
**EFFECTS OF RURAL BANDITRY ON HUMAN SECURITY: IMPLICATIONS ON
STABILITY OF KONTAGORA LOCAL GOVERNMENT NIGERIA FROM 2015 -
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UMAR ABDULRASHEED BALA¹

Phone number: +2348067790794

Email: aubala1993@gmail.com

Department of Political Science,
Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai,
Niger State

ALIYU TANKO AHMED, PhD

Email:atahmed2003@yahoo.com

Phone number: +2348037006930 & +2348039782201

Department of Political Science,
Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai,
Niger State

YERIMA EMMANUEL GYONG² (PhD in view)

Email:econometricsspssas@gmail.com

Phone number: +2348027245945

²Department of Economics and Development Studies,
Federal University Dutsin Ma, Nigeria

Abstract

Insecurity is a global and recurring phenomenon that threatens the well-being of its citizens. The multipronged occurrence constitutes a bane to development and leads to the proliferation of crime. This paper examined the effects of rural banditry on human security in Kontagora local government in Niger State. Primary data was sourced for this study. The theoretical framework used is the routine theory activity, which shows the relationship among routine activity where crime is likely to occur when three essential elements of crime convergence in space and time. The paper is descriptive in analysis. The findings revealed that rural armed banditry causes distress and inadequate peace of mind in the community and unpleasant displacement. It was found that bandits destroyed land and properties worth millions of Naira in the community. It was also discovered that rural armed banditry causes the increase of high cost of living in their community. The paper concludes that there is significant relationship between rural banditry and human security in Kontagora local government area of Niger State. Therefore the paper recommends that introducing safety measure nets by integrating and interacting with people involved in rural banditry back to the society. This can be done through deliberate policy reforms of integrating the bandits into the society. This policy can be done through engagements by use of strategic skills, entrepreneurship education and training which can serve as a measure for stable environment. This can lead to social interaction,

productivity and livelihood activities.

Key Words: Armed banditry, human Security, stability

Introduction

Insecurity is a global and recurring phenomenon that threatens the well-being of its citizens. The multipronged occurrence constitutes a bane to development and leads to the proliferation of crime. As a multifaceted quandary, insecurity assumes varying dimensions in different geopolitical zones. Africa regions and particularly Nigeria is plagued by a surge in cybercrime, armed robbery, kidnapping, domestic crime, extrajudicial killings, herder-farmer conflicts, ritual killings, and banditry. In Nigeria, the South East is a haven for ritual killings, commercial crime, secessionist agitation, kidnapping, herder-farmer clashes, attacks by unknown gunmen, and banditry. In the same vein, the South remains threatened by militancy, kidnapping, and environmental agitation. The North East has been subject to a humanitarian crisis lasting over a decade and caused by the Boko Haram insurgency and the Islamic State in West Africa Province. Meanwhile, the North West is enmeshed in illegal mining, ethno-religious killings, and banditry. It is, therefore, an axiom that insecurity in Nigeria has assumed a disproportionate geopolitical stance and that it has claimed thousands of lives and extensive damage and loss of property.

Rural banditry is a major challenge that can affect human security and stability in Kontagora local government if adequate measures are not put place. Therefore there is need to ensure security of humans in a community to improve productivity, livelihood and social activities to guarantee stability. The challenge of rural banditry in Nigeria is increasing to the extent that it affects the daily activities, which prevents a stable environment from engaging in productive activities. This has reduced the potentials of the community and productive output capacity of the community especially the farmers. Although in Africa there is the prevalence of rural armed banditry, which is a major security challenge. The severity of banditry in West Africa especially in Nigeria has contributed to the increase in human insecurity.

The rural banditry is in act of robbery and violence on the people particularly rural dwellers who mainly engage in agricultural production, processing and marketing. The activities of rural bandits have led to shocks such as displacement of people and communities. This shock can further aggravate the challenges faced by these communities if not adequately curtailed. Thus in West Africa, the prevalence and severity of banditry has contributed to the rising increase in regional insecurity with a potential threat to regional integration of the sub-region (Abdulahi, 2019). However, the Kontogara community is disturbed with issues of banditry, and these banditry activities have been increasing with seasonal farming activities. But the activities of rural armed bandits have put some farming activities of some communities on hold while others decrease. Banditry didn't only disturbed farming activities in rural communities of Kontagora local government, but also affected financial activities of

the city.

