

Interrogating Economic and Political Strategies Towards Combating Rural Banditry in Nigeria: A
Focus on Kontagora Local Government, Nigeria

By

UMAR ABDULRASHEED BALA¹
Phone number: +2348067790794
Email: aubala1993@gmail.com
Department of Political Science,
Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai,
Niger State

And

ALIYU TANKO AHMED, PhD
Email: atahmed2003@yahoo.com
Phone number: +2348037006930 & +2348039782201
Department of Political Science,
Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai,
Niger State

ABSTRACT

This paper examined the interrogation of economic and political strategies towards combating rural banditry in Nigeria focusing on Kontagora local government in Niger State. The paper used Primary data. The analytical techniques employed was descriptive statistics and content analysis. The study was anchored on the hearts and minds (HAM) theory activity, which emphasizes that Government first priority is to ensure the protection of its citizens and ensure stability in the polity so as to counter insurgency. The study found that government did not compensate rural dwellers after bandits attack to cover their loss. It was also established that there should also be the need to have local vigilantes in every community in the study area. On the other hand, the findings revealed that the government should also compensate the local vigilantes that lost their lives in the fight against rural armed banditry. This also includes the need to provide incentives to vigilantes as compensation for those who lost their lives in the fight against rural banditry. The findings also revealed that that there is need for Government to provide Police outpost in every community and create a joint task force with both local Vigilantes, Police, Military as well as food security personnel in order to protect food productions. Therefore, the study recommended that the State Government should introduce all inclusive participation as a political strategy. This is a form of political strategy can ensure smooth interaction between a government and the citizens of Kontagora local government area. That can give Governments the advantage of techniques to coerce certain actions, thereby gaining relative advantage to win the fight against rural banditry.

Key Words: Rural banditry, Banditry, Insecurity, Economic strategy, Political strategy, Military strategy

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The application of economic and political strategies towards combating rural banditry can lead to positive outcome to reduce the challenge of rural banditry in Kontagora Local Government, Nigeria. And so a combination of different strategies can ensure safety of lives and property in Kontagora Local Government, Nigeria. This Strategies are extensive efforts that involves the application of economic principles and analysis to provide solutions by using evidence aimed at addressing specific challenges to enhancing performance.

In addition to having political will compel bandits who are antagonizing government efforts to do the will of government. Hence, the political will involves calculated interaction between a government and targeted criminals who are the bandits.

The combination of these strategies can ensure the safety of lives and property, increase the means of livelihood and adequate food crop production. In Kontagora local government area of Niger State. The challenge of rural banditry in Nigeria is increasing to the extent that it affects the daily activities of communities preventing people from engaging in crop production. This has reduced the output of the community especially the farmers. Although in Africa there is the prevalence of rural banditry, which is a major security challenge. The severity of rural banditry in West Africa especially in Nigeria has contributed to the increase in insecurity.

The rural banditry which is an act of robbery and violence on the people particularly rural dwellers who mainly engage in agricultural production, processing and marketing have led to shocks. This shocks can lead to the displacement of farming communities, which constitutes a threat to existence of communities, hunger, rise in food shortage, low nutrition, low productivity and low income. This shocks can further aggravate the challenges faced by these community if not adequately curtailed. According to Abdulahi (2019) he posited that 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.

Furthermore it has been observed that Kontagora Local Government area is known for its political violence in the past years but not with issues relating to rural banditry. It is a local government that accommodates people of different religion, background, occupation, tribe and ideology. However, the local government is disturbed with issues of banditry, and this banditry activities have been increasing. Even though, the local government was noticed for its 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.

And so, the presence of rural banditry can lead to insecurity thereby affecting the certainty of food availability. The absence of this certainty of available food and nutritional needs of inhabitants of Kontagora local government can lead to food insecurity. Therefore, the use of economic and political strategies can serve as a tool to combat this challenge especially in the study area.

Niger State is one of the States that is known for rural banditry. Most of the agricultural farming systems, education, trading and businesses have been affected by this challenge. Therefore, this paper seeks to interrogate the economic and political strategies that can be used in combating rural banditry by focusing on Kontagora Local Government in Nigeria.

1.2 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.

