

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Beyond the Loss of Lives and Properties: Uncovering the Impacts of Land Conflict in Oyo State, Nigeria

Robert Ereola Shiyabola^{1 & 2}, Dimo Todorovski¹ &, Jaap Zevenbergen¹

¹Faculty of Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (ITC), University of Twente, Enschede, The Netherlands

²Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

Received: 16 October 2024

Revised: 23 June 2025

Accepted: 21 July 2025

Published: 6 November 2025

Cite article as: Shiyabola, R. E., Todorovski, D. & Zevenbergen, J. (2025). Beyond the Loss of Lives and Properties: Uncovering the Impacts of Land Conflict in Oyo State, Nigeria. *African Journal of Housing and Sustainable Development*, 6(2), pp. 88-102.

© The Authors, under the exclusive licence to Centre of Housing and Sustainable Development

Corresponding author:
r.e.shiyabola@utwente.nl and
ereshiyabola@oauife.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

Land is a source of human identity, a means of livelihood and an agent of economic growth and development, especially in rural areas where the customary land-tenure system is still practised. Despite its significance, its usage sometimes leads to competition and results in land conflicts, with impacts that extend beyond the loss of lives and properties. This study adopted a mixed-method of data collection complemented by reports from the Oyo State Technical Committee on Administrative Boundary Conflicts, the National Boundary Commission, and Nigeria Watch (IFRA-Nigeria), which served as secondary data. For the data analysis, the researchers undertook thematic, narrative, mean ranking, and principal component analyses. The findings show that beyond loss of lives and properties, land conflict leads to sour relationships, age-long hostilities, tenure insecurity, termination of peaceful coexistence, and loss of cultural heritage, among others. Often leading to new conflicts, these impacts are more grievous and are evident in individual households, families, communities, and the country's economy. After identifying the social, cultural, market and governance impacts of land conflicts, the researchers offer insights for designing a framework for land-conflict management that would be useful for government and other stakeholders.

Keywords: Land, Conflicts, Impacts, Oyo State, Nigeria

1.0 Introduction

Access to land seems to bring prosperity and development, thus reducing poverty in society. In every nation, the level and pace of economic growth and development will depend largely on land-based activities. As such, land is crucial to human existence, hence the prevalence of land conflicts involving individuals, families and communities.

Land conflict, which is any disagreement over the use of or access to land, has social, cultural and

economic impacts. In recent years, land conflicts have become increasingly violent, leading to severe negative impacts on individuals, families, communities and even national economies (Wehrmann, 2017). The impacts are more evident in developing countries with no official framework for land-conflict management. According to Gyamera et al. (2016), land conflicts have several impacts on a country's urban, peri-urban and rural areas, and the impacts could be economic,

socioeconomic, environmental, sociocultural, political, demographic and psychological.

In Oyo State, like other Nigerian states, land is a source of wealth and an agent of development. In addition, a people's identity may be tied to the land they occupy and possess (Abegunde et al., 2020; Abegunde, 2011). Clearly, land holds different values for people. No doubt, the significance and value attached to land have increased competition for it in modern society. Land conflict usually starts with a dispute, before degenerating into conflicts that claim lives and destroy property (Agheyisi, 2019).

While the obvious aftermath of land conflict is the loss of lives and property, other forms of impact may stay hidden, even as they affect social cohesion, cultural beliefs and environmental stability, while breaking the bond of trust among community residents. The severity and extent of these impacts of land conflict are determined by the interests and roles played by stakeholders. Despite the increasing incidences of land conflicts, extant studies such as Conroy (2014), Omotara (2016) and Salau et al. (2020) have focused more on the loss of lives and properties as the main impact of land conflict, neglecting other impacts which could have more adverse effects. Thus, this study argues that there are more severe impacts of land conflict than the loss of lives and property. The insights from this exploration can inform stakeholders' decisions on land-conflict management. A holistic examination of the impacts of land conflict can help in effective land-conflict management, thereby preventing future impacts, especially within the Oyo State context. This study has six sections. Section one is the introduction, followed by the literature review in section two and materials and methods in section three. Section four focuses on findings, and section five offers the discussion, while section six concludes it.

2.0 Literature Review: Impacts of Land Conflict and Theoretical Framework

This section elaborates on the drivers of land conflict and the mechanisms employed to it based on the available literature.

2.1 Impacts of Land Conflict

Land is more than a resource; it is an ancestral heritage involving gods and a people's identity (Ahmadu &

Ayuba, 2018; Mercy Corps, 2016; Okorji, 2021; Omotara, 2016; Shiyabola et al., 2024). Contesting people's inheritance and heritage inevitably leads to conflict, which has many impacts. Moreover, socioeconomic problems seem to contribute to land conflict when not properly managed (Onono, 2016; Wig & Kromrey, 2018). This manifests as the loss of lives and property, violence and a reduction in investment, among others.

According to Bruce (2013), the displacement of people and land grabbing are some of the impacts of land conflict. On their part, Deininger and Castagnini (2006) identified group marginalisation as another result of land conflict. Most of the time, these impacts give rise to new conflicts and the persistence of land conflicts. Interestingly, the cost of managing land conflict, through litigation or other means, is sometimes higher than the value of the land at issue (Moore, 2010). As Mugizi and Matsumoto (2021) observe, the displacement of people far from their land, which is one of their sources of identity, usually results in another series of land conflict as people try to reassert their identity and regain their land.

There is also no doubt that land conflicts adversely affect agricultural productivity. When farmers cannot access their farms, local and national development is hampered (Deininger & Castagnini, 2006; Essel, 2018; Sabogu et al., 2020). Also, social interactions and relationships are affected by intra- or inter-community land conflict (Mugizi & Matsumoto, 2021; Siyum et al., 2015). Such strained relations may transfer across generations, thus hindering growth and development as communities renew hostilities over land.

Recurrent land conflicts destabilize political life (Handoko, 2020). According to Wehrmann (2008), land conflicts affect the livelihoods of different people, regardless of status and gender, although the poor tend to be more vulnerable.

In Nigeria, land conflict takes different dimensions. For example, it has social effects (Chukwu et al., 2022; Omotara, 2016), which manifests in hostility, hatred and lack of trust among individuals, groups, families and communities. In this kind of situation, mistrust is inevitable. Land conflict equally impacts agricultural productivity, especially when it

involves farmers and herders (Ofuoku & Ekwierhurhoma, 2018; Salau et al., 2020; Shiyanbola et al., 2024), who are both adversely affected. While farmers may encroach on water holes and block cattle paths, herders may have their livestock graze on farmlands, destroying crops in the process and provoking further conflict. Land conflict also has an enormous impact on people and the economy, leading to loss of lives and property (Conroy, 2014; Daodu & Igbekoyi, 2020; Salau et al., 2020), thus displacing people (Anierobi et al., 2024) and slowing down investment (Okorji, 2021).

