Civilian Perspectives on Banditry and Human Insecurity in Northwest Nigeria: A case study of Birnin Gwari LGA of Kaduna State

A Research Paper presented by:

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(Nigeria)

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for obtaining the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Major:

SJP

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The Hague, The Netherlands

November 2022

Disclaimer:

The researcher's and the research respondents' opinions are expressed in this document. They don't represent the institute.

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Acknowledgements

First of all, I want to thank the Almighty for the gift of life and the life changing opportunity that was bestowed upon me.

I also want to express my gratitude to Orange Knowledge Programme (OKP) for providing me with this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Thanks to this scholarship, I have learned so much and helped people in my community. I wish the team behind the program God's blessings.

I am really grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Helen Hintjens, for her support and patience during this research project. I learned so much over this time that my writing really improved in my most recent essays. In addition, Dr. Hintjens generously assisted me financially when a few unplanned bills arose.

I also want to thank my second reader, Dr Anthony Ong'ayo. For his critical and insightful feedback during the course of this research work.

My appreciation also goes to my wonderful and supportive family members home and abroad, as well to my friends. May God keep and preserve us all.

Finally, my appreciation goes to my research assistant Maisule, A. for being my foot soldier in the field of gathering data and engaging with the research respondents. Also, thanks to all the wonderful staff of this great institute ISS. I will never forget this grand opportunity.

Before you became anything, you were first human. Humanity first!

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List of Acronyms

BS.C	Bachelor of Science Certificate
BE. D	Bachelor of Education
GTI.	Global Terrorism Index
HND	Higher National Diploma
HND	Higher National Diploma
IDC	Internally Displaced Camps
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network
ISS	Institute of Social Studies
LGA	Local Government Area
NCE	National Certificate Education
ND	National Diploma
NPC	National Population Council
SSCE	Secondary School Certificate
TA	Thematic Analysis
UNHCR.	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Abstract

This paper examines the perspectives of citizens directly affected by banditry and human (in)security. Their problems are further aggravated by the globalization of terrorism and proliferation of small arms within the Sahel region, of which northwest Nigeria forms a part. The case study is located in Birnin Gwari Local Government Area (LGA) of Kaduna state This study concentrates on civilian perspectives and experiences, and on mitigation strategies in terms of how peace and stability can be restored in this region. Fieldwork consisted of structured interviews conducted on-line, with a research assistant. Seventeen (17) respondents, comprising community members in Birnin Gwari LGA, were interviewed. None were community leaders, all were ordinary farmers. One camp leader was also interviewed, and three academics working in this field. The findings revealed that the social and economic impacts on residents of the LGA included loss of shelter, lack of food, clothing, reduced social gatherings, deaths and broken families. It was also discovered that a series of efforts had been made and were on-going by the communities themselves and by government. The causes of banditry were identified by those interviewed, as poverty, unemployment, ethnic crises, farmer-herder clashes and political interests. The study concludes, based on the findings, that solutions should incorporate job creation schemes, community policing and renewed political will from the government to find sustainable solutions to the banditry affecting civilians in Birnin Gwari LGA.

Relevance to Development Studies

This study raises awareness of obstacles to human security encountered by a community of rural people who have been attacked for some years, and lost faith in their own security forces' ability to protect them and their properties. In their individualized battles for survival and security, their struggles and insights are of great pertinence for development studies, which aims to support the livelihoods of the most marginal in society. The perspectives of ordinary citizens on how to address the situation is an integral part of this study and can be highly relevant for policy makers in Nigeria who seek to address banditry in future.

Keywords

Banditry, insecurity, human security, civilians, marginalization, economy of violence, peace, stability, youth, government, army, Hausa, Fulani, Gbagye, Nigeria.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Nature of the problem

In March 2022 the sister of a work colleague was kidnapped in Kaduna State in her home along with two little daughters. They were held ransom for several weeks until her husband and other family members were able to raise the money needed to secure her release. The sum of 4.5 million Naira was demanded, a huge amount given this woman's monthly salary of 40.000 Naira. People's homes have been destroyed by bandits, who have unleashed terror on civilians in the region. Some families are now displaced into IDP camps, children have been orphaned, women and men widowed. According to Oluwafemi, (2022) *The Cable Index*:

> "In 2021 alone, Kaduna witnessed an increase in banditry … kidnapping, killings and destruction of properties, a total of 3,348 victims were also said to have been kidnapped, 13,788 animals rustled, 891 people injured and 45 victims reported to have been raped".

A sizeable amount of the spike in bandit attacks is fuelled by earlier substantial government pay-offs in exchange for school children. This relationship has been found to operate not only in neighbouring countries like Niger and Mali, but also in countries like Mexico and Colombia. Kidnappings with the aim of receiving ransom tend to target schools and have grown as a direct result of government payments to specific groups of bandits. Already low levels of school enrolment in the north-west of Nigeria have continued to decline as a direct result. An increased degree of concern for the safety of pupils has caused general anxiety levels to escalate among the civilian population.

The presence of law and order, and the fulfilment of essential human needs, which is the state's obligation, characterizes a society that enjoys stability and peace. This study exposes the civilian population's susceptibility to human insecurity when bandits steal, kill and kidnap. Solutions points to the need for government to promote human security and human development. Although the practice of kidnapping people to demand ransom payments is not associated with any cultural traditions of North-western Nigeria, it is now common in the region, and rural banditry has been a contributing factor (Abu Bakar et al., 2018; Gadzama et al., 2018).

This study focuses on Birnin Gwari LGA (Local Government Area) in Kaduna state, Northwest Nigeria. Kaduna state boasts of a population of about 6 million individuals (NPC, 2006) and has almost equal number of Christian and Muslims. The main occupation in the state is agriculture.

Since 2013, Nigeria has regularly been one of the top three countries for acts of political terror. Afghanistan occupies first position, Iraq second and Nigeria is a close third (Dami, 2021). In 2022, Nigeria dropped to sixth position on the Global Terrorism Index due to some progress with reducing Boko Haram attacks (GTI, 2022). However, armed banditry remains frequent, and the phenomenon competes with Boko-Haram as a driver of national insecurity for civilians (Nkata & Okpanocha, 2022). Bandits in Nigeria are notorious for riding into communities on motorbikes to rob and kidnap residents and have been known

to kill anyone who puts up resistance. In northwest Nigeria, kidnapping has become an economy of violence (Ejiofor, 2022). Between 2011 and 2020, Nigerians spent hundreds of millions of Naira in ransom money, to liberate friends and family members (Oghuvbu, 2021).

Such expenses, extorted through banditry, have a direct and indirect impact on the socioeconomic status of these residents especially communities in the lower income strata. Families are forced to sell properties, livestock and agricultural land Farmers in the red zone districts of Zamfara and Katsina according to a report by Ejikeme, (2020) 13 November Arise News "the few farmers who manage to cultivate are denied harvesting until they pay between N300,000 (about $800) and N900,000 (about 2,400) per village". Where there is bride price, for example in Zamfara, banditry can lead families to force daughters into marriage as young as 13, just to obtain the bride price so they can pay ransoms for kidnapped kin, or they may even 'donate' their daughters as 'wives' to the bandits, in order to seek protection. More recently, Birnin Gwari pay bandit levies to access their farmlands during cultivation and harvest seasons, according to a Daily Post report by Amos Tauna 30 Sept. 2022 "The bandits informed some farming communities including Kwaga, Kwanan-Shehu, Unguwan Liman and Unguwan Shekarau to pay levies amounting to N12 million (3 million each) in order for them to be allowed to continue harvesting their crops." Or will be kidnapped.

The State government's negotiations with bandit groups and amnesty deals have backfired, heightening attacks on local communities (Abdullahi 2022). Nigerian military have also suffered heavy casualties, as thousands of Nigerians continued to be kidnapped and dozens killed. For instance, 18 soldiers were murdered, two reported missing, and eight others injured in a horrific incident that took place in Kebbi on March 28th, 2022 (Babangida, 2022). The government appears to be helpless, with state governors (in Zamfara, Kebbi, Kaduna, Katsina, Sokoto) trying to negotiate with bandit groups known to be terrorizing their states a decision they later regretted as the monetary payoffs negotiated (Abdullahi 2022) fuelled bandit's economy of violence and greed.

There is a lack of a critical diagnosis of driving factors that mean that banditry continues flourishes. The dynamics involved, and their effects on rural communities from civilians' perspectives are not well understood.

1.2 Justification and relevance of this research

There have been several studies investigating factors driving rising banditry in Northwest Nigeria (Rufai' 2021, Dami 2020, Abdullahi 2022, Olapeju and Adeniyi 2021). These studies have considered possible solutions to the threat, but the perspectives of civilians affected directly and indirectly by banditry, and their experiences, mitigation strategies and proposed solutions are missing from most of this literature, as well as from government policy responses. This blind spot justifies the current study, which proposes to listen to those who have suffered most.

In practice, bandit attacks have thrown northern Nigeria into chaos and economic turmoil, and the whole nation is increasingly being affected by raids and attacks, after a group of worshippers were attacked in Ondo State during church (Olapeju & Adeniyi, 2021). The

issue is becoming more serious and spreading geographically. The hope is that this study raises awareness of the problem, and that the international community and Nigerians, and the government itself will pay more attention to the security threat involved. I am particularly concerned that the situation has moved beyond the control of the Nigerian government and the army and police forces. The government is keen to avoid being called a 'failed state' (Foreign Policy May 27th, 2021), but seems to be ignoring the issue, as confirmed by Onwuzuruigbo (2020).

It is hoped this study's findings will be relevant for policy makers responsible for governance and security. The findings provide evidence on the major drivers of banditry as seen from the perspective of locals in a highly affected region. Having a better understanding of the socio-implication of banditry can inform policy making regarding ways to tackle banditry in the most affected regions. Identification of the role of external terrorist groups in generating insecurity can inform policies to engage more security personnel and tighten border security and restrict migration, for example. This could help reduce the proliferation of small arms and ammunitions as well as controlling bandits' cross-border movements.

The findings of this study will contribute to existing body of knowledge regarding the impact of banditry on the government as well. Specifically, understanding the socio-economic implication of banditry will contribute to literature and subsequent practical recommendations on reducing banditry and effective management of situations post-terrorism.

1.3 Background and Context of Proposed Study

Banditry is a general term that refers to a variety of criminal acts, some of which include kidnapping, attacks on settlements, looting, rustling cattle, and armed robbery. All cause unimaginable losses to the society on both the physical and economic fronts (Egwu, 2016). In recent years, not only has banditry in the northern part of Nigeria become more sedentary, but it has also taken on a territorial nature. Al Chukwuma and Anthony Chinedu (2019) state that the several bandit organizations that operate in the area have built underworld fiefdoms in the surrounding woodlands. Amid the ruthless control of the kingpin-bandit, these fiefdoms are in locations where they operate freely. One such kingpin, Buharin Daji, was complicit in the kidnapping of many Nigerian civilians. This has been going on continuously in several states, including in Kaduna, Katsina, and Zamfara (Rufai', 2021; Ilugbami and Nurudeen, 2021).

During the 2009 elections, desperate politicians in Northern Nigeria believed it was 'their turn' to take over state power. When a Southerner stepped in, these political elites felt very frustrated. In an apparent spoiling exercise, groups of young men were armed for electoral purposes to intimidate voters (Collier and Vicente 2008: 1). During the 2014 elections, clear intimidation continued, and 'security' was offered by candidates who in fact threatened those who did not vote for them. Whilst it was easy for politicians to arm young groups of men, it became difficult to disarm them later.

Rural banditry has been around for since the early twentieth century or so in Nigeria (Egwu, 2016). It has developed from humble origins into a complex and intricate form of organized economic crime. To have a complete understanding of the modernization of rural

banditry in Nigeria, it is necessary to understand this phenomenon within the context of the country's pre-existing national security debates. According to Bagu and Smith (2017, p. 5), criminal gangs, comprised mainly of young people from agriculture and herding communities, and local criminals, take advantage of increasing insecurity, fear, to engage in recurring attacks, rob expressways, loot rural communities, steal cattle and crops for their own financial gain. This illegal behaviour damages not only on farming communities but also herding communities and other Nigerians. The various causes of banditry are examined briefly in the next section.

1.4 Examining Causes of Banditry in Nigeria

As a result of poverty, a dearth of employment prospects and ineffective policing, kidnapping has evolved into one of the most lucrative businesses in Nigeria and become a significant threat to civilians' and national security. Kidnapping in particular is a societal and political security risk (Ilugbami and Nurudeen, 2021). Studies has identified the predominance of poverty, hardship, marginalization, and inequality in northwest Nigeria and Nigeria in general as a cause of the banditry problem (Ojo, 2020).

Previous studies have identified a series of other factors that gave rise to banditry. For instance, scholars such as (Abdulkabir, 2017; Akowe & Kayode, 2014) have traced the main cause of banditry to long term tribal conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and Hausa (and other) farmers. According to Ojo (2020), the Fulani were marginalized and socially excluded from welfare initiatives the government implemented over several decades. This was despite enormous economic contributions of Fulani to the country's economic growth, through provision of cattle and livestock. Climate change, migration, environmental degradation and resource struggles between pastoralists and farmers, are seen as root causes of banditry (Egwu, 2016). According to Obaji (2021), protracted conflicts over land issues have been going on between Fulani, primarily pastoralists, and Hausa, primarily farmers, for decades, contributing significantly to recent instability in Northwest Nigeria (Obaji, 2021). As Obaji (2021, p. 2) affirmed:

> In a bid to exact revenge, Fulani militants—operating from nearby forests that are vast, unregulated and difficult for security forces to penetrate—began to attack Hausa communities using sophisticated weapons, killing indiscriminately, and making large portions of northwest Nigeria no-go areas.

