



**Impact of communal conflict on livelihoods of some selected communities in NGADA special development area Taraba State, Nigeria**

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**International Journal of Social Science, Management, Peace and Conflict Research, 01(02), 100-111**

**Publication history: Received on 28 Jan 2025; Revised on Feb 3, 2025; Accepted on Feb 6, 2025**

**Abstract**

*Understanding the impact of communal conflicts in Nigeria is crucial due to their widespread occurrence and detrimental effects on economic activities, food security, and social harmony. Exploring these impacts sheds light on mitigating disruptions in agriculture, trade, and essential services, particularly in conflict-affected areas like Taraba State. This study examined the impact of communal conflicts on livelihoods in selected communities within the NGADA Special Development Area of Taraba State, Nigeria. This study used social capital theory and conflict theory to explain communal conflicts and its potential influence on livelihoods in some selected communities in NGADA special development area of Taraba State, Nigeria. The study adopted explanatory research design and utilizing secondary data sourced from journal publications, official reports, internet databases, and conference proceedings. The analysis explored literature on communal conflicts, livelihoods, farming, trade and pastoralism, providing a comprehensive understanding of the subject. Findings from the study indicate that communal conflicts in NGADA Special Development Area are rooted in disputes over natural resources like farmland, grazing areas, and water sources, exacerbated by demographic pressures and weak conflict resolution mechanisms. These conflicts disrupt livelihoods by reducing access to resources, curtailing agricultural productivity, and limiting economic opportunities. Additionally, the loss of farmland and restricted movement due to insecurity severely impact farming and trading activities, key sources of livelihood in the region. Therefore, the study concludes that communal conflicts have far-reaching negative consequences on economic activities and social cohesion, exacerbating poverty and instability. The recommendations include strengthening conflict resolution mechanisms, promoting equitable resource distribution, and investing in community resilience programs to aid recovery and stability in NGADA.*

**Keywords:** Communal, Conflicts, Farming, Livelihood, Pastoralism.

**Introduction**

Communal conflicts are among the most pressing challenges confronting societies globally, disrupting social harmony, economic progress, and sustainable development. From Africa to the Middle East, and from Southeast Asia to Latin America, these conflicts often arise from disputes over natural resources, ethnic and religious differences, or historical grievances (Abdel-Latif & El-Gamal, 2024; Askandar, 2021). They disproportionately affect vulnerable populations, undermining livelihoods and exacerbating poverty. In Africa, regions such as the Sahel and the Great Lakes have experienced prolonged communal conflicts, resulting in displacement, loss of life, and long-term economic stagnation (Bøås, 2019). These conflicts not

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only devastate local economies but also strain social institutions, making recovery a daunting task for affected communities.

In Nigeria, communal conflicts have become increasingly frequent and severe, with devastating effects on individuals and communities alike. The country's multi-ethnic and multi-religious composition, coupled with struggles over scarce resources like arable land and water, has made it a hotspot for such conflicts (Anierobi, et al., 2023; Fadeyi & Abdullahi, 2019; Alimba, 2014). The Middle Belt region, in particular, has been plagued by recurring disputes, often pitting farming communities against pastoralists over grazing land and crop destruction. These conflicts have led to widespread displacement, with the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (2023) estimating that thousands of people are forced to flee their homes annually due to communal violence. The economic toll is equally alarming, as affected regions experience disruptions in agricultural production, market activities, and public services. Despite national and international efforts to mediate and resolve these conflicts, their persistence highlights the need for a deeper understanding of their localized impacts.