The above social and economic impacts of land conflict are usually evident in rural and urban areas, with the severity differing based on local contexts. Examining the impacts of land conflict from a local perspective could also provide useful insights for its effective management. As such, this study empirically studies the impacts of land conflict beyond loss of lives and property in Oyo State, Nigeria. Insights from the study can guide the design of effective policies in land-conflict management and land administration.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study deploys Social Conflict Theory and New Institutional Economics Theory (NIE). Propounded by Karl Marx, Social Conflict Theory elaborates on societal inequality (GUCLU, 2014). The theory describes conflicts as a struggle over values or claims; accordingly, societies and individuals compete for scarce, limited resources, resulting in conflict (Kent, 2000). In relation to the Nigerian land-tenure system, wherein land-ownership claims and land-use rights are based on lineage, clan and ethnic affiliations, contestation for land takes quite a similar form, with lands being closely tied to families and communities. This also suggests that those possessing scarce, limited resources will protect and save those resources, while those without them will do everything to get them. This leads to a struggle over society's limited resources. Thus, society is viewed as an arena of inequality where groups of people struggle over scarce resources such as land, resulting in various conflicts and the many impacts experienced in society.

On its part, New Institutional Economics Theory draws ideas from economics, law, organisation

theory, political science, sociology, and anthropology (Dreyhaupt, 2006; Obińska-Wajda, 2016). The theory helps in understanding social, political and commercial life institutions. The theory is based on the role of society in defining values while approaching society from the perspective of individual behaviour in interactions (Parada, 2002). The theory identifies humanly devised constraints, such as culture and custom, alongside formal conditions, e.g., law and property rights, that shape human actions (Agboola, 2015; Parada, 2002). According to the theory, habits, norms, and institutions play a significant role in directing human behaviour, even as rationality also contributes to individual behaviour.

The theory of New Institutional Economics applies to the study because it examines land conflict in customary and statutory institutions, noting the involvement of different stakeholders, i.e governmental and non-governmental. It also involves parties with conflicting customs, traditions and cultures from diverse backgrounds. In the New Institutional Economics theory, there is transaction cost theory, referred to as hidden costs that are not visible but are quite germane as unforeseen circumstances (that is, the conflict and its impact are hidden).

3.0 Materials and Methods

This study uses a qualitative methodology involving a case-study approach, as it investigates social, community-based problems and a contemporary phenomenon in a real-life context (Burge, 2015; Yin, 2003, 2013).

3.1 The Study Area

Oyo State, Nigeria, was chosen as the case-study area owing to the frequency of land conflicts there. This study was prompted by the government's seeming inability to resolve the numerous land conflicts in the state, as well as the large number of land-conflict matters in the courts (Adebayo, 2017; InsideOyo, 2021; Oluwalana, 2018). Oyo State has 33 local government areas grouped into seven (7) zones: Ibadan I and II, Oke-Ogun I & II, Ogbomoso, Oyo, and Ibarapa. These zones have diverse geographical customs, cultures and traditions. The study would have covered the entire Oyo State. However, given the affinity between the Oyo and

Oke-Ogun I and II zones in terms of customs, cultures and traditions, as well as the nature of the land conflict, the researchers selected the Oke-Ogun zone. As such, the study was conducted only in Ibadan II (Ibadan Less Cities), Oke-Ogun, Ogbomoso and Ibarapa. The selected zones comprise peri-urban and rural areas, with the major occupation of the family heads, community leaders and some traditional rulers being predominantly farming. This shows the unique suitability of Oyo State for the study.

Oyo State operates a dual land-tenure system: statutory and customary. The law guiding the land administration in Nigeria is the Land Use Act of 1978, which governs the statutory land-tenure system. The Act nationalised all lands in the country, thereby eradicating the pre-existing tenure system. Nevertheless, the customary land-tenure system is still being operated according to the native law and customs of the people (Aluko & Amidu, 2006). The Land Use Act seems ineffective and unacceptable to the people, and many have demanded its review, given the bottlenecks involved (Adeniyi, 2013; Olapade & Aluko, 2023). This failure has resulted in many land conflicts in Oyo State.

3.2 Data Collection and Analyses

Data for this study was obtained through mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) and two fieldworks using a case-study approach. The mixed-method assessed information from different perspectives and improved the reliability of the data collected (Arko-Adjei, 2011; Bowen, 2009). The first set of data was obtained through key informant interviews (KII), focus group discussions (FGD) and secondary sources. The second set of data was collected through questionnaire administration. Data on the impacts of land conflict was obtained from land-conflict stakeholders in Oyo State. These stakeholders were selected based on expertise, availability and willingness to talk. Preliminary investigation revealed no comprehensive list of land conflict stakeholders, hence the adoption of the purposive and snowball techniques for their selection.

3.2.1 Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis (First Fieldwork)

For the first fieldwork (qualitative), Key Informant Interviews (KII) were conducted with eight (8)

land-conflict stakeholders in each selected zone. The stakeholders comprised two (2) traditional rulers, three (3) heads of landholding families, one (1) community leader, one (1) Seriki-Fulani (Herder), and the Chairperson of the Community Development Women Association (CDWA). This selection produced a total of thirty-two (32) land-conflict stakeholders. Shiyabola et al. (2024) describes these stakeholders as non-governmental land conflict stakeholders, most of them being farmers, especially the family heads and community leaders, meaning that they played double roles as family heads, community leaders and farmers.

In addition, KII was conducted with governmental stakeholders (see Shiyabola et al., 2024) for their view on the case facts. Four (4) directors in selected Oyo State ministries and parastatals (Lands, Justice, Surveyor-General, and Housing Corporation) were purposefully selected. Other government stakeholders were one (1) National Boundary Commission director and the Oyo State High Court Chief Judge. Accordingly, six (6) governmental land-conflict stakeholders were interviewed. In total, thirty-eight (38) land-conflict stakeholders were interviewed in Oyo State, with the interviews conducted until saturation was reached. The questions focused on the impacts of land conflict.

For broader community perspectives on the impacts of land conflict, KIIs were complemented with the FGDs. The FGDs were conducted with the selected family heads in the four selected zones. Also, one (1) FGD was conducted with selected women in one (1) zone to accommodate their views, opinions and perspectives. Altogether, five (5) FGDs were conducted in addition to the KIIs. Participants for the FGD were selected evenly across the conflicting communities making up each zone.

