

INVESTIGATING STRATEGIES FOR RETENTION AND COMPLETION OF BASIC SCHOOLS AMIDST FARMERS-HERDERS' CONFLICT IN NORTH-CENTRAL NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the availability, effectiveness, and influence of continuity strategies on pupils' retention and completion of basic education amidst farmers–herders' conflict in North-Central Nigeria, with specific focus on Benue and Nasarawa States. A descriptive survey design was adopted, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Data were obtained using interview guides and proforma records covering fifteen years of pupils' retention and completion. Twenty-four stakeholders were selected using multistage sampling techniques comprising purposive, stratified, and simple random sampling. Qualitative data were thematically analysed, while longitudinal proforma data provided trend-based evidence of retention and completion outcomes. Findings revealed five major continuity strategies used to sustain retention and completion of basic education in conflict-affected communities: Organised Community Efforts, Temporary Learning Centres, Educational Support Services, Technological/Remote Education Programmes, and Monitoring and Evaluation Platforms. OCEs emerged as the most prominent and sustainable strategy, reflecting strong grassroots initiatives such as parental support, flexible school schedules, and community-led monitoring. TLCs were found to be the most effective in preventing total educational disruption, despite challenges related to overcrowding and inadequate facilities. The results further showed that continuity strategies positively influenced pupils' retention and completion; Nasarawa State recorded consistent improvements compared to fluctuating outcomes in Benue State. There were no significant differences in perceptions based on status or location, but duration of stay significantly influenced respondents' perceptions of strategy effectiveness. The study concluded that community-driven resilience, supported by institutional and technological interventions, is critical for sustaining basic education in conflict-affected settings.

Keywords: *Farmers–Herders' Conflict; Basic Education; Continuity Strategies; Pupil Retention; School Completion; Community Participation; North-Central Nigeria*

Introduction

The persistent farmers–herders conflict in North-Central Nigeria has evolved into a major security, social, and developmental challenge, primarily driven by competition over land, water resources, and grazing routes (Abbass, 2012; Okoli & Atelhe, 2014). Over the years, the escalation of violent clashes has resulted in loss of lives, mass displacement, destruction of livelihoods, and the breakdown of social infrastructure, particularly in rural communities where basic education is predominantly delivered. These disruptions have posed serious threats to educational access, continuity, and outcomes in conflict-affected states such as Benue and Nasarawa.

Empirical evidence demonstrates that the farmers–herders conflict has significantly undermined basic education delivery in North-Central Nigeria. Studies indicate that recurrent violence has led to declining school enrolment, poor pupil retention, and reduced completion rates due to displacement, school closures, and pervasive insecurity (Terver & Tyoakaa, 2018; Ngbede et al., 2024). Similarly, Hamma (2024) reports that persistent conflict has disrupted academic calendars, discouraged school attendance, and weakened community participation in education. Fear of attacks and destruction of school infrastructure have compelled many parents to withdraw their children, particularly girls from school, increasing dropout rates and widening educational inequality.

Beyond educational disruption, the conflict has imposed severe socio-economic consequences on communities in Benue and Nasarawa States, including killings, displacement, destruction of farmlands and markets, loss of income, social disunity, and erosion of human capital. According to Ibanez (2016), conflict introduces uncertainty and risk that force households to adopt survival strategies that negatively affect education, such as child labour, migration, and prioritization of immediate economic needs over schooling. These conditions further exacerbate low enrolment, retention, and completion of basic education.

Despite these challenges, various education continuity strategies have been adopted globally and locally to sustain learning in conflict-affected contexts. International experience shows that continuity strategies such as safe learning spaces, mobile education units, alternative schooling models, psychosocial support, and remote learning platforms are critical in emergencies and protracted crises (INEE, 2016; Global Education Monitoring Report, 2023). In North-Central Nigeria, government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international partners, and local communities have introduced several interventions aimed at sustaining basic education amidst insecurity.