The NGADA Special Development Area of Taraba State offers a microcosm of the pervasive challenges posed by communal conflicts in Nigeria. This area is known for its agricultural potential and cultural diversity, it has faced recurring disputes over land ownership, access to natural resources, and ethnic rivalries. Communities such as Ali Dori, Anghai, Duna, Maisuma, Massah, Sabongida, Fali Isa, Garba, Lara Acha, Tsokuwa Haruna, Shina, Mashanyi, Maikasuwa, Sunkuru, and Bambami have all been embroiled in these disputes with the herders. A notable example is the 2016 Ndola and Fulani conflicts clashes in NGADA, which resulted in extensive casualties, property destruction, and the displacement of hundreds of families (Lenshie & Jacob, 2020; Amalu & Jibril, 2020). Likewise, the 2020 Jole and Gindin Dorowa conflicts exacerbated instability, undermining livelihoods and further entrenching poverty within the affected communities (Ibrahim & Ahmed, 2022; Lenshie & Jacob, 2020). Farmers lost access to farmlands due to destruction or fear of violence, while pastoralists faced challenges in maintaining their livestock amidst increasing hostility. Market activities were disrupted as trade routes became unsafe, and social services such as schools and clinics were either destroyed or abandoned, leaving communities more vulnerable.

The livelihood of Individual and communities in NGADA are intricately tied to the region's natural resources and social systems. Communal conflicts have disrupted the livelihood of people in the villages such as Ali Dori, Anghai, Mashanyi, Maikasuwa, and Fali Isa, leading to reduced access to farmland and grazing areas, which are vital for agriculture and pastoralism. Farmers have faced substantial losses as crops are destroyed or abandoned due to fear of violence, while pastoralists in places like Kona and Sunkuru struggle to maintain their livestock amidst increasing hostilities. Furthermore, market activities in Duna and Bambami have been severely disrupted as trade routes became unsafe, affecting the income of traders and artisans who rely on these markets for their survival (Yusuf et al., 2023; Lenshie & Jacob, 2020).

Beyond the immediate economic impacts, conflicts have eroded trust and social cohesion within communities like Anghai and Ali Dori. The breakdown of cooperative systems, such as collective farming and resource-sharing initiatives, has been particularly devastating. For instance, communities in Lara Acha and Shina have seen their cooperative savings schemes disintegrate, making it harder for members to rebuild their livelihoods. The loss of these systems further entrenches cycles of poverty and hinders long-term recovery

efforts (Omale & Afolabi, 2022). The inability to rebuild shared institutions leaves these communities vulnerable to further conflicts and economic marginalization.

The motivation for this study stems from the pressing need to address how communal conflicts in NGADA that disrupts livelihoods, deepen poverty, and erode social structures. In light of these challenges, this study examines the impact of communal conflicts on livelihoods of some selected communities within NGADA Special Development Area in Taraba State, Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Communal conflicts pose a significant challenge to sustainable livelihoods globally, particularly in developing regions where social cohesion and economic stability are crucial for survival. These conflicts often result in the destruction of property, displacement of people, and disruption of economic activities, exacerbating poverty and inequality. In regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa, where agricultural practices form the backbone of livelihoods, communal conflicts often lead to the abandonment of farmlands, loss of livestock, and the deterioration of social networks necessary for economic and social survival (Madzivhandila, 2023; Nchanji, et al., 2021). Despite global efforts to mitigate such conflicts, their impact on livelihoods remains a pressing issue, contributing to food insecurity, unemployment, and long-term developmental setbacks.

In Nigeria, communal conflicts have become recurrent, especially in regions with diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural compositions. States such as Taraba, Plateau, and Benue have witnessed persistent clashes over land, natural resources, and historical grievances, leading to the displacement of thousands and significant economic losses (Anierobi, et al., 2023; Ofodugu, 2023). In the Special Development Area of NGADA in Taraba State, the effects of communal conflicts on livelihoods are particularly severe, given the area's dependence on agriculture, petty trading, and pastoralism. The destruction of farmlands, marketplaces, and local infrastructure has disrupted the primary sources of income, leaving many communities in a state of economic vulnerability and social fragmentation (Aminu, et al., 2021; Oruonye, et al., 2020).

