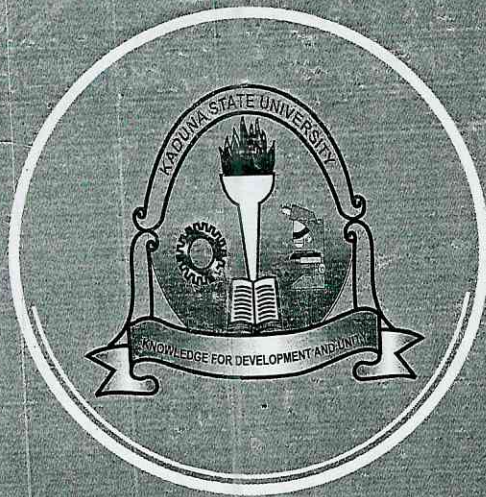




KADUNA JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY (KJS)

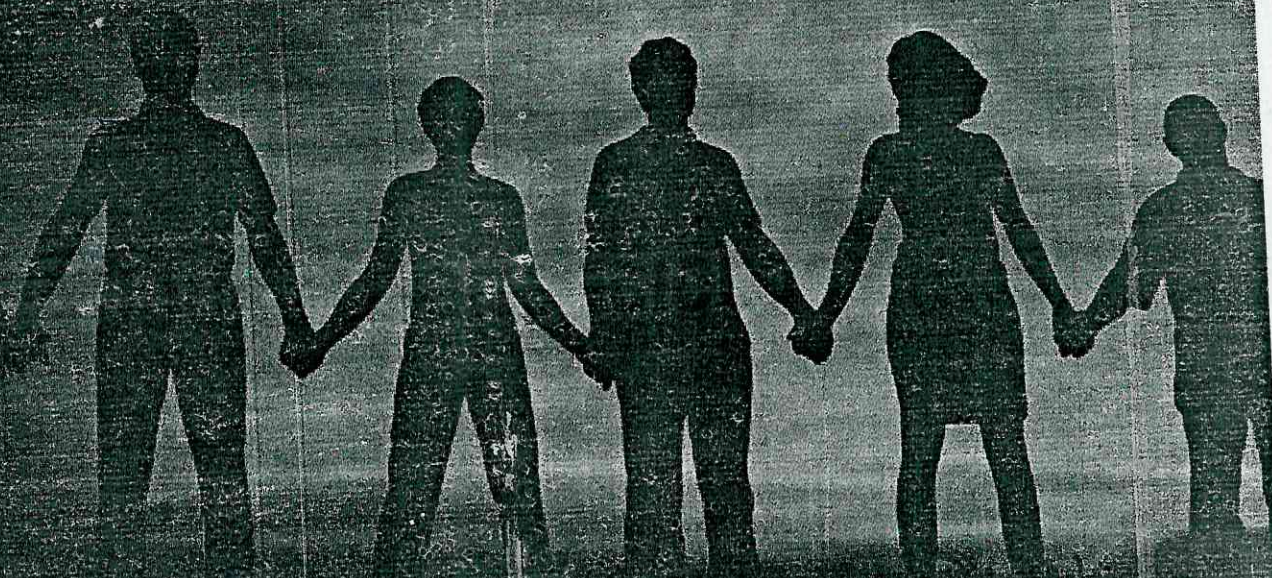
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An Official Journal of the Department of Sociology, Kaduna State University,
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KJS is a scholarly yearly, peer-reviewed and fully-refereed journal covering but not limited to, Anthropology, Sociology, Environmental Studies, Public Health, Demography, Criminal Justice, Development Studies, Industrial Relations, Cultural Studies, Social Work, Home Studies, Public Administration, Ethnography and Sociolinguistics, along with their interfaces. The journal raises issues across disciplinary boundaries and facilitates exchange of views, as well as serves as a forum of social scientists, especially those who share common interests in the understanding of various problems related to contemporary society.

Scope

The journal publishes original papers on current research and practical programmes, policy papers, review articles, short communications and commentaries, book reviews and professional announcements on all aspects of *Sociology and Social Anthropology*. The journal is committed to prompt review, and priority publication is given to manuscripts with novel or timely findings, and to manuscripts of unusual interests.

