A Re-Assessment of Security and Banditry in Kaduna State

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Abstract

The security situation in Nigeria has been alarming since 1999, with violence pervading allgeopolitical zones. Northwestern Nigeria has experienced significant violence, causing thousands of deaths. This paper will interrogate the factors driving banditry, its impact on national security, and government strategies to combat it; the paper adopted the pragmatic philosophy method and the Queer ladder theory to justify the subject of discourse. The primary focus of the paper is on two Local Government Areas; Birnin-Gwari and Kajuru, this is because of the rise and intensity of banditry and insecurity in the last six years (2016-2022) in the two local Government Areas of Kaduna state. The paper found that poverty, porous borders, unemployment, and lack of opportunities for youths to develop their talents, and the large expanse of forests that connects Niger and Katsina state which have international boundaries with Niger Republic and Chad are major drivers of banditry, and insecurity in Kaduna state. Bandits often recruit, indoctrinate and entice unemployed youths with money to join their groups. The paper also revealed that the security architecture in Birnin-Gwari and Kajuru LGAs is weak, with limited presence and capacity of security agencies to respond to threats. The area's difficult terrain is a challenge for security agencies to operate effectively. Therefore, this paper recommends, among others, that the government should equip the security agencies with appropriate modern equipment to improve their performance.

Keywords: Security, Banditry, Cattle rustling, Terrorism and Security threats.

Introduction

Threats to societies abound from different fronts, creating an exponential rise of insecurity in our contemporary world. A Plethora of threats, such as earthquakes, epidemics, and persistent violent conflicts, are major factors that constitute and contribute to hardship, instability, and conflicts, thereby undermining the peace, stability, growth and scientific development of society (Abdulkadir, 2020). Thus, government involvement on security matters cannot be over emphasized. Protecting the nation from external and internal dangers is only one aspect of the national security debate. Additionally, it entails enhancing the political, socioeconomic, physical, environmental, and food security of the populace, safeguarding the state's prevailing ideologies, values, and way of life, and preventing all types of political, socioeconomic, and environmental dangers (Bauer, 2014). The issue of national security is what nations today consider a priority because no nation-state is free from security threats. For instance, countries in Europe, America, and the Middle East are battling terrorism and other forms of crimes and threats. Africa, although confronted with terrorism, is also battling with ethno-religious crises, electoral violence, kidnapping, cattle rustling, banditry, and insurgency, among others.

The return of democratic governance in Nigeria since 1999 has not yielded the expected yearnings of the people. It is expected that democracy brings a "democratic dividend" in the form of capital and human development, economic growth, peace and security. There are also expectations, such as Nigeria as the giant of Africa, that it would tower above all other African countries in global representation and vast technological developmental concerns. However, Nigeria faces existential threats to its democratic practice and the corporate existence of the state. The existence of anti-democratic elements (corruption, insurgency, violent religious extremism, intolerance etc.) in Nigeria's polity has placed enormous dangers on our collective survival and statehood. The practice of democracy in Nigeria by the political actors, whereby the rule of law is not adhered to, has affected Nigeria's national security and trust

in the leadership (Okoli & Ugwu, 2019). There have been increased ethno-religious and political conflicts, which result in the emergence of insurgency, ethnic militias, political assassination, kidnapping, banditry, acute unemployment, abject poverty, farmer-herder conflicts and poor infrastructural facilities, which have posed a serious threat to national security (Amadu, 2011).

These have given rise to communal conflicts, Boko Haram insurgency in the North-East, kidnapping and hostage-taking on our highways and farmer-herdsmen conflicts throughout the country (Oyebade, 2017). Nigeria is, arguably, undergoing serious security challenges. The widespread escalation of armed conflicts and criminal activity across the nation is the clearest indication of the nation's problems (Okoli & Ugwu, 2019). Contemporarily, the Northern part of the country constitutes one with the highest level of insecurity. For instance, the North-Western Geopolitical zone has been entangled in the rapid upsurge of rural banditry along its international frontiers and the forested interior. North-Western Nigeria comprises seven states: Sokoto, Jigawa, Katsina, Kaduna, Zamfara, and Kebbi. The kidnapping, banditry and cattle rustling epidemic has primarily affected five states: Katsina, Kaduna, Zamfara, Kebbi, and Sokoto (Shinkafi, 2020).