These interventions include the establishment of Temporary Learning Centres (TLCs) to provide alternative learning spaces for displaced children (Onyeka, 2022), deployment of community-based and volunteer teachers (Adedayo, 2020), use of radio and digital learning platforms to reach learners in inaccessible areas (Adebayo, 2021), school feeding programmes to encourage attendance (Ogundele, 2020), psychosocial support and counselling services for conflict-affected pupils (Ike, 2021), and strengthening school security through collaboration between government and local communities (Nwosu, 2022). Additionally, USAID (2022) reports increased engagement of community education facilitators to ensure learning continuity where formal schools are closed.

However, despite the existence of these strategies, questions remain regarding their availability, implementation, and effectiveness in Benue and Nasarawa States, given the persistent and evolving nature of the farmers–herders conflict (Adebanjo, 2023). There is limited empirical evidence assessing how these continuity strategies influence key educational outcomes such as enrolment, retention, and completion in conflict-affected basic schools. Addressing this gap is critical, particularly as Nigeria strives to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) and reduce its high out-of-school population, one of the largest globally (UNESCO, 2022).

Retention and completion are central indicators of educational system effectiveness. Retention refers to the promotion and continuous enrolment of pupils within the same school until completion, while completion denotes the successful attainment of the final grade of basic education (Adaaku, 2023; UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2023). Although factors such as poverty and parental background influence retention in many contexts (Dunlap & Lowenthal, 2010), in Benue and Nasarawa States, conflict-induced displacement and insecurity play a more decisive role, often forcing families to withdraw or transfer children against their wishes.

Recent data further highlight the challenge. While Nigeria's average primary school completion rate stood at approximately 85.7% in 2023, North-Central Nigeria recorded significantly lower completion rates compared to other regions (Dataphyte, 2023; Ocheba-Murtala, 2023). Although state governments in Benue and Nasarawa have implemented enrolment drives, reintegration programmes, and partnerships with NGOs to improve access and quality, insecurity continues to undermine these efforts (Benue State Government, 2023; Nasarawa State Government, 2023).

Given these realities, this study investigates the availability and effectiveness of continuity strategies for sustaining basic education amidst farmers–herders conflict in North-Central Nigeria, with particular emphasis on pupils' retention and completion. By providing empirical evidence, the study aims to inform policymakers, education stakeholders, and humanitarian agencies on sustainable, context-responsive interventions capable of strengthening educational resilience in conflict-prone regions.

Statement of the Problem

Basic education is central to Nigeria's human capital development agenda; however, its effectiveness is severely undermined in conflict-affected regions. In North-Central Nigeria, recurring farmers–herders conflict has escalated over the past decade, leading to widespread displacement, loss of livelihoods, destruction of infrastructure, and persistent insecurity. Empirical

evidence shows that these conditions have adversely affected basic schools, resulting in declining pupil retention, increased dropout rates, irregular attendance, and poor completion of basic education (Abbass, 2012; Terver & Tyoakaa, 2018).

Despite numerous policy efforts aimed at achieving universal basic education, studies indicate that pupils in conflict-prone states such as Benue, Nasarawa, and Plateau are frequently withdrawn from school due to fear of attacks, displacement, poverty, and the closure or destruction of schools (Okoli & Atelhe, 2014; International Crisis Group, 2018). Teachers are also affected through insecurity-induced absenteeism and relocation, further weakening instructional delivery and learner support. These challenges collectively threaten educational continuity and long-term human development in the region (UNICEF, 2021).

Although existing studies have largely documented the negative effects of farmers–herders conflict on schooling, there remains a critical gap in empirical research on practical retention and completion strategies that basic schools can adopt to sustain pupils’ participation and ensure successful completion amidst ongoing conflict. The absence of such context-specific strategies limits effective educational planning and intervention in conflict-affected communities. This study therefore seeks to investigate retention and completion strategies for basic schools amidst farmers–herders conflict in North-Central Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The study investigated continuity strategies for basic schools amidst farmers-herders’ conflict in north central Nigeria. Accordingly, the study investigated:

- i. the availability of continuity strategies to sustain basic education amidst farmers-herders’ conflict in North-Central Nigeria.
- ii. the influence of continuity strategies on pupils’ retention in basic education amidst farmers-herders’ conflict in North-Central Nigeria.