According to UNDP (1994), human security consist of how human lives will be protected which mainly includes personal security, community security, political security, food security, health security, educational security, and environmental security. Niger State is one of the States that is known for rural banditry. Most of the human activity, livelihood and production activities have been affected by this challenge. The objective of this paper is to analyze the effect of rural banditry on food security in Kontagora local government in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Conceptual Clarification

The term rural banditry refers to criminal acts associated with armed robbery and violent crime in remote areas especially rural dwellers. Banditry involves the use of threat or force to intimidate targets, with intent to kill or rob the victims and deprive them from their belongings. Okpaleke (2014) in his attempt to define rural armed banditry maintains that banditry has to do with armed violence perpetrated by criminal opportunists and syndicates along the country's border lines and rural interiors. Abdullahi (2019) defined rural banditry as a resource-based conflict, in the form of farmers/herders conflict, village raids, rape, and kidnapping.

Banditry: Banditry refers to a situation of criminal act that is associated with acts of armed robbery, theft/stealing, the use of force or threat and violent crime by intimidating targeted victims and to kill targeted victims. Banditry involves the use of threat or force by predators to intimidate victims that are attacked who are their pre, with intent to steal, kill and destroy the victims. Banditry is defined as using arms (or any instrument of coercion/violence) to deprive people of their material possessions (Okoli & Ugwu, 2019)

Human Security: human security has two main aspects this include, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression and secondly protection from sudden and hurtful disruption in the patterns of daily life.

Empirical Review

The study of Faruk and Abdullahi (2022) investigated the impact of armed banditry and kidnapping on socio-economic activities in six local governments of Katsina State, Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design and administered structured questionnaires to 430 respondents drawn from various communities across the selected local governments. The data collected were analyzed using tables and percentages. It was found that armed banditry has significant negative consequences on poverty, unemployment, food security, education, health, income, and the general standard of living of the people living in the state. Furthermore, the study found that armed banditry affects other socio-economic activities in the region. Based on these findings, the study recommends the establishment of tight border security patrols to

prevent the proliferation of illegal arms and ammunition and proactive measures from security agencies to secure the life and properties of the residence.

Although the study Rosenje et al. (2022) investigated the role of armed banditry in the collapse of education in Nigeria's Northwest. They used descriptive survey research design, the researchers administered questionnaires to a sample size of 250 respondents derived from a population of 3,458,854 in the prone areas of Kaduna, Katsina, and Zamfara. They found that before the onset of armed banditry in the region, the teaching and learning environment had been conducive, with thriving learning activities, unwavering student enrollment, and encouraging academic performances, leading to a flourishing education sector. However, the study revealed that the presence of armed banditry, border porosity, arms proliferation, illegal migration, and the existence of ungoverned spaces had a significant and positive relationship with the collapse of education in Nigeria's Northwest. But the study of Brigid et al. (2022) conducted a study on the impact of banditry crisis in Nigeria, which has resulted in the emergence of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the creation of Internally Displaced Persons Camps (IDPCs). Using a political economy approach, the study revealed that bandits attack as a result of poverty, unemployment, the proliferation of arms, and the desire to belong to society. The crisis has led to loss of lives and properties, undermined security, peace, and development, and made women vulnerable to many societal ills.

Abdussalam et al. (2022) examined the impact of banditry on rural development in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The study found that banditry poses a significant challenge to the security and development of local communities in Kaduna State, leading to frequent attacks, kidnapping, carnage, and destruction of lives and properties. The study employed a mixed-method approach, sourcing primary data from questionnaires and secondary data from journal publications, periodic reports, and newspapers. The study revealed that the suspension of weekly markets and attacks on farmers significantly impacted the rural economy, and there is a need for better security for farmers and local communities. Additionally, the study identified factors responsible for the rise of banditry in Kaduna State, including massive unemployment, weak security, poverty, and the porousness of the country's borders. The study recommends that the ongoing banditry and kidnapping activities in Kaduna State must be tackled urgently, and holistic measures should be implemented to provide basic social amenities and create job opportunities for the populace.

Similarly, Faruk and Abdullahi (2022) conducted a study to investigate the impact of armed banditry and kidnapping on the nutrition status of under-five children in Katsina State, Nigeria. The study utilized cluster sampling to select six of the worst affected local governments from two senatorial districts in Katsina State. The findings revealed that armed banditry and kidnapping have had negative impacts on the

food security of the study areas, leading to malnutrition among under-five children. The study also found that other factors contributing to the death of under-five children in the state include inadequate health care centers, low staffing in rural areas, low income, unsafe drinking water, and poor eating habits. The study recommended that the government should equip security agencies with modern arms and weapons to combat the menace of armed banditry and kidnapping, and also provide farming inputs to revive agricultural production in the region.

