju, Otukpo, parts of Gwer West and parts of Konshisha local government areas (Kwanga and Kerenku, 2007:17). It is necessary to note here that, these sources of water are continuously being deteriorated in quality and quantity, as a result of the degradations of the environment of the area in question.

From the above, one could observe that the scarcity of land for agriculture and the level of exploitation of land related resources, is a factor of increased population pressure on land, the need for farmers to increase their areas of cultivation at every planting. It is also a requirement for more food and the orientation of agriculture towards the market; for man to satisfy his increasing need on an essentially inelastic supply of land, coupled with continuing increase in population growth, underlies the bases of the relationship between man and the land.

1.9. Plan of the study

The study comprises of five different chapters arranged in ascending order: chapters one, two, three, four and five respectively. Chapter one presents the introduction and background information, including statement of the problem,

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objectives of the study, justification of the study, and field experiences and limitations of the study, study area and operational definition of concepts. The chapter sets the stage for the study by harnessing different interconnected foundations that support the emergence of pastoralists and farmers conflict.

Chapter two presents the literature review and the conceptual framework of the study. The chapter covers several relevant issues which reflect some aspects of the study objectives in light of diverse methodological and theoretical contexts. Following some critical appraisals of extant studies, a synthesis of all the sections and conceptual framework were presented in the chapter.

Chapter three presents the methodology of the study. The chapter comprises the description of the study area, research design, sampling procedures, research instruments, methods of data collection, ethical consideration and methods of analysis. The methodology of the study involved a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative techniques of data collection and analysis. Validity and reliability of the research instruments were established.

Chapter four presents the data obtained and analysis of findings in line with objectives of the study. The chapter includes the results of the issues of the study. Different statistical device such as tables as well as qualitative narratives facilitated the presentation and analysis of data across different sections. The discussion of the results was connected with the literature review and theoretical underpinnings of the study to reflect and expand the frontier of knowledge, on the subject matter of the study. This was made possible through the tests of the questions in light of an original conceptual framework designed for the study.

Chapter five presents the summary and conclusion of the study in different sections. Recommendations for further studies are also presented in this chapter. Objectives of the study and inferences drawn from the findings served as a major foundation of the chapter. The study concludes that methods have been adopted in managing pastoralists and farmers' conflict in the state which is widely caused due to destruction of farmers' crops by animals of pastoralists as well as the struggle for natural resources such as land and water, which both parties cannot do without in their daily activities. Thus, there is the need for the state government to proffer solution to

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the plights of the people in their respective domain. The recommendations of the study include introduction of collaboration method of conflict resolution, an urgent need for the creation of grazing land for the pastoralists and construction of irrigation for the farmers. Essentially, it is discovered that effective mechanisms for resolving conflict and adequate implementation of policies are necessary for peaceful co-existence of both the pastoralists and farmers in the state.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the literature review and the conceptual framework for the study entitled "an assessment of the methods of managing conflict between pastoralists and farmers in Benue State, Nigeria". The purpose of this chapter is to update the state of knowledge, build a theoretical and methodological foundation and provide a reference point for interpretation of findings. Updating the state of knowledge entails a presentation of existing knowledge with clear identification of gaps, while building a foundation requires using previous studies to demonstrate linkages, illustrates trends and provide an overview of a concept, theory or literature base.

2.1. Clarification of the concept 'conflict'

Etymologically, the term conflict is derived from the Latin verb *confligere* meaning 'to clash', 'engage in a fight'. Present conceptions are not particularly at variance with this but appear to have grown wider in meaning. Therefore, there are many definitions of the term 'conflict'. Nevertheless, a common theme runs across most of these definitions. In agreement with Akpuru-Aja (2007), whether one is aware of it or not, conflicts exist by perception or real. Conflict involves two or more parties in opposition to interests, principles, practices or strategies. In essence, conflict reflects a class of interest or goal between parties, which may be individuals or group of individuals or ethnic groups or states (Burton, 1990). Conflict refers to a confrontation between individuals and a group resulting from opposite or incompatible ends or means. Issues constituting basis for conflict are numerous and multifaceted. This may account for its complexity and the consequent difficulty in arriving at a concise definition for the concept.

PIOOM (the Interdisciplinary Research on Causes of Human Rights Violation quoted in Schmid, 2005:12) attempts a synthesised definition of conflict. Here, conflict is viewed as an antagonistic situation or adversarial process between at least, two individuals or collective actors, over means or ends such as resources, power, status, values, goals and relations of interest. The range of outcomes includes victory, defeat,

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domination, surrender, neutralization, conversion, coercion, injury or destruction and elimination of the opposite party or, alternatively, the solution, settlement or transformation of the conflict issue. It is the struggle over values or claims to status, power and scarce resources in which the aims of the group, or individuals involved are not only to obtain the desired values, but also, to neutralize, injure, or eliminate rivals (Coser, 1956:8). Cousins (1996) observes that academic discussion on conflict usually generates enormous issues, as questions arise even in distinguishing between social problems, disputes and conflicts. Conflict reflects a determined action or struggle over a goal which may be overt or subtle, manifest, or imagining (Akpuru-Aja, 2007).

Conflict is a universal phenomenon. It is not restricted to one region, group, religion or race. Such celebrated cases are the ethnic cleansing in Rwanda by the Hutu against the Tutsi, Darfur in Western Sudan, Kosovo in former Yugoslavia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Liberia and Sierra Leone situations (Shut, 2007). In essence, conflict could be in form of religion, ethnic, state or communal. However, most of the conflicts in Benue are between farmers and nomads (pastoralists) which later transform into communal in most cases. By communal conflict we mean:

> Those in which the participants are communal groups; sometimes seen as ethnic groups. A communal group has primary identity of language, religion, common history; the 'we' versus the 'them' syndrome, the 'in-group' versus the 'out-group'. Communal identity has the symbolic capability to define for the individual the totality of his/her existence, including embodying his/her hopes, fears and sense of the future. Thus, individuals are very sensitive to matters of communal symbolism. Any action or thought that seems to threaten or undermine the communal group identity evokes very hostile response. Such actions include those that diminish group status, worth and legitimacy in the eyes of its members (Horowitz, 1985).

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Due to these reasons, communal conflicts become 'deep rooted', 'protracted' and 'entrenched'. Nnoli (2003) describes the different phases of ethnic or communal violence in Nigeria to include ethnicity and the tactic of divide and rule by the colonialists, ethnic conflicts and the struggle for minorities, identity exclusion and ethnic conflicts among others.

Over the years, conflict has been regarded as disruptive and undesirable, destructive rather than constructive. As far as people exist, conflict cannot be ruled out. It is a fundamental feature of human society and to deplore it is to miss its significance as a force for social change. Ogbu (2002) notes that, it is not the occurrences of conflicts in a group or between groups that matter, instead, what matters is whether conflict can be diverted and managed so that the group or groups can remain intact. Conflict not only creates opportunity for integration, it also helps to establish group identity, clarifies group boundaries and contributes to group cohesion and social understanding.

However, of the several attempts on the definition and explanation of conflict, that of Burton (1990) being all embracing and which defines conflict in *totum*, serves our purposes conveniently when he opined that conflict is a relation in which each party perceives the others' goals, values, interests and behaviour as antithetical to its own. This proves the fact as a socio-human phenomenon; conflict is bound to occur in all aspects of life. Like what Zakari and Umar (2006) state, all men encounter conflicts and will continue to do so, both personally and professionally. As for conflicts relating to land and sundry natural resources, a scholar on conflict describes it as:

> A struggle over values or scarce resources, in which two contesting groups each seek to impose values or claims on resources over those of the other. To do so, each seeks to maintain or to change the social structure in terms of his or her own interests (McKee, 1981).

The above position and definition of McKee portrays man's intention for conflict on land and other natural resources. Land as an indispensable factor of production has been at the centre of several conflicts among men. From the pre-historical epoch to contemporary era, people from all races and colour have been embroiled in strife over

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land. As an indispensable fact, the biggest and one of the most destructive warfare in humankind history, the 'Second World War' which took place in the last century, had land as the principal catalyst for the escalation of the war.

Shedrack (2004) points out that, perhaps, the past ten years were characterised by some of the most deadly conflicts in Nigeria. No region was spared of these conflicts even though the conflicts different in prevalence and intensity. Perhaps, the larger part of the conflicts occurred in the Middle Belt, which has on record, a concentration of the largest number of ethnic minorities with different histories, cultural identities, ancestral origin and sense of originality. They have defined themselves as 'indigenous' and those outside of them as 'settlers' depending on their own account of history of settlements, land ownership and claims to chieftaincy and rituals. Shedrack further argues that, the region is not the cause of the conflict, but the environment has great potentials for conflicts to occur. As such, some of the most violent conflicts and protracted conflicts in Nigeria have been recorded in this zone. Among them are, the Tiv and Jukun conflicts, the Fulani, Tiv and Jukun conflicts, Chamba and Jukun conflicts, pastoralists and farmers conflict to mention but a few.

Taking a cognizance look into Nigeria conflicts situation, land dispute is most frequent and this had precipitated attacks, counter attacks and even warfare among native tribes and their contiguous neighbours. Such disputes over land have more often than not, translated into inter and intra tribal clashes. The traditional history of the distinct tribes that constitutes the varied nationalities that make up Nigeria is replete with records that point to this fact (Zakari and Umar, 2006). As recent as the year 2000, internecine war between two tribes in Umuleri and Aguleri, two communities in South East Nigeria, unleashed terror on their kith and kin after a heated disagreement over the ownership and use of land (Eze, 2002). The celebrated mayhem between the Yoruba people of Ife and Modakeke as reported by Akpuru-Aja (2007); Zakari and Umar (2006); Albert (2004) over the ownership and claim of land aptly points to the veracity of the above claim. The South-South (Niger Delta) region of the country is not left out of this land crisis (Ibaba, 2005; Ikelegbe, 2005). The zone is embedded in a unique crisis with the Federal Government of Nigeria for the past decades over the control of all the natural resources in that region.

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The picture is not different in the Northern part of the country. According to IDP project report (2004), in the North Central for example, the war of attrition between the Jukun tribe and the Tiv people over the ownership of farmland has remained intractable for years. It is pertinent to note that the Savannah zone of the country (Nigeria) which comprises of the North East and North West, conflict over land is predominantly among local farmers and itinerant shepherds. The North Central (Middle Belt) is perceived either as, a geographical concept of people, found in a particular geo-political area that is contiguous, or a religious grouping that has a shared identity and belief that is distinct from the followers of Mohammed, or a collection of minorities whether they are Christians, Muslims or Animists (Ayoade, 2001; Tyoden, 1993). Apart from the political, ethnic cum religious crisis that have been witnessed in this zone, it has also suffered pastoral and farmers' conflicts of recent. Benue State located in the Middle Belt falls within the axis of this age long problem between farmers and pastoralists, therefore, making it a necessity for a scholarly survey of their conflict over land for grazing or for cultivation.

A major effect of this conflict is its implication to national, regional and even international security. According to Gizewsku (1997), the past two decades have witnessed growing recognition of environmental factors for national and international security. For instance, the UN World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 points to environmental stress as 'possible cause as well as a result of conflict'. In the same vein, the UN Security Council in 1992 warns that, sources of instability in the economic, social, humanitarian and ecological fields includes military and political 'threats to peace and stability'. Though, a number of scholars have raised valid criticisms against the securitisation of the environment (Frerks, 2007:15), some of the manifested security implications of environmental crisis mostly in the West African Sahel cannot be rejected.

Local resource use conflicts have been associated with some of the wider conflicts in the West African Sub-region, such as, the serious tensions between the Tuaregs and the State in both Mali and Niger and the civil war in Chad. It is necessary to note here that national borders do often not encumber nomadic pastoralists. For example, within the larger regional frame of the Chad Basin, pastoralists migrate across

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and come into direct contact with different people in different states, and therefore, events across the borders impact directly on the lives and livelihood of pastoralists (Moritz, 2005). Indeed, some scholars are of the view that we should think of the Chad Basin not as neighbouring states, but as the locus of numerous partially overlapping ecological, cultural, economic and political zones. Roitman (2004) states, these zones are crossed by political, economic and criminal trans-national networks. A good instance of such trans-national network is the transit of cattle through the ancient routs from Sudan through Chad and Cameroon to Nigerian livestock markets.

The complex regional ecology of the Chad Basin also directly encroaches on the issue of resource use conflict. Several instances abound to buttress this view. For instance, the 1983 war between Nigeria and Chad was as a result of the conflict between anglers of both countries; the Diffa department in Niger, which is located at the borders of Lake Chad and close to Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad, conflicts between Tubu, Arab and Fube herders over wells related with civil wars in Niger and Chad (Thebaud and Batterbury, 2001). In 2002, some 20,000 Fulbe cattle herders fled Nigeria and sought refuge in Cameroon to escape clashes with farming communities on the Mambila Plateau in Taraba State (Irin, 2005). More so, in the Senegal valley, conflicts over natural resources between pastoralists, farmers and fishermen articulated with other conflicts, escalated into border conflict between Senegal and Mauritania (Homer-Dixon, 1999; Schmitz, 1999).

Countries like Ethiopia, Sudan and Somali have also witnessed pastoral related violence influenced by outside factors fuelled by larger complex political emergencies resulting in famine, and mass displacement of civilian populations (Hendrickson, 1997:140). The ongoing conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan is a case in view. The relations between African and Arab inhabitants of Darfur have been tense during much of the history of the region. Historically, Darfur was the home of the slave trade with the Fur kingdom exporting Africans from other parts of Sudan as slaves to the Arab world. However, in more recent times, much of the conflict is rooted in the differing, and often, competing means of livelihood between the African and Arab inhabitants of the region. The African peoples are sedentary farmers while the Arabs are nomadic herdsmen. Since the drought of the 1980s, the nomadic Arab tribes from the more arid

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northern part of Darfur have been pushing further and further south into the semi-arid and humid mountain areas of Fur territory, and staying much longer than they previously did. The nomadic Arab incursion into the southern Darfur region brought them into direct confrontations with the sedentary farmers whose crops have been trampled on, and consumed by herds of camels or cattle. Some of the African communities resorted to self-defence groups in the 1990s to protect their crops, homes and families from increasing incursions by the Arabs' camel or horse mounted raiders, many of whom have also been armed over the past decades (Human Rights Watch, 2010).

Despite these negative effects of the conflict between farmers and pastoralists in West Africa, it must be mentioned, as Blench (1997:4) observes, resource conflict is often a major stimulus to the evolution of intricate interlocking patterns of exploitation. Without initial conflict, the complex patterns of co-operation that characterise the multiple uses of many African wetlands would never have developed. Also, considering the asymmetrical nature of power relations between farmers and pastoralists in the contemporary epoch, conflict may be the only viable means empowering the disempowered groups, namely the pastoralists; and in this way, addressing injustice in the distribution of scarce resources.

Nevertheless, Wilmot and Hocker (1998) identify some ideas for dealing with conflicts. These include clarification of communication and the checking of perceptions which in turn, involve speaking out what is in one's mind or heart, listening carefully, expressing strong feelings appropriately, remaining rational, asking questions, maintaining a spirit of give and take, avoiding harmful statements to mention but a few. In essence, appropriate communication skills and channels are crucial in conflict management.

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2.2. The concept 'land'

Two of the several definitions given in the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary regard land as the surface of the earth that is not sea and the area of ground that somebody owns, especially as a property that can be bought or sold (Hornby, 2006:827). These definitions suit our discourse on the issue of land conflict. The above

definitions of land enabled Adekunle (2006:2) to state that the ordinary man regards land as that element which covers the earth surface alone. Going further, he views land as consisting of both the surface of the earth, the inside of the earth crust and even down to the centre of the earth. It also consists of the space above the soil up to some reasonable distance into the air.

According to the Black's Law Dictionary, land is defined as:

> The material of the earth, whatever may be the ingredients, of which it is composed, whether soil, rock or other substance. It also includes free or occupied space for an indefinite distance upwards as well as downwards, subject to limitations upon the use of air space imposed, and rights in the use of air space granted, by law (Bryan, 1990:877).

This definition of land entails that whatever is attached to the soil forms part of it. Though this concept was introduced and used in English law, it has been copied into the Nigeria land law where it is held as states by Adekunle that:

> Whatever is affixed to the soil becomes in contemplation of law, a part of it, and it is subject to the same right of property as the soil itself. As a result, if a man builds on his own land with the materials of another, the owner of the soil becomes in law, the owner also of the building. Besides, if trees were planted or seed sown in the land of another, the owner of the soil becomes the owner also of the trees, plants or the seeds as soon as they had taken root (Adekunle, 2006).

Nevertheless, there is a different between the English law meaning and the Nigerian customary meaning. Under the Nigerian indigenous concept, land consists only of the soil alone. In other words, all things attached to it such as trees, buildings and other similar fixtures appear to be excluded from land.

In Nigeria, the concept 'land' has spiritual attachment as well as socio-political meanings, which consider land synonymous with a nation of people, a town or community (Nwabuaze, 1974; Ekong, 2003; International Encyclopaedia of the Social

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Sciences, 1972). According to Beatie (1964), land happens to be a commercial resource least needs, and has become a means of private investment. Reformation of land in its historical manifestation has varied according to the functions performed by land itself. The relative value of land rises, and it becomes increasingly a source of conflict among economic and social groups in the community (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1945:634). Land is a vital commodity in any economic system. It is even more important on agricultural based economics. Farmers, pastoralists and hunting bands all need land. However, the particular interest a society may have on land depends on their types of economy. Land serves as the means of survival in some society. Otite (1999) regards land as the principle source of wealth and the main form of property in indigenous societies. Thus, in many African states, the attachment of a lineage to its land is exposed by reference to the group ancestral graves or shrines.

Jones (1949:313) categorises land into four principles. In the first instance for him, every land is owned. In essence, no land is abandoned. Secondly, every land belongs to a lineage whether cultivated or not and as such, it cannot be re-alienated to another lineage or person. Thirdly, every individual has access to land for cultivation or other purposes within the lineage. Lastly, every member of a family has access to land. In other words, either an individual needs land or not, he has access to land and his portion is firmly kept by the family. Dike (1985) also classifies land into four groups, which includes compound land, farmland, sacred land and common land. Indeed, the traditional land tenure system in Africa creates rooms for subsistence economy, through which people provide food for their families. However, increase in population and demand for land for other usage like building, planting of cash crops, mining and even for government use like construction of schools, markets, offices and roads construction, makes land more important than ever. James (1973:16) points out that some of the unrests and land disputes occur when it is discovered that communal land or peoples' land are acquired and even sold illegally, and such money used for personal purposes. Moreover, in case where the community required to effect an alienation, there used to be problems of how to get the whole lineage members informed and involved before taking further steps on such a piece of land. Oloyede (1971) emphasises reasons for land shortage in his article "Judicial settlement of boundary disputes" which seems

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to hold a similar view with James. For him, unprecedented rise in population in Nigeria has given rise to the problems of a community growing so large that, its land cannot support it while neighbouring town or community may have vacant land. While some people are suffering for lack of enough space for farming and other activities in their own territory, the neighbouring people might have excess, however, not encroachable. In this case, boundaries of such areas are adjusted either in peace but most cases in violent.

2.2.1. The Land Use Act of 1978

The Land Use Act of 1978 is said to be one of the most maligned of all the several pieces of legislation that has been enacted in Nigeria. It has also attracted the highest number of criticisms and negative comments from the Nigerian citizenry. It is about the only legislative exercise which has perhaps, weakly drawn away any praise from majority of the different segments of the Nigerian society, except from the government itself, which promulgated this ingenious legal document (Adekunle, 2006:189). This Act vests all land in the state, through the office of the military or executive governor of each state. The land is thus, held in thrust and administered through the government's authority, to the use and benefit of all Nigerians. The opinion was that, all forms of customary tenure system were backward and not able to follow the demands of a fast changing agricultural sector.

Article 5 of the Acts states that, principles of land tenure, powers of the governments and rights of occupiers shall be:

(1). lawful for the governor in respect of the land, whether or not in an urban area.

(a). to grant statutory rights of occupancy to any person for all purposes.

(b). to grant easements appurtenance to statutory rights of occupancy.

(c). to demand rent for any such land granted to any person

(d). to revise the said rental:

(i). at such intervals as may be specified in the certificate of occupancy or

(ii). where no intervals are specified in the certificate at any time during the term of the statutory right of occupancy.

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(e). impose a penal rent for a breach of any covenant in a certificate of occupancy requiring the holder to develop or effect improvements on the land, the subject of the certificate of occupancy, and revise such penal rent as provided in Section 19 of this Act.

This Act was however, seen by many as been designed by the government to deprive the owner of the lands, their God given natural endowment. It was seen as a powerful instrument aimed at completely abolishing the sacred institution of kinship mostly in area where land had been closely associated with the institution from time immemorial. Concurring to this opinion, Adekunle (2006:190) quoted Olatuwura stating that, the Land Use Act is without doubt, unnecessary law due to its revolutionary provisions, which has great effects on certain families and groups of people, whose means of income or survival are gotten from these lands. It is undeniable that some of the Sections of the Land Use Act, mostly Section 36, annoying, rightly or wrongly, to a great number of traditional or customary landowners. Despite all these criticisms, the Federal Government has continued justifying the need for this Act, and even stating in the introduction of the Act that, it will be for the public interest of all Nigerians to enjoy the land in Nigeria, and the fruits thereon in sufficient quantity.

The Nigerian Land Use Act of 1978 together with changes in local government authority has shifted the balance of power significantly against pastoralists. The Decree made the Federal Government the sole owner of all land and removed from traditional chiefs and heads of communities, their power to allocate unused or abandoned lands. According to the Decree, the State Governor is vested with the authority to allocate up to 5000 hectare for agricultural or industrial use and a Local Government Chairman; the same rights over 500 hectares (Section 6, Sub Section 2, 1978 land Use Act). Local Government reform removed from traditional leaders, their power to fine and imprison, making their role more ceremonial than effective. Although, chiefs are still accorded respect in parts of the north, in many places however, the local government Chairman has effectively displayed them. As a result, the pastoralists always feel that decisions go against them, and that even long standing agreement can be negated in pursuit of short term political gain.

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2.2.2. Systems of land use

Mixed crops of root vegetables, cereals and beans on permanent fields and those close to settlements, date back to ancient custom. Even the permanent fields in the densely settled area of the Hausa-Fulani and the Fulani colonisation area commonly have crops alternating row by row. This pattern consists of planting beans or groundnuts, even at times cotton over rich soils into the furrows after the ridges have been heightened by heaping earth round the roots of cereal plants. This permanent cultivation is possible because of a certain amount of crop rotation, the shifting of ridge and furrow in successive years and some fertilisation with domestic refuse ash and dung from the smaller ruminants, horses and cattle. Only where the mineral composition of plots is severely damaged do they remain fallow for some years and in most cases, without tree growth. Creeping grass constitutes the pioneering plant on these leached out soils. In this stage, they are valueless for pasture, although stubble fields do offer short-term nourishment for cattle.

In less densely settled areas, permanent cultivation is limited to the sufficient well-fertilized land close to the homestead and outlying fields are allowed to regenerate under bush fallowing when the yields begin to fall after several years of cultivation. During this period, grasses spreading between the stump re-growth represent the usual grazing for cattle. Fricke (1993:78) states that unlike the red soils of the rain forest, the proportion of organic matter in soils of the Savannah zones is limited to a depth of at most 15cm, falling to 0.4-0.2% when cultivated for several years without fertilisation. The deeply penetrating root network of the woody growth transports the missing minerals from the subsoil and produces organic matter. Both of these enrich the topsoil when branches and bushes are burned down. According to Jones (1960), the proportion of organic matter thus rises to 0.8-1.55%, cultivation then starts with cotton or groundnuts, followed by several years of millet. In outlying fields, interspersed row cultivation occurs less often. In areas of medium population density, cultivation on ground burned in rotation has led to regular land use rotation in the outlying fields. Shifting cultivation in its original sense including the transfer of the settlement is only to be met in extremely sparsely settled areas.

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2.3. Expansion of agriculture in Nigeria

Expansion of cultivation always takes place in the Middle Belt region, which is less in population, compare to the semi arid zone. However, as the struggle for arable land in the semi arid zone increased, soil fertility on the other hand decreased and farmers were obliged to migrate to areas of unclear bush. As a result, more and more farmers began to settle further and further south in the less settled sub humid zone. With no clear tenure system, pastoralists who exploit the sub humid zone on a seasoned basis, increasingly found their established grazing areas blocked by maize and yam farms, created by farmers with no interest in developing exchange relations.

During the colonial era, there was the opinion that human population was encroaching on both grazing land and forest. This led to the formulation of the policy which introduced forest and grazing reserves in the country, and has remained policy with the Federal Livestock Department until today, and their value has become useful, since mobile pastoralists reserved wet season grazing in order to avoid crop damage. Nevertheless, large areas of open bush that have not been cultivated for a long time are also attractive to hard-pressed cultivators.

2.4. Introduction of Fadama cultivation into agriculture

The term Fadama could be referred to almost any naturally flooded piece of land but applies mainly to valley-bottoms, where rice is an increasingly common crop, also supplying urban demand (Moritz, 2003:4). Moritz states further that, before 1980s, agricultural pioneering was based on rainfall cultivation. Rivers were the preserved of anglers and were often obstructed by dense vegetation. In situation whereby the banks were grassy, pastoralists were allowed to graze without obstruction. However, there are some riverine and valley-bottom, or Fadama cultivation in Nigeria, which were formerly based on techniques brought from North Africa, such as the ‘shaduf’, which produced small quantities of cereals or vegetables in the dry season.

The Hausa and the Kanuri have been the major proponents of these techniques which were often combined with clap-net fishing in seasonal ponds. The effect of this system of production was reduced partly due to the high labour demands and transport difficulties that constrained supply of vegetables to urban markets. The introduction of

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small petrol driven pumps has led to a complete change in the system. This change permits farmers to raise water in otherwise inaccessible locales and exploit more areas that are fertile. Together with improved rural transport and an expanding urban market for horticultural products, this has developed into a major sector of the economy. This was first introduced in the 1970s, and has been supported by a number of other projects since the 1980s, notably, the World Bank Assisted Fadama I. Pumps are now bought and sold privately for Fadama cultivation, which has become an all year round activity, and has also diffused from the Hausa and Kanuri ethnic groups to many other minority ethnic groups in the North and Middle Belt. Groups of farmers are finding ways to finance larger pumps and share the water between interlinked fields using increasingly elaborated channel systems.

The expansion of both Fadama and horticulture has negative consequences for pastoralists. The southern dry season movement characteristic of Nigerian pastoralism depended on free access to riverbanks where grass could be found and when the surrounding land was largely devoid of nutrition. Since there were no farms where cattle could potentially stray and cause damage, they could be managed with relatively small amounts of labour. This was evident in the colonial era and even before then, that good interaction and understanding between farmers and pastoralists reduced friction, and they could agree on stock routes. Agreement by the pastoralists to maintain routes and farmers avoid farming across them minimized conflicts. This led to the establishment of different migration routes by agreement between pastoral leaders, and local community authorities under the auspices of local government (Moritz 2003:5). It was the duty of this committee to resolve disputes which arose concerning crop damage or wandering stocks before they result to violence. However, this practice began to collapse in the 1970s as farmers started claiming the land across which the cattle pass. The pastoralists were provoked by this action. They often allowed their cattle to graze in the new farms but realised that farmers were no longer passive, they decided to either fight with them or take them to court. The problematic issue of customary tenure thus re-appeared and pastoralists tend to regard their traditional grazing grounds as their land, whereas, farmers view undeveloped for cultivation.

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Horticulture has expanded rapidly and there has been no process of negotiation with herders over migration routes, drinking and grazing access; indeed, farmers preferentially farm where cattle have grazed because the land is particularly fertile. Due to this, there have been increasing numbers of incidents between farmers (cultivators) and pastoralists, not only in the Hausa and Kanuri occupied areas but as well as in the Middle Belt region and particularly in Benue State.

