

Loss of Intergroup Relation and Conflict Escalation: The Case of Farmer-Herder Conflicts in Kaduna State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Conflict occurrences is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria, however, the recent escalation of it between the rearing and farming communities in Kaduna state 2011-2017 have become a major challenge that have not received much attention. The reasons identified by the previous researchers did not reflect on the present escalating conflict situation in the area between the two communities. This therefore prompted the researcher and make it necessary to further investigate why the escalation within the stated period. The study explored the dynamic wave of the conflict through qualitative design method. In-depth face to face interview and focus group discussion (FGD) were conducted with 29 participants in the affected area in the state. Documentaries and various reports were also utilised for triangulation of data using MAXQDA 2018 software for thematic analysis. Attitudes, Behaviour and contradictions variables of ABC Galtonian triangle model was adopted for interpretation. The findings show that several attitudinal as well as behavioural factors had influenced the existing irreconcilable value contradictions among the two groups leading to the escalation of the resource conflict between: loss of intergroup relation education and superiority complex and cattle rustling emerged centrally in the midst of contradictory value leading to escalation of the conflict.

Keywords: Intergroup Relation, Conflict, Escalation.

Introduction

Throughout the evolutionary process of man, clashes of interest and values often arises leading to conflict, though, Ocheja (2019) stated that conflict is inevitable among human interactions but only to be managed. The struggle and distribution of power among nation states and societies, ideological as well as religious differences makes conflicts to occur that needs effective cooling mechanism. This gave birth to United Nation Organisation in 1945 with peace agenda (Halliru, 2018). WWI and WWII were good example of conflicts that ravages mankind due to clashes of interest. Within the African region, the attacks by Al-Shabab and Darfur in Somalia and Sudan were based on either power struggle, diversities, socio-economic, boundary, ethnicity or religious differences. Conflicts is therefore a replica of most heterogeneous African societies (Adisa, 2015 and Selassie, 1992).

Nigeria being the ninth largest country on this planet (larger than Belgium, France and United Kingdom) consist some degree of diversities to a certain extent affecting the people in the process of achieving a nationhood. Unlike other countries with similar ethnic diversities but were able to manage it and achieved reasonable advancement, Nigeria's development and progress have beign retereded with lack of unity due to polarities among. This however theorise that seeming equal proportion of the diverse ethnic nationalities interms of religious affiliations confirmed the role of ethnicity and treligiosity in the country's pace of development. It is important to note that conflicts of various nature and dimension tok place in nigeria with Kaduna state as one of the most heat state in the religious dimension. Of recent time, conflicts ensured between cropping and grasing communities in southern part of Kaduna state strtng from 2011. Many efforts were made by different governments from 2011 but the situation continue.

Literature Reviews

Conflict studies related to farmers-herders has been extensively written researchers, but their focus differs in the aspect of socio-economic, political, cultural and religious differences of the two groups but engaging in related economic activities. Other researchers argued from agricultural dimension, with some highlighting historical antecedents as a cause. For instance, clashes between the two groups is very critical as both of them constitute a large population of almost equal size. Additionally, both groups actively engage in similar economic activities requiring fertile land for production. From the various reports accessed, conflicts between them continued at different point in time, and the degree of damages to human, livestock and properties are paramount. Previously, scholars have claimed various causes for conflicts in general happening in the state. Some have argued it is due to ethnic dissimilarities between the various tribes in the state as Olatunji (2016) claimed that conflict is a character of pluralist states. There are group of scholars such as Uji (2016), Amanambu & Umuobiala (2017) and Halliru (2018)

whom also saw religion divides as the triggering point to the conflicts, while there are few scholars who stressed that it was due to the external activities of the existing terrorist/militancy /Boko Haram groups, especially in the present years (Amanambu & Umuobiala (2017). Although scholars have come up with some of these reasons for the occurrence of conflicts and several measures taken to response to it, but conflict between the duo continue to escalate different dimension.

However, conflicts between the farming and grassing communities in the area persist and escalated from 2011 till present time despite the submission by researchers. The situation is more intense within 2011-2018 as compared to pre 2011. Previous studies on the conflict by Mench and Edward (2014) examines geographical nearness of the two communities leading to cohabitation. Olaniyan and Okeke Uzodueka (2015), Mbaeze and Nnaji (2018), Akinkumi (2018), Omleye and Segun (2018) pointed out that change in climatology leads to for and unwanted migration of the livestock communities whereas Akinyele, Atelle (2014), Winkler (2017), Jumba (2018), Audu (2013) and Ladan (2014) on climate effects, natural resources and freshwater scarcity. Other scholars such as Uji (2016), Maingwa (2017), Amanambu & Umuobiala (2017) viewed the renewed attacks on religiosity and ethnic militias, this differences causes intolerance. On the conflict effects Akejobi, Ebira and Amuzie (2016), Alimba (2014); Halliru, Ezeonmuka and Igwe (2016), Adeoye (2017), McDougal (2015) highlighted on welfarism and livelihood of most families thereby reducing their income. Put differently, Ikezue and Ezeah (2017), Mohammad and Bibi (2015), Omokhoa and Okuchukwu (2018), Sunday (2013), Ladan, Dourotoy and Anyabe et.al (2014), (2018) & (2017) have presented encroachment and population upsurge as a point, with Eraye, Iyang and Ukpong (2017), Eke (2017) blaming authority for its negligence.