- iii. the extent to which continuity strategies influence pupils' completion of basic education amidst farmers-herders' conflict in North-Central Nigeria.
- iv. the differences in the ways continuity strategies influence pupils' retention in basic schools amidst farmers-herders' conflict in North-Central Nigeria based on LGA
- v. Evaluate the differences in in the ways continuity strategies influence pupils' retention in basic schools amidst farmers-herders' conflict in North-Central Nigeria on the basis of status
- vi. the difference in the ways by which continuity strategies affect basic schools completion amidst farmers-herders' conflict in North-Central Nigeria on the basis of duration of stay in the area

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the perception of continuity strategies for sustaining basic schools amidst farmers-herders' conflict based on status.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the perception of continuity strategies for sustaining basic schools amidst farmers-herders' conflict on the basis of Local Government Area (LGA).

Ho3: There is no significant difference in the perception of continuity strategies for sustaining basic schools amidst farmers-herders' conflict on the basis of duration of stay in the area.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design, combining both qualitative and quantitative data, using interview guide and proforma to get data from the participants. The study used the retention and completion details of all basic school pupils in Benue and Nasarawa states. Also, 24

participants were interviewed and the data was thematically coded in themes based on the objectives of the study. The study adopted a multistage sampling technique of purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques.

Result

Research Question 1: *What are the continuity strategies available to sustain basic schools amidst farmers-herders' conflict in North-Central Nigeria?*

The findings of the study were presented as thus;

The thematic analysis conducted using interview responses where five (5) continuity strategies emerged as themes: Temporary Learning Centres (TLCs), Technological/Remote Education Programmes (REPs), Educational Support Services (ESS), Organized Community Efforts (OCE), and Monitoring and Evaluation Platforms (MEPs), are as illustrated in figure 1:

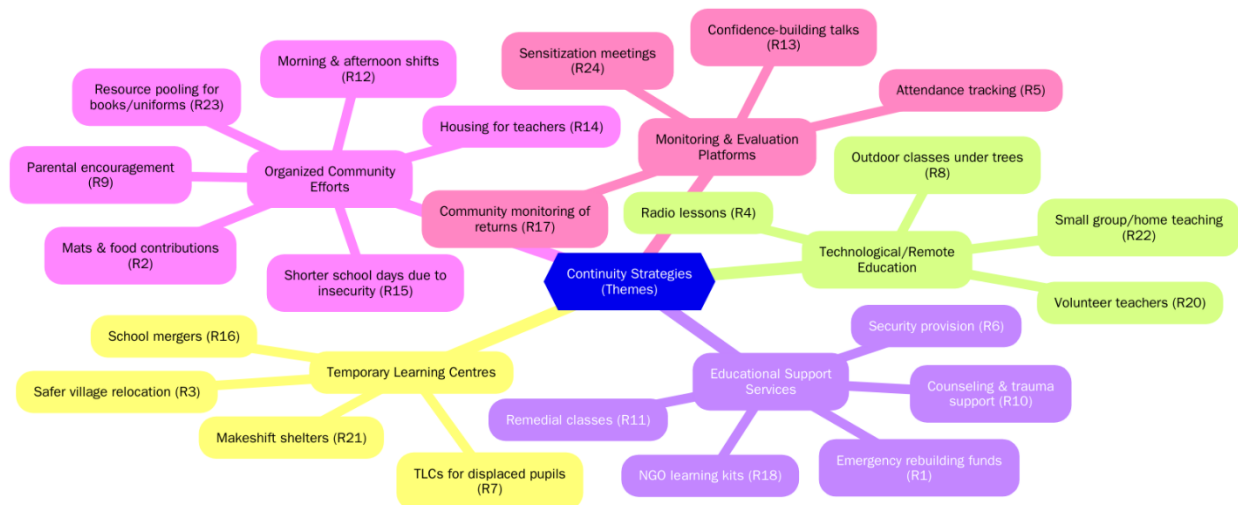


Figure 1: Thematic Mapping of Available Continuity Strategies Themes

Amidst farmer-herder conflicts in North-Central Nigeria, five key strategies have emerged: Organized Community Efforts (OCE), Temporary Learning Centres (TLCs), Educational Support Services (ESS), Technological/Remote Education Programmes (REPs), and Monitoring and Evaluation Platforms (MEPs). Organized Community Efforts stand

out as the most significant approach, characterized by local initiatives where parents and leaders provide food, shelter, and adjusted school schedules to ensure immediate continuity. Complementing this, TLCs offer makeshift learning spaces and school mergers to prevent displacement from halting education, while ESS provides essential institutional backing through security deployment, learning materials, and psychosocial support from government and NGOs.