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- Manuscripts should be printed on one side of an A4 type white paper; a space of 2.5 cm should be left on the left, right, top and bottom margins of each page.
- Headings should be in title case and subheadings in lower case; both headings and subheadings should be bold and numbered.
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Causes of Intergroup Conflicts between Herdsmen and Farmers in North-Central Nigeria: A Theoretical Discussion

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Abstract

Naturally, man is created to live in groups, and through group life, man has been able to overcome many challenges of nature. However, despite numerous benefits inherent in group living, it could also be source of problems in some instances especially when the groups existing in a society differ in terms of one social property or the other. Practically, Nigeria is a society consisting of different social groups delineated on several social variables ranging from language, ethnicity, belief system, cultural and occupational background. These social variables have been the basis of social categorization and have been source of differences and conflicts among various social groups existing in the country. In contemporary Nigeria, cases of intergroup conflicts are becoming too prevalent. An example of such is the prevalent intergroup conflicts between the Fulanis who are usually herders and the natives who are usually farmers. This paper theoretically examines the causes of inter-group conflict between the Fulani herders and the native farmers in the North-Central Nigeria. As a theoretical discussion, narrative research approach was used to achieve the study objective. Based on the position of the theories, the paper observed that intergroup conflicts between the Fulani herders and the native farmers were consequences of certain socio-economic cum political factors and the paper recommended that some measures should be taken in order to resolve problems of inter-group relations between the two groups.

Keywords: Group; Intergroup relations; Conflict, Fulani herders; Native farmers,

Introduction

Human beings are one of the few higher animals that live in groups, the necessity of social life has made group living indispensable among human animals. The necessity of group living makes Aristotle (the great Greek philosopher) describe man as basically a social animal (*Zoom Politikon*); he remarked that man's life outside the social group makes him either a 'god' or a 'beast' (Shankar-Rao, 1997). Technically, the study of human social group in one form or the other has been the major thrust of many Social Science disciplines. In the view of Imogene (1978), the numbers of existing human groups on earth far outnumbered the human population; this is so because, in modern societies, individuals usually belong to more than one group. For instance, an individual could belong to say: 'a family group', 'church group' 'religious group' 'educational group', 'age group' 'neighborhood group' 'occupational group' and so on. Fundamentally, the reason why the number of human groups is so many is because social relationships are delineated based on varying socio, political, economic, physical, work, (etc) characteristics in which all

individuals naturally belong to two or more of the existing social categories. Basically, the indispensability of social living which makes group living inevitable for human being also makes inter-group relations unavoidable.

Intergroup relations are forms of interactions between two or more distinct groups. This could be through trade, migrations, marriages and so on. Inter-group relations is a feature that is unique to only the human animal, and through it, the human animal has been able to make several giant strides in the history of existence, through intergroup relations, people of different groups come together in order to solve most of the notable challenges that have besieged the human world. Several local, national and international organizations such as the African Union (AU); Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), United Nations Organization (UNO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and so on are composition of people derived from positive or negative intergroup relations. This is the reason some researchers conceived that intergroup relation is one of the extrinsic characteristics of modern societies.

Nigeria is a nation made up several human groups, who have been engaging in series of intergroup relations long before the coming of Europeans, even during the period of colonialism, the people of the present day Nigeria were still relating with one another in one way or the other. Hodgkin (1960) summarized the shared patterns of intergroup relations among the various ethnic groups that made up the present day Nigeria thus:

A variety of links existed between the various states and peoples which were the predecessors of modern Nigeria: between Kanem-Bornu, the Hausa states, Nupe, the Jukun Kingdom, the Empires of Oyo and Benin, the Delta States, and the loosely associated Ibo communities. These relationships expressed themselves through diplomacy, treaties, the visits of wandering scholars, the diffusion of political and religious ideals, the borrowing of techniques, and above all trade (Hodgkin, 1960:2).

However, it would be erroneous to conclude on the premise that all is well among several groups, cohabiting or inter-relating with one another in human societies, most times, due to the nature of human animal, inter-group relations are not always rosy, rather it sometimes took the way of conflict in form of competition, colonization, discrimination, alienation, subjugation, intimidation, extermination, war and so on. In Nigeria, the pattern of intergroup relations has assumed a worrisome dimension, this is evident in high numbers of intergroup conflicts occurring between and among several groups that made up the entity called Nigeria (Alanamu, 2005; Fayeye, 2006; Asamu, 2006), some of such are the prevalent occurrence of inter-religious violence, political violence, inter-ethnic rivalry, community clashes to mention but few which usually lead to wanton destruction of lives and properties.