Given these highlights in the previous works of researchers, government often response is by ‘force peace’ using security personnel to immediately arrest the situation and bring peace and order in the affected areas. According to the reports in the previous works, authorities concern in many instances permanently stationed security personnel. Earlier on in the part of government, unification policies were introduced in the 70’s and in the recent time to address the existing polarity among different nationalities of the Nigerian state. Such policies introduced covers educational, socio-economic as well as political. For instance, unity schools, national youth service corp scheme, principle of federalism for equal representation in governance, poverty alleviation programs, N-power, trader money and yoths for agriculture program. However, despite all these, conflict continou to occur giving the need to look at the situation again between these two groups further deeper considering the escalation of the situation within the timeframe. Hence, this merit an investigation on why the escalation of the conflict by attacks and counter attacks between the two communities within 2011-2019, and how the escalation affects the involving communities and larger society as well?. Therefore, the believes that what seems to cause conflict in the first place might be dissimilar from the triggering factors leading to escalation overtime. Furthermore, the escalation of the conflicts in the Kaduna state according to Halliru, Omoleye & Okuchukwu (2018); Garba, Gaffey (2016) & Ajazeera report (2014) is affecting every tribe in the state and the country at large due to cosmopolitan nature of the state. This has therefore widened the tension in the country at anytime the conflicts broke out in the state. Kaduna is therefore, a miniature of the Nigerian state, with degree of political relevance representing the 19 northern states giving its geographical nearness to the capital of Nigeria is a reason to be reckoned with as stated by Omoleye & Segun (2018), Gyong (2013) and Mijah (2014).

Additionally, earlier studies on general conflict in the state have focused more on the measures taken to settle religious conflicts in Nigeria. There are studies devoted on ethno-religious in Kaduna, but they emphasize on different angles such as on ethnic identity and causes of conflicts in Kaduna in the earlier period and on other ethnic groups (Ikezue & Ezeah, 2017; Olateju, 2017; John, 2015; Fatai, 2016; Omoleye & Segun, 2018; Ojo & lateju, 2010; Ugorji, 2016; Suleiman, 2011; Akinyemi, 2018; Angrabrandt, 2015, Ladan, 2013; Ogboru & Adejonwo-Osho, 2018; Onapajo & Abubakar, 2015).The coverage of the previous studies relating to conflict in the state from 1980 to 2017 could be summarised in graphic form as follows:

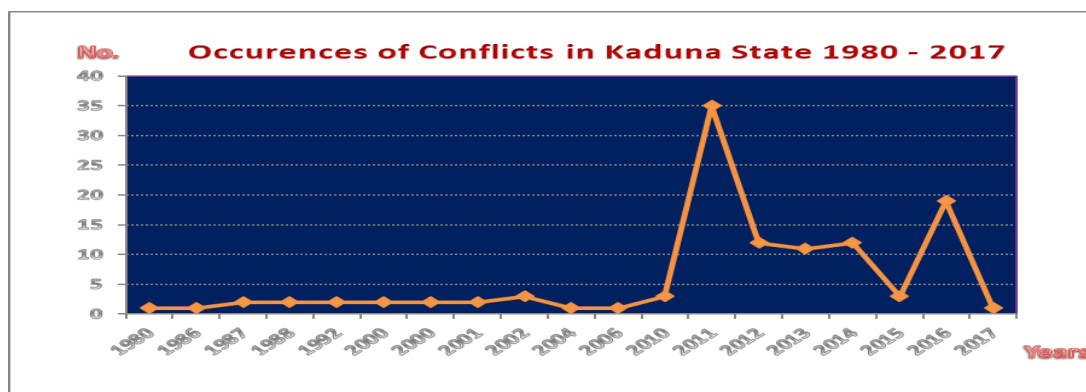


Figure 1: Occurrences of conflict indicating escalation within the chosen period
Source: (NEMA & SEMA 2017)

The above graphic data (Figure 1) is collated from emergency management agencies of national and state level indicating conflict occurrences in Kaduna state. It is important to note that conflict is not a new phenomenon in the state, but has escalated within the time frame 2011-2017. However, the researcher is concern with the following: Why the escalation of the conflict between the two communities from 2011 till present time given the highlights of the previous studies on conflict in the state?

Galtung ABC triangle model

It is on this background that the zeal of the study concerns on the escalation and continued reoccurrences of the resource conflict between the two mutually related farming and animal grassing communities in southern part of the Kaduna state focusing from the year 2011 till date. Therefore, the study utilises the three aspects of Galtung ABC conflict triangulation model, namely: *Attitude, Behaviour and Contradictions* to explain the conflict escalation. The combination of these variables would enable the researcher to analyse the complexities in the conflict which could start from any of the triangle point to involve all other angles (Galtonian, 2009). The presumption of the theory is that social conflict arises between and among groups in their day-to-day attitudinal and behavioural interactions with irreconcilable goals, values, needs and interest known as contextual cause.

