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Crop farmer-herdsmen conflicts, land occupation and food insecurity in Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Mangu Local Government is one of the seventeen Local Government Areas in Plateau State. The local is inhabited by two dominant ethnic groups; the Mwaghavul and the Pyem. The Fulani herders are settlers who come to the area primarily to herd. The local government area was engulfed by series of conflict between the arable farmers who are chiefly the Mwaghavul ethnic group and the Fulani herders. This study seeks to examine the conflict, its impact on land occupation and food insecurity in the local government area. We explored a mixed method research design. Krejcie and Morgan Table was used to determine the sample size of the Study. Bourley Proportional Formula was used to distribute the sample to their respective frame. We sourced our data from both primary and secondary sources. Questionnaire, interview and observation were the major instruments for data collection. We presented and analyzed the data we obtained from the field using descriptive statistical tools such as table, percentage and frequency count. We used T-test to test the formulated hypotheses. The study found that the conflict has significantly contributed to land occupation and food insecurity in the area. The study recommends the modernizing of herding system, farmers' education and dialogue to reclaim the captured lands and to resettle the displaced groups, among many others.

Keywords: *Conflict, Land occupation, Food insecurity, Mangu, Plateau State*

Introduction

Mangu Local Government is one of the seventeen local government areas in Plateau State. It is situated in the Central Senatorial District of the state. The Mwaghavul people are the predominant ethnic group in the local government area and are chiefly situated in the southern part of the local government area. Besides the Mwaghavul, there are other ethnic groups such as the Pyem, Bijim, Chakfem and the Jipal ethnic groups (Cinjel, Musa & Umaru, 2018). The local government area is known for the production of

foods such as maize, sugar cane, Irish & sweet potatoes, among others. Sheep, goats, cows, pigs, among others are also domesticated in commercial quantity (Cinjel & Kefas, 2024).

The Mwaghavul people are mostly the arable farmers. They are both into the seasonal and irrigational farming. Mangu Local Government Area has 21 districts; The Mwaghavul people largely occupied 12 district while the Pyem ethnic group have seven districts. The Jipal and Chakfem owned one district each. The local government is also rich in mineral resources- tin, columbite and Koaline (Jackson, 2024).

In 1994, there was a conflict between the Mwaghavul and the Ron ethnic group of Bokkos Local Government. The conflict was triggered by land tussle at the border areas, but it was tamed by the state apparatus within a short time. In 1997, the Pyem and Mwaghavul people clashed over the ownership of an area known as *Changal*. With the intervention of the State and security outfits, the conflict was resolved. In 2023 and 2024, the local government was engulfed by a notorious ethnic conflict which transmogrified to a religious conflict (Cinjel & Kefas, 2024).

The 2023 and 2024 conflict in Mangu Local Government began as a conflict between a Fulani herder and a Mwaghavul farmer. The conflict later transformed to ethnic; a conflict between the Fulani who are predominant herders and the Mwaghavul who are chiefly arable farmers. It did not stop at that, the conflict later metamorphosed from ethnic to religious. The Muslims in the local government area supported the Fulani ethnic group while the Christians from other ethnic groups took side with the Mwaghavul ethnic group. The local government witnessed a severe bloodshed on 16th January 2024. In the attacks, over 100 persons were killed, 26 Churches were burned and 15 Mosques were destroyed, business worth billions of naira were brought to standstill (Cinjel & Kefas, 2024).

In the conflict, several communities were disposed; a report from Human Right Watch shows that 87 community that were previously occupied by the Mwaghavul people were now occupied by the Fulani herders (Cinjel & Kefas, 2024). The record further indicates that these affected areas were vast land where 65% agricultural yields are produced. The report also shows that over 2000 people were internally displaced (Cinjel & Kefas, 2024).

This study aim to investigate the relationship between the conflict, land occupation and food insecurity in Mangu Local Government area. Emphasis was laid on the conflict of 2023 and 2024.

It is against this backdrop, the following questions were raised to guide the study:

- i. In what ways has the Mangu conflict contributed to land occupation?

- ii. How has the conflict impacted on food insecurity in the local government area?
- iii. What measures can be taken to address the mentioned menaces?