The study of Ibrahim, Ozdeser and Cavusoglu (2021) investigated “Rural Migration and Relative Deprivation in Agricultural and Pastoral Communities Under the Threat of Cattle Rustling in Nigeria. The study surveyed 1,750 agricultural and pastoral families to have adequate information about the activities of both the farmers and the pastoralist. The study used linear regression to achieve its objectives and they discovered that the loss of lives, income diversity, cattle rustle, literacy and the size of herd are the most contributing factor to migration pattern. The study findings shows that relative deprivation is a major push factor though migration in response to cattle rustling and deprivation may not would not decrease inequality due to weaknesses in social capital amongst the parties.

Theoretical Framework

Underpinning Theory

The study adopts Routine Activity Theory to examine the effects of rural banditry on human stability. The Routine Activity Theory is a sub-field of crime opportunity theory that focuses on situations of crimes. In routine activity theory, crime is likely to occur when three essential elements of crime converge in space and time, these are a motivated offender, an attractive target, and the absence of capable guardianship. The analytic focus of routine activity theory takes a macro-level view and emphasizes broad-scale shifts in the patterns of victim and offender behaviour. It focuses on specific crime events and offender behaviour/decisions. Routine activity theory is based on the assumption that crime can be committed by anyone who has the opportunity. The theory also states that victims are given choices on whether to be victims mainly by not placing themselves in situations where a crime can be committed against them.

The theoretical framework for this study is the Routine Activity Theory in which this paper is anchored on. The theory was first proposed by Marcus Felson and Lawrence E. Cohen in their explanation of crime rate changes in the United States between 1947 and 1974. The theoretical framework shows the relationship among routine activity where crime is likely to occur when three essential elements of crime converge in space and time. These are a motivated offender, an attractive target, and the absence of capable guardianship.

The Routine Activity Theory is a sub-field of crime opportunity theory that focuses on situations of crimes. Thus, the paper focuses on the absence of capable guardianship.

In this regard, the theoretical framework places emphasis on Absence of a Suitable Guardian. Guardianship can be a person or an object that is effective in deterring offense to occur and sometimes crime is stopped by simple presence of guardianship in space and time. This paper concentrates on this theory because it is assumed that adopting this theory to rural banditry in Kontagora, Niger State is relevant because the presence of motivated potential offender in an agriculturally and herding-based communities which are under-policed are likely targets for bandit activities.

Methodology

A descriptive and inferential methodology for this study was used because they give significant tools for categorical analysis on the hypothesis of the responses on the challenges of rural banditry on human security vis a vis on its implication of Kontagora local government. The target population of this research comprise of people or the respondents leaving in the study area for not less than ten years. The sample size was statistical determined using Taro Yanmane formula for a finite population. Chi-square test statistic was used to bring out the challenges of rural banditry on human security on Kontogora local government. The level of significance used in the test was 5% in the analysis no response and indifference were taken as indifference, while No and Yes were retained as a decision rule. As a decision rule in the chi-square test, accept the null hypothesis if the calculated chi-square is less than the table vale, while if the calculated value is greater than the tabulated value, the research hypothesis was not supported by the research finding and thereby refuted.

To strengthen the analysis, high point for some valid views and opinions of respondents interviews was discussed as they relate to the objectives of the study were appropriately cited. The analysis is interwoven with findings from the result of in-depth interview and quantitative survey. Based on 2006 population census, Kontagora local government has a population size of 151,968. Based on Nigeria's Population Bureau of statistic projection model of 2.9 % growth rate in Nigeria, the population of Kontagora was projected to be 213,667 in 2021. The population of the study consists of men, women as well as farmers and traders of the area under study.

The study adopted Taro Yamene's formula for arriving at sample size: the method is depicted as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where: n= Sample size, N= Population size, c= Level of significance (5%)

To find N, it is the sum total of (213,667) population of Kontagora LGA

N= 213, 667

Therefore, N= 213.667

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{213,667}{1 + 213,667(0.0025)}$$

$$n = 399$$

Sampling Technique

Both Simple random and purposive sampling techniques was used. The reason is for the simple random, a sub-set of individuals (a sample) chosen from a larger set (population) in the community was taken. Each individual is chosen at any stage during the sampling technique process. And so the people in the community were given equal chance of being selected to contribute to this research. The purposive sample, also commonly known as Judgmental sample. This is because the community affected by banditry is known and so the target population is the community who can contribute because they are being affected directly and can give their response because they are knowledgeable of the issue. Therefore they are selected based on the knowledge of a population and the purpose of the study.