In Northwest Nigeria, particularly in Kaduna State and especially Birnin-Gwari and Kajuru Local Government Areas, criminal gangs engage in rural banditry by cattle rustling and livestock theft, resulting in the displacement of rural dwellers. The theft of animals forces the rural inhabitants into poverty, increases the price of livestock, causes instability in the geopolitical zone, and further exacerbates farmer/herder conflict dynamics. Banditry appears to be increasing by the day. The phenomenon is associated with government security inadequacies, negative identity and intergroup relations and the worsening political, social, environmental, and economic conditions of the people, among others (Adeniyi, 2020).

The problem of banditry in Kaduna State particularly in Birnin-Gwari and Kajuru Local Government Areas is exacerbated by unemployment, weak security system, poverty, the porosity of Nigeria's borders, arms proliferation, illegal mining activities, and the presence of large ungoverned spaces which serve as hideouts to the bandits and the proliferation of light and small weaponry, particularly in the African Sahel region, as a result of the failure to implement disarming programs adequately. Targeted groups frequently cross porous boundaries, obtaining new identities in the process. The environment surrounding the rural communities, combined with poor information exchange, a lack of social amenities such as adequate power supply, good roads, poverty, and poor health facilities, exacerbate the situation, transforming it into an ideal environment for rustling, banditry, smuggling, kidnapping and small arms trade. These situations also present opportunities for terrorist activity. In Birnin-Gwari and Kajuru Local Government Areas, large violent crises may have also been symptoms of the deteriorating human security situation and the breakdown of democratic administration. These fundamental human security concerns are exacerbated by democratic governance's failure to provide socioeconomic and livelihood security for groups and individuals in the studied area (Okoro, 2021).

In addressing the issue of banditry in Kaduna State, the Federal and Kaduna State Governments have spent a considerable amount of money on security to bring a semblance of order to banditry-prone areas. The government rely solidly on the Nigerian Military to combat banditry in the state. As a sign of commitment, the government developed a military operation called "Operation *Karamin Goro*" on 25th January 2018. The Nigerian Army Operation *Karamin Goro* is saddled with the responsibility of combatting the menace of banditry and cattle rustling (Okoro, 2021). In all of these measures put in place by the federal and state governments the desired result is far from been obtained, thus the necessity to reassess banditry and the security situation in Kaduna state.

Understanding Banditry

According to Egwu (2016), banditry began as a battle for resources and evolved into robberies, kidnappings, village attacks, and conflicts between farmers and herders over time. According to his research, rural banditry in

Nigeria and other West African countries results in the loss of thousands of lives and the damage of property valued at millions of dollars. According to Egwu, there are numerous aspects to banditry, such as the relationship between declining state capacity and human security, the strain that land grabbing, climate change, and environmental degradation place on land and water resources, the long-term failure of government policies regarding pasture reserves, and the lack of established cattle routes. Additionally, He emphasizes how the ethnic coloring of rural banditry shows that it not only poses a threat to national security and public safety, but also hinders any country's efforts to integrate, expand, and develop as a nation. The issue of identity disputes has been made worse by banditry, which has also planted the germ of hatred among those who have lived as brother-keepers in a peaceful and harmonious environment. The awareness of economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political security highlights the multifaceted nature of both national and human security. The wellbeing of individuals, broader growth issues, and the redistribution of income among the many social strata are only a few of the many central issues that are becoming increasingly important. The fundamental premise is that, even with the strongest Army or police force in the world, no country can be safe or experience economic growth and development if it does not address problems with unemployment, corruption, and governance. These problems can all threaten the rule of law and negatively impact the welfare of its citizens.