The Fulani and mainly Hausa farmers engaged in this competition for economic resources, for grazing land, farming land and water, were in close contact for centuries. Their conflict has recently been exacerbated by military operations directed against Fulani to punish cattle rustling (Olaniyan & Yahaya, 2016). Pastoralists' attacks on farmers then intensified, affirmed by Okoli and Ochim (2016), and inadequate management of Nigerian forestlands gave impetus to illegal and criminal activities in forest areas, involving militancy, insurgency, and banditry. Lawbreakers established hidden bases of operations in the safe haven of the surrounding forests. There are also problem of porous borders and the rapid proliferation of small arms, leading to other kinds of crimes according to Rufai' (2021, p.2) "There are approximately over 10,000 armed bandits operating across different parts of Zamfara state alone".

A significant factor in the continuation of banditry is a large expanse of almost ungoverned territory in the north of Nigeria. According to Clunan and Harold's (2010) definition, an ungoverned space is an environment characterized by the presence of criminals, land that is populated by traditional nomadic tribes, an informal economy, the absence of a law enforcement agency. In an unregulated space, governance occurs outside the established authority of the state. Ungoverned areas as accentuated by Taylor (2016), are poorly controlled regions, not under government control. Such regions are extremely susceptible to the operation of a criminal enterprises and networks. Banditry is thus a sort of organized crime (Shola, 2022).

Over-centralization of the Nigerian police force is another problem mentioned in some studies (Agwanwo, 2014). The police in Nigeria were first established by the British colonial administration in 1861 (Agwanwo, 2014). Within the Nigerian Federation, the police force is still highly centralised, and this is currently cited as one reason the police are hardly able to effectively carry out their constitutional obligations to prevent and punish crimes (Agwanwo, 2014: p.165). Kaduna State government has no authority over the Police force, whose orders come from Federal level through the Inspector General. Civilian displacement may be worsened because of the lack of coordination between Federal and State enforcement agencies. Agwanwo (2014) argues that only state-level policing can solve Nigeria's crippling crime problems. State policing would entail local policing activities under state government's purview. Critics, however, argues that state-level policing will undermine democracy. Funding may also be a real challenge.

1.5 Research objectives and question

Objectives

Economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security are all important aspects of human security in this setting (Adewuyi, 2021 cited by Abdullahi 2022). Unfortunately, poor rural Nigerians in Kaduna State (and elsewhere) have been left to deal with highly insecure situations in all these respects, with little help from the state, Federal government or the international community. This paper seeks to give them a voice. According to Section 14 (1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria "the primary goal of government is to provide security and welfare for the people". Security is a vital precondition for personal and societal growth; within the life of the Nigerian nation, security is the most basic human and societal requirement (Dami, 2021). Until this provision of the constitution is fulfilled, how can Nigerians' human security be guaranteed? The objectives of this study are:

- To explore the socio-economic effects of banditry in the study areas on the individuals, families, communities, and the government.
- To explore people's perspectives on banditry in northwest Nigeria (Birni Gwari local government area of Kaduna State) from the perspective of the affected communities.
- To explore the possible panacea to the problem of banditry that is ravaging the North-Western Part of the country.

- To investigate the opinions of people impacted by bandit activities on how the threat can be stopped.

Research Questions

What are the socio-economic and security effects of banditry on civilians in the study areas, and how do they cope with these effects?

Sub-questions

1) What kinds of explanations have been given in the literature for the rise of armed banditry, in Nigeria and in general? (Discussed in Chapter 2).
2) What are the socio-economic implications of banditry in the study areas on individuals, families, communities and government? (Discussed in Chapter 3).
3) How is the state fighting the banditry activities in Birnin Gwari local government area of Kaduna State? (Discussed in Chapter 4)
4) Do people believe that peace, stability, and human security can be restored in the impacted communities in the near future? (Discussed in Chapter 5).

1.6 Methodology and Methods

This study is an effort to explore the phenomenon of banditry and abduction in the north-west Nigeria from the perspectives of local civilians – insiders to the substantial uptick in crimes of banditry and kidnapping over several years. Seven states make up north-western Nigeria: Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Jigawa, and Sokoto, and Zamfara. The most critical hotspots of banditry have been in Kaduna, Zamfara, and Katsina (Abu Bakar et al., 2018; Gadzama et al., 2018; Dutse & Olowoselu, 2020). Because it is an area where I have contacts and could interview people on the basis of trust, Birin Gwari is the local government area in Kaduna state considered for this study. This choice was also made to limit the scope of the investigation to a small, rural community.

Semi-structured qualitative interviews were used to gather data for this research. According to O' Leary (2017), qualitative methods can provide more thorough descriptions and narratives that represent the cognitive and emotive disposition of the local people and this can be of interest for gaining an 'insider's' perspective. Respondents interviewed were selected using purposive sampling and their informed consent was obtained. All had direct knowledge of the banditry situation in the areas and did not need to rely on news reports in the media for their information. A total of 17 respondents were interviewed (9 men, 8 women) through on-line interviews using. Zoom and WhatsApp calls were used for interviews and discussions to gather my data.

A few different, sometimes complex, steps were involved in the process of acquiring primary data for this research. I was unable to travel to Nigeria due to the pandemic and personal safety concerns, and so recruited a research assistant who could work in Birnin Gwari local governments area. April Maisule assisted in identifying respondents who were willing to be interviewed for this study and to give their own accounts of how bandit activities

had affected them. April also helped with follow-up and collection of other kinds of data, for example from the internally displaced people camp in which a part of the interviews was held. The fact that a research assistant was directly involved in the process of locating people to interview mean that her contributions have a direct bearing on the final product of the research in a number of different ways, with significant implications for the quality of the research (Stevano & Deane, 2017: p.1). According to Bujra (2006:177), the choice of a research assistant should not be limited to individuals with first-hand knowledge of the subject of research or the research setting. Even more fundamental is "skill both in hearing and in delivering thorough reports of what is said, as well as the capacity to be self-effacing and to 'set their ego aside' so that they do not hinder informants". The research assistant, an MA student studying Media and Community Development at Ahmadu Bello University in Zaira, Kaduna State, also works with an NGO serving rural women in Kaduna State. She had all the personal qualities required for non-directive interviewing.

Before the second step, I constructed guiding questions for interviews, went over them with my supervisors, and determined ethical guidelines to be adhered to during and after data collection. The third step was to ensure respondents selected were more or less representative in terms of gender, age range, and educational levels. Balance on ethnicity was more difficult to achieve, given community polarisation. The knowledge base and perspective of an educated respondent or an older respondent may differ from that of a young or illiterate respondent, but all are of equal interest to me in this study. The impact of the banditry may also be experienced differently by women and men, by farmers and non-farmer residents of the same village.

A Thematic Analytical (TA) technique was employed as the instrument for data analysis following translation and transcribing of interviews. This was to ensure that the primary objectives and questions of this study remained the main focus of interpretation. Thematic Analysis also uncovered some unexpected themes, that went beyond answers to the research questions as provided above in this chapter. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is especially effective for qualitative data because it attempts to uncover patterns in the themes emerging from data. In addition, TA is adaptable, and perhaps most crucially, it can help for both deductive studies, where the researcher has a reasonable understanding of what they are likely to find, and exploratory studies, where the researchers have little idea of what pattern they will uncover (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 78). This study was mainly deductive, but also uncovered some surprises both in terms of causes of banditry emphasised by respondents, and in exploring possible solutions to the problem. An essential point to keep in mind is that TA changes based on the subjects that are investigated and reported on (Guest et al., 2006). Therefore, the most interesting and significant themes were derived from looking at the data collected from semi-structured interviews, in conjunction with relevant literature.

Throughout the course of the research, ethical considerations were thought through and put into practice. Neither the researcher nor research assistant placed respondents under any kind of obligation to be interviewed. Undue risks or pressure to contribute information for the study were both avoided. Despite this, there were practical obstacles. The research assistant could not access the study area due to insecurity and had to identify further respondents who had been displaced by previous attacks. There were limitations on funding, transport

and the poor quality of internet access in the region, as well as lack of computer software and hardware.

1.7 Chapter outline

This research will proceed in the following order. Chapter 1 was the Introduction and has definition the subject matter and main questions, outlining research methods. Chapter 2 is the Literature Review and elaborates on academic and policy research data on the subject of banditry and its causes. Chapter 3 presents Methodology and includes more detail on research methods used and why. Chapter 4 is where the main research findings are presented thematically. Chapter 5 is the Conclusion and presents some recommendations derived from analysis of the fieldwork data, juxtaposed with the literature on this topic.

Chapter 2 Banditry in Literature, Banditry in Kaduna

2.1 Introduction

The north-western region of Nigeria has a "lengthy history of banditry" (The Humanitarian, formerly IRIN News 2018, 8-9). Rural banditry is not unique to Nigeria and occurs in other countries. It has also been extensively researched. Problems analogous to those in Northwest Nigeria can be found in other regions of the world. In this chapter, the complex inter-connections between armed banditry and other political, socio-economic and environment catastrophes wreaking havoc on civilians will be considered. There is a particular focus on national security and banditry's impacts in Africa's Sahel and Sahara regions (Gaye, 2018). However, studies on organised rural banditry in countries such as Mexico as far back as 1850 and in Colombia, when social bandits were at times in solidarity with civilians, can also be useful for this study. At times, bandits were even seen as fighting for the collective freedom of peasants, even if regarded as bandits by the state (Hobsbawm, 2000 cited in O'Malley, 2008). In general, there is frequently a connection with the shadow economy and with drug wars and human trafficking.

2.2 Explaining Banditry

Over the years, there has been changes in the conceptualization of banditry. In the 19th Century, some bandits were even referred to as freedom fighters, with the aim of emancipating the people from their leaders (Warto, 1994). Robinson et al (2009) in their study, celebrate individuals such as Chucho el Roto, Herachio Bernel and some other individuals who although they were bandits, saw their role as freedom fighting for the oppressed.

In Africa, however, bandits are rarely seen as freedom fighters, but as the direct opposite, as criminals. There is little resonance with the romantic view of bandits in 19th century Europe and America. In Africa, bandits are armed robbers, kidnappers and linked with virtually all types of organized crimes. They characteristically maim, destroy lives and pillage properties (Curott & Fink, 2008). Rufai (2018) linked banditry to herdsmen, as banditry was traced back to acts of cattle rustling, carried out against sedentary farmers' herds in particular.

Egwu (2016) referred to banditry as the raiding of individuals who are often unarmed and robbed of their properties. Uche and Iwuamadi (2018) referred to banditry as involving attacks on unarmed civilians in agrarian communities, by armed criminals. Abdullahi (2019), and Rufa'I (2021) in their studies described banditry from another perspective, seeing it as the product of a group of lawless individuals who engage in activities that includes raiding of villages, kidnapping and cattle rustling, for the main or sole purpose of accumulating personal wealth. Another perspective on the root cause of banditry is farmer-herder clash as well as ethnic crises. It was discovered that farmers-herders clash was based on land ownership. Specifically, it was observed from the findings that herders, who moves from one place to the other attempted to lay claims on lands where farmers use for cultivating crops. This led

to misunderstanding, and gave birth to the farmers-herders clash, which could have culminated to the banditry attack.in the same vein, this study discovered that when farmers began mixed farming which is the combination of crops and cattle farming, almost to a greater extent than the Fulani. They became jealous and began rustling farmer's cattle, fellow Fulani cattle were not exempted. Ethnic crises share some similarities with the farmers-herders clash in a way. The Fulani are known to be herders, who migrates from one place to the other, depending on the weather, while Hausas are majorly farmers. Therefore, the fact that there is farmers-herders clash, could have culminated to the ethnic clash between Hausas, who are majorly farmers, and Fulani, who are majorly cattle herders.

Bandits can be identified by the activities they are involved in, which are said to include cattle rustling, kidnapping, armed robbery, drug use and abuse, rape, massacre of civilians and security forces, arson, and the trafficking of weapons amongst others (Egwu, 2016). Uche and Iwuamadi (2018) refer to banditry in terms of armed attacks on unarmed community dwellers, mainly in agrarian communities.

Shalangwa (2013) indicated that armed groups are almost always regarded as outlaws or as lawless marauders without a permanent place of abode. They move around carrying out both premeditated and unplanned attacks on innocent victims, without having a definite destination to return to after such attacks. According to Shalangwa (2013), groups engaged in banditry move around not in identified routes or roads, but in forests, mountains and across hills and valleys. They thus hide their movements. This is to avoid been followed, identified and arrested.

In their studies, Abdullahi (2019), and Rufa'i (2021) view banditry from another perspective, referring to bandits as a group of lawless individuals who engage in activities that includes raiding of villages, kidnapping and rustling of cattle with the main intention of creating their own personal wealth. Bandit gangs are known to terrorize and then dispossess mainly unarmed local civilians, seizing their valuables, properties, money, movable goods, all of which were owned by people already living in relative poverty. Abdullahi (2019) indicated that bandits often operate across borders, and sometimes with the assistance – tacit or open - of security agents and other local collaborators who share in the spoils.