The number of participants in each FGD averaged 10, keeping in line with the recommendation by Nara (2021), who suggests that the number of people in a focus group should be between 8 and 12. Altogether, thirty-eight (38) KIIs and five (5) FGDs were conducted with the selected stakeholders to obtain primary information in the first fieldwork. These stakeholders were involved in either a specific land conflict or its management in Oyo State. In addition, secondary reports came from the 2005 and 2022 Oyo State Technical Committee on

Administrative Boundary Conflicts, the 2021 National Boundary Commission reports, and Nigeria Watch (IFRA-Nigeria).

KII and FGD recordings done in other languages were first translated into English; subsequently, all the KIIs and FGDs were transcribed. The KIIs, FGDs and secondary data transcripts were analysed using the ATLAS.ti version 22 software with open coding. The KIIs and FGDs were analysed using thematic and narrative analysis, which were deemed suitable for the study (Adekola et al., 2023; Elo et al., 2014). The findings from the first fieldwork were further examined statistically for generalizability.

3.2.2 Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis (Second Fieldwork)

The impacts of land conflict in Oyo State, as discussed by the stakeholders, were extracted from the KIIs and FGDs conducted during the first fieldwork and from secondary data. These impacts were used to prepare a questionnaire for the second fieldwork. The questionnaire had two parts. The first focused on data from the respondents and the second focused on the impacts of land conflict. To confirm whether the impacts identified by the stakeholders had been correctly captured, the researchers administered the questionnaire to the thirty-eight (38) land-conflict stakeholders interviewed during the first fieldwork to rank the level of the impact. In addition, ten (10) professionals who were knowledgeable and had experienced land conflict or had been involved in land-conflict management were identified and purposefully selected.

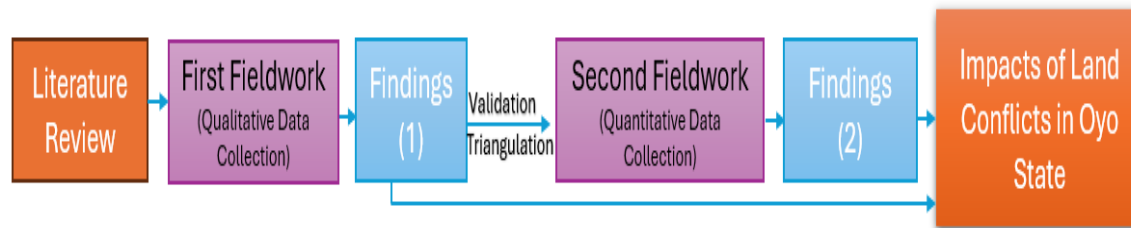
As such, a questionnaire was administered to ten (10) lawyers, estate surveyors and valuers (land administrators), as well as land surveyors and academics, each for generalizability and validation purposes. These professionals had over ten (10) years of experience in land management or transactions. Altogether, seventy-eight (78) copies of the questionnaire were administered, out of which seventy-two (72) were retrieved, analysed and used for this study. This amounts to a 92.3% response rate. The questionnaire was designed on a 5-point Likert scale for land-conflict stakeholders,

professionals and academics to rank the impacts of land conflict on people and the economy.

Data collected through the questionnaire was analysed using descriptive statistical methods, such as mean ranking, standard deviation (Std. Dev) and Principal Component Analysis. The mean score for each impact was obtained by summing all scales and dividing by the maximum rating of 5 using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). A benchmark of 3 $(1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5)/5$ was used to determine the level of impact. This benchmark has been used in previous studies such as Chileshe and Kikwasi (2014) and Ikediashi and Okwuashi (2015). In other words, any impact with a benchmark mean value of ≥ 3 is significant. The following range/classes were used as determinants of the significance and usage levels: 5.00 - 4.50 = Very Highly Impact, 4.49-3.50 = Highly Impact, 3.49 - 2.50 = Moderate Impact, 2.49 - 1.50 = Low Impact and 1.49 - 1.00 = No Impact.

It was also necessary to ascertain the correlation patterns within the data scale since interrelated variables in a scale might be correlated. The study carried out factor analysis based on the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) extraction method. The suitability of the data for factor analysis was based on the correlation matrix displaying a correlation coefficient $r = 0.3$ or coefficients exceeding 0.3 and KMO values being ≥ 0.6 as Also the Bartlett Test of Sphericity reached a statistically level p -value < 0.00 . ($p < 0.000$). These are requirements stipulated for ascertaining the factorability of variables (Pallant, 2010).

Although there was some hostility towards the study by certain stakeholders, that drawback was overcome with the support of some educated people in the study areas, who explained to those resisting the study that it was strictly for research purposes. The researchers also presented the letter authorising the exercise and stating its research aim. Following these assurances, the stakeholders spoke freely. Moreover, ethical advice and clearance from the ITC Ethics Committee of the University of Twente were obtained to ensure ethical compliance. Accordingly, the consent of all the respondents was obtained before they participated in the study. The study methodology is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Methodological Processes Undertaken in the Study

4.0 Findings and Discussions

4.1 Findings: Impact of Land Conflicts

This sub-section presents the results of the key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and secondary data obtained during the first fieldwork, as well as the results of the second fieldwork exercise with stakeholders and professionals in Oyo State, Nigeria. In the first fieldwork, land-conflict stakeholders were asked about their experiences on the impacts of land conflict on the individual and the economy. The results are presented in this section.

4.1.1 Loss of Lives and Property

All the key informants interviewed reported that when land conflict reaches its peak, it leads to the loss of lives and property. People defend their land from being encroached on or taken away by others who do not have the right to it. As such, stakeholders take every measure to protect their land, with lives lost and property destroyed in the