2.5. The origin of the Fulani and their dominance

The Fulani are an important population group found mainly in the Northern part of the country, Nigeria, as well as the Middle Belt region. They are also with or without justification, identified with rearing of cattle in these areas. More so, the variety of names given to them in different countries indicates the extent of their living areas. For instance, they call themselves Fulbe. In the Chad region and to the east of it, they are known as Fellata; among the Mande in the far west, they are known as Fula (Barth, 1957:33 quoted in Fricke, 1993). However, in the course of a widespread migration, the Fulani spread in the Sudan zone from west to east, from Senegal to the Upper Nile region. According to Tauxier (1937:7 quoted in Fricke, 1993), only the area of their origin in the Fouta Djalon is historically proven, and they have continued to spread from this area since the eight century. They however penetrated into the Hausa States in a peaceful manner in the 13th century (Palmer, 1936; Hogben, 1930:59; Westermanni 1952:136 all quoted in Fricke, 1993). According to Fricke (1993), Fulani tribes were recorded as been in Baguirmi in the central Sudan in the 15th century. He states further that, large numbers of them were forced out of Baguirmi into Cameroon highlands. In the 16th and 17th centuries, fresh immigrants from the west consolidated the Fulani population there (Duhring, 1926:125; Palmer, 1936:258 both quoted in Fricke, 1993; East, 1994:21; Kirkgreen, 1958:22) resulting in the establishment of Fulani dominance at the beginning of the 19th century.

The appearance of the Fulani in towns where they assumed certain occupational roles such as warriors, courtiers and artisans proved to be more of interference than the peaceful intrusion of the independent cattle breeders. It was little wonder that the competing native Hausa upper class destroyed the educated, versatile but foreign upper

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class, together with the remaining Fulani or periodically drives them from the country (Fricke, 1993:157). The Fulani in the 18th century again represented a sizeable minority in the Hausa States, as well as in the empires of Borno and Jukun. Apart from the pastoralists, there were Mohamedian scholars and artisans among these people who remained in an underprivileged position within the existing social order into which they were not integrated by adaptation, but rather retained their special status at courts and in the towns, by preserving their Mohamedian beliefs. This pariah situation according to Triminghan (1962:155) was further emphasised by the activation of Islam in the 18th century. In 1804 when forced to flee from the king of Gobir, Osman dan Fodio, a preacher from an urban Fulani clan of Torobe (in the Sokoto Province) proclaimed a religious war (jihad). Within a few years, the Hausa States were conquered. Building on the existing territorial and aristocratic order, Osman created a theoretical state of which he himself as Sultan of Sokoto-Gwandu was the ruler of the believers and political overlord at the same time (Fricke, 1993:56). Fricke states that, by 1831, about 15 (fifteen) Mohamedian emirates, under the lordship of Sokoto, controlled an area of about 280,000sq km, about 5 (five) million inhabitants. They were aided by the well-developed administrative organisation of the Hausa States which they had earlier on taken over. On its part, the empire and its emirates constituted a tributary hierarchy which was partly conditioned by the extension of the political conquest in the south.

This change affected not only the top authorities of the Hausa States, but also, the subordinate administrative centres. In the rural areas, the Fulani were the ruling class. This has remained effective as regards the social structure of western and Central Northern Nigeria and the Middle Belt region up to the present day. As a reward for war services, Fulani from the towns and even Fulani herders were given villages. These were obliged to pay tribute to them and provide land on which slaves settlements were established. The political and organisational progress of Fulani rule (that is, the uniform administration of a large empire, the simultaneous spreading of their belief and popular learning) was accompanied by the forced organisation of one section of the labour force in the form of slaves, and the interruption of the development in the areas which had remained independent by compulsory conversion and procurement of labour. However, since slaves were liberated after their conversion to Islam, they gave rise to a broad

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class whose social status was in most cases guaranteed as clientele of an important man and a further dependency resulted from the right of the upper class to control the land.

2.6. A brief characterisation of selected social areas

One could view the conditions for this characterisation to be most clearly developed in areas last settled and feudally organised by the Fulani and thus, describes them as Fulani areas of colonisation. The settlement forms exhibit some planning characteristics, and the fragmentation of land ownership is not as far advanced as in the area of former Hausa States. These had already developed their consolidated social stratification on which Fulani rule was superimposed. However, the process of assimilation made them into 'Fulbe Hausare' (that is, Fulani of the Hausa language). Even the mode of settlement which already existed, permitted only minor change mainly by new Fulani settlements or to those of slaves in the border zones. Older features in the social as well as the settlement structures have together with a considerable concentration of population and fragmentation of enterprises, remained effective until date. These spatial structures, which have become historic, explain for instance, the presence of compact town-like village with the enterprises of individual Fulani breeders or 'Maguzuwa' settlement (the pagan Hausa) without cattle rearing in the Fulani-Hausa territories. It also explains the fact that in planned villages in the Fulani colonial region only some of the enterprises traditionally concern themselves with cattle rearing (Norman, 1972; Mann, 1976).

As for the further division of the 'Hausa economy' considered by Forde (1961) to be a single entity, it should be taken into cognisance that Borno though similar to the remaining feudally organised territories with its hierarchical, social and territorial organisation, represents an autonomous units; nobles, commoners and the descendants of former slaves were formerly distinguished from one another (Cohen and Brenner, 1974:115). The territorial division had been destroyed by Rabeh's conquest towards the end of the 19th century, but had to be reconstructed by the British in the interests of indirect rule. This accounts for the fact that the social stratification is less well preserved. Borno's ethnic structure is more varied than that of other areas of the northern zone of Northern Nigeria, since compact groups of the various ethnic units

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live together in their settlements here. The Kanuri, Shuwa, Kanembu and Fulani are traditionally known for cattle rearing.

Although they were feudally organised, Forde (1961) excludes Ilorin and Nupe from the Middle Belt economy. Rule by the Fulani who are in any case few in numbers is restricted to a few estates and to those parts of public land conquered by them. The system of clients taken over from feudalism contains still older features of the segmentary society, such as the custom of several farmers working together in the fields. Probably, because of the difficult situations resulting from tsetse infestation faced by sedentary cattle keeping, the Fulani aristocracy soon abandoned this; and the area is now one of peaceful penetration of sedentary and semi-sedentary herders. Nevertheless, the Fulani herders scarcely succeeded in remaining for long periods in the Tiv settlement area in the Middle Belt, which was not conquered by them (the Fulani). It was only after the subjection of these hitherto independent peoples by the British, were the herders able to spread in some areas such as the Jos Plateau. Some groups of Fulani, however, who had already mixed with the indigenous population before the Jihad, had been tolerated in certain areas. An example of this are the Kitihe- Fulani (Meek and Palmer, 1969:xxvii) who are settled in Waja in the lower Yola valley where they mainly tend the herds of the population of hoe cultivators together with their own animals. However, economic cattle rearing are prevented by cult-rooted hoe cultivation by the small size of the enterprises and by the division of land among marriage partners in certain tribes. This was also the cause which in general, frustrated the introduction of the plough, although, the unmonitored keeping of dwarf cattle (muturu) chiefly for cult purposes is widespread.

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2.7. The dominance of field cultivation and its traditional variants

In Benue State as in other states in the Middle Belt region, the growing of agriculture produce for domestic consumption and the market is mostly done using traditional hoe for cultivation. This is functionally divided from animal rearing and underwent transformation only when some fifty years ago, the ox-drawn plough and to a limited degree, the mechanical ploughs were introduced. In essence, the super ordinate term ‘field cultivation’ is preferably used in recent times. The separation of the

two branches of agricultural production (that is, pastoralism and field cultivation) results in only one section of pastoralism being connected with field cultivation, and then, by nothing more than the owner of the field. In a negative sense however, animal rearing depends on field cultivation to the extent that pastures are restricted to areas not supposed to be cultivated. Although, the integration of animal rearing with field cultivation is urgently needed for maintaining soil fertility, it can be promoted only if the regional variations of the tradition forms prevailing in both branches are accorded due consideration.

As indicated in the description of the social-agricultural areas, the right of ownership of the land for field cultivation purposes is mainly the right of usufruct based on nothing more than the erection of buildings and the cultivation of crops. Usage as pasture however, does not create a legal title to land as a rule and is guaranteed only in places where cattle breeders, being the political overlords, are in a position in remote areas to prevent field cultivation or in pasture areas established based on the grazing Act of 1965. Due to the effect of the rapid increase of the field cultivating population, pastoralism in most part of the state (Benue) is increasingly being forced away to the marginal, uncultivated zones of villages, settlement areas and provinces. In the opinion of Ringer (1963 quoted in Fricke, 1993), the agrarian has always been mainly the creation of the field cultivators, which the Fulani rulers were able to take over, because at that time, sufficient unused space was available for pasture in the immediate vicinity of the settlements. However, the recent increase witnessed in the rural population has altered this to the disadvantage of animal rearing.

Within the selected social agricultural areas, other particularities of the agrarian constitution affect field cultivation. The independent position of women among the non-Islamic peoples of the Middle Belt in general, and Benue State in particular, presents a transitional form to the agrarian constitution of the southern forest zone where the planting and especially the care of tubers which play so decisive a role in nutrition, are the duty of the women. Forde (1961:171) explains the cultural-historical origin and the great antiquity of this form of hoe cultivation. The cultivation of tubers stands in contrast to the male oriented and more recently, introduced hoe cultivation of grain in the state. The linkage of cultivated plants and hoe cultivation with cult concepts

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promotes the retention of traditional techniques of cultivation and organisation of labour. Among the relic peoples of the Guma and Katsina-Ala local government areas in Benue State, women, besides growing millet and beans, also plant some yams such as starchy tubers *(Dioscorea)* species and cocoyam (*Colocasia Esculenta*) for feeding the family. Groundnuts are grown for sale on their own account as a sideline. This was formerly the tiger groundnut (*Cyperus esculentus*), but this has now largely given way to the later introduction of *Arachis hypogaea* (peanut).

In the feudally organised areas of the Middle Belt, mostly in Benue State, subsistence economy has always been supplemented by market-oriented agriculture. This was intensified during the colonial epoch and even more so since independence. Modern means of transportation permit the cultivation of cash crops in areas far from the home base or from markets. The examples of yams being grown in this state for sale in the large cities of southeast and west are well known. In the course of the past decade, the area of rice cultivation has experienced particularly rapid expansion not only in Benue State, but the entire Middle Belt region as well as in the western part of the northern zone. The individual farmer makes use of all the existing sites which are edaphically suitable in the small depressions in the area belonging to his home village. On the other hand, the Benue State government together with the authorities of the Federal Government endeavours to carry out large irrigation projects for the benefit of the individual farmer. The 'Allan Akpan' irrigation project has become the most widely known of these. Even the cultivation of sugar cane was encouraged and traditionally carried out by the peasant farmers. Within the selected social agricultural areas, variations of the agrarian constitution are thus to be observed, ranging from relicts of older Middle Belt related forms in areas of adherence to the newly developing, transferable individual rights in land, in the active areas with their considerable considerations of population. Newly elements arise because of the development policy set in train by the government and concerning the agriculture of the small farmer as well as the new form of large state directed enterprises.

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2.8. Pastoralism in Nigeria

There are few inventory of pastoral people in Nigeria which consist of the Fulbe, the Kanuri related groups, the Shuwa, the Yedina and the Uled Suleiman. However, the Fulbe (Fulani) are the most numerous and widespread and they have migrated eastwards from the Gambia river over the last thousand years and probably entered Nigeria in the fourteenth century (Moritz, 2003:1). The Nigeria Fulbe are described by a number of classic authors, most notably de St. Croix (1994), Hopen (1959) and Stenning (1995) who study pastoral clans in semi-arid areas. For the humid and sub humid regions, there is relatively little descriptive material. Awogbade (1983) describes the Fulbe on the Jos Plateau while some of the papers in Blench (1999) deal with pastoralists in southern Zaria.

On the other hand, the Koyan, Shuwa and related peoples have remained in the semi-arid area of Lake Chad. They do not enter into contact with farmers except their own ethnic group, cultivating around river valleys or catch cropping at the foot of dunes. However, change in ecology and pressure on grazing has produced some surprising adaptations among the Uled Suleiman, camel herders of Libyan origin who now migrate between Niger and north east Nigeria. The desiccation of several former wetland areas coupled with pressure on grazing resources, make them explore further south and the high levels of water abstraction that are making the Hadeja-Nguru wetlands to dry up (Blench, 2003) have benefited the Uled Suleiman by making parts of the zone accessible to camels during the dry season. None of the other pastoral peoples in Nigeria has expanded in the same way as the Fulbe or Fulani. Therefore, conflict of the sort which is common among the Fulbe is not usually conceived as a problem.

2.8.1. Pastoralism in mixed farming

As may be appreciated from the description of the historical development and the usually separate agrarian systems of field cultivation and pastoral economy, mixed farming has grown out effectively. Formerly, full time pastoralists have lost the mobility necessary for extensive pastoral economy because of their suzerainty over either field cultivators, or the economic incentive to undertake full time pastoralism. The herd losses caused by the widespread rinderpest epidemics towards the end of the

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19th century probably had only intensifying effect, as the Fulani still engaged in full time pastoralism hardly fared any better. They, nevertheless, sought with all means at their disposal, to re-establish themselves as full pastoralists.

Former full time pastoralists, who change over to a sedentary way of life with cattle rearing as part of a mixed farming economy, also enter into a new way of life, which finds expression in the decline of their inherited traditions and language. Fricke (1993:113) draws attention to the manifold forms in the western Fulani area which have resulted from the contact of Fulani cattle breeders, with hoe cultivators of different ethnic origin in Senegal. These can even extend to the subjection of isolated Fulani so that they become 'prisoners' of the sedentary people. The outcomes are mostly serious in northern Nigeria, when Hausa women get married to Fulani, as it is their task to bring up the children, making the younger generation remains ignorant of the language and customs of the Fulani. This is particularly evident in the Hausa-Fulani States including some areas in Benue State. According to Norman (1972) and Van Raay (1975), the Fulani in Zaria belong to this category as they were assimilated by Hausa culture and engaged in mixed farming. Whereas, in territories colonised by the Fulani, those of them who still breed cattle as part of their mixed economy have retained their language and in some parts of Bauchi, have obliged people under their subjection to adopt it. Fricke (1993), in quoting Hopen (1959) argues that, among some Fulani, men frequently appeared to do the milking because, they suspected the women of not leaving sufficient milk for the calves. The segregation of women may, however, also contribute to this.

The attitude towards field cultivation is to be regarded as positive. This group now represents the major element among plough cultivators. This form of farming, including a still profitable pastoralism element, is probably found especially among the field cultivating Fulani in the less densely populated areas where there is sufficient pasture, near isolated farmsteads and small hamlets. For the greater part of the year at least, the animals can be kept overnight in a field pen and the manure is useful for field cultivation activities. As Frantz (1973:17) observes in the environs of Yola, there are of course, great differences in this in accordance with the degree of territorial over lordship and in the availability of pasture and fields near home.

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A special connection between Fulani cattle breeders and field cultivation is reported from north-western Ghana (Allan, 1965:250) which also occurred in the Middle Belt region of Nigeria. The Fulani look after cattle owned by sedentary non-Fulani peoples and encloses them overnight near their fixed camps. The camp is shifted during the rainy season, and millet is planted on what has become well-manured land. In Ghana, according to Allan (1965), the yields from such fields are 35% higher than those of the usual crops grown on unfertilised fields. This exercise enables the Fulani to employ paid labours in the fields. Much of the pastoralism taking place in Shuwa in the south-east Borno province takes this form of mixed farming. Majority of them live in hamlets and small villages on the edge of the flood plains of Lake Chad where they grow millet, maize, cotton, groundnuts and vegetables on the fertile black and grey clay soils. The herds are penned inside the hamlet and inside the spacious huts in cases of severe insect attack. Night grazing is a further measure adopted to counter the tormenting insects near the reed belt.

In areas with inadequate pasture, herds are divided up in the same way as described for the Fulani in that situation. In earlier times, slaves worked the fields and these accounted for more than one tenth of the population. Although, some manure is scattered on the fields, a good deal remains on the site of the settlement with the result that especially high yields are obtained from crops grown in this region. Therefore, within the Nigerian borders, the settlement area of the Kuri and the Buduma only marginally overlaps with the island pastures of Lake Chad. Their mode of life is determined by the optimal utilisation of the shore zone and the islands by the cultivation of maize and wheat. This is however carried out on polders in conjunction with livestock pastoral economy in the marsh meadows and in the reed belt as well as fishing on the open waters. During the dry season, the working members of the family leave the permanent settlements. Initially, the herdsmen take their animals on short walk, but extent their range as the marsh meadows dry out, while other groups outside the settlements devote themselves to fishing and work in the fields (Le Rouvreur, 1962:223 quoted in Fricke, 1993). According to the reports of early travellers as notes by Fricke (1993:114), the Kanembu on the north-west shore of Lake Chad have developed an economic pattern similarly adapted to natural conditions. Le Rouvreur

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(1962:81 quoted in Fricke, 1993) dealing with the zone away from the lake in the Republic of Chad, describes a livestock economy equal in importance to field cultivation and which takes into account, the particular ecological circumstances of the Quaternary dune region.

In sum, it should be emphasised that an exact division of mixed cattle farming is not possible based on data available at present in view of the fact that these do not reflect any social agrarian differentiations.

2.8.2. Characteristics of semi-sedentary and sedentary pastoralism

Semi-sedentary and sedentary pastoralism could be found in the southern border of the Fulani distribution area of the Middle Belt. Fricke (1993:109) is of the view that two factors contribute to this. First, only half to a third of the pasture area required is needed here, thus, making retribution to a limited area possible. Secondly, the population distribution in the Middle Belt region is concentrated in few centres of settlement, so that quite often-sufficient pasture is still found approximately good market outlets for milk. The semi sedentary full time cattle breeder owns a fixed rainy season camp, where he carries out some hoe cultivation on the sites of his cattle pens, from the previous year. However, he plants nothing but millet and calabashes which yield well due to the manuring. During the dry season, he moves mainly near this dwelling place. If pasture and watering conditions are good, the stay at the dry season site is often extended over a longer period. The dry season camp continues to be constructed according to the nomadic Fulani tradition. If necessary, the semi nomadic full time cattle breeder can easily change his location or revert to nomadism. Being fully aware of the value of manure, they endeavour to obtain permission from the village heads to plant (or to have planted) millet on the site of their dry season encampment following their departure. Village heads have been known to refuse though, partly out of prejudice against the Fulani their former enemies and partly because they themselves appreciate the value of manure (Fricke, 1993:109-110).

In principle, the change over to a fixed residence is probably inevitable for many full time pastoralists at a later stage in their life when they are no longer fit for the exertions of migration and the management of the enterprise has been passed on to

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the son. In this situation, the older person remains at a fixed camp throughout the year at the same time, holding it in readiness as a base camp for the clan in the rainy season. From this place, he may also supervise the cultivation of fields by paid labourers. This technique presupposes a pasture area sufficient for the rainy season, together with outlets for the sale of milk near the camp. These camps, too, are now mostly found in the more sparsely settled districts of the northern provinces and in the Middle Belt, whereas before now, when the population still concentrated in fortified settlements, they were also found in the now densely populated northern zone. It is possible that in the north-eastern province, there are also some groups of Shuwa Arabs who engage in semi sedentary extensive pastoral economy as a major occupation. Nevertheless, a certain amount of inter breeding with the indigenous population has taken place (Trimingham, 1962:17). Pastoralists reside in their fixed settlements only during the rainy season until harvest time. When the waterholes dry out, they move with their family and herds further south to their dry season camp, remaining there until the onset of the rains. Quoting Lebeuf (1959:95), Fricke affirms that:

> This semi sedentary group of the Shuwa is also oriented towards the care of their herds, and field cultivation is merely a supplementary activity, which results in directing the migration by ways of fixed points (Fricke, 1993:110).

Sedentary full time pastoralism without noteworthy, field cultivation, probably takes place only in connection with the seasonal division of the herd or the transhumance. This is because; the great demand for pasture area per livestock unit cannot be met near the settlement since the land available is shared with those field cultivators who are expected to provide cereals in exchange for the pastoralists' milk. In the event of the herd being divided, milking cows remain at the farm together with the older members of the family while the younger ones are sent away with the rest of the herd.

2.8.3. Nomadism and transhumance

These concepts are exceedingly valuable and stimulating pertaining to pastoralism in Benue State and the entire Middle Belt region. Authors like Stenning

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(1957), Hopen (1959) and Dupire (1962) and Bernus (1963) all quoted in Fricke (1993) describe the seasonal and regular herd migration as transhumance. Dupire explains the reason why the term 'Fulani' is applied to nomads. For her, the regular periodicity of herd movements as expressed by the term 'transhumance' is considered to be the most important distinguishing criterion between these moving cattle breeders and genuine nomads who under severe conditions, follow the unpredictable rainfall in the desert. Bremaud and Pagot (1962:320) evidently express this same view in their study of the Sahel zone. De Planhol (1965:37 quoted in Fricke, 1993) on his part, regrets that the migration of nomadic groups is refer to as 'transhumance', a term that ought to be reserved for the seasonal movement of the herds of sedentary people. He feels that the increasing use of this term in Africa is an epidemic started by some British writers. Fricke (1993) on his part rejects the term transhumance customarily used by British geographers to describe movements between regions of different climate, and even the description of nomadism as perennial transhumance, since this conflicted with the usage of the term in Southern and Eastern Europe.

Fricke (1993) states that the South-Ethiopian developed a technique of pastoralism which can be describe as transhumance. Although, they adopted field cultivation only recently, their light construction huts are now replaced on the same spot frequently, whereas in the past, they were erected on a new site. They share certain traits with the full time Fulani cattle breeders who have permanent settlements due to favourable pasture conditions. Among the cattle breeders of the Fulani, a return to nomadism is still possible, but the decisive difference between the Fulani and the Arusi appears to lie in their different legal titles to land. The Fulani do not have any legal titles to land in large parts of the Middle Belt region. In other areas for instance, those of colonisation such as Adamawa or the inland delta of the Niger, Fulani rule still exists over land and sedentary cultivators. Here, transhumance is practiced by the younger generation trekking with the animals while the older Fulani assisted by former 'bondsmen' cultivate the fields.

It would be of great interest to analyse the term 'transhumance' at this juncture. Its origin could be traced to the Roman language where it described 'periodic herd migration from pasture to pasture' (Hofmeister, 1961 quoted in Fricke, 1993).

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However, according to Fricke (1993), different investigations carried out in Southern and Eastern Europe in the 20th century mostly those of French geographers, have led to a narrow definition of the concept. It now means a particular kind of pasture economy in which pastures lay at a distance from the homestead or in which distant or domestic pastures are used alternatively and in which the cattle are owned by a sedentary predominantly field cultivating population. Since the regular migration of herds, constitutes only one aspect of transhumance, the term should not be applied with the British meaning to the roving Fulani described by Stenning, Dupire and Bernus. However, the temporarily sedentary Fulani earlier mentioned, turned to field cultivation only as an emergency measure with the aim of returning to full time cattle breeding when this becomes possible.

Froelich (1954:17 quoted in Fricke, 1993) also describes as transhumance, the quarterly relocation of the herds of the Fulani upper class in that part of Adamawa which went to the Cameroons. It must be remembered however, that the link with field cultivation is based solely on an old feudal dominance. If this were dissolved through a genuine liberation of the class of crop cultivators, the Fulani would prefer a way of life based solely upon cattle rearing. If this were possibly carried out from a fixed location, the Fulani would refrain from field cultivation instead of themselves tending the fields in the villages of their former bondsmen. Only when the herds no longer suffice as an economic basis does field cultivation becomes a necessity.

It remains an issue of debate whether these groups become acculturated to a sedentary life and field cultivation or whether they strive to return to full time pastoralism. In the densely settled areas of the Hausa-Fulani such as Katsina, Kano and Sokoto, it must be assumed that acculturation has become a necessity since the Jihad there being no alternative. Probably, this is the result of the difference between the original settlement areas of the Hausa-Fulani with their restricted pasture availability and the Fulani colonisation areas in the sparsely populated Middle Belt. This situation has been further intensified by the low fodder potential of the natural pastures in the northern zones.

For the greater part of the last two decades, many sedentary pastoralists in over populated areas place their animals in the care of roving breeders; a seemingly

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paradoxical situation arises in which transhumant cattle may form part of a nomadic herd. This entails that two identically cultivated plots belonging to owners from different socio-economic groups may have very different social functions. Social plurality among formally identical agricultural techniques justifies the classification made above, and based on methods of pastoralism which can evidently be modified by socio-geographical categories.

2.8.4. Nomadic and transhumant forms of agrarian enterprises

Terms like nomadism and transhumance should be checked accordingly to establish whether they in fact, and in all cases, stem from the same source and have both been applied correctly. A statement by Sorre (1961 quoted in Fricke, 1993) affirms this when he described nomadism as been a *genre de vie*, and of interest to the entire group. Transhumance is a technique of cattle breeding permitting improved utilization of pastures by means of a seasonal change of location. Sorre, however, considers only the change of pasture between mountain and plain or transhumance in its original sense. He goes further to state that, as modern means of transportation is now employed; transhumance cannot be regarded as having an innate character like nomadism. However, as earlier pointed out, even nomadic migration of the herd is not always due to an inner call, but probably more often to an ecological and socio geographical importance matched by the social behaviour of the people concerned. In genetic terms, it may be said that this behaviour has simply been suitably adapted. The traditional way of life of the pastoralists with their social organisation and a spiritual and material culture geared to animal rearing, does not necessarily and exclusively demand migration. This is proved by the numerous instances of periodic and permanent settlement.

If innate character or the inner call is to be a distinguishing criterion between nomadism and transhumance, then, it may be stated that only the most mobile representatives of the northern Nigerian pastoralists, the '*Bororo'*, are to be described as nomads. This created a room for the question as to whether the *Bororo* would not discontinue their wanderings in the event of pasture, water and milk sales becoming available in sufficient and dependable scope. Together with his interpretation of the

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phenomena of nomadism, the extensive evidence compiled by Fricke (1993) on the radical change in nomadic life of modern times, mostly in the classical areas of desert nomadism, can be similarly interpreted for northern as well as Middle Belt region of Nigeria. It is certain that, in spite of their roaming, a large proportion of Fulani livestock breeders are not nomads by innate character. They are established in the socio-economic position of the herder or to avoid any confusion with transhumance, the position of the livestock breeder traditionally very close to the animals he has bred and does not own any pastureland. It is therefore my opinion that herd migration, whether transhumant or nomadic, is a technique, a form of management or a system of land use. Besides, these livestock breeders adopt the technique of herd migration to balance out the greatly varying natural conditions of their agricultural geographical environment. This may also correspond with ethnological approach.

Forde (1961:287) for instance, writes on pastoralism and views nomadism as being a special form of pastoralism. The form of rearing employ by the full time nomadic and sedentary livestock breeders and in the mixed farm economies of the transhumant livestock breeders is thus, very eligible for inclusion in Andreae's (1960:20 quoted in Fricke, 1993) category of extensive pasture economy as being a 'passive adaptation to seasonal fodder scarcity'. If this has been realised to date, then, it is only because of the erroneous idea that the herdsmen merely 'accompany' their herds in the nomadic form of pastoralism. In addition, these herd migrations are comparable to those of African wild species (Andreae, 1960:24 quoted in Fricke, 1993). The careful selection of the domestic species for different climate zones; the breeding of animals adapted to suit the prevailing conditions of the region's ecology, the provision of leaf fodder and the collection of grass and straw on mixed and subsidiary farms ought to be sufficient arguments for a new classification.

