

## Impact of Banditry On Human Security and Sustainable Development in Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

The fact that banditry poses a serious threat to the security of Nigeria, in view of its ever increasing impacts and implications on sustainable development cannot be refuted. Armed bandits operate with impunity within the boundary of Nigeria which has led to fling of kidnapping, loss of innocent lives, civil unrest, extortion from the victims and disruption of socio-economic activities in the country. This paper therefore investigates the impacts of banditry on human security and sustainable development in Nigeria using Ojo Local Government Area of Lagos State as a case study. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design; with sample size of hundred (100) respondents which comprises of staff and public officers in Ojo local government area Secretariat of Lagos state. The research instrument used for data collection was self-developed questionnaire which is subjected to face validity and made reliable by Pearson Product Moment (PPM) reliability which gives a correlation coefficient “r” of 0.917 showing that the instrument is reliable for the study Chi- square statistical method of analysis was used to test the three hypothesis formed. The study posited that Nigeria's sustainable development and human safety has been hampered by these emerging security threats caused by bandits. Therefore, the study concludes that banditry and other social vices, if not urgently curtailed presents a great danger to Nigeria. The research study recommended, among others, that there is urgent need for Government at all levels to create employment for the citizens in order to reduce poverty. Also, government should encourage and pursue proper orientation for the Nigerian Security system in order to brace them up for the challenges of insecurity to maintain peace and order.

**Keywords:** Banditry, Kidnapping, Nigeria, Security and Sustainable development

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## 1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

National security is a premise for national economic growth and development of nations. This is because peaceful nations attract foreign investors while the domestic investors freely operate the economy with little or no tensions and apprehensions. According to Nwanegbö and Odigbö (2013), security is the pillar upon which every meaningful development could be achieved and sustained. Nigeria as a nation state has witnessed unprecedented series of agitations in the form of kidnapping and abduction, armed robberies, bombing, and carnages of all forms and magnitude in the past decade and a half. The most dastard so far is the activities of a group of some Islamic militants that called themselves the 'Book Haram', interpreted to mean 'western education is evil'. With the coming to the scene by Book Haram in 2002, the insecurity situation in Nigeria seemed to have assumed higher and more complex dimensions. Apart from the frequency and intensity of deadly attacks and carnages, insecurity situation in Nigeria cuts across cities, towns and villages that there is hardly anywhere to run to for refuge. Lives and properties are not safe to urban and rural dwellers. People across the globe live in apprehension almost every day. Both developed and under-developed countries alike face the challenges of insecurity within their borders on a daily basis. The difference between these nations and Nigeria according to Adejumo is how they manage the threats (Adejumo, 2011).

The speed with which the evil is growing in Nigeria and the merciless ways that lives of innocent ones are being wasted are worrisome. People are burdened on a daily basis with psychological and emotional trauma resulting from gory sights of lifeless and mutilated bodies of loved family members, close associates and colleagues littered on the streets, public squares and everywhere. Apart, a stable economy cannot be guaranteed in the face of insecurity. Banditry means occurrence or prevalence of armed robbery or violent crime. It involves the use of force, or threat to that effect, to intimidate a person with the intent to rob rape or kill. Banditry is a crime against persons. It has been a common genre of crime, as well as cause violence in contemporary societies (Nigeria Watch, 2011). While in essence human security entails how an aspect of human lives will be protected which mainly includes personal security, community security, political security, food security, health security, educational security, environmental security etc (UNDP, 1994).

A "more explicit definition" of human security is provided by two main aspects: "safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression," and "protection from sudden and hurtful disruption in the patterns of daily life." Quoting the US Secretary of State reporting to his government on the results of conference in San Francisco in 1945 that set up the United Nations, the Report emphasized that the two freedoms, "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want," were recognized at the founding of the UN. The Report deplores, however, that the concept of security has been linked only to "freedom from fear UNDP (1994).