A similar description of banditry as armed robbery can be found in the study by Okoli and Okpaleke (2014). Weapons enable bandits to carry out not only kidnapping, but also market raids and village attacks. The use of force and threats to intimidate a group of weak and often unarmed individuals also characterizes banditry (Okoli & Okpaleke, 2014). Further expanding the meaning of banditry, Okoli and Ugwu (2019) indicated that often bandits are not only economically, but also politically motivated. Specifically, it was indicated that politically driven banditry activities can involve assaults on specific kinds of individuals, in a way that would politically and materially favor another group of people.

From this brief overview of literature on banditry, there seems to be some agreement on key features of the concept. One element in the dominant conceptualization is that banditry involves the formation of a group of people motivated for economic and/or political gain. It involves targeting mainly unarmed individuals, often located in rural areas. Banditry activities includes raiding, robbery, cattle rustling, kidnapping for ransom, sexual violence, smuggling and trafficking. Having conceptualized banditry and given it a general definition,

it is important to assess theories that can help account for the rise of banditry in Nigeria, and especially in Kaduna, in the context of poverty and frustration.

2.2 Concepts for Analysing Banditry

2.2.1 Frustration-aggression and crime opportunity theory

According to Fererabend and Feirauben's (1972) hypothesis, violence is a by-product of frustration brought on by a person's failure to achieve their goals. As a result, insurgency and even banditry can be seen as a by-product of violent behaviour, brought on by problems of insecurity, unemployment, poverty, and government neglect. The study's findings suggest that some Northwest Nigerians vent their resentments against other Nigerians. It can also be suggested that banditry (or insurgency) was fuelled by government negligence, failing to tackle extremely high levels of poverty, unemployment, environmental degradation, injustice, or intervene to address poor infrastructure, ethnic disputes, and religious militancy. According to the study, all these factors combined to a sharp decline in human security in northwest Nigeria in recent years.

This is similar to Grievance theory as elaborated by Hoeffler, (2002), who suggests grievances are incentives for violent rebellion. Grievances out of systematic inequalities along either vertical or horizontal lines (Stewart et al. 2002). Inequalities between individuals as measured on a societal level are referred to as the former, and inequality between social groups, in which one social group is marginalized in comparison to others, is referred to as the latter. This could explain the fight for superiority between Hausas and Fulani.

According to Felson and Clarke (1998, p. 2), the driving premise in this scenario is that "people are more likely to engage in illegal activity when possibilities that are easy or appealing are available to them" This theory is relevant to the research because the security forces in Nigeria suffer from severe shortages of funding and personnel, making it extremely difficult for them to combat the problem of banditry effectively (Obaji, 2021). There seems a lack of political will to prevent crime, creating opportunities for criminal gangs to operate almost with impunity. According to crime opportunity theory, criminals make logical decisions, selecting victims based on those who provide the greatest potential gain with the least amount of work and risk (Shola, 2022; Ebobo Urowoli & Akujobi Alero, 2022). "The opportunistic potential for criminal-terrorist groups to take over geographic areas is related to weakening state power", states the 2016 edition of the Global Terrorism Index (GTI, 2016, p. 85). The implication of this is that those participating in banditry activities are quite aware of their low risks of arrest and imprisonment and know they are likely to be successful because of the country's weak security environment.

2.2.2 Human (In)security

As stated in Chapter 1.5, human security involves (1) protection from hunger and sickness (2) freedom from repression and violence, whether by state or non-state actors (3) security in basic needs such as housing, income and 'life pattern' (Abdullahi 2019). In this sub-section

I discuss each of these elements in turn. Human security signifies the presence of basic human needs (Galtung, 1979) and was advocated by the 1994 UNDP Report, which focussed on people and their well-being (Abdullahi 2019). Human security means different things to different people, depending on the context. During the literature review process, I noticed that literature about developed nations generally looks at human security from an environmental and climate change angle more often than in studies on the global South, where poverty and deprivation are the main focus (Adger 2014, Fagan and Munck 2009).

Human insecurity can be seen as insecurity in meeting basic needs and securing basic freedoms. According to the Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, food and shelter are basic human needs. Being deprived of these can be regarded as a fundamental form of human insecurity. In Nigeria, where distribution of resources is highly unequal, citizens in cities and urban centers have better infrastructures and generally more resources, on average, than those in rural areas.

Of Nigeria's 200 million people, 48.04% were recently reported to be living in rural area (World Bank, 2018). Rural dwellers in Nigeria are mainly involved in farming yet receive fewer basic amenities from the government than those living in cities. Deinne (2021) also indicated in his study that all states in Nigeria experiences unequal rate of development, with rural areas receiving fewer basic amenities and having poorer infrastructure. The results include higher level of unemployment, and vulnerability to criminal activities including banditry.

According to Fagan and Munck (2009.p:2) "globalization creates greater economic, political, social and cultural interactions across the world and thus [is] a source of great dynamism". However, Fagan and Munck (2009.p:2) citing a security analyst believes that globalization has equally ushered in transnational insecurities such as global terrorism and crime, environmental insecurity, internet fraud, inflation, migration, the spread of infectious diseases, proliferation of weapons, terrorism, because it made the world more accessible and efficient.

While President Bush's war against terror after 9/11 positively impacted developed nations including the US, the UK, and France, turmoil and insecurity worsened in the emerging world. The Sahel region of Africa, especially the gold- and oil-rich nations like Nigeria seems more hurt than helped (Carothers and Ottaway, 2010). For example, after Muammar Gaddafi was toppled and killed in 2011, Libya's social and political structure underwent a rather dangerous transformation resulting in weapons proliferation, Islamic insurgencies, sectarian warfare, and anarchy, which spread to Mali, Nigeria and other West African countries (Marsh, 2017). These events left rural people in states like Kaduna more defenseless and isolated than ever.

2.2.3 Freedom from Hunger and Repression

A crisis in food security has arisen in Nigeria in recent years, and it is a daily struggle for the poor to afford sufficient food. In the past two years, agricultural supplies have suffered from farmer displacement due to banditry, as well as droughts resulting in poor harvests and higher food prices. As Nigerians came out of the CORONA lockdown, paradoxically incomes fell further and prices rose rapidly, especially for basic food commodities. From July 2020, prices

for basics like beans and tomatoes increased by 253 percent and 123 percent respectively countrywide. A kilo of beans (known as *mudu*) sold for 73 cents (N305.48) in July 2020 but cost $2.16 (N900) by July 2021 (Forbes News 2022). How those who live below poverty can manage to eat is a question, especially when other staples like bread, onions, and cassava flour are also skyrocketing in price (Forbes News 2022).

The second element of human security is freedom from repression and violence. Repression is regarded as the act of subduing another individual using force. This force could be physical, economic, political, or social (Dipietro, 2016). In Nigeria, there is unequal distribution of resources, especially to rural areas in Nigeria (Fagbamigbe et al., 2015). Evidence from this research is that most rural dwellers in Kaduna are living with little or no provision of physical security by the state security forces. This makes them vulnerable to armed repression and violence from bandits (Uche & Iwuamadi, 2018).

2.3 A History of Banditry in Northwest Nigeria

2.3.1 Factors Responsible

Among the factors responsible are changes in climate, growing demographic demands, shorter rainy seasons, dwindling water sources and declining arable land in the face of expanding desert and semi-arid conditions (Madu, 2012; Adeoyo, 2018; Ofuoku & Isife, 2009). Demand for land has increased with the rapidly expanding population, and rivalry for suitable farming and grazing land has intensified, in the absence of more effective means of producing crops and cattle. Violent attacks between Hausa farmers and Fulani pastoralists have risen, and even though conflicts between farmers and herders have long been a problem, the level of violence was historically low. In the past, minor disagreements could be settled by officials at local level. Farmers, the majority Hausa, and minorities such as Gbagye, were for some time in competition with herders, the majority Fulani, over access to land and water. However, the situation has worsened and become much more violent in recent years, for several reasons (Adeoye, 2018).

Since 1999, when Nigeria returned to democratic rule, controversial government policies arguably favoured farmers over herders. Vast tracts of land were ceded to elite farmers, exacerbating herder-farmer conflicts. The Kuyambana forest, along with a portion of the Maru and Zurmi LGAs, had been grazing reserves, but were cleared by the Zamfara state administration for farmers (Ofuoku & Isife, 2009; Adeoye, 2017). This move interrupted the routines of centuries-old Fulani pastoral routes, reducing the amount of pasture that could be used by their animals. Redistributing land to farmers led to obstruction of livestock grazing paths, increasing herdsmen's trespass on farmlands, and led to growing claims for crop damage reimbursement by mainly non-Fulani farmers. Herders protested the compensation they had to pay for damaged crops, claiming farmers, district heads, police, and judges were all conspiring against them in a corrupt process. Meanwhile farmers complained about herders' animals intruding on farmland, ruining crops. The scene was primed for more lethal confrontations.

Around 2010-2011, young men in many Hausa communities started to organize themselves into vigilante squads known as *yan sa kai* (Volunteer Guards). They claimed to safeguard their villages from herders and criminally motivated attacks increased throughout the Northwest (Brottem, 2021; Rufai, 2021). By doing this, the vigilantes contributed to their own communities' future uneasiness. They used crude weapons to punish those who thought responsible for trespassing on land, or for robberies and raids, without any fair hearing. Numerous Fulani who lived in towns were specifically targeted by these vigilantes, simply because of their ancestry and their association with cattle-herding in the forests. Arbitrary detentions, torture, indiscriminate cattle seizures, as well as extrajudicial executions of suspects — occasionally slashed to death in public places — were all part of the sanctions meted out (Brottem, 2021). Vigilantes occasionally set Fulani villages ablaze, causing victims to flee into the woods. This strained further ties, breaking former relationships of cooperative competition.

Similarly, the Fulani created *Yan-bindiga* (Gun Owners), paramilitary organizations that claimed to defend themselves and cattle against 'Hausa vigilante' violence. Hassan Dantawaye, a former militia leader, stated: "We decided to kill at least 50 people anytime one of us was killed". These gangs were believed to engage in other illegal activities, like kidnapping for ransom, and trading weapons. As violent attacks increased, more advanced weapons were used, a large portion acquired via international routes from the Sahel. Corrupt government security agents, gun importers from southern Nigeria, and local gunsmiths in north-eastern Nigeria were all too happy to sell arms (Adeoye, 2017).

To reverse this trend of armed violence, Kaduna state government extended accessibility for 17 grazing reserves. According to Mr. Maigari, Commissioner for Agriculture, Ludugga reserve is one of the largest in Kachia and Kagarko LGAs (John Shiklam, August 7, 2016, This Day Nigeria). 50,000 Fulani herders are settled there, but the reserves were met with apprehension by members of other communities,

> "(d)ue to the destruction some Fulani herders have created, and the fact that the reserves are for the Fulani herdsmen excluding other ethnic groups that also rear cattle and animals like pigs, fish, and poultry". Will a southern man be granted land to raise his pigs if he requests so in the Fulani-dominated region? (Solomon Musa, President of Southern Kaduna People Union (SOKAPU) in This Day NG, Shiklam, Aug. 7th, 2016).

Community members gave other reasons such as, cattle rearing has become a profitable individual business, therefore such individuals should be renting land for ranching, not being given access to community lands. The people's suspicions grew when the cattle reserves were extended across Nigeria by a president who is himself of Fulani origin. In addition, the expanses of unregulated forest areas, characterized by rocks, caves and wetlands, separated from each order, meant these reserves were ideal hideouts for those engaged in criminal activities (Dami, 2021. Abdullahi, 2019). From the conceptualization of banditry, it was explained that most banditry activities take place in rural areas, and that bandits prefer to retreat to mountains, hinterlands and forests after carrying out their hideous attacks. In this way, they their identity and ensure they are not tracked (Abdullahi, 2019).

Under-policing in the region is another problem mentioned in studies on banditry (Dami, 2021. Gaye, 2018). Rural regions are often isolated and may be far from the central

offices and posts of police and governance. This remoteness could be another motivating factor for continuous banditry activities, since security operatives hardly control the hinterlands from their headquarters in the capital (Gaye, 2018).

Another contributing factor to banditry is the high unemployment in the country, especially in the North (Adegoke, 2019). According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), unemployment stood at 23.1% in 2019. More than half of unemployed individuals are youths (55.4%). This is a trigger factor since unemployed youth can easily be lured into criminal activities, including banditry. Other youth without work may be paid to support bandits by acting as informants within rural communities (Suleiman, 2017; Mustapha, 2019). Adagba, Ugwu, and Eme (2012) also confirmed that desperation at high unemployment meant a lot of unemployed youth resort to criminal activities to make money.

Poverty can be regarded as a major social factor that predisposes individuals to join bandit groups in Kaduna State and elsewhere in Northern Nigeria (Rosenje & Moliki, 2016). According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), in 2019. One in six Nigerians barely earned $1 dollar per day and could be classified as very poor (NBS, 2019). Of the total population, it was indicated that 82.9% of Nigerians are referred to as poor, majority of whom live in rural areas. While the poverty rate in Nigeria is generally high, the Northwest has the highest poverty rate in the country (Adegoke, 2019). Specifically, the poverty index in the Northwest is 77.7% of all individuals living in poverty or extreme poverty even a decade ago (NBS, 2012).