However, if one agrees with Sorre (1961 quoted in Fricke, 1993) that the use of railway and road transportation is merely a modernization of the techniques of transhumance and therefore, does not change the underlying principles of the management system or those of the term definition, then the use of radio and aircraft by the nomadic livestock breeders in the USSR is no reason to discontinue regarding them as being nomads. Contrasting approaches would appear to be a consequence of the

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generally accepted cliché of the desert nomads which was in the minds of Dupire (1962 quoted in Fricke, 1993) and many others when making their evaluations. Moreover, if the Fulani were to modify their present system of searching for favourable pasturage on horseback, and by an exchange of information in the markets using modern technical aids such as radio, walkie-talkies, mobile phones and the like instead, their nomadic management system would still exist. Within the given natural region, their mode of management is the result of a long adaptation to social structure. Living in a society and culture rooted in hoe cultivation, they are specialised outsiders without rights or influence. Political events such as the first eviction of the Fulani from Kano in the 16th century, or the Jihad of the Osman dan Fodio in the 19th century are responses to the social tensions between the field cultivators and the necessary, but only tolerated livestock breeder. For this reason, the nomadic system of pastoralism and its old life style ends when the livestock breeders receives a firm right to the very use of the land and the wells and has a market for his products in keeping with the size of his herd; either daily grazing around the farmstead or a transhumant techniques are then adopted, a fact proved by numerous instances.

In sum, it is pertinent to return to the concept of cattle thesauration advanced by Goldstein (1908:376) and repeated by Hahn (1913:213) and Bensch (1949:225), all quoted in Fricke (1993). In several assessments of pastoralism in Middle Belt, the northern zone of Nigeria and the rest of Sub Africa, cattle thesauration is also regarded as being indirectly a retarding, irrational factor. The monetary value of cattle as animals for breeding, milking, riding, drought purposes and slaughter is however, undeniable. There is also a demand for them. The network of banking facilities continues to be very widely spaced across the country and with the exception of the upper social class the population has no tradition of rational monetary savings.

2.9. The immigration of the pastoralists in the twentieth century

For a long period, the Fulbe pastoralists were restricted to the edge of the desert. During the 20th century however, pastoralists started migrating through and settled in an entire area that were previously inaccessible to them which made them come into close contact with unknown peoples, cultures and even strange methods of production. The

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effect of this was a raft of untested communications between all parties and considerable space for misunderstanding and conflict. The reasons preventing their southern expansion in a previous era remain controversial, but it is likely that a migration from the semi arid zone would have led to major losses from the trypanosomes (Blench, 1997). Human population densities were said to be low and wild animal numbers still high before the spread of firearms in Nigeria. This created a high level of tsetse challenge for the non-trypanotolerant zebu, owned by the pastoralists (Blench, 1999). This migration in the colonial period was however, considered a seasoned movement between the semi arid north and the dry season pastures along the Niger-Benue system. As the rains gathered momentum, tsetse populations expanded and pastoralists were forced to move back northwards.

In spite of this, the gradual exploration of southern pastures made those seeking these types of remaining in these zones all year round, a routine practice. Fricke's (1993) study of livestock production in Nigeria conducted from an analysis of tax and slaughterhouse shows that there had been a general shift by pastoralists towards the southwards. In essence, there is a drastic reduction of the pastoralists living in the north as they move southwards every year. According to Blench (2003:2), two major reasons led to a major reformulation of the conventional stereotypes of pastoralism. These include; the movement into the southwest which was earlier noticed than in the Centre and South East regions of the country, for both ecological and cultural factors. The climatic regime of the South-West is such that, the derived Savannah loops Southwards West of Oyo State, getting close to the coast in Benin and the Togolese Republic. This created relatively open land without the high humidity associated with forest proper and therefore, reduced the disease risk to zebu cattle.

The second reason was the abnormal security of the colonial epoch. One reason pastoralists so often become militaristic is that, they are comparatively vulnerable. In an economy where land is not at a premium, it is difficult to prevent a farmer of his working capital. However, pastoralists can easily be overcome, mostly as much of their days are spent virtually alone with the animals. For instance, according to Awogbade (1983:8-10), not until the colonial era, grazing herds avoided the otherwise attractive

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Jos Plateau because of the threat of armed raids. The relative peace and security in rural areas from 1910 onwards, encouraged exploratory movements towards new pastures.

Nevertheless, this south ward movement has some costs to the pastoralists. This could be noticed in two main characteristics of their present society; extensive sedentarisation and an increase in conflict with the agrarian societies on whom they have traditionally relied for their supply of cereal staples. The pastoralists and the farmers, among whom they move, have traditionally had an interdependent relationship based on the local exchange of dairy products for grain and the periodic sale of animals to provide cash for domestic reasons such as cloths or marriage payments. Moreover, in some areas, pastoral management strategies depend on access to cereal crop residues. However, because of the goods or services pastoralists have to offer essentially to the farming community, the pastoralist thus, is obliged to remain on good terms with farmers, if he wishes to keep or hold on to the same locale in successive years. Also, these pastoralists established a good relationship with the host communities in order to be accommodated for a longer period. Nevertheless, if they are unable to build up good relationship, then, it will be difficult for them to stay long. This means, their ability to survive is based only on settling by flexible movement patterns which include encountering new arable communities every time. These strategies operate in communities where pastoralists and farmers live together. Thus, understanding the structural elements underlying conflict is a necessity to interpreting its current transformation.

Threat by disease is another contributory factor to the migration of pastoralists from one place to another. There is no doubt that these zebu cattle are always been threatened by disease in more humid regions. Moritz (2003:3) notes that, the colonial regime established some tsetse control measures and made available a range of new veterinary medicines. The tsetse control programmes opened new pastures and even led to the expansion of population in the Middle Belt, accidentally acted to get rid of both the vectors by hunting out wild animals and the forest habitats of the tsetse fly by cutting down for agricultural land. Pastoralists are thus driven not only by the nutritional needs of their herd, but also by fear of epizootic and chronic disease particularly skin problems such as dermatophilosis.

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The high price of meat in Southern region of Nigeria also makes it worthwhile for the pastoralists to bring their animals by truck to these communities for grazing and fattening. In fact, some communities in Delta, Rivers and Bayelsa States could said to be host communities to the pastoralists. This practice has arisen because of the premium price of fat stock rising transport costs and the economies of scale in herding close to markets. Traders apart from pastoralists have also realised the potential of the humid zone. There are therefore, recognised locations for fattening herds' grassy patches within the forest zone where cattle are fattened for the market.

2.9.1. Structural characteristics of pastoralists and farmers' interaction

The pivotal characteristics of rural dynamics in Nigeria in the twentieth century have been demographic extension and consequent expansion of cultivation. The national census conducted in the pre-colonial era as reports by Moritz (2003) suggests that, the human population for the whole Nigeria was below five million in the twentieth century. Comparison with the 2006 figure of almost one hundred and fifty million made it clear how pastoralists and cultivators could have co-existed in the earlier period, and why the situation is so fraught in recent times. The results of human population increase underlie other vital dynamics in rural Nigeria, especially relatives between pastoralists and arable farmers. Moritz (2003:3) attributes four main themes to this, which are:

a. Increase competition of pastoralists for a dwindling 'stock' of grazing land as agriculture has expanded.
b. The collapse of the system of cattle tracks intended to separate livestock from farmers.
c. Movement of pastoralists into new terrain, where language, religion, culture and landholding patterns are unfamiliar.
d. Declining importance of the market for dairy products.

2.9.2. Fulani colonisation, penetration and diffusion in the Middle Belt region of Nigeria

The Middle Belt region of Nigeria is regarded to be the area, which since 1967 belongs to various states which earlier belonged to the provinces of Plateau, Benue,

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Niger, Kwara States as well as the Southern part of Zaria. These are areas where the Fulani are predominant as regards cattle breeding. These are areas of diffusion resulting from a spontaneous heavily scattered propagation of nomadic or semi sedentary full time cattle breeders without adequately fixed legal ownership or usufruct rights to the land they use. In essence, this constitutes a transition to a penetration area in various partial areas of the Jos Plateau, since the peaceful penetration of the settlement areas of other people has developed into an undisputed possession of grazing areas. This has been legitimated by the administration at least, since they have been formed into Ardorates according to Fricke (1993:203) as regards the Fulani population. In other words, these are not demarcated grazing areas as on the Mambila Plateau with the result that uncertainty still exists between the cattle breeders and the field cultivators as regards legal title to the land. How the Fulani spread across different states in this region are hereby discussed.

2.9.3. The spread of the Fulani in Jos-Plateau since 1900

The Jos-Plateau has been a typical penetration area for the Fulani since 1900. Before it was conquered by the British, it was a 'refuge area' used predominantly by palaeonigritic population groups and inaccessible for the Fulani (Fricke, 1993:203). At the dawn of the 20th century, cattle breeding Fulani moved up through Bauchi during the dry season, and advanced as far as the foot of the North East edge of the Plateau at Lere. After some years, they changed their dry-season location to a rainy season location and located the new dry season camp near Gindiri, 20km south west in the Lere valley which cuts back into the Plateau edge at this point (Stenning 1957:63). Fricke (1993) goes further to state that almost every year, cattle stealing leads to bloody dispute with the hill peoples living there, the Fulani apparently being victorious. When the British gained control of the Plateau by means of punitary expeditions over the period 1904 to 1908, the Fulani assisted by acting as scouts well acquainted with the area. They also supplied milk, butter, meat and sorghum to the troops. According to Fricke (1993:203), they were the only people growing this grain in this area at the time in question. It is therefore not surprising that the Fulani penetrated the Plateau with their herds following pacification. Here, they found tsetse free pastures and good

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watering facilities as well as a short dry season. Initially, only a small proportion of the cattle breeders remained on the Plateau during the dry season and as such, no sales outlets for milk, butter or meat. Only with the increase in the rapidly developing tin mining industry (Raphael, 1913 quoted in Fricke, 1993:203) did a sales' outlet become available for the animal products.

However, the rapidly increasing number of Fulani made it necessary for the British District Officers to appoint community leaders, but apparently with the sole aim of regulating the affairs of the settling Fulani, the original inhabitants of the Plateau remaining in their inaccessible hill settlements on the slopes of which they had intensively cultivated permanent fields. Three independent settlement strata were therefore established below the hill dwellers which include the open cast mines on the high table lands, the houses of the Europeans and Levantines and the camps of the workers recruited particularly from the north (Fricke, 1993:203). The stratum also includes the newly formed administration and trading locations in which the Hausa and Southern Nigerians formed a higher proportion. On the other hand, the third stratum consist the cattle breeding Fulani, some in semi permanent camps while others in compounds.

The full time cattle breeders in the Eastern part of the Central Plateau began in the mid-thirties, a new form of enterprise operation 'herd splitting'. This incorporated transhumance over four months, taking these people into the lowland. This movement was important in view of the fact that the steadily increasing number of cattle then coincided with the partly forceful downhill resettlement by the British administration of the hill peoples to the high-level plateau surface, the earlier grazing pastures of the Fulani now being used by others, for irregular rotating field cultivation. Accordingly, their fodder value for the cattle was reduced at least, for a few years, since crop cultivation without proper fertilisation calls for correspondingly long fallow periods on these leached soils. Transhumance was possible in the Benue lowlands since these very thinly populated areas were not pacified by the British until that time. On the herds being split, the family stayed at the usual place with the cows and the calves, the young animals being sent on a trek with the younger members of the family. As reports by Fricke, this resulted in permanent resettlement of the Fulani away from the Plateau,

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since the spreading settlement area in the lowlands had then reduced the danger of tsetse infestation during the rainy season (Fricke, 1993:204). However, Fricke did not mention in this context, the significant influence of the enforced displacement of the Fulani over the period 1946 to 1950.

2.9.4. The spread of the Fulani in the Benue Province

The Benue Province was formed from 1967 to 1976 as a single state with the Plateau Province. However, it is now an independent state. Located in the Southern Guinea Savannah Zone, part of this state is only thinly populated. Wide areas are not without risk for cattle rearing purposes, at least not during the rainy season, in view of the occurrence of *Glossina Morsitans* (species of tsetse fly) in the region.

The largest and most important population group is the Tiv ethnic group. The Tiv are steadily spreading from south to north via the Benue, and towards the east in the direction of Adamawa. In spite of the lack of a territorial organisation, the settlement of complete families of clans maintains superiority as regards all other population groups such as the Idoma, Igede to mention but a few. From the economic aspect of pastoralism, this population group remains without significant, since the 'muturu' kept by the Tiv are left to them most of the year. In all, this is a diffusion area of the Fulani with nomadic full time cattle breeding, which tendency is to stay in one location for a longer period. Development to sedentary enterprises with transhumant grazing technique is governed in the final issue by the land ownership conditions and the pressure exerted by the field cultivators on the land. In smaller areas, the establishment of a small emirate introduces land usage rights and Fulani cultivate some land. The enterprises are managed in the form of 'gandaye'. In addition to the gandu of a family, joint field cultivation work is also undertaken whereby neighbours are invited to assist, and thus, treated as guests. A person not owning any cattle will try to earn money (for instance, by trading with milk which he buys in bush) to purchase an animal and then, slowly build up a herd (Fricke, 1993:209).

The biggest herds of sedentary owners who also engage in field cultivation are estimated as 150 head. However, they seldom form a single herd since more than 50 head per herd are difficult to supervise during grazing. In such cases, 50 head are left

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near the compound and transhumant grazing carried out with the remainder. Bigger enterprises split their herds during the dry season and trek into the Benue lowland in the area of Loko (up to 80 miles, 130 km distant). However, the bulk of the dry season stock the stems from Kacchia/Zaria Province, and nomadic herds from Bauchi Province, Kano and even from northern Adamawa, are also found there (Fricke, 1993:209). Quoting information from livestock superintendent in Nasarawa, Fricke states thus:

> The stock of sedentary, semi sedentary and nomadic herds in the Nasarawa Division have increased steadily since 1968 until now because of veterinary measures. No influence of the drought on the vegetation was noticed in this area (Fricke, 1993:210).

According to Fricke, about 90% of the cattle in Keffi and Nasarawa belong to the Fulani. Town dwellers also possess small herds which are placed in the care of sedentary, full time and part time cattle breeders. In the case of 10 head of cattle, one head must be handed over by way of payment each year and in addition, the costs for salt licks for the entire herd must be borne. The local population has no interest in starting mixed farming since it is now easy to have land ploughed by tractors. The influence of the Fulani on the administration of the local authority is said to be minor since the non Fulani majority is more strongly represented there.

In the Benue Province, very few head of cattle are usually taxed each year. Fricke went on to state that, one third of the taxed cattle belong to Awe (located between lowland Division and Benue). A further one third to Obi, east of Lafia, one sixth to Assaiko (adjacent to the Jos Plateau in the north) and one sixth to Keana (south of Obi). The town of Lafia has more than 1000 head in the tax list; some of these belong to the Borno people who established the town and who have not given up their preference for cattle. A further proportion of the cattle are kept in herds of a new type on fenced-in farms belonging to members of the new elite.

To the south up to the northern bank of the Benue, ‘Wodabe’ from Bauchi Province are said to be encountered, mostly during the dry season. They do not have good relations with the Tiv farmers who claim that the grazing cattle simply trample the

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soil, thus, making it compact and cause grazing damage. It was said that the Fulani started spreading to the south of the Benue only in the fifties as the Tiv having repeatedly expelled the herdsmen in earlier times. The main centre is in the area of Katsina-Ala, a further centre is located in Wukari, Taraba State. Those who came from Pankshin (Jos Plateau) could be described as sedentary, who with the help of paid labour, cultivate rice and yams. The total stock including non-sedentary herds and cattle belonging to dealers is said to reach 40,000 head during the rainy season and 80,000 during the dry season.

In the Idoma Division of the state, force was last used against Fulani herdsmen and their herds in the late 1970s in Otukpo. For reasons connected with traditions, no interest is displayed in milk products. Only in the Adoka District which has an open-minded District Head, invited the Fulani to his domain to stay. Only limited number of mixed farmers is to be found in the areas in which the Tiv live. The reason for this is stated as being the dense stands of field trees, mainly the shear butter tree (*Parkia Butyrospermum Parkii)*. It should be noted here that the organisation of the heavy field work according to age groups, the division of crop tending work and harvesting between the various family members and the garden like intensity of cultivation have to date, not allowed any desire to grow for the employment of an ox drawn plough.

2.9.5. The Niger Province and the Southern part of the Zaria Province

From 1967 to the 1976, the Niger Province belonged to the North-West State, but it is presently a state of its own. The Southern Zaria Province with the two areas of the Jema'a federation and Kacchia will also be discussed here, since they differ considerably from the Fulani-Hausa social area of the Northern Zaria Province, however, not only as regards cattle rearing. These areas are parts of the Fulani Diaspora in the Middle Belt which also constitute the starting points for sedentary cattle rearing in the Niger Province. In the Kontagora Division of the Niger Province, Fulani own a great proportion of sedentary cattle herds. However, measures against the population of the Districts, the proportion of Fulani is very low. In contrast, their proportion in the individual settlements can increase to one-third and is then again, concentrated on individual quarters or hamlets in the area surrounding the village. The cattle are kept

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mainly in mixed and subsidiary enterprises. Field cultivation and often administration offices, too, form the bulk of their work. The spreading field land and the distribution of the tsetse fly govern the cattle rearing technique. During the rainy season, the herd must be kept within the area of the settlement on fallow fields. In the larger centres like Kontagora, supplementary fodder in the form of millet, cut grass and leaf fodder became established in increasing degree. During the dry season, the herd is split. The younger members of the family or paid herdsmen wander with the young cattle and the major proportion of the herd on the natural pastures of the wider vicinity; whereas, the mulch cows are penned in the compound and in the bigger villages also outside the compound, or are kept with friends on the outskirts of the village. They also receive supplementary fodder in addition to the daily pasturage.

The main proportion of the herds belong to semi sedentary Fulani. For decades, these have lived with herds of 40 to 50 head in the same district during the rainy season, employing paid workers to carry out some cultivation on the fields manured by their herds, to cover part of their needs. During the dry season, they do not move far away from this location, possibly leaving some older members of the family and children behind with some milch cows. On the other hand, the remaining head in the Kontagora Division (during the rainy season) belongs to the nomadic, full time breeders with an average of 50 head per household (Fricke, 1993:211). However, their rainy season location is not fixed and they roam during the dry season up to the Niger in the west and south. Fricke states further that, the sedentary cattle breeders taxed their cattle 100%, the semi sedentary breeders 50% and the nomads 25% to 30%.

Fricke also notes in his study that, the semi nomadic herds which are found in the same location at that time year after year account for 60% of the stock during the rainy season. The remaining cattle belong mainly to the nomadic herdsmen who have no definite radius of action. Mixed farming is not included here. The progressive farmers are recent innovations who are non Fulani owners of one to three cows who buy their animals from the cattle breeders and tether them in front of their compounds or at the side of the road and keep them in an excellent condition with the aid of supplementary fodder. In the same way as in many other parts of Northern Nigeria, the members of the upper class also have their own herds which they keep in pens on their

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land. They are placed under the care of Fulani herdsmen who in turn receives food and clothing on important feast days. Even though the stocking density is heavily increased during the dry season, the grazing conditions for the herds remaining here are also satisfactory.

The conditions in the Bida Division were not greatly different from those of the Divisions already discussed. Here, too, the semi nomadic Fulani stay in one place. In some Fulani communities, the camp belongs to one family whose cattle were divided into small number of herds. Further camps of the same communities were located near this North-South aligned Ruga. They came from Dindima (East of Bauchi) some years ago, and would build permanent houses if the owner of the land would allot them a portion for this purpose. However, each year they clear a different section of fallow field overgrown with bush for them. In the following years, the owners harvest very good crops from these areas which are well manured by the herds of the Fulani. In return, the Fulani receive salt licks for their herds from the villagers and guinea corn for themselves. In addition, the full time cattle breeders have some grain cultivated by paid workers. The semi nomadic herds also remain in the same area in the Bida Division, since sufficient Fadama pasturage is available not far away during the dry season. According to Fricke, Fulani with 7000 to 10,000 gudale have remained in this region because of the temporary heavy stocking rate in the preceding years of drought in the north and their owners are attempting to secure a permanent footing. For Fricke also, the approximate 30 cattle breeders of the upper class owned the gudale cattle. The herds are looked after by herdsmen against payment of a token per month for 10 head in each case; these herdsmen also keep the milk. This is a high wage, but it is possible that it is not easy to graze the herds without causing damage in the intensively used areas, which during the dry season, are partly used for intensively cultivated vegetable and rice fields.

2.9.6. Pastoralism in Kwara and other states in the Western region

Due to its population and its administration structure, Kwara State is probably one of the most heterogeneous states in Nigeria. The former provinces of Ilorin and Kabba in the Northern region form it. In the Ilorin Province, the Ilorin Emirate and the

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Borgu Emirate stemming from the kingdom of Borgu dominate. Borgu with its sparse settlements over wide areas is the grazing area of nomadic enterprises to the extent that the occurrence of the tsetse fly and the existence of the Borgu game reserve do not limit the radius of action. These Fulani preferably breed the Bunaje cattle and have herds of Keteku. The Borgawa also hold cattle breeding in such high esteem that they are called 'Fillanin barba', meaning, Fulani of the soil (Fricke, 1993:216). Whereas, the nomads are reported as having 200 to 300 head of cattle in one family, the herds of the Borgawa are smaller. There are also, Sokoto-Fulani who got married to local Borgawa families who now engage in sedentary mixed enterprise cattle rearing.

In Ilorin and Lafiagi-Pategi, there is the traditional keeping of herds of Muturu (having mainly a social and cult significance), and their owners attach value to their children owning such animals. Sedentary Fulani are also present here. For generations, they have had blood relations with the Yoruba and own herds of Zebu. The proportion of this group in the keeping of Zebu herds according to Fricke is estimated at 60% of which 15% are accounted for by semi sedentary Fulani who have long lived in this area and engage in field cultivation. More so, nomads enter the area (mostly Lafiagi-Pategi) and their cattle account for great size of the stock. They are located in the extensive marsh areas of the Niger during the dry season, but move to Igbomina-Ekiti in the rainy season.

Modern elites also have herds, but these are not of any great significance. Normally, their herds comprising muturu and N'dama or muturu and gudale, are placed under the care of paid Fulani herdsmen, though, without precise figures. Even though there is a considerable unsatisfied demand for N'dama cattle, and particularly for bulls, a larger scale breeding enterprise has only recently been endangered on the death of the owner, since the costs for looking after the pastureland are considered too high. The Kabba Province is mainly an area of muturu breeding. In contrast to other areas where muturu are bred, the cattle in this place have good grazing since the owners place them under the care of paid Fulani herdsmen. In other words, there is probably zebu which crosses with these in this place.

The Fulani could also be found in places like Shaki in the Northern Division of Oyo, Ogbomoso and Saki, all in Oyo State, Osun North West, Abeokuta, Ibarapa and

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Egbado (Fricke, 1993:217). Fricke states that the Fulani have been in this zone for a long time, normally engaging in a semi nomadic to semi sedentary cattle rearing technique, as may be assumed. In addition to cattle, a type of cheese is also marketed, even though there is a great demand for fresh milk in this area. The consumer areas may be located too far away from the locations of the herds to permit the marketing of milk and cheese. In most cases, more than half of these animals looked after by the Fulani, belong to the Yorubas. The modern form of cattle ownership by the elite of the wealthy class is relatively widespread. The cattle which are owned by them are also placed under the care of Fulani herdsmen but normally graze on the land of the owner.

2.10. Historical evolution of pastoralists/farmers' conflict

The conflict between farmers and pastoralists should not be regarded as a recent phenomena or something peculiar to any state, country or sub region. According to Blench (2003:1), the conflict between pastoralists and farmers dates back to the earliest written records, and this is mythically symbolised in many and different cultures. For instance, according to the Bible, Cain slew his brother, Abel (Cf. Genesis 4:8), king Ahab connived with his wife Jezebel, to kill Naboth over a piece of land (Cf. 1kings 21:1-16) and the Chinese emperors built the great wall to keep out the marauding hordes (Abba and Usman, 2008:169). Besides, as far back as 1953, Spate identifies three perennial motifs with a strong geographical backing which cut across the course of human history. These perennial motifs include conflict between townsmen and farmers, sea power and land power and peasant farmers and nomadic pastoralists. He however regards the third as the most serious and the one that has attracted the attention of some classical historians, and this conflict is described as:

> The secular struggle of peasants and pastoralists on the frontiers of the desert and the sown which have shifted back and forth with climatic changes with the rise and decay of strongly organized states, with changes in the technology of war and peace. So spectacular have been the changing fortunes of this struggle that some (for

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> instance, Ibn Khaldun) have seen in it, a main key to the course of history (Spate, 1953:16).

Heathcote (1983) in his summary argues that, scholars like Ibn Khaldun and Toynbee (1958) see the historic conflict between 'the desert and the sown' as one originating from the economic contrast between the two modes of livelihoods. The two historians see the conflict mainly as phenomena which is common to North Africa and South West Asia. According to Heathcote, both scholars attribute the conflict to the contrasts in the obvious wealth and life style, between the oases and river lands, and the desert hinterlands, which were so marked, and where cycles of feast alternated with famines from droughts or plaques, whether of insects' pests or plant diseases (Heathcote, 1983:276). Also, Nura (1996) notes that, the conflict between pastoralists and farmers was historically not peculiar to those regions identify by Ibn Khaldun and Toynbee (1958), and that the same conflict has occurred in Latin America. He bases his claim on the fact that conquering Spanish pastoralists forced indigenous agriculturalists from the fertile valleys in the sixteenth (16^{th}) and seventeenth (17^{th}) centuries and thereby, laid the foundation for the conflicts of the twentieth (20^{th}) century. In the contemporary period for instance, the 1917 Mexican agrarian revolts as well as conflicts in Peru in 1950 and in Bolivia in 1953 were all identified as examples of this conflict (Abba and Usman, 2008:170).

In summary, the conflict between pastoralists and farmers cannot be reduced nor limited to any geographical region or even to any particular historical phase. It is nevertheless important to note that the conflict has always been endemic in some regions and communities where the environmental, economic and social conditions have combined to predispose the two groups to a competitive encounter as the case in Benue State, Nigeria.

2.11. Background to the conflict

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are today regarded as two historical epochs characterised by the contest for power, conflict and open warfare between various nationalities and groups, most especially between pastoralists and farmers of the region of West Africa. Yet, during this period, despite the political domination and

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enforced slavery suffered by farming populations at the hands of herding population from northern zone of the Sahel, deep exchange relations persisted between the two groups. According to Webb (1995) and concurs to by Hussein (1998:20), the desert pastoralists depend on Savannah farmers for calories, exchanging salt for grains and for the provision of essential needs such as tent poles, cloths and cooking utensils. This exchange relationship was also noticed in the wide network of exchanges between pastoralists and farmers involving for example, pastoralists trading manure for grain (Oddih, 2000). Little (1994:62) conducting a research in Niger State, notes that in the past harvest season, farmers were enticing animals onto the cropped fields with gifts to the herders of money, sugar and tea. In fact, farmers were known to dig wells on the fields to attract post harvest grazing, and to consign a few animals to the care of a particular herder in the hopes that he would lead the herds onto the owners' field.