Previous studies on communal conflicts in Nigeria have largely focused on the causes and dynamics of these conflicts, such as resource competition, political marginalization, and ethnic tensions (Bolaji, et al., 2023; Fadeyi & Abdullahi, 2019; Oji, et al., 2014). While some have explored the broader socio-economic implications of these conflicts, fewer studies have specifically examined their direct impact on livelihoods in rural and agrarian communities, particularly in less-studied regions like NGADA. Moreover, most of these studies tend to adopt macro-level approaches, failing to capture the micro-level variations in the experiences of different communities or the specific mechanisms through which livelihoods are disrupted and adapted to conflict (Enamhe, et al., 2021; Bolarinwa, et al., 2013).

However, the study by Mercy Corps (2015) states that Nigeria could potentially generate up to 13.7 billion US Dollars annually if peace were sustained in communities across Benue, Kaduna, Nasarawa, and Plateau States. The study further indicated that states experiencing communal conflicts suffer a loss of about 47 percent of their internally generated revenue (IGR) due to disruptions caused by these conflicts. Affected households in these areas could see a 64 percent increase in income, with the potential for even higher gains in a peaceful environment. These conflicts have become widespread, especially in states like Plateau, Nasarawa, Benue, Taraba, Adamawa, Kaduna, Zamfara, Ekiti, Ogun, Ondo, and Cross-Rivers. Numerous

lives have been lost, along with livestock and crops valued in millions of naira, and essential services in the affected regions have been severely disrupted (Turkur, 2014).

This study bridges these gaps by focusing specifically on the impact of communal conflicts on livelihoods in some selected communities within NGADA Special development area like (Ali Dori, Anghai, Duna, Maisuma, Massah, Sabongida, Fali Isa, Garba, Lara Acha, Tsokuwa Haruna, Shina, Mashanyi, Maikasuwa, Kona, Sunkuru, and Bambami) in the NGADA Special Development Area of Taraba State. By adopting a case-study approach, the study delves into community-specific dynamics, analyzing how various livelihood activities such as farming, trading, and pastoralism are affected by these conflicts. The study also explores the coping strategies employed by affected populations and the role of local and governmental interventions in mitigating the impact of these conflicts. This localized and livelihood-specific focus sets the study apart from previous research, offering a detailed understanding of the interplay between communal conflicts and livelihoods in a rural Nigerian context.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study examine the impact of communal conflicts on the livelihood of some selected communities in NGADA special development area of Taraba State. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Investigate the nature and drivers of communal conflicts on livelihood of some selected communities in NGADA Special Development Area, Taraba State, Nigeria.
- ii. Examine the effects of these conflicts on various aspects of livelihood of some selected communities in NGADA Special Development Area, Taraba State, Nigeria.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Conceptual Framework**

##### **Concept of Communal Conflicts**

Communal conflicts are multifaceted phenomena that involve violent disputes between groups within a society, often rooted in identity-based factors such as ethnicity, religion, or cultural heritage. According to Egwu et al. (2022), these conflicts arise from competition over limited resources, political exclusion, and longstanding grievances that create fault lines within communities. Such conflicts are especially pronounced in regions like Taraba State, where diverse ethnic groups coexist amid economic dependencies on shared natural resources. Ibrahim and Abubakar (2021) argue that the cyclical nature of communal conflicts, often driven by unresolved disputes, exacerbates insecurity and stalls development, creating an environment where violence becomes a recurring response to societal tensions.

In addition, Omale and Afolabi (2022) emphasize that communal conflicts are not only a product of resource competition but are also deeply influenced by institutional weaknesses and governance failures. Poor conflict resolution mechanisms and inadequate legal frameworks often leave disputes unresolved, fostering distrust and perpetuating violence. In the Nigerian context, Mohammed et al. (2023) note that socio-economic disparities and historical marginalization further heighten tensions, particularly in multi-ethnic and multi-religious regions. These conflicts disrupt social cohesion, destabilize local economies, and undermine traditional systems of cooperation and governance. As such, communal conflicts are seen as both a symptom and a driver of broader structural challenges, demanding holistic approaches for resolution and prevention.

According to this study, communal conflicts are violent or non-violent disputes between distinct groups within a society, often rooted in competing interests over resources, identity, or power, which disrupt social harmony, economic stability, and community cohesion.