In addition, proliferation of arms is contributing to banditry in Nigeria. According to Gaye (2018), the influx of small and light weapons (SALWs) has increased rapidly. Specifically, most of these weapons are reportedly transported through the Sahel region from Libya, after the killing of former head of state, Ghadaffi. African and Middle Eastern countries alike are threatened by the proliferation of weapons and illicit arms trade exacerbated by the Libyan situation, and worsening crises in Syria, Egypt, Mali and Nigeria (Trofino, 2013). In 2018, Adeniyi reported that a joint operation had retrieved arms and ammunitions being transported into the Northwest region through the Funtua-Gusau road.

In this subsection, some of the factors believed to have contributed to the rise of banditry in Nigeria and elsewhere, have been identified from the literature. This also includes environmental factors such as the geographic location of areas in Nigeria, making the Northeastern part of the country as favorable for bandit related activities. Other factors include unemployment, poverty, proliferation of arms and ammunitions as well as the poor underpolicing in the region. Having explained what gave rise to banditry in Nigeria, the next subsection will cover literature on the causes of banditry in Kaduna state, Nigeria.

2.3.2 A Short History of Banditry in Kaduna State

Within Northwestern Nigeria, Kaduna is among the of the seven states (AOAV & NWGAV, 2013). A series of factors have been identified from previous studies as explaining why Kaduna state is especially plagued by banditry. Some scholars (Abdulkabir, 2017; Akowe & Kayode, 2014) have traced the cause of banditry in Kaduna to long term tribal conflict between Fulani herdsmen and farmers, as already mentioned. These researchers view historically embedded conflicts around boundary struggles between Fulani herdsmen and Hausa

farmers as having contributed significantly to the rise of banditry in Kaduna. Some studies emphasize the link between banditry and the historical socio-political and economic marginalization of the Fulani ethnic group (Yahaya & Bello, 2020).

Kundu and Buharin Daji founded the first bandit group in 2011 calling it *Kungiyar gayu*, meaning "association of young males,". To the public, they were known as *kungiyar barayin shanu* mean "cattle rustlers association" (Rufai', 2021: p. 14). they do not spare other Fulani people then nor now. And according to Rufai', (2021.p:16) "some Fulani were coerced into the gangs through the threat of cattle rustling". Now they kidnap and kill people strictly for economic gain. Kaduna and Niger states are under the bandit leaders called Dogo Gide of Birnin Gwari and Dan Karami of Zurmi, causing enormous human insecurity.

These acts of banditry have stalled socioeconomic progress, particularly in Kaduna and neighbouring states. According to Mohammed (2019), many pupils do not attend school, after schools became a target for kidnappings. A parent said that each day the child goes to school, she remains restless until he returns home.

> *"Whenever my son goes to school I pray for him to return back safe"*
>
> *"I didn't know the gravity of these attacks until 2 of my children were killed on their way to school early last year"* (41-year-old farmer Umar).

Due to their dread of having their children abducted or slain by armed bandits, parents are unable to send their children to distant schools. Mohammed (2019) went on to say that people's persistent fear of the unknown has hindered socio-economic endeavours.

Mohammed went on to say that people's persistent fears of the unknown have hindered socio-economic endeavours and undermined business confidence. Sexual violence and rape cases have also increased, representing yet another setback for socio-economic advancement in regions affected by banditry. According to Rufa'i (2021, p:32)

> "Not all attacks are carried out to kill innocent people, some attacks are to satisfy sexual urges. Their targets are usually young teenage girls, the options are either to rape them at the scene or kidnap for rape".

According to Badaru (2017), there have been documented occurrences of rape along the Dansadau forest by armed bandits since 2014.

> "Girls sent out to fetch firewood or cut grass in the nearby bush usually come back howling because of either individual or gang rape by unknown persons. In 2012 alone, over fifty (50) cases were recorded in one district. Some affected parents often keep silent, to avoid social rejection against the victims. In view of this, women and girls were banned from going to the bush alone" (Rufa'I, 2021: 33).

Additionally, Onuah and Akwagyram (2019) claimed that Kaduna's mining operations have almost ceased because of armed bandits' regular attacks on mines. The suspension implies that the state's mining revenue has been cut off, and this potentially can have a serious impact on all economic activity and on public services.

One of banditry's most obvious effects in the Northwest is the internal displacement of civilians. In numerous towns in Zamfara, Katsina, Kauna and Sokoto, between January and August 2019, more than 200,000 people became internally displaced, according to a 2019

report released by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Nigerian government. The majority of these IDPs were women, children, and old people seeking sanctuary in the neighbouring nations of Cameroun, Niger, and Chad (Reliefweb, 2019). In the chapter that follows, we will go deeper into our methodology for analysing the date, and methods of interviewing.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the overall methodology for the study. Specifically, the following outline were covered in this chapter; research design/approach, study area and its high risk, participants, sampling, data source, research ethics and limitations of the research.

3.2 Research Design & Approach

This study investigated the dynamics and human security effects of banditry in Northwest Nigeria: A case study of Birnin Gwari LGA of Kaduna State. The case study approach is suitable for the qualitative approach adopted, which involves some inductive reasoning, starting from the views and experiences of civilians in this case, those affected by banditry. An inductive approach starts with specific observations, which then lead to more generalized conclusions, based on the gathered evidence. In other words, inductive reasoning starts from the specific to the general rather than the other way round.

Qualitative research is adopted when the research is interested in understanding how people interpret their world, and give meaning to their experiences (Merriam, 2009). According to Weinberg (2002), qualitative research helps interpret facts from the data gathered, in this study, based on participants' own voices and experiences.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), qualitative research helps place the observer in the world they are observing. The researcher in qualitative research is investigating issues in their natural surroundings, using field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, reports and memoranda to understand and interpret occurrences in terms of the meanings different people give these 'social facts'. According to Marshall and Rossman (2011), exploratory or descriptive research that stresses the significance of context, setting and participants' frames of reference should show the benefits of qualitative investigations. According to Glesne (2006), qualitative research methods are used to understand various social phenomena from the perspectives of those involved, to interpret problems in their unique socio-cultural-political contexts, and, in certain situations, to improve or change social conditions. Naturalistic, interpretative, and inductive worldviews are used in qualitative research.

Also, much qualitative research adopts interviews to examine the variables as they pertain to the case study. This requires adoption of one of the following types of interviews: In-depth Interviews (IDI), Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussion (FGDs). This study adopted in-depth interviews so that a small number of participants could express their viewpoints. Key informant interviews were conducted with a few community members of Birnin Gwari LGA who found shelter in Gonin Gora and Mando, in the State capital.

3.3 Study Area and Sampling for In-depth Interviews

The research assistant was cautioned by a Security Officer not to enter the area because of the risks involved. Therefore, we came up with a method and tracked down displaced locals from the region from which we collected our data. The local government is located on Kaduna-Lagos expressway, about 125km away from Kaduna's capital city, in the western part of the state. It is near Zamfara to the North, Kogo Forest (Katsina) to the East, and Giwa LGA of Kaduna state to West (Kamuku Park Report, 2010).

According to the 2006 population census, there are a total of 252,363 persons in the LGA, across sixteen districts. The main occupation of residents in the LGA is farming in maize, rice, wheat, groundnuts, and guinea corn (Alabi et al., 2013). However, activities of bandits have left the towns deserted. This makes the LGA a high-risk area to research in. Carrying out fieldwork in this authoritarian and risky setting was challenging. According to Glasius et al (2018: 6).

> "There are different ways of studying authoritarianism: historically, empirically with quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods, or (more rarely) purely theoretically. The 'authoritarian field' is an unfriendly place where academics and others spend time to gather research data. Such study environments are usually not conducive for both the researcher and their sources. the safest method here is conducting interviews for qualitative and surveys or statistics for quantitative research (Glasius et al 2018.p:6)

Risks mentioned by Glasius et al. include being subjected to electronic monitoring by security agencies (Glasius et al 2018) or by terrorist group informants. It was considered too dangerous to enter Birnin Gwari because of the sudden attacks the bandits were launching at the time of fieldwork. They also have a network of informants (Rufai' 2021), making it challenging to distinguish who to believe and who to avoid.

Since going into the area was risky the researcher adopted the convenience sampling technique (Sedgewick, 2013). For these reasons, interviews were conducted with IDPs, either on-line through various phone apps, or face to face and mostly recorded. Participants were selected based on their availability at the time of interviewing, which resulted in a total of seventeen (17) displaced residents from different communities who had fled Birnin Gwari LGA. Appendix 1 provides details of all those interviewed in IDIs and a different setting in Mando. They all requested that their specific communities of origin be kept anonymous. Their names have been changed where requested.

3.4 Source of Data

Primary source of data was adopted in this study. This is because data was derived directly from the respondents in real time, rather than depending on existing reports. To achieve this therefore, a semi-structured interview guide was designed to gather the data. According to Bryman (2012) it was indicated that a semi-structured interview guide assists to get deeper perspectives from respondents due to its flexibility to probe. Also, it allows for the combination of both formal and informal interviewing methods. In this study, this interview structure allowed participants to speak freely regarding questions asked, which further gave the

researcher the opportunity to gather more relevant data from the respondents (Galletta, 2013).

It is also important to state that interviewing individuals who have been subjects of war or suffered casualties due to armed violence might be difficult and sensitive at the same time (Galleta, 2013). Semi-structured interview allowed the researcher to ask open-ended and flexible questions.

3.5 Access Strategy

Due to the displacement in the LGA, the researcher conducted inquiries and located two sites in Gonin Gora and Mando in Kaduna state capital where some residents of Birnin Gwari currently take shelter. Based on how banditry attacks affected them and their society, 50 percent of the participants were at the Hope Ambassadors and Child Care Organization, Angwan Zawa IDP Camp Goni-Gora, Kaduna State. The research assistant set up a meeting with the NGO supervisor and was given instructions that included feeding the subjects. An interview date was set, and the interview was conducted. The feeding arrangement was justified during the zoom interview sessions we had, when more than half of the respondents looked pale and hungry, it was worthwhile. The remaining 50% of the interviews were done in Mando, where other participants currently reside.

3.6 Thematic Analysis of Data

Qualitative data has a characteristic that is not numerical in nature. It frequently takes the shape of written documents, audio recordings, audio notes, transcripts, and photographs. According to Dudovskiy, (2018) and Caulfield (2019), carrying out thematic analysis, spans across six (6) stages; getting familiar with the gathered data, generating codes, searching for themes and sub-themes from the data, consists of six (6) steps: becoming familiar with the generated data, creating initial codes, searching for themes, review of the themes, right labelling, and writing the final report. Thematic analytic method was chosen for various reasons. First is its effectiveness in determining people's views and perspectives, their level of awareness, and experience regarding the subject matter, in this case, the impact of banditry.

Transcripts, which served as the primary source of data for this study's data collection, can also be used to derive values using thematic analysis. The flexibility thematic analysis provides in analyzing the acquired data, including a big data set in terms of categorizing into major themes.

Thematic analysis uses a variety of techniques. Deduction or induction may apply here. Inductive technique involves letting the data define the themes that are derived from the data, as opposed to deductive strategy, which involves obtaining data with preconceived ideas. The study used an inductive methodology. Data were analyzed using Atlas.ti, is an application for organizing, analyzing, and coding primary data, such as interviews, text, and photos (O'Leary, 2017). This was utilized after transcription of the recorded data. For content analysis in themes/sub-themes.

3.7 Ethical Considerations and Limitations

According to O'Leary (2017.p:119) "Researchers must actively manage power, politics and ethics". This study adhered to the four principles of research ethics in relation to social sciences research. The principles include risk of participating, informed consent, confidentiality, and prevention of deception (Tolich 2009). Participating in the research did not require the application of invasive procedures, or any other form of subjecting respondents to any harmful procedure. Also, regarding psychological harm, the researcher ensured that the study was conducted in a place where respondents felt comfortable in. Also, questions that could trigger traumatization were avoided.

As regards informed consent, respondents were ensured to give their consent willingly to participate in the study. Respondents that did not give their consent were not included in the study. In addition, the confidentiality of respondents was strictly maintained. No personal information of respondents was required for participating in this study. This is to keep responses anonymous. Respondents were allowed to have adequate knowledge on the purpose of the research, to ensure that they are aware of the product of the data gathering. Finally, the research was objective.

More work went into the data transcription than anticipated. For those who spoke in English and for those who spoke Hausa, the zoom transcription of the interviews presented different meanings from what the respondents stated. 80% of respondents spoke in Hausa language and 20% spoke in English language didn't match up, this could be because of the disparity between the accent of the people and that of the transcription software, however, the researcher transcribed all 17 interviews word for word, for the sake of accuracy. In the next chapter we will hear what the interviewees revealed of the main impacts of banditry on their lives, and their sense of (in)security.

Chapter 4: Civilian Perspectives on Banditry

4.1 Introduction and Demographic Information

This chapter presents results of data gathered through IDIs, on the civilian perspectives of banditry and human insecurity in Northwest Nigeria, with a focus on people from Birnin Gwari LGA of Kaduna State. The data gathered from the seventeen respondents was analyzed using Atlas.ti application software. Analysis was done according to the research questions. In this chapter, views of respondents regarding root causes of banditry are directly addressed, drawing on their own words. It was discovered that different themes emerged as root causes of banditry. Firstly, some individuals indicated that banditry started as armed robbery, including cattle rustling. Farmer-herder clashes, often with an ethnic dimension, were also mentioned. Other causes included unemployment, poverty and politics. In this chapter the first part outlines the situation of human insecurity that civilians were facing in the study area.