Specifically, the study seeks to:

- i. Assess the influence of the conflict on land occupation
- ii. Examine the effect of the conflict on food production in the local government area
- iii. Provide ways in which the above mentioned challenged could be mitigated

Hypothetically, the study states that:

- a. The Mangu Local Government conflict has led to land occupation in the local government area
- b. The Mangu Local Government conflict has contributed to food insecurity in the local government area

Conceptual Review

a. Conflict

Conflict arises from the pursuit of divergent interests, goals and aspirations by individuals or groups in defined social and physical environments. Change in the social environment, such as access to new political position, or perceptions of new resources arising from development in the physical environment, are fertile grounds for conflicts involving individuals and groups who are interested in using these new resources to achieve their goals. By recognizing the inherent nature of conflict in heterogeneous and competitive situations, people, more or less compellingly, sustain their societies as ongoing social system through the resolution, transformation and management of conflicts (Cinjel & Akende, 2015).

One of the most quoted traditional definitions of conflict regards it as “a struggle over values claims to scarce resources power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals” (Coser, 2010: 10). In the same direction, Park and Burgess (cited in Abdu, 2010) argue that “conflict is designed to resolve divergent dualism and achieve some kind of unity even if it is through the annihilation of one of the conflicting parties”.

Conflict may not be regarded only in a negative light of dysfunctional or disjunctive process and a breakdown of communication as some scholars tend to suggest (Lundberg, 2000). Conflict is a conscious act involving personal or group contact and communication. Together with, though

distinct from competition, struggle, and contest, etc. conflict is a normal process of interaction particularly in complex societies in which resources are usually scarce. Although conflict may generally exist “wherever incompatible activities occur” (Deutsch, 2000,p156), and may result in a win-lose situation; the resolution, transformation and management of conflict may produce a “win-win” outcome.

Hence Coser (2010, p10) elaborate definition of conflict becomes a useful clarification:

Social conflict may be defined as a struggle over values or claims to status, power, and scarce resources, in which the aims of the conflicting parties are not only to gain the desired values but also to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rival. Such conflict may take place between individual, between collectivities, or between individuals and collectivities. Inter-group as well as intra-group conflicts are perennial features of social life.

b. Land Occupation

Land occupation is a recent concept in social sciences. It is of late that scholars have begun to develop interest on the concept. Land occupation entails the taking over of land from a group known as aborigines to a new comers group. According to Jackson (2018), it is a forceful invasion of land by armed group for economic gains. He went further to state that the occupation is mostly built on interest; that is, mineral resources, land resources and agricultural production.

Land occupation is into the following types:

- a. Land Grabbing:** This is the acquisition of a large portion of land by either an individual or group for certain uses. It is formal and is backed by agreement. It is also known as land acquisition.
- b. Land Invasion:** This is the forceful taking over of a land using coercion and fight. It is not backed by law and it is a typical attribute of a traditional society. It is also known as land conquest. This is the type that study will concentrate on.
- c. Land Annexation:** This is the forceful extension of a land by a dominant group. It is common with neighbouring countries or a colonial power.

c. Food Security and Food Insecurity

The concept of *Food Security* is multidimensional and has no universal definition; it is easier to be identified than to be defined. Scholars, practitioners

and institutions have presented their own meaning of the phenomenon in different ways and dimensions (Cinjel & Akende, 2015). The concept originated in the 1970s at a time when there were growing concerns of a global food crisis. The main thrust of the food and hunger discourse was centered on assuring steady food supply and availability; lesser attention was paid to price stability and access (Moses, 2015). A World Food Conference held in 1974 set an institutional arrangement to promote food security globally. The outcome of this conference was a redefinition of the term food security. The concept was viewed as the availability of basic food supplies at all times and the ability to sustain production in the face of expanding food consumption to offset fluctuations in production and prices (Akpera-Tyough, 2016). In 1983, the World Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) went a step further to include its availability for all in the society. FAO describes food security as “ensuring that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to basic food that they need (FAO, 1983). The World Summit of 1996 defines food security as “when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficiency and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO, 1996).

