# FULANI PASTORALIST VIOLENCE AND TRANSNATIONAL DYNAMICS IN NIGERIA: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

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#### Abstract

The activities of Fulani pastoralists in Nigeria would hardly be extricated from the activities of other terrorist groups by way of trans-national linkages and influences which is the core focus of this study. The persistent escalation in the bloody and lethal massacre of farmers/locals may largely be attributed to external linkages as a major trigger to the exacerbation of the Fulani pastoral violence and the level of sophistication of weaponry with its devastating effects on the socio-economic development of Nigeria. This study was guided by two research questions and two objectives which are to determine how external linkages exacerbated Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria and to examine the government responses to Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria. The theory of mobility transition was adopted to analyse the competing interests between Fulani pastoralists and farmers. Both quantitative and qualitative data was adopted. The study made use of 500 sample size. Analysis was done using mean and standard deviation, with a criterion mean value of 2.50. From the analysis, the study found that, external linkages majorly exacerbated Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria. The study equally revealed that, government response to Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria has not been encouraging, comprehensive and proactive. Thus, the study concluded that only effective and proactive efforts on the part of government can cut down the external linkages of Fulani pastoralists with a view to curtailing their nefarious activities in Nigeria. The study recommended, among others, that the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) and other relevant agencies of government at the international borders should be proactive in ensuring strict boarder control and appropriately implement the ECOWAS transhumance protocol by proper documentation and scrutiny of foreign immigrants.

**Keywords:** Fulani, Pastoral Violence, Herdsmen, External Linkages, Transnational Dynamics, Challenges, Prospects.

#### Introduction

The violent actions of Fulani herders over the past two decades have been a prominent topic in various discussions across West Africa, particularly in Nigeria, leading to an increase in academic discourse regarding the origins of disputes between pastoralists and crop farmers

(Nabai, 2018). The pastoral crisis and its associated threats to human security in Nigeria are linked to the inadequate execution of pertinent regional protocols in West Africa, where human security, defined as freedom from fear and want, has been significantly jeopardised by a confluence of natural and anthropogenic factors. Although these factors, which are not mutually exclusive, differ across countries and contexts, certain overarching issues persist, including extreme poverty, social exclusion, human rights violations, proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs), food insecurity, environmental degradation, illiteracy, endemic diseases, governance failures, climate change, terrorism, and transhumant pastoralism. These risks extend beyond conventional security concepts that just emphasise external military aggressions. Despite being very prevalent in West Africa, the menace of transhumant pastoralism seems to have proliferated and acquired prominence, mostly due to the political and security landscape (Nwangwu, Mbah & Ike, 2020).

Nwangwu et al. (2020), referencing the studies of Cabot (2017), Odoh and Chilaka (2012), and Onuoha and Ezirim (2010), asserted that the origins of the persistent violent conflicts between these two groups can be ascribed to climatic conditions and global warming. This situation is exacerbated by their reliance on natural resources, such as land and water, leading to competition that heightens the likelihood of conflict and accounts for the escalating incidents between farmers and pastoralists. Likewise, the Malthusian viewpoint on urbanisation and rapid population growth in Africa, in relation to available resources, has resulted in the expansion of farmlands into grazing reserves, hence intensifying conflict between these land users in many regions globally (Frartkin, 1997).

The insecurity in the Lake Chad region exacerbates the deteriorating relationship between transhumant herders and their host communities in Nigeria's savannah belt, and also plays a role in the regional dynamics that crystallise the conflict between nomadic pastoralists and sedentary peasant farmers (Fasiyi & Otunga, 2016). Fulton and Nickels (2017) asserted that "Islamist terrorist organisations in the Sahel and Sahara are seeking to exploit the complaints of pastoralists to garner further support for their goal" (p. 1). They contended that the newly established Macina Liberation Front, in its objectives and tactics, functions similarly to other Islamic terrorist organisations (such as Al-Qaeda, ISIS, ISWAP, etc.) active in the Sahel and Sahara, mobilising nomadic Fulani herders to its cause. Their policy possesses the potential for significant destabilisation, as it risks conflating Islamist terrorism in the West African sub-region with pastoralist complaints and communal violence. Mobilising diverse pastoralist populations, such as the Fulani herders, for an Islamic agenda would provide terrorists with leverage within entrenched societies across extensive regions, particularly in Nigeria and the South-East.

Although arguable, it is hard to extricate the activities of Fulani pastoralists in Nigeria and particularly in the South-East from the activities of other terrorist groups in the Sahel and Sahara by way of trans-national dynamics and influences. Could the persistent escalation in the bloody and lethal massacre of farmers/locals be attributed to external linkages as a major trigger of the exacerbation of the Fulani pastoral violence and the level of sophistication of weaponry and its devastating effects on the socio-economic development of Nigeria? It is premised on the foregoing that, this study was guided by the following research questions: How have external

linkages exacerbated Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria? How has the Government responded to Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria? The study majorly interrogated the Fulani pastoral violence and transnational dynamics in Nigeria.

### Literature Review

The inception of pastoralism is recorded to have occurred around 6000 B.P. in the Andes of South America, and potentially as early as 9000 B.P. in Northeast Africa. The emergence of pastoralism is more likely to have occurred in several centres rather than a single centre to account for its global dissemination. Presently, substantial pastoralism occupies around 25% of the Earth's surface area, predominantly in developing regions, from the arid terrains of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula to the elevated areas of Asia and Latin America. Pastoralists are individuals residing predominantly in arid, isolated regions. Their sustenance relies on their profound understanding of the local ecosystem and the health of their cattle (Antonio & Silvia, 2009).

