
EFFECT OF RURAL BANDITRY ON FOOD SECURITY IN KONTAGORA LOCAL GOVERNMENT, NIGERIA FROM 2015 - 2022

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Abstract

This paper examined the effect of rural banditry on food security in Kontagora local government in Niger State. The rural banditry which is in form (or acts) of robbery and violence on the people particularly rural dwellers who mainly engage in agricultural production, processing and marketing have led to shocks. The paper used Primary and secondary sources of data. The paper employed descriptive statics and chi-square analytical technique. The study was anchored on the routine theory activity, which is made up of motivated offender, an attractive target, and the absence of capable guardianship. In terms of methodology, the paper relies on both primary and secondary sources of data generated. The objective of this paper is to examine the effect of rural banditry on food security in Kontagora local government, Nigeria from 2015 – 2022. The findings revealed that rural armed banditry has negatively affected agricultural activities in the study area, and leads to farms to be abandoned and people pay ransom to bandits before they harvest their crops. The paper establishes that, majority of the community members have difficulty in meeting their nutritional needs in the study area. The finding revealed that there is a significant relationship between armed banditry and food insecurity in Kontagora local government area of Niger State. The study recommends that government should introduce the policy of community policing. This can be done through community mobilization by engaging community leaders, members and citizens. This can ensure safety of lives, crops and property. There is also, the need to have the Political will of the Government to involve those that are in the act of rural banditry be engaged in the development process through political and social reform policies.

Key Words: Rural Armed Banditry, Banditry, Food Security, Food Insecurity, Insecurity

Introduction

Rural banditry can have negative effect on food security if it is not tackled to ensure safety of lives and property in Kontagora local government, Nigeria. This safety of lives and property can enhance adequate food crop production and increase the source of livelihood of people 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 armed banditry, which is a major security challenge. Especially in East, Central Africa and the trans-Saharan trade routes from Niger Republic and Libya. It has been observed that there is the presence of banditry in Southern Africa and Lake Chad. The severity of banditry in West Africa especially in Nigeria has contributed to the increase in insecurity.

The rural banditry which is in form (or acts) of robbery and violence on the people particularly rural dwellers who mainly engage in agricultural production, processing and marketing have led to shocks. This shock 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 armed 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 disturb farming activities in rural communities of Kontagora local government, but also affected financial activities of the city.

Therefore food security is a multidimensional concept to eliminate hunger and is one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nation. To achieve food security the challenge of rural banditry must be tackled. The concept of food security is a situation where there is available nutritional and adequate and safe foods or the ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways that is unlimited. This means there is certainty of available food. 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.

Niger State is one of the States that is known for rural banditry. Most of the agricultural farming systems have been affected by this challenge. Therefore this paper seeks to analyze the effect of rural banditry on food security in 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.

Food Security: Food security obtains when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (FAO,1996). Food security also refers to food availability, food accessibility, and food utilization. This means that a nation whose food production level is unable to satisfy these three criteria is said to be food insecure. Food security at the individual, household, national, regional and global levels is achieved when all people, at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their needs and food preference for an active and healthy life (FAO, 2019b). According to Olanrewaju et al. (2020c), approaches to the definition of the term has ranged from mere emphasis on self-sufficiency to emphasis on coping with vulnerability and risk in food and nutrition access.

Food Insecurity: food insecurity is a situation where there is the absence of food and the inability to access food, absence of nutritional and dietary needs requirement to have a healthy life. According to FAO (2010), food insecurity refers to the consequences of inadequate consumption of nutritious food, considering the physiological use of food by the body as being within the domain of nutrition and health. Malnourishment also leads to poor health; hence individuals fail to provide for their families.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Empirical Literature

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

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.

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.

Similarly 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 an 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.

2.2 Theoretical Literature

Routine Activity Theory

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.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is the Routine Activity theory. 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.

3.1 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. The need for each item was based on the five point rating interval that was used in the study. 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 chisquare tes 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.

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 pont rating interval that was used in the study. In addition, the research hypothesis were tested using chi-square test statistic. The research hypothesis were tested at 0.05% level of significance. 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 1 51,968. 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 TaroYamene's formula for arriving at sample size: the method is depicted

as follows:

n=

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

$$n = \frac{213,667}{1 + 213,667 (0.0025)^2}$$

$$n = 399$$

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 examined the effects of rural banditry on food 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 food insecurity in Kontagora local government area.

4.1.1 Examining the effects of rural banditry on food security in Kontagora local government area of Niger State

4.1 Rural Armed Banditry has Negatively Reduce our Agricultural Activity

Table 4.1: Response Rate on How Rural Armed Banditry has Negatively Reduced our Agricultural Activity

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	9	2.9
Disagree	16	5.2
Neutral	18	5.9
Agree	63	20.6
Strongly Agree	200	65.4
Total	306	100.0

Sources: Field Survey (2023)

The findings in table 4.1 revealed how the rural armed banditry has negatively affect agricultural activity. The result shows that 2.9% of the respondents strongly disagreed that rural armed banditry negatively affected agricultural activity, 5.2% also disagreed, 5.9% were neutral, 20.6% agreed and 65.5% strongly agreed. Based on the findings, majority (86.1%) have agree, we conclude that rural armed banditry has negatively affected agricultural activities in the study area.