Specifically, the pattern of intergroup relations between the Fulani herders and the Native Farmers is increasingly becoming an issue-of concern. It is becoming an issue because of the prevalent conflicts that occur between these two opposing groups in most places where the two groups co-habit. Although some school of thought perceived conflict as 'an engine of progress' but the conception of this article is that inter-group conflict causes lots of threats and rancour to the peaceful socio-political co-existence of people, there is need therefore to look into specific causes of intergroup conflicts between these two groups, through such effort, it would be possible not only to improve the pattern of inter-group relations among the two groups but will also go a long way in bringing about peaceful co-existence, socio-political development of the people and a society where peace and tranquility reigns. Although studies have been conducted on the prevalent rates of intergroup animosities between the two groups but not much of such studies have discussed the specific causes of the intergroup rivalries. Furthermore, even some studies that examined the causal factors have failed to situate these causes within a specific theoretical

framework. It is based on the above that this research work, through theoretical juxtaposition, looked into the causes of intergroup conflicts between Herdsmen and Farmers in North-Central Nigeria.

The Nature of Group and inter-group relations

Every human society consists of aggregate of people (human congregation) but mere congregation of people in an environment does not make them a social group. A social group emerges when two or more people are in direct or indirect contact and communication. The word 'group' is a term which in common usage lacks exactness or precision, rather, it is a term loaded with several meanings and understanding based on the angle from which an individual is looking into it. The relevance of the term in human social living has made it to have attracted the attention of many philosophers and scholars. According to Lewin (1948); Cartwright (1951); Mills (1967), a group is a class of social entities having in common the property of interdependence among their constituent members; it is not similarity or dissimilarity of individuals that constitutes a group, but interdependence of various segments of the social collectivity. According to Forsyths (2006:1) 'A group is defined as two or more individuals who are connected to one another by social relationships'. According to Emory cited in Shankar-Rao (1997:276) a social group is "a number of persons, two or more, who have common object of attention, who are stimulating to each other, who have common loyalty and which participate in similar activities.

Characteristically, some of the features of social group include: at least two or more individuals, existence of social interaction among members, common interest, 'we feeling', mutual awareness, existence of group norms and development of similar behaviours. In terms of classification, social groups are classified on several categories as formal and informal group, primary and secondary group, organised and un-organised group, in-group and out-group and so on. Technically, society is made up of different groups such as political group, religious group, business group, gender group, political group, tribal group, ethnic group and so on. By principle, when these differing social groups interact with one another in a way or the other, then such interactions or relationship is technically referred to as intergroup relations. Intergroup relation has been described as the social interactions or social relationship existing between or among two or more groups in the society. On a parochial analysis, inter-group relations connotes a harmonious social relationship between or among various groups in the society, however, on a critical level, it connotes any form of relationship cordial or casual, friendly or hostile, cooperative or competitive, harmonious or conflictual. In other words, inter-group relations could take various forms such as corporation, harmony, peaceful co-existence, competition, discrimination, rivalry, discrimination, conflict and so on. Factors which determine pattern of inter-group relations in a society include 'comparative size of the groups, the balance between their concentrations in and dispersal from their specific territorial location, the underlying cultural patterns, their historical background and the degree of competition for the scarce resources available within the geographical location' (Egharevba, 2007:181)

Conflict Defined

On a general sense, conflict connotes any form of disequilibrium in social interactions. Conflict though most times un-wanted but it is undoubtedly a normal consequence of social relationship (Asemah, 2011). Conflict is a universal phenomenon for it exists in all human societies from primitive to modern and post modern societies. Conflict is so inherent in social relationship that Karl Marx described it as 'inevitable consequence of social relationship' and an 'engine of progress'; that is, conflict naturally occur in any social relationship and that, without the existence of conflict in social relationship, the human world cannot progress steadily. Elaigwu (2005) described conflict as the spice of every state which tests the fragility or otherwise of the state and creates the basis of future amelioration or adjustments. Conflict occurs in virtually every social relationship from inter-personal, to group and to societal level; from the family level to most advanced formal and informal relationships.

Conflict, according to Wilson (1997:163), is "any situation which results into controversy, struggle, strife or contention and in consequence brings about either a state of compatibility between humans or a crisis within the society". According to Obot (2004), conflict is a case of disagreement (mild or severe, visible or hidden) between individuals or groups in a particular society, usually caused by opposing interests and resulting into an act of violence. Wilson (2004) notes that conflict find expression in a communicable form such as violence, assault, rivalry, discrimination, war and so on. What could be deduced from the above is that conflict is not only inherent in all social relationship but it is also a mechanism needed for the development of human societies. However, conflicts beyond certain thresholds are detrimental to the survival of the state, precisely because they threatened the basis of social interactions (Eliagwu, 2011).