Horowitz (1985) and Horowitz and Little (1987) quoting earlier studies also concede that relationship between pastoralists and farmers were sometime strained. These relationships were particularly strained due to the outcome of the early southward movement of pastoralists into the sedentary zone before the completion of the harvests. They generally noticed that land use between pastoralists and farmers in Niger State was complementary rather than competitive. Awogbade (1983) observes in his study of Fulani pastoralism in Jos that though the relationship between farmers and the Fulani pastoralists was under increasing pressure due to aggressive struggle for resources, pastoralists were still received by farmers in Jos. Thus, pastoralists keep animals for the village farmers who consider livestock, especially cattle as a form of investment as milk, cattle and manure are however, traded for farm produce and social interactions between the sedentary populations and the pastoralists are evident in ceremonial transactions. Bennet (1991) also reports such complementary interactions and transactions of other agricultural societies (like the Kanuri, Hausa, Songhay) and the pastoral groups (like the Tuareg, Fulbe) in Niger where all cultivators own livestock and many nomads practice agriculture.

Carrying out a similar study in Fandene village in Senegal of the 'Goll', Gueye (1994) quotes a popular saying in the region which holds that 'pastoralist and field are nature allies'. This buttresses the long standing agreement and complementary

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relationship that has existed between agriculture and animal husbandry, that is, between farmers and pastoralists. The levels of relationship between farmers and pastoralists in the semi arid regions of Africa have made many scholars to equate it to the relations between family members, for instance, husband and wives. However, Raynaut and Delville (1997:112) note that, such a co-existence has never been without tension since it demands a conciliation of rival interests. According to them, conflict can erupt when livestock is poorly controlled, and when animals wander about in a cultivated fields. This always occurs at critical times in the annual cycle mainly during sowing, when herds are late in leaving agricultural lands and during harvests; if they return too early, clashes occur when agricultural activities hinder the movement of animals and cut off their access to water sources or pastures.

It has therefore be argued that, such conflicts are on the increase in West Africa, mainly in Nigeria; though the claims of increasing conflict between farmers and pastoralists often lack empirical evidence (Hussein, 1998, Hussein *et al.*, 1999). What is not in dispute is the tenacity of this conflict and the enough attention it has received from stakeholders, academia, researchers and policy makers. However, some reasons have been developed to explain the preponderance of the conflict between farmers and pastoralists. These include growing pressure on natural resources caused by human population increase, the growth in the population of herds and the extension of cultivated areas (Breusers *et al.*, 1998). Nevertheless, recent works by Miligan and Binns (2007) in northern Nigeria have seriously question the assumption which seem to regard farmers-pastoralists conflict as an unavoidable consequence of steady population growth, environmental stress and irrational natural resource management. Abba and Usman (2008:171) argue that such crisis narratives, those that place an accent on the role of power, history and symbolism in the dynamics of rural society, neglects the degree of heterogeneity and disequilibria in the natural environment.

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2.12. Nature of nomadic pastoralists and farmers' conflicts

Generally speaking, conflicts manifest in different ways which include mild and non violent such as avoidance, ridicule and verbal exchanges, insults, character assassination to the violent and destructive ones such as riots, assaults, crisis and war.

Although, much has not been written on the nature of pastoralists and farmers' conflict in Benue State Nigeria, writers and academia have made some inputs on the dimensions of the conflicts. According to Yahaya (2008:8) pastoralists and farmers' conflicts are most times violent, destructive and within a short period. For him, these conflicts sometimes take place in the night when farmers are asleep at their homes while the pastoralists move to the farmlands before dawn and harvest times. Khan (2007:6) states that ethnicity also play a greater role in pastoralists and farmers conflicts as it often involve the Fulbe (Fulani) who are mostly pastoralists and the Tiv and Idoma (as the case in Benue State) who are mostly farmers. Khan goes forth to say that the conflicts sometimes results to ethno-religious conflicts (though ethno-religious conflict has not actually happened in Benue State). This could be attributed to the fact that those in the central region of the country, of which Benue is a state, are predominantly Christians as well as farmers while the pastoralists who are few are mainly Muslims. Thus, the tendency of the conflict leading to ethno religious one is undebatable.

Ingawa *et al* (1999:6) observe while carrying out a research in the core National Fadama Development states that the conflicts have been a recurring incidence for many decades now. According to them, the conflict occurs especially during the dry season when the animals move southwards and sometimes at the beginning of the wet season when they are returning. They further note however that, the activities of pastoralists who wander with arms and usually in large groups and who commit intentional crop damage has added a new dimension to the conflicts in recent times. This implies that the conflict is presently fought with arms and heavy ammunitions against the bows and arrows which were earlier weapons of these pastoralists. This could be attributed to the inflow of light weapons and small arms into the country through our porous borders. The Bauchi State agricultural development programme report (1997) confirms this when it points out that the emergence of militant pastoralists like the "*Udawa*" and "*Bokoloji*" have introduced a violent and fatal dimension to the conflicts. According to the report, they are young pastoralists who are heavily armed with guns and arrows, and they seem to enjoy the support and protection of their local godfathers and bandits and thus, have no respect for any law or authority.

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Pastoralists and farmers' conflict also has international linkage, especially when ethnic groups cross borders such as the one between Kenyan Turkana and Sudanese Toposa as well as those in Mali and other parts of the African continent. For instance, the Toposa cattle rearers often migrate into Kenya territory from southern Sudan to raid farms and settlements. On the other hand, the Kenya pastoralists attacked farmers in Karamojony, Uganda in 1984, killing hundreds of people (Herrero, 2003:8). Since the conflict is outside the territory of a particular country, it can thus be regarded as an international one.

2.13. Traditional/informal institutions and models of conflict resolution

Resolution of conflicts no doubt is a common issue in Africa context since it involves a process of finding total solution to conflicting issues. Conflict resolution is therefore, a process of settling conflicts within a community or between communities and even among warring groups and the process varies from one society to another. Traditional norm may be defined as simply the legacy of the past; including the changes and transformation this past must have gone through. Traditional method of conflict resolution could thus be defined, as the indigenous ways and manners in which conflicts were resolved in the past.

It is precisely this present situation which may tempt us in Africa to forget the complex history and the indigenous expertise of Africa. However, the recent and current news about conflicts and wars everywhere, couple with issues of ceasefires and agreement grip our attention. The current methods of conflict resolution from the Americas, Europe, Asia and Australia impress us because of their professional quality and their scientific underpinning by several human sciences. However, we should not allow the appeal of such contemporary materials to make us forget the time proven methods which originated on African soil.

After its long and eventful history, Africa can indeed make most significant contributions to the field of conflict resolution. There are the original traditions which might be as ancient as those that were developed in China and Mesopotamia. Early traditions in Egypt could have taken shape at about the same time. Affirming this, Oguntomisin (2004:1) states that, the processes of peacekeeping begin at the level of

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the individual and his household. This entails that, a man who is free of inner and domestic conflict is able not only to behave in a less aggressive manner, but also, to relate well with his neighbours and the larger community. Consequently, different communities in pre-colonial Nigeria had varying conventions concerning individual behaviour to mitigate intra-human, inter-human and domestic conflicts. The conventions which were backed by taboo which must be observed, regulated activities such as cohabitation, relationship between husband and wife, parents and their children inheritance and the like. As head of the family, a husband was expected to be at peace with his household and ensuring that its members related well with others within the immediate compounds and wards in their village or town. The compound and ward heads as well as the village heads, district heads, clan heads or chiefs had similar responsibilities in their respective domains. They guarded their laws and customs and applied appropriate sanctions against any breach.

Furthermore, the family which has been considered as the smallest unit of political culture in every African society is always a starting point of traditional administration in conflict resolution. The oldest male folk in every family is regarded as the head of the compound. Olaoba (2002:20) in his opinion about the Yoruba affirms this when he categorises indigenous courts into two broad categories, namely; the informal and formal courts. The informal courts include public tribunal meetings under the trees, market places and impromptu public settlement of disputes. Davidson (1973:114-115) and Koyptoff (1971:129-142) views affirm the above statement when they note separately that, the elders who possess the spirit of the ancestors, meet underneath the tree and talk until they have agreed on a point as compromise. Besides the fact that the elders usually enjoyed the evening breeze under the shady trees, they equally listened to, and ironed out seemingly difficult matters affecting the society. Cases of fighting among children were in the past, accorded an impromptu settlement by the passers' by who normally ensured resolution of peace and harmony hitherto upheld by the termagants.

According to Olaoba (2002:33), the Africa legal heritage and the judicial procedures upon which justice is administered are crucial. In African context, restoration of peace and reconciliation form basic tenets of law. In essence,

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peacemaking and peace building was the focus of Africans rather than peace keeping by the third world method of brokering peace in the society. African judicial processes of conflicts resolution which are regarded as informal are open tribunal, kings' courts and religious cults. All these processes helped in African context, to maintain law and order in the society. Other extra-judicial processes which are socially accepted and endorsed by members of the societies are carried out through the influences and activities of secret societies sanctions. These agencies have their causes and effects or the administration of justice in African societies. However, the procedure of carrying out the extra-judicial process varies from one society to another.

Among Africans, God is generally believed and accepted as the Supreme Being (deity) whose judgment is irreversible. Different attributes are given to this Supreme Being (God). Some of these attributes among the Idoma people in Benue State are *Oche no jipu ache* (He that knows the inner thought), *Ohepo Okwei* (the righteous judge). Besides, there are secret cults (societies) in African societies that perform judicial role. Judgments of these cults are widely acceptable. Nwolise (2004b) points out that the "*Ogugu"* shrine in eastern Nigeria bases its judgment on truth. Among the Yoruba and the Bini in Edo state, the "*Ogboni"* secret society is of paramount. According to Opoku (1978:187), there are *"Poro"* and *"Sanda"* societies of the Mende in Sierra Leone. In addition, there are the *"Ekpo"* (leopard) and "*Ekpe"* spirit societies in South-eastern Nigeria as well as *Ndi-diadia*, an organisation of notable spiritual men among the Igbo. The Ogboni chiefs are executive chiefs in African societies. They are vested with the power to ask the paramount ruler like the *Oba* in Yoruba land or the *Tor Tiv* or *Chi-Idoma* as the case in the study area, to vacate a throne or commit suicide if found guilty of any serious offence. The chiefs perform legislative, executive as well as judicial functions in the society. This prompted Olaoba (2002) to contend that in the indigenous societies, extra judicial proceedings and traditional executive authority was a strong linkage with traditional judicial authority.

In addition, Africans are regarded as very religious people who believe in the practice of traditional mode of worship before and even after the advent of Christianity. It is African general belief that traditional religious system helps to modify the way of life of practitioners. It also performs judicial roles. The head of each religion, on behalf

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of his or her worshipers, consult each deity in Benue land and other African societies. Criminal issues, land disputes, crises between farmers and pastoralists as well as other conflicting cases are brought to the head of these worshipers to detect and deal with, in order to resolve it. Oracles are consulted to find solution to dangerous diseases and help to detect culprits of crises in the society. Deity through the worshipers deals with any culprits known and unknown which prove stubborn. The belief of Africans in these divinities enhances law and order in the society. This process creates psychological fear in the people and it helps to reduce disputes and even crime in the society. In Benue State, deities like *Owoicho Okpabanna* (god of thunder), *Owoicho Oje* (god of iron), *Owoicho Okpa* (god of stream/rivers), *Owoicho Olohi* (god of morality), *Owoicho Hepo* (god of justice) have great force on the administration of justice.

Uncompromised dispute cases as well as criminal issues are left to the gods for settlement. Woe betides any erring person who provokes the wrath and anger of these gods. Culprits as well as witnesses are asked to eat or drink certain object(s) to prove his or her innocence. If any culprit or offender were killed by any of these gods because of the administered oath, the relative of such a victim would be asked to perform some rituals in order to appease the god(s) to limit the spread of the price to other members of the family. Just as the case of Ogugu shrine in the eastern part of Nigeria, some sacrificial items must be brought to the chief priest in the shrine before the sacrifice could be done. The shrine gods or chief priest must do the sacrifice at a chosen date (Nwolise, 2004b). What Fadipe (1970) says of the Yoruba is also practiced almost everywhere in Africa including the studied communities in Benue State. According to him, extra judicial procedure is one of the processes by which judgment was passed in traditional Yoruba societies. He opines that administration of the poison ordeal was generally reserved for cases of witchcraft. In most societies, an accused person may be permitted to vindicate himself by accepting to undergo the 'sasswood' poison ordeal. If no harm came upon the accused person, he/she is set free, but if he/she died, all his relatives, including his children, will be required to undergo the test, to correct the wrong.

From the above therefore, one could state that almost every community possesses their own methods of handling disagreements and disputes over natural

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resources and any other transgressions related conflicts. In essence, resource managements and conflict managements are essentially one in the same process. Both aim to bring consistency, order and accountability to situations of competition and conflicting interests. In fact, the local authorities that manage resources are also the same ones that deal with conflicts. For instance, Haro *et al.*, (2005) describe "nested" resource management and conflict management institutions among East African pastoralists consisting of households, camps, assemblies of camps and 'neighbourhoods'. The 'term informal' does not entail that local resource management procedures are *ad hoc*, but that, state officials do not recognise their procedures and decisions. The principal techniques used by communities are negotiation, mediation, arbitration and adjudication. People also frequently use avoidance and coercion with the latter manifested in peer pressure, gossip, ostracism, public humiliation, witchcraft and the fission of kin or residential groups.

According to Zartman (1989), the first characteristic of traditional system is that, like other strands of the traditional heritage, conflicts management is experiential and undocumented. Bozeman (1976:288) says, traditional forms of conflict management in Africa emanated from established social practices, and are therefore, comprehensive references, virtually synonymous with the entirety of social life. The system manifested in, and usually propagated and preserved through folklore, songs, rituals and other cultural and religious practices such as sculpture and other art forms and in advanced forms as well as specific juridical institutions.

Another feature of traditional system as notes by Zartman as explicable in terms of the preliterate heritage is the mix air diffusion of conflict management systems in religious, social, cultural and political practices. Most conflict management practices are ensconced in rituals and other religious observances, customs, spirit medium, witchcraft, secret society activities to mention but a few. Mediators usually derive their authority from religious roles and functions, old age and other distinctive personal qualities. The roles of secret societies with their mythical and ritual powers exercised through masks and masquerades in conflict mediation have also been well documented.

The rationale for thinking aloud on this area of intellectual study at this particular point of continental and national experience is not farfetched. Emphasis

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should be made known here that, before the advent of the colonial masters to Nigeria in particular and Africa in general; Africans have traded peculiar methods of monitoring, preventing, managing and resolving conflicts (Nwolise, 2004a). They also had their peculiar ways and manners of effecting peacemaking, peace building and confidence building. These peculiar and effective methods have today almost been adulterated and even wiped out in some societies by the forces of colonialism including religious psycho-war forces. Its outcome is ubiquitous violence which promotes instability and retard development.

2.13.1. Contemporary institutions and models of conflict resolution

This involves setting up of different institutions and models as could be seen in the operations of the Anglo-Roman legal and court systems, police, prisons, commissions of inquiries and others. Third party intervention mechanisms were often used in resolving conflicts. These mechanisms include amongst others, litigation, arbitration, compromise, negotiation, conciliation, facilitation, adjudication and security agents. These mechanisms are western models of conflict resolution which have been imported into not Benue State alone, but Africa in general. They are different from what used to be in practice before the advent of colonialism. They are strange models and institutions that cannot completely resolve conflicts in Africa. The institutions on the other hand include customary court, magistrate court and high court where disputes are been brought for adjudication.

According to Gulliver (1979:50-51), conflict management theorists pay too little attention to and at times, ignore completely, factors like rules, norms, values and beliefs when writing about negotiation and models of negotiation in conflicts situation. Indeed, the judge could force the disputants to perform certain actions, but a mediator can only encourage them to do so, through appeals or by referring them to earlier set ground rules. Joint problem solving is concerned with solving problems in ways acceptable to all involved parties. This technique has a sequence of steps that must be followed. These steps include:

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a. Developing agreement on how to organise the problem solving effort, individual responsibilities of the participants, the facilitator ground rules and the working agenda.
b. Developing mutually criteria for the evaluation of options.
c. Brainstorming and development of options including any necessary feasibility analysis.
d. Joint selection and/or synthesis among the options through application of the evaluation criteria.
e. Problem analysis and definition of concepts.
f. Documentations and final review of the agreement.

This event obviously serves as dual purpose. First, it spreads the news about the satisfactory conclusion of the conflict resolution process. Secondly, it places an additional obligation on the parties to observe the agreement which has now become public knowledge.

2.13.2. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) encourages consensus-based approaches for managing and resolving conflicts. ADR has been used widely in American environmental conflicts since the 1970s. It is seen as a flexible as well as low-cost substitute to adversarial legal proceedings and adjudication. Main ADR techniques include interest-based negotiation, multi-stakeholder dialogue and negotiated rule making with strong dependence on the role of facilitators. Considerable attention is also directed in ADR towards capacity building. The advocates of ADR see it as a means of encouraging creative "win-win" settlements and its emphasis on training and building social capital are portrayed as enlarging human and social capital when promoting social justice. In theory, such procedures should result in environmentally appropriate, socially sound and sustainable agreements. However, it was only recently that such claims started to be evaluated (O'Leary & Bingham, 2003). Meanwhile, Castro (2005) is of the view that, international donor agencies, technical assistance agencies and the ADR industry have promoted its introduction into Africa and other developing areas.

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Critics of ADR question its assumptions, uses and impacts. Much of this criticism centres on issues of power. Nader and Grande (2002:574) who attack its export to Africa, state that 'ADR has power dimensions that have not been adequately analysed or understood.' Advocates of ADR are seen as accepting too easily, the claims that its interest-based negotiation techniques can effectively level power differences among disputants. Sceptics contended that, masking power differences behind participatory discourse only perpetuates, if not widens inequalities (Cooke & Kothari, 2001). Some analysts suggest that the effectiveness of ADR might be helped by political reforms that increase government accountability while also supporting democracy (Castro, 2005). Such reforms however, would probably enhance the performance of all conflicts management processes since each shares difficulty in dealing with power and social exclusion. Some critics view ADR's emphasis on "managing" conflict as disguised people-manipulation, reducing the legitimacy of conflict as a political process. In addition, ADR has been described as undermining or replacing indigenous conflicts management practices. Another criticism is that, ADR advocates often focus only on capacity building while failing to follow-up on what people do with this knowledge in the absence of additional resources for conflicts management activities. Finally, it is not clear that ADR-based agreements are more equitable or sustainable than those reached by other means.

Strengths and weaknesses of ADR are summarised in Table 2.1. As with any social innovation, caution and sensitivity are needed in promoting and using ADR. Thus, ADR has potential to contribute to conflicts management processes in rural Africa, but its form and deployment need to match local circumstances.

Strengths	Limitations
□ May help overcome obstacles to participation	□ Power differences are difficult to overcome
□ Emphasis on capacity building through training	□ Usually few resources for post training work
□ Uses means similar to	□ Imported methods may not fit

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traditional practices such as consensual negotiation □ Promotes consensual decision-making □ Fosters ownership in Solution/implementation	local context, displace customary practices □ May be difficult to engage all stakeholders □ Decisions may not be implemented/sustained

Table 2.1: Strengths and limitations of alternative dispute resolution approaches
Adapted from Matiru *et al.,* 2000

2.14. Theoretical Framework

From the moment problems are discovered, theories are therefore developed for a logical explanation of what is happening. Theory according to Shedrack (2004) helps analysts to situate their narration of the conflict within some existing theories of conflict. Many scholars and academia have propounded different conflict situations depending on the school of thought to which they represent. As a result of this, the political economy of resource scarcity and environmental scarcity theories were adopted in the work to better our understanding and knowledge of the conflict in Benue State.

2.14.1. The political economy of resource scarcity theory

Ecological borders are in most cases, also ethnic and cultural borders. In essence, ecological borders become ethnic and cultural lines of demarcation, where people meet to co-operate or to fight. For instance, in most West Africa countries, including Nigeria, an ethnic dimension comes to play in the conflict which often appears to oppose two broad ethnic groups, the Fulani pastoralists versus a population of group of sedentary farmers who are made up of a variety of ethnic groups. This ethnic dimension to the conflict in the views of Breusers *et al.,* (1998) indicates not only the increase in competition over natural resources, but also a breakdown in the balance between the two groups.

Hussein *et al.,* (1999) view conflict of interests as part of the fundamental relationship between different resource users; and once there is a conflict of interests, a

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stage is set for competition that may in turn lead to violent conflict. Though, there is no automatic cause effect relationship between conflict of interests, competitions and conflicts, the likelihood is increased with scarcity of resources on which the groups depend, and the asymmetrical manner in which the impacts of scarcity are distributed between farmers and pastoralists. Toulmin (1983) clearly explains the relationship between conflict of interests, competitions and violent or non-violent conflict in his study. He argues that in semi arid Africa, there are three interlocking resource users who are involved in a competitive demand for the resources on which pastoralist rely. These resource users are the sedentary cultivators, other pastoralists groups and new livestock owners.

In line with the theoretical opinion adopted in the work however, it is necessary to redefine the whole concept of scarcity and assess the extent to which it plays a role in competition and conflict among multiple resource users. Contrary to the new-liberal and new Malthusian arguments, scarcity is not an absolute given or as mediated by prices on a market since natural resources are not marketable commodities in many instances. Frerks (2007) thus argues so convincingly that, property and access rights are fixed in a myriad of social and political relations. Frerks contents that scarcity is relative and must be seen as such by the actors involved. The question must be answered as to why scarcity leads people to resort to violent conflict rather than non-violent means to resolve their problems. In his view, the basic reason why scarcity leads to violent conflict can only be located in the social and political relations as well as patterns and processes of identification with specific identities. Based on their status in the local and broader political economy of a nation or region, specific groups of people such as the pastoralists in most West Africa states in the contemporary era, may be denied access to resources, or can be increasingly marginalised (Abba and Usman, 2008:174).

In the works of Collier (2001), the greed versus grievance theories are articulated and developed to explain broader processes of conflict which include civil wars, and meticulously questions the role of scarcity in conflict causation. Collier thus argues that, conflicts are related to proxies for greed rather than proxies for grievance

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(inequality, lack of political rights, etcetera). He opines that, the actual motivators of conflict are thus, the possibilities of predation and for doing well out of war.

Beachler (1999) and Hildyard (1999) have earlier in their various works given a well-grounded critique of the scarcity thesis. For example, Beachler contends that there is no direct causal link between scarcity and conflict, mostly violent conflict. Elaborating it within a broad framework of society nature relationships, he notes that the common interest of two or more parties to use a plot of land for instance, automatically includes the competing interests of who uses it, who, how and probably when. For him, a combination of common and competing interest consequently lead to the transformation of nature, which in turn, affects and transforms the relationship between the users as well. He however notes that it is only in exceptional cases or at some turning points in history, the competing interests dominated the common interests to the degree that the running together of vital factors purposely led to violent struggles over access to resources in defined areas. The domination of common interests by competing interests result from the scarcity of natural capital and or the destruction of established regulations over access to resources.

It worth noting here that, scarcity of resources is neither always a natural phenomenon nor does it automatically leads to conflict between resource users. For Beachler (1999) however, scarcity has always been a primary and ever-present condition of existence throughout human history. Besides, episodes of harvest failure and shortages brought about by warfare, social and environmental dislocations characterised all historical epochs (Hildyard, 1999). Cohen and Brenner (1974) argue on their part that, common as well as competing interest of actors over the use of natural environment is an enduring fact of human life. Therefore, conflicts over scarce environmental goods are not in any way a new phenomenon. They form an intrinsic part of dialectical interactions between human beings and nature. People in all cultures have tried severally to overcome resource scarcity, each in their own way by using their societal and instrumental possibilities (Beachler, 1999; Cohen, 1997). Some post-modern critiques question the whole idea of scarcity, mostly when it is linked to environmental resources, arguing that nature is not ‘scarce’. Instead, scarcity is a matter of definition and a man made phenomenon associated with factors such as power

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politics and distribution, as well as to the drawing of boundaries and to international politics. It can be stated that, this point bears direct relevance to the contemporary problem of resource scarcity in many area of the world, including the Benue valley (region).

Among other scholars, Lottimore (1962) study proves that boundaries and territories have never had any meaning to nomadic pastoralists' rights. Lottimore points out in his study of mongol tribes that no single pasture would have had much value to them because it soon would have become exhausted. Hence, the pastoral nomads pushed by what Lottimore calls 'the sovereign importance of movement' wandered about herding their livestock. Therefore, the issue against scarcity is first, an ontological one. Scarcity would not have existed for pastoral nomads if territories and borders have not been designed to exclude them, and thus, in the process, bring them into direct conflict with other resource users, especially farmers. The formation of modern states summed up nomadic pastoralist within fixed artificial boundaries. By making a group that was historically mobile new prisoners of limited or restricted spaces, the modern state system has made nomadic pastoralists vulnerable to the vagaries of social and natural scarcities. How and when do the different regulatory mechanisms breakdown and scarcity lead to conflict between resource users? Many and different explanations have been suggested, but perhaps, the most convincing is the political economy approach to the subject.

The experience of scarcity in the sense of which individuals or groups get access to the sources and means of livelihood, for example, land and pasture (used within the context of this research) and which individuals or groups do not relies on the distribution of political and economic power within society. Scarcity and hunger which may lead to group conflict, is not always natural; it is usually socially constructed, politically manufactured and economically distributed. Even when there is 'natural' scarcity, the distribution of its effect within society is socially determined. Therefore, the foremost basic way in which scarcity leads to conflict is through the deliberate creation of scarcity and or injustice in its distribution within the various parts of society. Scarcity and its consequences can be distributed within society such that no group is made to suffer more than the rest. Most of the traditional common tenure regimes

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permit joint management of land and so limit the ability of any one group or individual to control access. As such, scarcity and its resulting hardship become not the burden of any group or individual but a shared phenomenon (Hildyard, 1999). In essence, Hildyard believes that scarcity has always been shamelessly used as an instrument of population control in its original sense of controlling people. He however, warns that, our recognition of socially generated scarcity, insufficient necessities for some people and not others, is not to deprive absolute scarcity and insufficient resources, no matter how equitably they are shared.

The nub of the argument here is that, where abundance is distributed with some level of justice, scarcity too will be spread out to some degree. The breakdown of common property regimes through a joint process of state appropriation of land as well as the general penetration of capitalist market relations into the countryside has led to the marginalization of the politically weaker section of the rural communities. Deriving from the theoretical view on the political economy of scarcity, the work argues that pastoralists are driven into the fringes of society, not because of scarcity of land and pasture or over population, but through a sustained process of agricultural colonization, political marginalization and social exclusion.

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2.14.2. Environmental scarcity theory

The environmental effects of human activity are a function of, first, the vulnerability of the ecosystem and, second, the product of the total population and that population's physical activity per capital in the region. This theory was proposed, developed and well articulated best in the works of Homer-Dixon (1991; 1999) and Gizewski (1997). Homer-Dixon uses the term "environmental scarcity" to refer to scarcity of renewable resources. Homer-Dixon (1999) argues that environmental change, population growth and unequal social distribution, are the three major sources of scarcity which lead to violent conflicts. First, Homer-Dixon identifies supply-induced scarcity, which is caused by the loss of resources such as a lack of quality drinking water or fertile land. Second, population growth and/or migration can increase the person’s demand leading to demand-induced scarcity. Third, a skewed or disproportionate distribution of, or access to resources, is what Homer-Dixon terms

'structural scarcity'. These three types of scarcity are not mutually exclusive; they often occur simultaneously and interact. In this context, Homer-Dixon also considers the political economy of resource distribution, contending that the first two (sources of scarcity) are most pernicious when they interact with unequal resource distribution. However, these scarcities contribute to violence, only under certain circumstances. There is no inevitable or deterministic connection between these variables. The nature of the ecosystem, the social relations within society and the opportunities for organised violence, all affect causal linkages. In essence, the theory attempts to link conflict between multiple resource users to increase tension between these groups, emanating from growing vulnerability and insecurity of their livelihoods. It takes into cognisance, conflict between multiple resource users as an unavoidable result of the competition for scarce natural resources, to achieve security of livelihood.