### **Communal Conflicts in Nigeria**

Communal conflicts in Nigeria have become a persistent challenge, undermining peace, security, and development in various parts of the country. These conflicts, often arising from a combination of ethnic, religious, and resource-based tensions/rivalries, have been particularly prominent in the Middle Belt and North-Central regions, as well as parts of the North-West, South-East, and South-South. The clashes between farmers and pastoralists, competition for land, and ethnic rivalries have been the main drivers of these conflicts. States such as Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa, Taraba, Kaduna, Adamawa, and Zamfara have witnessed intense violence, leading to significant loss of life, property, and disruption of livelihoods (Turkur, 2014). For instance, in Plateau State, the persistent conflict between indigenous communities and migrant groups, such as the Fulani herders, has resulted in many fatalities and displacement of thousands of people (Amnesty International, 2019). The Benue State crisis, largely fueled by the herder-farmer clashes, has had severe economic impacts, with large-scale displacement and destruction of farmland (Ogbe & Dayi, 2022; Mbese & Aliyu, 2021).

In addition to these prominent conflicts, other regions in Nigeria, including the South-East and South-West, have also experienced communal rivalries/tensions. The Ibo-Yoruba clashes in parts of the South-West, and the ethnic conflict between the Tiv and Jukun in Taraba State, have added to the complexity of the country's security challenges (Amakoromo, et al., 2024). These conflicts have led to significant disruption of social services such as healthcare, education, and local governance, with many communities grappling with the aftermath of violence and displacement. The economic toll of these conflicts is also profound, with losses in agriculture, trade, and local businesses, thus exacerbating poverty and underdevelopment. As a result, the persistent nature of these conflicts continues to challenge Nigeria's efforts towards achieving sustainable development and fostering national unity (Onugu & Ige, 2023).

However, in the NGADA Special Development Area of Taraba State, these broader causes of communal conflict are evident. The region is characterized by majority Ndola also the Fulani, Kongha, Mambilla Jibu, ethnic composition, each with distinct cultural and economic practices. Competition for land, especially between farming and pastoral communities, has led to recurring conflicts, as both groups depend on the same resources for their livelihoods. The Kona and Fulani clashes in 2019 and the Jole-Gindin Dorowa conflict in 2020 are examples of how disputes over land use and access to water have exacerbated tensions in the area (Ibrahim & Abubakar, 2021). Furthermore, political manipulation and the struggle for political power have contributed to the fragmentation of social relations in the region, with some communities feeling marginalized by the state. These elements of ethnic competition, resource scarcity, and political tension reflect the broader causes of communal conflict in Nigeria, with specific manifestations in the NGADA Special Development Area.

### **Nature of Communal Conflicts in NGADA Special Development Area**

The nature of communal conflicts in the NGADA Special Development Area of Taraba State, Nigeria, is characterized by ethnic rivalries, competition for land and natural resources, and historical grievances among Ndola and Fulani communities. These conflicts often result in violence, displacement, and disruption of local

livelihoods, particularly affecting agricultural activities, trade, and pastoralism. Communities such as the Kona, Fulani, and Tsokuwa have experienced violent clashes over grazing areas, farmland, and water sources, which have been exacerbated by the lack of effective conflict resolution mechanisms. These conflicts are also influenced by the marginalization of certain ethnic groups and competition over political and economic resources, leading to a persistent cycle of violence (Ibrahim & Ahmed, 2021; Amalu & Jibril, 2020). The following table illustrates some of the major communal conflicts in the region:

Year	Conflict	Affected Communities	Primary Causes	Outcome
2016	Fulani vs Ndola	NGADA SDA	Disputes over land, water access	Displacement, loss of livelihoods
2019	Kona vs Fulani	Kona, Fulani	Land disputes, grazing rights	Casualties, displacement
2020	Jole vs Gindin Dorowa	Jole, Gindin Dorowa	Land ownership, ethnic rivalry	Destruction of property, poverty

These conflicts continue to challenge the region's development and exacerbate poverty, highlighting the need for sustainable conflict management strategies (Yusuf et al., 2023).