Bye and large, conflict though an inevitable consequence of social relationship is detested by human being due to the negative and catastrophic consequences it usually bring about in social relationship. In most cases, conflict serve as bane in human society because it usually lead to unwanted consequences such as violence, maiming, destruction of lives and properties, threat to peaceful co-existence and a general setback to human society. In relation to our present discussion, the intergroup conflictual relationship that exists between herders and native farmers in the North-Central Nigeria should be a thing of concern due to the catastrophic consequences such conflicts are having on the general well being of the people in the area as well as the country at large.

Patterns of Intergroup Relations between the Fulani Herders and Native Farmers in North-Central Region of Nigeria

Though, there are many ethnic groups in Nigeria but this paper is concerned with the Fulani ethnic group and other ethnic groups in North Central Region of Nigeria. While the Fulanis are herders (cattle rearers), the other ethnic groups are usually farmers (crop farmers). More so, while the farmers are usually the indigenes, the herders are usually settlers. Fundamentally, apart from the fact that the two groups have different historical origins and cultural backgrounds, the common occurrence is that the herders (consciously or un-consciously) usually transgress with their herds by intruding into the farm yard of the natives thereby destroying crops, which is the mainstay of their economy. These fundamental differences have been source of misunderstanding and conflict between the two groups even in places where they have lived together for decades. In essence, pattern of inter-group relations between the native farmers and Fulani herders in this region is delineated on several bases such as tribal, ethnic and occupational differences (Nwese, 2005).

Due to the above, the pattern of intergroup relations between these two ethnic categories is one based on incessant conflict and rivalry and this have made the two groups developed the orientation of 'in-group' and 'out-group' - a pattern of inter-group relations, which usually result into incessant conflict and violence. These fundamentals depict the nature and dynamics of intergroup relations between the Fulani herders and the native farmers in Nigeria. Technically, this negative pattern of inter-group relations is a consequence of high level of competition over scarce resources (mainly grazing and farm lands). This is further enhanced by other divergent socio-political variables such as religion, group size, cultural patterns, historical patterns and so on ((Ingawa, Ega & Erhabor, 1999; Nyong, 2010).

Cases of Intergroup Conflicts between Fulani Herders and Native Farmers in North Central Nigeria

Cases of intergroup conflicts between the Fulani herders and the native farmers in Nigeria have been recorded as far back as 1920s, For instance, around the Mambila Plateau, present day Taraba State, there were sporadic incidents of conflicts between Mambila farmers and pastoralists as far back as 1923 (Migeod, 1925, cited in Blench, 2010). The cause of the conflict is that Mambila Plateau is an area suitable for grazing, during the raining season, the Fulani moved to the top of the Plateau and move down during the dry season, this opportunity of getting suitable avenue for grazing all year round is highly profitable to the Fulani herders. But because, initially, the Fulani herders are not many, the area is able to contained the whole inhabitants (settlers and

natives/indigenes) and little inter-group conflict is heard among them at this initial period because the 'sky space is enough for the birds to fly without interrupting one another'. However, as time goes on, the herders moved in their large number to the Plateau from various locations within and outside the country, the high concentration of the Fulani around the Mambilla Plateau makes the area become volatile for conflict because not only that available natural resources on which both herders and farmers live on reduce but also the natives and the herders increase geometrically. This socio-environmental disequilibrium is naturally one of the major factors causing negative inter-group relations pattern between the two groups.

Between 1996 and 2002, 49 cases of conflicts between native farmers and Fulani pastoralists in Kogi State were reported (Ajuwon, 2004). Nweze (2005) also reported that between 1996 and 2005, 19 people died and 42 people injured in the native farmers Fulani herders conflicts in Kogi State. Ajuwon (2004), Nweze (2005), Tonah (2006), Abbass (2009), and Blench (2010) summarized the incidents of intergroup conflicts between the Fulani herders and native farmers between 2002 and 2003 in Nigeria thus:

- (a) January 8, 2002: dozens of people died and hundreds were displaced in clashes between local farming communities and nomadic Fulani herders in Mambilla plateau, Northeastern Nigeria. The fight broke out in Tonga Maina village following a dispute over grazing land.
- (b) February 22, 2002: at least 23,000 Fulani herders fled Nigeria's Eastern Taraba State to Cameroon to escape clashes which broke out between several communities in Mambilla Plateau.
- (c) May 30, 2002: at least 10 people died in clashes between nomadic Fulani herdsmen and local people in parts of central Nigeria's Plateau State. These fights were part of an emerging pattern since a major upheaval in 2001 in the State capital, Jos, in which more than 500 people died.
- (d) June 20, 2002: at least 30 people were killed in clashes between farmers and herders in Barkin Ladi local council area of Plateau State. The clashes were sparked by a dispute over grazing land in the village of Kassa.
- (e) July 15, 2002: at least 12 people were killed in an outbreak of ethnic and religious violence between Fulani herders and agricultural people in the Plateau State, in North central Nigeria. Farmers blame some of the attacks on Fulani herdsmen who, would have been seeking to avenge the death of one of their chiefs in the September 2001 Jos conflict. The herdsmen in turn accused the indigenes of giving them ultimatums to leave land which, for decades, had been their traditional grazing areas.
- (f) March 4, 2003: more than 100 people were killed in clashes between ethnic groups living side-by-side and competing for limited resources in the Northeastern state of Adamawa.

In contemporary days, the intergroup conflict between the Fulani herders and native farmers have assumed militancy dimension. The situation has degenerated to the extent that some extremely aggressive groups are now emerging. Examples of such groups are the aggressive 'Udawa' and 'Bokoloji' pastoralists, which usually use sophisticated weapons such as guns, advanced communication devices to confront their rivals (Pyramid Trust, July 17, 2009). Tipto, Kisa, Samne, Bangi, Wurke, and Gure communities in Lamurde local government area of Adamawa State were invaded in 2010 by Fulani herders with dangerous weapons. The incident left a number of people dead (New Nigerian, February 1, 2010). Between 8th and 10th February, 2010, armed Fulani numbering between 200 and 500 sacked three districts in Gwer Local Government,

unleashing an orgy of violence and killing. Many people were killed and many were rendered homeless (Iyorwuese, 2013). On March 5, 2012, many Fulani herders crossed River Benue into Benue State. They were armed with AK47, Mark4 and other assault weapons. They attacked various communities and left unconfirmed numbers of people dead and farmlands were burned. They also invaded the Tiv farming communities, marching through a distance of thirty kilometers from Tse Abatse Mbamegh to Tse Joo. They killed all men, women and children on the way (Iyorwuese, 2013). Table 1 shows the pervasiveness and intensity of the intergroup antagonism between the Fulani and the local people in Northern Nigeria in 2013.

Table 1: Summary of Major Cases of Fulani Herders and Native Farmers Conflicts in North-Central Nigeria

Date	Case	Number of Death
January 1	Jukun/Fulani clash in Taraba State	5
January 15	Fulani clash with native farmers in Nasarawa State	10
January 20	Fulani clash with native farmers in Nasarawa State	25
January 24	Fulani clash with native farmers in Plateau State	9
February 7	Fulani/Eggon clash in Nasarawa State	30
March 20	Fulani/Tarok clash in Jos, Plateau State	18
March 28	Clashes between the Fulani herders and Riyom native farmers in Plateau State	28
March 29/30	Clashes between the Fulani and natives in Bokkos areas of Bokkos Local Government Area of Plateau	18
March 30	Police killing in clashes between farmers and Fulani	6
April 3	Fulani herders and native farmers clashes in Guma Local government Area of Benue State	3
April 10	Clash between the Fulani and Tiv farmers	28
April 23	Fulani/Egbe farmers clashes in Kogi State	5
May 4	Fulani/farmers clashes in Plateau State	13
May 4	Jukun/Fulani clash in Wukari, Taraba State	39
May 13	Fulani/Agatu clash in Benue State	50
May 20	Tiv/Fulani clash at Benue-Nasarawa border	23

Source: Sunday Trust, May 26, 2013, P.1

Table 1 shows the prevalent cases of intergroup conflict between herdsmen and native farmers in the North-Central Nigeria. it shows that most of the conflicts occurred in 2013 and also shows 300 persons were killed in the conflicts. The Herald Newspaper of 25th of October, 2013 reported the mayhem that occurred between Fulanis and Yoruba in Alapa area in Asa local government area of kwara state where about 10 people were killed and property worth millions of Naira were destroyed. What could be deduced from this analysis so far is that, the pattern of inter-group relations between the herders and farmers in many areas the two groups cohabit is not harmonious, rather it is a relationship based on hatred, violence, maiming and incessant killing of one another. At this juncture, it is important we note that these conflicts do not just occur, rather, they are caused by varying factors and these factors need to be examined if the incidence of conflict between the two groups could be brought to check, then there is the need to look into the causes of this social problem. In this respect, the next sub-section of this presentation is used to theoretically examine the causes of prevalent inter-group conflict between the herders and the native farmers in most areas they co-habit.