Both the amount of food produced and the availability of food for populations have drastically decreased. Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) data, according to Okoli and Addo (2018), indicate that over the previous ten years, agricultural productivity in bandit-prone areas of northern Nigeria was negatively impacted by banditry operations to the tune of $12 billion. The effects of banditry on the state of Kaduna are indescribable, but they also have severe bodily repercussions. These include a high rate of kidnapping, the spread of light and small arms, food insecurity, a decline in farming and livestock rearing, business activities that are erratic, a decline in social relationships, a decline in family ties and cultural values, a lack of wealth creation, increased migration and displacement, and environmental insecurity, among other things.

Theoretical Framework

Queer Ladder Theory (QLT)
A study of this nature is better understood with the help of a theory which serves as a guiding tool of analysis. Therefore, based on that, this study adopts the Queer Ladder Theory (QLT). Daniel Bell is credited with having influenced the queer ladder theory. According to Okoli & Agada (2014) Bell created the term "queer ladder" in an effort to "explain the instrumental nature of organized crime as a desperate means of economic empowerment" and social advancement. Since then, this theoretical viewpoint has given rise to a well-liked theoretical framework that is frequently employed in modern crime studies. These are some examples of the fundamental QLT assumptions:

i.   Organized crime is an instrumental activity; it serves a purpose.
ii.   It is a tool for social progress and/or socioeconomic advancement.
iii. It is a method of accumulating riches and gaining authority (Mallory, 2007; Okoli & Orinya, 2013).

This thesis is frequently associated with the assumption that organized crime thrives in environments where the government's ability to control, penalize, and discourage crime is limited; where public corruption is rampant; and when chances for legitimate economic alternatives are limited (Nwoye, 2000; Lyman & Potter, 2007; Okoli & Orinya, 2013). In these conditions, the temptation to commit a crime is considerable, while the deterrent to illegal behaviour is low. In other words, the advantages of crime outweigh the costs and hazards. It provides adequate justification and incentive for criminal impunity and franchise (Okoli & Orinya, 2013).

When applied to the analysis of this study, QLT allows one to come to grips with the existence of organized crime and various acts of criminality in Nigeria. In this light, it should be noted that criminal actions in Nigeria, such as

the phenomena of banditry, have been driven by a criminal goal for economic accumulation in an environment that more or less condones and facilitates crime (Okoli & Agada, 2014:137). It has been exacerbated by the country's current socioeconomic malaise and attendant livelihood crises. The apparent inaction of essential government entities in ensuring effective criminal punishment in Nigeria has compounded and exacerbated the matter. The unavoidable result of this is the predominance of criminal impunity (Okoli & Orinya, 2013).

In QLT, the term "ladder" refers to an unfavourable pattern of social mobility. Those that engage in organized crime, such as abduction, burglary, theft, and so on, do so as a desperate method of social advancement (mobility). Focusing on banditry in Kaduna State, the theory says that the pursuit of particular goals in society most often leads to the creation of various criminal activities. This notion fits into this study based on this premise.

Causes, Nature and Pattern of Banditry in Kaduna State

According to Sanusi (2013), insecurity brought on by bandits and rebels is said to originate from nearby states like Jos, Katsina, Abuja, and so on has generated significant anxiety in some areas of Kaduna State. The ease with which these foreign rebel groups enter and exit Kaduna territory has been linked to the prevalence of armed banditry in rural and urban regions.

These bandits rob with relative ease due to the porous borders surrounding Kaduna State. Jalo (2014) observed that trans-border banditry is a security problem in Birnin-Gwari and Jere areas because of the international cattle market in those places. The suspected bandits normally attack their victims from their base in the thickly forested strip. Even though the border towns share commonalities in terms of culture, religion, and even language, activities in and around border communities appear to have given birth to security dangers of alarming dimensions. These cross-border communities with shared cultures gather for the same funerals, naming and wedding rituals, marketplaces, and farming activities. Despite this, the internal conflicts some of Nigeria's neighbours have been going through have worsened armed banditry in border areas (Jalo,

2014).