Food Insecurity on the other hand is the opposite; it is a term that denotes a condition of diffidence, lack, inadequacy, timidity and insufficiency in food production. Stephenson (2024) sees it as a state where food production decline as a result of factors which could be natural – earth quake, flood, drought, pestilence and disease or human factors such as: war, crop damage, high consumption and many more. The World Bank in its report “Hunger and Poverty” drew attention to the dynamics of food insecurity. The report categorised food insecurity into *chronic* insecurity that arise out of structural poverty associated with low incomes, and *transitory* insecurity which occurs in times of natural disaster or conflict. The report reaffirms the view held by FAO that food security entails access of all people at all times to enough food for an active and healthy life (World Bank, 1983). From the above, it could be deduced that there is food insecurity even the food is common but highly priced and only the upper class can have access to it. Thus it can be deduced that food insecurity is a situation where food production and food availability fall, drop and degenerate and has resulted to absent, insufficient and weak supply.

Nature and History of Arable Farmers-Herders Conflict in Mangu Local Government

The conflict between the Fulani herders and Mwaghavul ethnic group has a long history; the conflicts have different causes at different period. In the

1980s, 1990s and 2000s, what mostly led to minor dispute between the two ethnic groups was the damage caused to the crops of the Mwaghavul arable farmers due to either negligence or carelessness. These disputes, at the time were easily managed by traditional institutions and the Police Force, thus preventing a full blown conflict (Cinjel, Musa & Umaru, 2018). In 2007, there was a dispute between a Mwaghavul man and a Fulani man over a land. The Mwaghavul man claimed that his father was a friend to the father of the Fulani man and that his father before his death temporarily gave his said friend (the father of the Fulani man) a portion of land on mutual trust. The parties later on passed away and the son of the Mwaghavul man returned home after retirement from active service with the Plateau State government and wanted to retrieve the possession of the land but the other son of his father's friend (the Fulani man) disputed the fact and this led to a tussle. The Mwaghavul youth in *Daika* angrily went and set the house of the Fulani man ablaze; and they forcefully asked him to leave the area. The aggrieved Fulani took the case to the C Division of the Nigerian Police in Jos. All the Mwaghavul youth that participated in the act were reprimanded and were ordered to pay the acclaimed money and properties that the Fulani man claimed to have lost as a result of the tussle (Cinjel, Musa & Umaru 2018).

In the 2000s, there were high incidents of armed robbery in places like *Bwai*, *Ncha*, *Chisu*, *Alogom*, *Giambos*, *Shimilang* and *Daika* areas. Several of the people that were caught by the police in the act were mostly the Fulani youths in the mentioned areas. In 2021, 3 police officers were killed during a clash with robbers along *Bwai* road and the culprits found were Fulani youths in the community. The activities of the police, vigilante group and the association of hunters helped to nip the incident to its bud (Stephenson, 2024).

Aside the incidents of armed robbery, kidnapping became more prevalent in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. It was frequently done in places like *Kantoma*, *Mangul*, *Mairana*, *Bungha-Dawo*, *Daika*, *Sabon Gari*, among others. Many people were kidnapped and several culprits that were caught in the act were the Fulani youth in the community. There were several meeting and dialogue between the traditional institutions of the Mwaghavul people and Fulani=herders. Beside the mentioned vices, the destruction of the farmers' crop kept reoccurring. The destructions were mostly done in the night and on Sundays; when the arable farmer is not in the farm (Stephenson, 2024). Several reports were filed by the affected farmers at the different police stations in the local government area but there was no record of arrest. It did not stop the destruction of crops; the cattle of the indigenous people were rustled in almost all the districts that constituted the Mwaghavul

chiefdom in the local government area. The crops damage and cow rustling kept re-occurring despite the intervention of the Nigerian Police Force and the traditional institutions from concerned parties. On 20th August 2022, a Mwaghavul arable farmer out of annoyance shot a Fulani herder whom he caught herding on his crops. The arable farmer was arrested by the police and later imprisoned. The traditional institution of the Mwaghavul ethnic divide sat with the leadership of MACBAN in the local government to discuss how a lasting solution could be found; to help put an end to the issue but all to the contrary (Human Right Watch, 2024).

On 5th May, 2023, a Fulani herder (youth) was herding and left the cattle to destroy the crop of a young Mwaghavul man. The young insisted that he must be compensated. In the process of the settlement, the herder rejected what he was charged by the arable farmer slapped the herder for what he considered as an insult. The herder on his part picked his herding stick and hit the crop farmer on the head. The crop farmer fell on the ground and collapsed; several attempts to revive him proved abortive and when he was taken to the hospital, he was declared dead on arrival (DOA). The youth from Kiwes were bitter and went after the herder. They thought he had left the community. They then projected their aggression on his younger brother. On 8th May, 2023, the Fulani herder in the *Kiwes* villages carried out an attack at the area and in the attack, several persons were killed and properties worth millions of Naira were destroyed. On 10th of May, 2023, the Mwaghavul youth in *Kiwes* and those in the neighbouring villages launched a reprisal attack and in the attack, several Fulani herders were also killed along with their cattle (Human Rights Watch, 2024).