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 prey, with intent to steal, kill and destroy the victims.

Economic Strategy: this refer to an extensive (and diversified scope) area of economic consulting, which involves the application of economic principles and analysis to provide solutions by using evidence that is based on insights aimed at addressing specific issues/problems and/or enhancing performance.

Political Strategy: this type of strategy in this scenario involves the use of political means to compel bandits who are antagonizing government (or opponents), to do one's will, based on hostile intent. The term political describes the calculated interaction between a government and target bandits, criminals, including another state's government, military, and/or general population. Governments use a variety of techniques to coerce certain actions, thereby gaining relative advantage over an opponent. The techniques include propaganda and psychological operations (PsyOps), which service national and military objectives respectively.

Military Strategy: this strategy is a form of tactics that encompasses the art of organizing and employing fighting forces on or near the battlefield. They involve the application of four battlefield functions which are closely related – kinetic or firepower, mobility, protection or security, and shock action. The firepower is crucial to fixing an enemy in place to allow a decisive strike. The use of machine guns are significantly for infantry firepower. Secondly mobility, which determines how quickly a fighting force can move. While protection or security refers to fortifications, which are been used to provide collective protection i.e the use of entrenchments, roadblocks, barbed wire and minefields. And lastly shock action which is a psychological function of tactics as a physical one, and can be significantly enhanced by the use of surprise. It has been provided by charging infantry, and as well as by chariots, war elephants, cavalry and armored vehicles which provide momentum to an assault.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Empirical Literature

The study of Akinyetun (2021), maintained that banditry is a serious crime that poses a security challenge to democratic governance and peaceful coexistence in Nigeria. Bandits often terrorize communities in the Northwest region. Their activities include kidnapping, arson, shooting, rape, cattle rustling, killing, and looting. Thus Ojo (2020) opined that the prevalence of under-governed spaces where the government's control is ineffective and limited is a major factor giving rise to banditry. These areas are characterized by bad governance, weak legitimacy, protracted conflict, and poor leadership, which make citizens vulnerable to exploitation by terrorist groups, traffickers, and other criminal elements. Such areas are not generally entirely devoid of the government's control but are governed poorly and differently from larger communities. And so Akinyetun (2021) opined that these poorly governed territories are plagued by bandits and other criminal gangs due to their remoteness, which allows for the perpetuation of an array of illegal business activities. It is not uncommon to find human trafficking, piracy, cattle rustling, and illegal mining in such areas. These are used to promote and sustain an illegal, informal economy. Examples of such include large forests in Rumah/Kukar Jangarai, Kamuku

The study of Abdullahi and Muktar (2022) on armed banditry as a security challenge was carried out in Northwestern Nigeria. The study adopted content analysis. Strain theory and Rational Choice theory were used to provide theoretical reference for the study. The study found that armed banditry has affected security and education in northwestern Nigeria, and the overall economy of the country. Despite efforts made by government and community to curtail the menace, armed banditry continue to become even more devastating.

Similarly 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 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.

Rosenje and Adeniyi (2021) examined the impact of banditry on Nigeria's security in The Fourth Republic: An Evaluation of Nigeria's Northwest. The study used of secondary data source and employed descriptive method of research as it adopted Queer Ladder Theory (QLT), and the Frustration Aggression Theory to underpinning the study. The study enlisted factors such as: unemployment level, scarce governed space, poverty, inefficient security system, border's porosity, proliferation of arms amongst others are the driving force behind the crime in the region. The study discovered that the bandit's activities have brought set back in the region's security, peace as well as development and all effort to curtail such activities have failed to yield expected outcome.

Abdullahi (2021) argues that the root cause of the insecurity in Zamfara State is the failure of the government to fulfill its constitutional responsibilities of providing a sense of belonging and basic social amenities to all segments of the state. The author uses qualitative methods and the human needs theory to support this conclusion, stating that when a government fails to fulfill its responsibilities, conflict is likely to arise. The paper highlights the negative impact of the continuing banditry on the sustainable development of people and the state, and suggests that until both state and central governments address the issue, the displacement of people and the manifestation of banditry will persist. The study does not address the rebels' conversion of the island on the Lake Chad during this period and their attacks on Chadian.