Methodology

The research used qualitative methods to generate appropriate data for analyses and interpretation to narrate events instead of statistical numeration or figures. A total of 29 participants, 22 of them on face-to-face in-depth interviews and group of 7 men for focus group discussion (fGD) using a snowballing technique. A semi structures question was provided based on the research objective with ideas emanating from the participants whom are active stake holders in the resource conflict between the two communities. In the descriptive analyses, MAXQDA 2018 software was used for coding to identify themes.

Thematic Data Presentation and Analysis

The identified themes were discovered from the participant's contribution in answering the escalation of the conflicts between the two communities as the research objective. The identified themes revolve around arising conflicting situation due to intergroup bias from stereotyping and prejudices because of existing differences among groups. The reality is that the pastoralism and farming are some of the oldest professions in the world. The spiritual history of two occupations lies with the two children of Adam Kane and Abel, one murdered the other simply because of the issue of whose sacrifice is accepted the most. Of the two children Kane and Able, one is a professional farmer while the other is a herdsman, so he reared sheep and other animals. This important factor is getting back to the early children of Adam who lived his life on earth as a farmer while his fourth generation of children (Seth) as pastoralists. The detailed interviews for the study revealed that about 24 out of the 29 respondents in all the categories [A] [B] [C] [D] and [E] as well as FGD respondents have agreed that the intergroup relations in form of cooperation's and exchange between the Fulani's and the farmers in southern Kaduna have vanished culminating into prevailing attacks and conflicts situation between the two groups. Their responses however highlighted three ways through which loss of intergroup relations has contributed as coded by

MAXQDA 2018 output figure 1.2 below. According to informants 1, 5 and 13 from category A, B and C generally states that:

“...despite the camouflaging and presentation of Nigeria as a united nation state, the bicker, animosity, hostility, hatred and suspicion become an avenue for worry and concern among diversities in southern Kaduna” (In-depth interview with respondent A1, 23rd October 2017).

Due to that it has escalated the degree of conflict between the two groups in the area. From the findings loss of intergroup relations has severed the relations and contribute to the escalation of the conflict between the two groups. However, further view point also showed in three ways subthemes through which the situation has contributed to the conflict escalation that includes: Education and Superiority Complex, Cattle-rustling as well as proliferation of small arms as presented by the respondents below:

Education and Superiority Complex

Superiority complex is an arrogant expression of one's own merit or value as better as and greater than it is. It often means pride, arrogance or egotism in human that is in constant competition with everyone else. Education is one key issues in the formation of behavior that could lead to conflict. It is an attitude as well as life experience activity that places people as good when practicing the former, and bad when the later occur. Respondents mostly in category A have raised a concern and doubt by saying that “...the progressive development of mankind through civilizations should have positively impacted on the morality of human beings”. However, what have been identified by the respondents is that the cordial relation and good neighborliness between the two groups have soared and become negative in the modern time, which some of the respondents attributed that to the negative attitudes of superiority complex of modern Fulani-herder due to acquisition of modern education.

Prior to the present time, Fulani's were only known as animal herders who moves around from one location to another in search of lushly environment for grazing. But recent societal socio-cultural transformation and development have made them (Fulani's) to settle down and acculturate with their hosting communities, thereby enrolling their children in schools for western education for the improvement of man's social life through application of science and technology. Because of this opportunity and new lifestyle by the Fulani-herder, they have now begun to feel superior and rub shoulder with their hosting communities, misinterpreting what is trust by formulating and interpreting simple issues and logic in different ways. It is true that wealth, education and power undoubtedly gives a little sense of pride as Gray (2014) believes that, pride comes up by having a sense of educational ownership in a largely uneducated community. Thus, this pride always affects the modesty of the possessor and surrounding others that often result to underrating of group/community and subsequently unhappy situation and eventual conflict.

In line with this therefore, some respondents argued that, based on tradition of what is happening between the local farmers and the Fulani-herdsmen in southern Kaduna, the Fulani's are given land to settle if they like, but whenever they leave, the land automatically reverts to the original owner. But now they begun to claim equal right due to the pride developed by being educated. Quite significant number of respondents interviewed mostly from category A, B and few in category C and D have agreed on this assertion that, acquiring higher western education by the Fulani people have made them to abuse their humbleness and made them to develop pride in them against the trust giving to them by the farmers. This happened because the modern Fulani-man no longer keep to the tenets that let to good relationship in the past, as result according to the respondent A1, the farmers are no longer in trust to accommodate the Fulani's thereby giving birth to the developed pride and subsequently attacks and conflicts between them:

“These people because they are educated, started laying claims that they are also the original owners. They have now become lawyers, linguists, anthropologies, etc., and begin to turn things round and refused to answer the word ‘settlers’ again but original. so, in essence, claiming of ownership of the land by settlers is the number one cause of the problem”. (In-depth interview with respondent A1, 23rd October 2017).