Banditry in virtually all states of the federation has reached alarming heights in recent years. Bandits terrorize villages with impunity. They actually settled in remote villages, setting up fortified enclaves in the hinterland and on the frontiers, from where they plot and carry out their operation (Pastoral Resolve, 2016). The phenomenon of banditry, which recently gained currency in Nigeria's public discourses, is fallout of persistent violence in rural communities within the last ten years. The results had been traumatic. There had been massive loss of thousands of lives, forced displacement of locals and devastation of monumental proportions across Nigeria state. Although banditry is also re-elected in criminal escapades like cattle rustling, kidnapping, armed robbery, drug abuse, arson, rape and other forms of violence, the brazen and gruesome massacre of agrarian communities with sophisticated weapons by suspected herdsmen and reprisal attacks from surviving victims threw it up to the front burner of national security.

Banditry is threatening not only the existence of lives, but also the pastoral communities in states within Nigeria boundary. In recent times, banditry has emerged as another important problem. Conflicts and banditry are closely inter-linked as they are all forms of social insecurity, characterised by weaknesses in the institutional capacity of the State to address the problems of insecurity, joblessness and acute poverty. Common manifestations of banditry in contemporary Nigeria include cattle rustling, armed robbery, kidnapping, and criminal raids. Of all these patterns of banditry, kidnapping has been the most endemic and widespread in recent time. According to a recent report by West African Network for Peace building (WANEP), no fewer than 3,312 persons were kidnapped in various states of Nigeria between January and December, 2020. The report adds that a total of 1,181 persons have fallen victim of kidnapping in the country from January to February, 2021 alone (p.1).

With particular reference to Northern Nigeria, a report by Sahara Reporters (July 2021, para.7) indicates that a total of 2,557 people were abducted in the region between January and June 2021. The predominant threat and security challenges are emanating from unbaiting attacks on Nigerian citizens, individuals, public and government installations, kidnapping and destruction of properties. The effect of banditry activities is a serious crime against the Nigeria state, which has threatened its national security and socio-economic activities. This has posed great challenges to the ground strategy for national security of which the primary aim is to strengthen the Federal Republic of Nigeria to advance her interest and objectives, to curtail instability, control crime, ensure good quality life for every citizen, improve the welfare and enhance sustainable development. National development is impeded in the forms of bombing, killing as well as banditry. How can Nigeria's economy be positioned to withstand the forces of banditry and guarantee human security as well as sustainable development of the nation? This study therefore investigates the implications of banditry on human security and sustainable development in Nigeria.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The seemingly increased nature of insecurity in the country occasioned by the activities of criminal gangs, terrorist organisations, bandits, unrests from the civil society and marginalised ethnic groups, and most importantly, the designated rationalised forms of insurgencies and criminalities, and modes operand have been the sources of concern to the government and security agencies in the country over the years. Several attempts have been made to reduce the impact of these menaces in the Nigerian society. The Nigerian government has tried using a counter insurgent force as policy deterrence, with the imposition of sanctions, to curb actual attempts by putting appropriate measures in place to reduce the menaces of banditry in the country. Nigerian economic rating with major focus on growth has witnessed an increase in spending on military hardware as well as equipping the personnel security systems and training to make them efficient to cope with the insurgent phenomena and ensuring sustainability of economic growth. Nigeria is considered to be an emerging power house, annual growth rates have averaged more than 7% per year, making the Nigeria economy one of the fast growing economies in the world.

Over the few years, banditry has created widespread insecurity across regions in Nigeria, increase tensions between various ethnic communities, interrupted development activities, frightened off investors, inflamed religious tensions and upset the nation's social cohesion (Eme and Ibietan, 2012) and Muzan, 2014 and this has generated concern among the Nigerian citizens. Despite these obvious scenarios, the government and the security agencies are yet to identify those behind these nefarious behaviours. We must therefore start to think "out of the box" if a solution is to be found, and do this quickly to bring an end to this growing and very dangerous situation. Insurgency, terrorism, banditry, kidnapping for ransom, herdsmen attacks and other acts of criminality, could all be related and we must attacks frontally and quickly bring both short and long term solutions before the country becomes another War-Lords-Governed Somalia (Aruba, 2019).

It is on the backdrops that this study is poised to investigate the impacts of banditry on human security and sustainable development in Nigeria.