Environmental scarcity produces four principal social effects: decreased agricultural potential, regional economic decline, population displacement, and the disruption of legitimised and authoritative institutions and social relations. These social effects, either singly or in combination, can produce or exacerbate conflict between groups. Most such conflict is sub national, diffuse and persistent. For conflict to break out, the societal balance of power must provide the opportunity for grievances to be expressed as challenges to authority. When groups organized around clear social cleavages such as ethnicity or religion, articulate grievances, the probability of civil violence is higher. Under situations of environmental scarcity where group affiliation aids survival, inter-group competition based on relative gains is likely to increase. As different ethnic and cultural groups are propelled together under circumstances of deprivation and stress, we should expect inter-group hostilities in which a group would emphasise its own identity while denigrating, discriminating against and attacking outsiders (Homer-Dixon, 1999).

Using a causal diagram from his recent book "Environment, scarcity and violence", Homer-Dixon (1999) shows the complex interrelationship among environmental scarcity, social capital, population growth and migration and the potential for violent conflict. In explaining why a country may or may not resort to violence in the face of environmental scarcity, he emphasises that urban unrest and/or

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rural insurgency occurs in the context of other variables. Environmental scarcity is merely a contributing factor and is neither a necessary nor a sufficient cause of violent conflict. Other factors such as the adaptability of social structures (for example, market (in)stability, autonomy of the states, social norms, etcetera) and a country's capacity or ingenuity in solving problems play a major role in whether a situation may become violent. Nevertheless, the environmental scarcity theory has received widespread scholarly attention, including those who have criticised it from the perspective of the political economy of scarcity.

Dessler (2000) presents an overview of what methodology does to assist social science research and where Homer-Dixon's methodology falls short in his environmental scarcity theorising. First, he outlines what two questions methodology seeks to answer in the case of environmental stress. The first question is predictive and asks if researchers can predict future levels of conflict from environmental trends? Second, the causal or explanatory question asks how environmental change brings about conflict. Two types of information could be used from the methodological questions. The first is descriptive, in that, the information describes what the subjects under study are. The second type of information is broader, in that, it offers general knowledge of what it is that the researcher is studying.

This methodological discussion led to an examination of exogenous and endogenous boundary conditions and their impact on predictions of social/human behavior. The key problem with Homer-Dixon's work is that, only one of the three scarcities discussed in his environmental scarcity theory is exogenous, and therefore, unaffected by other social factors. Supply-induced scarcity is exogenous because, it has nothing to do with human behavior, but rather, what resources nature has endowed the earth. The remaining two scarcities, demand-induced and structural are endogenous conditions that are affected by human activities.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.0. Introduction

This chapter presents a description of the materials and methods that were utilized for the study. It covers different sections including research design, study area, the study population, sampling procedures, research instruments, methods of data collection and procedures for data collection. Thus, the processes followed and methods used in data collection and analysis, are clearly specified in this chapter. These methods and materials allowed for the specific issues of pastoralists-farmers' relations, competition and conflict to be fully examined within the analytic frames of sustainable rural livelihoods.

3.1. Research methodology

The study investigated the causes of pastoralists-farmers' conflict and the various methods adopted in managing and resolving it. Thus, ethnographic research design and field survey methodology were used to obtain the views, feelings, attitudes and suggestions of the pastoralists (Fulanis) and the farmers who are mainly the Tiv, Idoma and Jukun. This is in collaboration with Tuckman (1999) view of survey as a means of measuring what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person thinks (attitudes or belief), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences) and how a person feels (feeling).

Data were collected through primary and secondary sources. Sampling technique adopted was purposive sampling (for selecting subjects for in-depth interview with key informants) and multi stage sampling for selection of subjects for focus group discussion and structured interview.

Benue State was purposively selected for the study. The state is made up of three senatorial zones which include zones A (North East), B (North West) and C (South). Three local government areas namely, Katsina Ala, Guma and Ado were selected from these senatorial zones. Thereafter, five communities of Katsina-Ala, Abinsi, Gbajimba, Agila and Igumale where the conflicts were most rampant, were selected for this study. Methods for primary sources consisted of Key Informant

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Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and structured questionnaires. Key informant was the first data gathering method used. It made entry into the field easy. It was used in retrieving information regarding the relationship between the farmers and the pastoralists which has gone sour. This is to ensure that no vital information is lost. In-depth interviews were conducted with twenty (20) key informants in order to seek their opinions about the conflict. These key informants consisted of community, political, religious leaders as well as security agents who are familiar with the conflict. Similarly, four (4) FGDs were held in four communities. The discussions were held in a relatively informal setting which allows discussants freedom and greater participation. The setting was semi-circular to avoid 'high table effect'. In addition, copies of five (500) hundred structured questionnaire were administered to respondents (both farmers and resident pastoralists) to elicit information about the conflict, out of which four hundred and eighty (480) were retrieved for validation. Personal observations were recorded through photography.

The secondary source included published books, journal articles, official reports, monograph and internet materials. The work involved fieldworks, which were preceded with a visit to the proposed study communities to make contacts, and have a general feel of the nature and dimensions of the contestations. Based on information and observations, communities with predominant conflicts were examined and studied. All these provided a rich pool of literature on the farmers and pastoralists' conflict in Benue State.

Data obtained were analysed using content and descriptive techniques such as frequencies and percentages with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) tool.

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3.2. Research design

The major types of research design include case study design, cross sectional design, descriptive design, experimental design and survey design (Grunow, 1995; Vaus, 2002; Keppie, 2006). Based on the research questions, scope and the sensitive nature of the research, "*ex post facto"* design was used. According to Onwioduokit (2000), "*ex post facto*" means "after the factor". It implies that cause(s) of an event

have already occurred and the causes or the independent variables involved are not manipulated. The study thus, adopted largely, a combination of survey and descriptive research designs, to gather detailed information from a relatively large population, through some selected samples, by means of quantitative and qualitative techniques. This combination is suitable for addressing the subject matter of the study based on the fact that:

> Survey researchers rely on natural variations in samples rather than induced variations, and rely on natural change over time rather than deliberately creating change. There is little danger that, surveys will create the harm that experimental studies can. This is not to say that surveys are without their dangers. The questions that survey researchers ask-such as those about family relationships, sexual respondents may create psychological harm… where surveys are administered through third parties… these third parties must not see the responses before the questionnaires are returned to the researcher… but the potential of this breach of confidentiality is clear (Vaus, 2002:61-62).

The qualitative technique involved the participation of the researcher as a member of the studied group. This enabled the researcher to see the social world from the perception of the actor. The survey design was adopted in order to reach a sizable number of the people within the target population, since the research involved a large population where everybody's opinion cannot be sampled. In addition, the survey design was thought to be appropriate because it is people oriented and was used to elicit information about peoples' opinion. Above all, the study adopted the qualitative and survey processes since it did not intent to manipulate any independent variables, but to obtain base line information on pastoralists and farmers' conflict in the Local Government Areas of the state where the conflict are most rampant.

The dangers inherent in the application of survey design was managed through an observance of ethics of social research, including an assurance that participation is voluntary, and that the respondent is free to withdraw from the study at anytime or

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decline to answer any particular question. Survey design is combined with descriptive research design to accommodate the nuances of views among different segments of the study population. The strength of descriptive research lies in the fact that:

> Descriptive research plays a key role in highlighting the existence and extent of social problems, can stimulate social action and provide the basis of well-targeted social policy interventions… Competent description makes it more difficult to deny the existence of problems (Vaus, 2002:19).

From the foregoing, the research methodology of the study proceeds through the above mentioned research design to other crucial stages in data collection and analysis.

3.3. Study population

According to Ogundipe *et al.,* (2006:100) population means the totality of all elements, subjects or members that possess a specific set of one or more common definite attributes. In this work, the population included both male and female adults, young and old people, literate and illiterates that are either farmers or pastoralists, community, political and religious leaders. This was done in the selected communities from the chosen local government areas.

3.4. Sampling procedure and sample size

The three local government areas selected cut across not only the three senatorial districts of the state, but also, ethnic and cultural divide and where the conflict between farmers and pastoralists is frequent in the state. Thus, respondents for this study included farmers, pastoralists, family heads, leaders of selected pastoral and farmers' groups, religious leaders, political leaders, security agents, clan and district heads, community and youth leaders. A district constitute a cluster, hence, cluster sampling was used in the selection of the farmers and pastoralists. Thereafter, 20 (twenty) individuals of different sect were purposively selected based on their knowledge of the conflict, availability, convenience, consent and the various roles they played during the conflict. Also, 12 (twelve) persons (6 from each party) were purposively selected for the FGD based on proximity to pastoralists/farmers' conflict,

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availability, familiarity with the conflict, convenience, consent and who above 35 years of age. In addition, copies of five hundred (500) structured questionnaire of which 480 were retrieved, were administered to pastoralists and farmers as well as community leaders, religious leaders, security agents and political leaders who were randomly selected from the sampled communities

In all, the sample size of this study comprised 568 respondents who participated in the study. There were people who assisted the researcher in conducting the interview in these areas, and helped in explaining the language, since the researcher is a stranger among the people, and could not speak nor understand the languages (that is, Tiv, Idoma and Hausa-Fulani). They all did a good job.

3.5. Research instruments

Primary and secondary data were generated and integrated for the study. The secondary data were obtained from extant literature in archives and libraries. The primary data were collected via quantitative and qualitative research instruments. Based on the objectives of the study, quantitative and qualitative data were gathered using different methods such as the, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and structured questionnaires. The contents of the questionnaire were precise, clear and legible, which made the subjects' responses logical and constructive. The position of social theory in relation to empirical research, has led to some claims for a greater integration between particular methods of enquiry, and particular theoretical schools (Surridge, 2002:43). In support of Bourdieu's "logic of research and methodological polytheism", Surridge (2002:47-49) argues that:

> Such an approach to sociological research requires that, we begin from a position that accepts that there is a social world, and that the aim of sociology is to understand and explain it. The theories and methods brought to bear on the object of research must be those most appropriate for the object under investigation. If we separate theory and method, we deny the possibility of this dialectic relationship between them, and operate with an overly

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> narrow conception of sociology. In addition, we run the danger of losing sight of sociology completely and rendering social research impotent.

3.5.1. Key Informant Interviews

Key Informant Interview (KII) comprising of structured and unstructured questions, was used to gather qualitative data from twenty (20) (community, herdsmen, political, security and religious leaders) stakeholders, who were purposively selected from different communities in the study area. KII provided a flexible way of obtaining some detailed information which was obviously used to cross-examine and complement the questionnaire used for the study. A suitable KII guide was used for data collection and the data obtained from various KIIs were recorded manually and electronically.

Using the KII as part of the sources of data collection, we engaged in moments of critical, rigorous and comprehensive dialogue with various stakeholders, whose contributions enhanced our understanding of the various methods of managing the conflicts between pastoralists and farmers in Benue State. The flavour of oral evidence by respondents substantially consolidated the materials gathered from other sources such as documented evidence, questionnaire and other materials. Thus, by using this technique, the researcher was able to gather relevant information about the introduction of these methods into the conflict management in the respective communities. The researcher also got relevant and useful information from members of the public, about the strengths and weaknesses of the existing methods employed for the management of the conflict in the state. In addition, interviews were conducted with the various stakeholders on what should be done in terms of reviewing the existing management methods with a view to making them more effective and applicable in the state, to curb re-occurrence of such conflicts. Pictures of selected interviewers were taken and their voices were recorded for onward transcription and empirical analysis. The researcher personally conducted in-depth interviews with all the purposively selected interviewers, but was assisted by research assistants, who are familiar with the conflict, language and the terrain of the study area. One moderator and two research assistants facilitated the process of data collection during each interview which lasted between 60 to 80 minutes.

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3.5.2. Focus Group Discussion

In order to gather group opinions as relate to the conflict, four (4) Focus Group Discussions were conducted with those who were familiar with the conflict. The respondents were mainly the community leaders, the farmers and the heads of the Fulani herdsmen. Each session of the FGDs comprised of 12 persons and lasted between 70 and 80 minutes. The FGDs were used to gather qualitative robust data that could buttress the key informant interviews and the questionnaires. A pre-determined discussion guide was used to address some objectives of the study. Data from the FGDs were recorded manually and electronically. One moderator and two research assistants facilitated the process of data collection in each FGD.

3.5.3. Questionnaire

Human beings are the primary source of information in every kind of investigation and thus, the fieldwork involved the administration of questionnaire, collection of data and analysis of the findings of the study. Respondents were randomly selected from purposively selected communities across the three local government areas which cut across the three senatorial zones of the state. The target population included pastoralists and farmers, community leaders and security agents. One hundred (100) copies of questionnaire were distributed for this research in each of the communities visited. The sampling was not based on the proportion of the local government population rather on equality of local government. Each respondent was given a copy of the questionnaire to fill and return. In all, a total copy of 500 structured and open-ended questionnaires were administered on the studied population of which 480 were retrieved for validation. The choice of questionnaire was based on its suitability for generating comparably and quantifiable data covering a wider population within a short period of time. In support of this approach, Surridge (2002:46) submits that despite its weaknesses, quantitative data is particularly good at identifying commonalities amongst individuals and at characterizing the social positions occupied by individuals. The questionnaire consisted of two sections in accordance with the objectives of the study.

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The first section of the questionnaire was designed to elicit information on respondents' personal characteristics such as sex, ethnic group, religion affiliation, age, marital status, educational qualification and occupation. The second section was designed to provide information needed in analyzing the questions in the research. The researcher was on ground to explain necessary instructions to respondents where needed to make the population more accessible at the grass root level. The questionnaires were explained orally to those who did not understand some of the asked questions. The literate ones were able to accept and fill the questionnaire on their own, while it was read and explained to the illiterates who accepted to participate in the study and their responses were immediately filled by the researcher in the presence of the respondents.

3.6. Procedure for data collection

The researcher went to the field with a letter of introduction from the Director of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan. The letter was first, presented to the adviser to Benue State governor on land and conflicts matters, who endorsed it to be taken to the various community leaders where the research was conducted. This was accepted by all the community leaders visited, also giving their candid cooperation.

3.7. Validity and reliability tests for research instruments

The validity of a research instrument depends on operational definition of concepts and its ability to measure what it is intended to measure (Vaus, 2002). Different dimensions of validity such as criterion validity, content validity, construct validity and face validity are crucial in the assessment of the validity of a research instrument. The research instruments of this study were subjected to the above mentioned dimensions of validity excluding criterion validity which is based on comparison of responses to the new measure of a concept with the existing measure of the concept. Criterion validity of the new measure is obtained for responses to the new and established measures for many concepts in the social sciences (Vaus, 2002). Understandably, the research instruments were standardized in the context of the applicability of content validity, construct validity and face validity.

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Drafts of the questionnaire were given to different scholars including sociologist and psychologists for inspection and comments in order to establish its face validity which implies a process of getting an approval of the panel of judges on the appropriateness of a research instrument. Also, the theories and conceptual framework of the study were thoroughly examined and linked with the questionnaire to ensure its construct validity which connotes how well a research instrument conforms to theoretical expectations. It has been established that construct validity is the most rigorous validity test. Nachmias and Nachmias (2007:142) disclose that construct validity involves relating a measuring instrument to an overall theoretical framework, in order to determine whether the instrument is tied to the concepts and theoretical assumptions that are employed. In accordance with the above statement, some indicators of measuring social capital including frequency of talking, helping and shared activities as shown by Vaus (2002) and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) questionnaire developed by Francis *et al.*, (2004) were adapted to provide a benchmark for the study. The TPB questionnaire was exposed to the study given the following methodological assurance:

> With the exception of behaviour, the variables in the TPB model are psychological (internal) constructs. Each predictor variable may be measured directly by asking respondents about their overall attitude or indirectly by asking respondents about specific behavioural beliefs and outcome evaluations. Direct and indirect measurement approaches make different assumptions about the underlying cognitive structures and neither approach is perfect. When different methods are tapping the same construct, scores are expected to be positively correlated, so, it is recommended that both be included. In general, the methods used to measure intentions should be guided by researchers' judgements about which types of questions seem to make sense for the behaviour and sample under investigation (Francis *et al.*, 2004:9-10).

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Following the establishment of its validity, the questionnaire was pretested for reliability, comprehension and clarity. A sample of 30 respondents selected randomly from the study population was used for the pre-test and the results of the pre-test showed a high reliability coefficient. Subsequently, the questionnaire including both open-ended and closed ended questions was utilised for quantitative data collection from all the selected respondents. The questionnaire was divided into two sections based on the objectives of the study. To move beyond the questionnaire for a deep probing into the study with a desire to strengthen the weakness of the dominant quantitative approach based on a positive paradigm, KIIs and FGDs were employed in the process of gathering qualitative data from community(s), religious and political leaders as well as security agents. The respondents for KIIs and FGDs were purposively selected based on their experiences on the conflict, convenience, availability and consent.

3.8. Ethical consideration

The process of data collection for the study was guided by the following social sciences research ethics: honesty, beneficence, justice, safety, respect for persons, informed consent, anonymity, privacy and confidentiality. In the course of data collection for the study, ethical concerns such as the principle of informed consent (obtaining the consent of participants after having carefully and truthfully informed them about the study), the right to privacy and confidentiality (protecting the identity of the participants) and protection from any harm were considered. All the participants were informed and allowed to freely decide to participate or refuse to participate in the study. They were reminded that participation was voluntary and they could withdraw from the study at any point if necessary. Also, all the participants were told that their privacy and confidentiality would be respected and protected before, during and after the study. Participants in the KIIs and FGDs were allowed to accept or reject the use of tape recorder during their discussions.

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3.9. Data management and analysis

Data from the KIIs and FGDs were transcribed verbatim from field notes and camera recordings while data from the questionnaire were scrutinized, coded, entered and processed through the use of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) tool. The raw qualitative data including non-verbal responses were translated into English and included in the transcription. Descriptive technique was used for the analysis of quantitative data while content analysis and ethnographic summaries were conducted for the analysis of the qualitative data obtained from KIIs and FGDs. The analyses of both quantitative and qualitative data were integrated for robust interpretation of findings.

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CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and discussion of the study. The presentation includes the results of both qualitative and quantitative data. Content analysis and ethnographies summaries were used to present the results of qualitative data while descriptive and inferential statistics such as frequency distribution were used to present the results of quantitative data. Both results were integrated to facilitate their discussion.

4.1. Findings

Findings are presented in line with the study objectives for clarity and easy accessibility. Necessary inferences are drawn from some of the findings in light of theoretical framework of the study while observed similarities and differences between the present study and extant literature are reconciled using appropriate sociological explanation.

4.1.1. Socio-economic demographic characteristics of pastoralists and farmers' conflict

In order to gain more insight into the characteristics of the respondents, demographic information was elicited from them in the first seven items of the questionnaires. Out of the four hundred and eighty respondents that completed the questionnaire, 273(56.9%) were males while 207(43.1%) were females. This shows that male respondents were considerably more than female respondents were. Below is the table of distribution of respondents by sex.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	273	56.9
Female	207	43.1
Total	480	100

Table 4.1 Distribution of respondents by sex

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More of the respondents fall within the 40-49 age range with 150(31.3%) of them belonging to this category. Following this category are those who are within the 30-39 age range with 90(18.8%) in this category. Those between the age range of 20-29 with 80(16.7%) of them followed the above group; 76(15.8%) respondents are of the age range of 50-59. Those between the age range of 69 and above 55(11.4%) followed. Finally, respondents between the age ranges of 10-19 are the least with 29(6.0%). However, it should be noted that the higher concentration of respondents comes from the age bracket of 40-49 and 30-39 age group. This could be attributed to the most potent virile and active group in terms of both confrontation and active demonstration. Below is the table of respondents by age.

Age	Frequency	Percentage
10-19 years	29	6.0
20-29 years	80	16.7
30-39 years	90	18.8
40-49 years	150	31.3
50-59 years	76	15.8
60-above	55	11.4
Total	480	100

Table 4.2 Distribution of respondents by age

It can be seen from table 4.3 below that respondents have varying levels of qualification. Respondents with primary education qualification have the highest percentage with 150(31.3%), followed by those with secondary school qualification having 121(25.2%). Tertiary education certificate holders are 109(22.7%) respondents while 100(20.8%) respondents never went to school. Thus, it is important to note that majority of the respondents are educated. Below is the table of respondents by level of education.

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Level of education	Frequency	Percentage
No formal education	100	20.8
Primary education	150	31.3
Secondary education	121	25.2
Tertiary	109	22.7
Total	480	100

Table 4.3 Distribution of respondents by level of education

Table 4.4 below shows that respondents who are married have the highest percentage with 293(61.0%), 146(30.4%) are single while those who are either divorced or widowed are 34(7.1%) and 7(1.4%) respectively.

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	146	30.4
Married	293	61.0
Divorced	34	7.1
Widowed	7	1.4
Total	480	100

Table 4.4 Distribution of respondents by marital status

From the fifth table below, respondents who practice farming as occupation have the highest percentage with 246(51.2%). Respondents who are involved in pastoralism with 119 follow this (24.8%). Civil servants are 53(11.0%), business men/women are 37(7.7%), artisan are 19(4.0%), while respondents in other occupation are 6, representing 1.3% of the population.

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Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Farming	246	51.2
Pastoralism	119	24.8
Civil servant	53	11.0
Business men/women	37	7.7
Artisan	19	4.0
Others	6	1.3
Total	480	100

Table 4.5 Distribution of respondents by occupation

From the table below, respondents who practice Christianity as religion have the highest percentage with 303(63.1%). Next to this are those who practice Islamic religion numbering 109(22.7%); 37(7.7%) practice traditional religion while 31 representing (6.4%) do not practice any religion. This indicates that majority of the respondents are Christian and this proves the fact that Tiv people are predominantly Christians.

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Islam	109	22.7
Christianity	303	63.1
Traditional religion	37	7.7
None	31	6.4
Total	480	100

Table 4.6 Distribution of respondents by religion

The Tiv speaking ethnic group have the highest percentage with 227(47.3%), 128(26.7%) are respondents who belong to the Idoma speaking ethnic group with 81(16.9%) respondents belonging to the Fulani/Hausa ethnic group. In addition, 31(6.4%) respondents belong to the Jukun ethnic group while 13(2.7%) belong to other ethnic groups within the communities. Below is the table showing participation of respondents.

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Ethnic group	Frequency	Percentage
Tiv	227	47.3
Idoma	128	26.7
Fulani/Hausa	81	16.9
Jukun	31	6.4
Others	13	2.7
Total	480	100

Table 4.7 Distribution of respondents by ethnic group

4.1.2. The question of the real owner of the land and occurrence of pastoralists and farmers' conflict in Benue State

Owners of the land	Frequency	Percentage
Pastoralists	27	5.6
Farmers	453	94.4
Total	480	100

Table 4.8 Distribution of respondents on owner of the land

It was gathered from both parties (the farmers and pastoralists) in the conflict during the research that the Tiv and the Idoma who are mainly the farmers are the real owner of the land. In essence, they were the first settler in the communities. As indicated in the table above, farmers have the highest percentage with 453(94.4) while the pastoralists have only 27(5.6). This was concurred to by a community leader during a focus group discussion that:

> Their ancestors acquired this land through conquest and early settlement as virgin land in the past. The Fulani pastoralists who later came to the communities, acquired some portion from them through allocation, or were allotted some portion to settle and use for the grazing of their animals (community leader, FGD).

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A good example of conquest occurred in Ado local government area, particularly in Agila, one of the visited communities and in Gbajimba and Katsina-Ala where the elders stated clearly that the piece of land which the entire community settled on, was acquired by conquest. This explained why they always protect the land and do not allow evaders, not even the Fulani pastoralists to claim ownership of the land. Besides, their major occupation is farming and as such, they would not allow the pastoralists to wander about with their animals, to avoid destruction and damage of crops and other farm products. In essence, the question whether both the farmers and pastoralists have the right to pasture or farm anywhere in the community was answered in the negative. Both parties asserted that land is an inalienable gift of God to man and all human beings (including the Fulani pastoralists), having been equally created, are entitled and has the right to use it. The Tiv as well as the Idoma farmers maintained the rights of ownership of the land, and so, have the right to reject or allot a portion to the Fulani pastoralists. The portion of land that is given to a Fulani pastoralist is determined by the size of his herds. In all the areas visited, it was asserted that there are district heads and community leaders who control the affairs of the community. That is, it is the sole responsibility of the community leader and his chiefs to administer land to the Fulani pastoralists. In other words, not everybody has the right to apportion land in the community.

The above statement led to the question of how many Fulani groups were in Agila then. The community leaders named four, they were, Alhaji Aowudu, Alhaji Jakari, Alhaji Musa and Alhaji Mamodu, father to Aowudu. Asked if there was a cordial relationship between the Fulani and the farmers before now, one of the elders in Focus Group Discussion affirmed this by saying that:

> Both the Agila farmers and the Fulani pastoralists have lived together in peace for a very long time until a dispute happened not quite long. It was reported that a Fulani herdsman beat a little boy to a state of coma in the bush and the Agila people reacted and the particular group of Fulani was expelled from the community. Since then,

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> there has been a relative peace in the Agila community (community and Fulani leaders, FGD).

The above finding is compatible with Dafinger and Pelican (2002) study that, in exploring the question of land rights, the farmers are regarded as 'the landed group' which means those who claim ownership over the land and exercise political rights over it. On the contrary, the pastoralists/herders are referred to as 'the landless group', that is, those who do not own the land they use or settled on. Consequently, the extent of pastoral powerlessness manifested in landlessness among pastoralists in the region, and within the context of the contemporary political economy of land use. According to Leonard and Longbottom (2004:43):

> Pastoralists in West Africa dry lands have little legally recognised tenure security over their traditional grazing lands. In many countries, pastoralism is not legally recognised as a productive use of the land and consequently, pastoral lands have been subjected to expropriation by the state and marginalised in favour of agricultural use.

In essence, scarcity of land or their high contentions make the pastoralists who constitute the landless and powerless group disadvantaged. Baba (1986:62) concurs to this when he observes that land use conflict between arable farming and pastoralism is a systematic one resulting from differences in the perception of land resources, the institutional tools for utilising the land resource base and the very process of land utilisation between the two systems of production. While these broad factors taken individually or collectively are all necessary explanatory variables in understanding farmers and pastoralists conflict not only in Nigeria, but West Africa generally, some have argued that the tendency to think that a specific kind of conflict is about poverty or environment or ethnicity is fundamentally flawed (Ohlsson, 2003:26). According to him, there is the urgent need to incorporate sets of explanation built on several factors which include environment, poverty, ethnicity to mention but a few, into a common framework by concentrating on the necessity of livelihoods; poverty may be a close mark endemic condition in certain societies. Loss of livelihoods however, marks a rapid

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transition from a previously stable condition of relative welfare into a situation of poverty or destitution. In turn, such losses of livelihoods are caused by environmental degradation.

Occurrence of the conflict	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	480	100
No	None	None
Total	480	100

Table 4.9 Distribution of respondents on the occurrence of the conflict

The question whether conflict between pastoralists and farmers has occurred and was rampant in the state in general and the local governments in particular was answered in the affirmative. This could be seen in the table above where all the respondents answered yes, that is, 480(100%) to the issue of the occurrence of the conflict between the pastoralists and farmers in the state. In addition, an informant concurred to this when he stated thus:

> Since the introduction of this office in the state, it has received and treated more than 4000 cases not only of conflict between farmers and pastoralists, but including land disputes. He noted that most of these cases are from Guma, Ado, Katsina-Ala, Vandeikya, Gwer West, Ushongo and Ukum local government areas of the state (political leader, KII).