Conversely, violence is the ability to enforce or the unlawful act of imposing one's will on another individual. Violence can be unequivocally defined as the most direct and extreme manifestation of physical power, characterised as force in action. Its utilisation represents an extension of negotiations initiated through alternative methods, regardless of whether it is employed by the State, business entities, or individuals (Akiyemi, 2011). Violence denotes any unsolicited yet deliberate or semi-deliberate act of physically infringing upon the body of an individual who previously existed in tranquilly (Onimisi & Omelegbe, 2019). The phrase violence can apply to several actions, including strictly physical acts such as striking a blow or aiming a pistol, as well as collective activities, exemplified by mob lynching. Any instance involving the application of physical or quantifiable force can be classified as violence.

Historically, the Fulani are a nomadic, trading ethnic group, herding cattle, goats, and sheep across the expansive arid hinterlands of their territory. The Fulani were the inaugural group in West Africa to embrace Islam via jihads, or holy wars, successfully dominating a significant portion of West Africa and establishing themselves as both a religious and a political-economic entity. In recent years, the increase in violent clashes between pastoralists and farmers in rural communities of Nigeria has been attributed to the influx of foreign cattle from Niger, Cameroon and Chad (Nkwede, Nwankwo, Aro, & Dauda, 2018). The persistent crisis between the Fulani and other ethnic groups in Nigeria is the culmination of years of discord, driven by many social, economic, and environmental variables that have historically impacted the Fulani. The conventional conflict resolution mechanisms are ineffective in this context due to the herdsmen's lack of connections to the local communities. The crisis is primarily attributed to climate change and desertification, which have resulted in limited arable land and water, intensifying competition for these resources. Regrettably, the violence is assuming ethnic and religious dimensions.

Conflicts between cattle herders and farmers have persisted since the inception of agriculture, fluctuating in intensity and regularity based on economic, environmental, and several other reasons. For instance, the expansion of herd sizes, resulting from enhanced cattle conditions, necessitated that herders pursue more pastures beyond their restricted area. Climate change has posed a significant concern by exerting substantial pressure on the land, hence inciting tensions among stakeholders. Nonetheless, advancements in human health and population have exerted increased demand on land. Since the 1980s, there has been a significant increase in the cultivation of Fadama (riverine and valley-bottom) regions. This indicates that both farmers and cattle herders have participated in intense fights for access to important lands, frequently leading to heightened violence and discord. These conflicts have posed significant risks to the lives and livelihoods of both farmers and cattle herders, as well as to what both groups are diligently safeguarding and promoting. The disputes, stemming from contentious assertions on access to agricultural land and livestock pathways (labi), have become pervasive and are resistant to resolution (Abbas, 2012).

In a nutshell, the origins of conflicts around access to and utilisation of land resources between pastoralists and farmers are inherently complicated. The population growth in northern Nigeria has equally resulted in the encroachment of agricultural practices into regions traditionally used by cattle herders for livestock production.

## Pastoral Activities, Government Responses and Best Global Practices

On the issues of state responses and/or measures to curb pastoral violence in Nigeria, Idowu and Okunola (2017) had recommended a number of measures that help achieve considerable reduction on the impact of pastoral violence in the country which included, among others, to review and implement National Livestock Development policy, effective implementation of Community Policing Model, grazing reserves, national stakeholders' conference on nomadic pastoralism, and recognition of the roles of traditional institutional rulers in the grundnorm of the country. The Fulani herder-farmer's violence in Nigeria, though age-long, has taken a new twist in recent times with some level of sophistication in the way and manner it is going. In spite of the new turn of events in these crises, government's approaches in handling the violence over time vary significantly and have not been able to address the age-long crises between the Fulani herders and farmers in some parts of the country including the South-East under study. It is for this reason it has become imperative to review how government has handled the Fulani pastoral violence in different parts of the country including the South-East.

There is no doubt that Tayo and Nasrullah (2016) in their report, stated that the Fulani pastoralists before independence paid fees to local settlers in order to use grazing areas but after independence all that changed as the government designated certain grazing reserves for the pastoralists to avoid clashes between herders and farmers. But as Nigeria developed, many of those designated grazing routes were acquired by the political class to expand their business concerns thereby reducing the number of available grazing areas for the pastoralists hence the worsening Fulani pastoral violence Nigeria has witnessed across the country including the South-East. Accord (2018) also observed that the efforts of government in handling the spate of Fulani pastoral violence in this regard failed to achieve the purpose for which it was initiated.

The International Crisis Group Report (2018) succinctly documented the government's response to the Fulani pastoralist violence in Nigeria, noting that the federal government has implemented efforts to curtail the slaughter. It has dispatched supplementary police and military personnel and initiated two military operations to mitigate unrest in six states: Exercise Cat Race, conducted from 15 February to 31 March, and the continuing Operation Whirl Stroke. Despite these deployments, homicides persist. Late President Buhari and senior officials had engaged in consultations with leaders of herders and farmers, along with pertinent state governments, to explore strategies for ceasing the attacks. The government proposed long-term remedies, including the establishment of "cattle colonies" to provide land for herders nationwide, and had just introduced a National Livestock Transformation Plan (2018-2027). These steps indicated a heightened commitment from the administration; nonetheless, they remain unimplemented, and violence persists.

