

## **Infiltration of Banditry and Abduction in Nigeria: Counter Strategy and Implications on Victims of Portfolio Management to National Security**

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### **Abstract**

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**B**anditry and abduction in Nigeria have become national tragedy and social menace across social fabric of human society. The incidences of frequent banditry in the country have pose a serious threat to the development and insecurity of the lives and properties of citizens. The study utilize qualitative approach whereby relevant literature were reviewed. Useful materials including records of data, television broadcast, network news, newspaper, security report diary and ongoing report and unpublished sources from general public on banditry and all forms of insecurity. This ravaging the serendipity of the country peace, harmony, unity and socio-economic well-being which constitute major impediments to the national security challenges. It is an illicit phenomenon whereby human-beings are forcefully abducted to an unknown destination for the purpose of payment of ransom by relatives. In recent times, Nigeria citizens across geographical entities and zones had continued to witness tremendous setbacks in its socio-economic development fueled by the continuous resurgence of different kinds of banditry, insecurity, threats and dilemma engulfing the society. Nigeria was ranked in the global index as one of the worst places to live as a result of social malady and bandit's infiltration most especially in various Nigeria university campuses, communities, towns, states and geographical zones of the country. The ugly challenge confronting human society is delusion. In conclusion, the study revealed that the negligence, lackadaisical or look warm attitude of the government and reluctance to address such challenges where the force igniting heinous crime in many societies. Similarly, Unemployment, quick money syndrome, political class division, inequality, and all form of differentiation has been the major problems in Nigeria. The study recommends that there should be a new strategy and modern technological tools to curb the bad eggs. Government should provide ways to have been made to tackle this ugly trend such as adequate provision of general packet radio service (GPRS), packet switching technology for GSM networks, geotechnical monitoring security, tracking system, and sim-card registration regulation, provision of adequate employment opportunity, equal treatment of citizen, nation building and effective functional system to regulate the ills in the society.

**Keywords:** *Abduction, Banditry, Infiltration, National Security and Strategy.*

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### **Background to the Study**

Infiltration of banditry in Nigeria is a common phenomenon in the recent times. Banditry in Nigeria can be traced to the pre-civil war period when government deteriorated in certain parts of the old western region resulting in political violence, crime and organized insurgency (Ekhomu, 2021). The bandits were reportedly stealing domestic animals in pre-colonial history. Recently, infiltration of banditry in Nigeria has become a evil child of necessity that rooted from Al-Qoeda and Islamic states, ISIS terrorist groups from the West African Sub-region into Nigeria has become a central focus in security challenges across the regions, states, geo-graphic zones and the country as a whole (Chidi, 2018). The activities of bandits have been particularly worrisome ranges from Kidnapping to Murder, robbery, rape, cattle rustling and the likes. Their modus operandi involves maiming and killing their victims when they least expected to continue unleashing terror in the committees and society.

Several studies have explained that the bandits are an assortment of criminal gangs involved in large scale business for example armed robbery, sexual violence, kidnapping, pillage and attacks. Ekhomu, (2021), argue that since Nigeria's porous borders have made it hard for the authorities to prevent infiltration of both the Local and foreign terrorists into the country. The law enforcement agencies should detect and arrest these terrorists once on Nigeria. This collaborate the view of Nduka (2020), banditry techniques and its dimension have gradually penetrated its pores or interstice the growing threat is claiming victims in hundreds. Several children have been orphaned and women become widows overnight while the issues of food security as well as humanitarian tragedy will further make life unbearable for many Nigeria.

This implies that the Nigeria authorities need to strengthen the country's security infrastructure whereby members of the public could report bandits or suspected terrorist activities to the whistle blowers and they were equally required for protection and motivation. The invasion of a common citizens as enemy were the utmost priority among the banditry group and unleashed of agony on the victims, pain, emotional and psychological trauma as well as provocation in the society. Chris (2020), maintain that the infiltration of banditry and counter strategy involves series of advanced and well-articulated decisions formulated in a coherent plan to achieve policy objectives. The collaboration of security experts, law enforcement agencies, stakeholders and government is germane to nip the ugly phenomenon bedeviling human society in the country.

Banditry is the code for organized crime like kidnapping, cattle rustling, mass abduction, arson and even armed robbery. (Ekhomu, 2021 and Chris, 2020) maintain that the Jihad terror organizations linked in the network analysis, Boko Haram, Taliban, ISIS, AQN had common goals of repudiating Western education, Western civilization and proselytizing conversion to wahibi, Salafi, Islam or death and therefore posited that a network and ISIS.