He equally enumerated the various crises which they have experienced in recent times. Some of the crises reported were: the pastoralists-farmers' conflict in Mbagwen in Guma local government area and the pastoralists and farmers' conflict in Agila, Ado local government area. The informant also stated that apart from the conflict between the farmers and pastoralists, there were several communal crisis in the state, some include; the Ikyurav Tyiev crisis with the Shitile districts in Katsina–Ala local government area; the recent communal crisis between Tiv people in Taraba State and the Jukun that extended right to Katsina-Ala local government area; the Agila disputes

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with the Ibo people of Ebonyi State; the Igumale and Agila all of Ado local government area, the Kaambe of Guma local government area, conflict with Mbakor of Tarka local government area to mention but a few.

A Deputy Vice Chairman of a local government area as well as the adviser to the local government on security issues maintained that, within two (2) years of their administration, over hundred (100) cases relating to pastoralists and farmers' conflict have been received and attended to in the local government. He said during the interview:

> In fact, the reason why you have not been able to see me all these days was that, I have been involved in settling a conflict between a Fulani pastoralist and a Tiv farmer in Mbagwen, one of the districts in my domain where a Fulani was reported to have killed a Tiv man (political leader, KII).

Also, a religious leader adduced that:

> Since my resumption as the religious leader of this community about two (2) years ago, I have witnessed almost fifty different cases of conflicts. It is between either pastoralists and farmers or boundary disputes and at times, land disputes (religious leader, KII).

The religious leaders on their part stated that, they have contributed towards managing and resolving the conflict in their respective domain, however differently, but in similarity, they offered prayers for the victims (quick recovery of the wounded and the happy repose of the dead); construction of schools, hospitals and for ceasefire. Relief materials were also provided to the people.

4.1.3. Causes of the pastoralists and farmers' conflict in Benue State

From the information gathered during the interview, all the respondents were of the view that this conflict is common in the state. The position was confirmed and recapped by the adviser to the governor on land and boundary resolution thus:

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> Pastoralists and farmers' conflict cum land disputes in Benue State are very rampant. This is particularly in the Tiv and Idoma speaking areas, mainly because they are predominantly farmers who depend largely on agriculture and who would not tolerate any form of intrusion from the Fulani pastoralists. Since my assumption of office, over 4000 cases of conflicts between not only pastoralists and farmers, but also communal disputes, have been received by this office and almost half of these cases are from Guma, Katsina-Ala, Vandeikya, Gwer West and Ado local government areas (Political leader, KII).

The following are some of the causes of the conflict between the pastoralists and farmers as gathered from respondents during the research.

Causes of the conflict	Frequency	Percentage
Crop damage	283	59.0
Drought and water scarcity	23	4.8
Activities of young pastoralists	31	6.5
Bush burning	7	1.5
Ownership and usage of land	19	4.0
Lack of confidence in the judiciary	25	5.2
Unemployment	15	3.1
The role of the elites/chiefs	27	5.6
Inability of the govt to deal with crisis effectively	26	5.4
Problem of erosion	13	2.7
Problem of integration	11	2.2
Total	480	100

Table 4.10 Distribution of respondents for the causes of pastoralists and farmers conflict

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(a). Crop damage

It was evident that one of the major causes of conflict between the two groups was damage of farmers' crops by animals of pastoralists (Fulani). An informant affirmed this by stating that:

> Both the Tiv and the Idoma are predominantly farmers who cherish and depend largely on agriculture for their sustenance and livelihood. Thus, they will not tolerate any intruder who wants to encroach on their land, or allow any Fulani's herds to destroy their farm products when grazing. In essence, the major cause for this crisis is destruction of farmlands and crops by cattle (political leader, KII).

Asked if there have been conflict between the two groups of recent, he answered in the affirmative. Some security agents affirmed the re-occurrence of the conflict in their respective communities and traced it down to destruction of crops by the cattle and the reaction of the farmers is always offensive. An informant stated that:

> The Fulani attacks innocent farmers on their way to the farm having smoked marijuana and got drunk (security agent-farmer, FGD).

However, a Fulani security agent differed on this opinion by asserting that:

> It was the farmers who normally insult them (that is, the Fulani) first by calling them names such as '*bigol*' telling them that they are animalistic in nature. Since they would not accept such names, the Fulani therefore respond quickly by attacking the farmers, and not that, they were neither drunk nor taken over doze of marijuana (security agent-pastoralist, FGD).

On how the conflict was carried out, securities from both sides maintained that

> Arms, machetes and ammunitions were often used (farmers and pastoralists, FGD).

In another interview, an informant noted:

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> It is always difficult for the little herdsmen to control the large herds of animals during grazing. Thus, while they are behind, they would not see what the animals are grazing on in the front and while they are in front, it is always impossible for them to know what is going on behind. In addition, the animals are not human beings and as such, cannot differentiate between weeds and crops, therefore, would graze on every grass they come across (Fulani leader, KII).

From information gathered from respondents (59%) 283, the damage often attracted quick reactions from the farmers, either in form of litigation or open clashes. Most of the clashes take place during the dry season which is also the farming period. At this time, the Fadama pastures were the only viable grazing resource. Most of the traditional cattle routes with water were already encroached upon, making it impossible for the pastoralists to have access to water. This correspond with what Abdullahi (2005) says that the land area that was supposed to be reserved for grazing purposes in the northeast was four hundred and thirty thousand acres, but only one hundred and sixty three acres was actually devoted to grazing. He further explains that out of that total, 30% was already being cultivated; out of the remaining 70%, 33% was also partially encroached on by the farmers.

Moreover, because of commercialisation of production, even the traditional areas for grazing by pastoralists were eventually taken over by the farmers. Thus, one of the reasons why the pastoralists inevitably damaged crops was the inefficient management of the limited resources, mostly land, by the local government and traditional institutions. They appeared not to sanction farmers who worked on grazing areas, knowing that violent conflict between the farmers and the pastoralists was the result of their conspiracy with the farmers. Sometimes, the traditional rulers appear helpless when it concerned government officials (Williams, *et al.*, 1999:204).

The rising level of competition between farmers and herders is regarded to develop out of several factors, which are not limited to agricultural encroachment and the political powerlessness of herders in the postcolonial state. This issue has been

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vividly illustrated in the works of Marty (1972, quoted in Hussein, 1998:41), which shows that pastoralists always feel threatened by agricultural colonisation. This displacement goes on continuously without hindrance because the farmers are perceived by the pastoralists to be in close alliance with the state, thereby rendering the pastoralists powerless. He also argues that when conflict occurs between farmers and pastoralists, the state arbitration structures only pay attention to the farmers, thus, abandoning the pastoralists to their fate, making them as helpless and defenceless victims. The extent of pastoral political powerlessness is best illustrated by the testimony among some pastoralists during the interview. They stated that rules governing the trespass of animals are made and enforced by farmers with an inherent bias against pastoralists. According to them, when passing judgments on conflict between farmers and pastoralists, the judges always say that, 'it is the cattle that move to meet the farm; it is not the farms that move to meet the cattle'. This entails that in development policy, the pastoralists are often criminalised as causing the conflict. Traore and Lo (1996) argue differently that it also makes sense to think of 'straying fields' into grazing lands to describe a situation in which the agriculturalists are causing the conflict and not the herders. For Abba and Usman (2008:175), this is a question of power and in the contemporary era which pastoralists lack badly. Below is a picture of cassava plantation damaged by pastoralists' herds that led to a conflict in one of the communities visited during the research.

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Plate 1. A cassava plantation destroyed by grazing animals which led to a conflict in one of the communities.

Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

(b). Drought and water scarcity

Pastoralists have experienced debilitating and recurring droughts. An inspection of the transition zone between the Sahel and the Guinea Savannahs reveals that incessant drought leads to crop failures and water scarcities. Periodic droughts take a heavy toll on the animals. This finding resonates with Stenning (1995) submission that during droughts, animals die from thirst, hunger and exhaustion. In an article in the *National Geographic* titled 'An age-old challenge grows,' Gore (1979) writes that in 1968 alone, the Sahelian drought claimed a quarter million people and a million animals. Droughts make rain-fed farmers to expand their farms into cultivable sylo-pastoral land, thus, displacing the pastoralists. An informant noted that:

> Frequent droughts have forced the Fulani to move into the southern tsetse infested region. To counter natural and artificial disasters, the pastoralists engage in frequent movement and resource circulation and during this process, their cattle destroy the farm products which the farmers find difficult to bear. This often leads to serious

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conflict between the farmers and the pastoralists (Community leader, KII).

This information was also the view of twenty three (23) respondents which comprises 4.8% of the total number of the respondents. This is a key factor in the conflict between pastoralists and farmers. According to Scoones (1995:2), farmers and pastoralists' conflict is likely to be most acute in the semi arid zone with 500-750mm average rainfall per year. Abba and Usman (2008:172) note that this zone falls between the arid lands where only livestock based production systems are possible and the more humid zones can support livestock production systems. The semi arid region of Africa lies between the Sahara and the Sudanian zone including most parts of West Africa. This region is said to favour contact between crop farmers and pastoralists as it is favourable for both finding new pastures and expanding crop cultivation (Bernus, 1974, quoted in Abba and Usman, 2008:172). Abba and Usman referring to the works of Bennet (1991) point further that, one vital environmental features of the semi arid region which has impacts on the livelihood strategies of both crop and livestock farmers is the low level and unpredictability of rainfall, characterised by short rainy season and recurrent cycles of drought and famine. According to Brown and Crawford (2008:viii) climate change is not a new phenomenon in Africa. West Africa in general and the Middle Belt of Nigeria in particular, are characterised by some of the most variable climates on the planet. Going further, Brown and Crawford aptly observe that climate variability in the region appears to have become acute in the 20th century with a period of unusually high rainfall from the 1930s to the 1950s, followed by an extended cycle of drought for the next three decades. In most parts of West Africa, the 1968-74 Sahelian drought and famine in particular had a devastating effect which decimated both human and livestock populations, and also provoked mass migration of human and livestock population across the region (Abba and Usman, 2008:172).

Nevertheless, serious consequences on resource use competition and conflict in the region became completely altered due to the existing pattern of human and livestock population movements. For instance, according to Moorehead (1989), conflict between farmers and pastoralists in Mali's Niger River delta started to occur when the delta became drier and local farmers begun cultivating deeper parts of the delta including

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stock routes leading to the flood plains. Consequently, pastoralists took to crop damaging measures that make conflict out of the frustration that farmers are overtaking their grazing zones. Besides, according to Breusers *et al.*, (1998), the droughts that took place in the 1970s and 1980s not only led to an increase in competition over natural resources between farmers and pastoralists due to what they called a 'saturation of space', but it also resulted in a breakdown in the balance between the two groups. They contend that since the droughts, the two production systems have increasingly gathered, with farmers engaging in cattle breeding and pastoralists in agriculture. This led to the disappearance of both ecological and economic complementarities between the two groups.

(c). Activities of young pastoralists

The conflict between farmers and pastoralists could also be based on the violent activities of a group of young pastoralists who rear cattle without being accompanied by older people. This group of young armed herders damage crops intentionally usually at night and attack any farmer who tried to prevent them. These immature young pastoralists beat and at times, killed farmers in the process. The problem usually arose as to how to identify them, since they move away as soon as they commit this atrocity, and the older innocent cattle pastoralists become the unfortunate victims of retaliation by the farmers. The district heads of Agila in Ado Local Government Area and Gbajimba, in Guma Local Government Area, at different times during focus group discussion, narrated incidents of how a group of young pastoralists killed farmers who approached them of destruction of their farm properties. According to the district heads:

> This was the cause of the clash between their followers who are mainly farmers and the pastoralists whom the societies have been accommodating for a long period (community leader, FGD)

Even the leaders of the Fulani in the communities agreed that:

> The major problem facing them was the irresponsible activities of these young pastoralists. Thus, the leaders of both parties in these communities met and agreed to outlaw the group. As such, no pastoralist was supposed to

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> move or migrate without his or her families, and anyone found guilty of such crimes would be banished from the community (Fulani leader, FGD).

Thirty one (31) respondents which represent 6.5% of the total figure affirmed this opinion. Below is a picture of the researcher with a very young pastoralist and other pictures of people killed by these young pastoralists (though not this little boy).

Plate 2. The researcher in a photograph with a little pastoralist.
Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

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Plate 3. A picture of a young boy killed during the conflict.
Source: Gotten during the research, 2010.

Plate 4. A photograph of a woman killed during the conflict; with her hands and legs cut off (an aunt to the young boy above). They were both killed on their way to the farm.
Source: Gotten during the research, 2010.

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Plate 5. A photograph of another woman butchered to dead during a conflict.
Source: Gotten during the research, 2010.

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(d). Bush burning

Bush burning is also another cause of pastoralists and farmers' conflict. This practice was widely used by farmers, but the pastoralists did not like this practice. Interviews with both groups revealed that bush burning served several purposes. For the farmers, bush burning facilitate fast clearing of the remains of previous season's crop residues on the field. It also destroys the hideouts of the rodents that damaged farm crops. From the point of the pastoralists, bush burning was an intentional act to prevent animals from eating crop residue. Apart from bush burning, the pastoralists complained that wood and grass cutters colluded with the farmers to carry out extensive wood grass cutting for commercial reasons, and that the practice greatly reduced browsing and fodder available for the pastoralists. The most annoying thing to the pastoralists was that, the grass cutting from grazing reserves was resold to them at very high prices. Few respondents (1.5%) 7 were of this view compared to other causes.

(e). Ownership and usage of land

In conflict situation, land is considered a vital issue. Since the major occupation of the people in this region is farming, the need to acquire and use land for farming purposes has therefore been at the root of several conflicts in this region. This has

always been the case between the farmers and pastoralists. This is obviously against the background of the fact that the Tiv who are mainly farmers are particularly agrarian in nature and go to great lengths to carve out virgin areas for the development of farmland. Crisis of this nature is usually of two styles, either with other agrarian tribes like the Jukun or because of competition with Fulani who practice cattle grazing. This trend is clear in Opene Commission as states by Alubo (2006) that the 2001 crisis in Wukari Area of Taraba State between the Tiv and the Fulani was sparked off by the action of Fulani herdsmen who led their cattle into the beni-seed farm of a Tiv farmer, Mr. Iortimin Umande on 13th May, 2001 and subsequently killed him following his protest of the invasion.

Speaking generally on conflict situation in the state, all the security agents maintained that pastoralists and farmers' crisis are very rampant in the state due to ownership and usage of land. They stated further that:

> This was particularly in the rural and remote areas where level of education and mutual understanding is still very low. Pastoralists sometimes attempt to exceed the plot of land given them while the farmers on the other hand, always fight hard to protect their land and farm products since they value farming so much. By so doing, they sometimes engage one another in battles or wars (security agents, KII).

An informant during a focus group discussion established the fact that:

> Abuse of hospitality and backstabbing is the major factor responsible for this conflict in the state. According to him, Benue people in the olden days gave land freely to the Fulani pastoralists who migrated from different areas and other states to settle and pasture their animals. After sometime, most of these Fulani pastoralists started claiming ownership of the land and the community. Some of them have even extended their parcels beyond what

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> was given to them. The fighting is now persistent in order to send the 'strangers' packing (community leader, FGD).

Another reason attributed to the frequent crises was that, both the farmers and the pastoralists depend largely on land and agriculture for their sustenance and livelihood. Thus, struggles over grazing land fermented troubles that precipitated to violence. A religious leader noted that:

> The Tiv who are mostly farmers have had several violent conflict which involved fighting and bloodletting between them and Fulani nomads over grazing land. Due to the strong value and the importance of grazing land (pasturing, settlement and others), the quest for ownership by the two groups degenerated to violent conflict (religious leader, KII).

This factor was affirmed by 4.0% (19) respondents. The conflict led to the displacement of people from their homes and loss of family ties. In Agila, Ado local government area, the religious leaders reported how Fulani herdsmen who raided the community killed a women and her nephew. Other similar stories were told of scores of deaths in other places visited like Gbajimba and Katsina-Ala. The pictures below depict the researcher with some religious leaders during the interviews.

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Plate 6. The researcher in a photograph with the co-coordinator of JDPC, Catholic diocese of Otukpo, (Rev. Fr. John Attah) who was involved in peace making process during a crisis and also distributed relief materials to victims of the conflict.
Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

Plate 7. The researcher in a photograph with Rev. Fr. Joseph Itodo, a religious leader who was in one of the communities during the crisis and played a vital role in the settlement of the conflict between the farmers and the Fulani, but he is now the Catholic Cathedral Administrator in Otukpo.
Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

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Plate 8. The researcher with Rev. Fr. Adole Alhaji, a religious leader in one of the communities visited, after an interview with him.
Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

(f). Problem of integration

It was inferred from 2.2% (11) of the respondents that this is another cause of the conflict in their communities. This corresponds with Mahdi (1986) opinion that the pastoralists have long been an integral part of economy and society in not only the central region but largely in Nigeria and some parts of West Africa. However, unlike other groups, they always have difficulty in integration. They experience a degree and rejection in the hands of host communities (Baba, 1987). Due to their mobile and nomadic life styles, the nomads have no permanent abode, but wander from place to place according to the dictates of the seasons (Abubakar, 1977). It is in the course of these seasonal migrations that they collide with the farmers who find difficulty in watching their farm crops been destroyed by the animals. To the farmers in these communities, land is a heritage, a sacred trust and source of their means of livelihood that must be protected, especially when it is harbouring their crops even at the point of death. According to Gyuse and Oga (2006), the Fulani have constituted a menace to the farming community. They state:

> During the clashes between the farmers and the unwanted visitors, weapons ranging from guns to swords, spears,

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> bows and arrows freely deplored. They are believed to be the nomadic cattle rearers mostly from the neighbouring (sic) Niger Republic, perennially move across the country from north to south and vice versa, depending on the season. They carry their cattle through farmlands and eat up whatever is on their way. This normally ends up in bloody bearing charms and then (sic) invincible. Their mere mention sends terror in the minds of the villagers and farmers. At times, they even rape women and cart away foodstuffs. This is always a nightmare (Gyuse and Oga, 2006).

For the nomads, the same land is not only a grazing ground for their animals, but a claimed defined route for their seasonal nomadic migrations. This unavoidable interaction often leads to serious animosity with a consequence of violence and outright breach of law and order.

(g). Lack of confidence in the judicial system and delay in response

In a situation whereby corruption is the order of the day, the criminal justice procedure does not take into cognisance, the justice act of victimology where a victim of a crime becomes entitled to proper and appropriate compensation for any damage done to him. It is a common saying that 'justice delayed is justice denied'. As such, the prolonged delay by the courts in passing judgments in some cases over conflict between pastoralist and farmer and even land disputes, has not gone well with the people. Thus, the average farmer does not have confidence on the modern court system. The researcher gathered from an informant that:

> The people most often fight because they expect a quick resolution, intervention, identification and prosecution of culprits; thus, any delay for obvious reasons on the part of the court is regarded as connivance by the people, hence, the need to fight as a means of self help (community leader, KII).

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Some key interview informants also stated during an FGD that court judgments are often ignored because, in the view of the people, the judgments do not reflect their desires and aspirations. The judges according to some interviewees are often bias as some are always interested in the cases in one way or the other. An elder stated thus:

> Rights to ownership of the community are determined on peculiar land traits, history and lineage, and not by scientific perceptions by the courts. Thus, the people conceive such judgments as victory to the victors, and the need to reject such judgments and challenge the victorious or successful communities become eminent (community leader, FGD).

Zakari and Umar (2006) affirm this in their writing that farmers report most of the cases brought to courts and the pastoralists are hardly prosecuted and even in the event where prosecution is instituted, the farmers hardly get commensurate compensation for damages meted unto their farms. The farmers are thus, pushed to a frustrating limit. Due to their narrow knowledge of the law, they resort to instituting justice by out-rightly assaulting the pastoralists who attack their farms. With a counter attack from pastoralists, serious conflicts are usually let loose and lives and properties are colossally lost.

In addition, the exorbitant charges by legal practitioners have worsened matters. The less privileged in these communities therefore, are not comfortable as their financial positions are so precarious so much so that they cannot even pay the required fees and charges, nor secure the services of legal practitioners. For instance, a retired police officer maintained during a discussion as follows:

> It is almost five years now since I retired and my pension has not been paid and nothing is given to me. I have moved down to my village and I have nothing to live on, and cannot even afford to secure the services of a lawyer in case of any dispute over my farm products because of the high charges. Therefore, we prefer the old traditional

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> systems of disputes settlement to the court settlement, because it is cheaper and convenient for us (farmer, FGD).

A pastoralist also concurred to the above statement in a separate Focus Group Discussion when he stated thus:

> Some of us have been deceived into believing that the court can easily resolve our problems, but we have found out that it does not, and the price they charge is too high. We, therefore, prefer the indigenous methods to this so-called English method (FGD, pastoralist).

In this sense, both parties (that is, the farmers and the pastoralists) resort to self-help, which is, fighting. In addition, 5.2% (25) of the respondents were of the view that lack of confidence in the judicial system is really another contributing factor of this conflict.

Plate 9. The researcher in a photograph with a community leader and two Fulani leaders after an interview with them, in one of the communities visited.

Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

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(h). Unemployment

It was noticed during the research from key informant discussants through FGDs and interviews that the state lacks a lot of development infrastructure and this leads to various kinds of conflicts in the state. The youths are highly affected by this factor due to the high unemployment rate resulting from lack of industries as well as small and medium scale businesses. As affirmed by a youth of about 37 years in Igumale (Ado local government area) during an FGD:

> We are angry and idle and therefore, have to fight just to receive small amounts of money and other gifts from elite and politicians (youth leader, FGD).

A district head of Abinsin (Guma local government area) concurred with this when he stated:

> Look around me; I have five (5) wives and many children. They are all here with me. Some are even graduates while others are through with their secondary schools but none of them has a job. I can see that you (the researcher) is a young boy and have gone far in education because your people are able to sponsor you, but I cannot sponsor any of them further. Therefore, if you can take some of these of my children with you to your place and offer them jobs, I will be very grateful (community leader, FGD).

The elders emphatically maintained that the trend would continue, if the economy of Benue State does not improve so that the youths can desist from such atrocities and be gainfully employed. Also, 3.1% (15) respondents affirmed this view.

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Plate 10. The researcher with a youth leader after an interview with him
Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

(i). The role of the elites/chiefs in conflict situation

The elites and chiefs in Benue State are reported to have played significant roles by fuelling all sorts of conflicts in the state. Their role as one of the causes of conflict between the farmers and pastoralists was confirmed by an informant during an interview. He stated thus:

> Most chiefs, districts heads as well as leaders of pastoral groups have promoted conflict between the farmers and pastoralists but were not punished for their crimes. The state government has not been able to deal with them decisively by melting out any punishment (political leader, KII).

Affirming this, 5.6% (27) of the respondents which made up the study figure expressed their fears concerning this issue. According to them, this inability on the part of the government has tended to encourage the chiefs, the Fulani herdsmen' leaders and the various farm group leaders to settle their differences through the 'illegal combating' instead of resorting to the law for help and thus, conflict is abound to occur.

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(j). Inability of the government to deal with crisis situation promptly and effectively

During the interviews and discussions, the people attributed and castigated government for partly responsible for most of the conflicts in the state by not responding promptly, and if they do, not effective enough. In the first instance, the people blamed the government for not releasing or publishing the decisions and white papers of judicial commissions of inquiry set during such conflicts in the state. A religious informant affirmed this when he stated that:

> The state government delay in intervening in the crises situations, and if they do, they send forces that do not make peace but shoot to kill even innocent people. Also, the government has not implemented most of the findings from the commission of enquiries constituted to look into most of these crises, besides not sending relief items to them (religious leader, KII).

The religious leader therefore, called on the three arms of government (that is, federal, state and local) to wake up to their responsibility.

The government was also blamed for not always releasing the Nigeria 'unequipped police team' on time, and that the team arrives at the scene most often when the situation is already out of hand, leading most at times to high death toll and massive destruction of property. Other issue discussed was the delay in identifying culprits of the conflict for proper punishment to serve as a deterrent to future troublemakers. An elder in Katsina-Ala local government decried during a community meeting that:

> Until this ugly trend is reverse by the government, all forms of conflict, being it communal, chieftaincy, land and farmers-pastoralists conflict in Benue State will never stop (elder, FGD).

It was also inferred from 5.4% (26) of the respondents that inability of the government to deal with crisis situation promptly and effectively often leads to the conflict in the state.

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(k). Problem of erosion

Erosion issue is also another contributing factor to the conflict in this region. This information was the view of thirteen (13) respondents which comprises 2.7% of the total number of the respondents. This is in resonate with Baba (1987) view that, with the increasing demand for land by farmers because of too much pressure and attendant erosion of soil fertility in an area where shifting cultivation or bush fallowing is not rampant, the areas hitherto demarcated as farmlands became over used and the farmers (being static occupants of the areas) were left with no other option than to extend their farming hoes to the more fertile ranching grounds, or migrating routes that were preserved for the pastoralists who are perceived as under utilizing those areas on seasonal part time bases. This situation has created a scenario where as the pastoralists migrate every season, they are confronted with the reality that their designated ranching grounds and migrating routes are seasonally converted into farmlands. Since the nomads lack the patience and necessary decorum for peaceful settlement through dialogue with community leaders, they revert to taking the law into their hands, thereby, rendering havoc on the farms with their animals. The farmers on their part cannot tolerate this rift, and this therefore, leads to conflict and total breakdown of law and order.

4.1.4. Assessing the methods of managing pastoralists and farmers' conflict in Benue State.

Methods	Frequency	Percentage
Informal or indigenous	353	73.5
Formal or court	127	26.5
Fighting/confrontation	None	None
Total	480	100

Table 4.11 Methods of resolving conflict

Oguntomisin (2004:1) once states that, peace is a *sine qua non* to political stability, socio economic development and societal well-being. It is regarded as the

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greatest desire of all human communities at all times. To underscore the universal desideratum, traditional and orthodox religions all over the world preach the gospel of peace. Religious brotherhoods and pseudo religious and mundane associations which had been organised in the past and persist in the present, aimed at ensuring inter-personal, inter racial, inter community, interstate and inter occupation relation. In keeping with the universal human wish for peace, various communities in Nigeria in the pre-colonial era so much valued peace that their institutions were built around it. Africans engaged in peace making in order to mitigate conflicts and maintain a state of equilibrium in their various communities. They made peace and resolved conflicts which threatened to tear societies apart, to restore order and harmonious relations.

In most of the communities visited and in the state (Benue) in general, the major aim of conflict resolution is to return individuals, families or groups already dislocated by conflict or war, to a state of equilibrium. Since it was not always possible for individuals, families, groups and even the warring parties in a conflict to resolve their conflict by themselves, resort was normally made to conventionally acceptable methods of peace making in the society. Though methods of managing and resolving conflict between farmers and pastoralists differ in the research areas, some of the people rely on the indigenous or informal methods why others adopt the formal or contemporary methods. The indigenous method includes *ela otumin* (mediation) *epo oloche* (traditional courts), *orka o' oka* (informal discussions) and *ojojira ko ole* (community meetings) while the formal method includes court of adjudication, arbitration, litigation and security agents. However, all the methods gear towards making peace and resolving conflict between warring parties.

On the issue of the methods adopted in resolving pastoralists and farmers' conflict in the state, the respondents were of the view that two methods are recognised while a third one is an illegal one. These are the formal method or court settlement, the indigenous method also referred to as informal approach and confrontation or fighting as the last method, which is an unconstitutional method. A political informant stated that:

> Yes, parties to different conflict approach us for settlement.
> There are three methods of settlement of conflict between

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> either pastoralists and farmers or communal disputes and the informal or indigenous method is just one of them. The other methods are formal or court settlement and confrontation (fighting). However, the last method that is, confrontation (fighting) is not officially recognised while the other two are recognised (political leader, KII).