Mohammed and Abdullahi (2021) explored the devastating effect of armed banditry on the socio-economic development of Zamfara State and Nigeria at large. The study reveals that since 2011, the State has experienced a deterioration in both social and economic spheres due to the persistent and heinous activities of bandits, resulting in reduced livelihoods, forced migration,

and displacement of economic activities. The consequences of this have included food scarcity, loss of animal species, and loss of human lives. The authors emphasize the need for the government to examine the causes, character, and manifestation of banditry in the state and offer effective solutions to this menace, using qualitative data collection through key informant interviews and human needs theory.

Umaru (2020) conducted a study on threats of rural banditry on human and food security, in Niger State, Nigeria. The search design for the study is a descriptive survey method; a sample of 90 respondents was drawn from the three most affected local government areas where rural banditry thrives in the state. The questionnaire was used as major instrument for collection of primary data; in-depth interviews were also conducted by the researcher to elicit further information from respondents. Secondary data was sourced from books, journals, newspapers and online peer reviewed materials. The routine activity theory was adopted to explain rural banditry in Niger State. Findings suggested that kidnapping for ransom, mining activities, collection of farmlands amongst others were major causes of the phenomenon while the loss of lives, farmlands, psychological depression amongst others were discovered to be the major effects of rural banditry in the State. The study recommended the provision of more sophisticated detection equipment in the rural areas for early detection of arrival and settlement of bandits in the forestlands, provision of more sophisticated arms and ammunition to the security forces to eliminate the bandits in order to enhance human and food security.

Abdullahi (2019) investigated 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. The study employed secondary data sources and discovered that the banditry in the rural area of the Northern Nigerian state is based on resources as well as conspiracy by the regional elites, the request for riches and the poverty situation of the West African people. The study discovered that the bandit activities has become lucrative and mentioned other factors that equally fueled the banditry activities as: "bad governance, political clientelism, urbanization, climate change, shortages in grazing fields and routes and lack of effective conflict-settling instrument" that plagued the West African region. The study also documented that youths are being radicalized into crime as their increase in unemployment rate surges as they get involved in drug trade as well as gun trading amongst others.

According to Okoli and Ugwu (2019), drivers of rural banditry in northwestern Nigeria consist in some socio-existential conditions that characterize the interior as well as the frontier of the region. Prominent among these conditions are the scarcely governed hinter lands, forest, lands and border lines of the region. The northwestern hinterlands are marked by extremely dispersed rural settlements, separated by range lands and farmlands that are susceptible to violent contestations. They are also interspersed by diverse forested landscapes, some of which are dotted by wetlands, rocks and caves. Apart from being separated from each other, they are equally far separated from the centers of governance at the local and state levels.

2.2 Theoretical Literature

The Hearts and Minds (HAM) theory by Sir Gerald Templer who introduced this term during the Malayan Emergency. The theory however was developed during the Vietnam war, when the United States asked the RAND to assist them in developing counter-insurgency measures. For hearts and minds (HAM) analysts, the first problem is protection of the populace from insurgent where the government in need must receive assistance to strengthen their armed forces (security). Furthermore, hearts and minds theory suggests that insurgency-threatened countries ought to attack the two basic political problems behind insurgency: bad administration and lack of administration. Therefore, reforms are essential, the rule of law should be enforced and distributional, ethnic communal and corruption problems should be addressed and the quantity and quality of government should be improved to enforce the reforms (governance). The final issue that needs to be addressed according to the HAM theory, is the unrest which is caused by bad living conditions