The ISIS is the most recent incarnation of these violent extremist organizations. FBI (2021) defines organized crime as “any group having some manner of formalized structure and whose primary objectives is to obtain money through illegal activities such groups maintain their position through the use of actual or threatened violence, corruption, public officials,

gift, or extortion and generally have a significant impact on the people in their locales region or the country as a whole. Similarly, the United Nation convention against transnational organized crime (Article 2 (9) states that an “organized criminal group shall mean a structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crime offences established in accordance with the convention in order to obtain directly or indirectly a financial or other material benefit. The problem requires robust structured analytic thinking for its resolution and also, security experts and law enforcement agencies needs intelligence gathering analysts to use a powerful analytic tools such as morphological analysis. The will enable the analysis array the threat analytic data into a matric set up the dimensions of the problems and possible examine permutation of different combination of the matrices (Howard, 2013, Micheal, 2011, Jeffrey, 2009). The Fasts are scary, while about 1,100 people were murdered in 2018 in the sex states of North West Nigeria in 2018, over 2,200 were killed in 2019 and 1,600 killed between January and June 2020. About 247,000 people had been displaced while their activities alone have led to the production of more than 41, 000 refugees (Onyebuchi, 2020).

In Zamfara alone, 8000 people have been murdered in the last decade, 200,000 displaced internally and others fleeing to neighbouring states. The situation is so porous already that the religious leader and Sultan opined that Bandits now move in the north from house to house with AK47 and lamented that the reform had become the worst place to live in Nigeria (Punch, 2020).

### **Conceptual Analysis**

Contemporary social issues and challenges on banditry in Nigeria is unprecedented such as civil unrest, terrorist threats, banditry attacked, abduction, kidnapping, corruption, extortion, political delusion and organized crime are on alarming in Nigerians. This also includes the well-publicized banditry and abduction in recently kidnapping of some university of Abuja lecturer and staff, Benue, Edo, Niger, Jos, Kaduna, Nasarawa, Maiduguri, Bauchi, kastina, Enugu, Imo, Anambra among others including the school boys and girls by the bandits and terrorist group, underscores the continuing challenges of insecurity and country under development.

One of the most fundamental challenges facing contemporary states is how to ensure national development in the face of manifold and ever burgeoning security threats. Prominent among these threats is the issues of organized crime (Okoli and Orinya, 2013). Organized crimes are high profile crimes which are often perpetrated through transnational syndication and racketeering. Cases in point include terrorism, banditry, money laundry, abduction and kidnapping. Globally, indications are rife to the effect that organized crimes are not only getting prevalent; indeed they are also getting sophisticated and consolidated and politicized. In this effect, they are becoming rather entrenched both locally and globally.

### **Concept of Banditry**

The concept of Banditry means occurrence or prevalence of armed robbery or violent crimes. It involves the use of force, or threat to that effect, to intimidate a person with the intent to rob,

rape or kill. Banditry is a crime against persons. It has been a common genre of crime, as well as cause violence in contemporary societies (Nigeria watch, 2011). The prevalence of banditry in Nigeria appears to have been high and rising over the years. Nigeria's Northwest is gradually becoming another major regional theatre of violence, much like the Northeast where Boko Haram terrorist have wreaked havoc in the past ten years. A problem, which initially appeared as localized disputes between herders and farmers over access to land, has morphed into an intractable crisis posing a major threat to national and regional security.

The level of rural banditry keeps escalating from 2014 till date attracting a lot of attention, while assuming increased political undertones are master minders to this yet it's of great implication to the survival of common man and at large impedes national development. Banditry refers to armed violence driven principally by the criminal intent to steal and plunder. It is motivated by the quest for economic accumulation. The victims are individual communities with material valuables or most cases average people displaced from their home. Banditry in the northwestern states of Kaduna, Zamfara and Katsina has reached alarming heights in recent years. Bandits terrorize villages with impunity. They have actually settled in the Katsina State, setting up fortified enclaves in the hinterland and on the frontiers, from where they plot and carry out their operations. Abduction is related to kidnapping which is usually accompanied with ransom for money or other gains. Crime of abduction is considered to be when a person has been taken away from his or her location in persuading some act of Fraud or forceful way that may include violence.