So, it may be claimed that socioeconomic underdevelopment in these places, defined by a lack of infrastructure, an absence of enterprises that can produce jobs, and a shortage of favourable conditions for commerce, could serve as a prerequisite for frightening incidences of banditry. An environment for the predominance of armed violence, especially armed banditry, appears to be created by difficulties with weak governance and institutional capacity to take proactive or reactive actions. These offenders are frequently found to have weapons from previous conflicts. Kaduna State may possess these qualities. The political conflict that broke out in Chad (and later in Niger) in the preceding decade was the immediate cause of the armed incursion into Kaduna State. Rebels used the island in Lake Chad at this time as their base to wage guerrilla attacks against Chadian Government forces. Similarly, these rebels periodically crossed into Nigeria to assault border towns and plunder goods like cattle to carry out their uprising against their native authority (Bobbo, 2011).

Dambazau (2009) contends that there isn't just one isolated factor that leads to criminal activity. Many factors will play a big role in the explanation of crime. In addition to other elements that may be distinctive or exclusive to the individual offenders, it is frequently the case that the environment also plays a significant impact. The definition of their international boundaries as a symbol denoting the limit of their legal, political, or administrative authority has been largely acknowledged and applied by many governments through diverse measures. However, Hinjari (2013) notes that the necessity of daily life contradicts the exclusive nature of nation-state boundaries. Consequently, border communities' social, political and economic relations have remained intact despite the official government's attitude towards these international boundaries.

According to Asiwaju (2013), there has been an increase in violent crime in recent years, which the Nigerian Police have not been able to handle due to increased poverty, unemployment, and the dissolution of traditional social institutions. The study went on to say that the country's high crime rates and the spread of crime had been made worse by the

widespread availability of small guns. The spread of tiny and light weaponry, according to Chung (2011), is particularly important concerning banditry, livestock theft, poaching, and robberies along major roadways. In disputes between farmers and livestock breeders, firearms are also often employed.

The Birnin-Gwari Native Authority gazetted Kamuku Forest as Forest Reserve No. 2 in line with Section 36 of the Forest Act in 1936, transforming it into Kamuku National Park. The second schedule included the following: a) General right of way. b) The residents of Kamuku's sub-district have reserved rights, such as the right to fish, the right to access sources of clean water, the right to gather edible free fruits and seeds, the right to gather dead trees for fuel, and the right to forage and use grasses as thatch.

The Kokongo group has specific rights to occupy and farm a patch measuring around 0.8 square miles (i.e. according to the Forestry Ordinance No.129 of 1936 Northern Province of Nigeria). The Kamuku Forest Reserve was elevated to a Game Reserve in 1969. To reduce human influences and widen the reserve's perimeter, seven villages-Kalba, Shiri, Zage Zagi, Magajiya, Maikidi, Murai, and Matseri-were relocated out of the game reserve in 1987. (Ayagade, 2002). Nowadays, communities surround the park and are near the reserve line. Doka, Gwaska, Kakangi, Dagara, Kurigi, Gangamai, and Goron-Dutse are some of these villages. Most who live in these settlements are herders, hunters, fishermen, and subsistence farmers. Sadly, the establishment of Kamuku National Park did not address the concerns of the impacted support zone communities regarding bush meat (Bell & Morris, 2004).

In various areas of the state, armed banditry has also been common. Mburu (2009) noted in his study of the Horn of Africa that banditry had evolved from what he called an "innocent tribal pastime" into terrorism unleashed by seasoned former guerrilla fighters who were used to murdering and had no regard for the law of the land or any sign of formal authority. Even cross-border and inter-ethnic raids for cattle are part of these modern types of banditry. He said this occurred in the Kaduna state local government areas of Igabi, Kagarko, and a portion of Birnin-Gwari. Nonetheless, according to Crummey

(2009), banditry is a real African phenomenon deeply ingrained in rural areas, and those who live there are aware of it. Specific names in the local languages are known as bandits.