On 15th May, 2023 and around 3 pm, 13 villages were attacked by the Fulani's herders in Mangu Local Government Area. In the coordinated attacks, several persons (men, youth, women and children) were killed; several houses, churches and agricultural produces were destroyed. The affected villages were: Chisu, Mangul, Kibat, Jwakchom, Ting, Alogom, Kantoma, Tyop, Kombili, Changkal, Gwet, Njing, Dang Dai, Farin Kasa, Murish, among others. In the attacks, several persons were displaced and many communities were deserted. This was what led to other attacks in the local government area in 2023. The Fulani herders were forced out of the southern part of the local government; and many of the Fulani herders moved to the northern side and settled with the Pyem and the Kwangka ethnic groups. Some of the Fulani that have no cow went and settled among the Hausa communities living in *Sabon Kasuwa, Sohon Kasuwa, Angwan Pyemawa areas*, among others (Human Rights Watch, 2024).

Dislodged and deserted Mwaghavul communities like Tyop, Alogom,

Changal, Washna, Kombili, Nandang Dai, among others were grains like maize, irrigated Irish potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, among others were farmed at commercial quantity

Table: Clashes between the Mwaghavul Arable farmers and the Fulani herders

S/N	Year	Nature
	2007	The confront at Diaka
	May, 3, 2023	The first attack at Kiwes
	May, 7, 2023	Reprisal Attack
	May, 9, 2023	Attack at Chisu
	May 15, 2023	Coordinated Attack on 13 villages
	1 st June 2023	Clash between Muslim and Christians in Mangu Town
	24 December	Attack at some villages
	23 24 January 2024	Muslim-Christian clash in Mangu Town
	24 January ?2024	The massacre of all villagers in Kwaghaslalek

Source: Researchers’ Survey, 2024

On 20th January, 2004, the Fulani herders attacked the Sabon Gari Village, inflicted injuries on 5 youths, and burnt several properties. In an attempt to retaliate, the Mwaghavul youths drove out all the Fulani herders in *Tyop*. At the hearing of the scene, the youth of the Hausa ethnic group along with the indigenous Mwaghavul Muslim residing inside Mangu town precisely in *Sabon Kasuwa, Sohon Kasuwa, Angwan Pyemawa, Lahir, Angwan Malti*, among others became aggrieved; they came out and set ablaze the houses of the Christians living among them. The Christians in other side of the town (Bungha, Dawo, Angwan mission, Angwan Sarki, Chichim, among others also retaliated by setting ablaze the houses of the Hausa and Muslims living among them. Major roads were barricaded; worship centres were burnt, several persons were killed and several shops were ransacked, among others. It was as a result of this, the Plateau State Government declared 24 hours curfew in the town. Even with the curfew, Kwaghaslalek, a village that housed the *NYSC camp* was attacked in the early hours of 24th January 2024. In the attack, all the 30 persons living in the village were killed and this further deepened the crisis (Human Rights Watch, 2024).

Empirical Review on Herders-Farmers Conflict in Nigeria

Adams and Hollis (1987) conducted a study on *hydrology sustenance resources* and its impact on *herders-farmers' conflict* in Hadija –Nguru Wetland. They used a survey research design and the sample size drawn for the study was 350. The study employed a systematic and simple random technique to select the respondents of the study. The study generated data from both primary and secondary data. The study found that land and hydrological resources were at the heart of the conflict between farmers and herders in Hadija –Nguru.