Results and Discussion of Findings

This section evaluated the threats of rural armed banditry on human security in Kontagora local government area of Niger State. In addition, the test for hypothesis was conducted to see if there is no significant relationship between armed banditry and human insecurity in Kontagora local government area.

4.2 How Rural Armed Banditry Causes Distress and Inadequate Peace of Mind in my Community

Table 4.2: Response Rate on Rural armed banditry causes distress and inadequate peace of mind in my community

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	1	.3
Disagree	2	.7
Neutral	15	4.9
Agree	46	15.0
Strongly Agree	242	79.1
Total	306	100.0

Sources: Field Survey (2023)

The result in table 4.2 has to do with how rural banditry causes distress and inadequate peace in the respondents' community. The response rate revealed that 0.3% strongly disagree that rural armed banditry causes distress and inadequate peace of mind in their community, 0.7 disagree, 4.9% are neutral, 15% and 79.1% agree and strongly agree that rural armed banditry causes distress and inadequate peace of mind in their community. Therefore based on the findings, we conclude that majority (94.1%) of the respondents agreed and opined that that rural armed banditry causes distress and inadequate peace of mind in their community. This is in agreement with the findings of Umaru (2020) who conducted a study on threats of rural banditry on human and food security, in Niger State, Nigeria and Abdullahi (2019) who conducted a study on Rural Banditry, Regional Security and Integration in

West Africa by questioning the threat banditry has on the integration of the west Africa as a result of the regional activities of bandits.

Bandits Destroyed Land and Properties worth millions of naira in my Community

Table 4.3: Response Rate on How Bandits Destroyed Land and Properties worth millions of naira in my community

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	11	3.6
Disagree	21	6.9
Neutral	28	9.2
Agree	37	12.1
Strongly Agree	209	68.3
Total	306	100.0

Sources: Field Survey (2023)

Table 4.3 reveals the response rate of how bandits destroyed land and properties worth millions of Naira in their community of the respondents. The findings revealed that 3.6% are of the view and strongly disagreed that bandits destroyed land and properties worth millions of Naira in their community, 6.9% disagreed, and 9.2% were neutral. In addition, findings showed that 12.1% and 68.3% agreed and strongly agreed that bandits destroyed land and properties worth millions of Naira in their community. Therefore from the results we conclude that 80.4% agreed that bandits destroyed land and properties worth millions of Naira in the community. The findings is in agreement with study of Abdulsalam et al. (2022) that the rise of banditry in Kaduna State, including massive unemployment, weak security, poverty, and the porousness of the country's borders.

People are Displaced whenever Bandits Attack my Community

Table 4.4: Respondents Rate of Response on How People are Displaced whenever Bandits Attack my Community

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	2	.7
Disagree	8	2.6
Neutral	41	13.4
Agree	44	14.4
Strongly Agree	211	68.9
Total	306	100.0

Sources: Field Survey (2023)

The result in table 4.4 reveals the response and opinion on the displacement of people whenever bandits attack their community. The findings shows that 0.7% indicated that people are displaced whenever there is an attack by bandits in their community, 2.6% disagreed, and 13.4% were neutral. But on the contrary, 14.4% agreed and 68.9% also strongly agreed that whenever bandits attack their community, people are displaced. Therefore we conclude that majority (83.3%) agreed that people are displaced whenever bandits attack their community. This in line with the study of Brigid et al. (2022) on the impact of banditry crisis leading to emergence on internally displaced persons and the creation of internally displaced person's camp.

The Schools are closed whenever there is a case of bandits attack

Table 4.5: Response Rate on How Schools are Closed whenever there is a case of Bandits Attack

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	6	2.0
Disagree	13	4.2
Neutral	43	14.1
Agree	58	19.0
Strongly Agree	186	60.8
Total	306	100.0

Sources: Field Survey (2023)

The result in table 4.5 reveals the response on how schools are closed whenever there is a case of bandits attack. The findings from the result show that 2% of the respondents strongly disagreed that schools are closed whenever there is a case of bandits, 4.2% disagreed, while 14.1% are neutral. But the findings indicated that 19% agreed and 60.8% strongly agreed that schools are closed whenever there is a case of bandits attack. Therefore since majority (79.8%) of the respondents agreed by giving their opinion, we conclude that schools are closed whenever there is a case of bandits attack.