Security agents interviewed concurred to the above statement and maintained by the community leaders. This is in other words, the affirmation of the fact that, two methods of managing and resolving conflict or dispute are in place in Benue State. It would be proper to state here that, the discussants during the Focus Group Discussions acknowledged the settlement of farmers and pastoralists' conflict by confrontation in some cases, but denied the method despite its existence, as illegal and unconstitutional, affirming the opinions of the adviser in the above quotation. In essence, it could be deduced that, it is only the court or formal method and the indigenous (traditional) method that are official, since settlement of farmers and pastoralists' conflict by confrontation appear to be remote in spite the fact that it remains a cherished method in Benue State for almost two decades now.

However, a security agent differed in one of the communities when he stated that:

> Whenever such conflict comes up, the warring parties are summoned by the local government Chairman with the leaders of both Fulani community and the host community in attendance, to witness or testify to the case. After hearing the suit, judgment is then deliver to the doorsteps of the litigants. The culprit or the party found guilty is asked to pay compensation to the other party (security leader, KII).

There came the question of youths and women not granted the right to participate in decision making on resolution of conflict between the pastoralists and farmers. The elders acknowledged this fact and maintained that, resolution of conflict is

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an exclusive affair of the elders as demanded by tradition. An elder bluntly put the situation in the following words:

> The disputes settlement mechanism system is a strict elders' forum and the youths and women are excluded from such foray.

When asked the reasons, the elders maintained that:

> They were excluded because of their volatile nature. 'We leave out the youths and women because they are sometimes uncontrollable and are quick tempered' (maintained by a chief in an FGD).

The elders also maintained that tradition forbids the women and youths from participating in conflict resolution and management of conflict. It was also noticed during the research that, within the Idoma area, a woman is regarded as a stranger to her husband's family and her duty is only to produce children for the husband. She is to be taken back to her father's compound for burial once she dies. Since strangers are not permitted in the decision-making on management issues, and women are regarded as strangers, they are thus, left out in conflict management that involved farmers and pastoralists.

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Plate 11. The researcher in a photograph with *Tor Guma*, a traditional and community leader of Guma LGA, after an interview with him.
Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

Plate 12. The researcher in an interview with a security officer in one of the LGAs.
Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

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The different approaches under indigenous method are hereby discussed and assessed.

The indigenous method:

Mediation:

This is an intervention by a third and neutral party to assist warring parties in conflict arrive at a voluntary settlement of their differences, through an agreement that will define their future co-existence. This often takes shape within the immediate social context. In this regard, mediators are sought for within the family or families of disputants or neighbourhood of disputants. People of good personality who enjoy social respect and recognitions are selected. This helps to resolve the problems of unrepresentative. The mediators would inevitably be associated with the disputing parties. All over Africa, elders are respected as trustworthy mediators. Elders in Africa context are not expected to tell lies or take side in the attempt to settle conflicts. On complex issues, mediators are high ranked chiefs, selected and appointed by traditional rulers and presided over by the king. Their decisions are always based on truth and widely accepted. Mediation has been used to manage 81.3% of conflict cases in the respective communities as noted by the respondents. Below are some pictures of community leaders who mediated in a conflict between pastoralists and farmers.

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Plate 13. Group of community elders dressed in their traditional attire in preparation to resolve a conflict.

Source: Gotten from a community leader, 2010.

Plate 14. Some community elders in a group photograph after resolving a conflict.

Source: Gotten from a community leader, 2010.

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Plate 15. A community leader in a jubilation after peace returned to the community.
Source: Gotten from a community leader, 2010.

Traditional courts:

These were first, the judicial processes ranging from the traditional methods of the clan heads within the conflict zones to the state customary court. Under these traditional courts of resolving conflict between the farmers and the pastoralists, it is the responsibility of a clan head with his district heads to summon both the farmers and the pastoralists to the palace for cross examination. The leaders of the Fulani group are also invited to be part of the traditional courts during the case. Both parties in the conflict are expected to make their presentation one after the other. After cross-examining the issues at stake, a decision would be made allowing for cooperation among the warring parties. In essence, the case is always a win-win outcome which is African in nature.

It is very important to note here that, before any conflict could be resolved in any community, truth must first be established. It is after this that the judgment could be made. In essence, judgment is principally based on truth and nothing else. However, it may be very difficult to get the truth in some cases, but no matter how difficult, effort must be made to get it established. In establishing the truth, Benue people believed so much in cross-examination as it is the case in every African society. This cross-examination can take different forms such as invitation of external agency, asking questions, invitation of witnesses and host of other means of arriving at the truth of the

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matter. The traditional courts have been used to manage 87.4% cases of conflicts in the various communities visited.

Informal discussions:

This entails that individual within their social context start discussing an emergency disputes. According to the circumstances, the context can be condensed family or an extended family, immediate neighbours or a distant neighbourhood or even a combination of family and neighbourhood. It could also be a smaller or larger organisation like a school, an association or a religious group. Since all the people involved are human in nature, they would always have to contend with the temptation to degrade the discussion to ill-disclosed gossip. However, if the social context is indeed taken seriously, this danger might be reduced. Instead of steering the discussion towards site or apportioning blame, it might be directed towards a solution. In all, 73.7% of the cases have been managed through this medium.

Community meeting

The clan is made up of various districts that came together and identified with each others as brothers, yet retaining their segmentary nature of leadership that was clan based. In every clan, an experienced male adult was saddled with the onus of leadership to settle feuds within the clan. Apart from the various district heads that formed his cabinet, the clan head identified elders from various families and co-opt them to work with him, thereby, constituting a council of elders where decision is taken and implemented in the community. Once such a decision is taken at the clan level, it automatically becomes binding on every districts in the community. This was the pattern of leadership operated by the people before their contact with the colonialists as maintained by a clan head during a community meeting. Going further, he stated that:

> Every clan had its own paramount chief, and this encouraged the segmentary system of leadership the community loved and made firm (community leader, KII).

Prominent among the issues the council of elders collectively addressed were security issues, land disputes, pastoralists and farmers conflict, epidemics and the likes.

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Community meeting as a process of managing conflict between pastoralists and farmers has been used to manage 91.6% of such cases in the state.

Plate 16. A community leader in one of the communities visited, dressed in his traditional regalia and holding his staff of authority.
Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

Strengths of the indigenous method

The greatest strength of informal dispute resolution is that, it is rooted deeply in the norms, values, institutions and practices of communities, fostering reconciliation in a context where conflicting interests in resources are rife. People generally know a conflicts' context, that is, the principals, their interests and events leading up to the dispute. Discussion takes places in the local languages and within a cultural context with which people are comfortable. Customary practices offer several advantages such as low cost, flexible schedules, inclusion of local knowledge, reference to local norms and public participation in the proceedings. Community leaders can serve as mediators, facilitating negotiations and promoting conciliation, or they may act in mediation roles if the parties cannot reach a solution. In many cultures, agreement is marked by a ritual or ceremony aimed at fostering reconciliation.

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Limitations of the indigenous method

Dependence on local relationships and knowledge is considered as one of the limitations of customary approaches. This corresponds with Mamdani (2009:290) conclusion that such practices rely on disputants being 'local and identifiable neighbours with an interest in strengthening the system of local accountability'. What is "local" in most places in Nigeria, including communities in Benue State, has been altered in many places by destroyed villages, displaced people, new occupants on the land and chronic insecurity. Nevertheless, informal dispute resolution procedures continue to operate throughout the state (Benue).

It is necessary to bear in mind other limitations of informal conflict management practices as socially marginal groups can experience difficulties accessing dispute resolution forums. The poor, women, lower castes, migrants and others seen as 'strangers' may lack the social standing to participate in local tribunals. This concurs with Moore (2005) who lays emphasis on the influence of powerful individuals and groups in informal conflict management processes. Instead of being a forum where disputes can be resolved through reference to tradition, informal conflict management processes now serve specially as an arena for testing the political strength of local factions. According to Moore (1986), local conflict management procedures do not necessarily yield more equitable, harmonious or longer-lasting settlements than other approaches. Providing legal recognition to informal conflict management procedures can bolster their legitimacy, but it can also have a deleterious effect. In spite of these limitations, informal, locally based practices continue to serve as a major option for conflict management in Benue State, Nigeria.

The approaches under formal method include:

Adjudication

This is non violent approach of managing conflict which involves the use of courts procedure in getting to the root of the case. In Benue State, some parties in the conflict prefer to seek redress in the court of law before a judge of competent jurisdiction instead of resolving their differences through the indigenous method. Such a party in the conflict is represented by a legal counsel. This approach also involves the

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use of cross examination of the parties in the conflict. At the end of the court processes, the court then gives a judgment which legally binds both parties. This judgment is further enforced by the law enforcement agencies of the state. This has been used to manage 15.1% of the conflict between pastoralists and farmers in the state.

Arbitration:

This is also another approach used in managing conflict between pastoralists and farmers in Benue State. Arbitration is the use and assistance of a neutral third party in conflict who hears the evidence from both parties and thereafter, gives a decision in form of an award which is also expected to be binding on the parties in the conflict. It is not a court system as it is done outside the court and as such, its enforcement mechanisms differ from those of litigation and adjudication. This approach has been used to manage 11.9% of cases in the state.

Litigation:

When a person begins a civil lawsuit, the person enters into a process called litigation. Under the various rules of civil procedures that govern actions in state and federal courts, litigation involves a series of steps that may lead to a court trial and ultimately a resolution of the matter. Once a decision is final, litigation ends. The prevailing party is then given the authority to collect damages or receive other remedies from the losing party. After the losing party provides the relief, that party is entitled to receive from the prevailing party, a satisfaction of judgment which is filed with the trial court. However, litigation is said to destroy trust, love, respect and other forms of confidence between parties. It increases suspicion and the bitterness of litigation lingers on for a long time after the judgment must have been given. Litigation is a win-lose outcome where the winner appears to take all while the loser ends up with nothing. It is an expensive approach and also outside the control of the conflicting parties in every respect. Besides, parties cannot decide how long such cases will take and thus, cannot choose the nature of the outcome. Due to its numerous weaknesses, it has been used to manage only 14.6% cases of the conflicts in Benue State.

Security agents

Some communities visited adopt the contemporary method of conflict resolution through what they referred to as security meetings and the enforcement agents. In this

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method, the warring parties are invited to state their issues. This approach has been used to manage 27.4% of the conflicts involving pastoralists and farmers in Benue State. It was discovered during an interview with a security agent in one of the areas that, only the *Tor* Guma is a member of the security team in that local government area and he represents other clan heads. However, in a case of alarming situations, it could involve leaders of affected districts and the heads of the Fulani groups in the area. In resolving the conflict between the farmers and the pastoralists, an informant maintained during the interview that:

> The culprits (guilty party) are always punished. In event of destruction, the guilty party is meant to pay for the destroyed properties. After the resolution of the conflict, both parties are expected to reconcile with each other and the refreshment which is always provided by the local government Chairman of the conflicts communities is shared among the people (security agent, KII).

The local government area Chairman is regarded as the Chairman of the peace and security committee in all the local government areas and he alone has the right and authority to convey such a meeting during an alarming situation. They (security agents) however affirmed that other channels such as church leaders and business men are also involve in resolution of conflict in the local government in particular and the state in general. Other members of the peace and security committee include:

1. Heads of various clan who represents traditional rulers
2. Heads of security agents in the local government areas
3. Secretary to the local government areas
4. Advisers to the local government chairman on security issues.
5. The church leaders in the community, mostly the catholic priest in such a community
6. About three (3) prominent sons and daughters of the local government area

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Strengths of the formal method

Few merits could be noted on this method as it has more limitations. It promotes consensual decision making that binds both parties in the conflict. Apart from the fact that it is a win lose outcome, it encourages capacity building through training. Also, presence of security agents such as the police force and military reduce tension in conflicting areas and bring the situation under control until relative peace is achieve in such a community.

Limitations of the formal methods

From the above discussion, it should be noted here that, adversarial which is one of the two broad categories of third party interventional mechanism, is used to manage the conflicts between pastoralists and farmers in Benue State. These mechanisms involved the use of some measures of force, and are suffused with win or lose dimensions. Arbitration mechanism is grouped into two categories, which are the adversarial and the non-adversarial. The adversarial mechanism is used to address the disputes between the farmers and the pastoralists in Benue State which is not African in nature. The source of the adversarial conflicts management tradition could be self-imposed by the intervener, who considers himself to have some powers that could enable him to impose his will on others. The methods here include recourse to adjudication and to a lesser degree, arbitration, both of which suggest an attempt at legal norms. Most of the crises between Fulani pastoralists and the native farmers in Benue State are settled in the customary court and in the police station if the various clan/district heads could not resolve it. One noticed that these conflicts are not completely resolved or transformed because of western methods of conflicts resolution adopted (that is, the win-lose method). Some of the conclusions arrived at through the adversarial process include banning herdsmen (pastoralists) from entering certain host communities and these has rendered many *Bororo* herdsmen (pastoralists) jobless. In some cases, victims of such compromise became nuisance in the society and even committed more atrocities.

The situation corresponds with Moore (1986:9) argument that, arbitration as litigation is a generic term for a voluntary process whereby people who are involved in

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conflicts, request the assistance of an impartial and neutral third party to make decision for them regarding contested issues. It is a private process initiated by the conflicting parties. Arbiters of panel voluntarily selected by the parties handle the process. This is so because the disputants have advantage of controlling the conflicts' settlement terms than the situation would have been, if the case were taken to law court.

In a nutshell, the formal method is said to destroy trust, love, respect and other forms of confidence between parties. It increases suspicion and the bitterness of these approaches lingers on for a long time after the judgment must have been given. The method is a win-lose outcome where the winner appears to take all while the loser ends up with nothing. It is an expensive approach and also outside the control of the conflicting parties in every respect. Besides, parties cannot decide how long such cases will take and thus, cannot choose the nature of the outcome. Due to its numerous weaknesses, it has been used to manage few cases of the conflicts in Benue State as could be seen in all the approaches.

The preferred method

However, when asked the preferred method of resolving this conflict if given different options, most of the respondents were of the view that they would prefer collaboration between the pastoralists and the farmers. An informant during an interview stated that:

> Since the different methods adopted thus far, for instance, adjudication, security agents, community meetings mediation to mention but a few have not yielded any positive result, I will suggest collaboration method if it will resolve it, for we are tired and fed up with this everyday conflict (Political leader, KII).

A community leader in a Focus Group Discussion affirmed the above statement when he opined thus:

> We have co-existed with the pastoralists over a long period of time now and we have even inter married. I see no reason why we should be fighting each other. I will

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> therefore suggest for the various governments to introduce a collaboration method into resolving this conflict. Besides, when there is collaboration between those of us at the community, we will now apportion a land for the pastoralists to graze their animals. This will reduce re-occurrence of this conflict (Community leader, FGD).

In all, 73.5% (353) of the respondents prefer the indigenous method while the remaining 26.5% (127) prefer the formal method.

The reasons for the preference of the traditional method are stated below.

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
The method is cheaper	209	43.5
The method is faster	74	15.4
Justice is accessible	65	13.5
It is a win-win situation	30	6.3
All the above	102	21.3
Total	480	100

Table 4.12 Respondents' reasons for preferring indigenous method of conflict resolution

On the contrary, the non-preference of the formal method was attributed to the following reasons:

i. The judges sometimes exhibit bias mind towards one party.
ii. It is time-consuming due to prolong and vexations adjournments.
iii. Since it has to do with land, such conflicts are often interpreted based on technicalities which are foreign to native laws and customs.
iv. The cost of litigation is high particularly where the services of a lawyer are required.

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Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
High cost of litigation	148	31.8
Time consuming	83	17.3
Justice not accessible	72	15
It is a loose-win situation	51	10.6
All of the above	126	26.3
Total	480	100

Table 4.13 Respondents' reasons for non-preference of court.

In summary, the two major methods of managing farmers and pastoralists' conflict in Benue State have not been fully and dully utilized (despite the effectiveness of the indigenous method) due to the problems associated with both methods enumerated above. Thus, this has often led to re-occurrence of the pastoralists and farmers' conflict in the state. A collaborative method involving cordial and mutual dialogue between the pastoralists and farmers was therefore, a preferred alternative method of managing the conflict. Also, the government should collaborate with the different community leaders for an agreeable format and allocation of lands for pastoral purposes.

4.1.5. Relevance of traditional African methods of conflict management to contemporary methods

Without mincing words, before the advent of colonialism and the introduction of the western (that is, contemporary) methods of conflicts management, Africans had an efficient and rich cultural mechanisms through which conflicts between groups, communities, states, kingdoms and even farmers and pastoralists were resolved. Such mechanism is part of the culture of the social formations in which it was practiced. It flows from the accumulation of the peoples' experience in curbing disorder in society through the ages and which have been passed on from generation to generation, thus, forming a tradition. However, this Africa's rich cultural mechanisms were disorganised, distorted, rubbished and even wiped out in some communities by colonial forces and the assault is mainly responsible for the ubiquitous and high intensity of conflicts

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prevalent not only in Benue State, but the country (Nigeria) and Africa as a whole today. Nwolise (2004a) concurs to this when he states thus:

> It is not a misplaced statement emanating from the sad experience of Africa societies today that the abandonment of utility laden traditional methods of bargaining, and conflicts resolution for foreign models is largely responsible for the multiplicity of avoidable conflicts all over the continent.

Today, little misunderstanding between farmers and pastoralists easily spark off war which often results to lost of lives and destruction of properties worth millions of naira. This affirms Nwolise's documentation that mere land disputes between two families or communities, leads to murder and destruction of hundreds of houses and killing of several people in recent time. Whereas, in traditional African society, the systems put in place to monitor, prevent, manage and resolve conflicts would have readily prevented such wanton damages.

The advent of colonialism and its forces of religious psycho war and lack of confidence relegated the African peculiar and effective methods of resolving conflicts. This led to violence everywhere and even promoted instability and retard development. Today, dialogue between warring parties is replaced with fighting; the mediating roles of elders and other more peaceful institutions as age grades, highly revered groups and their party neighbours are replaced in several cases with police action, military peacekeeping operations and endless court proceedings.

Nwolise (2003) goes further to emphasise that, in the traditional African societies, social leaders and elders not only worked seriously for peace in their societies, but also, taught the children and the youths, how to live in peace with others, how to manage conflicts and how to resolve it, with the aim of promoting the culture of peace in the societies. In return, the youths through the various age grades and associations, promoted the culture of peace and tried not to indulge in the promotion of violence. Harunah (2003) concurs with Nwolise when he asserts that African indigenous cultures, customs, traditions and civilisations had emphasised not only the value and significance of peace in society, but also the necessity of having to ensure

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that there was peaceful co-existence and harmony among the various groups that lived in a community and between them and their neighbours. The sort of premium which was placed on peace and on the essence of ensuring peaceful coexistence in pre-colonial Africa stemmed from the realization by the people about the negative outcomes and allied adversity that usually followed the demise of peace in a society, and in inter group relations.

Hence, it was in a bid to ensure that such negative developments were completely prevented or nipped in the bud that the various forms of political, social, religious and economic organisations and institutions were evolved and put in place in all pre-colonial African societies. The basic aim of the pre-colonial governments of African societies was to ensure that peace existed and reigned supreme in every community. It was a general belief that once peace was installed or restored and preserved in a community, all other prerequisites needed for growth and development naturally take place and maintained their rightful shapes and positions.

Furthermore, Tekena (2004) observes that the main pillars in peace maintenance in traditional society were many and varied. Hence, belief in gods/goddesses, spirits, shrines, priests/priestesses, ancestors, oracles, diviners and the like proceeded for several centuries, the doctrines of, and practices under imported religion such as Islam and Christianity. He states thus:

> Practices in the southeast and parts of the southwest, northeast and north central communities of Nigeria had common features in their cultural forms. Religion underpinned measures of social control, respect for elders, the identification and punishment of abominable acts, public opinion and early consistent education on the principles that crime did not pay and that none was above the law among others provided a sustainable basis of maintaining peace and stability. A deft combination of measures of these kinds made justice through the prevailing pre-colonial institutions of social control, cheap, convincing and quick (Tekena, 2004).

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The methods adopted by Africans revolved around shrines or deities which revealed truth in criminal or conflicts cases involving contestation as well as cases of murder, land disputes and conflict between farmers and pastoralists. Among the Tiv people in Benue State, such deity like *Swem* assisted in crime control. Among the Hausa people before the advent of Islam, the *Bori* or spirit of possession method was used as traditional institution of social control. Among the Yoruba people, such deities include *Ogun, Sango* and *Ayelala.* In Igbo, *Amadioha, Ezenwanyi, Ala* and *Ogwugwu* hold sway. The *Ekpo* system worked for the Calabar people. The *Agbadagbruru, Erinvwin* and *Akpranran* systems worked for the Urhobo as the *Egbesu* was effective for the Ijaws.

With these deities, shrines, ancestors and other mechanisms of social and crimes control, peace maintenance and conflicts resolution, Africans generally and Nigerians in particular, had highly moral, peaceful and stable environment. However, it was not totally devoid of evils, but the chances that deviants would be caught and punished immediately and certainly was guaranteed and extremely high. But today, new values have crept in rendering the high African values useless. With oath system that is not effective, a judicial system that is corrupt (except for few judges), a security investigative apparatus that is unreliable, and a justice system that is not certain in terms of duration and delivery, violence, impunity, greed, assassination, fraud, conflicts and host of other societal ills have overwhelmed the land. The common dictum of "live and lets live" and the concept of "being our brothers' keepers" have been displaced and replaced with the adoption of zero-sum games or winner take all which is most laden with potentials for conflicts, devastation, instability and disorder. These make peaceful co-existence impossible between individuals and groups within a given community.

In fact, the weakness and inability of the colonially inherited mechanisms and processes of conflict prevention, management and resolution mostly the absence of conflicts monitoring institutions are today aptly exposed in the society. The inadequacy of the police in handling certain conflicts, the inadequacies of violent approach to conflicts resolutions adopted by the government, the inadequacies of the courts and government commissions of inquiries and lack of the political will to implement the recommendations of panels and commissions it set up, rear its ugly head not only in

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Benue State, but in almost every community in Africa. We fail to realize that Africans are not after who hires the best judge or who will be the highest bidder for justice in conflicts resolution and disputes settlement. Instead, the goals are always truth, justice, genuine reconciliation, restoration of social harmony, enduring peace as well as the welfare and happiness of the conflicting parties on one side and the entire society on the other side.

4.2. Multi-Track Diplomacy approach to peace

From the above analyses and discussion so far, we have enumerated the fact that there are several approaches to the peaceful resolution and management of the farmers and pastoralists' conflict situations in Benue State, Nigeria. We have also pointed out that there are Traditional African methods of resolving disputes as well as contemporary approaches. In essence, while Africans may apply some of these indigenous methods, they also increasingly employ the Western methods of conflict management and resolution. However, there are other ways; just as there are many different methods of settling conflict, there are also different stakeholders and participants in the conflict management spectrum.

Diamond and McDonald (1996) introduce a new system approach to peace, which is referred to as "Multi-Track Diplomacy". According to them, at least nine tracks of conceptual and practical framework assist and work in the peace-building sector. The approach emphasised the fact that different parties and stakeholders have to be, and are usually involved with conflict management and transformation. This goes beyond the traditional belief in Africa that the state through the machinery of government is in charge of bringing about peace. The nine tracks include the following;

a. Government
b. Non-governmental/professional or peacemaking through conflict resolution
c. Business or peacemaking through commerce
d. Private citizen, peacemaking through personal involvement
e. Research, training and education or peacemaking through learning
f. Activism or peacemaking through advocacy
g. Religion or peacemaking through faith in action

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h. Funding or peacemaking through providing resources

i. Communications and the media or peacemaking through information

These nine tracks may not be exhaustive as such; however, they provide a useful starting point for understanding the array of actors and participants in the conflict management sector. During the course of this research, it was discovered that about three different stakeholders out of the nine in the Multi-Track Diplomacy have contributed towards the resolution and management of the conflict in the state. Those stakeholders that have contributed include the following, identifying them with their respective tracks. They are:

• 'Track One' = Government

• 'Track Two' = Non-government actors/professional or peacemaking through conflict resolution

• 'Track Seven' = Religion or peacemaking through faith in action

Using this typology, the conclusions of this approach are as follows-

Track One: Government Responses

Government is involved in peacemaking through the formal processes and institutions of government as in official diplomacy, policy making and peace building activities. Also to be added is crisis management and the maintenance of law and order. The various levels of government-federal, state and local governments-and their agencies have responded to the conflict in a number of ways. The following are some of the responses patterns gathered during the field research:

(a). Security Responses

The various arms of government (federal, state and local) often made a reactive response to conflict relying almost completely on the use of force. Nevertheless, such deployments failed to address the root causes of the conflict and it is extremely unusual for them to include any attempt to facilitate reconciliation among the warring factions. The police have attempted to respond at different stages of conflict, but lacked the capacity to do so effectively. In many cases, they have been overwhelmed by the proliferation of arms in the communities. Their lack of capacity to guarantee security has in itself, encouraged arms proliferation.

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(b). Relief Responses

Federal and state governments provided relief to victims of crises, but the management and distribution of the relief materials by the government and its agencies were sometimes poor and disproportionate to the number of peoples affected. The federal government has also provided political and financial support for the return of displaced groups, notably in the case of the Agila people in Ado local government and between the Mbagwen (who are Tiv) and the Fulani of Gbajimba in Guma local government area of the state. This example where the returned population fled following further violence illustrated that, such initiatives can fail, unless the root causes of the conflicts have been addressed to the satisfaction of both communities. The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), an organ that responds to distress calls in the country have also responded in supplying foodstuffs, clothing and other materials to victims of both parties during the conflict.

(c). Political Responses

Establishing Commissions and panels of inquiry by federal, state and local governments has been a common means of response to majority of the conflict in the state. Commissions and panels of enquiry are routine and well-intentioned processes of governance, but in most cases, their recommendations were not implemented. In the case of the Agila, Gbajimba and even some communities in Gwer West local government which have witnessed such conflicts for example, the recommendations based on results of the inquiries or 'White Papers' were highly contested and had not yet been enforced. Even court rulings were for the most part ignored. These also apply to other conflicts such as communal disputes and chieftaincy tussle. Non-implementation therefore means that the conflict remained unresolved and could be a source of grievance which could lead to another.

A further problem is that the composition and methods of such inquiries do not usually allow for appropriate local representation and participation. The creation of new administrative units (states, local government areas, districts and wards) has also been a historical means of response by the government. However, this is just as likely to be a key cause of conflict as a solution. Co-operation between leaders of different groups such as the Fulani and the host communities/districts head for instance, has also been a

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response. This has substantial impact on strained relationships. There are other cases where respective leaders have been parties to the conflict or their negligence has resulted in conflict.

Peace and Security Committees have been established at the state, local government as well as the ward levels, forming an important strategic response to conflict. This seemed to be a positive development, but fieldwork for this study suggests that few of such Committees had actually been created and those that had, were largely ineffective. This structure clearly has massive impacts and deserves additional attention and supports.

The federal government sought an agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) as a means of reducing tension between the farmers and the pastoralists. Issues were raised about the level of participation of the affected parties in such arrangements. The establishment of the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) provided the government with policy-relevant options on fundamental issues to be taken into full account in designing an effective and durable peace process, a major response to the prevention and resolution of conflicts.

The main thrust of government's response is to use force to suppress conflict. The problem is that this may stop the use of violence in the short term but it does not address genuine underlying problems. As the study shows, some of the underlying causes (youth alienation, for example) may even be exacerbated by such a response. It has also been found that military and police responses often take place in isolation from other responses despite opportunities for joint activity and sharing of perspectives. This is not to say that such forces responses are no longer required. When the security of the state and its fundamental institutions are threatened, there is no alternative to the use of force. It is even possible that the response may need to be of an exemplary character in dealing with conflict entrepreneurs, no matter how highly placed security agencies can help in this direction by investigating the antecedents of 'community leaders' with a view to discrediting those who work in conflict for private benefits. However, the strategic focus should shift toward preventive and collaborative approaches, and to the use of public policy as a tool of conflicts mitigation.