or rising expectations. Especially, if the legitimacy of the government is poor, HAM theory argues that economic aid will help persuade the population to support the government instead of the insurgents/bandits. What is required is a coordinated effort by military, political, and administrative leaders to insure balanced action on all fronts and at all level. Finally, the hearts and minds prescriptions amount to three great thoughts: governments ought to secure the population from insurgent coercion, they ought to provide competent, legal, responsive administration and they ought to meet rising expectations with higher living standards. This is useful for this study because it gives an understanding of how rural banditry can be combated using economic and political strategies in Kontagora LGA in Niger State and Nigeria as a whole.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on Heart and Minds (HAM) theory. The theory however was developed to counter-insurgency measures. For hearts and minds analysts, the first challenge is the protection of the populace from insurgents. And so, for the Nigerian Government, its first priority is to ensure the protection of its citizens and ensure stability in the polity. Thus, the Nigerian Government in need must receive assistance to strengthen their armed forces to ensure security. Furthermore, hearts and minds theory suggests that a country like Nigeria that is threatened by insurgency such as rural banditry needs to attack and tackle basic political problems behind insurgency. For instance Nigeria is faced with the challenge of bad administration and lack of administration, lack of strategic leadership leading inequity and inequality, hence the need for reforms, which are essential, the need to ensure that the rule of law should be enforced, the challenge of upsurge in ethnic and communal clashes, increased corruption problems, increased unemployment and poverty should be addressed and the quantity and quality of Government (or good governance) should be improved to enforce these forms. The final issue that needs to be addressed according to the HAM theory, is the unrest which is caused by bad living conditions or rising expectations. Especially, if the legitimacy of the government is poor. The HAM theory argues that economic aid will help persuade the population to support the government instead of the insurgents/bandits. What is required is a coordinated effort by military, political, economic and administrative leaders to insure balanced action on all front and at all level. Lastly, the Nigerian Government must ensure that the Nigerian citizens are secured insurgent coercion, the need to provide competent, legal, responsive administration and the youth to meet rising expectations with higher living standards.

3.1 METHODOLOGY

A descriptive and inferential methodology for this study was used because they give significant tools for categorical analysis on the descriptive statistics of the responses on the economic and political strategies towards combating rural banditry in Kontagora Local Government. The target population of this research comprise of people or the respondents living in the study area for not less than ten years. The sample size was statistically determined using Taro Yanmane formula for a finite population. The need for each item was based on the five point rating interval that was used in the study. 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.

3.2 Presentation and Analysis of Data

The data collected was analyzed using frequency and percentage from the personal data of the respondents. Frequency, percentage and mean were used to analyze and to answer the research question. The mean for each item was calculated based on five point rating interval that was used in the study. The analysis were performed using IBM statistical package for social sciences (IBM SPSS 20) and MINITAB 13.

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.

3.3 Cross-Sectional Survey

The cross sectional survey only was adopted for this study.

3.4 Sample Size of the Study

3.5 Study Population

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 consist of men, women as well as farmers and traders of the area under study.

The study adopted Taro Yamane'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

3.6 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.

4.1 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section interrogates the economic and political strategies in combating rural banditry in Kontagora local government area of Niger State.

4.1 Government compensate rural dwellers after bandits attack to cover their lost

Table 4.1: Government compensate rural dwellers after bandits attack to cover their loss

	Frequency	Percent
No response	7	2.3
Strongly Disagree	186	60.8
Disagree	62	20.3
Neutral	21	6.9
Agree	18	5.9
Strongly Agree	12	3.9
Total	306	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2023)

Table 4.1 reveals the findings on how government compensate rural dwellers after bandits attack to cover their lost. The result shows that 60.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed that that government compensate rural dwellers after bandits attack to cover their loss, 20.3% disagreed, 6.9% were neutral, 5.9% agreed and 3.9% strongly agreed. In conclusion, the findings was able to establish that majority (81.1%) of the respondents indicated that government did not compensate rural dwellers after bandits attack to cover their loss. The findings is in line with the study of Umaru (2020) found that suggested that kidnapping for ransom, mining activities, collection of farmlands amongst others were major causes of the phenomenon while the loss of lives, farmlands, psychological depression amongst others were discovered to be the major effects of rural banditry in the State

This is not in line with the economic strategy as a form of Government coercion to gain legitimacy. The act of compensation is an economic strategy to empower the citizens or population in the study area. This is a strategy to ensure Government coercion in the study area. Thus the findings is not in line with the HAMS theory which emphasizes that when a country like Nigeria is threatened by insurgency, it needs to attack and tackle two basic political problems behind insurgency. The HAM theory argues that economic aid will help persuade the population to support the government instead of the insurgents/bandits.