Furthermore, innovative and administrative measures such as REPs utilize radio lessons and informal group learning to bridge gaps when formal classrooms are inaccessible. These are supported by MEPs, which focus on tracking displaced students and conducting sensitization campaigns to rebuild parental confidence. Together, these multi-faceted strategies highlight a robust synergy between bottom-up community resilience and top-down institutional interventions, ensuring that learning remains flexible, mobile, and sustained even during periods of intense insecurity.

Research Question Two: *How effective are the continuity strategies available to sustain basic schools amidst farmers-herders’ conflict in North-Central Nigeria?*

To examine the effectiveness of the interview data on the effectiveness of the continuity strategies analysed thematically in keeping with the Five broad themes: TLCs, REPs, ESS, OCE, and MEPs.

Figure 2 showcase the thematic map structure.

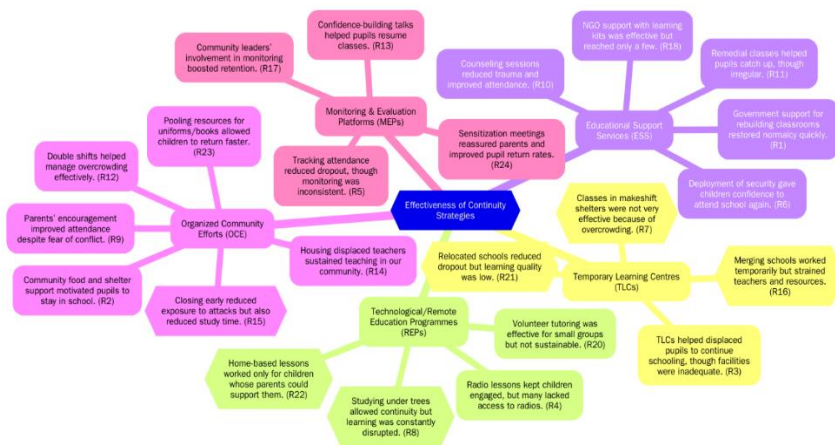


Figure 2: Thematic Mapping of how Effective are the Continuity Strategies

From figure 2, to sustain basic education amidst farmer-herder conflicts in North-Central Nigeria, five key strategies were used: Temporary Learning Centres (TLCs), Organized Community Efforts (OCE), Educational Support Services (ESS), Technological/Remote Education Programmes (REPs), and Monitoring & Evaluation Platforms (MEPs). Others see TLCs as the most effective strategy for preventing total educational disruption, it accounts for significant limitations, including overcrowding and poor facilities that hindered learning quality. Contrastingly, OCE were consistently praised as the most practical and sustainable approach; because they are grassroots-driven, these initiatives, ranging from providing food and housing for teachers to implementing double-shift systems, directly addressed the immediate needs of pupils and staff.

Elsewhere, other strategies provided vital but more fragmented support. Educational Support Services, involving security deployment and NGO-led psychosocial counseling, were effective in restoring confidence but suffered from limited geographic coverage. Similarly, Technological and Remote Education Programmes, such as radio lessons and volunteer tutoring, offered innovative alternatives but were often constrained by poor accessibility and a lack of resources for scaling up. Finally, Monitoring and Evaluation Platforms helped improve student retention through community sensitization and attendance tracking, though their impact remained moderate due to inconsistent implementation. Collectively, these findings suggest that while institutional and technological interventions are helpful, community-led resilience remains the cornerstone of educational continuity in conflict zones.

Research Question 3: In what ways do continuity strategies influence pupils' retention in basic schools amidst farmers-herders' conflict in North-Central Nigeria?