Due to flaws in national security institutions, disorganized state security agencies, weak cooperative efforts, and an inadequate legal and regulatory framework, most Nigerian states, including those that share international borders with Nigeria, struggle to respond to cross-border criminal activities. Although the problem of armed banditry in the border areas of Kaduna State has been a major source of national worry, Zamfara, Katsina, and Kaduna states are not the only ones to experience this issue. The complete disregard for the border settlements' socioeconomic progress is a typical trait of border administration. The lack of infrastructure frequently makes it impossible for border security officers to carry out their tasks. Communities around the border are so disadvantaged that they resemble "no man's land" (Sanusi, 2013).

According to Chung (2011), border villages in the adjacent States still live in conditions best characterized as inhumane and indecent communities from both the Southern and Northern sections of the state due to their relatively big size and dispersion. Their level of living and the overall economy is lower than that of the ordinary Nigerian living in cities and semi-urban regions, despite their critical position and significance. Poor roads, a lack of healthcare facilities, insufficient educational institutions, and even subpar industrial growth result from border areas' neglect of socioeconomic development. These border towns have also served as locations for creating negligently managed forest reserves, which today serve as cover and hideouts for cross-border thieves (Asiwaju, 2013).

Obstacles to the Government's Efforts to Suppress Banditry in Kaduna state
I. Porous Boundaries
The location of the northwest states, with a contagious and porous border with neighboring Niger Republic, renders the nation prone to terrorist infiltration from neighboring countries with a high incidence of terrorism, such as Mali. For example, between the international boundaries of Nigeria and Niger, there is about

1,497 km of geographical space that is poorly policed by the Nigerian Customs Service and Immigration Service (Ojewale, 2021). Furthermore, its closeness to the conflict-torn northeast exacerbates the situation.

ii. Uncharted Forests and a Lack of Institutional Mechanisms for Governance in Rural Regions

Banditry may flourish in wide tracts of scattered, unrestrained, and unpoliced wooded environments since there are no governing mechanisms to prevent criminal activity and these conditions already present. The majority of attacks and high-profile kidnappings involving significant numbers of individuals, according to the evidence, were launched from woods inside the settlements. Furthermore, because security authorities did not intercede, the majority of attacks were successful. a sign that there aren't any security personnel present in rural areas. Thus, the growth in banditry in the region is symptomatic of bad government structure in the Northwest.

iii. Illiteracy and poverty

Illiteracy and poverty are two prominent traits that give muscle to crime. The bulk of the local kids are poor and illiterate, making banditry the next great commercial prospect for them. Many jobless illiterate youngsters may be more susceptible to being recruited by criminal gangs as a result of population growth, bad governance, and high poverty rates, according to the evidence. The increase in the employment of political thugs in the area, which has opened the door for widespread exploitation of this vulnerable group in criminal activities, is closely related to this.

iv. Easy Availability of Small Arms and Light Weapons

Because of the open nature of the borders with nations like Chad, Niger and even the conflict zone in northeast Nigeria, evidence has revealed that smuggling of all types of illicit goods, including weaponry and ammunition, is simple in the northwest. For instance, it was revealed in 2018 that the majority of the weapons and ammunition trafficking in West Africa-70%-goes via Nigeria. 2018's Daily Trust. In other words, the region's banditry is made worse by the easy access to weapons and ammunition that the porous borders have a significant influence on.

v. Unlawful Mining Practices

The Zinc and gold mineral riches in the area, particularly in Katsina, Zamfara and Kaduna, continue to be a key draw for bandits in the states. Banditry in the state has been plagued by rivalry amongst illicit miners for access to these natural deposits. Research suggests that criminal gangs frequently manage minefields and operate with impunity because to the excessive favoritism they receive from the police as a result of collusion (Ojewale, 2021).