From the report, it means clearly that the government, in part, has responded positively to the Fulani pastoral violence in several parts of the country by way of security deployments but regretted that other plans that would address the lingering violence in the country, though still ongoing, are yet to be fully implemented as the violence surges in spite of those commitments aimed at addressing the problems. According to Leonhardt (2019) "to resolve the current state of pastoral violence in the Sahel, a total overhaul of ECOWAS Transhumance Protocol including its implementation has become imperative in this regard" (p. 2). This implies that what the ECOWAS Protocol of 1998 currently presents does not guarantee first peaceful co-existing among Member States and second between pastoralists and local farmers in West African Subregion in general and Nigeria in particular. The antidote to resolving the protracted conflicts between herders and farmers can be achieved when there is a review of ECOWAS Protocol of 1998 and also an adjustment of legislation and policy in the area of transhumant pastoralism among Member States.

Adelakun et al. (2015) identified a number of measures to address the protracted pastoral violence in Nigeria particularly Oyo State over the years in their study when they stated that government has provided a number of grazing areas and routes spanning from Sokoto to Oyo State and other parts of the country like Adamawa and Cross River States. Government has also demarcated a number of hectres of land for grazing and built centres for veterinary services and settlements for nomads. NGOs are involved in support of efforts to resolve the persistent crises in diverse ways. According to them "unfortunately these conflicts not only continue to persist, they are on the rise and fast becoming a nation-wide phenomenon" (pp. 60-61).

In an attempt to respond to the issues of pastoral violence in Nigeria and other parts of the South-East, the Federal Government planned rural grazing area policy as a panacea for handling the conflicts between farmers and pastoralists but that was greeted with a lot condemnation hence the policy could not see the light of the day. Olayinka (2020) agreed no less with they said "the politicisation of the issue coupled with the lackadaisical approach of the government makes every move towards resolving the conflicts unattractive to the parties involved (p. 22)". They further opined that handling of the issues around pastoralism has always nose-dived due to the perceived interest of the influential elite who are part of the ownership of large herds and

government's complacency as the latter has rather been focusing on ethnic and religious dimensions of the conflicts.

Nwangwu et al. (2020) posited that successive governments have failed to implement farreaching strategies, measures, policies and programmes including legal frameworks that would have addressed the perennial farmers-herders' conflicts in Nigeria. They said that that NGOs and international partners which ought to play a collaborative role with government to resolve the protracted pastoral violence have been rather conciliatory and constructive in their responses. Some of those have ended up with paper recommendations that hardly saw the light of the day. They concluded that the transnational character of the herders-farmers conflict makes it impossible national strategies to be employed in resolving the impasse. Awogbade et al. (2016) proposed the adoption of conflict resolution mechanisms that address eco-violence, ungoverned spaces, and regional security in their study on trans-border terrorism. The UNOWAS study (2019) investigated the origins and factors contributing to pastoralist-related conflicts in six West African and Sahelian nations, recommending increased focus on land rights and natural resource management challenges. Furthermore, conflict avoidance strategies must be formulated in close collaboration with pastoralists and farmers, aiming to safeguard the livelihoods of both parties.

Ejiogu (2019) examined the extensive narratives, strengths, and limitations of implementing community policing to address herdsmen terrorism in West Africa, akin to pastoral violence. They advocated for the incorporation of volunteer programs within community policing initiatives and the establishment of standards and evaluation criteria for community-oriented terrorism monitoring units to prevent egregious violations of individual liberties. Strategies to address the given recommendations would be diverse and tailored to various communities, influenced by differences in social roles, geographical locations, and the economic impact of rural environments on individual factors. Ejiogu (2019) conducted a study examining community policy and participation regarding pastoral terrorism in West Africa, analysing the overarching narratives, advantages, and drawbacks of using community policing to mitigate herdsmen terrorism in the region. It embraced the notion of interconnected communities to establish a comprehensive and inclusive intelligence community policing framework in particular communities besieged by pastoralists. It evaluated community policing implementation options that could be applied to curb the problem of terrorism by herdsmen and highlights the strengths of communally organized social control mechanisms.

Folk (2020) examined the efficacy of Israel's targeted killings, evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of such measures as a principal counter-terrorism strategy against Palestinian suicide terrorism, particularly suicide bombings emanating from Gaza during the initial decade of the 21st century, with the aim of mitigating suicide terror. The analysis indicates that a significant targeted killing occurred on November 9, 2000, involving Hussien Abayat, the leader of Fatah's military faction in Bethlehem, who was accountable for shootings in southern Jerusalem and the deaths of several Israelis. The principal findings of the study demonstrated a deceasing tendency in suicide bombing fatalities following most of the key targeted kills. It was determined that the frequency of Palestinian suicide bombs experienced by Israelis diminished with time, with the lethality of such assaults decreasing from a peak of 60 in 2002 to 80 in 2005,

one in 2007, and none since 2009. The deliberate elimination of high-value ideological leaders, particularly in Gaza, was more effective in reducing subsequent suicide fatalities. The targeted assassinations in Gaza significantly reduced fatalities from suicide bombings.