Causes of Intergroup conflict between Fulani Herdsmen and native Farmers in North-Central Nigeria: the Theoretical Anchorage

The role of theory in research cannot be over emphasized. Osuala (1982) sees a theory to be an attempt at synthesizing and integrating empirical observations for maximum clarification. In a similar view, Siege and Senna (1988) defined theory as a statement that explains the relationship between social facts and concepts in a meaningful way. In this paper, the theoretical assumptions were used to explain the fundamental causal factors responsible for the incessant incidence of conflicts between herders and farmers in parts of the Northern regions of the country. Theoretical positions that were considered in this regard were highlighted below:

(1) The Malthusian Theory

According to Olatunji (2011), the population of a society has a very important role to play in the general ways the social structure of the country would be. Though, in the past, population increase has been observed to contribute positively to societal development. Contrarily, the positive functions of population increase have been challenged by social thinkers such as T.R Malthus. Rev T.R Malthus gave a serious treatment to the problem of population increase in his essay published in 1798 titled: "Essay on the Principle of Population as it affects the Future Improvement of Society". Malthus was worried over the tendency of population to outgrow food supplies. He felt that population grows in geometrical progression - 1,2,4,8, - while the means of subsistence (land, food supplies) increases in arithmetic progression - 1,2,3,4 - Malthus had warned that unchecked population could bring about a situation whereby scarcity of resources will result into serious environmental destruction, chaos, conflict, hunger, poverty and under development (Olatunji, 2003).

Applying this conception to this presentation, the substantive population growth of the Fulanis (UNO, 2012), necessitated the need for more grazing lands to feed their cattle. As they move southwards, they face fierce competition from the natives or indigenes that are in most cases farmers. This competition often translates into serious intergroup clashes. In other words, it is assumed within the premise of this theoretical assumption that the increase in population of both the farmers and herders will automatically reduce the marginal available land resources that will be used for farming and grazing. Whereas, as both groups strive to make a balance for the increased population, the available land-resources will become inadequate for this purpose, hence the possibility encroaching into one another's land thereby resulting into chaos and conflicts between the two groups. Adogi (2013:7) put it thus:

As the population is increasing, definitely there will be an increase in demand for land as well, also, water, forest products and grazing land within the territories inhabited by Fulani and native farmers; these groups are forced to find new ways to cope with different types of conflict at once because of competition over marginal resources.

The potential of inter-group rivalry becomes higher as the two groups share different historical background to the land, thereby making the two parties claiming rightful ownership of the land. The concern of this school of thought is that, this wouldn't have occurred if not for the increase in population which was not accompanied by increase in natural resources (Ingawa, Ega, and Erhabor, 1999). Population growth denotes that more land is being cultivated and less is available for pastures. This may force the Fulani Herders to move and tramp on crops cultivated by the native farmers. This development has therefore increased the antagonism between the herders and the farmers (Nyong, 2010).

Due to the importance of farm crops to the natives and the relevance of cattle to the livelihood of the herders, inter-group conflict is imminent between the two groups because of the damage the two groups caused to these farm products (Crop and Cattle). Abbas (2012:331) aptly describes the socio-economic and cultural importance of the cattle to the Fulani when he said: "our

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herd is our life because, to every nomad, life is worthless without his cattle. What do you expect from us when our source of existence is threatened? The encroachment of grazing field or tampering with our cattle by native farmers is a call to war". The quotation below aptly captured the situation further:

The consequent rapid growth in population has caused the farmers to struggle for farmland which is becoming scarce by the day. With this development, grazing areas that were hitherto abundant are being taken over by scattered small farms, making grazing in these extremely difficult. This provides fertile grounds for the intergroup hostility between Fulani herders and the Jukun/Agatu/Tiv/Egbe farmers in the region (Ayih, 2003:10-15, emphasis added)