4.2 There are Enough Security Checkpoints on Road, Leading to my Community

Table 4.2: Response Rate on whether there are Enough Security Checkpoints on Road, Leading to my Community

	Frequency	Percent
No response	2	0.7
Strongly Disagree	94	30.7
Disagree	25	8.2
Neutral	56	18.3
Agree	71	23.2
Strongly Agree	58	19.0
Total	306	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2023)

The findings in table 4.2 revealed the response rate on whether there are enough security checkpoints on road, leading to the community of the respondents. The findings show that 30.7% and 8.2% strongly disagreed and disagreed that there are enough security checkpoints on road, leading to their community respectively while 18.3% were neutral. Also 23.2% and 19% agreed and strongly agreed that there are enough security checkpoints on road, leading to the community respectively. Therefore, since majority (42.2%) agreed, we conclude that there are enough security checkpoints on road, leading to the community in the study area. This findings is in line with military strategy that Government provides such as protection or security which refers to fortifications, which are been used to provide collective protection i.e the use of entrenchments, roadblocks, barbed wire and mine fields. And the HAM theory states that the Government first problem is protection of the populace from insurgent where the government in need must receive assistance to strengthen their armed forces (security).

4.3 The community should organize measures in order to protect themselves

Table 4.3: Response Rate on How the community should organize measures in order to protect themselves

	Frequency	Percent
No response	9	2.9
Strongly Disagree	2	.7
Disagree	1	.3
Neutral	19	6.2
Agree	21	6.9
Strongly Agree	254	83.0
Total	306	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2023)

The findings in table 4.3 revealed the response rate of respondents on how the community should organize measures in order to protect themselves. The result shows that 0.7% strongly disagreed and 0.3% disagreed that the community should organize measures in order to protect themselves, while 6.2% were neutral. In addition, 6.9% and 83% agreed and strongly agreed that the community should organize measures in order to protect themselves in the study area. Therefore the study found that majority (89.9%) opined that the community should organize measures in order to protect themselves. The findings is in agreement with Faruk and Abdullahi (2022) who carried out a study on the impact of armed banditry and kidnapping on socio-economic activities in six local government of Katsina State, Nigeria. Where the study found that armed banditry has negative consequences on poverty, unemployment, food security, education, health, income and the general standard of living of the people in the State. Further banditry affects other socio-economic activities in the region.

4.4 There should also be local vigilantes in every community

Table 4.4: Response Rate on How there should also be Local Vigilantes in Every Community

	Frequency	Percent
No response	9	2.9
Strongly Disagree	2	.7
Neutral	7	2.3
Agree	30	9.8
Strongly Agree	258	84.3
Total	306	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2023)

The findings in table 4.4 reveals how there should also be vigilantes in every community. The findings show that 0.7% strongly disagreed that there should be local vigilantes in every community, 2.3% were neutral, 9.8% agreed and 84.3 strongly agreed. In conclusion the study found that majority (94.1%) agreed that there is should also be need to have local vigilantes in every community in the study area.

4.5 The Government Should Also Compensate the Local Vigilantes that Lost their Lives in the Fight Against Rural Armed Banditry

Table 4.5: Response Rate on How the Government Should Also Compensate the Local Vigilantes that Lost their Lives in the Fight Against Rural Armed Banditry

	Frequency	Percent
No response	9	2.9
Strongly Disagree	1	.3
Disagree	1	.3
Neutral	9	2.9
Agree	27	8.8
Strongly Agree	259	84.6
Total	306	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2023)

Table 4.5 reveals the response rate on how the government should also compensate the local vigilantes that lost their lives in the fight against rural armed banditry. The findings show that 0.3% and 0.3% strongly disagree and disagree respectively that the government should also compensate the local vigilantes that lost their lives in the fight against rural armed banditry, while 2.9% were neutral. Also 8.8% and 84.6% agreed and strongly agreed respectively that the government should also compensate the local vigilantes that lost their lives in the fight against rural armed banditry. Therefore from the findings since majority (93.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the government should also compensate the local vigilantes that lost their lives in the fight against rural armed banditry, we conclude that there is need for incentives to be given to vigilantes as compensation for those who lost their lives in the fight against rural armed banditry.