### Concept of Livelihood

Livelihoods refer to the means and activities individuals or households engage in to secure their basic needs and improve their standard of living (Scoones, 2009). According to Scoones (1998), livelihoods encompass a combination of assets, capabilities, and activities to maintain well-being and resilience. In the context of the NGADA Special Development Area of Taraba State, Nigeria, livelihoods are primarily based on farming, pastoralism, and trade, all of which are significantly impacted by communal conflicts. These conflicts, such as those between herders and farmers in communities like Ali Dori, Anghai, Maisuma, Duna, and Massah, disrupt agricultural activities and pastoral mobility, leading to food insecurity and loss of income (Adzenga et al., 2021). Moreover, the violence and displacement resulting from these conflicts further erode social capital and hinder access to markets and essential services, undermining the livelihoods of affected households (Mercy Corps, 2015). Therefore, communal conflicts in these communities have a direct negative impact on the sustainability and diversification of livelihoods, exacerbating poverty and social instability.

Therefore, this study looks at livelihood from the activities of individuals and households in some selected communities within NGADA (Ali Dori, Anghai, Duna, Maisuma, Massah, Sabongida, Fali Isa, Garba, Lara Acha, Tsokuwa Haruna, Shina, Mashanyi, Maikasuwa, Kona, Sunkuru, and Bambami) special development area such as farming, trade and pastoralism.

### Farming

Farming is often described as a critical livelihood activity that sustains rural economies and food systems. Ofstehage (2020) and Adamu and Yusuf (2020) view farming as a subsistence activity integral to the socio-economic survival of households in agrarian communities. Similarly, Olanrewaju et al. (2021) emphasize the role of mixed farming combining crops and livestock in diversifying income sources in rural settings. Within NGADA Special Development Area, communities like Ali Dori, Kona, and Bambami rely on smallholder farming, including maize cultivation and livestock rearing, to meet their needs. However, communal conflicts

disrupt farming activities by displacing farmers, destroying crops, and reducing access to farmlands and markets (Ibrahim & Ahmed, 2021). This leads to food insecurity and loss of income, further entrenching poverty in these communities.

### **Pastoralism**

Pastoralism as defined by Turner et al. (2014), involves the herding and management of livestock as a primary livelihood strategy, often adapted to arid and semi-arid regions. This practice supports food security and economic resilience in communities like Ali Dori and Sunkuru within NGADA Special Development Area. According to Adamu and Bello (2020), pastoralism fosters social cohesion through communal grazing systems and cultural practices. However, communal conflicts, such as the Kona-Fulani clashes in 2019, have disrupted these systems, leading to loss of livestock, restricted grazing routes, and heightened rivalries/tensions between farmers and herders (Amalu & Jibril, 2020). In communities like in NGADA Special Development Area, these conflicts have further strained relations and destabilized the local economy, exacerbating poverty and displacement.

### **Trade**

Trade as defined by Smith (1776), is the exchange of goods and services to meet the diverse needs of communities, fostering economic interdependence and growth. Modern interpretations, such as those by Todaro and Smith (2015), emphasize the role of trade in rural development by connecting local producers to broader markets. In NGADA, communities like Bambami and Lara Acha rely heavily on trade in agricultural produce and livestock. However, communal conflicts, such as the clashes between Duna and Maisuma in 2021, have severely disrupted trade routes, market activities, and trust between trading partners (Ibrahim & Ahmed, 2021). In Bambami, the destruction of market infrastructure during these conflicts has hindered local economic recovery, leaving traders and households vulnerable to prolonged poverty.

### **Empirical Review**

#### **Communal Conflicts and Livelihood**

The empirical review of studies on the impact of communal conflicts on livelihood highlights several critical dimensions of how such conflicts disrupt communities' economic well-being. Studies across different regions of Nigeria have consistently highlighted the devastating effects of communal violence, particularly in rural and agrarian areas. For instance, Adzenga et al. (2021) analyzed how communal conflicts affect farmers' access to agricultural extension services in conflict-prone areas of North-central Nigeria. Using a multi-stage sampling method, data were collected from 391 farmers through questionnaires and interviews, with analysis conducted using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study revealed that farmers perceived limited access to extension activities such as farm visits, training, technology information, and agricultural shows, with mean scores ranging from 1.23 to 1.33. Key conflict factors, including frequency, timing, and displacement periods, significantly influenced access to services. The study concluded that communal conflicts substantially hindered farmers' ability to benefit from extension services.