To address this research question, three complementary data sources were obtained to provide a comprehensive understanding of how continuity strategies influence pupils' retention in basic

schools amidst the farmers-herders' conflict in North-Central Nigeria. The data were 15-years proforma, and interviews. The result was presented as thus;

Fifteen-Year Retention Records in Basic Schools (Farmers-Herders' Conflict-Prone Zone, North-Central Nigeria)

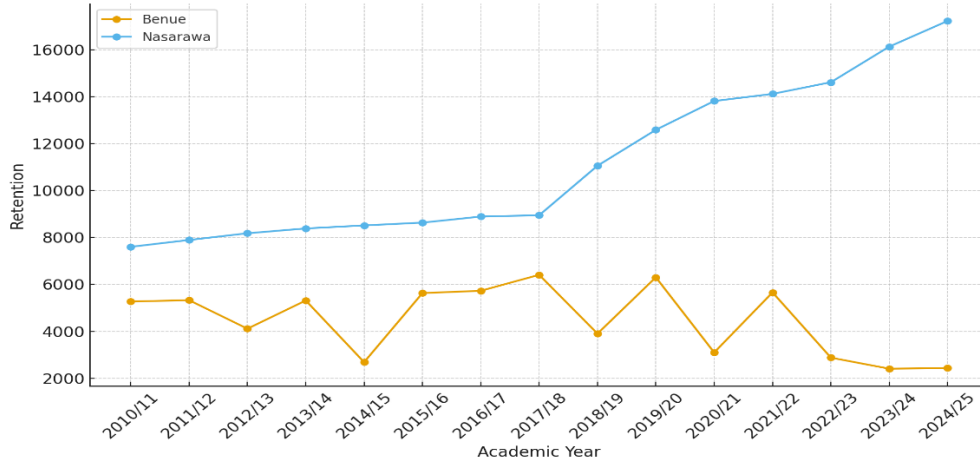


Figure 3: Trend of Pupils' Retention in Basic Schools in amidst farmers-herders' conflict in North-Central Nigeria

Figure 3 visually illustrates the contrast between the two states. While Benue's trendline oscillates sharply, reflecting periods of decline and recovery, Nasarawa's line shows a consistent upward trajectory. To complement the proforma findings, thematic analysis of interview responses revealed the ways in which continuity strategies influenced pupils' retention in basic schools within conflict-affected communities.



Figure 4: Thematic Mapping on ways Cognitive Strategies influence Retention

From the themes in figure 4, five primary strategies were seen to significantly enhance pupil retention in basic schools amidst farmers-herders' conflict in North-Central Nigeria: Temporary Learning Centres (TLCs), Technological/Remote Education Programmes (REPs), Educational Support Services (ESS), Organized Community Efforts (OCE), and Monitoring & Evaluation Platforms (MEPs). TLCs, such as relocated schools and makeshift shelters, effectively maintained consistent attendance by offering safer, more accessible learning spaces despite challenges like overcrowding. REPs, including radio lessons and home tutoring, sustained academic engagement during school closures, reducing the likelihood of permanent disengagement from education, though their reach was limited by accessibility issues.

Organized Community Efforts proved to be the most influential factor, demonstrating the power of grassroots resilience. Community-led initiatives, such as providing food, housing for teachers, and flexible scheduling, directly addressed immediate needs and fostered local ownership, leading to high retention rates. These efforts were complemented by ESS from government and NGOs, which addressed psychosocial and structural barriers through security provisions and counseling. Lastly, MEPs supported these efforts by actively tracking attendance and engaging parents, which helped identify and re-engage absent pupils, collectively building a robust system to ensure educational continuity and pupil retention amidst persistent insecurity.

Research Question 5: In what ways do continuity strategies influence pupils' completion of basic schools amidst farmers-herders' conflict in North-Central Nigeria.?