Table 4.1: Demographic Distribution of Respondents

SN	Variable	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Gender	Male	9	52.9
		Female	8	47.1
2	Age	Less than 29 years	2	11.8
		30-39 years	4	23.5
		40-49 years	6	35.3
		50-59 years	2	11.8
		60 years above	3	17.6
3	Educational qualification	No formal education	4	23.5
		Primary	6	35.3
		SSCE	1	5.9
		ND/NCE	2	11.8
		HND/University degree	4	23.5
4	Occupation	Artisan	5	29.4
		Self-employed	2	11.8
		Farmer	6	35.3
		Clergy	2	11.8
		Teacher or Lecturer	2	11.8
	Total		**17**	**100**

SSCE - Secondary School Certificate, ND - National Diploma, HND- Higher National Diploma, NCE - National Certificate Education.

Table 4.1 presents results of data gathered on the demographic distribution of respondents. Gender distribution showed that nine respondents (52.9%) were males, while eight (47.1%) were females. Age distribution showed that two respondents were under 29, four (23.5%) were 30 to 39 years old, six (35.3%) were between 40 and 49, and 2 (11.8%) between 50 and 59. Finally, three (17.6%) were 60 years or older. Further, Table 4.1 shows that some respondents six (35.3%) held primary school certificates, but four (23.5%) had no formal education. Another four (23.5%) were educated to HND or University level, whilst two (11.8%) had lower ND or NCE certificates. One individual had studied up to secondary school leaving certificate. Finally, a third of respondents, six in total (35.3%) described themselves as farmers. Five (29.4%) were artisans, two (11.8%) were self-employed, another two (11.8%) were in missionary or religious activities, while two (11.8%) were teachers or lecturers.

4.2 Socio-Economic Implications of Banditry

The first objective of the study was to understand the socio-economic implications of banditry in Birnin Gwari LGA. Figure 4.1 shows a network of responses supplied by respondents regarding the socio-economic implications of banditry. Specifically, six themes and sub-themes were discovered from analysis of interview responses. A series of socio-economic implications were discovered and are further discussed in the sub-sections that follow (see also diagrams in Appendix 2).

4.2.1 Loss of Shelter

One socio-economic implication of banditry in Birnin Gwari local government is loss of shelter. Due to constant attacks and activities of bandits in the LGA, most residents had been forced to leave their original places of abode for some other, safer area. One male farmer Umar indicated that: "*I have lost shelter*". Shelter is a place of abode where individuals retire to at the close of work. A missionary, also a clergyman, Sale reported: "*We no longer live in our homes."* This is another indication of the loss of shelter due to the activities of bandits in the local government. By implication, it implies that individuals who lost their homes would be required to seek for shelter in some other places or regions, possibly a neighboring village or an Internally Displace Centre (IDP), as the case may be. This is also confirmed from the response of a 55yr old woman, Habiba "*I ran off before it got to my area. Everything is not the same again. We are all scattered*".

> "*Areas in Birnin Gwari are a deserted area now, their farmlands, churches, schools all abandoned and since then life has not been easy……. people who had their own houses are now in IDP camps and some are renting houses when they have their own homes"* (Caleb 44yr old lecturer also stated that)

From the responses, it is evident that banditry has made a lot of people leave their villages within Birnin Gwari LGA, seeking physical security and to protect their remaining property. Displacement can be considered a part of survival instincts that comes into play

when peaceful living conditions are threatened. Apart from loss of shelter, other implications of banditry in the LGA were lack of food, clothing and finance.

This implies that certain basic needs of human being are affected directly or indirectly. The importance of shelter cannot be overemphasized for human survival. When an individual feels threatened in where is considered and supposed to be safe, insecurity can be said to be the major cause. According to Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of need, it on the first level of human need is shelter. This implies that even if a human does not have every other need, shelter is paramount. Being displaced by act of banditry and terrorism therefore implies that residents could have run out of options to remain, therefore, needed to flee for security of their lives, leaving behind some properties and their primary occupation.

4.2.2 Lack of food, clothing, finance

Following the demographics of participants in this study it could be generalized that more of the residents in the Birnin Gwari local government are farmers. However, following the activities of bandits, and the fact that banditry has made many of the respondents to desert their original place of abode, it has had further implications on their livelihood. It was observed from the sets of responses that there is increased lack of food, clothing, and finance, because of bandit attacks on the LGA. A farmer stated that:

> *"...it has really affected us, we no longer have farms and means of livelihood, I have lost shelter and finances." "Feeding is a problem."* (65yr old farmer Ezekiel also stated that).

> *"It has affected us so much that my means of livelihood has been affected, I could not eat without meat but now I hardly see food to eat not to talk of meat"*

> *"Since I no longer do my farming activities, getting money has been a challenge. But I go and look for laborer work such as breaking of firewood and get the little money they pay me to survive…We cannot make money from our beans farm anymore"* (41 year old farmer Umar).

From the responses extracted, it is observed that majority of individuals who gave food and finance problems were farmers. This is understandable as their major source of livelihood has just been withdrawn from them, as they needed to vacate their place of abode, which is by implication closer to where they live. Due to bandit attacks, the source of livelihood, which gives an opportunity to make a living through earnings from the farming activities was left behind to survive. In addition, it was observed that some individuals needed to change their jobs immediately to make ends meets. This is more of an economic implication, as lack of work, translates to lack of finance, which subsequently contributes to the inability to afford food. In some other instances, the situation changed the feeding habit of individuals, specifically in frequency of eating, food combinations, etc.

By implication also, this could increase the prevalence of poverty in the region of the country, and indirectly might contribute to shortage of food for entities or individuals who relies on farm produce from the affected LGA.

> *"I cannot have access to my farmlands and it has affected me, I now live on the mega salary I get from the state government. It has affected everyone around me. I cannot help them as much as I used to help before"*- (44year old lecturer Caleb.)

While the direct implication of banditry on lack of food and increased poverty has been covered, it could also be observed that it has indirect impact as well. It was discovered that some individuals have multiple streams of income which is utilized to cater for individuals around them (civil servant & farming). However, because of the sacking of every individual from the community, some have been left to live only on their salary, making them to abandon their other sources of income such as farming, which invariably limits their scope of support for other persons around them.

4.2.3 Reduced Social Gathering

Another socio-economic implication of banditry is its effect on social interaction and connection among community dwellers in Birnin Gwari, Nigerians are *Owambe* lovers which translates to 'Come Lets Party'. This was made explicit as it was gathered from the responses that bandit activities affected the rate of attending social gathering to avoid kidnappings. Schools are also risky places, and as one of the artisans 20 year old Esther, also a student, said: "*I was in school and now I am no longer in school*". This implies that community educational institutions where community children attend for formal learning has been stalled, following the sacking of majority of villagers and dwellers in the local government, it also implies that the child stops going to school. This implies that such a child does not have the benefit of gaining formal education, which is supposed to be a right in the first place.

From responses, it seems that markets have become deserted, which further compounds the economic situation of individuals within the community. 41 year old male farmer, Umar, stated:

> *"The market and other social gathering are now at people's own risk. It is not a good feeling. No social gatherings anymore."*

45-year-old female farmer, Laraba also stated that

> *"Our social gathering has been affected, we are no longer together like we used to on Sundays and market days. I miss everything...nobody goes to Church or Mosque these few years with peace of mind. Because you don't know the outcome of your going because you might be attacked and killed so now most people have to pray in their rooms. Same with going to the farm or market."*

One other 30 year old female farmer, Marayama indicated that: "*There are no market and other social gathering now, some of my family members who got stocked there say it is very lonely and difficult*". From this excerpt, it seems that there is an urge to avoid the market, sacrificing social bonding for personal safety, to avoid exposing oneself to vulnerability to bandit attacks. Another 46-year-old farmer Joshua stated that:

> *"...before now, we used to travel round both Niger state for farming activities and competition but now we cannot dare it"*

From this excerpt, it seems that one indirect implication of banditry on the mobility of individuals is undermining mobility on which livelihood security depends. Banditry disrupted the lives of town dwellers in Birkin Gwari, and the routes which were used to ply their trade

and bring goods to market to sell. This has severe social and economic implications for residents. Religious activities in churches and mosques, where large number of people usually gather for religious purposes, have been affected too. 25-year-old farmer, Hanatu stated that:

> *"Our social life has been badly affected, I no longer go to church, we no longer visit or see each other, no farming activities"*

30-year-old farmer, Marayamu.

> *"We no longer see my relatives. No more weddings, parties, things I looked forward to. My children are now out of school"*

From the excerpts, it was also discovered that community dwellers dread attending or organizing social parties such as weddings because of the fear for bandit attack. In addition, visitation of relatives was minimal.

Also, the fact that social gathering is affected also translates to hindrance to their freedom of movement. When a human being is prevented from attending desired functions, at any time due to fear of being victim of kidnap, there is lack of freedom to socialize. On the second level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is the need for social connections. This can also be said to have been breached due to banditry. From the previous themes and sub-themes, it could be arrived at that human needs on the first and second level seems to have been lacked by residents of Birnin-Gwari local government, due to insecurity. These are significant social and economic implications of bandit attacks on the local government.

4.2.4 Broken Families

One of the most indicated implications of the bandit activities is its contribution to broken family and homes. It was observed from the responses that many families and homes were broken because of bandit attacks. Virtually all the respondents indicated that they miss their family members and neighbors, since attacks on their village forced them to run in different directions, while others were killed. Some excerpts are presented below. 20-year-old female artisan, Blessing, stated that:

> *"My family and I were all together and my friends in the same church in Numana Gbagyi but we are no longer together".*

Another respondent indicated.

> *"I am far from my family and friends. Some are dead and some are missing. We are all scattered. I have lost contact with families which are not mobile."*

From the excerpts it was observed that majority of the respondents missed their dispersed family members. It was indicated in the first part of this study that banditry made most civilians lose their shelters and contributed to increased poverty as most were unable to travel to farms, markets or work. Now, it has been established from the findings that families have been scattered and, in some cases, lost touch following bandit attacks that forced them to flee.

It was further discovered that respondents pointed to loss of family members kidnap, or homelessness because of banditry. In some instances, it was discovered that to make ends

meet, some who are heads of the family needed to seek for employment through either casual labors, or other means, while they are forced to send their family members to far distances, considered to be safer than where they originally stay.

> *"I don't like the place my mother is living but what can I do. Now we live to survive"*-34-year-old teacher Daniel.

This was also in line with a study by Ladan and Mutawalli (2020). It was found in their study that banditry had series of economic and social impact on individuals who resides in Katsina state. It was reported that bandits who operated in Katsina state has engaged in series of crimes which includes chasing farmers out of their farmlands. This by implication contributed to scattered family members and relatives all over the state and outside the state.

In some instances, family members were killed, as excerpt by a 44 year old farmer, Joshua *"they killed my family member he was a young father in his young marriage, they killed a pregnant woman and two other people"*. Some were kidnapped, while some others were forced to send family members away while they sort out business related matters. In addition, some were unable to contact family members due to the lack of mobile networks or devices. Most of the displaced individuals were camped at an Internally Displaced Camp (IDCs), not far from the Kaduna state capital, which serve as safe sites for community dwellers chased out of their previous place of abode. Some relatives in the extended family and some neighbors were to be missing by respondents. Banditry attacks meant everyone's survival instincts were triggered, resulting in individuals seeking personal safety first, before protecting other people. Generally, banditry had broken up some family connections whilst destroying some people's homes and livelihoods.

4.2.5 Religious Divides

One of the most unique themes observed from the responses is mention of religious divides. Nigerians are a religious people. It was observed from the study that banditry activities have created division in line with religious beliefs of communities in and around Birnin Gwari LGA. A 60-year-old missionary, Sale, stated that:

> *"...we have become apprehensive of each other, both religions mixed together before now but not anymore, I believe the other religion has paved way for these attacks"*

From this excerpt, it is observed that banditry has left the people with series of suspicions. Specifically, it is observed that some of the respondents perceives that one religious is more culpable, being in support of the ideas and beliefs behind bandit attacks, than the other. It was indicated from the responses that before the bandits began attacking villages in the local government, there was a cordial relationship between two religious communities. However, the emergence of bandit attacks on the community strained this relationship between Christians and Muslims. They seem to have lost trust, making them suspicious of each other. This strained relationship has affected the civilians in the community to the extent that they no longer wish to share buildings or public social activities. This was perceived to be a means of surviving from subsequent bandit attacks on the community.