### **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of this study is to investigate the implications of banditry in Northern Nigeria on security and sustainable development of Nigeria. While the specific objectives are to:

1. Investigate the impact of banditry on human security in Nigeria;
2. Evaluate the impact of banditry on and sustainable development in Nigeria
3. Examine the combined relationship between banditry and human security and sustainable security in Nigeria

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Concept of Banditry**

Understanding banditry may create a problem when one tries to delineate the difference between it and armed robbery. This is because in each situation there is the use of force and weapons of offence. The basic aim is that of dispossessing their victims of their possessions, in the course of which injury or even death may occur. Robbery is a proto-type of the kind of crime most feared by the public. It usually involves theft with violence or threat of violence by a person, with whom the victim has had no previous contact, and it is usually unprovoked and unpredictable (Conklin, 1992). It is therefore the crime of taking or attempting to take something of value by force or by putting fear in the victim. The lives and actions of the bandits on the other hand are often shrouded in mystery and legend and usually involve violent acts, by common criminals who may be termed „ignoble robbers“ for whom theft is simply an expedient means to an end (Gravel, 1987).

Banditry according to (Gravel, 1987) is the taking away of property by force or the threat of force, often by a group, usually of men. Of necessity, bandits usually operate in the shadows, often on the fringes of society, in geographically isolated areas. Armed banditry has been observed to be carried out in homes, workplaces, schools, banks, highways and neighbourhoods; it seems to be concentrated in towns, cities, urban centres and major highways. The robbers are also mostly residents of these towns and cities. Bandits on the other hand are observed to operate from among hills and bushes, along major highways and bush paths, and between villages. They have no fixed abode during their operations, villages are razed, cattle stolen and persons displaced. Since it is not easy to arrive at a conception of armed banditry that will command general acceptance by all scholars, a worthwhile conception must therefore be faithful to the empirical world that it purports to represent.

This means, ideally, that the conception should be developed through a careful examination of a set of representative instances of armed banditry with the aim of identifying its essential features. We can therefore start from the premise that armed banditry is a distinctive type of armed robbery. Conceptually therefore, armed banditry and armed robbery are complimentary and can indeed supplement each other. Both derive from a complex of inter-related socio-economic factors, but are primarily related to the actor's search for greater wellbeing. Armed banditry for the purpose of this study should be seen as the practice of raiding and attacking victims by members of an armed group, whether or not premeditated, using weapons of offence or defines especially in semi-organized groups for the purpose of overpowering the victim and obtaining loot or achieving some political goals. Such bandits are usually regarded as outlaws and desperate lawless marauders who do not have a definite residence or destination, and they roam around the forest and mountains to avoid being detected or arrested.

## **2.2 Concept of Human Security**

The definition of human security is subject to policy and academic debate in literature. Its first, most commonly cited usage came in the United Nations Development Programs (UNDP) 1994 Human Development Report. The report devoted a chapter the „New Dimensions of Human Security“, characterizing the term as a “a child who did not die, a disease that did not spread, a job that was not cut, an ethnic tension that did not explode in violence, a dissident who was not silenced,” as well as stating that human security was universal; its components interdependent; based upon preventative, rather than reactionary measures; and intrinsically people-centered (UN, 1994, p.22-23). Defining human security as “safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and disruptions in the patterns of daily life,” the UNDP broadened the conceptualization of security. This moved it away from state-centric approach that had prevailed to encompass seven key individual centric components: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security (UN, 1994, p.24-25).

As underlined in General Assembly resolution 66/290, “human security is an approach to assist Member States in identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood and dignity of their people. “ It calls for people-centered, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented responses that strengthen the protection and empowerment of all people.”(UN. Org: 2020). For the purpose of this paper, the conceptualization offered by the UN aligns with how Banditry impacts humanity by making them vulnerable to economic, so-political and food insecurity among others. This vulnerability has played out in Nigeria since the outbreak of the disease in the country.

## **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research design adopted for this study is survey design. It involves the collection of data for the purpose of assessing the impact of banditry on human security and sustainable development in Nigeria. The population of a study was selected based on what the topic is targeted which is public servants in Ojo Local Government Area Secretariat of Lagos State. A sample of one hundred (100) participants was be used for the study. The participants were randomly selected which among the staff of Ojo Local Government Area Secretariat. The sampling technique adopted was simple random sampling technique. The instrument to be used for the study was questionnaire based on four likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD) and Disagree (D).