To address this research question, data were obtained from three sources. The first include a 15-year proforma record on pupils education completion amidst farmers-herders' conflict in North-Central Nigeria. The second include a survey to quantify their perceptions of the effectiveness of various continuity strategies on pupils completion amidst farmers-herders' conflict in North-Central Nigeria. The third component consisted of qualitative interviews. The result was presented thusly:

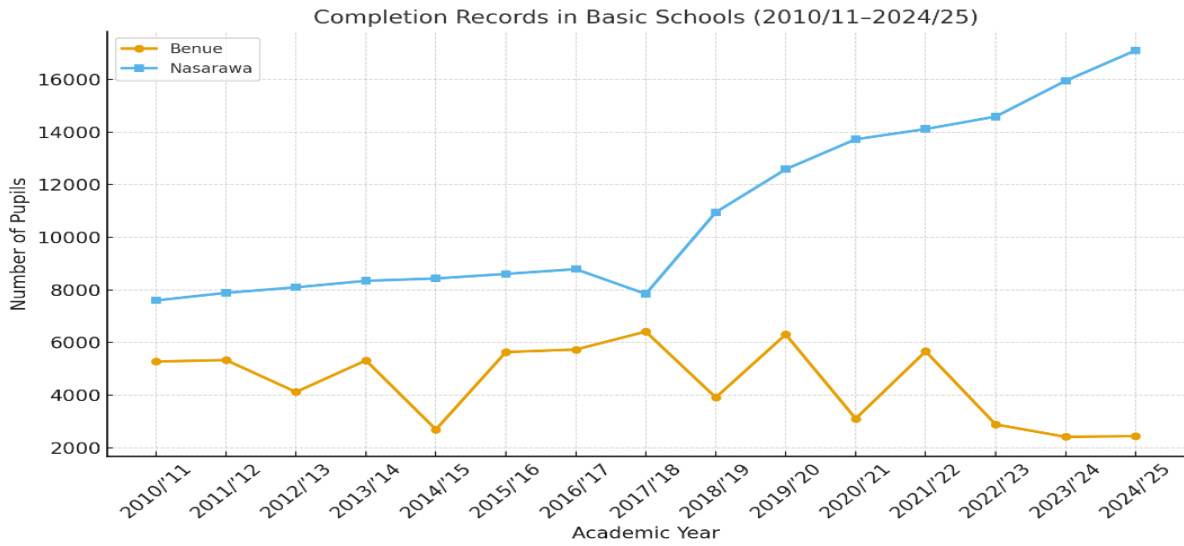


Figure 5: Trend of Pupil’s Completion Rate amidst amidst farmers-herders’ conflict in North-Central Nigeria.

Figure 5 shows clear contrasts in completion trends between Benue and Nasarawa States over the 15-year period. While Benue experienced fluctuating and generally declining completion rates, particularly after 2014/15, Nasarawa demonstrated a consistent upward trajectory from 7,596 in 2010/11 to 17,102 in 2024/25.

In addition to the survey findings, thematic analysis of interview responses revealed the ways in which continuity strategies influenced pupils’ completion in basic schools within conflict-affected communities.



Thematic Mapping on ways Continuity Strategies Influence on Pupil’s Completion

Five main strategies were crucial for ensuring pupils completed their education during the farmer-herder conflict in North-Central Nigeria: Temporary Learning Centres (TLCs), Technological/Remote Education Programmes (REPs), Educational Support Services (ESS), Organized Community Efforts (OCE), and Monitoring & Evaluation Platforms (MEPs). TLCs, such as school relocations and makeshift classrooms, provided vital physical access to education, allowing students to complete final years and sit for exams despite disruptions. REPs, utilizing resources like radio lessons and home tutoring, maintained academic continuity and helped pupils catch up on the syllabus, thereby ensuring they met graduation requirements, though access limitations were a challenge.

Organized Community Efforts emerged as the most significant factor in influencing completion rates. These grassroots initiatives, involving community meals, housing for teachers, and parental motivation, created a supportive environment that kept pupils enrolled through to graduation. This was bolstered by ESS from governments and NGOs, which removed structural and emotional barriers through security provisions, remedial classes, and counseling, allowing students to focus on their studies. Finally, MEPs contributed through proactive measures like attendance tracking and community awareness campaigns, helping identify and support at-risk pupils to ensure they finished their schooling.

Integrating evidence from the data sources (proforma and thematic results) revealed a coherent pattern: continuity strategies collectively improve pupils' completion of basic education amidst conflict, though their success depends on scope, consistency, and local adaptation. The proforma data show real evidence of improvement in completion rates where continuity strategies were more functional in Nasarawa, compared to fluctuating outcomes in Benue, where insecurity frequently disrupted schooling.