4.2 Farms are abandoned because of rural banditry in my community

Table 4.2: Response Rate on How Farms are abandoned because of rural banditry in my community

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	14	4.6
Disagree	24	7.8
Neutral	41	13.4
Agree	67	21.9
Strongly Agree	160	52.3
Total	306	100.0

Sources: Field Survey (2023)

Table 4.2 shows the finding on how farms are abandoned because of rural banditry. The result revealed that 4.6% of respondents indicated that they strongly disagreed that farms are abandoned because of rural banditry, 7.8% disagree, 13.4% are neutral, while 21.9% agreed that the cause of farms been abandoned is because of rural banditry and 52.3% also strongly agreed too on the issue. Therefore based on the findings, we conclude that majority (74.2%) opined that rural banditry leads to farms to be abandoned in their community.

4.3 People pays ransom to bandits before harvesting their crops

Table 4.3: Response Rate on How People pay ransom to bandits before harvesting their crops

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	56	18.3
Disagree	69	22.5
Neutral	81	26.5
Agree	30	9.8
Strongly Agree	70	22.9
Total	306	100.0

Sources: Field Survey (2023)

Table 4.3 reveal the response rate of how people pay ransom to bandits before harvesting their crops. The response rate shows that 18.3% strongly disagreed that people pay ransom to bandits before harvesting their crop, 22.5% disagreed, 26.5 are neutral, 9.8% agreed and 22.9 strongly agreed. Since it was found that majority (32.7%) of the respondents indicated and agreed that people pay ransom to bandits before they harvest their crops. We therefore conclude that ransom is paid to bandits before they can harvest their crops in the study area.

4.4 My family are able to meet our dietary and nutritional need

Table 4.4: Response Rate on How My family are able to meet our dietary and nutritional need

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	56	18.3
Disagree	51	16.7
Neutral	67	21.9
Agree	57	18.6
Strongly Agree	75	24.5
Total	306	100.0

Sources: Field Survey (2023)

The findings in table 4.4 shows the the response rate on how their families are able to meet their dietary and nutritional needs. The result revealed that 18.3% of thr respondents strongly disagreed that their family have been able to meet their dietary and nutritional needs, 16.7% also disagreed, and 21.9% are neutral. In addition, 18.6% agreed that their family were able to meet their dietary and nutritional needs, while 24.5% also strongly agreed that they have being able to meet their dietary and nutritional needs. Therefore we conclude from the findings that 43.1% comprising of the majority of the respondents have been able to meet the dietary and nutritional needs of their family in the study area. 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.

4.5 Agricultural products crops are very expensive, thereby food product have an increase in price which make it difficult to meet our nutritional need

Table 4.5: Response Rate on How Agricultural products crops are very expensive, thereby food product have an increase in price which make it difficult to meet our nutritional need

	Frequency	Percent
No response	9	2.9
Disagree	6	2.0
Neutral	48	15.7
Agree	107	35.0
Strongly Agree	136	44.4
Total	306	100.0

Sources: Field Survey (2023)

The findings in table 4.5 reveals the response rate on how agricultural products crops are very expensive, thereby food product have an increase in price which make it difficult to meet our nutritional need. The result shows that 2% of the respondents disagreed that agricultural crops are very expensive because the rise in price and so makes it difficult for the respondents to meet their nutritional needs. 15.7% are neutral, while 35% and 44.4% agreed and strongly agreed respectively. Therefore we conclude that majority (79.4%) of the respondents agreed that it was difficult for them to meet their nutritional needs because of the increase in price, which makes the agricultural products very expensive. The finding is in agreement with the study of Faruk and Abdullahi (2022) on the impact of banditry and kidnapping on the nutrition status of under-five children in Katsina State Nigeria. And the study found that armed banditry and kidnapping have had negative impacts on food security of the study area leading to malnutrition among under five children. And there are other factors contributing to death of the under five children such as poor eating habits, inadequate health care centers, unsafe drinking water, and low income.

4.6 Test of Hypothesis

H_0 : There is no significant relationship between armed banditry and food insecurity in Kontagora local government area.

Table 4.6: Hypothesis One

How Rural Armed Banditry Causes Distress and Inadequate Peace of Mind in my Community * Rural Armed Banditry has Negatively Reduce our Agricultural Activity Crosstabulation

		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 $X^2_c < X^2_1$,

Reject H_0 if $X^2_c > X^2_1$,

$X^2_c = 455.849$

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

df = 16

$X^2_1 = 28.8$

Table 4.6 shows the cross tabulation and chi-square test for hypothesis testing. The result revealed 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 armed banditry and food 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.

5.1 Conclusion

Armed banditry has negatively affected food security in Kontagora local government area of Niger State. It was established that that there is significant relationship between armed banditry and food insecurity in Kontagora local government area of Niger State. Although majority opined that rural banditry leads to farms to be abandoned in their community. In addition to this, it was found that people pay ransom to bandits before they harvest their crops. Secondly, the study was able to ascertain that armed banditry has significant influence on food security in Kontagora Local Government Area of Niger State. And lastly, the study confirmed that that Food security in Kontagora Local Area depends on how banditry is tackled.

5.2 Recommendations

In order to sustain and improve the challenge of rural banditry on food security, agricultural food production and farming systems in the study area, the following suggestions and policy recommendations are made:

There is need for government to introduce the policy of community policy. This can be done by engaging community leaders, members and citizens. This can be done by community mobilization so as to ensure safety of lives, crops and property. This can serve as a catalyst to improve and create a sense of belonging that can trigger communal unity to defeat the activities of rural banditry. Secondly, the result of the findings indicates there is significant relationship between armed banditry and food insecurity in Kontagora local government area of Niger State. This therefore means there exist a relationship. And so it is a situation of lack of opportunity to improved quality of life which has resulted to rural banditry. And there is need to have the Political will by the Government to involve those that are in the act of rural banditry to be engaged by the Government.

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