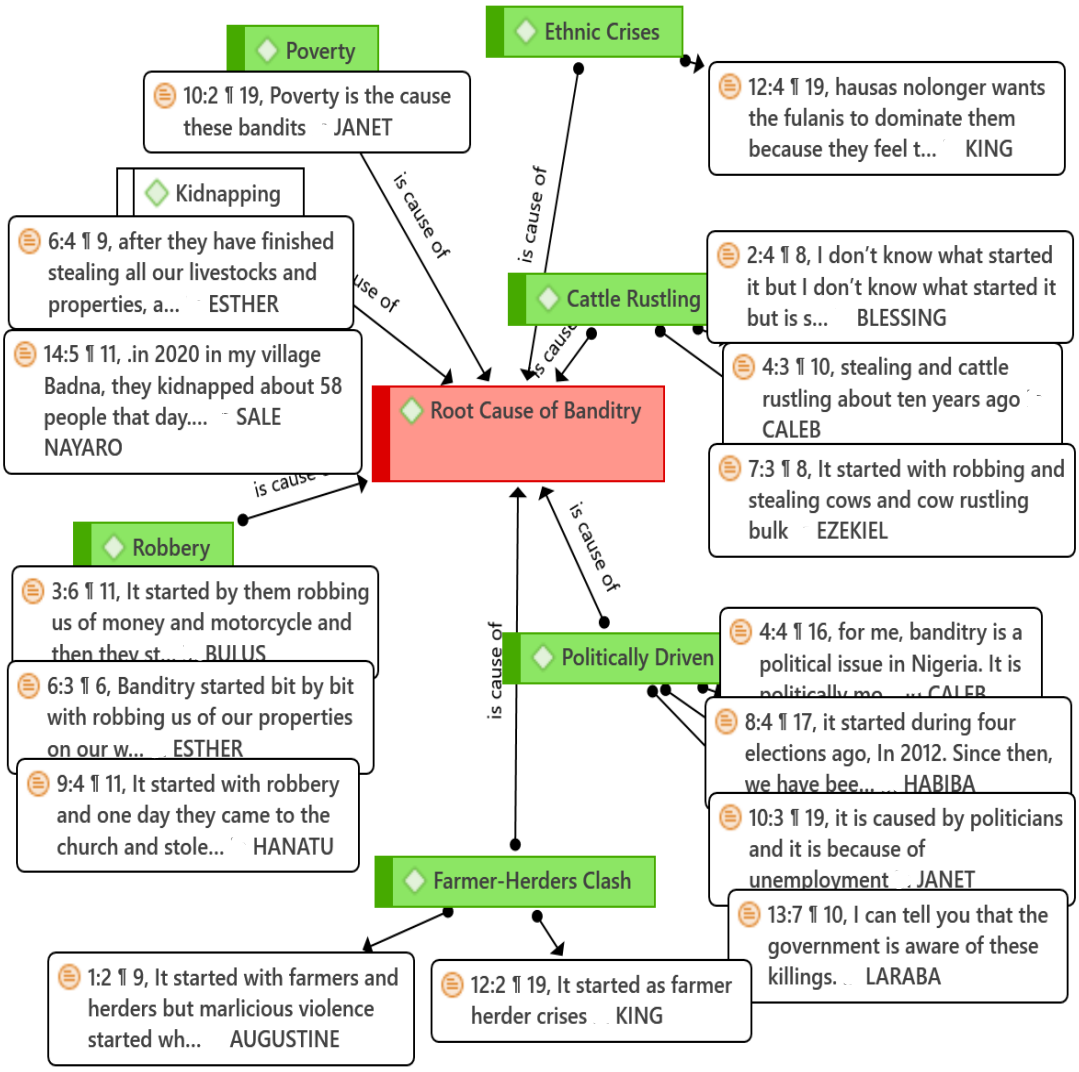
4.3 People's perspectives on the causes of banditry

Different accounts have been given regarding the root cause of banditry in the North-East region of Nigeria, with specific focus on Birnin Gwari LGA. The data gathered during this study yielded a total of six (6) themes and sub-themes regarding the root causes of banditry.

Poverty was identified as a major cause of banditry by those interviewed for this study. It was discovered that individuals involved in banditry are more of unemployed youths, as they were easily identified, recruited and paid to carry out criminal activities. Similarly, Rosenje et al. (2016) also indicated that poverty played vital role in the development of banditry in Nigeria. It was already identified by Adegoke (2019) that poverty is already high in Northwest Nigeria, hence, could be a possible trigger factor for the easy penetration of banditry in Northwestern part of Nigeria.

Other identified root causes of banditry that were identified in this study includes politics. A large proportion of the respondents indicated that politicians armed some youths during the 2011 elections for their own political gain, and it had become difficult to disarm these young men. It was discovered from this study that the rate of unemployment in the region made some individuals opt to join bandits, either directly or indirectly through becoming informants.

Figure 4.2: Causes of Banditry



In relation to frustration-aggression theory, Fererabend and Feirauben's (1972) affirmed that violence is a by-product of frustration brought on by a person's failure to achieve their goals. As a result, insurgency is a by-product of violent behaviour, which is brought on by problems like unemployment and poverty, among others. Using the research as an example, we can say that the insurgency in the nation was laced by extreme poverty, unemployment, environmental degradation, injustice, a lack of infrastructure, ethnic disputes, and militancy. Also, Adegoke (2019) also affirmed that unemployment is a factor that has aided the development and growth of unemployment in Northwest Nigeria.

4.3.1 Robbery

Following the responses submitted, there were series of individuals who indicated that banditry started out more like robbery by individuals outside the community. It was indicated that shops, motorcycles, as well as houses were robbed, when it all started initially. 60-year-old Sale excerpts that:

> *"It started by them robbing us about 10 years when they would attack people on market days and rob them of all the money they made from their sales, then killing and now kidnapping in 2020 in my village Badna,*

they kidnapped about 58 people that day. The first kidnap that happened in my community was they came at night and kidnapped a middle-aged man and demanded for ransom and said that if his family didn't pay, they will kill the man".

35-year-old farmer, Esther also stated that:

"After they have finished stealing all our livestock and properties, and had nothing left to steal, I think they started kidnapping people because that was what next they could see to make money from"

From the excerpts, it is observed that there is agreement that banditry started out around 10 years ago, with stealing and robbery of people's goods and properties. The stealing span across different settings from the responses. Some robberies were done in shops, houses, and even in religious settings. Some were also robbed in marketplaces during broad daylight.

4.3.2 Farmer-Herder Clashes

Another theme identified from the source of banditry attack is the historical clash between farmers and herders. The cause of banditry, according to the gathered data can be traced to the clash between farmers and herders. It was discovered from the study that there seems to be a clash of 'roles' and 'responsibilities' clashes between farmers and herders. For instance, it was discovered from one of the responses that there was clash between farmers and herders regarding who has the right to rare cattle. There was no agreement, on who is to do what, hence, led to frequent clashes. According 39-year-old welder, Augustine:

"It started with farmers and herders, but malicious violence started when the farmers also started cattle rearing almost more than the Fulani's so the Fulani became envious and started rustling farmers cows."

Another account indicated that the farmers-herders clash was based on land ownership. Specifically, it was observed from the findings that herders, who moves from one place to the other attempted to lay claims on lands where farmers use for cultivating crops. This led to misunderstanding, and gave birth to the farmers-herders clash, which could have culminated to the banditry attack. 41-year-old Jane stated that:

"Some (Fulani) came and started killing farmers and chasing them away from their farmlands and eventually they started claiming the lands."

The farmers-herders clash account is also like the next identified theme on the source of banditry, which is ethnic crises.

4.3.3 Ethnic crises

Ethnic crises are another identified theme on the source of banditry. This shares some similarities with the farmers-herders clash in a way. The Fulani are known to be herders, who migrates from one place to the other, depending on the weather, while Hausas are majorly farmers. Therefore, the fact that there is farmers-herders clash, could have culminated to the ethnic clash between Hausas, who are majorly farmers, and Fulani, who are majorly cattle rearers or herders. 41-year-old Sandra

indicated that:

"The Hausas no longer wants the Fulani to dominate them because they feel they are superior and violent. Because Hausas are saying that the Fulani like taking over anywhere they go. They said the crises in other parts of Africa caused foreign Fulani to come down to Nigeria. And you know how the Fulani like themselves. I believe they want to drive indigenous people from their homes so that they can give it to their fellow Fulani to settle in."

From the excerpt above, it shows that there are tribal superiority crises between the Hausa and Fulani. In Birnin Gwari, the original settlers are noted to be farmers of Gbagyi and Hausa ethnic groups however, they started experiencing robbery, which includes rustling of cattle by strangers, which led to banditry. Accordingly, the hesitation of the Hausas to allow the Fulani to dominate them could have led to the forceful sacking of residents of Birnin Gwari, who are originally farmers however, the Fulani are also affected by these bandit attacks because four of the displaced respondents are of the Fulani ethnic group.

4.3.4 Poverty – Politics, Unemployment.

A study carried out by Okoli and Ugwu (2016) confirmed that banditry contributes significantly to increase in poverty rate. Specifically, due to banditry, many residents in a particular setting were forced to leave their place of abode, hence, implying seeking for another means of livelihood.

*"We don't have jobs nor farming since we became displaced. We have been impoverished. God sends Strangers who take pity on us and help sometimes" (*25-year-old farmer Hanatu.)

The study considered the socio-economic implications of banditry in Birnin Gwari LGA of Kaduna State. Firstly, it was discovered that banditry displaced a lot of residents in certain communities in Birnin Gwari LGA of Kaduna state. Specifically. Some had to seek refuge at Internally Displaced Persons camps (IDPs), closer to them. They were made to abandon their houses, businesses, and properties to secure their life. This is also in line with the report of Reliefweb (2019). It was reported by UNHCR in 2019 that internal displacement of community members is one of the armed banditry's most obvious effects in the Northwest. In numerous towns in the states of Zamfara, Katsina, and Sokoto between January and August 2019, more than 200,000 people were internally displaced. These are also areas affected by the activities of bandits, which invariably could be applicable to Birnin Gwari LGA of Kaduna state. According to the Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, banditry has deprived local civilians not only of shelter, food and clothing but also of social relations needed for human security.

This is understandable as their major source of livelihood has just been withdrawn from them, as they needed to vacate their place of abode, which is by implication closer to where they live. Due to bandit attacks, the source of livelihood, which gives an opportunity to make a living through earnings from the farming activities was left behind to survive. This also directly or indirectly increased the poverty level in the region of country. Related to this, Abdullahi (2019) carried out a study on the socio-implication of banditry in Niger republic. It was discovered in the study that banditry including acts of cattle and sheep rustling had a strong connection with poverty and poor governance.

Similarly, Ebonine (2022) carried out a study on the assessment of the impact of banditry on the educational and socio-economic development of the Northern part of Nigeria. It was discovered in the study that banditry has negatively affected the northern part of Nigeria significantly and to a great extent. Specifically, it was found that bandits target populous areas where large number of people can be seen, with the aim of kidnapping. This formed the basis of targeting secondary schools, as it houses a higher number of students. Schools were ordered to be closed in the affected communities.

In some other instances, banditry has been indicated to have political undertone. Specifically, it was discovered from the gathered data that the government has a hand in the banditry activities. It was specifically stated that the bandits metamorphosed from their original objective after a particular period operating at will in Military uniforms. It was alleged that a political party has a hand in how bandits started in Nigeria as a country. This is seen in the excerpt below:

> *"It is political. There is this political party I don't want to mention, they wanted power by all means and mobilised some youths to disrupt the country and make it ungovernable for the then incumbent government for political struggle"* (34-year-old teacher Daniel)

> *"I can tell you that the government is aware of these killings because, the government has allowed these boys to operate at will even in military uniforms, where do they get the uniforms from if not from government agencies?"* (41-year-old clergy, Janet)

> *"The bandits share the ransom money with the government, believe it or not the government is doing this to its own people"* (75-year-old artisan, Abdullahi)

From another perspective, it was discovered from the response that the politics of banditry is indirect, as it was directly aided by unemployment, which was caused by the government. It could be assumed that unemployed youths were recruited into banditry, who subsequently assists in the sacking of communities: *"It is caused by politicians, and it is because of unemployment"*. (46 year old artisan Janet)

Another perspective to it is the effect of poverty on bandits. The excerpt below shows that poverty could be leveraged upon to recruit youths into the acts of banditry. There are instances from the responses where it was reported that certain individuals serve as informant for the bandits, who then comes to kidnap according to given information about the kidnapped persons.

4.4 Other Causes

According to gathered responses, there were two other factors. The first was the use of sophisticated weaponry and the second was the use of informant within the community and within the security agencies. Regarding sophisticated weapons, it was affirmed by some of the respondents that the bandits utilize sophisticated weapons, which their local ammunitions cannot match with. While it was agreed that collective efforts are needed to stop banditry, the community was deterred as they do not have matching weapons with the bandits. Excerpt by 41-year-old farmer, Umar and 34-year-old teacher Daniel below:

> *"It is not possible because these bandits have been increasing with more sophisticated weapons"*

"They were very effective until when the bandits started coming in large number on motorcycles with very sophisticated weapons that the vigilante group could no longer face them"

Having a sophisticated weapon could be a discouragement for further engagement with bandits, especially when there are more casualties than successes recorded by either the community youths or vigilantes. In fact, it was observed from the excerpts that when local vigilantes and community youths started, they were recording successes, until the bandits started using more sophisticated weapons.

"They also started planting informants"

"There are informants everywhere in Kaduna. Infact all the kidnapping are based on information they get from informants" (41-year-old farmer, Umar).

Another factor that could hinder the win against banditry is the role of informant. It was alleged from the responses gotten that bandits have informant within the community and the security agencies, who gives live information regarding their operations and targeted victims. This is shown in the excerpt below.

4.5 A Civilian Lens on State Engagement with Banditry

This section presents responses and analysis regarding how the fight against bandits has been carried out in recent past. Figure 4.3 presents the network of responses, including themes and sub-themes. Broadly speaking, efforts to combat banditry can be divided into two parts. The state or federal government effort on the one hand, and the community effort.