The National Geographical Society (2011) equally indicated that better management of ranches in the United State for example has turned ranching to the practice of handling large herds of grazing animal on dry land. It is an occupation which has a rancher that is the owner who manages the operations. The owner is also called by the term cattleman, stockman or stockgrower. In Australia, the owner of ranch/stations is called grazier, especially those that reside on the property. A ranch may also have other employees who bear various occupational titles. For example, there may be a foreman or ranchman; he is in charge of the overall management, while other staff includes among others cowhand, ranch hand, cowboy, veterinarians, engineers, and mechanics. Cowboys are responsible for herding the animals across the ranch, and maintain their health in good medical condition and the safety of the animals from predators. Cowboys often move around on horses to do their job (The National Geographical Society, 2011).

In the number of farms and ranches Texas was also rated number one by having 185,000 farms and ranches and both covered an area of 129.3 million acres. This showed that the industry changed indeed from its earlier status. It changed from having longhorn and sprawling king ranch to having commercial feedlots, having sophisticated slaughter and meat industry, spreading in the use of computer, making intensive search for export markets and in many ranches hunting leases have replaced cattle raising from the above quoted Texas historical narrative, and notwithstanding, the grave picture of environmental impact assessment which often existed, scientists and other stakeholders have worked and are working together to provide reductive solution to environmental problems. It also goes to say that ranching developed gradually for over a century to its present level. And it tallies with the saying that a journey of 1,000 miles begins with a step. Be that as it may, and as Nigeria advances in age, Nigeria like other countries need to adopt the culture of ranching as a panacea to the incessant herdsmen/farmer conflict. When Texas herdsmen and famers stopped fighting, the result of a survey reported in 1995 showed that the Texas ranching industry led the United the State in cattle and calves by a population of 15.1 million, that is, beef cows 6.2 million, calves 5.75 million born in 1994, cattle on feed 2.38 million, total value of cattle and calves was \$8.532 billion, and cash receipts -1995 sales was \$6.353 billion (Williams, 2018).

The above suggests that in Nigeria and indeed West Africa sub region, individual breeders and famers and of course Nigeria as a country, must advance beyond the current wealth of breeders and farmers and adopt the culture of ranching in line with World Global Best Practice. West Africa is susceptible to terrorism and the financing of terrorism for several reasons. The subregion experiences political instability, ethnic and communal violence, rampant corruption, extensive poverty, and elevated rates of unemployment and underemployment, particularly among the youth. Terrorists and terrorist organisations may capitalise on these adverse circumstances, particularly concerning youth. The UNDP in its 2011 Human Development Report classified 13 of the 15 ECOWAS countries as exhibiting 'poor human development,' highlighting the severity of the challenges to human development in the area.

#### **Theoretical Framework**

This research adopted the theory of mobility transition. The proponent of this theory is Zelinsky (1971). Massey (1988) later expounded the theory. The main thrust of this theory is that the type of migration which occurs within a country is determined by its development level and its society type. The theory therefore explains a long-term structural change in migration within a country which comes in different stages. Essentially, the theory argues that in the Pre-modern traditional society that is, before urbanisation, nomadism was high but migration was low. However, the increase in industrialisation led to massive movement of people from the countryside to different locations thereby leading to high migration rates (Cooke et al., 2018).

The mobility transition theory integrates concepts from modernisation theory and demographic transition analysis, positing that societies progress through five distinct developmental phases, ranging from pre-modern traditional societies to future super-advanced societies, each associated with diverse internal and international migration patterns. In pre-modern societies, characterised by restricted circular migration, industrialisation and modernisation commence prior to the shift to an early transitional society, resulting in heightened emigration due to population growth, a reduction in rural employment, and low wages, alongside an increase in all forms of internal and international migration. During this phase of industrialisation, or the late transitional society, substantial rural-to-urban migration diminishes as agricultural production aligns with economic optimisation; nevertheless, internal migration remains elevated, and circular movements become increasingly intricate (Zelinsky, 1971; Minenor-Matheson, 2016).

Specifically, this theory noted that before urbanisation, nomadism was high but migration was low. However, increase in industrialisation and urbanisation led to high migration thus accounting for the pastoralists' movement from region to region in Nigeria. Hence, the relevance of the theory to this study. The theory of mobility transition is one of the most empirically confirmed research outcomes on international migration (Hochleithner & Exner, 2018). The theory is supported by several other recent and detailed cross-national statistical analyses with plausible theoretical explanations (De Haas 2007; Hatton & Williamson 2009; UNDP 2009; Hatton 2010; Clemens 2014a; b), as well as by longitudinal national case studies and panel data (Dustmann & Okatenko, 2014). De Haas (2010b) however distinguished the theory of mobility transition from the notion of the migration hump referring to short-term migration hikes. However, the theory has remained marginal in both policy debates (De Haas 2007; Clemens, 2014a; b; UNDP, 2009) for a similar assessment and a significant share of scholarly migration research.

The assumptions of mobility transition theory just like other migration theories border on the movement of persons occasioned by socio-economic factors such as industrialisation and urbanisation. The theory explains that the main reason why people migrate from one place to another is the socio-economic factors and basically to search for a better means of livelihood which in this case, the Fulani pastoralists migrate from one region to another in search of green land for their herds. Thus, people migrate from the poorest regions of the world in search of improved standard of living. The migration flows could be from rural to rural, rural to urban, or from urban to urban, within a country or across borders. As argued by the theory, increase in industrialisation and other social factors leads to massive migration from the countryside. This lends credence to explaining the fact that climate change and socio-economic factors including conflicts arising from the upsurge of terroristic activities around the Sahel region exacerbated migration of the Fulani pastoralists to other countries and region particularly Nigeria in search of greener pastures for their flocks.