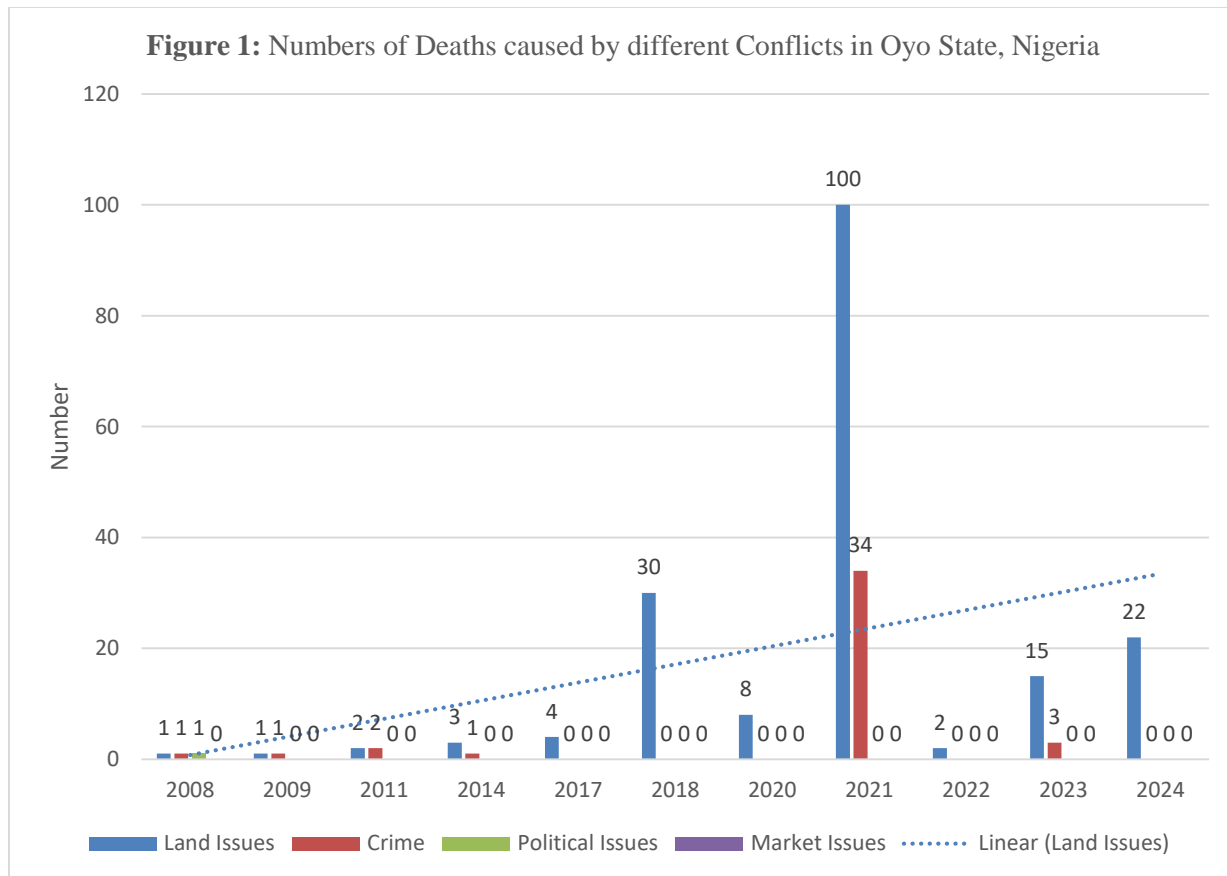
process. Sometimes, the number of deaths and the value of destroyed properties are not adequately reported. As reported by some of the stakeholders:

....We were forced to face them when we were cheated and called fools. Though we lost two members of our family in March this year, I know next time they will not try it with us again.

.....the number of deaths recorded is more than three (3) that were reported. We lost more than ten (10) people from the two communities.

.... More than five (5) acres of land of my cashew plantation were destroyed by them, even though they are our tenants.

In addition to the information provided by the key informants and during the FGD, the yearly overview of the numbers of deaths recorded in all conflicts based on press and police reports, was also extracted from the database of Nigeria Watch (IFRA-Nigeria), a French institute for research in Africa located at the University of Ibadan, Oyo State (see Figure 1).



Source: Nigeria Watch (IFRA-Nigeria)

The figure shows the number of deaths recorded in Oyo State from the various conflicts. From 2008 to 2024, land-related conflicts, which include farmer-herder or cattle-rearing conflicts, have posted the highest number of deaths. Also, the trend over the years indicates an increasing number of deaths resulting from land conflicts. This indicates that land conflict results in the loss of lives and property.

4.2 Impacts of Land Conflict: Beyond the Loss of Lives and Property

Beyond the known loss of lives and property, land-conflict stakeholders were asked about the other impacts of land conflict. The findings are presented in 4.2.1 to 4.2.10.

4.2.1 Sour Relationship among Conflicting Parties/Age-long hostilities/hatred/grievances among individuals/communities/Lack of Trust among Conflicting Parties

The analysis from the FGD indicates that land conflict results in sour relationships among the

actors, individuals and communities. Some communities do not encourage their children to marry from certain other communities because of such sour relations, which have led to hatred between individuals and communities that should otherwise be cordial. Consequently, there is no longer trust between individuals, families and communities.

4.2.2 Stalled Development/Reduction in Investment/Loss of Investor Confidence

Clearly, land conflicts hamper development by reducing the number of those who would have invested in the areas facing conflict, such as Ibarapa and Oke-Ogun. Previous land conflicts in these zones have destroyed people's property. According to one of the key informants: "...Our children are even afraid of investing resources at home for fear of being destroyed one day by people." No doubt, land conflicts in these zones have reduced the number of investors willing to invest in the areas.

4.2.3 Tenure Insecurity/Limited Access to Credit Facilities

Land conflict in most zones of Oyo State has increased tenure insecurity, as people are always wary of conflicts that may arise in the future. Owing to the insecurity of land tenure in most of the selected zones in Oyo State, most landowners have not been able to process or obtain the Governor's Consent or Certificate of Occupancy (C of O) on their land. One government official, a key informant, said, "We have not been able to process most of the applications on C of O due to conflicts on the subject property." Inability of people to obtain C of O on their land has also limited their access to credit facilities. A Certificate of Occupancy is a prerequisite for obtaining credit facilities while using property as collateral.

4.2.4 Termination of Peaceful Coexistence/Eruption of Violence/Displacement of People, Loss of Cohesion and Political Instability

Through peaceful coexistence, a stable and sustainable environment could be created. The study indicates that land conflicts in the study area have resulted in the eruption of violence, degenerated into cohesion, caused political instability and eventually displaced many people from their residences. For example, farmer-herder conflicts sometimes lead to violence and termination of the peaceful coexistence that has existed between Yorubas and Fulanis for time immemorial. Violence erupts between farmers and herders owing to the herders' overgrazing of cattle on farmlands and encroachment on water holes and cattle paths by the farmers. These actions sometimes results in the displacement of farmers and herders.

4.2.5 Loss of Cultural Heritage/Loss of Sacred Sites and Identity

Usually, cultural heritage, which is synonymous with people's identity, is destroyed during land conflict, often without regard to the future implications. Most sacred sites have been sold to avoid occasional land conflicts, leading to perpetual land conflicts in some areas.