The primary function of any government is the protection of life and property of community dwellers. However, from the perspective of the responses gotten from the participants, it could be arrived at that the government did not leave an impression of performing its primary duty. Regarding the efforts of the government, two (2) major themes emerged; no government support and missed airstrikes. Find figure in the appendix.

Regarding the lack of government support, some of the respondents indicated that the government never showed signs of supporting the fight against banditry in the local government. Some excerpts by 34 year old teacher Daniel and 46 year old Janet presented:

"To the best of my knowledge, the government has not done much. Because at some point, we organised called and wrote to the commissioner for security and home affairs of Kaduna state, but nothing was done."

"They have been saying they are fighting bandits, but the evidence shows otherwise. These bandits kill people daily. How can the government say they can't end these boys?"

From the excerpts above, it is shown that some of the respondents indicated that the government has not been active in the combat against bandits in the LGA. It was expressly discussed by one of the farmers that the government might not consider their security a priority as the family members of the government officials were not affected by the attacks.

In addition, it was found from the responses that although government claims to be gathering intelligence and fighting against the bandits, the residents were not seeing the result as the bandits kept attacking them almost all the time.

> *"I feel the government has been romancing these bandits because sometimes ago, we saw the military bombing some areas but it was an area that does not shelter the bandits, it was quite confusing because innocent people were the ones who were affected"* (60-year-old farmer/missionary, Sale).

From the excerpts, it was discovered that in a bid to assist in the fight against bandits in the local government, innocent villagers and community members ended up being casualties of the support through airstrikes, which was meant to aim at destroying the bandit's hideout in the bushes closer to the local government. This serves as a major blow as there were reports of some respondents who claimed that they have relatives that were part of the incidence. While this could be seen as an intention to support the fight against bandits, it ended up being a missed strike, which subsequently increases the casualties they are dealt with by the bandits.

4.6 Community Interventions

The aspect of solutions community dwellers adopted includes involvement of community youths, formation of local vigilantes, prayers and some completely deserted their homes and properties. All these could be tagged as seeking self-help as a community. In some instances, youth were gathered to jointly fight against bandit. Series of successes were recorded according to the responses gathered. 60-year-old farmer, Sale stated that:

> *"Our youths have really tried in fighting off the bandits, they once rescued a girl the bandits kidnapped, the youths followed them and rescued her"*
>
> *"We organised ourselves to fight them off, the youths would chase the kidnappers but now we were overpowered because they are now highly armed"*

From the excerpts, it was discovered that the community organized series of modes of repelling the attacks from the bandits, one of which is the organization and cooperation of youths to fight against the bandits. Although this did not last long as they do not have the required fighting weapons such as guns and ammunitions which the bandits possess, they were able to record some successes, such as the rescue of a kidnapped girl among others.

> *"…we formed a local vigilante, once they come, we used to attack and overpower them and reclaim our people and cattle"* (39-year-old welder, Augustine).

Apart from the forming of the youth groups, the community was also able to form a local vigilante group to repel the attacks. This also did not last long as the weapons they possess does not match with that of the bandits.

> *"We pay the ransoms ourselves through the help of family members and community people from the Church"* (46 year old farmer, Joshua)
>
> *"My brother was freed after we organized fund raising in the Mosques and I also sold grains for this. We paid 2million Naira along with 3 android phones"* (55-year-old herbalist, Sani).

"The government has left us to our fate"

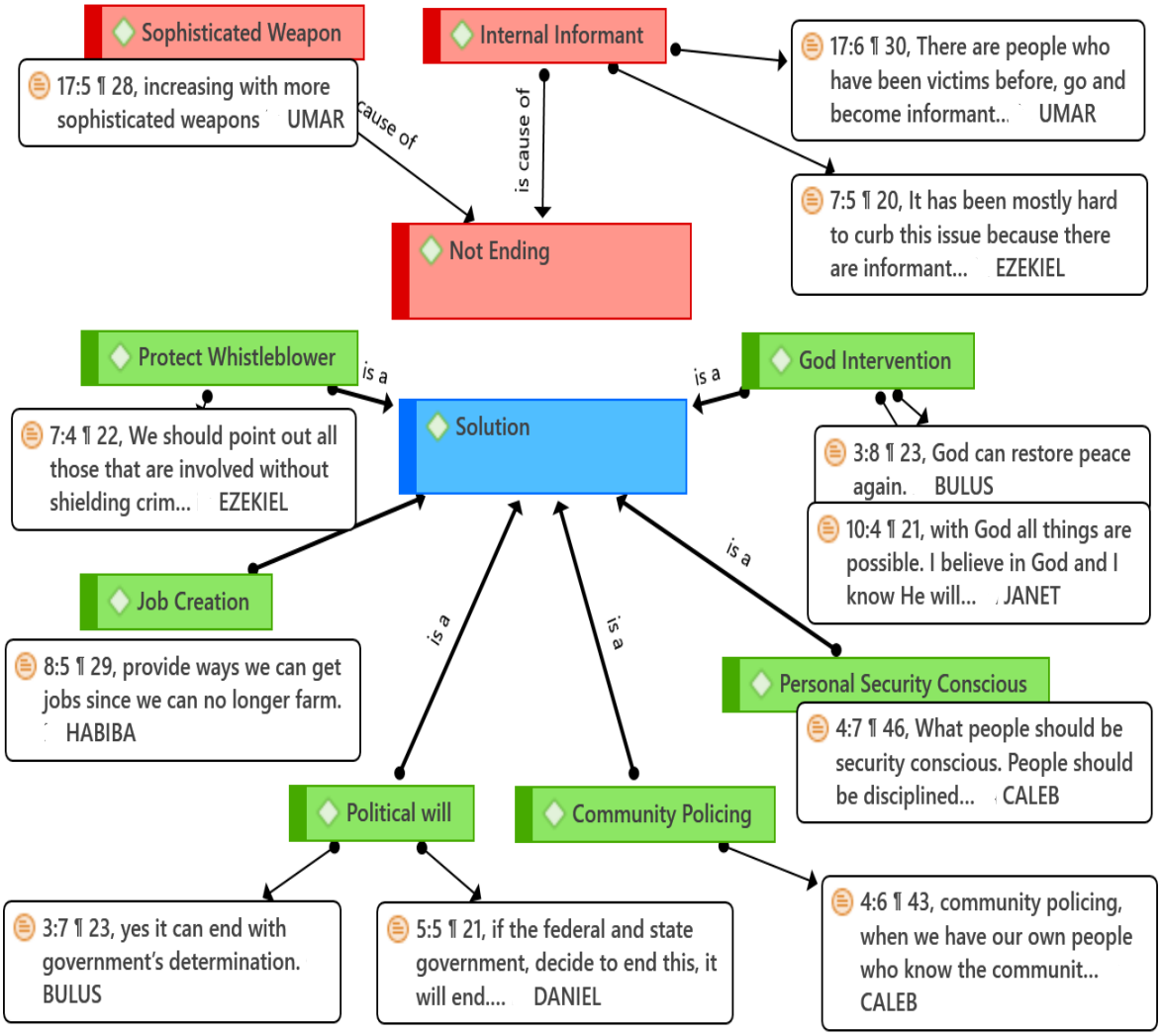
In terms of ransom payments to secure the release of family members, responses indicate that the burden lays solely on family members and place of worship. This can be interpreted that the government has does nothing to secure people's release. Leaving close relatives of the victims with the financial burden.

Chapter 5 How can banditry be ended?

5.1 Introduction

Figure 5.1 presents the network of themes and responses regarding how banditry could be stopped from the opinion of the respondents. While related questions to achieve this objective were asked, certain responses affirmed that banditry cannot end. This therefore divided the sections to achieve this objective into two parts; factors perceived to further elongate banditry, and the solutions to stop banditry.

Figure 5.1: Solutions to end banditry



From the responses, series of solutions were identified and stood out as themes and sub-themes from Figure 4.4. The solutions cut across the following: political will, job creation, community policing, personal security consciousness, protection of whistle blowers and God's intervention. This is shown in the excerpt and sub-themes below:

5.2 Political will

One of the points that was repeated by majority of the respondents was the lack of political will of the government to end banditry. According to 85% of the responses, it was affirmed that the government has the wherewithal to put an end to banditry only if the government is willing to. 35-year-old farmer, Esther stated thus:

> *"The government has not put in genuine efforts"*

> *"Government negligence has made this escalate but they can bring it to an end when they truly want to"*

From the sample excerpts, it is shown that the people believe that the government needs to only show political will to combat banditry to put an end to the menace in the community. This will go a long way in ensuring that banditry is put to an end.

In response to curbing banditry attacks, on the 26th of October 2022, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Governor, Mr. Godwin Emefiele announced the redesign of the Nigeria currency. The redesign of the naira was intended to address terrorism financing, which is still a major security threat in the nation. Nigerians have long called for financial regulatory involvement to make it more challenging for kidnappers to demand ransom from victims (Emejo. 3rd Nov. 2022. This Day Nigeria). However, the question is, is the new currency going to have a tracking chip on them? otherwise, what will prevent the bandits from demanding ransom in the new currency. Even though the initiative looks positive in the fight against corruption and embezzlement? What will prevent them from demanding payment in foreign currencies such as the US dollars? These are the questions the Central bank needs to address.

Another related factor is the creation of jobs. It was observed from the findings that unemployment could have contributed to the rise and continued growth of banditry in the Northwestern part of the country. Therefore, the government, the exhibition of political will create more jobs for unemployed youths. The excerpts below illustrate this:

> *"The government should help provide food for us and provide ways we can get jobs since we can no longer farm"* (55 year old milk seller).

> *"It is because some people are evil. There are people who have been victims before, go and become informants to the bandits and once they see the money involved, from informants, they will become bandits by joining one of the groups. Something which has compounded the issue"* (41 year old farmer, Umar).

It has been established in this study that banditry has socio-economic implications in Birnin Gwari in various ways. Therefore, there has been series of efforts to counter banditry. This includes governmental and community efforts. As regards governmental effort, it was found that this has been more of a negative impact. Specifically, it was discovered that respondents indicated that there was no government intervention regarding preventing banditry. Also, it was found that an effort to counter banditry by the government had caused more casualties than help the system. For instance, it was found in this study that airstrikes through bombing with the aid of Helicopter targeted the wrong location, hence, killed more locals who are not members of the bandit groups. From this indication, it could be arrived at that the federal and state government has not contributed actively to reducing bandit activities in Birnin Gwari LGA.

In a related study, Adeoye (2018) also affirmed that successive administrations in Nigeria have contributed significantly to the failure in the combat against terrorism and banditry. Also, Yaro and Tobias (2019) indicated that the fight against terrorism and banditry in North-western part of the country has majorly been the effort of community dwellers and others who are close to the affected areas or communities. Also, according to Yusuf (2015), it was reported that the response of the government towards security threat has been poor, slow, and insensitive.

As regards community impact, it was found that several efforts were made and out in place by the community members. First, it was discovered that community youths were gathered to fight against bandit attacks, while in some other instances, local vigilante groups were formed to fight against bandits. Excerpt by 30-year-old farmer Marayamu:

> *"During the attacks, we had no choice than to secure ourselves. There was a vigilante group our husbands formed but were soon overpowered because we had no guns like the bandits"*

A series of successes were recorded through communal efforts. In some other instances, some deserted their homes, while some others simply prayed to God. Okoli and Ugwu (2019) indicated that banditry is not just economically motivated but has political undertone. Specifically, it was indicated that politically driven bandit activities have to do with assaulting a group of individuals based on a disposition that would politically favour a particular individual or group of people.

5.3 Community Policing and Whistle Blower Protection

Another identified solution to ensuring human security is the formation of community policing. 44-year-old lecturer Caleb stated that:

> *"Also, community policing, when we have our own people who know the community well, because everyone knows everyone in the community and understand the terrain"*

The creation of community policing, according to the respondents would ensure that individuals who has better understanding of the terrain would perform better than military personnel or police officers who will just be deployed without having full knowledge of the routes within the area. This could also be in form of upgrading the existing local vigilantes to work as community police personnel within the area.

Another identified solution from the findings is the protection of whistle blower. It was discovered from the study that there are certain community dwellers who could identify some members of the bandit gang, who, for personal security reasons would not want to divulge such information.

> *"The government should protect those willing to give them information on bandits and there should be CCTV to capture these criminals"* -65-year-old farmer, Ezekiel.

Finally, Gods intervention was indicated by some respondents as a method of ending banditry. This can be explained by the high level of religiosity among Nigerians. Another factor could be that they stopped having faith in the government.

5.4 Proposed Solutions to Banditry: A Synthesis

From this study, two broad sets of themes were discovered. The first falls in the pessimistic angle, which specifically states that banditry is not ending anytime soon. Reasons given includes bandits getting more sophisticated weapons, and presence of internal informant for the bandits within the community and government institutions. It was discovered from this study that initially, community efforts yielded positive results, until the bandits started attacking with more sophisticated weapons.

The other aspect of the solutions to banditry was found to generate different themes spanning across; political will, job creation, community policing, encouragement of being security conscious, and God's intervention. By political will, it was discovered from this study that most of the respondents indicated that the government could end the banditry only if they are willing to. Further, it was discovered from this study that community policing, which will include more of community members would help combat banditry better. In addition, creation of job by the government could help to discourage more youths from joining bandits. Human development is a government responsibility, failure in this responsibility is detrimental to the overall wellbeing of that society. Two theories applied here are frustration aggression and the crime opportunity theory.