Meanwhile, respondent A1 precisely revealed how the developed superior attitudes lead to claiming ownership of land by the Fulani's, that,

“...these people because they are educated, started laying claims that they are also the original owners. They have now become lawyers, linguists, anthropologies, etc., and begin to turn things round and refused to answer the word ‘settlers’ again but original” (In-depth interview with respondent A1 23rd October 2017).

Consequently, therefore, the above quotations by respondents indicate the compromising attitudes by the Fulani-herdsmen in their communal relationship with farmers is attributed to becoming more enlightened by the Fulani’s. To these respondents however, the attainment of higher education by the Fulani’s has become a curse to them that breed distrust. This according to some respondents, Fulani’s attitudes have really changed towards the farmers:

“...the Fulani-man in those days never carry carries guns, bows and arrows but only that traditional stick that they move around with all the time. But now a days moves around with AK47 guns in the name of herdsmen who rears cows, and out of that superiority complex they have developed in them, they push their cattle to go and destroy any crops within the fringes of their routes. And when the local’s farmers complain, it becomes an issue” (In-depth interview with respondent C15, 16th October 2017)

Similarly, a discussant from FGD also have this to say:

“The modern Fulani man because of this new superiority complex now carries sophisticated guns, the like of which is not even being used by our military. Not even the guns or ordinary guns that we see around. They used these weapons to enforce their claim of ownership of the land” (In-depth interview with FGD 2, 21st November 2017).

Thus, according to the above responses, the more educated people (Fulani’s) become the more difficult they have become because now they feel now, they have educated people among them who could stand for them. Additionally, respondent A5 supported by A1 & A2 reported that: “...you also see another set of people who think it is their right to do whatever they want. These are what made the conflict so persistent over time”. Justifying this viewpoint of feeling superior by the Fulani’s, respondent C13 also stated how they openly hold guns use it to threaten farmers. He said:

“...of course, sometimes the herdsmen are armed with AK47 which something we have not known before. Sometimes the attackers move with the cattle and hide behind them to shoot people” (In-depth interview with respondent C13, 16th October 2017).

To sum it up, respondent C15 supported by A1 and C13 has revealed how the sources of weaponries by the Fulani’s added that:

“...some of these things happens because the owners [actual owners] of the cattle are not ordinary [regular] Fulani’s. Many of the Fulani’s were just hired to look after those cattle. Now, if you look at this scenario, is it someone or the owner who sits comfortably in town and issuing him instructions, money and arms to kill and terrorize people and forcefully takeover their land? or is it because a northerner is the president, you have a very high of unexplained attacks. I looked at the scenario and the interpretations are, may be some people feel that the leader belongs to my religion, so I can do certain things with impunity” (In-depth interview with respondent C15, 16th October 2017).

The above quotations by respondents indicate the compromising attitudes by the Fulani-herdsmen in their communal relationship with farmers is attributed to becoming more enlightened by the Fulani’s. This educational enlightenment has now made the Fulani’s to develop superiority complex according to the respondents in their attitudes towards the local farmers by brandishing weapons openly thus:

“...the Fulani-man in those days never carry carries guns, bows and arrows but only that traditional stick that they move around with all the time. But nowadays moves around with AK47 guns in the name of herdsmen who rears cows, and out of that superiority complex they have developed in them, they push their cattle to go and destroy any crops within the fringes of their routes. And when the local’s farmers complain, it becomes an issue” (In-depth interview with respondent C15, 16th October 2017).

Accordingly, the Fulani-man sees his position as a man of right and not a privileged anymore, thus “...since the authority have not done anything on that, in fact they are backing them to use sophisticated weapons” respondent A1 added.

Based on the above experienced submissions by the respondents and the statements of Omirin (2012) & Laura (2013) superiority complex at times lead to pride and arrogant behaviour, which in fact contributed and become liable in the escalation of attacks and conflicts situation between the two groups. Instead of using the acquired knowledge for development of the two communities, it became a source of pride and negative attitude of superiority complex in the misuse of the education and knowledge acquired. The underrated group or community get angry, annoyed and become unhappy, and in many occasions believes that is done to discredit them and thereby widening the differences leading to unending hostilities between the Fulani-herdsmen and farmers in southern Kaduna. For instance, committee reports on peace and reconciliation Kaduna state January 2013, and a report committee on attacks in southern Kaduna 2015 all concluded that the sudden pride by the herdsmen is annoying to the farmer's giving the fact that modern Fulani's were settlers and not real indigenes of the areas but the farmers.

As this revelation concerning the escalated conflicts between Fulani-herdsmen and farmers in southern Kaduna is proved by the actors and players involved, will serve as a flesh to the stakeholders in addressing the situation. The ABC triangulation model of conflict escalation using *attitude* (A) variable supported this claim where stereotyping and negative psychological perception and condition experienced by the Fulani-herders in the past have become a constructive enmity overtime leading to development of emotions, aggression and dehumanisation that have manifested and escalated the arising resource conflict between the two groups. This stereotyping perception against the Fulani-herders by the farming communities was due to the deep-cultural value' (variable (C) *contradiction* of Galtung model) of the Fulani's for not embracing modern education on time. Thus, the Fulani's who had earlier experienced this *attitudinal stereotyping* are now exhibiting similar wrong attitudes of pride and arrogance towards the farming communities, thereby making conflicting issue to escalate giving this preceding psychological condition of mind.