Rural Armed Banditry causes the Increase of High Cost of living in my community

Table 4.6: Response Rate on How Rural Armed banditry causes the increase of High Cost of living in my community

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	5	1.6
Disagree	18	5.9
Neutral	16	5.2
Agree	56	18.3
Strongly Agree	211	69.0
Total	306	100.0

Sources: Field Survey (2023)

The response rate of respondents in table 4.6 indicate that 1.6% strongly disagreed that rural armed banditry causes the increase of high cost of living in their community, 5.9% disagreed, 5.2% remained neutral, 18.3% agreed and 69% are strongly agreed. Therefore since majority (87.3%) agreed, we conclude and affirm that rural armed banditry causes the increase of high cost of living in their community

4.7 Test of Hypothesis

H_0 : There is no significant relationship between rural armed banditry and human security in Kontagora local government area

Table 4.7: Hypothesis

		Rural Armed Banditry has Negatively Reduce our Agricultural Activity					Total
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	
How Rural Armed Banditry Causes Distress and Inadequate Peace of Mind in my Community	Strongly disagree	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Disagree	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Neutral	6	9	0	0	0	15
	Agree	0	7	18	21	0	46
	Strongly agree	0	0	0	42	200	242
	Total	9	16	18	63	200	306

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	455.849 ^a	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	292.532	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	238.623	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	306		

a. 17 cells (68.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .03.

Decision Rule

Accept H_0 if $X^2_c < X^2_t$

Reject H_0 if $X^2_c > X^2_t$

$X^2_c = 455.849$

$\alpha = 0.05$; since it is a two tail test we divide α by $2(\alpha/2) = 0.025$.

$$df = 16$$

$$X^2_1 = 28.8$$

Table 4.7 reveals the cross tabulation and chi-square test. The result shows that X^2_c (455.84) is greater than X^2_1 (28.8), therefore we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant relationship between rural armed banditry and human insecurity in Kontagora local government area of Niger State. The findings is similar to Okoli and Okpaleke (2014) banditry is a crime which is both the cause and effect of insecurity." It also discovered that the frequency of crime (armed robbery) in Nigeria poses a serious risk to public safety and sustainability of the country's national security. In addition the findings is in line with the routine activity theory, which focuses on situations of crimes. In routine activity theory, crime is likely to occur when three essential elements of crime converge in space and time, a motivated offender, an attractive target, and the absence of capable guardianship. The theory emphasizes that the absence of capable guardianship of communities can be possible targets for bandit activities because they are under Policed.

Discussion of major findings

This analyzed the results on the challenges of rural banditry on human security. It went further to ascertain the threats of banditry on human security in the Kontagora local government area. Therefore based on the findings, it was found that majority (94.1%) of the respondents agreed and opined that that rural armed banditry causes distress and inadequate peace of mind in their community. Therefore from the results we conclude that 80.4% agreed that bandits destroyed land and properties worth millions of Naira in the community.

Furthermore it was also observed that 83.3% agreed that people are displaced whenever bandits attack their community. This in line with the study of Brigid et al. (2022) on the impact of banditry crisis leading to emergence on internally displaced persons and the creation of internally displaced person's camp. In addition to this, the results found that 79.8% of the respondents agreed by giving their opinion, that schools are closed whenever there is a case of bandits attack. Also the findings concluded that 87.3% agreed, we conclude and affirm that rural armed banditry causes the increase of high cost of living in their community.

Lastly in the test of hypothesis, the chi-square test shows that there is significant relationship between rural armed banditry and human insecurity in Kontagora local government area of Niger State. The findings is similar to Okoli and Okpaleke (2014) banditry is a crime which is both the cause and effect of insecurity." It also discovered that the frequency of crime (armed robbery) in Nigeria poses a serious risk to public

safety and sustainability of the country's national security.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The challenge of rural armed banditry has hindered and prevented human security in Kontagora local government area of Niger State. It was established that there is significant relationship between rural armed banditry and human insecurity in Kontagora local government area of Niger State. Although majority opined that rural armed banditry affected the livelihood and productive activity of community members leading to insecurity, low income and displacement. In addition to this, it was found that people were displaced whenever bandits attack their community, bandits destroyed land and properties worth millions of Naira in the community and it was revealed that rural rural armed banditry causes distress and inadequate peace of mind in their community.

In order to mitigate the challenge of rural banditry on human security and ensure productivity in the study area, the following suggestions and policy recommendations are made: There is need for combined efforts with government, community leaders and the community to introduce the policies that can safeguard people. Safety can lead to stability of the community. This can be done by introducing safety measure nets by integrating and interacting with people involved in rural banditry back to the society. This can be done through deliberate policy reforms of integrating the bandits into the society. This policy can lead to engagements through the use of strategic skills, entrepreneurship education and training that can serve as a measure for stable environment. This can lead to social interaction, productivity and livelihood activities.

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