

ABSTRACT

The research explores the escalation of the herder-farmer conflict in Nigeria to identify the significant patterns of escalation. Relying on a mixed-method analysis of secondary data and aligning with the analytical anchorage of dynamic systems theory, the research argues that although Benue and Enugu observe the same herder-farmer the patterns of conflict escalation is neither similar, linear or recurrent. This research submits ethnoreligious antagonism, lawlessness, and exclusionary politics as reasons why the conflict escalated into widespread violence. Adding that each of these elements self-reinforces and influence each other to sustain a coordinated state of violence or maintain peace. It makes a case for pragmatic policies that captures the history and political, economic, and social interaction of states and local government.