The compensation by Government of Niger State to the local vigilantes that lost their lives in the fight against rural armed banditry is an economic strategy. Thus this strategy can provide solutions since there is empirical evidence that vigilantes are affected. The target is to address the specific problems encountered by the vigilantes in order to enhance their performance.

4.6 There is Need for Government to Provide Police Outpost in every Community

Table 4.6: Response Rate on the Need for Government to Provide Police Outpost in every Community

	Frequency	Percent
No response	9	2.9
Strongly Disagree	1	.3
Disagree	5	1.6
Neutral	10	3.3
Agree	22	7.2
Strongly Agree	259	84.6
Total	306	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2023)

Table 4.6 reveal the findings on the need for Government to provide Police outpost in every community. From the result it shows that 0.3% strongly disagreed on the need for Government to provide Police outpost in every community, 1.6% disagreed, and 3.3 were neutral. In addition the result showed 7.2% and 84.6% agreed and strongly agreed respectively on the need for Government to provide Police outpost in every community. In conclusion, it was observed that majority (91.8%) are of the opinion and agreed that there is need for Government to provide Police outpost in every community.

	Frequency	Percent
No response	9	2.9
Strongly Disagree	1	.3
Disagree	1	.3
Neutral	9	2.9
Agree	24	7.8
Strongly Agree	262	85.6
Total	306	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2023)

Table 4.7 reveals the response rate on the need for government to create a joint task force with both local Vigilantes, Police, Military as well as food security personnel in order to protect food productions.

4.7 There is need for government to create a joint task force with both local vigilantes, police, military as well as food security personnel in order to protect food productions

Table 4.7: Rate of Response on How there is need for government to create a joint task force with both local vigilantes, police, military as well as food security personnel in order to protect food productions. The findings showed that 0.3% and 0.3% strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively, while 2.9% of the respondents were neutral. In addition 7.8% and 85.6% agreed and strongly agreed that there is the need for government to create a joint task force with both local Vigilantes, Police, Military as well as food security personnel in order to protect food productions. Therefore since 93.4% consisting of the majority strongly agreed, we conclude that there is need for government to create a joint task force with both local Vigilantes, Police, Military as well as food security personnel in order to protect food productions.

4.8 Discuss of Findings

This paper analyzed the economic and political strategies in combating rural banditry with focus on Kontagora Local Government Area, Nigeria. The findings was able to establish that majority (81.1%) of the respondents indicated that government did not compensate rural dwellers after bandits attack to cover their loss. It was also observed that majority (89.9%) opined that the community should organize measures in order to protect themselves. And so the study found that majority (94.1%) agreed that there should also be need to have local vigilantes in every community in the study area.

The findings revealed that majority (93.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the government should also compensate the local vigilantes that lost their lives in the fight against rural armed banditry. And so there is need for incentives to be given to vigilantes as compensation for those who lost their lives in the fight against rural armed banditry. It was observed that majority (91.8%) are of the opinion and agreed that there is need for Government to provide Police outpost in every community.

Therefore since 93.4% consisting of the majority strongly agreed that there is need for government to create a joint task force with both local Vigilantes, Police, Military as well as food security personnel in order to protect food productions.

5.1 Conclusion

The interrogating economic and political strategies towards combating rural banditry in Kontagora Local Government has been established. It was established that that the economic strategies was not employed towards compensating rural dwellers after bandits attack to cover their loss. But there is lack of local vigilantes in every community in the study area. Furthermore, the

Government have not been able to compensate the local vigilantes that lost their lives in the fight against rural armed banditry. And so there is need for incentives to be given to vigilantes as compensation for those who lost their lives in the fight against rural armed banditry. And so the political strategy have not been able to strategically deployed towards ensuring safety of livelihood, lives and property in the study area.

5.2 Recommendations

In order to interrogate the economic and political strategies towards combating rural banditry to ensure peace, stability and meaningful productivity in the study area, the following suggestions and policy recommendations are made:

The Government should as a matter of urgency deploy economic strategies towards ensuring the welfare of citizens in affected areas by rural banditry. It has been observed that giving relief materials for the community can have effect on the morale of the local vigilantes especially to the families who lost their lives and property in the fight against rural banditry.