4.2.6 Insecurity

Most of the insecurity experienced in parts of the study area was traced to incessant land conflict, which some disgruntled societal elements took advantage of. According to one of the key informants, "None of us could farm on the land again; apart from the fact that the land is under litigation, the fear of being killed or kidnapped did not allow us to go there."

4.2.7 Low Agricultural Productivity and Increased Poverty

During a land conflict involving families, communities or farmers and herders, farm produce is destroyed, multiple heads of cattle are positioned or killed, leading to the loss of the potential income from farming activities or the rearing of animals. The result is increasing poverty levels in the society. A key informant said: "What do you expect? Our cattle were killed and poisoned, and you want our people to be looking? No, no ooo."

4.2.8 Increased Cost of Managing Land Conflicts and Increasing Corruption

Whenever land conflict involving loss of lives and property ensues, the government sets up an inquiry committee to investigate the remote and immediate causes. A considerable amount of money is spent on this process – money that should be used for development projects. Taking advantage of the situation, some individuals in the civil service and even the government inflate the cost, thus further corrupting the system. According to a respondent:

"We do not have enough money to go around and appeal to people on all land conflicts in Oyo State. The funniest thing is that the amount allocated for the committee on paper differs from the cash released to us. Can you see the civil and public service bureaucracy?"

4.2.9 Land Speculation and Land Grabbing

The FGDs show that some influential people actually took advantage of the land conflict to buy parcels of land at very low rates only to sell them later at extremely high profit margins. In fact, some government officials and traditional rulers took advantage of land conflicts to grab people's land in the name of brokering peace. All these acts continue to aggravate land conflict in the area. A key

informant stated thus: “Our traditional rulers are our problems. Some of them used the advantage of the conflict to take over our land for their benefit; we will not agree. The era of *Oba lo ni ile* [“The king owns the land.”] has gone. Our land is our land. We would take our land back.”

4.2.10 Group Marginalisation and Increased Inequality

The study found that the outcome of land conflict sometimes leads to the marginalisation of groups, thereby resulting in increasing inequality in the area.

4.3 Level of Land Conflict Impacts in Oyo State

This section explains the level of impact of land conflict as ranked by land-conflict stakeholders in Oyo State. The ranking was based on the mean ranking analysis done in the study to determine the level of the impact. The higher the mean value, the higher the level of the impact. The standard deviation (Std. Dev) helps rank the variables (impacts) with the same mean. The lower the Std. Dev, the higher the level of the impact. The result of the analysis is presented in Table I.

Table 1: Level of Land Conflict Impact

Impacts of Land Conflict	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Rank
Eruption of Violence	72	4.46	0.691	1
Sour Relationship among Conflicting Parties	70	4.43	0.734	2
Age-long hostilities/hatred/grievances among individuals/communities	71	4.42	0.647	3
Loss of Investor Confidence	71	4.42	0.690	4
Loss of Lives and Property	72	4.42	0.783	5
Stalled Development	69	4.39	0.691	6
Insecurity	71	4.37	0.779	7
Tenure Insecurity	72	4.36	0.718	8
Land Speculation and Land Grabbing	72	4.33	0.787	9
Termination of Peaceful Coexistence	71	4.32	0.732	10
Displacement of People	71	4.28	0.796	11
Reduction in Investment	70	4.26	0.793	12
Lack of Trust among Conflicting Parties	72	4.25	0.835	13
Increased Cost of Managing Land Conflicts	71	4.21	0.791	14
Low Agricultural Productivity	71	4.21	0.844	15
Increased Poverty	70	4.13	0.883	16
Loss of Cohesion	70	4.01	0.825	17
Loss of Cultural Heritage	71	4.00	0.926	18
Increasing Corruption	68	3.99	0.889	19
Limited Access to Credit Facilities	71	3.97	0.941	20
Group Marginalization	72	3.94	0.748	21
Political Instability	71	3.94	0.908	21
Loss of Sacred Sites and Identity	72	3.92	1.017	23
Increased Inequality	72	3.88	0.963	24

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The analysis in Table 1 shows the perception of the levels of impact of land conflict as ranked by stakeholders in Oyo State. Land conflicts show high levels of impact in various forms on individuals, communities and the economy, with the mean value ranging between 4.46 and 3.88, which is above the benchmark of 3.0. While the

level of impact varies, the analysis confirms the KIIs and FGDs carried out in the first fieldwork. It is also evident that there are other high impacts of land conflicts beyond the loss of lives and properties (4.42), such as the eruption of violence (4.46) and the souring of relationships among conflicting parties (4.43) in Oyo State.

4.4 Grouping of the Impacts of Land Conflict in Oyo State, Nigeria

It is noted that the mean rating may not precisely capture the interrelationship among items in a scale. Also, several dependent variables may be correlated and have similar underlying impacts. As such, exploratory factor analysis using PCA was adopted for grouping the impacts of land conflict. The PCA summarises the impacts of land conflict into a number of groups with a view to understanding and interpreting the combination of the underlying relationships and patterns of the original variables.

The mean rating of 24 variables was subjected to PCA and the factorability criterion was applied to ascertain the data's suitability for PCA. The result showed a KMO value of 0.821, with the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity being significant at $p = 0.000$. The parameters indicate the suitability of the data for factor analysis (Field, 2005; Pallant, 2010; Williams et al., 2010).

The total variance explained is presented in Table 2. The four (4) groups extracted explained 70.456% of the variance. The four (4) components were identified, which were 1, 2, 3 and 4, with Initial Eigenvalues of 46.928%, 10.514%, 8.205% and 4.809% respectively, before rotation. After the rotation, the four factors, components 1, 2, 3 and 4, explained 20.776%, 18.123%, 18.102% and 13.456% respectively. This shows that four (4) significant components explain the impacts of land conflict. The purpose is to present the results better and reduce the dimensionality of a dataset by identifying principal components.

As revealed in Table 3, the factor loading of items was grouped under the four identified components. The outcome of the variance of the identified factors reveals that nine, seven, four and four factors were loaded in components 1, 2, 3 and 4, with a variance of 20.776%, 18.123%, 18.102% and 13.456% respectively. The four components were grouped and named in line with the factors constituting the group, as presented in Table 3.

