IMSISS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	**Glasgow** 2485237 **DCU** 19108800 **Charles** 12133497
Dissertation Title	**Hidden Conflict in Nigeria: The Escalation of the Herder-Farmer Conflict in Nigeria**

INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION GRADING

Reviewer 1 Initial Grade	*Reviewer 2 Initial Grade*	*Late Submission Penalty*
		no penalty

Word Count Penalty *(1-15% over/under = 1gr point; 15-20% over/under = 2 gr points; 20-25% over/under = 3 gr points; more than 25% over/under = 0 fail)*
Word Count: 24165   **Suggested Penalty:** no penalty

JOINT GRADING (subject to agreement of the external examiner and approval at Joint Exam Board)

Final Agreed Mark. *(Following correspondence reviewers should list the agreed final internal grade taking before and after any penalties to be applied).*
Before Penalty: B2   **After Penalty: B2**

DISSERTATION FEEDBACK

Assessment Criteria	*Rating*
A. Structure and Development of Answer	
This refers to your organisational skills and ability to construct an argument in a coherent and original manner	
• *Originality of topic*	Very Good
• *Coherent set of research questions and/or hypothesis identified*	Very Good
• *Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work*	Very Good
• *Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions*	Good
• *Application of theory and/or concepts*	Very Good
B. Use of Source Material	
This refers to your skills to select and use relevant information and data in a correct manner	
• *Evidence of reading and review of published literature*	Excellent
• *Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument*	Excellent
• *Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence*	Very Good
• *Accuracy of factual data*	Excellent
C. Academic Style	
This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner	
• *Appropriate formal and clear writing style*	Excellent
• *Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation*	Excellent
• *Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)*	Excellent

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• *Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?*	Yes
• *Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)*	Not required
• *Appropriate word count*	No

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

The student has chosen for her research an issue that has so far been little explored. She defined a clear and logical theoretical framework and, in line with a robust quantitative methodological grasp, conducted high quality and detailed empirical research. I highlight the student's work with the literature and the research data set she was able to collect and process.

However, I would like to mention that the thesis noticeably lacks a follow-up application of a purely qualitative method (in addition to answering the question of HOW? through the quantitative methods used) answering the question of WHY?, which the author herself acknowledges and perceives as a shortcoming (p. 80). In this context, however, I would like to appeal to the evaluation committee that the student was unwittingly in a difficult situation caused by the Covid pandemic and was no longer able to carry out the qualitative part of the research.

Despite this shortcoming, the student's thesis represents a solid study of one aspect of security developments in West Africa in the second and third decades of the 21st century. The thesis contributes to the existing body of knowledge, which it extends and enriches to a large extent.

Reviewer 2

The student reflects on a quite fascinating and clearly under-researched question and from the outset. The conceptual framework is well developed and from the outset, it is clear that the premise of the dissertation is born of careful thought and planning. Chapter one provides a neat introduction—useful for the uninitiated—and a snapshot of the rationale. This is well judged for quite a niche topic. The literature review is quite meticulous and spans a broad timeline—it also incorporates disparate literature which displays a firm grasp of the subject matter. DST is neatly incorporated here too, showing awareness that methods—and conceptual frameworks—too, have a basis in literature and can belong in a lit review.

Chapter 3 provides more empirical depth, though in terms of space management of the study, it might be argued that there is a little too much explication already and that the dissertation is in danger of becoming a very detailed literature review; that eventuality will depend on the empirical explication to follow, as signposted earlier in the dissertation—notably, in chapter 1.

In Chapter 4, there is yet more justification for the dissertation but all the same, the specific outline of the mixed-methods employed is quite bare and insufficient—this required to be fleshed out in more detail (see earlier point re. space management in the dissertation). A justification for a study should not appear 40 pages into the dissertation. Nonetheless, the R questions are very nicely outlined and there is good explanation of the use of NVIVO-led discourse analysis and content analysis. The admission on p. 45 ("This research is limited to secondary data, especially newspapers, as its dominant source of data."), while welcome, nonetheless poses a retrospective question around the employment of NVIVO-led analysis in the absence of what the student deems to be sufficient sources. Is this a problem stumbled upon mid-way during the dissertation? P. 46 perhaps provides deeper justification for the shortfall, such that "The newspaper collected spanned from 2016-2020. I intended to look at 2012 to 2020 to understand the conflict escalation patterns. However, I fall ill while collecting data at Covenant University I was only physically able to collect data for five years." I believe the evaluation process—and those involved—need to discuss the impact of extenuating circumstances on this study, especially given that the ISP is an extended process.

Chapter 5: re. themes 1-8, yes they are drawn from Yasmi, Schanz, and Salim's (2006) eight manifestation dimensions, but the reader should be reminded of that here and I am still not quite convinced re. the depth of justification of these categories as provided earlier in the dissertation. Nonetheless, the application in the proceeding chapter is solid; a little unspectacular (as the number of categories strains the depth of qualitative analysis made possible thereafter), but this should have been rectified by an in-depth qualitative discussion to round off the dissertation's analytical core. Alas, this does not come; and here, again, I feel the students' circumstances—already identified in the dissertation—require to be taken into account. On pp. 80-81, the student identifies avenues for future research in the field, but really, some attempt should have been made in *this* dissertation to address precisely those issues. The onus of sufficient depth for this dissertation falls not on the field, but on the student themselves (insofar as circumstances allow for a full attempt at completing the dissertation).

In this vein, the conclusion is overly-brisk and suggests, again, a dissertation that could not be completed in the manner intended. I believe further mediation—in full view of the students' circumstances—is required before finalising the ultimate grade.