Cattle-Rustling

This is an activity of stealing animals either in the farmstead or in an open space. It is a forceful acquisition of cattle and sheep's. This has been a major problem in southern Kaduna area. Traditionally, livestock theft (now rustling) happened in a smaller scale with little or no violence against the herders, but with time, it magnified into larger scale problem using weapons and trucks to move the raided animals against the herders due to commercialisation of the raiding act and proliferation of weapons in southern Kaduna area. Property and wealth ownership in general are natural and civic right of every human. In Nigeria, there is no restriction in the quantum of wealth one acquires. However, what is inquisitively interested is how does such wealth are acquired.

Contrary to the earlier preceding claims by some respondents on the changing attitudes of the Fulani's because of acquiring western education is behind the escalation of the conflicts, other respondents argued that the escalation of the conflict is necessitated by the new wave of cattle-rustling against the Fulani's that forced them to acquire weapons for self-defence and in some cases retaliate. Aside this self-defence, the existence of government at various level has profess a creditable impression that the collective individual's goods and property ownership of the citizens will be secured and protected (Oluyemi & Salihu, 2015). But however, after long mutual understanding, cordial relationship and intermarriages between the farmers and the Fulani's known as (kache-chere) in southern Kaduna, attacks and counter attacks continued due to theft/rustling.

The respondents have argued that in any situation there is attack by one community against the other with a view of animal theft (rustling), once such an attack happens, the attacking community will surely revenge in a similar or more devastating way. Hence, the existing conflict resentments resurfaces and escalate between the two groups. This in no doubt has stirred up disharmony among the ethnic groups as the frequent of this opinion is captured from the respondent's viewpoints. Some of the respondent's submissions in all categories D22, FGD1 &3, E16, C19, 13,18, B7 and A4 have concisely agreed with D22 that "...the escalation of the conflicts was simply because there are a lot of cattle-rustling and so, robbery has come in". As a result, the Fulani's were necessitated to arm themselves for protection. Some of them said:

"Traditionally, they[Fulani's] drive their cattle with stick, but the cattle rustlers come with

AK47 and machine gun, and therefore the Fulani's have to arm themselves to the teeth to be able to save their animals, lives, honor and dignity because the state has failed to protect them".

"Sometimes they [farmers] would meet a Fulani man rearing his cows kill him and carted way his cows. The Fulani men realized that they were the targets and therefore started defending themselves since they were pushed to the wall. That is why you have reprisal attacks here and there" (In-depth interview with respondent B7 & 12, 5th November 2017).

In a similar vein, respondent B11 & B12 added that "...there are also external factors that fuel this intentionally such as the issues of cattle rustling". "...and they killed any Fulani's they see, slaughtered their cows and carted away many of them". However, this issue of cattle-rustling against the Fulani's made them dispossess their hard earned and reared cows. The animals raised several years, overnight all the animals are rusted and disappear into the thin and that is their only possessions. As a result, the Fulani's attack as a revenge or attempt to recover their stolen cows that escalates the conflict as respondent C18 stated thus, "...the fact is that people must have to survive and therefore the Fulani's devised a means of defending themselves and then it became a problem". Similarly, respondent A4 also stressed on the reason why Fulani's wage an attack after 3rd FGD and B6 have lamented on the issue of "...rampant cattle rustling which the herders have been concerned much about". Thus:

"The attacks by the Fulani's are mostly revenge of the killings of either their cows or one of the members. If a community attacks the Fulani's, it must prepare for reprisal because they (Fulani's) would definitely come on revenge mission" (In-depth interview with respondent A4, 6th November 2017).

Though, as presented above by a respondent that the escalation of the resources conflicts was due to revenge in attacks against the external factor of cattle-rustling. FGD 2 also have this to add on why the conflict persisted using an instance case that:

"...the herders are also unforgiving in their nature, there was this case in Plateau state in which a Fulani boy was killed and his body was found without the head. So, they gave an ultimatum to the community to produce the head which was not, and in place, the Fulani's bowed to kill five hundred people" (2nd FGD discussant, 21st November 2017).

Justifying the theft and unforgiving nature of the Fulani's to retaliate as earlier stated above by some respondents, respondents B10, E11 and D20 also corroborated that: "...the reason why the crisis is still recurring is simply because the Fulani's were attacked, and everybody knows the unforgiving nature and their capacity to retaliate". It is interesting from the scenario to note that giving the Fulani's unforgiving nature, peace will hardly sustain thereby escalating the conflict. From this scenario, it can be seen that attacking someone who has wronged someone wronged someone is unlawful and it is a wrong doing. The victims are to seek redress through legal procedures to allow peace to reign. Besides this, respondent B10 has lamented further in a different direction on the multiplicity of criminalities in the area, that:

"...the situation is so pathetic that even the so-called indigenes do attack, destroy and kill each other overnight and blame it on the Fulani's. There were many instances where the natives were caught and confessed to carrying out the attacks" (In-depth interview with respondent B10, 8th October 2017).