There is need for the State Government to introduce all inclusive participation. This is a form of political strategy can ensure smooth interaction between a government and the citizens of Kontagora LGA. This can give Governments the advantage of techniques to coerce certain actions, thereby gaining relative advantage to win the fight against rural banditry. The Government can also employ techniques such as propoganda and psychological operations, which can service national and military objectives respectively.

Reference

- Abdullahi A. (2019). Rural banditry, regional security and integration in West Africa. *Journal of Social and Political Sciences*. 2019;2(3):654-664. DOI: 10.31014/aior.1991.02.03.107
- Abdussalam, Aisha Ajoke, Richard Ayoola Olayiwola, Praise Fisayo Akinniyi-Duyile (2022). Impact of Banditry on Rural Development in Kaduna State. *KIU Journal of Social Sciences*. Kampala International University ISSN: 2413-9580; 8(2): 71-80.
- Ahmad S. Abdullahi and Jamilu I. Mukhtar (2022). Armed Banditry as a Security Challenge in Northwestern Nigeria. *African Journal of Sociological and Psychological Studies (AJOSAPS)*ISSN 2752-6585 (Online); ISSN 2752-6577 <https://doi.org/10.31920/2752-6585/2022/v2n1a3>.
- Akinyetun Shola T. (2021). Banditry in Nigeria: Insights from Situational Action and Situational Crime Prevention Theories. *The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes. Conflict Trends, issue 4, 32 – 38*.
- Brigid, Ochi Ijeoma, Ortindi Boniface, Arinze Emmanuel Okonkwo (2022). Crisis of Banditry and the Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria: A Political Economy Approach. *Scholars Journal of Economics, Business and Management*, pp247 – 256. Published by SAS Publishers, India.
- Faruk, Bashir Umar and Abdullahi, Mustapha Muhammad (2022).The Impact of Armed Banditry and Kidnapping on Socio-Economic Activities: Case Study of Selected Local Government Areas In Katsina State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Review*, 12(1), 308 – 322. March. (ISSN: 2276-8645)
- Mohammed Adamu, and Abdullahi, Muhammad (2021). Armed Banditry and Socio-Economic Development In Zamfara State: *The Assessment. EPRA International Journal of Research and Development (IJRD)*, 6(12).

- Muhammad, T. A. (2014). Pastoralism, socioeconomic development and security issues in Nigeria. Keynote Address at the Conference on "Violent Conflicts in Nigeria: Perspectives on Pastoral Insecurity in Rural Area, organized by African Research and Development Agency (ARADA), Kano, and Network for Justice (NJ), Kaduna, held at the Centre for Democratic Research and Training, Mambayya. House (Bayero University), Kano. May 31.
- Okoli, A. C. and Okpaleke, F. N. (2014). Banditry and crisis of public safety in Nigeria: issues in national security strategies. *European Scientific Journal* 10(4), pp.25062.
- Okoli, A.C, (2021) Of Banditry and „Human Rustling“: The Scourge of Kidnapping in Northern Nigeria. *African Journal of Terrorism*. Vol 11 No 2 Dec 2021
- Okoli, A. C. &Ugwu, A. C. (2019). Of marauders and brigands: Scoping the threat of rural banditry in Nigeria's north west. *Brazilian Journal of African Studies*. Vol 4(8), 201-222.
- Ojo, John Sunday, Oyewole Samuel, and Folahanmi Ainad (2023). Forces of Terror: Armed Banditry and Insecurity in North-west Nigeria
- Rosenje Musharafa Olapeju, Zubair Olayiwola Soluade, Oluwadamilare Adeolu Olatoye, Temitope O. Peju-Rosenje, And Oluwatobi Peter Adeniyi (2022). Armed Banditry and the Collapse of Education in North West Nigeria. *Journal of Lexicography and Terminology*, 6(2), 2022. pp. 94-115Print ISSN: 2517-9306; Online ISSN: 2664-0899
- Umaru, Musa Emmanuel (2020). Threats of Rural Banditry on Human and Food Security in Niger State, Nigeria. Department of Sociology, IBB University, Lapai, Niger State, Nigeria