The pastoral violence, its external linkages vis-à-vis its impacts on the socio-economic development of Nigeria gains explanatory support from the theoretical notations of the arguments of the theory of mobility transition. This theory is therefore relevant to this study. The mobility transition theory therefore helps in explaining the ECOWAS Protocols on free movements of persons in the West African sub-region and the issues of high poverty rate, proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria. The theory explains the foregoing reasons as why the Fulani pastoralists and their merchants go all out in search of better grazing routes and new economic opportunities from the Northern parts of Nigeria to the South-East. Hence, the increasing level of violence resulting from backlashes with indigenous Fulani herders mixed with foreign herders and locals, causing more socio-economic harm than good. Regrettably, most of the pastoral-migrants have leveraged on the porous nature of Nigerian borders to move illegally into Nigeria thereby causing more transnational crimes. Hence, exacerbated the pastoral violence in South-East Nigeria which hitherto have been living harmoniously with traditional Fulani herders before recent twist in the pastoral rift caused mainly by the illegal infiltration of foreign herders.

Notably, the main intent and purpose of the movement of persons and cattle from one region to another is for socio-economic gains anchored on the cheap availability of green pastures provided for the pastoralists but the reverse has become the case with the Fulani pastoralists in the South-East Nigeria. This is because, it has not brought the desired socio-economic gains rather it has brought socio-economic woes or calamity to the people of the South-East and the herders alike. The South-East in recent times has joined the bandwagon of insecurity ridden region hence has become a shadow of itself with socio-economic and political lives of the people largely in comatose. There is no doubt that the standpoints of migration transition theory explain the how and why of the pastoralist violence, external linkages and the socio-economic development of Nigeria.

## Methodology

This study was hinged on mixed method approach. The mixed method approach design is a systematic integration or a "mixing" of quantitative and qualitative data within a single investigation or sustained program of inquiry. The sample size for the study is 475. Purposive sampling technique was adopted to select the study's respondents. The study primary sources are personal observation, interview, questionnaire, while the secondary sources are research articles, text book, journals, policy document and the internet. In gathering data for this work, openended questionnaire was used for a pilot study of the area covered by this research via phone

calls, WhatsApp messages, video calls and emails. The research questions were analysed using descriptive statistics (mean and Standard Deviation) with the criterion mean value of 2.50, secondary data was analysed using content analysis and the interview were analysed thematically.

## **Data Presentation and Analyses**

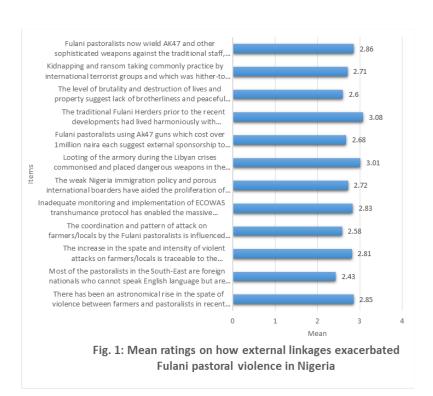
Question One: How have external linkages exacerbated Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria?

Table 1: Summary of descriptive statistics on the mean ratings of external linkages exacerbated Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria

exactibated Fulam pastoral violence in Nigeria								
S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD	Decision
1	There has been an astronomical rise in the spate of violence between farmers and pastoralists in recent times.	143	145	160	27	2.85	0.92	*
2	Most of the pastoralists in the South -East are foreign nationals who cannot speak English language but are fluent in French and other foreign languages.	40	164	233	38	2.43	0.76	
3	The increase in the spate and intensity of violent attacks on farmers/locals is traceable to the infiltration of foreign pastoralists	126	156	171	22	2.81	`0.88	*
4	The coordination and pattern of attack on farmers/locals by the Fulani pastoralists is influenced by other terrorists groups like Boko Haram, ISWAP, Al-Oaeda and Macina Liberation Front ((MLF).	52	188	218	17	2.58	0.73	*
5	Inadequate monitoring and implementation of ECOWAS transhumance protocol has enabled the massive influx of illegal pastoralists from other West African countries into Nigeria.	141	146	154	34	2.83	0.94	*
5	The weak Nigeria immigration policy and porous international boarders have aided the proliferation of SALWs which has exacerbated the rising insecurity in Nigeria.	137	104	199	35	2.72	0.96	*
7	Looting of the armory during the Libyan crises commonised and placed dangerous weapons in the hands of non -state combatant like the Fulani pastoralists in the South-East.	155	183	122	15	3.01	0.84	*

8	Fulani pastoralists using Ak47 guns which cost over 1 million naira each suggest external sponsorship to actualize a perceived religious and socio -economic agenda.	148	62	231	34	2.68	0.99	*
9	The traditional Fulani Herders prior to the recent developments had lived harmoniously with indigenous/local farmers in the South-East.	178	173	110	14	3.08	0.85	*
10	The level of brutality and destruction of lives and property suggest lack of brotherliness and peaceful co -existence that was experienced prior to the escalation.	88	142	211	34	2.60	0.87	*
11	Kidnapping and ransom taking commonly practice by international terrorist groups and which was hither-to alien to indigenous Fulani pastoralists has suddenly become their stock in trade.	103	178	148	46	2.71	0.91	*
12	Fulani pastoralists now wield AK47 and other sophisticated weapons against the traditional staff, bow and arrow.	182	79	180	34	2.86	1.02	*
	Grand mean					2.76	0.56	*