Table 2: Total Variance Explained of the Impact of Land Conflict

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	11.263	46.928	46.928	11.263	46.928	46.928	4.986	20.776	20.776
2	2.523	10.514	57.442	2.523	10.514	57.442	4.349	18.123	38.898
3	1.969	8.205	65.647	1.969	8.205	65.647	4.344	18.102	57.000
4	1.154	4.809	70.456	1.154	4.809	70.456	3.229	13.456	70.456

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Table 3: Rotated Component Matrix of the Impact of Land Conflicts and their Grouping

Variables	Component				
	% of Variance	1	2	3	4
Displacement of People		0.854			
Loss of Lives and Properties		0.831			
Insecurity		0.770			
Low Agricultural Productivity		0.650			
Reduction in Investment	20.776	0.602			
Political Instability		0.601			
Loss of Cohesion		0.568			

Increase Poverty		0.552			
Stalled Development		0.508			
Sour Relationship among Conflicting Parties			0.854		
Eruption of Violence			0.712		
Lack of Trust among Conflicting Parties			0.652		
Age-long hostilities/hatred/grievances among individuals/communities	18.123		0.591		
Group Marginalization			0.579		
Termination of Peaceful Coexistence			0.556		
Loss of Investor's Confidence			0.550		
Loss of Sacred Sites and Identity				0.852	
Increased Inequality				0.843	
Loss of Cultural Heritage	18.102			0.749	
Tenure Insecurity				0.608	
Increased Cost of Managing Land Conflicts					0.756
Limited Access to Credit Facilities					0.676
Increasing Corruption	13.456				0.624
Land Speculation and Land Grabbing					0.512

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

5.0 Discussions on the Impacts of Land Conflict in Oyo State, Nigeria

The section discusses the results of the impacts of land conflict in Oyo State, Nigeria

5.1 Impact of Land Conflict in Oyo State, Nigeria

The findings show that land conflict has occurred and is recurrent in Oyo State, Nigeria. This is undoubtedly evident in the number of deaths caused by land conflicts, as Nigeria Watch (IFRA-Nigeria) has recorded. This suggests lack of a framework for managing land conflict in Oyo State. The finding is akin to that of (Shiyanbola et al. (2024), who confirmed the presence of land conflict and the need for an effective framework to manage such conflict in the state. Also, the findings align with studies identifying the loss of lives and property as one of the impacts of land conflict (see Conroy, 2014; Daodu & Igbekeyi, 2020; Salau et al., 2020; Wig & Kromrey, 2018).

Also, it could be deduced from the findings that land conflicts result in frequent violence, loss of cohesion and political instability/violence, which in turn frequently emanate from the sour relations, age-long hostilities and hatred that land conflicts

have created among individuals, families and communities over the years. Perhaps not surprisingly, hatred/hostilities usually transfers across generations. Similarly, the lack of trust among conflicting parties (individuals, families and communities) could also be responsible for incessant violence in the study area. This is perhaps one of the reasons why some family and community members do not marry from other families and communities. This finding is in line with studies identifying the eruption of violence, sour relationships and political instability as impacts of land conflict (Chukwu et al., 2022; Mugizi & Matsumoto, 2021; Omotara, 2016; Siyum et al., 2015).

In addition, land conflict seems to be one of the underlying factors responsible for underdevelopment in some parts of Oyo State. No doubt, no rational investor would want to invest in areas where they could not be certain about recoup their investment. Any investor aims to maximize profit and minimize cost, so the fear of losing investment, especially in the rural areas of Oyo State, could be responsible for stalled development, loss of investor confidence and reduction in investment. This suggests that for any meaningful development to occur, land conflict has to be reduced to minimum levels and effective

management strategies have to be implemented to manage it whenever it erupts. The elimination of conflict will be quite reassuring for intending investors. The result confirms previous findings by Okorji (2021), Onono (2016) and Wig and Kromrey (2018).

Moreover, the findings suggest that recent and long-term land conflict could have been responsible for increasing insecurity, termination of peaceful coexistence, displacement of people and group marginalisation in Oyo State (see Deininger & Castagnini, 2006; Mugizi & Matsumoto, 2021). Rising kidnapping in some areas of Oyo State could be attributed to the age-long land conflict that usually occurs between farmers and herders, which has resulted in violence and displacement of some herders, who then return to kidnap farmers and other people in exchange for ransom, especially as a retaliation for their lost cattle.

Similarly, low agricultural productivity in the Oke-Ogun zone, known as the “Food Basket of Oyo”, appears to also be the result of conflict over land use by farmers and herders. Farmers block cattle routes and poison water, while herders destroy crops and kill or injure farmers. The findings by Shiyabola et al. (2024) confirm that people usually resist attempts to block their means of livelihood, leading to land conflict. Low agricultural productivity could be responsible for decreased household income, the increasing cost of food items and an increasing poverty level among people whose main occupation is farming in the rural areas of Oyo State. The findings align with studies identifying low agricultural productivity and poverty as some of the impacts of land conflict by (see Essel, 2018; Ofuoku & Ewuerhurma, 2018; Sabogu et al., 2020).

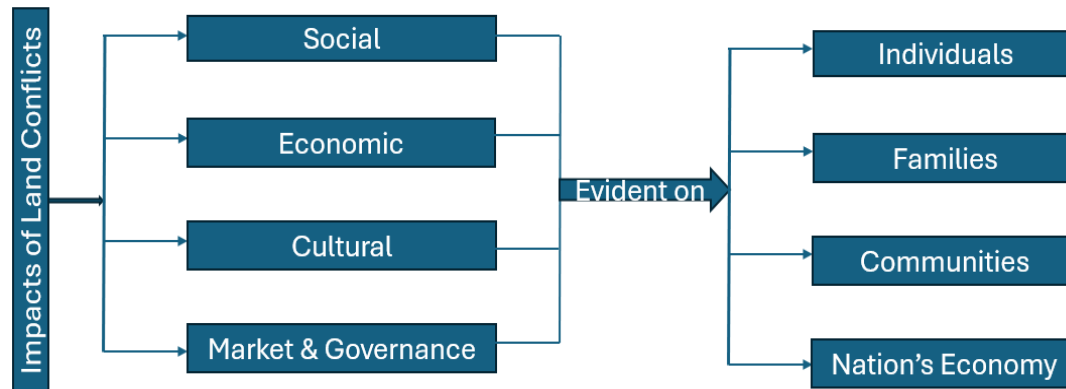
Besides, the loss of cultural heritage, especially sacred sites and people's identity, is a prominent feature of the frequent occurrence of land conflicts

in Oyo State. Apart from this, the finding confirms the evolution of land grabbing and multiple land sales in Oyo State, as confirmed by Shiyabola et al. (2024). Land grabbing may continue if no pragmatic measure is taken to curb incessant land conflict.