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Track Two: Non-Governmental Organisations/Professional (NGOs) Responses

This relates to the realm of conflict management by professionals or non-governmental organisations. Their activities are in the areas of analysis, prevention, resolution and management of conflict. Non-governmental organisations have been active in providing and coordinating relief as have religious organisations. These have enjoyed some successes, but some organisations have been limited by insufficient capacity and limited experience. Religious organisations are more widely established and have a greater following. In addition to the reputation of the Nigerian Red Cross Society in most conflict situations, other Non Governmental Organisations have given good account of themselves in facilitating the peace process and providing relief materials to displaced persons.

Civil Society has been active in conducting studies of conflict and organising workshops on various techniques of conflict resolution. A number of local successes have been recorded. However, it cannot be claimed that these initiatives have materially altered not only Benue State, but also the entire country's underlying problems. Such structures remain limited in their scope and connections. External donors have driven many of their activities and funding has been on a project-by-project basis. Donor policies are notoriously fickle, moving from organisation to organisation and area to area. This makes it difficult for such organisations to sustain themselves or even to keep up the involvements that they have begun. Unfortunately, many civil society organisations are just as vulnerable to accusations of 'unwanted' behaviour, as the politicians whom they so often criticise. It may be that, without compromising the independence of such organisations, government can assist them to play a more constructive role.

NGOs have also implemented peace-building initiatives in response to individual community conflicts, focused on bringing parties together and encouraging dialogue between them through capacity building and joint problem solving workshops. Some are not reaching relevant parts of the communities they are focused on. Even when they did work directly with the affected groups, that is, the farmers and the pastoralists, interventions resulting in apparent agreements amongst leading figures subsequently failed because they were short-term. Some of the conflict requires a

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change in governmental policies, which may be the root cause. The inability of the NGOs to carry intervention project beyond the international donors' grants usually leave the intervention inconclusive. Donors should integrate conflict analysis into their strategic thinking so that conflict-sensitive approaches are integrated into individual programmes from the start. It is also important that aid agencies develop better mechanisms to check that specific activities, at least, do no harm.

Track Seven: Religions and faith in action/ assistance

This track deals with beliefs and peace-oriented actions of spiritual and religious communities. Pacifism, humanism, non-violence, brotherliness, as promoted by dominant religions is in this track. Religion plays a major role in every living society. It is seen as a unifying factor in the society. Today, religious leaders are contributing not only to the socio-economic and political stability of the society, but as well as the religious growth of the society. They have engaged in active involvement of conflict and dispute resolution in warring communities, making peace, reconciliation and providing relief materials for the victims of conflict.

During the pastoralists and farmers' conflict in Benue State, the Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC), an organ of peace established by the Catholic Church and other religious groups played vital roles in the resolution of the conflict. Apart from preaching and teaching peace, the organ reconciled the warring parties through the process of dialogue. Besides, the religious leaders established schools, hospitals and maternity homes to bridge the gap of development and give hope to the people of the affected communities. They also encouraged them to embark on communal work for their upliftment and freedom. In communities like Gbajimba in Guma local government area and Agila in Ado local government area, the religious leaders interviewed stated that they intervened directly and indirectly to bridge the gap of hatred and divisions among the conflict parties. They noted that in the heat of the conflict in those communities, the church through the assistance of the religious leaders, organised rallies, prayer sessions and seminars to stop the conflict.

Through this forum, different occasions and in various communiqués, the different religious groups sought for an end to the conflict. At the same time, some

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assisted the victims with food, shelter and medicine. In other words, the religious (leaders) action, an arm of the Multi-Track Diplomacy have sheltered and continue to shelter Internally Displaced Citizens (IDC) who must be given a sense of meaning through elimination of many of their distresses which include mainly, deep wounds and hurts that exist in the hearts of many war affected citizens. To tackle the distresses and assist in the reconciliation, the religious leaders seek first from every member of the communities, the purification of memories, admission of sinful deeds perpetrated against one another and sincere apology as a way vital in the process, for peace and reconciliation. These are the basic for good inter-relationship in every community, and this is where societal healing begins. This gives opportunity for other social values such as patriotism, respect for human dignity and rights to follow.

4.3. Impacts of the conflict on the communities/state

It is a universal opinion that in every violence prone society, youths are jobless; resources are scarce after the scourge of the conflict and cannot go round all the needy ones. Essential resources such as water, electricity, houses, roads, schools, churches and mosque are destroyed, leaving the community with an impoverished environment and a dispossessed population, refugees in its own state. In such a situation, there is hardly any development to talk of. Blench (2004) affirms the competition for land, water and vegetation by pastoralists and farmers coupled with scarcity or dwindling of the resources and adverse climatic changes, all act as precipitant in pastoralists-farmers' conflict. The conflict is by nature, economic and mostly inflicted to promote parochial interest devoid of communal interest which is undesirable, destructive and therefore, constitute an impediment to growth and development of agricultural economy.

Reports gathered from the research indicated that the transhumance pastoralists who in most cases were more aggressive and combat ready, often perpetrated the destruction of irrigation facilities in the night and disappeared before dawn to unknown location, leaving the resident pastoralists with blames. Those carried out during the days were often met with retaliations from farmers, resulting to violence, leading to loss of live-stocks and even human lives. A community leader however stated during an interview that, the animals killed during the conflict were never consumed by anyone.

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During the research, both farmers and pastoralists also asserted that conflict between the two resource users is real and increasingly assuming an alarming proportion with serious implications for agricultural productivity. For example, some farmers in one of the focus group discussion (FGD) sessions argued:

> Unless something is done about this conflict, we shall be forced to abandon crop farming completely (farmers, FGD).

This sense of helplessness and frustration seem to resonate with all the farmers across all the communities visited during the research period. Therefore, the impacts and consequences of this conflict would be examined in order to know how they adversely affect the economic growth and development of not only the war torn communities, but also the entire Benue State.

(a). Impacts of the conflict on livelihood

Farmers and pastoralists conflict is generally considered as a negative phenomenon, which often leads to loss of lives and properties which invariably affects the community negatively. Reduction in farm production was the most serious effect, followed by increased poverty within and among the communities, social insecurity and inadequate food supply for the family respectively. Reduction in farm production could be linked to many other factors and consequences. This could be brought about by scarcity and increase in cost of inputs including labor resulting from conflict. Consequentially, food items are scarce and there is reduction in income leading way to poverty. This may not be far-fetched from why manifestation of poverty was rated high effect of conflict.

Similarly, probable link to reduction in production was inadequate food for the family. According to Goodhand (2001:26), one of the most devastating effects of wars or conflicts is scarcity of food item which often leads to poverty and diseases. This further buttressed the manifestation of poverty in the conflict communities. Interruption of education of children and reduction in health care provision of the family were also some of the social insecurity effects of the conflict identified as critical issues in the life of the communities. These hamper accomplishment of other life endeavor including economic activities such as production and marketing. The lower proportion might not

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be unconnected with the fact that most children of the respondents especially the pastoralists did not attend school. It has been established that most violent conflict do not stop at the boundary of the communities in which the conflict occur, they often spillover to neighboring communities.

There is also the assertion that, the first economic parameter often affected by war or conflict situation is price of goods and services, because other factors such as transportation cost, labour and information disruption affect the price of goods and services. Scarcity of foods during conflict is a very common phenomenon as there could be blockage in supply and diversion to peaceful environment. Social insecurity is a common manifestation in conflict situation especially when it is a violent one. People develop fear of being attacked unnecessarily which also negatively affect their ability to carry out their economic activities. Perhaps, there were also fewer refugees in some of the communities during the conflict. However, it was one of the most important effects of war or conflict as asserted which creates a huge burden on the government or the affected communities.

(b). Impacts on material life

Apart from the obvious and more visible toll on human life, crises have a devastating impact on material life. Both the immediate victims who fled as well as others who remained in their former abode felt this impact. In the first instance, food security was jeopardised as people either could not grow crops or had to migrate to safety far away from the farms. In either situation, but mainly for those forced to flee, food security became a major issue. Even among the former group, food supply was problematic because of the mutual inter dependence for aspects of production such as labour, food processing and even the safety to move crops from the farms. In addition, people were hamstrung in meeting other needs as crops could not be harvested, cows could not be milked nor cattle butchered, let alone sold. Thus, the main sources of incomes became unavailable with profound implications for poverty. This means that other needs as school and hospital fees which were regularly raised as part of deregulation and commercialisation became more difficult to meet and with these, profound implications for education and material life.

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The situations in the conflict areas therefore show that not only are explosions of violence materially motivated, they also take a tool on material life. What is more while the brunt might be disproportionately borne by those compelled to flee, such movement and general insecurity affect everyone else and so, the threat to material life.

(c). Impact on physical capital

Violent conflict results in the destruction or removal of physical capital such as bridges, buildings and energy sector infrastructure. Hence, the pastoralists and farmers' conflict left most communities completely ruined; properties worth millions of naira were sabotaged and destroyed. Crop products were destroyed just as animals were killed and slaughtered uncontrollably. In some areas, church buildings, schools and both private and public structures worth billions of naira were burnt. All these point to the negative impact of violent on economic growth and development. Besides, it led to reduction of investment on physical capital in the state. Indeed, rather than money coming into the state (Benue) for investment, the conflict is likely to produce capital flight. In fact, pastoralists and farmers' conflicts in the state have the very damaging effect of giving the signal to the rest of the states in the country, that the state is not a safe and secure place, and as such, not suitable for economic investments and activities.

(d). Impact on population

Population rates change during violent conflict. Population goes down most obviously because of battle deaths, though in fact, more deaths tend to occur to famine diseases and the destruction of health services. This implies that the destruction of physical capital such as power or health infrastructure also kills directly and evidence indicates that such destruction is in fact on the rise. The pastoralist and farmers' conflict has led to the deaths of thousands of people, although accurate data on the exact figures were hard to come by. In fact, it has remained difficult to quantify the cost of the conflict in terms of loss of properties as well as the displacement of persons. Above all, hundreds of people were rendered homeless during the conflict.

From the above analysis, one could deduce that during these crises, there was always massive burning of houses, business premises, schools and farmlands, accompanied by looting of properties, brutal killing of people, beheading and setting of people (human beings) ablaze. As a result, the whole economies of the communities

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were ruined. This could be said to be the impact of not only the pastoralists and farmers' conflict but also, other conflicts in Benue State. These impacts on development of the affected communities in particular and the state in general are better imagined than told.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0. Introduction

This chapter presents a brief summary and conclusion of the study. The rationale and objectives as well as the inferences drawn from the findings of the study are included in this chapter. Recommendations and suggestions for further studies are also presented.

5.1. Summary

This research was prompted by the zeal to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and the development of peace in our society, mostly in conflicts torn states like Benue State and other states in the Middle Belt region of Nigeria. The study analytically and critically looked at the various movement and activities of the farmers (that is, the Tiv, Idoma, Jukun) and the pastoralists (Fulani) into the present day Benue State, and the different causes of conflict between the farmers and pastoralists in the state and other land related issues. The work also assessed the different authorities and institutions as well as the methods adopted in managing these conflicts and ensuring orderliness and peace, not only in those affected communities, but also in Benue State at large. These institutions and methods include the indigenous method such as mediation, community meetings, traditional courts and informal discussions, and the formal method such as adjudication, arbitration, litigation and security agents.

Field studies showed that the high increase of conflicts between pastoralists and farmers are becoming a matter of concern not only in Benue State, but also across the country. The case seems to be mostly strong in the issue of pastoralists from outside Nigeria, notably from Niger, Chad and Cameroon and the issue may be compounded not by any new patterns of migration, but by the presence of armed mercenaries from the above mentioned countries. Destruction of farmers' farm products by pastoralists' herds is the major cause of this conflict in the state. In some parts of Benue State, however, competition for farmlands was exaggerated as a cause of the conflict. Some Tiv farmers for example, said that the issue was not so much lack of land as a view of different political and social status as 'indigenes' and 'settlers' and that the significance

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of this difference lay in access to political power and land. Nevertheless, as with so many manifestations of conflict listed here, the primary issue in many cases is the politicisation of the problem. The Tiv have often been able to enlist the support of the Fulani against their enemies. However, there is a strong feeling among the farmers across the state that the Fulani are able to encroach on farmland annually because they (Fulani) have the money to buy up government officials (police and judiciary). Consequently, the farmers take the law into their own hands by attacking the Fulani whenever there is an encroachment into their farmland.

In all countries including Nigeria, the poor communities, women, remote communities, pastoralists and other marginalised groups often encountered difficulties accessing courts and officials due to financial, political, social or other constraints. Female heads of household for example, may need to take male kinfolk along with them for their grievances to be handled adequately by authorities. Slow procedures can make national systems unappealing, as disputes may linger for years in the courts or in administrative offices. Getting a lawyer or legal advice can be strenuous mostly for rural dwellers, since environmental advocacy law is a small specialty in most places. Individuals and groups may face intimidation when pursuing grievances through official channels and repressive laws and oppressive practices pose a threat to activism and dissent.

It is based on these circumstances that it is advisable to introduce conflicts prevention and management strategies in almost every community in Benue State. These institutions would assist in informing the populace on conflicts prevention, resolution and management and avoid any issues that may result to conflicts in the society. This would be of great merit to the government and non-governmental organisations to help sponsor these institutions so that peace would reign in these studied communities and the state (Benue) at large and government would not spend much in managing conflicts.

The basic role played by non-governmental organisations should be encouraged and simulated while reviewing the role of the police and other security agents as well. From the research, it was discovered that these security agents more often than not, contributed to conflicts escalation in these studied communities and in Nigeria at large.

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They were said to be collecting bribes from culprits and their release effected to the discomfort of complaints, which often resulted in lack of public confidence in the institution and the consequent resolve of people to take laws into their own hands. A specialised mediation and negotiation committee should be established between the farmers in Benue and the Fulani pastoralists, in order to watch the activities of these groups to promote the efforts of the security committee at the involved communities, to prevent further conflicts between the two groups. One of the efforts made to avoid future occurrence of this conflicts between these two groups is the clarion call on the different levels of government (federal, state and local) to assist them with grazing lands for their animals and plots of lands for farming. This would be of great relief to both groups.

5.2. Recommendations

Looking at the major findings of this research through the different methods applied, that is, various answers from key informant, focus group discussion and research questionnaires, the following recommendations are hereby made. This is in a bid to enhance the relationship between the farmers and pastoralists in Benue State, as well as improve the mechanisms for managing the conflicts if carefully studied and implemented.

(a). Introduction of collaboration method of conflict resolution.

Collaboration assists in building trust, confidence and understanding among people. Thus, a direct collaborative method between pastoralists and farmers is recommended for the resolution of the conflict. This is based on the fact that, those that collaborates and live together is likely to establish intimate friendship and mutual respect among themselves than those who do not. The chief-in-council mechanism both at the clan and district levels should be encouraged while appeals should be made to the supreme traditional councils, headed by the *Tor* Tiv" in the Tiv speaking communities and the "*Ochi*-Idoma" in the Idoma speaking communities of the state to collaborate with the pastoralists (Fulani) to resolve their differences through constructive dialogue and by sharing things (projects) in common.

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(b). Creation of grazing land.

The primary reason for most of the conflict is destruction of crops by the wandering animals since there is no specific place for them to stay. Thus, the state government should collaborate with the different community leaders and chiefs, to give a good portion of land to migrating pastoralists as grazing land. This would prevent the occurrence of the frequent conflict between the farmers and the pastoralists. However, the pastoralists should negotiate with the farmers on fallowing farm before grazing on such lands. Likewise, crop farmers should be encouraged to sell fodder to them where and when necessary to feed their animals. This approach would prevent the incessant clashes between the farmers and the pastoralists and lead to peace in the state.

(c). Identification and punishment of erring culprits.

It was discovered during the course of the research that most crisis in Benue State, been it conflict between farmers and pastoralists or land or any communal disputes, are sponsored by the elites, politicians and some chiefs. These personalities encourage and fan these crises by supplying arms and other destructive weapons to the youths as well as finance the crises. Therefore, the state government should identify and punish any personality involved in the promotion of any crises in the state. They should be stripped of their positions, and the government should prosecute them for criminal activities, capable of breaching public peace. These measures would serve as deterrence to other culprits and to future troublemakers.

(e). Implementation of decisions of various white papers.

During the research, it was discovered that Benue State government has not released most of the highly expected and long awaited white papers on some past disputes between farmers and pastoralists submitted to it by judicial commissions of inquiry. In essence, the expectations of the people are not met. For example, compensating the victims where it was recommended, identified and punishing the culprits amongst other recommendations. In this regard, the warring parties pick up arms as expected results and desires are not forth coming. It is advisable that the government should release and implement the conclusions of the various white papers on past disputes in a bid to calm down anger.

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(f). The neutrality of the Nigerian forces.

According to some respondents, the police do not respond to distress calls and if they do, they are not prompt. In some cases, even after their arrival, they pitch a tent with one group (party) and arrest culprits of the other side. Many reasons were attributed to this. For example, they could be acting under instructions from influential politicians or personalities, who may be an owner of the farmyard, or the owner of the animals in question. Even the District Police Officer (DPO) in charge could be an interested personality in the crises. In this regard, the aggrieved party sees this act of the police as one of connivance and such a party is never ready to lay down its arms thereby prolonging the crises. Hence, the Nigeria police should always be fair, unbiased and neutral in dealing with every conflict.

(f). Provision of jobs/employment for the youths.

The provision of more jobs by government at all levels would curb the high unemployment rate which is pushing the youths into promoting conflicts. If the youths were employed, they would not listen to unwholesome calls by selfish farmers and herdsmen to fight. In addition, social amenities such as electricity, good roads, water supply and health facilities should be made available in the rural communities to encourage the youths to set up small scale businesses. This would discourage them from fighting, since fighting would equally jeopardise their businesses and jobs as well.

5.3. Conclusion

Without doubt, Benue State is very vulnerable to pastoralists and farmers' conflict as well as communal disputes. Majority of the respondents blamed the state government, for been largely responsible for the recurrent pastoralists and farmers cum land disputes in Benue State that have led to the displacement of so many people from their original settlements and are now refugees in other places. Besides, the weakness and inability of the colonial methods and mechanisms of conflict prevention, management and resolution which is the absence of conflict monitoring institutions was also responsible for the relatively high incidence of conflict between the pastoralists and farmers in the state. This has led to increase in poverty (since they have no crops to sell as even the crops and farmlands were destroyed during the disturbances), insecurity

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and underdevelopment of the state. This they maintained by saying that, the manner in which the government has handled past conflicts is not encouraging.

From the findings, a lot of archaic and obnoxious customary practices still exist, and these have prevented many people from managing land, for instance, the Fulani who are considered to be non indigenous, thereby subjecting them to agony and grief. The results have been physical confrontations and challenges which often lead to high death toll and destruction of properties. The denial of land rights to the Fulani pastoralists in the state (Benue) and the incessant disputes, not only between farmers and pastoralists, but communal and land conflicts, have contributed immensely to the social economic under-development of the state. The absence of visible industrial set-ups, both in the urban and rural communities is partly due to the fear of property being burnt down in the event of any crises, since the major way of settling scores during the crises is by killing and burning down of houses. This is against the courts' equitable punishment of fine or imprisonment commensurate to the offence. This has deprived most elites and wealthy people from building decent houses in those rural communities or citing small and medium scale industries for the benefits of the rural populace, thereby retarding the growth and development of the state (Benue) in general.

However, there are ways through which these conflicts are managed in these communities in particular and the state in general. They are indigenous (informal) and formal (contemporary/western) methods of conflicts management. The populace preferred the indigenous (informal) method of managing conflicts to the formal (contemporary) method. As discussed in this study, the informal approaches are an indigenous (Africa) methods used in resolving conflicts in the affected communities in particular and Benue State in general, before the introduction and adaptation of the formal or contemporary approaches. These indigenous methods were very effective and reliable and conflicts were resolved with these methods immediately. These indigenous approaches were established in Benue State and other communities in Africa with the sole aim of resolving relative peace in the communities. But above all, both parties prefer a collaborative method of managing this conflict to all other methods such as negotiation, arbitration, mediation, security agents, community meetings and

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adjudication and host of others that have been adopted in time past. This is because; they have not yielded any positive result, instead lead to re-occurrence of the conflict.

From this study, it is a known fact that the human being is a sacred creature in Africa context. Thus, killing of human being unjustly is an abomination. This is because our spiritual environment is occupied by spirit which controls and sees every day activities of the environment. In relation to this, if a person was killed unjustly in Africa, the gods of the land would be angry with such a person, and strange things would start happening in the community until the gods of the land are appeased. It is therefore advisable for the farmers and the pastoralists to adopt collaboration method for managing the conflict rather than confrontational which always leads to violent conflicts. In essence, every group should shun violent to ensure peace and harmony. In sum, the government should collaborate with the different community leaders for an agreeable format and allocation of lands for pastoral purposes.

5.4. Area of further studies

This research was embarked on amidst language barriers and insufficient materials in some cases. This topic requires consistency coupled with the fact that this conflict is almost a daily occurrence not only in Benue State, but also in wherever farmers and pastoralists co-exist. Thus, the work does not pretend to have exhausted the dissemble correlation in the social organisation of the different groups, their religion beliefs and practices, political organisations, the role play by the traditional leaders on conflicts management of those communities and government reactions to the conflicts situations. Further study of the above-mentioned communities and other places where farmers and pastoralists co-inhabit would reveal the causes of the conflicts and best way to maintain peace, harmony and order in these areas would come to limelight.

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Appendix 1

Peace and Conflict Studies Programme,

University of Ibadan, Ibadan

Key Informant Interview with pastoralists and farmers (various leaders)

Hello Sir/ Madam,

I am a Doctoral (Ph.D) student, Peace and Conflict Studies Programme, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan. I am conducting a research on a project titled: "an assessment of the methods of managing conflict between pastoralists and Farmers in Benue State, Nigeria". It is my pleasure to inform you that the success of this research depends on your co-operation. Kindly feel free to express your opinions. Your anonymity is guaranteed and all your responses will be treated confidentially. Thank you for your anticipated co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Agbegbedia Anthony.

Instruction: please feel free to express your views on the following questions.

(1). What do you know about the conflict in this community?

Probe:

i. Gender

ii. Age

iii. Education qualification

iv. Religion

v. Ethnic background

vi. Occupation

vii. Marital status

(2). How would you describe the conflict?

Probe:

(i). Knowledge of the conflict

(ii). The causes of the conflict

(iii). The effects of the conflict

(iv). The various methods of managing the conflict

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(3). How can the leaders manage or resolve this conflict?

Probe:

(i). what would prompt the community leaders to intervene

(ii). How can the conflict be resolved

(iii). What role should the government play

(iv). Is there any way the conflict could be resolved to the satisfaction of all the involved parties

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Appendix 2

Peace and Conflict Studies Programme,

University of Ibadan, Ibadan

Focus Group Discussions with pastoralists and farmers (community leaders).

Hello Sir/ Madam,

I am a Doctoral (PhD) student, Peace and Conflict Studies Programme, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan. I am conducting a research on a project titled: "an assessment of the methods of managing conflict between pastoralists and Farmers in Benue State, Nigeria". It is my pleasure to inform you that the success of this research depends on your co-operation. Kindly feel free to express your opinions. Your anonymity is guaranteed and all your responses will be treated confidentially. Thank you for your anticipated co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Agbegbedia Anthony.

Instruction: please feel free to express your views on the following questions.

(1). What do you know about the conflict in this community?

Probe:

i. Gender

ii. Age

iii. Education qualification

iv. Religion

v. Ethnic background

vi. Occupation

vii. Marital status

(2). How would you describe the conflict?

Probe:

(i). Knowledge of the conflict

(ii). The causes of the conflict

(iii). The effects of the conflict

(iv). The various methods of managing it

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(3). How can the leaders manage or resolve this conflict?

Probe:

(i). what would prompt the community leaders to intervene

(ii). How can the conflict be resolved

(iii). What role should the government play

(iv). Is there any way the conflict could be resolved to the satisfaction of all the involved parties

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Appendix 3

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PROJECT

Hello Sir/ Madam,

I am a Doctoral (PhD) student, Peace and Conflict Studies Programme, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan. I am conducting a research on a project titled: "an assessment of the methods of managing conflict between pastoralists and Farmers in Benue State, Nigeria". It is my pleasure to inform you that the success of this research depends on your co-operation. Kindly feel free to express your opinions. Your anonymity is guaranteed and all your responses will be treated confidentially. I will appreciate it, if you can spare me some minutes to answer the following questions. Thank you for your anticipated co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Agbegbedia Anthony

SECTION A

In this section, give your answer by marking the appropriate answer.

Sex: male □ female □

Age: 30-35 (□) 36-40 ( ) 41-45( ) 46-50( ) 51-55( ) 56-60 ( ) 60-65 ( ) 60above ( )□

Marital status: married ( ) single ( ) divorced ( )□

Level of education……..

Occupation……..

Religion …….

Ethnic group……

SECTION B

1. What is the name of this community?
2. Are you an indigene of this community? (a) yes (b) no
3. How long have you be living in this community? 6-10years, 10-20years, 20-30years, 30years and above
4. Are there clans and clan heads in this community too? (a) yes (b) no

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5. Do these various clan heads answerable to a particular leader or chairman? (a) yes (b) no

6. What is the major occupation of these people? (a) farming (b) pastoralism (c) civil servant (d) others

7. Has there been any conflict between the farmers and the pastoralists in this community? (a) yes (b) no

8. If the above answer is yes, what then are the major causes of these conflicts? (a) Crops damage (b) lack of confidence in the judicial system (c) activities of young pastoralists (d) others

9. who are the real owner of the land? (a). Pastoralists (b). Farmers (c). government (d) nobody

10. Who are the people that fight during the crisis? (a) youths (b) women (c) both youths and middle age men (d) old men and women.

11. Have the leaders of both parties to the conflicts (that is, the farmer and pastoralists) ever attempted to make peace with each other in a bid to settle their differences? (a) yes (b) no

12. What were the methods adopted in resolving this conflict in the community? (a) informal (b) formal (c) confrontation (d). others

13. What method of conflict settlement do you prefer? (a) court (formal) (b) indigenous (informal) (c) fighting (confrontation) (d) others

14. If formal, why do you prefer it? (a) it is time consuming (b) the cost of litigation is high (c) justice is not accessible (d) it's a loose-win situation (e) all of the above.

15. If indigenous, what are your reasons? (a) the method is cheaper (b) it is faster (c) justice is accessible (d) it's a win win situation (e) all of the above.

16. If confrontation, what are your reasons? (a) it's the quickest option (b) lives are involve (c) properties are destroyed (d) others

17. What are the indigenous methods used in managing the conflict? (a). traditional courts (b). community meetings (c). informal discussion (d). others

18. What are the formal methods used in managing the conflict? (a). arbitration (b). adjudication (c) security agents (d) litigation

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19. Which other alternatives do you prefer, if the formal and informal methods are not effective?

(a) conciliation (b) avoidance (c) collaboration (d) others

20. Are you aware that it is a punishable offence by the government to destroy someone's properties, kill or maim somebody? (a) yes (b) no

21. Are the youths involved in the settlement of conflicts? (a) yes (b) no

22. Are women recognized in the decision taking/making in the community? (a) yes (b) no

23. What is the role of the elders in managing conflict in the community? (a) make peace (b) to promote justice (c) to avoid war (d) all of the above

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Appendix 4

Plate 17: The researcher with a Fulani leader carrying one of his children.
Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

Plate 18: The researcher in front of the hut he stayed during the research.
Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

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Plate 19: The researcher been entertained by some community leaders on arrival.

Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

Plate 20: The researcher in a group picture with some of the Fulani children.

Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

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Plate 21: A hut where community meetings are held and conflicts are resolved.

Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

Plate 22: A Fulani leader with some of his children.

Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

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