Key=\* Agree



The result in table 1 above showed the descriptive statistics on how external linkages exacerbated Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria. The grand mean on the external linkages exacerbated Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria was found to be 2.76±0.56. According to the result it is agreed that traditional Fulani herders prior to the recent developments had lived harmoniously with indigenous/local farmers in Nigeria with the mean 3.08±0.85. The result further agreed that looting of the armoury during the Libyan crises commonised and placed dangerous weapons in the hands of non-state combatants like the Fulani pastoralists in the South-East with the mean 3.01±0.84. The result also agreed that Fulani pastoralists now wield AK47 and other sophisticated weapons against the traditional staff, bow and arrow with the mean 2.86±1.02. The result as well agreed that there has been an astronomical rise in the spate of violence between farmers and pastoralists in recent times with the mean 2.85±0.92. The result also agreed that inadequate monitoring and implementation of ECOWAS transhumance protocol has enabled the massive influx of illegal pastoralists from other West African countries into Nigeria with the mean 2.83±0.94. The result also agreed that the increase in the spate and intensity of violent attacks on farmers/locals is traceable to the infiltration of foreign pastoralists with the mean 2.81±0.88. The result also agreed that the weak Nigeria immigration policy and porous international boarders have aided the proliferation of SALWs which has exacerbated the rising insecurity in Nigeria with the mean 2.72±0.96. The result as well agreed that kidnapping and ransom taking commonly practice by international terrorist groups and which was hither-to alien to indigenous Fulani pastoralists has suddenly become their stock in trade with the mean 2.71±0.91. The result also agreed that Fulani pastoralists using AK47 guns which cost over 1million naira each suggest external sponsorship to actualise a perceived religious and socioeconomic agenda with the mean 2.68±0.99. The result further agreed that the level of brutality and destruction of lives and property suggest lack of brotherliness and peaceful co-existence that was experienced prior to the escalation with the mean 2.60±0.87. The result finally agreed that the coordination and pattern of attack on farmers/locals by the Fulani pastoralists is influenced by other terrorists groups like Boko Haram, ISWAP, Al-Oaeda and Macina Liberation Front ((MLF) with the mean  $2.58\pm0.73$ .

**Question 2:** How has the government responded to Fulani pastoral violence in South-East Nigeria?

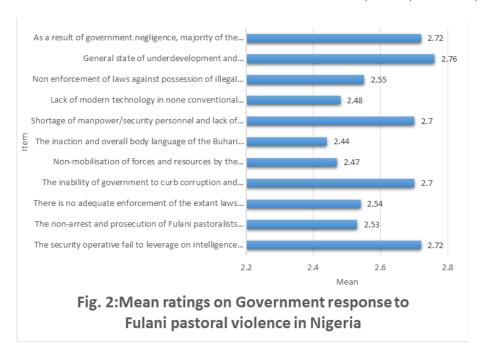
Table 2: Summary of descriptive statistics on the Government response to Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD	Decision
13	The security operative fail to leverage on intelligence gathering to prevent the menace of Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria.	152	134	93	96	2.72	1.12	*
14	The non -arrest and prosecution of Fulani pastoralists who parade with Ak47 and other dangerous weapons by the Nigerian government has heightened the pastoral violence in Nigeria.	66	231	67	111	2.53	1.00	*

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15	There is no adequate enforcement of the extant laws to curb the menace of insecurity by the relevant agencies of government.	73	154	206	42	2.54	0.86	*
16	The inability of government to curb corruption and sabotage amongst the security agencies is responsible for the rising wave of insecurity in Nigeria.	104	159	179	33	2.70	0.89	*
17	Non-mobilisation of forces and resources by the government against the Fulani pastoralists who kill, maim, and destroy whole communities is not proactive.	61	193	131	90	2.47	0.94	
18	The inaction and overall body language of the Buhari led federal government on nepotism, tribalism and religious bigotry suggests that Fulani pastoral violence is state sponsored.	57	193	127	98	2.44	0.95	
19	Shortage of manpower/security personnel and lack of modern equipment among the security operatives is an apparent failure of the government to prevent pastoral violence in Nigeria.	148	134	97	96	2.70	1.11	*
20	Lack of modern technology in none conventional crime fighting, non -commitment and preparedness by the government is largely responsible for the current level of insecurity in the country.	95	91	238	51	2.48	0.93	
21	Non enforcement of laws against possession of illegal firearms by government has led to the increase of pastoral violence and insecurity in Nigeria	79	139	223	34	2.55	0.85	*
22	General state of underdevelopment and infrastructural decay has hindered the prompt response against the activities of Fulani pastoralists.	129	166	119	61	2.76	0.99	*
23	As a result of government negligence, majority of the pastoralists lack basic/formal education which pose as a serious security challenge.	122	175	99	79	2.72	1.03	*
	Grand mean					2.68	0.33	*