Thus, the real cow owners i.e. Generals and powerful traditional rulers in the word of D20 & 22 earlier mentioned, supply the Fulani-herders with sophisticated weapons beyond max16 to use for protection and aggression. According to these viewpoints therefore, this is another escalating factor that fuels the crises intentionally (robbery) that made it to persist for long time. Also holding same view in wider spectrum, respondent E16 argued in the overall security challenges, that:

"...the persistence of the conflict by the cattle rustlers is due to long period of poor governance in the area over time that breeds insecurity. You find many youths engage in criminality. So, when youth from an ethnic group go and commit crime, it is seen as if it is the whole members of the ethnic group that committed the crime, where as it is pure criminality" (In-depth interview with respondent E16, 8th October 2017).

Moreover, in his experience on the rustling against Fulani's, respondent C19 stated how the rustlers

extend their act to killing innocent human lives thus, "...the man that killed my father came and raped my wife or my mother in front of me is the man I am naturally going to attack". However, another respondent has briefly captured this scenario of camouflaging situation by the local farmers to perpetuate evil among themselves in the name Fulani's thus:

"However, everybody has evidently seen that man arrested with dangerous weapons in Kagoma the home town of the former governor Patrick Yakowa, was not a Fulani man. But he wore Fulani attires to disguise, meaning that they have been hiding under this guise to blackmail the Fulani's" (In-depth interview with respondent C19, 9th October 2017).

Also, respondent C13 added by blaming Fulani's for the attacks claiming a vengeance for theft that, "...see what happened in Zakon-Kataf few months ago, some people said to be Fulani's went to the market and started shooting sporadically likewise in Benue also they started killing people". Contrary to the above viewpoint, respondent C16 supported by B6 & 10 have exonerate Fulani's as innocent who don't cause problem but being caused again through rustling thus "because they were innocent people who own the economy. And you know somebody who lives in a glass house don't normally throw stones and that was why the Fulani's don't normally cause trouble". Thus, in the 3rd FGD, the respondent state that:

"...their use of weapons is necessitated by the challenges of theft and Criminality Against them. So, they are using it for self-defense and protection" (3rd FGD, 21st November 2017).

From the foregoing discussion, it is important to note that increasing commercialization of cattle raiding led to vengeance by the Fulani's who tend to prioritize cattle more than human life is a major reason for the escalation of the conflict necessitating counter attacks. The above points were supported by the literatures believing that cattle rustling, and other form of criminalities have combined to prolong the conflicts. Works such as Ladan (2013); Abbas (2014); Ogbeidi (2012) and Onapajo (2015); Sampson (2014); Azunna (2015) have related the criminalities to the increasing rate of unemployment. Given these perceptions of cattle-rustling and form of criminalities, one important point to note in the submissions is that these levels of criminalities in southern Kaduna area became an external factor that influences the resource base conflict between the two groups, and it determines how un-peaceful the environment is in relation to the escalated farmers-herders conflict in the area. Moreover, a white paper report on riot in Jema'a Kafanchan southern Kaduna August 1999, and a communique issued after one-day stakeholders meeting on emerging security issues in Jema'a November 2016 reiterated that these criminalities of cattle-rustling and communal attacks are perpetrated against the Fulani's as well as among the local farming communities in disguise of Fulani-herdsmen leading to perpetual attacks and counter attacks. Theoretically using Galtonian model, this means that criminality '*violent behavior*' by and against a group has its roots in people's attitudes giving the cultural differences of values, needs and interest between the farming as well as herding communities. This has created the *contradictory* environment (variable C) leading to the criminal behavior of animal theft cum socio-economic and political reality. Additionally, the *behavioral* (B) aspect of ABC conflict model representing destructive attitudes of the actual violent behaviors such as killings, burning and war.

Proliferation of Small Armed Weapons

These are light weapons readily available in the hands of irregular troops operating with little or no regard for humanitarian and international law. It serves as a primary tool for violence in recent conflict occurrences in the world with weighty toll of deaths constituting nearly 80% casualties. This have become a concern for the international communities to garner effort and rid the globe from this scourge of irregular possession of armaments. The weaponry increase has affected the volume as well as duration of violence's and motivated militarization of the world rather than peace and resolution of conflicting issues. This perhaps is more grievous in the heightened demands of weapons with protraction of cyclical conflicts all over. Arms proliferation and its misused has overall effects on rule of law in widest sense, though firearms are not root cause of crime on its own, but the deployment of such illicit arms in conflict situation aggravates the horrifying scene beyond the victims but society at large.

For instance, from the interview and focus group discussion, they all have lamented that arm proliferation has contributed to the escalation of the conflict. Respondent 4 in category A corroborated by 18 & 19 in

category C, and 12 category B testified the proliferation of irregular weapons by the communities against one another, thus, "...there is proliferation of small arms as reasons for this conflict escalation". Moreover, he added that:

"The question however is where being these weapons coming from? Has the Nigerian government or its security agencies addressed these concerns? Nigerians no longer believe their governments because of its double standard on such issues. Sometimes they will confiscate truck load of arms, but you will never hear how the issue ended" (In-depth interview with respondent A4, 6th November 2017).