Frustration aggression theory asserts that violence is a byproduct of frustration brought on by a person's inability to fulfill their aims (Fererabend & Feirauben ,1972). As a result, a violent behavior, which is a result of government's inability to establish a society firmly on human development stirs a loss of hope in a state system. Laden by issues like unemployment and poverty. When a person lacks their Basic Human Needs, they often turn into a danger to themselves and others. The process of actively meeting needs like those for food, shelter, safety, and medical care is known as "human development."(Galtung, 1966 and Sen, 1975). Frustration pushed some members of the society to join the bandit group because of the state's failure to provide security for them and their properties (Rufai', 2021) finding protection was to join an armed group while some kidnapped victims came out to become informants. 100% of the respondents spoke with one voice in the solutions as excerpt below:

> *"If we have a good functioning government if the government can do their governing jobs well. create job opportunity for the youths Security will be enforced"*

This is a call for a more responsive and people-oriented government. For example, it was discovered from the research that kidnapped victims and their family have had to face the horrible struggle of complying to the terms and conditions of freeing a kidnapped person without government's support as excerpt by 41-year-old Sandra below:

> *"The government is not responsive in any way and form. but these victims need care and attention. like psychological centers for the victims to help them. And they should be relocated to other cities. And the money their family members pay should be reimbursed so that they can start life again. Because my sister's husband had to sell some things and take out all his savings for her release. And was left with nothing".*

Crime opportunity theory is applicable to this research because the bandits saw the lack of human insecurity in the region and leveraged on it to unleash terror on others. The 2016 Global Terrorism Index argues that "the opportunistic potential for criminal-terrorist groups to take over geographic areas is tied to declining state power" (GTI, 2016, p. 85) to provide

the basic human needs of its people the government needs to improve human development and security.

Chapter 6 Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Overview of Key Insights

The following conclusions were drawn based on the findings of the study. Firstly, it could be concluded from this study that banditry has socio-economic impact on residents of Birnin Gwari LGA. Banditry was found to have led to loss of food, clothing, shelter and security, which are the basic needs for human existence Also, it could be concluded that banditry contributed to broken family, reduced social activities such as attending religious activities, schooling, and market gatherings. Also, banditry was discovered to be a major source of religious divide in North-western part of Nigeria, specifically in Birnin Gwari LGA.

Secondly, it can be concluded from this study that there has been more communal effort towards combating banditry in Birnin Gwari local government, compared to governmental intervention. Formation of local vigilante, and the cooperation among community youths were some of the efforts by the community in combating banditry in Birnin Gwari local government.

Thirdly, this study concludes that from the perspective of residents of Birnin Gwari LGA, the root causes of banditry could be traced to ethnic crises, history of farmer-herder clash, and poverty. It could also be concluded that banditry has some iota of political involvement as it was indicated by some of the respondents that banditry is politically motivated.

Finally, it could be concluded from this study that while some indicated that it might be difficult to end banditry, some solutions were identified. Creation of job, genuine political will by the government, community policing, protection of whistle blower, encouragement of personal security consciousness, and prayers for God's intervention were concluded to be solutions proffered by residents of Birnin Gwari local government.

6.2 Some Modest Recommendations

Banditry has been found to have huge socio-economic impact on residents of Birnin Gwari LGA of Kaduna state. This setting is part of one of the most affected regions of Northwest Nigeria, where poverty is high and literacy level is low. Following the activities of bandits therefore, it is important to proffer recommendations on ending the menace. Based on the findings therefore, the following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.

1) Firstly, it is recommended from this study that government should invest in job creation for unemployed individuals in the Northwestern region of Nigeria. It was found in this study that unemployment and poverty is part of the root cause of banditry, hence, creation of employment opportunities and jobs for youths in the region would prevent enticing them to banditry. This will subsequently reduce the prevalence of banditry in the region.

2) It is also recommended that government should make conscious effort in ensuring that they put an end to banditry in the Kaduna. This could be done by deploying more security personnel to the region of the country. This will further ensure that bandits are combated and overpowered in affected regions. While deploying more security personnel, it is important to also provide firearms and ammunitions in fighting the bandits.

3) In addition, it is recommended that communities should be supported in the provision of firearms and ammunitions for local vigilantes. This local vigilante has better knowledge of the area and routes, which makes it easier to navigate and track down bandits in the bush. This could also be done through establishing a well-structured community policing. This will ensure that effective joint fight against bandits is achieved.

4) Furthermore, it is recommended that more studies should be carried out on other implications of banditry and how it could be resolved. This will offer more practical means of tackling insecurity in Northwest Nigeria.

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Appendices

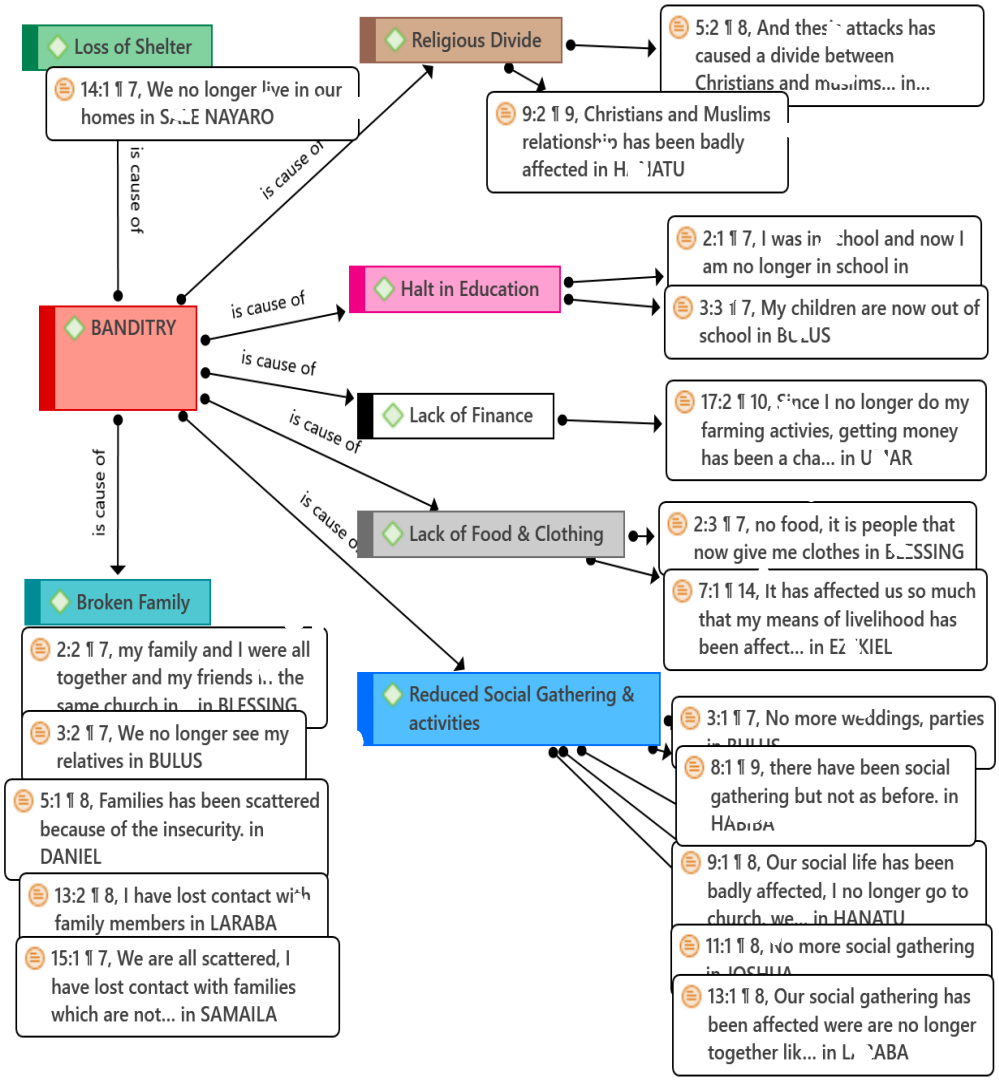
Appendix 1: List of respondents

Serial No	Name	Age	Gender	Occupation	Level of Education
1	Caleb M.	44	Male	Lecturer	B.Ed.
2	Joshua K.	46	Male	Farmer	Primary school Cert.
3	Blessing A.	20	Female	Fashion designer	Primary school Cert.
4	Esther J.	35	Female	Farmer	Primary school
5	Augustine K.	39	Male	Welder	HND
6	Sale N.	60	Male	Farmer	Adult education

7	Hanatu L.	25	Female	Farmer	Primary school
8	Marayamu S.	30	Female	Farmer	None
9	Daniel R.	34	Male	Teacher	B.Sc.
10	Laraba L.	45	Female	Farmer	Primary school
11	Ezekiel M.	65	Male	Farmer	Primary school
12	Janet O.	46	Female	Business-woman	Tertiary education
13	Sani M.	55	Male	herbalist	Arabic education
14	Habiba S.	55	Female	Milk seller	None
15	Abdullahi A.	75	Male	Plumber	None
16	Umar M.	41	Male	Farmer	Primary school
17	Sandra J.	41	Female	Clergy	B.Sc.

Appendix 2: Supplementary Figures for Chapter 4

4.1: Implications of Banditry



Appendix 3: supplementary figure for chapter 4

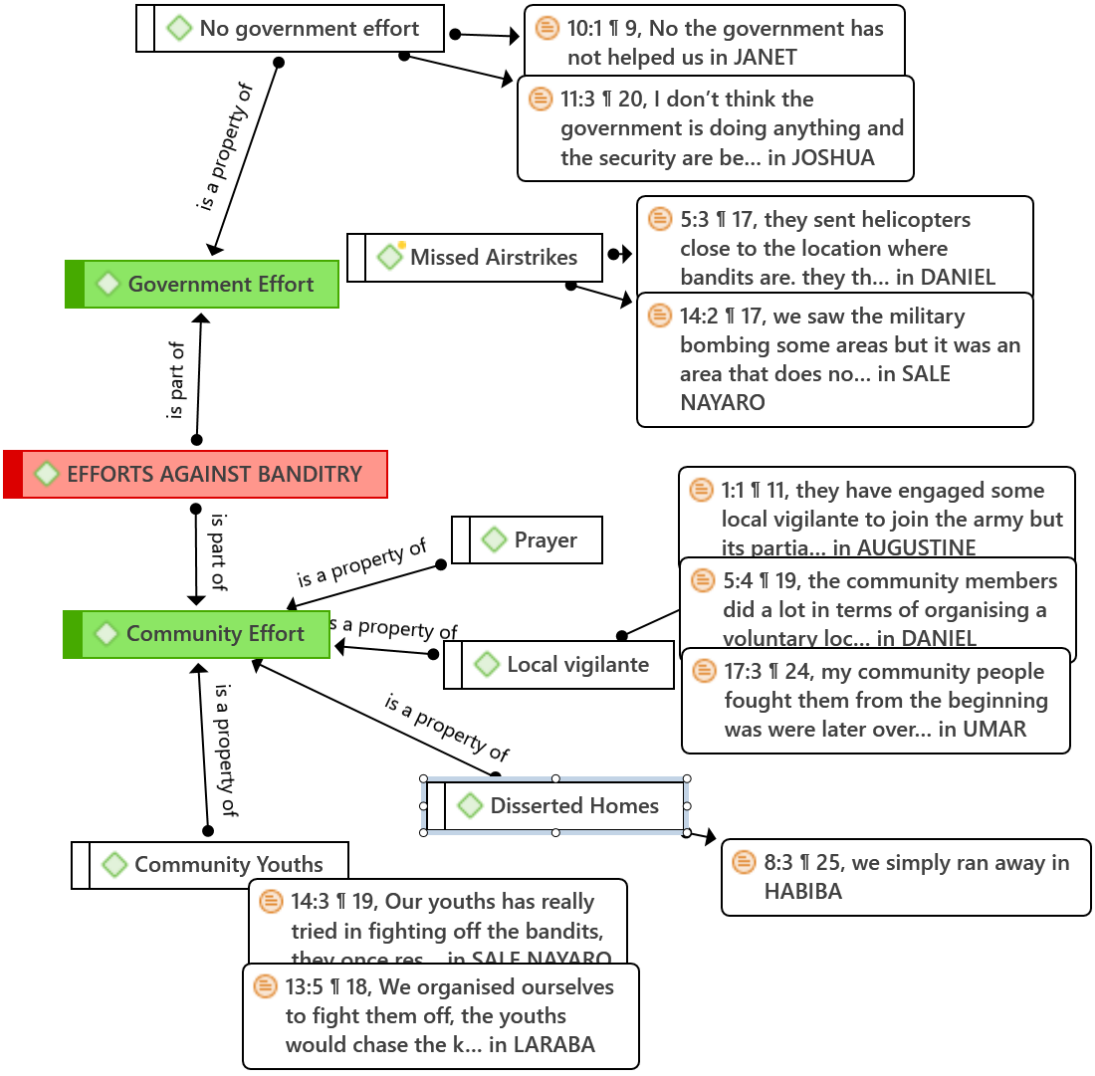



Figure 4.3: Fighting against banditry