In 1993, Ismaila (1993) carried a study on *socio-economic* basis of *farmers-pastoralists conflict* in Jigawa State. The study employed a survey research design and used the sample size of 280 which was determined using *Krejcie and Morgan Formula*. Cluster and simple random sample techniques were exploited to reach to the respondents. Both primary and secondary data were used and were generated from interview, observation, questionnaire and documentary facts. The study uncovered that the intermittent conflict between the herders and farmers have significant effect on development of the study area

Shalangwa (1995) conducted a study on the importance of *adequate river flows* to the economy of *NEAZDP area*. The study used mixed method research design. Taro Yamane Formula was used to determine the sample of the study which is 453. Simple random and cluster sampling techniques were used to reach to the respondents. The study used *Bourdley (1964) Proportional Formula* to distribute the instruments to the clusters. In the study, the data of the study were generated from both primary and secondary sources of data collection. The study revealed that water and land resources have significant impact on the farmers-herders conflict in Northern part of Nigeria

Mkalachiwi(1995) carried a study on the dilemma of *sustainable water resources management* in Komadugu, Yobe Basin. The study adopted survey research design. The study used *Fishers' Exact Sampling Formula* to determine the sample size of the study. The sample size utilized was 420 and *simple random* and *purposive sampling* technique was used. The study also generated data from both the primary and secondary data. The study found that climate change has significant effect on farmers-herders conflict in the Yobe Basin

Bello (2013) carried a study on *herdsmen and farmers* conflict in Kano State in the North- Western geo-political zone of Nigeria. In the study, *four-stage cluster random sampling* procedure was used to administer the research instruments. Out of the 44 local governments in the state, 31 LGAs were affected by the menace. In each of the 31 LGAs, five farming communities

were randomly selected making a total of 155 villages. In the study, 10 arable farmers were randomly selected from each of the village, thus making a total of 1550. In each of the 31 LGAs, 250 cattle herdsmen were also randomly selected for data collection. He stated that necessity to provide food crops and animals as well as raw materials for industry and export in order to meet the growing demands has contributed to the completion for the use of land resources and herders-farmers conflict in Kano State

Chinwokwu (2017) conducted a study on the glamorization of Fulani herdsmen's criminality and implication on national security in Nigeria. The study used mixed method research design and gives emphases on happening in the north central Geo-political Zone. Slovin formula was used to determine the sample size of the study which is 430. Cluster and simple random techniques were used to administer the research instruments. The study also generated data from both primary and secondary sources. The study revealed that the inaction of the state and the security apparatus have significant influence on the criminality of herdsmen in the zone

Cinjel, Musa and Umaru (2018) carried out an empirical assessment of herders-farmers conflict in Nigeria, from 2000-2017. The study used meta-Analysis and documentary research design. The documentary facts were extracted from published and unpublished materials relevant to the study. The primary data were collected from structured interview whose content comprised of open and closed ended questions. The primary data was generated using participatory method, which combines informant's interview with focus group discussion. The result of the study reveal that factors such as porous borders, population explosion, bad governance among others contributes to herders-farmers conflict in Nigeria

Theoretical Anchorage

Forced migration theory is adopted as the theoretical underpinning of the study. The theory was propounded by Lolberg, Newland and Nowotony in 1976. Indira Doreen (2010) and Spear (2014) also contributed to the growth and advancement of the theory. The theory states that several factors can send away people from their land. These factors include, war, conflict, natural disaster, greener pasture, poverty, famine, among others.

In this work, we dwelled on the forced migration strand that is caused by conflict. The arable farmers – herder conflict of Mangu has dislodged several settlements. Record and reports on ground shows that over 87 communities were displaced, 3500 persons were IDPs and over a hundred were killed during the conflict (Stephenson, 2025).

The conflict has impacted on land; several lands that were previous

owned by the Mwaghavul arable farmers were now occupied by the herders and this has affected food production. The local government of is currently battling with food insecurity. Irrigation that is practiced in commercial scale has declined and the prices of food stuffs have soared up. These are the after math effects of the conflict in the local government area.

Methodology

A mixed method research design was employed for the study. The study used the projected population size of the study area (Mangu L.G.A) as the population size of the study. Krejcie and Morgan formula was used to determine the sample size which is 420. Bourley Proportional Formula was use to distribute the sample to their respective frames. We utilized purposive sampling technique and 3 districts were selected from the two zones in the local government area (North and South). We used both primary and secondary data. Questionnaires, interview and observation were the basic instruments we used to collect the data from the field. We subjected the instrument to face, content and predictive validity test.