It is also worth noting that, despite the Land Use Act of 1978 (LUA of 1978), the customary land-tenure system remains operational. This could have also contributed to the increasing land conflict in Oyo State, which is evident in various impacts identified by the findings. The customary land-tenure system and several land litigations on most of the land have hindered the successful registration of land in the rural areas of Oyo State. This is why investors, farmers and others find it extremely difficult to process Certificates of Occupancy (C of O) on their land. Given that a C of O may be presented as a loan collateral, it is inevitable that its absence will foster tenure insecurity, thus increasing poverty levels via the underdevelopment that emanates from reduced investments in Oyo State. Similarly, high litigation costs on the part of individuals and government could promote corrupt practices, especially among government officials, who are likely to inflate their reimbursement claims.

Regrettably, governments at various levels, as well as some traditional rulers, tend to engage in land-grabbing during cases of land conflict, further widening the inequality gap and setting the stage for further conflicts. Beyond the loss of lives and properties, the study has shown, there are other impacts of land conflict with severe implications for individuals, communities and nations.

Based on the principal component analysis, the impacts of land conflict can be categorised into four groups: social, economic, cultural, and market/governance. Figure 2 depicts the summary of the impacts of land conflict and their manifestations.

Figure 2: Grouping of Impacts of Land Conflicts

6.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has examined the impacts of land conflict. The results show that, beyond the loss of lives and properties, there are other serious impacts of land conflict requiring attention in the literature on effectively managing land conflict. Among these impacts are sour relationships among conflicting parties and age-long hostilities/hatred/grievances among individuals/communities, which are often not visible to most people. Given this fact, it is necessary to pay attention to such impacts when making decisions on the management of land conflict, as well as considering them in designing a framework for land-conflict management in Nigeria.

The impacts of land conflict are evident in individuals, families, communities and the national economy. Based on such knowledge, experts may design an effective land-conflict management framework that caters to needs at the social, economic, cultural, market, and governance levels. Given the foregoing, government and other stakeholders need to pay special attention to these other impacts when making decisions on land-conflict management, especially in the context of Oyo State, Nigeria.

References

- Abegunde, A. A. (2011). Land as the Main Cause of Inter-communal Conflicts in Africa; Key Natural Resource against Community Development of Third World Nations? *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, 2(4), 2222–2855.
- Abegunde, Alawode, O., & Sibanda, M. (2020). Socioeconomic impact of land use conflict in Nigeria: A Study of Agricultural Production in Southwest Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies*, 62(2), 127–146. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343610103>.
- Adebayo, M. (2017). Oyo land dispute: Ajimobi sues for peace - Daily Post Nigeria. *Daily Post Media Ltd, Yaba Lagos*. <https://dailypost.ng/2017/07/20/oyo-land-dispute-ajimobi-sues-peace/>
- Adekola, O., Krigsholm, P., & Riekkinen, K. (2023). Adapted institutional analysis and development framework for understanding customary land institutions in sub-Saharan Africa – A case study from Nigeria. *Land Use Policy*, 131, 106691. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.LANDUSEPOL.2023.106691>.
- Adeniyi, P. O. (2013). Improving Land Sector Governance in Nigeria. In *Implementation of the Land Governance Assessment Framework*. World Bank. <https://doi.org/10.1596/28525>.
- Agboola, A. O. (2015). *The commercial real estate investment market in Lagos, Nigeria : an institutional economics analysis*, PhD thesis, University of Aberdeen, UK.
- Agheyisi, J. E. (2019). Inter-communal land conflicts in Benin City, Nigeria: Exploring the root causes in the context of customary land supply. *Land Use Policy*, 83, 532–542.

- Ahmadu, H. J., & Ayuba, H. (2018). Conflict of livelihood and survival: the absurdity of farmers versus pastoralists conflict in the lake chad basin of nigeria. *Academic Research International*, 9(1), 128–139.
- Aluko, B. T., & Amidu, A. (2006). Women and Land Rights Reforms in Nigeria. *5th FIG Regional Conference Accra, Ghana, March 8-11*.
- Anierobi, C. M., Obasi, C. O., Nnamani, R. G., Ajah, B. O., Iloma, D. O., Efobi, K. O., Nwaoga, C., Ngozi, A., Okonkwo, U. T., & Innocent Chigbe, E. (2024). Communal conflicts in Nigeria: Assessment of the impacts on internally displaced persons and settlements amidst COVID-19 pandemic. *Heliyon*, 10(9).
- Arko-Adjei, A. (2011). *Adapting land administration to the institutional framework of customary tenure The case of peri-urban Ghana. PhD Thesis*. Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands.
- Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27–40.
- Burge, S. (2015). *An Overview of the Soft Systems Methodology. System Thinking: Approaches and Methodologies*.
- Chileshe, N., & Kikwasi, G. J. (2014). Risk assessment and management practices (RAMP) within the Tanzania construction industry: Implementation barriers and advocated solutions. *International Journal of Construction Management*, 14(4), 239–254.
- Chukwu, M. F., Utobo, K., & Ufere, N. N. (2022). Effects of Fulani and Herdsman Farmers clashes on Agricultural development in Nigeria. *Economic and Business Review*, 3(3), 2022.
- Conroy, S. (2014). *Land Conflict , Climate Change , and Violence in Nigeria : Patterns , Mapping , and Evolution* (38). IFRA-Nigeria.
- Coser, L. A. (1957). Social Conflict and the Theory of Social Change. *The British Journal Of Sociology*, 8(3), 197–207.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. In *Sage Publications*. (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications Inc.
- Daodu, F. F., & Igbekoyi, K. E. (2020). Socio-economic implication of farmers-herdsmen conflict in Benue state, Nigeria. *International Journal of Arts, Languages and Business Studies*, 4(0).
- Deininger, K., & Castagnini, R. (2006). Incidence and impact of land conflict in Uganda. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 60(3), 321–345.
- Dreyhaupt, S. J. (2006). *Locational Tournaments in the Context of the EU Competitive Environment*. Deutscher Universitäts-Verlag.
- Elo, S., Kääriäinen, M., Kanste, O., Pölkki, T., Utriainen, K., & Kyngäs, H. (2014). Qualitative Content Analysis. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244014522633>, 4(1).
- Essel, E. (2018). Impact of land conflict on agriculture production: A case study of the Alavanyos and Nkonyas of Ghana. *Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference “Economic Sciences for Agribusiness and Rural Economy,”*
- GUCLU, I. (2014). Karl Marx and Ralf Dahrendorf: A Comparative Perspective on Class Formation and Conflict İdris GÜÇLÜ. *AĞUSTOS*, 9(2), 151–167.
- Gyamera, E. A., Duncan, E. E., Kuma, J. S. Y., & Arko-Adjei, A. (2016). Land conflicts in ghana , causes, effects and resolution. *44th UMaT Biennial International Mining and Mineral Conference, August 3-6, 2016. UMaT Auditorium, University of Mines and Technology, Tarkwa, Ghana*, 1–26. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316554067_LAND_CONFLICTS_IN_GHANA_CAUSES_EFFECTS_AND_RESOLUTION.
- Handoko, W. (2020). The Impact of Land Conflict on Darmakradenan Toward Social, Economic, and Politic Vulnerability in The Life of Farmers 'Community. *SHS Web of Conferences: The International Conference on Rural Development and Entrepreneurship*, 86(01039), 7.
- Ikediashi, D., & Okwuashi, O. (2015). Significant factors influencing outsourcing decision for facilities management (FM) Services: A Study of Nigeria's Public Hospitals. *Property Management*, 33(1), 59–82.
- InsideOyo. (2021). *Boundary Dispute: Oyo Sets To Give Final Judgment Among 23 LGAs | InsideOyo.com*. <https://www.insideoyo.com/boundary-dispute-oyo-sets-to-give-final-judgment-among-23-lgas/>.
- Mercy Corps. (2016). *Role of Religion and Religious Leaders in Farmer - Pastoralist Conflict in Plateau State: An Inter-Religious Peacebuilding in Northern Nigeria (IPNN) Qualitative Research Report* (Issue October).
- Moore, J. (2010). *Land disputes at the root of African wars - A selection of the African continent's fights over lands that have turned into violent, conflict, or threaten African-wars*. The Christian Science Monitor.
- Mugizi, F. M. P., & Matsumoto, T. (2021). From conflict to conflicts: War-induced displacement, land conflicts, and agricultural productivity in post-war Northern Uganda. *Land Use Policy*, 101, 105149.
- Nara, B. B. (2021). *Customary land rights and tenure security of subsistence farmers for food security in northern Ghana* [Enschede : University of Twente].
- Obińska-Wajda, E. (2016). The New Institutional Economics - Main Theories. *Financial Internet Quarterly*, 12(1), 78–85. https://doi.org/10.14636/1734-039X_12_1_008.
- Ofuoku, A., & Ewrierhurhoma, F. (2018). Effect of land conflict on arable crops production in Delta State, Nigeria. *Journal of Agriculture Faculty of Ege University*, 55(3), 357–366.
- Okorji, U. (2021). Land Conflict and Local Risk Profile, Implications for Emerging Markets. *Paper Delivered at the Estate Surveyors and Valuers Registration Board of*