Ho1: *There is no significant difference in the perception of continuity strategies for sustaining basic schools amidst farmers-herders' conflict based on status.*

Table 1: ANOVA on Continuity Strategies by Status

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-cal.	p-value	Remark
Between Groups	61.652	5	12.330	1.964	0.083	Not Significant
Within Groups	2989.097	476	6.280			
Total	3050.749	481				

Table 1 shows that there is no statistically significant difference in the perception of continuity strategies for sustaining basic schools amidst farmers–herders’ conflict based on respondents’ status, $F(5, 476) = 1.964$, $p = 0.083$. Since the p-value is greater than the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis is retained. This indicates that respondents, regardless of their status, share similar views on the effectiveness of continuity strategies used to sustain basic education in conflict-affected areas.

Ho2: *There is no significant difference in the perception of continuity strategies for sustaining basic schools amidst farmers-herders' conflict on the basis of Local Government Area (LGA).*

Table 14: ANOVA on Continuity Strategies by Local Government Area (LGA)

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-cal.	p-value	Remark
Between Groups	28.891	7	4.127	0.647	0.717	Not Significant
Within Groups	3021.858	474	6.375			
Total	3050.749	481				

Table 14 reveals that there is no statistically significant difference in the perception of continuity strategies for sustaining basic schools amidst farmers–herders’ conflict across the eight Local Government Areas (Awe, Doma, Guma, Gwer, Keana, Logo, Obi, and Ukum), $F(7, 474) = 0.647$, $p = 0.717$. Since the p-value is greater than the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis is retained. This implies that respondents from all LGAs hold similar perceptions regarding the effectiveness of continuity strategies implemented to sustain basic education during the farmers–herders’ conflict.

Ho3: *There is no significant difference in the perception of continuity strategies for sustaining basic schools amidst farmers-herders' conflict on the basis of duration of stay in the area.*

Table 15a: ANOVA on Continuity Strategies by Duration of Stay

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-cal.	p-value	Remark
Between Groups	82.148	5	16.430	2.634	0.023	Significant
Within Groups	2968.601	476	6.237			
Total	3050.749	481				

Table 15a reveals a statistically significant difference in respondents' perception of continuity strategies for sustaining basic schools amidst farmers-herders' conflict based on their duration of stay in the area, $F(5, 476) = 2.634, p = 0.023$. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that respondents' duration of stay significantly influences their perception of the effectiveness of the continuity strategies implemented to sustain basic education in conflict-affected communities. To determine the specific groups responsible for the observed difference, a Duncan post hoc test was carried out.

Table 15b: Duncan Post Hoc Test of Differences in Continuity Strategies by Duration of Stay

Duration of Stay (Years)	N	Subset 1	Subset 2
26 years above	48	12.13	
6–10 years	92	12.86	12.86
11–15 years	124	12.86	12.86
16–20 years	88		13.18
21–25 years	61		13.33
0–5 years	69		13.68
Sig.		0.092	0.076

The Duncan post hoc test in Table 15b reveals two homogeneous subsets, indicating where the significant differences lie among the groups. Respondents who had stayed 26 years and above in the area reported the lowest mean perception of continuity strategies ($M = 12.13$), while those who had stayed 0–5 years had the highest mean perception ($M = 13.68$). The mean perception scores increased progressively with shorter durations of stay. This pattern suggests that respondents who had lived in the area for a shorter time perceived the strategies as more effective, whereas those who had lived there longer appeared less optimistic about their effectiveness.

Discussion

The findings indicate that basic schools in farmers–herders’ conflict-affected areas of North-Central Nigeria rely on a combination of five major continuity strategies: Organized Community Efforts (OCE), Temporary Learning Centres (TLCs), Educational Support Services (ESS), Technological/Remote Education Programmes (REPs), and Monitoring and Evaluation Platforms (MEPs). Among these, Organized Community Efforts emerged as the most prominent and consistently applied strategy, reflecting strong grassroots responses such as parental support, flexible school schedules, provision of food, and community-led monitoring. This finding aligns with previous studies which emphasize that community participation often becomes the backbone of education delivery in conflict and emergency settings where state capacity is weakened (INEE, 2016; UNICEF, 2020). The availability of TLCs, ESS, and REPs further demonstrates attempts to adapt schooling to displacement and insecurity, supporting the view that education systems in fragile contexts must be flexible, mobile, and locally responsive (World Bank, 2018).