Test-retest method reliability was used to determine the co-efficiency of reliability which was 0.8 on the scale of one (1). We used descriptive statistical tools such as percentage, table and frequency count to present and analyze the data that were obtained from the field. T-test was used to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Population Distribution of Study Area

S/N	Area	Population Size	Sample Distribution
	Panyam	10500	72
	Pushit	11200	76
	Kombun	7500	51
	Mangu Halle	8000	55
	Mangu District	13500	92
	Bungha/Dawo	10800	74
	Total	61500	420

Sources: 2024 Projection and Researcher field work, 2024

We administered 420 questionnaires and we were able to retrieve 400. The 400 constitute 95% of what we used for the study. According to Hair and Black (2001), 95% of rate return is a good collection for any scientific and empirical studies.

Bio-Data of Respondents

S/N	Characteristics	Nature	Number	Percentage
	Sex	Male	220	
		Female	180	
		Total	400	
	Age Bracket	18-30	150	
		31-40	150	
		41 & above	100	
		Total	400	
	Religion	Christians	200	
		Muslim	150	
		Others	50	
		Total	400	
	Qualification	FSLC	10	
		SSCE	30	
		NCE/ND	60	
		HND/First Degree	150	
		Postgraduate certificate	150	
		Total	400	

Source: Researchers' field work 2024

The Conflict and Land Occupation

S/N	Items	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
1	The aborigines are forced out	380	5	5	5	5

2	Many of the aborigines were killed	300	50	10	20	20
3	Several villages are occupied by new group	380	5	5	5	5
4	Aborigines have access to their land resources	5	5	5	380	5

Sources: Researchers' field work, 2024

As regards whether the conflict has forced the aborigines out of their abode, 380 of the respondents strongly supported the view, 5 of the respondents also subscribed to the view, 5 of the respondents were indecisive, another 5 of the respondents disapproved it and another 5 of the respondents strongly rejected it.

As regards to the death of many aborigines, 300 of the respondents strongly subscribed to the view, 50 of the respondents supported the view, 10 were without stands, 20 declined and another 20 strongly opposed the view.

With respect to the occupation of villages by a new group, 380 of the respondents attested to the view that several villages/communities were occupied by a new group, 5 of the respondents supported it, 5 were without stands, another 5 declined and 5 strongly opposed it.

On whether the aborigines still have access to their land and land resources, 5 attested, another 5 strongly subscribed to the view, another 5 were without stands, 380 opposed the view and another 5 strongly opposed the view.

The Mangu Conflict and Food Insecurity

S/N	Items	Responses									
		SA	%	A	%	U	%	D	%	SD	%
	Decline in food production	380	95	10	2.5	5	1.3	3	0.6	2	0.5
	Deduction in irrigation	380	95	10	2.5	5	1.3	3	0.6	2	0.5
	Food scarcity	380	95	10	2.5	5	1.3	3	0.6	2	0.5
	Increase in prices of food stuff	380	95	10	2.5	5	1.3	3	0.6	2	0.5
	Total			40		20		12		8	

Source: Researchers' Field work, 2024

The table above shows that 380 of the respondents strongly supported the notion that there was decline in food production in the study area, 10 supported the view, 5 were not decisive, 3 disapproved the view and 2 strongly opposed.

On whether the conflict has led to decline in irrigational activities; 380 of the respondents strongly supported the view, 10 subscribed to the view, 5 were without stands, 3 opposed the view and 2 strongly supported the view.

As regard to the existence of food scarcity, 380 of the respondents strongly acknowledged it, 5 were indecisive, 3 declined and 2 strongly opposed it.

With regards to the increase in the prices of food stuffs, 380 of the respondents strongly subscribed to the view, 10 acknowledged, 5 respondents were without stands, 3 disapproved it and 2 strongly opposed it.

Test of Hypotheses

We subjected the observation into 2 zones (North and South) and thus uses T-test to test the formulated hypotheses

Test of Hypothesis One (1)

Table 1: The mean difference between the conflict and land occupation

Characteristics	Conflict	Land occupation
Mean	1.80931	1.6
Variance	0.18152421	0.01621891
Observation	200	200
Pearson correlation	0.1431224	
Hypothesized mean Diff	0	
Df	199	
T-stat	0.85282441	
P() one tail	0.42671	
t critical one tail	1.66433714	
P() two tail	0.911881	
t critical two tail	1.981381	

The table above shows the t-test to determine mean difference between conflict of Mangu LGA and land occupation. The *P- value* of the t-test is 0.85 and is greater than the significant level of 0.05. We therefore uphold H_1 and

we reject H_0 . This simple shows that the conflict in Mangu has significantly contributed to land occupation in the local government area.