Penu and Paalo (2021) examined pastoralist conflicts in Africa, focusing on how institutions influence conflict management. They analyzed 172 relevant publications and tested a conceptual framework using interviews and policy documents from Agogo, Ghana. The study identified three key dimensions shaping these conflicts: institutional change, pluralism, and meanings. Findings revealed that state-level institutional

changes affect community-level institutions, with varying stakeholder evaluations contributing to conflict management challenges. The study recommends addressing contradictions between new and existing institutions before implementation to enhance conflict resolution efforts.

Kuenga (2020) investigated the types of conflicts encountered by mobile herders in Bhutan, the role of arbitration forums, and the impact of new land laws that nationalized grazing areas. Using qualitative in-depth interviews with 33 informants and seven focus group discussions, the study examined herders, adjacent residents, and government agents. Findings revealed that conflicts stem largely from policy changes rather than herders' actions, with traditional institutional frameworks disrupted by new legislations. The study highlights the need for consistent policy interpretation and secure tenurial rights to mitigate conflicts.

Fadeyi and Abdullahi (2019) examined communal conflicts in post-colonial Nigeria, focusing on the Ife-Modakeke and Zangon Kataf disputes and their impact on national security. Using qualitative data from secondary sources and adopting the psycho-cultural theory, the study linked these conflicts to ethno-cultural differences, which foster discrimination and influence resource distribution. The findings highlighted the persistent nature of ethno-cultural conflicts and their challenge to resolution, as claims of genealogy fuel prolonged tensions. The authors recommended addressing the indigene-settler dichotomy in the constitution and institutionalizing good governance at all levels to mitigate these conflicts.

Adzenga et al. (2019) investigated how communal conflicts affect the delivery of agricultural extension services to farmers in North-central Nigeria. The study aimed to analyze farmers' socio-economic characteristics, assess the perceived effects of conflicts on extension services provided by ADPs, and examine the relationship between socio-economic factors and service delivery. Using a multi-stage sampling technique, 391 farmers were surveyed through questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions, with data analyzed via descriptive statistics, Likert scale, and Ordered Logit Regression. Findings indicated significant negative impacts on service accessibility, timeliness, efficiency, and effectiveness, while socio-economic factors like gender, marital status, education, and proximity to towns influenced these perceptions.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Social Capital Theory**

Social Capital Theory, primarily propounded by Pierre Bourdieu in 1986, James Coleman in 1988, and Robert Putnam in 1995, emphasizes the role of social networks, norms, and trust in facilitating cooperation and enhancing the collective well-being of individuals and communities. The thrust of the theory is that social relationships characterized by trust, shared values, and networks serve as valuable resources that individuals and groups can leverage to achieve common goals, including economic success, social stability, and community resilience. Previous studies on Social Capital Theory have explored its implications in diverse contexts, highlighting its ability to foster cooperation and improve access to resources. For instance, Putnam (1995) noted that communities with high levels of social capital tend to experience better economic outcomes and greater social cohesion. However, one of the main criticisms of the theory is its vague and often contested definition of "social capital," which makes it difficult to measure consistently across different settings. Additionally, critics argue that the theory overlooks inequalities in access to social capital, potentially exacerbating social exclusion and reinforcing existing power structures. Despite these criticisms, Social Capital Theory remains highly relevant to this study, as it offers insight into how the breakdown of social networks and trust during communal conflicts can disrupt livelihood systems. In the context of NGADA,



where ethnic and resource-based tensions have fractured social ties, the theory helps explain how the erosion of communal bonds exacerbates economic hardships and hinders recovery efforts following conflicts. Studies by scholars like Omale and Afolabi (2022) have demonstrated the significant role of social capital in post-conflict recovery, especially in regions like Taraba State, where communal conflicts have weakened local networks and economic stability.