The questionnaire was close ended with fifteen items related to the three stated objectives. The research instrument was subjected to face validity before being used for data collection. It was thoroughly scrutinized by experts in text and measurement, by matching each item of the questionnaire with the research questions to ensure that the instrument actually measured what it was meant for. The reliability of the instrument was determined through the split-half technique. Here, the instrument was administered to fifty (50) respondents drawn from the study area and the data collected were split into odd and even numbers, this was collected and analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment (PPM) reliability. This gives a correlation coefficient “r” of 0.917 showing that the instrument was reliable for the study. The collected data were analysed using Chi-square and simple percentage. The simple percentage is used for the analysis of respondents’ bio data while the Chi-square is used for testing the stated hypothesized objectives at 0.05 alpha level.

**Table 1: Analysis of Respondents' Bio-Data Table 1: Sex Distribution of Respondents**

Sex	Number of Response	Percentage
Male	45	45
Female	55	55
Total	100	100

The table above shows 45% of the respondents are male while 55% of them are female. From the table we can conclude that majority of the respondents were female.

**Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents**

Age	Number of Response	Percentage
25-35	51	51
36-50	47	47
51 and above	2	2
Total	100	100

From the above, 51% of the respondents fall within the age range of 25-35 years. 47% fall within the age range of 36-50 years while the remaining 2% fall within the age range of 51 years and above. From the table, majority of the respondents fall within the age range of 25-35 years.

**Analysis of Hypothesis One:** There is no significant impact level of banditry on human security in Nigeria.

**Table 3: Summary of Chi – Square Table**

A	SA	D	SD	TOTAL	L.Sig	DF	X <sup>2</sup> cal	X <sup>2</sup> tab	Decision
63	24	10	3	100	0.05	12	71.175	21.026	Rejected
48	41	6	5	100					
38	44	10	8	100					
41	37	18	4	100					
31	14	42	13	100					
221	160	86	33	500					

**Decision Rule**

At 12 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significant, Chi – square tabulated is 21.026. Since the Chi – square calculated of 71.175 is greater than chi- square tabulated of 21.026 ( $X^2_{cal} > X^2_{tab}$ ), reject the null hypothesis which says that there is no significant impact level of banditry on human security in Nigeria. This means that the banditry activities in Nigeria have direct impact on the security of lives.

**Analysis of Hypothesis Two:**

There is no significant impact of banditry on sustainable development in Nigeria.

**Table 4: Summary of Chi – Square Table**

A	SA	D	S D	TOT AL	L.S	D F	X <sup>2</sup> cal	X <sup>2</sup> tab	Decisi on
31	19	25	2 5	100	0. 05	1 2	71.1 75	21.0 26	Reject ed
21	18	40	2 1	100					
38	32	19	1 1	100					
28	42	16	1 4	100					
43	26	24	7	100					
16 1	13 7	12 4	7 8	500					

**Decision Rule**

At 12 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significant, Chi – square tabulated is 21.026. Since the Chi – square calculated of 71.175 is greater than Chi- square tabulated of 21.026 ( $X^2_{cal} > X^2_{tab}$ ), the null hypothesis was rejected, which means the alternate hypothesis which says “there is significant impact of banditry on sustainable development in Nigeria” was accepted. This means that there cannot be a sustainable development in the country with the constant activities of bandits in Nigeria.

**Analysis of hypothesis Three**

There is no significant combine relationship between banditry and human security as well as sustainable development in Nigeria.

**Table 5: Summary of Chi – Square Table**

A	SA	D	S D	TOTA L	L.Si g	D F	X <sup>2</sup> cal	X <sup>2</sup> tab	Decisio n
33	20	28	1 9	100	0.0 5	1 2	65.03 5	21.02 6	Reject ed
29	50	17	4	100					
31	16	28	2 5	100					
41	37	11	1 1	100					
41	16	21	2 2	100					
17 5	13 9	10 5	8 1	500					

**Decision Rule**

At 12 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significant, Chi – square tabulated is 21.026. Since the chi – square calculated of 65.035 is greater than Chi- square tabulated of 21.026 ( $X^2_{cal} > X^2_{tab}$ ), reject the null hypothesis which says there is no significant combine relationship between banditry and human security as well as sustainable development in Nigeria. This means that with the activities of bandits operating in Nigeria, there can never be any sustainable development or guarantee of human security in the country. The relationship is significant and high, but negative.