vi. Poor security architecture and overloaded security apparatus

Because it is indicative of a poor security architecture when internal security issues are allowed to grow to the size of the type of armed banditry we have in the northwest without being stopped in their tracks at the state level by the Nigerian Police, the State Security Services, and other paramilitary organizations like the NSCDC. Also, the military has been overworked as a result of its engagement in virtually all cases of insecurity across the nation, which has a negative impact on operations. In place of internal security difficulties that would normally be handled by the police, the DSS, and the NSCDC, the military is conducting more than 30 operations around the nation. These flaws have contributed to the Northwest's increasing insecurity.

The Role of the Military in Curbing Banditry in Kaduna State

The scale of the security difficulties that Nigeria has faced so far has demonstrated that the Nigerian Police and other paramilitary establishments cannot handle them, as is obvious from the significant costs that the Nigerian state has expended. It is a proven reality that underdeveloped and developing nations can face violent conflict that threatens internal security and destabilizes the entire country, as in the cases of Rwanda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Columbia, and many others. Hence, there is much to be desired regarding the requirement for military involvement in domestic security operations.

Yet, this decision to include the Military in Internal Security Operations (ISOPs) is not without its difficulties because, unlike Civil Security Agencies, the Military is not known for and not specifically trained for ISOPs (Maikomo & Ngomba, 2018:12). Nonetheless, the Nigerian Military's participation in domestic security operations is nothing new. The Nigerian Military has consistently participated in domestic and foreign security operations, even before independence, according to (Peterside, 2014:130).

Due to the persistence of cattle rustling and armed banditry, by 2015, some governors of northern states also started showing interest in the anti-rustling fight. Between July and October 2015, After, two meetings they decided to pool their funds to pay for a combined operation combining the police and the Military. Others include the Department of State Service (DSS) and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), to search the woodlands in the affected states that are thought to be hideouts for livestock thieves (Binniyat, 2016). The accord, however, led to more discussion than actual action. Nevertheless, the proposal was successfully implemented when the Niger State government set up its joint patrol, Operation Sharan Daji. The operation, which involved the Nigerian Army, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), the NSCDC, and neighbourhood vigilante organizations, was conducted by aggressively confronting the forest rustlers. In the first week after it was established, rustlers had been apprehended with 118 cows and 23 sheep. The Kaduna State administration implemented the same combined patrol operation strategy in late 2015 (Binniyat, 2016).

To strengthen the capacity of security personnel in crime prevention and control of the affected areas, the Federal Government approved the establishment of a new Battalion of the Nigerian Army and a new Police Area Command in Birnin-Gwari LGA of Kaduna State as part of measures to scale up security response to armed banditry in that state (WANEP, 2018:2).

Operational codenames including "Operations Puff Adder," "DiranMikiya," "SharanDaji," "HadarinDaji," "Thunder Strike," and "Exercise Harbin Kunama III" were used by the Federal Government to send police and military operations to the problematic States. Yet, the security reaction had primarily produced a range of outcomes. While hundreds of bandits have been killed or imprisoned and security forces have demolished many hideouts, bandit-related homicides and abductions have persisted in states including Zamfara, Katsina, and Niger State (WANEP, 2020:9).

Yet, the Nigerian Military has significantly contributed to reducing the threat posed by armed banditry. For instance, following the overthrow of Ghadaffi's rule in Libya, Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) gradually migrated into Nigeria from the Sahel (Best, 2018). Terrorists, militants, and bandits ultimately get these armaments and weaponry and use them to terrify people and communities. On the Funtua-Gusau road in September 2018, military soldiers and DSS agents conducted coordinated operations to apprehend two suspected illegal gun dealers who were en route to hand over 1,479 rounds of 7.62mm (special) ammunition to armed bandits (Adeniyi, 2018).