And, respondent C14 has expressed his worry by accusing government for the insecurity and escalation of the conflict, he commented that, "...there is high proliferation of arms necessitated by self-defence following government failure to guarantee the lives and property of the people". These circumstances have therefore given birth to the appearance of different ethnic militia groups representing and protecting their side as well as hunting enemies as in the case of persistent Fulani-herdsmen and farmer's conflict in southern Kaduna. On the implication of the arm proliferation as confirmed by the respondents above, it is more worrisome giving the presence of such weapons in a volatile environment like southern Kaduna, where youths resort to taking law into their hands on a slightest issue. This was however testified by discussants 3rd and 4th in FGD interaction where they stated that, "...the Fulani's said they had a law where such cases of trespass could be resolved amicably, but the farmers usually take laws into their hands by either attacking the Fulani's or the cows". This view of taking law at hand by the active unemployed youths in possessions of weapons was similarly expressed as a concern issue by respondent B9 as argued:

"The farmers on their part will naturally react when the herders enter their farm by harassing, snatching the cows, injuring or beating the cattle rearers-in short taking laws in their hands. ...Now, the children of the farmer and other members of the community went and attacked the father of the herder who machete their community member, killed him, burnt his house and forced the rest to live that area. Three days later, the Fulani's came back attacked that village killed some of their people and burnt their houses as well. The community also took revenge by attacking another Fulani man and killed about 42 of his cows. Then, the Fulani's came back again and attacked them. That is how the attacks continue" (In-depth interview with respondent B9, 4th November 2017).

Primarily, knowing the inherent selfish nature of man, groups and individuals are bound to take advantage of any situation to intensify violence especially when there is a weak control system in place. Acknowledging this viewpoint of weak system leading to taking law at hand using weapons by the unemployed youths, respondent E11 have attributed this chain of unfortunate situations to the presence of weak system of governance, thus, "...the conflict persists because the system to curtail the conflict is weak". Comprehensively, he added that:

"...very weak control system at the level of the borders and the immigration. People move in and out without any form of identity, be them pastoralists, be them farmers, be them anything they move into and out of Nigeria at free will. The immigration system and the internal security are very weak" (In-depth interview with respondent B11, 11th October 2017).

Buttressing this claim, another respondent has observed that weak control system in all strata of governance has made life to be a survival of the fittest and struggle for existence among unequal citizens and groups in Nigeria given reference to the ongoing Fulani-herdsmen and farmers conflicts in southern Kaduna. Thus:

"...there are no mechanisms for weaker groups to present their grievances and for their needs to be protected and preserved. Consequently, the whims and caprices of the majority always reign everywhere. Resources needed by weaker groups within same geographical environment are today not guaranteed and therefore there are precipices for conflicts" (In-depth interview with respondent C16, 8th October 2017).

Similarly, respondent C19 supported by B7 & A3 narrated the horrific incidence of the misusing of the illicit weapons against each other thus:

"...my friend you came today use cutlass to cut my animals and you tell me I can't do anything because you are the owner of this place. In weeks' time, you come and physically kill my father, burn my house and I know you, but the government did not either arrest you or do anything."

Do you expect me to wait for another Fulani man from Kano or Sokoto to come and avenge what you did to me? The person that has been so trapped in this and had seen the worst of it takes reprisal attacks” (In-depth interview with respondent C19, 9th October 2017).

From the above submissions one could evidently see the proliferation and usage of small weapons in the escalated conflict leading to un-forgiveness and reprisal attacks between the two communities leading to death as further revealed by respondent A3, B7, B11 & A4 that:

“...you know the Fulani’s never forgive. When the Fulani’s realized that the Ardo has been killed and all his property destroyed, they went back and prepared for a revenge attack. After two days these Fulani’s entered Ninte, burnt everything in the village and killed about three people that day (In-depth interview with respondent B11, A4 & B7).

The proliferation has accordingly made people to be hostile by taking law unto hands giving the prevalence of weaponries in their possession as well as deficiencies in other aspect as reckoned by 3rd FGD discussant, “...the escalation is basically as the result of people taking laws into their hands. Many times, people take law into their hands by attacking the Fulani’s whenever they see them around their farms”. Taking laws into hand by people giving the availability and proliferations of weapons around brings more anger and causes further attacks and conflict escalation as respondent B11 stated, thus: “...for instance, you have killed my brother and my cows, I gone to the police I am locked or to the judge who either dismiss the case or make it to drag. For that I will go and do is to take revenge”.

“From there the Ninte youth attacked the Ardo killed him and his wife and burnt down his house. As if that was not enough, the youth went into the bush and they killed any Fulani’s they see, slaughtered their cows and carted away many of them” (In-depth interview with respondent B12, 5th November 2017).

Also, A4 added:

“It must continue because the Fulani’s normally carried out the attacks overnight. They go to villages in the night kill people and destroy their house and before daybreak you will not see anybody” (In-depth interview with respondent A4, 6th November 2017).