- Nigeria's 2021 Valuers Assembly with the Theme: Asset Valuation as an Economic Tool for Decision Making in an Emerging Market on September 14 at Port Harcourt, Nigeria.
- Olapade, D. T., & Aluko, B. T. (2023). Tenure Insecurity in Informal Land Delivery System of Lagos State, Nigeria: Causes and Manifestations. *Urban Forum*, 34(1), 31–52.
- Oluwalana, S. (2018). 22 Families Vs Oyo State: Court Reserves Judgment On Land Dispute – Independent Newspaper Nigeria. *Independent Newspapers Limited*. <https://independent.ng/22-families-vs-oyo-state-court-reserves-judgment-on-land-dispute/>
- Omotara, O. A. (2016). Conflicts over farmland and its socioeconomic effects on rural residents of Southwestern Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Rural Sociology*, 16(3), 29–34.
- Onono, P. (2016). Economic Effects of Inter-community Conflicts In Kenya: Evidence of the Importance of Peace in the Realization of Sustainable Development. *Revista Internacional de Cooperación y Desarrollo*, 3(2), 118–129.
- Pallant, J. (2010). *SPSS SURVIVAL MANUAL A step by step guide to data analysis using SPSS* (4th Editio). Open University Press, McGraw Hill. http://spss4.allenandunwin.com.s3-website-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/about_book.html.
- Parada, J. J. (2002). Original Institutional Economics and New Institutional Economics: Revisiting the Bridges (Or the Divide). *Oeconomicus*, 5(8), 44–50. https://www.academia.edu/549953/Original_Institutional_Economics_and_New_Institutional_Economics_Revisiting_the_Bridges_Or_the_Divide_
- Sabogu, A., Nassè, T. B., & Osumanu, I. K. (2020). Land conflicts and food security in Africa: An evidence from dorimon in Ghana. *International Journal of Management & Entrepreneurship Research*, 2(2), 74–96.
- Salau, L. T., Akinyemi, S. O., Hadiza, A. M., T, S. L., Saheed, A. O., & Ahmed Musa, H. (2020). Evaluation on land conflict in selected states of Nigeria: The causes, pattern and way forward. *International Journal of Environmental Design & Construction Management*, 18(4), 233–250.
- Shiyanbola, R. E., Todorovski, D., & Zevenbergen, J. (2024). Fight or Flight? Understanding the Nature of Land Conflicts and Stakeholders' Roles in Oyo State, Nigeria. *African Journal on Land Policy and Geospatial Sciences*, 7(3), 663–684.
- Siyum, B. A., Kassa, B., Sisay, B., & Gebremedhin, M. A. (2015). Farm Land Conflict and its Socio-Economic Consequences in Tahtay Qoraro, Tigray, Ethiopia. In *International Journal of African and Asian Studies* www.iiste.org ISSN (9).
- Wehrmann, B. (2008). Land Conflict: A practical guide to dealing with land disputes. In *Land Conflicts*. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH, Eschborn, Germany.
- Wehrmann, B. (2017). *Understanding, preventing and solving land conflicts*. <http://www.foncier-developpement.fr/wp-content/uploads/LandConflictsGuide-web-20170413.pdf>.
- Wig, T., & Kromrey, D. (2018). Which groups fight? Customary institutions and communal conflicts in Africa. *Journal of Peace Research*, 55(4), 415–429.
- Williams, B., Andrys, O., & Brown, T. (2010). Exploratory Factor Analysis: A Five-Step Guide for Novices. <https://doi.org/10.33151/Ajp.8.3.93>, 8(3), 1–13.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case Study Research design and methods*. Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA (Vol 5). Sage Publications.
- Yin, R. K. (2013). Validity and generalization in future case study evaluations. *Evaluation*, 19(3), 321–332.
- Zainal, Z. (2007). Case study as a research method. *Jurnal Kemanusiaan*, 9, 1–6.