#### 4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The three hypotheses tested in this study were rejected. Hypotheses one which stated that there is no significant impact level of banditry on human security in Nigeria was rejected. This is supported by West African Network for Peace building (WANEP), 2020 which submits that the effect of banditry activities is a serious crime against the Nigeria state, which has threatened its national security of both human and property as well as socio-economic activities. Drama makes language learning an active motivating experience. It is an effective tool for the development of language skills in all parameters.

From the findings on table 4 which indicates that Chi-square calculated value is greater than the critical value which makes the second null hypothesis to be rejected which shows that banditry activities within the country has significant, but negative impact on sustainable development of Nigeria. A study carried out by Salami and Fatimah (2012) shows that one unit of Foreign Direct Investment increase in the oil sector will increase the GDP by 15-16 units. As a result of banditry, foreign direct investment (FDI) has declined. It has been consistently dropping by 21.3% in 2021 from \$8.9 billion in 2018 to \$7 billion in 2021, (World Investment Report, 2021). It was recognized that this banditry attack is a centre of weakness for Nigeria's economy.

From the third hypothesis which states that there is no significant combine relation between banditry and human security as well as sustainable development in Negara" was rejected due to the fact that the Chi-square calculated value (65.035) was higher that the critical value (21.026). This is supported by Ejiofor et al., 2017 that no country can development in the midst of chaos and insecurity. Targeted attacks on farmers throughout the year have made cultivation and harvest impossible. Bandits have warned farmers to stay away from their farms, and those farmers who ignored this order were killed in Batsari LGA of Katsina state. Farmers have been kidnapped for ransom, while bandits in Shirörö LGA have demanded payments of up to \$1,100 before farmers can access their farmlands.

Thus, banditry by all accounts is undermining security, peace and development in Nigeria. While the unfolding crises could be linked to a set of factors, the threat to security and the sustainable development of Nigeria cannot be over-stated. Therefore, affected communities started relying on local vigilantes for protection as a result.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

The security situation in Nigeria is highly volatile and unpredictable. The presence of bandits in almost all the state of the federation constitutes an unfortunate dynamic in an already complex area. Nigeria's sustainable development has been hampered by these emerging security threats caused by bandits. The human security challenge is also evidenced by Nigeria's declining global status as a peaceful country where people can live in happiness. Once described as having one of the happiest populations on earth, it has become a country torn by civil strife, violence, and crimes of all sorts, including rural banditry that has made existence oppressive. Daudi (2009). The 2014 Global Peace Index, which ranked 162 countries by measures such as security, extent of conflict, and degree of militarization, puts Nigeria as the 14th-least-peaceful country in the world. Noting that the level of peace in Nigeria had fallen by 5% since 2008, the report rates countries like Chad, Lebanon, and Yemen as more peaceful than Nigeria Fabusoro (2007).



## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made to curb armed banditry and its consequential effects on human security and sustainable development in Nigeria:

1. There is urgent need for government at all levels to create employment for the citizens in order to reduce poverty.
2. It is important for government as well as private companies' management to establish a commission that will be empower for the creating social security system that will guarantee employees of their future in order to discourage corruption among the populace.
3. Government should encourage and pursue proper orientation for the Nigerian Security system in order to brace them up for the challenges of insecurity to maintain peace and other.
4. Federal Government should equip the security forces with modern and up to date equipment's and necessary incentives to enable them to carry out their duty without hindrances.
5. Government should put in place a proactive measure to tackle banditry both tactically and institutionally.
6. Nigerians should hold their nation the duty of reporting any strange event or persons if suspected to engage in such act.
7. Rural poverty and deprivation needs to be urgently addressed to stem the increasing tide of rural banditry and its negative effects on the rural economy.
8. There should be an urgent need to strengthen the traditional security system and its conflict resolution component to fill the gap of the declining capacity state formal security agencies to meet security challenges of rural areas.
9. The way forward, then, is the development of grassroots policing, enriched by local personnel and intelligence.

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