The Malthusian view was supported by some scholars like Kaplan (1994) and Blitt (1998) who argued that resource scarcity can cause violent intra-state conflict. On the whole, the argument of the Malthusian school is that the fundamental cause of inter-group conflicts between herders and farmers in Nigeria is disequilibrium between the level of population growth and land resources available for economic use of the groups. This is so because inadequate grazing lands for the Fulani herders and farm lands for the native farmers have been one of the major causes of intergroup hostilities between the two groups. Although the Malthusian explanations could be faulted on the basis that it cannot provide an all-inclusive argument to explain other causes of inter-group conflicts between the two identified groups in this study but the theory has explained one of the critical factors accounting for the upsurge of intergroup animosity between the herders and the native farmers in the North-Central Nigeria.

(2) The Eco-Violence Theory

This theory was developed by Homer-Dixon in (1994). It is an eclectic theoretical paradigm, which derived its wholeness from the scholarly contributions of 'developmental geography' and 'cultural ecology' in the 1970s and 1980s (Bryant, 1998). The major conception of this theory is that, human being in a bid to satisfy his economic needs has been violent with the eco-system and by that has caused damage to it. Since its emergence as a theoretical perspective, eco-violence has sought primarily to understand the dynamics surrounding material and discursive struggles over the protection of environment in African countries (Bryant, 1998). This theory also held that there is a significant relationship between environmental degradation (desert encroachment, drought and famine) and violent conflicts. Homer-Dixon (1994) used three hypotheses to link environmental problems with violent conflict. First, he suggested that decreasing supplies of physically controllable environmental resources, such as clean water and good agricultural land, would provoke conflicts. The second hypothesis stated that large population movements caused by environmental stress would induce 'group-identity' conflicts, especially ethnic clashes. The third hypothesis suggested that severe environmental deficiency would simultaneously increase economic deprivation and disrupt key social institutions, which in turn would cause deprivations and conflicts such as civil strife and insurgency. Homer-Dixon (1999:30) summarizes the basic tenets of the theory thus:

migration has been a threat to peaceful co-existence in modern social living not only in Nigeria but also in many African countries where these herders live. The herders need to imbibe modern techniques of keeping herds and shun their traditional methods which usually results into chaotic inter-group relations. Also, the farmers also can solve most of the problems relating to infertility or inadequacy of land by imbibing modern farming techniques, if these modern techniques are cultivated, the tendency for maximum yield that would cater for the ever-increasing population growth and an enhanced economic return on farm produce will be guaranteed and hence there will be no need to strive for a large area of land before farming could take place. This is one of the major ways through which the problems of scarcity of viable land resources (which has been observed as one of the major cause of conflict between the groups) could be solved.

Also, government should also find every means to properly check desertification as it is one of the major factors accounting for recent increase in the frequency and intensity of intergroup hostilities between the Fulani herders and the native farmers in Nigeria as well as some other West Africa countries. West African countries on the fringes of the Sahara Desert should intensify their afforestation programs in order to slow down, if not completely stem the advance of the desert. Planting trees, or any form of vegetation could actually help check the encroachment of the desert. This will go a long way not only in reducing intergroup hostilities between the Fulani herders and native farmers in Nigeria but will also bring about improvement in the ecological system of the region.

More so, there is the need for Nigerian government to collaborate with the governments of neighboring countries to curtail the indiscriminate migration of the Fulani herders from other countries into Nigeria. In other words, the nomadic push into and across the country should be checkmated. Evidences have shown that rapid incursion of non-Nigerian Fulani herders is making the conflict more intense. Therefore, another necessary step needed in controlling this seemingly protracted intergroup antagonism is to ensure that the country's borders are well secured against invasions by non-Nigerian Fulani herders.

Furthermore, Non Government Organizations (NGOs) also have a role to play in bringing lasting peaceful and harmonious intergroup co-existence between the Fulani herders and the native farmers in Nigeria. There is need for viable NGOs on farmer-herdsmen conflict management, especially in the areas of awareness, education, prevention, and amelioration. Even, the very first recommendation made in this study can be achieved through the effort of NGOs. Traditional and local leaders should be well involved in finding solutions to intergroup conflicts between the Fulani herders and native farmers in Nigeria. They should sensitize and encourage their subjects or kinsmen to respect each other's rights in their interactions. 'Settler/Indigene dichotomy should be resolved once and for all. This is necessary because conflict abound in areas where there is intense 'in-group/out-group feelings'.

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