In terms of effectiveness, the findings show that Temporary Learning Centres were perceived as the most effective strategy for preventing complete educational disruption, despite challenges such as overcrowding and inadequate facilities. This supports Burde et al. (2017), who found that proximity-based and safer learning spaces significantly improve access and continuity for displaced learners. Organized Community Efforts were also widely regarded as highly effective and sustainable because they directly addressed immediate needs of pupils and teachers, reinforcing the argument that locally driven interventions tend to be more resilient during prolonged conflict (Shah & Lopes Cardozo, 2014). Conversely, Educational Support Services and Remote Education Programmes, while valuable, were limited by uneven coverage, poor infrastructure, and access constraints, challenges commonly reported in low-resource conflict environments (UNESCO, 2019).

The findings further reveal that continuity strategies significantly influence pupils' retention and completion of basic education amidst conflict. Longitudinal trends showed fluctuating retention and completion rates in Benue State, contrasted with steady improvements in Nasarawa State, suggesting that consistent application of continuity strategies enhances educational outcomes. Qualitative evidence indicates that Organized Community Efforts played the most decisive role in retaining pupils and ensuring completion by fostering local ownership, addressing psychosocial needs, and sustaining motivation. These results are consistent with evidence that sustained engagement, parental confidence, and school-community partnerships are critical determinants of retention and completion in conflict-affected settings (UNICEF, 2021; World Bank, 2020). Overall, the findings underscore that while institutional and technological interventions are important, community-led resilience remains the cornerstone of sustaining basic education during farmers–herders' conflict.

Conclusion

This study concludes that sustaining basic education amidst farmers–herders' conflict in North-Central Nigeria is achievable through a combination of community-driven, adaptive, and institutional continuity strategies. The findings demonstrate that five major strategies, Organized Community Efforts, Temporary Learning Centres, Educational Support Services, Technological/Remote Education Programmes, and Monitoring and Evaluation Platforms, collectively contribute to maintaining access, retention, and completion of basic education during periods of insecurity. Among these, Organized Community Efforts emerged as the most consistently available and influential strategy, underscoring the central role of grassroots resilience, parental involvement, and local leadership in sustaining schooling where formal systems are weakened. Temporary Learning Centres, although limited by infrastructural challenges, were found to be highly effective in preventing total educational disruption for displaced pupils. The study further establishes that continuity strategies positively influence

pupils' retention and completion, with more consistent outcomes observed in contexts where these strategies were better coordinated and sustained. Differences in perceptions based on duration of stay highlight the importance of contextual experience in assessing strategy effectiveness. By and large, the study affirms that while institutional and technological interventions are important, community-led initiatives form the cornerstone of educational continuity in conflict-affected areas.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Strengthen Organized Community Efforts:** Governments and education stakeholders should formally recognize, support, and integrate community-led initiatives into education planning by providing small grants, training, and logistical support to local education committees.
2. **Improve the Quality and Coverage of Temporary Learning Centres:** Temporary Learning Centres should be expanded and better equipped to address overcrowding and poor facilities, ensuring safe, child-friendly environments that support effective teaching and learning.
3. **Expand Educational Support Services:** Government and non-governmental organizations should increase the geographic reach of security support, psychosocial counseling, and remedial programmes to restore learner confidence and address trauma-related barriers to learning.
4. **Scale Up Accessible Remote Learning Programmes:** Technological and remote education initiatives, particularly radio-based learning, should be strengthened with consistent scheduling, teacher training, and community sensitization to enhance accessibility and effectiveness.
5. **Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation Platforms:** Attendance tracking, community sensitization, and early-warning systems should be institutionalized at the local level to identify at-risk pupils early and prevent dropout, especially during prolonged conflict.

6. **Adopt Context-Sensitive Education Policies:** Policymakers should design flexible, conflict-responsive education policies that account for local security realities, displacement patterns, and community dynamics to ensure sustainable implementation of continuity strategies.

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