Test of Hypothesis Two (2)

Table 2: The mean differences between the conflict and food security

	Conflict	Food Insecurity
Mean	1.70136	1.6
Variance	0.151201	0.016518
Observation	200	200
Pearson correlation	0.1331221	
Hypothesized mean Diff	0	
Df	199	
T-stat	0.902101	
P(T > = t) one tail	0.32671	
t Critical one tail	0.16338	
P(t < = t) two tail	0.911811	
t critical two tail	1.901381	

Sources: SPSS, 2024

Decision and Result

The table above shows the t-test to determine mean difference between the arable farmers-herders conflict and food insecurity. The P-value of the t-test is 0.952101 and is greater than the significant level of 0.005 we therefore upheld H_1 and reject H_0 . This implies that the conflict significantly contributed to food insecurity in the local government area.

Results and Discussions

In the course of the study, the following were found:

- a. The Mangu conflict of 2023/2024 has tremendous impact on land occupation. The responses from the field shows that there were several incidences to indicate that the conflict has actually impacted on land occupation. Majority of the respondents attested to the fact that the conflict has forced most of the aborigines out of

their land; many of them were killed, there were high cases of land invasion, and there were incidence of non-accessibility of land. In an interview session with M. Gunaghap, an indigene of Ndang dai community, he enthused:

Land capture and acquisition is one of the effect of the recent Mangu conflict. The Mwaghavul people are known for two things- education and agriculture. If you have taken the land from them you have killed them. In Plateau State, bulk of food crops like cowpea, maize, millet, Irish potatoes, sugar cane, among others are produced in the affected areas.

Corroborating this fact, a report by the Human Rights watch in 2024 also illustrate that about 87 communities were affected; 69 were invaded and only 18 were reclaimed. An interview with MYM leader also shows that several community were captured, several persons were killed and many properties (houses, business, schools, Churches, Mosques etc.) were destroyed.

- b. With regard to the case of food insecurity, we were able to discover that the conflict has significantly impacted on food insecurity. Report from the field and test statistics espoused the notion. A study of Cinjel and Kefas in 2024 also shows that there was decline in food production, irrigation, among many others. In an interview session with Nanpan Solomon, an indigene of Mangu Halle. He stated:

The monster has affected us in many ways, food production has declined. Our market no longer bump up with foods as it was in the past. Irrigation is now history and 80 percent of Irish potatoes produced in Mangu were done through irrigation. This is why food stuff are scarce and their prices kept soaring up.

- c. Commenting on the impact of the conflict on food insecurity, a trader attested to food scarcity and the increase in the prices of goods and services in the study area. He (Name withheld) enthused: Mangu Local Government Area Friday Market is one of the biggest markets in the state. There is no grain that you cannot see. The eruption of the conflict has weaken the market. When I went there, it was a ghost of itself. Deserted and prices of the few things available skyrocketed

Conclusion and Recommendations

The arable farmer and herdsmen conflict of Mangu Local Government

Area of Plateau has a long history. The conflict started in 1990s but it was not thought to be an issue that will later metamorphose to a larger scale. It was in 2023 and 2024 that the conflict escalated to a proportional dimension. In the conflict, several persons were killed, many properties worth billions of naira were destroyed. Beside this, several community were forced out through land occupation. The conflict, land occupation, among other factors have contributed to food insecurity in the local government area.

In the local government, over 89 villages were forcefully taken over from the aborigines and this has led to decline in agricultural practices.

Based on our findings, the following were recommended:

- a. Open grazing should be discouraged in the local government area. The government can do this by introducing measures such as animal reserve, ranching, among others. This will prevent crop damage by cattle and consequently reduce clashes between the herders and arable farmers
- b. Herders and farmers should be educated on modern method of farming and things like climate change, urbanization and population growth. This will go a long way to inform them on how land and other land resources could be managed and utilized.
- c. A law should be design to curb land occupation. The herders need to be educated on modern ways of acquiring land. Land invasion, land capture, are traditional methods of acquiring land that should be discarded in the 21 century. The government can correct this through proper education and sensitization.

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