### **Conflict Theory**

Conflict Theory, largely developed by Karl Marx in the mid-19th century, posits that society is fundamentally shaped by conflicts between competing groups, primarily driven by inequalities in wealth, power, and resources (Marx, 1867). The theory suggests that these conflicts lead to social change and that the ruling classes exploit the working classes to maintain their dominance. The central thrust of Conflict Theory is that social order is not maintained by consensus but by the ongoing struggle between groups with differing interests (Marx, 1867). Criticisms of the theory include its focus on economic factors and class struggle while neglecting the role of social institutions, culture, and ideology in shaping society (Ritzer, 2011). Additionally, its deterministic view that conflict inevitably leads to revolution has been challenged (Giddens, et al., 2017). Despite these criticisms, Conflict Theory is highly relevant to understanding communal conflicts, as it provides a framework for analyzing how power imbalances, resource competition, and ethnic or social divisions fuel tensions within communities, such as those in NGADA, Taraba State, where conflicts often arise from competition for land and resources (Egwu et al., 2022).

### **Research Methodology**

This study adopted exploratory research design while making use of secondary data generated via journal publications, internet, library, and other documented materials relevant to the study of impact of communal conflicts on livelihood of some selected communities in NGADA in Taraba State, Nigeria. The research is conducted by examining literature concerning communal conflicts, livelihood, farming, trade and pastoralism challenges. The literature was obtained through searches in publicly available material, literature from non-serial publications, official reports, and conferences particularly if they have been cited by other references.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings from this study revealed that communal conflicts in NGADA Special Development Area are deeply rooted in disputes over access to and ownership of natural resources such as farmland, grazing areas, and water sources. These conflicts are often fueled by demographic pressures, cultural differences, and weak institutional mechanisms for conflict resolution. Similar findings were reported by Fadeyi and Abdullahi (2019), who highlighted ethno-cultural dichotomies and resource allocation disputes as primary conflict triggers in Nigeria's communal settings. Moreover, Adzenga et al. (2021) also identified frequency and seasonality of conflicts as significant factors in conflict-prone agricultural areas. Conversely, studies such as Kuenga (2020) in Bhutan emphasized the role of national policies like land laws rather than local demographics, suggesting a divergence in conflict drivers across contexts.

The study found that communal conflicts significantly disrupt the livelihoods of some selected communities within NGADA residents by reducing access to essential resources, curtailing agricultural productivity, and limiting economic opportunities. For instance, the loss of farmland and restricted movement due to insecurity have adversely impacted farming and trading activities, which are key livelihood sources in the region. These findings align with those of Adzenga et al. (2019), who reported that communal conflicts in North-Central

Nigeria negatively affected extension services, timeliness of agricultural practices, and access to inputs. Similarly, Mercy Corps (2015) quantified the economic losses resulting from communal conflicts, including reduced household income and internally generated revenue. However, contrary perspectives like that of Penu and Paalo (2021) in Ghana suggest that institutional dimensions such as pluralism and change might mitigate these effects when properly managed, offering a pathway to minimize livelihood disruptions.

## Conclusion

Based on the finding, this study concludes that communal conflicts significantly disrupt the livelihoods of individuals in some selected communities within NGADA special development area in Taraba State, Nigeria. This implies that communal conflicts in NGADA have far-reaching consequences, undermining economic activities such as agriculture and trade, while eroding social capital. As a result, the community's ability to recover and thrive is severely hindered, exacerbating poverty and instability.

## Recommendations

From the conclusion, the study recommends that:

- i. Government should strengthen conflict resolution mechanisms, focusing on dialogue and reconciliation between conflicting groups. Additionally, creating policies that promote equitable resource distribution and improving security infrastructure can help prevent the recurrence of such conflicts.
- ii. Government of all level should invest in community-based resilience programs, including social capital building and economic diversification, will aid in the long-term recovery and stability of affected some selected communities in NGADA Special Development Area.

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