Key\*Agree



The result in table 2 showed the descriptive statistics on the mean difference of Government response to Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria. The grand mean on the Government response to Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria was found to be 2.68±0.33. The result agreed that general state of underdevelopment and infrastructural decay has hindered the prompt response against the activities of Fulani pastoralists with the mean 2.76±0.99. The result also agreed that security operative fail to leverage on intelligence gathering to prevent the menace of Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria with the mean 2.72±1.12. The result as well agreed that as a result of government negligence, majority of the pastoralists lack basic/formal education which pose as a serious security challenge with the mean 2.72±0.33. The result also agreed that shortage of manpower/security personnel and lack of modern equipment among the security operatives is an apparent failure of the government to prevent pastoral violence in the south-east with the mean 2.70±1.11. The result further agreed that inability of government to curb corruption and sabotage amongst the security agencies is responsible for the rising wave of insecurity in Nigeria with the mean 2.70±0.89. The result as well agreed that non-enforcement of laws against possession of illegal firearms by government has led to the increase of pastoral violence and insecurity in Nigeria with the mean 2.55±0.85. The result also agreed that there is no adequate enforcement of the extant laws to curb the menace of insecurity by the relevant agencies of government with the mean 2.54±0.86. The result finally agreed that non-arrest and prosecution of Fulani pastoralists who parade with Ak47 and other dangerous weapons by the Nigerian government has heightened the pastoral violence in Nigeria with the mean  $2.53\pm1.00$ .

## **Discussion of Findings**

The discussion of findings of this study is in line with the study research questions. Essentially, the purpose of this section is to align the results from the data analysis with the previous literatures on the subject matter.

## External Linkages and Fulani Pastoral Violence (FPV) in Nigeria

Table 1 identified 8 questionnaire items as the foremost dominant factors with the mean values ranging from 3.08 to 2.71. It also showed 3 other items as second major factors with mean values of 2.68 to 2.58. The implications of these findings therefore, indicated that, majority of the respondents agreed to the totality of the questionnaire items which apparently established how external linkages exacerbated FPV in Nigeria, at the grand mean value of 2.76 with SD of 0.56, and this addresses the first problem of the study. This study therefore, proved that, external linkages have significantly exacerbated the Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria.

The above finding is in line with position of Nwangwu et al. (2020), Akerjiir (2018), Leonhardt (2019), Ogundipe (2018), Akinyetun (2016), Awogbade et al. (2016) and UNOWAS (2018), whose studies proved that external factors facilitate the Fulani pastoral violence. Specifically, Nwangwu et al. (2020) found that the non-effective implementation of ECOWAS protocols and conventions by member states have enabled illegal herders to move freely with their cattle across the border searching for pastures thus perpetrating pastoral violence as the bane of the worsening farmer-herder clashes in Nigeria and other parts of the country. Furthermore, they stated that the level of pastoral violence in Nigeria is largely driven by external forces within the Sub-Saharan Africa owing to the effects of climate change which has impacted in grazing patterns and forced pastoralists to graze in new areas outside of traditional grazing routes.

The finding is also in tandem with the work of Akejiir (2018) who found that, climate change has necessitated forced migration leading to influx of migrant herders to the South hence exacerbation of violent clashes between pastoralists and local farmers in Nigeria; that prior to the current spate of pastoral violence in the Sahel and Nigeria in particular, conventional Fulani pastoralists had enjoyed peaceful co-existence with indigenous farmers and only to witness a twist when climate change drove foreign Fulani herders to the South, causing more mayhem than the latter. This was further corroborated by the Benue State Governor, Samuel Ortom in an interview who said that "the indigenous farmers used to enjoy peaceful relationship with conventional herders until the infiltration of foreign Fulani herders who are bent on usurping available grazing areas causing more harm than good (Arise TV Interview, August 4, 2022)." Furthermore, the study by Awogbade et al. (2016) revealed that, despite the unprecedented grievance on dwindling grazing land that the occurrence and dimension of FPV on host communities is a reflection of porous state borders aiding the proliferation of illegal herders and their livestock into Nigeria.

In the course of this study, out of 60 persons interviewed on their view on factors considered to be responsible for the worsening FPV in Nigeria, 75% aligned with the result of the findings for instance, a member of All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN) in Akapugo community of Nkanu Local Government Area of Enugu State who pleaded anonymity said "Proliferation of illegally obtained weapons by Fulani pastoralists is to be blamed for the heinous crimes. This is because, the weapons are often sold and bought through illegal means and in most cases not registered by the owners, if not checked the violence in Nigeria would throw the country into total anarchy (Interview, May 12, 2020)." Similarly, Mr. Okoroigwe Agu of Omuchukwu Ifukwu Amanato Onicha Farmers Multi-Purpose Corporative Society Limited of Ebonyi State in Onunwakpa community of Izzi local government area of Ebonyi State said Fulani pastoralists that brandish AK47 and other dangerous weapons have international link and support from other religious/terrorist groups unlike the indigenous pastoralists who lived with them peacefully. For example, the dexterity and their forms of assaults on famers and communities is professional (Interview, June 28, 2021)."

## Government Response to Fulani Pastoral Violence (FPV) in Nigeria

The foremost 8 indices on table 2 ranges from 2.76 to 2.53 mean value. Nonetheless, other 3 nonexigent indices, yet insignificant, range from 2.48-2.44. This however proved that, most of the respondents admitted to the fact that government responses to FPV in Nigeria has not been encouraging and proactive with the grand mean value of 2.68, and SD of 0.33. This findingagreed with the previous findings of Nwangwu et al. (2020), Enviazu and Nwangwu (2019), Tayo and Nasrullah (2016), Olayinka (2020). Thus, Nwangwu et al. (2020) found that successive governments have failed to implement far-reaching strategies, measures, policies and programmes including legal frameworks that would have addressed the perennial farmersherders conflicts in Nigeria. They said that that NGOs and international partners which ought to play a collaborative role with government to resolve the protracted pastoral violence have been rather conciliatory and constructive in their responses. Some of those have ended up with paper recommendations that hardly saw the light of the day. They concluded that the transnational character of the herders-farmers conflict makes it impossible national strategies to be employed in resolving the impasse.