In addendum, respondent D22 have confirmed the above claims of arms proliferation by saying that both groups keep stocking arms with some where intercepted by the military thus:

“...there is also the issue of proliferation of arms. Everybody has access to buy arms which they use to defend their farmlands and for vengeance. This make it easy for people to take arm and kill. Sometimes back, the military intercepted large quantum of arms belongs to the locals. The locals/indigenous, later complained that military have intercepted their arms but let go those of the Fulani’s. Each one buys arms in the arms of protection” (In-depth interview with respondent D22, 13th November 2017).

Given this, it is obvious to say that any act of violent crime is mostly perpetrated with the use of weapons especially in Africa, this is because small arms are portable, liable, lethal, simple to use, durable, cheap and easy to access, etc. Sources for the small arms to Nigeria according to Moses & Ngomba (2017) is traced to the increasing failed states and uprisings in some African countries such as Somalia, Egypt, and Libya etc. In relation to the escalation of farmers-herders conflict, the easiness and cheapness to access these small arms made thousands of such armaments floating around in civilian’s possessions creating more security problem, and worsening/escalating the existing conflict between the two groups at loggerhead.

From the scenario above, we can see that the floating of armaments and firearms with civilian’s whom regard themselves as enemies culminated the accumulation of crimes perpetrated by groups against themselves leading to the unending attacks. To many unruly persons, the desire to possess weapons has commercial value in it at the detriment of the victims. As a result of the profitability, it has made weapons to be saturated venture with everyone unto it among the duo communities. This thus, requires special intentional effort by the concern authorities to enforce law and recover the circulated irregular weaponries. Based on the testimonies by the respondents above literatures on criminality and related have supported that failure of the state to checkmate influx of weaponries from the collapsing of some African states, have made accessibility of weapons very easy. Furthermore, in the northern part of Nigeria, the

country bordered with about four African countries. These access to weapons transformed into insecurity with criminality everywhere have combined prolonged the conflicts as Ogbeidi (2012) and Onapajo (2015); Sampson (2014); Azunna (2015) stated. Various white paper resort (report of judicial commissions), and committees reports such as memorandum of peace and security in southern Kaduna of August 1999; April 2001; January 2013 & 2014 have supported the findings as a reason for the escalation of the conflict in the area. Given these perceptions, the combination of arrogance, theft/criminalities and floating of arms weapons have become an external influenza to the main resource conflicting issue between the two groups, and it determines how peaceful or otherwise the environment could be in relation to the ongoing farmers-herders conflict.

Applying theory for this argument, Galtung ABC conflict model is relevant. The relation is that the resources conflict between the two groups is lingering due to 'Value contradictions' of variable (C) in southern Kaduna area comprising more than one ethnic groups with varied individual group's needs. This differences couple with socio-economic hardship as well as state incapacitation to maintain boarder line leading to floating of the unchecked armaments. As internal schism, combining the accessibility of the armaments, economic hardship and the existing value contradictions as highlighted by the model led to theft due to enormous state failure. Furthermore, using *behavioural* variable (B) of the triangulation model by Galtung which state that the main conflicting issue may have been over shadowed by some of the negative consequences that serves as further triggering issues escalating the conflict just as in the case of theft as well as criminalities. It is worthwhile to consider objective and subjective aspect of why the escalation of the conflict, given the fact that other factual underneath elements have come in. It is necessary according to the model to learn about the conflicting issue as actual cause of the conflict in the first place, and the influencing *attitudinal, behavioural and contextual* (ABC) preceding circumstances that escalated the situation. This made the Fulani's to react on the criminality against them and consequently escalated the conflict situation in search for equity and justice by the aggrieved party as postulated by the Galtonian ABC conflict triangulation.

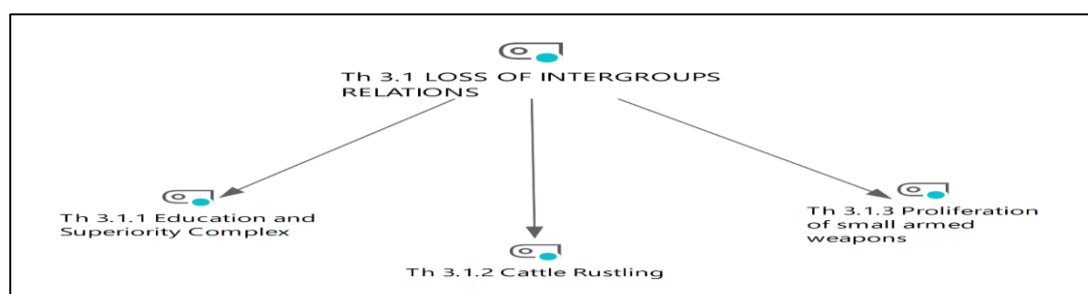


Figure 1: Theme Loss of Intergroup relations indicating conflict escalation

Conclusions

The above were submissions by the participants who believe that other form of criminalities beyond the actual resource issue as external factors have combined to influence the resource conflict leading to attacks and counter attacks in the name of resource issue and made the conflict escalate within the period.

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