In addition, as part of its strategy to combat armed banditry, the Nigerian Army outlawed the use of motorbikes in the hinterlands and woods of Katsina, Zamfara, Kaduna, Sokoto, Kano, Kebbi and Niger States in May 2019. (WANEP, 2020:10). According to WANEP (2020:11), the perseverance of armed bandit groups operating in affected states in the face of the dominant military approach to quell the bandits' violent activities necessitates a multi-pronged approach that includes dialogue, coordinated community policing, and a civil-military support structure as critical tools to mitigate the threats. The integrated approach provides a chance for conflict reduction, settlement, and long-term discussions about establishing peace and security in the United States and throughout the country.

In Northwest Nigeria, particularly in Kaduna State and especially in Birnin-Gwari Local Government Area, criminal gangs are engaged in rural banditry by stealing cattle and livestock, leading to the displacement of rural dwellers. The theft of animals forces the rural inhabitants to migrate southward, causing environmental degradation, population growth, an increase in the price of cattle, regional instability influence and exacerbating

farmers/herders conflict dynamics (Gadzama, Saddiq, Oduehie, & Dariya, 2018:42).

To stop the recurrent armed bandits in the State, the Kaduna State Government has increased security measures in collaboration with Security Services. These initiatives include joint security patrols and raids, aerial surveillance of neighbouring states Katsina, Zamfara, and Niger's forests that serve as bandit hideouts, and the Nigeria Police Force's disarmament program, which encourages criminals to give up their weapons and commit acts of lawlessness. The frequency of recent attacks and kidnappings in the area shows that the armed groups' capacity to resist and extend their activities is still present, even though these security measures did have some success in decimating and diminishing their capabilities. The affected communities believe that Nigeria's state intelligence system and security agencies are not appropriately responding to their security concerns due to the rise in assaults and kidnappings. Consequently, in a recent joint press release on the rise in security issues in the region, the communities urged the Kaduna State Government to establish strong community policing in Birnin-Gwari as well as to acknowledge and support the self-defence group (*"Yan Sa Kai"*) to increase the security of the LGA (WANEP, 2018:2).

Conclusion

The major causes of armed banditry in the study area are multifaceted and include, among others, poverty, unemployment, and lack of opportunities for young people. The attacks by bandits have displaced many people from their homes, caused the death of many, deprived a large number of their source of livelihood and led to the refugee crisis. The outstanding socioeconomic impact of armed banditry is disruption of economic activities, fall in business activities due to fear of insecurity by travellers and service providers, and the psychological trauma suffered by residents, victims and relatives of victims of armed banditry. However, an effort has been put in place by individuals, community and government law enforcement agencies towards controlling and preventing armed banditry. The relationship between banditry and national security is very high. The activities of bandits have hurt the economy of the LGA badly. It has resulted in the disruption of social and economic activities in the affected LGA. The government should create job opportunities, improve education, develop the agricultural sector, provide access to basic amenities, and promote entrepreneurship. These measures will improve people's living standards, reduce their vulnerability to banditry, and promote peace and security in these areas.

Recommendations

Given the nature, dimension and intensity of insecurity in Kaduna state, particularly in Birnin-Gwari and Kajuru LGA's, government at all levels should intensify effort to arrest and address the situation so as there can be the desired economic and scientific development in Kaduna state. This can be achieved if the following recommendations are adhered to:

i. The government should address the issues of neglect of the border communities and create more effective institutional coordination among specialized institutions, given the multi-dimensional nature of state interest in border security;

ii. Government should address the issues of unemployment and lack of opportunities for young people with a view to improving the residents' socioeconomic conditions and reducing the tendency to turn to crime as an alternative to survival;

iii. There is a need to enhance intelligence gathering by security agencies to identify the bandits' hideouts, plans, and movements. It will enable security operatives to take proactive measures to prevent attacks before they occur;

iv. The government should increase public awareness campaigns to educate people on identifying and reporting suspicious activities to security agencies;

v. Efforts must be made to control the flow, illegal trafficking, circulation and use of small and light weapons.

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