Also, Olayinka (2020) found that, "the politicisation of the issue coupled with the lackadaisical approach of the government makes every move towards resolving the conflicts unattractive to the parties involved" (p. 22). Regrettably, the handling of the issues around pastoralism has always nose-dived due to the perceived interest of the influential elite who are part of the ownership of large herds and government's complacency as the latter has rather been focusing on ethnic and religious dimensions of the conflicts. However, in their report, Tayo and Nasrullah (2016) found that, the Fulani pastoralists before independence paid fees to local settlers in order to use grazing areas but after independence all that changed as the government designated certain grazing reserves for the pastoralists to avoid clashes between herders and farmers.

Corroborating with the above findings, the International Crisis Group Report (2018) vividly captured government responses or handling of the Fulani pastoralist violence in Nigeria when it observed that:

The federal administration has implemented efforts to halt the violence. It has sent supplementary police and military personnel and initiated two military operations to mitigate unrest in six states: Exercise Cat Race, conducted from 15 February to 31 March, and the continuing Operation Whirl Stroke. Notwithstanding these deployments, homicides persist. President Buhari and senior officials have engaged in consultations with leaders of herders and farmers, along with pertinent state governments, to explore strategies for ceasing the attacks. The government has proposed long-term remedies, including the establishment of "cattle colonies" to provide land for herders nationwide, and has just introduced a National Livestock Transformation Plan (2018-2027). These steps indicate a heightened commitment from the administration; yet, they remain unimplemented, and violence persists (p. ii).

From the report, it means clearly that the government, in part, has responded positively to the Fulani pastoral violence in several parts of the country by way of security deployments but regretted that other plans that would address the lingering violence in the country, though still ongoing, are yet to be fully implemented as the violence surges in spite of those commitments aimed at addressing the problems. Thus, one of the respondents interviewed in this study, Mr. Ogbonna Ugwu, a farmer from Aku Igbo-Etiti community in Nsukka L.G.A. of Enugu State, in an interview lamented that:

Slow response practice of the government security agencies has negative effects on curbing Fulani attacks in the South-East Nigeria. It is a clear fact that the herdsmen are not even the only security challenges faced by many communities in the South-East on daily basis, the incessant case of banditry, kidnapping are also encouraged by the slow response of security agencies to attacks as well as the lack of effective equipment and gadgets, the procurement of substandard military equipment and gadgets. Those saddle with the responsibilities of purchasing Military Hardware to be used by on the ground soldiers are now known to either obsolete equipment which do not match up with the fighting capacities of the herdsmen/bandits. Also is the lack of proper care of military personnel and other security agents, greed and corruption (September 19, 2019).

Enyiazu and Nwangwu (2019) asserted that the intricate nature of security arises from examining diverse sectors of the security architecture to pinpoint specific interactions that ensure effective security management. Nnoli (2006, p. 17) noted that "security necessitates military power adequate to deter or thwart an attack; however, numerous non-military components are essential to produce effective power, as security considerations cannot be confined solely to the ultimate military outcome".

#### Conclusion

The place of peace and security as a basic enabling environment for meaningful development of any society cannot be overemphasised. Insecurity has in recent past become a global challenge and the Nigerian State, grappling with its own share of the problem, has been trying to respond to this challenge and has employed some modalities and approaches which have been seen as largely inadequate. This study proved that external linkages have significantly exacerbated the Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria. It further indicated that, government responses to FPV in Nigeria has not been encouraging and proactive. Thus, the evolution of adequate strategy in curtailing the external linkages of Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria is paramount. Therefore, except there is a genuine commitments on the part of the government at all levels and the locals in tackling head-long the lingering Fulani pastoralist violence in Nigeria, current efforts at addressing the problem will remain an illusion in view of the transnational nature of the menace and its negative impacts in the recent past.

#### Recommendations

To reduce the influence of external linkages on Fulani pastoral violence, the study made the following recommendations based on its findings:

- The Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS) and other relevant agencies of government at the international borders should be proactive in ensuring strict boarder control and appropriately implement the ECOWAS transhumance protocol by proper documentation and scrutinising of foreign immigrants. This will control the influx of illegal migrants and reduce the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) into the country.
- To address the non- proactive, lack luster approach by government which was seen to be complicit in the exacerbating Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria, the government of Nigeria should take urgent steps to reduce the prevailing level of illiteracy among the Fulani pastoralists, embark on massive upgrade and reconstruction of critical infrastructure and other social amenities, procure and deploy modern technology for non-conventional crime fighting.
- iii. Furthermore, the Nigerian government should purge its ranks of corruption and come clean of any tribalistic and nepotic tendencies, hire, engage and properly equip security operatives who will leverage on intelligence gathering in their complimentary and coordinated engagements against Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria.
- The Nigerian Government should equally embark on tree planting as modelled by UAE and other measures to reduce desertification; to check the North-South drift of Fulani pastoralists and also gainfully collaborate with international organiations, NGOs and others in the fight against the menace of Fulani pastoral violence in Nigeria.

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