### **Crime**

Crime in a broad sense is an act that violates a political or moral law or violation of the criminal law (Zems, 2013). Crime is an act of omission which renders the person doing the act or making the omission liable to punishment. Tappan (1947), maintains that crime is an intentional act of omission or commission in violation of criminal law (statutory or case law), committed without defense or justification and sanctioned by the state as a Felony or misdemeanor (Reid, 2000). This means that an act of omission can only become a criminal act or criminal wrong if the act or omission is specifically prohibited by the criminal law. Omission to act he refer to failure to carry out a legal (not moral) duty imposed on someone by law which legal (not moral) duty imposed on someone by law which requires him to act in a particular case or manner. The term crime denotes an unlawful act punishable by a state.

### **National Security**

Security is the degree of protection against danger, damage, loss and crime. Security is a form of protection consists of structures and processes that provide or improve security as a condition.

Security is defined as a form of protection where a separation is created between the assets and the threat. Furthermore, security is a state of resistance to any type of behavior that causes harm or damage to a person or property. Security can also be defined as protection against criminals, thieves, and threats (Buzan, and Hansen, 2009).

Adoyi (2019), conceptualized national security as the members of the law enforcement defense establishment appropriate national security as their own. They confronted domestic challenges occasioned by the failure of Nigeria's military government to provide adequate security. Adoyi (2019), further observed that since 1947, national security has been institutionalized as philosophy, law, policy, strategy and structures, institutions and individuals to take on a life of its own. The meaning of national security is so deep rooted that it is covered by consistency of expositions, practices, conventions, scholarships, media analysis, movies, documentaries, awards, and endowments over the course of several decades to avoid any ambiguity whatsoever. Security is presently a major challenges in Nigeria, even though the government claims to be on top of the situation yet the problem persists. Thus, National security, a concept understood by some as an abstract notion relating to the condition of the state, and referred to in security and intelligence legislation.

Ammerdow (2016), asserts that national and international security may be understood as a shared freedom from fear and want, and the freedom to live in dignity. Prabhakaran (2008), argues that national security is the measurable state of the capability of a nation to overcome the multi-dimensional threats to the apparent well-being of its people and its survival as a nation-state of any given time, by balancing all instruments of state policy through governance and is extendable to global security by variables external to it. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1994) human security may include absent of Chrome threats, such as hunger, disease and repression. However, national security is the defence of a country against internal and external threat to national unity, cohesion, peace, aspiration and goals.

National Security can be defined to mean “the sum total of actions and measures, including legislative and operational procedures, adopted to ensure peace, stability and the general well-being of a nation and its citizens (Shinkaiya, 2004). In strategic studies, security has an objective and subjective meanings. At the objective level, security measures the absence of threat of life, liberty, property and core value (Wolfers, 1954). At the subjective or apprehension of being in danger of losing life, liberty, property and core values.

According to Lippmann (1987) “a nation is secure to the extent that it is not in a position to lose core values; life, property and liberty and if it wishes, to deter aggression or win war when unavoidable”. Security can be defined as the protection of a nation from all types of external aggression, espionage, hostile reconnaissance, sabotage, subversion, annoyance and other inimical influence. This definition however, views national security in the classical concept in terms of the survival of the state and protection from external aggression through the use of the military.

### **Some Causes of Banditry and Kidnapping in Nigeria**

Social injustice, youth unemployment, poverty, corruption, insecurity, proliferation of dangerous weapons, and indiscipline and moral decadence

### **Scourge of Banditry in Nigeria**

Banditry in Nigeria is a serious national security challenge. It takes various forms and adopts violence, terror, coerciveness, intimidations and aggression. These acts are performed with the intent to receive ransom with forceful threats. Banditry and all forms of sociological issues have grown over the years. It has been adopted as an industry for abducting political rivals, and financially advantaged calibers in society.

Kidnapping, banditry, terrorism are demons eating up the nation's sense of identity and security as it affects virtually everybody. This crime has created serious security challenges for the nation as it affects foreign expatriates, oil industries, and creates a negative image for the country. The perpetrators choose their victims based on their ability to cough out the resources. The problems of unemployment have become a national thorn in the flesh in Nigeria. The banditry in recent times has been commercialized. The root scourge of banditry in Nigeria can be traced to natural resources (Ejimabo, 2013).

### **Implications of Banditry**

Banditry in Nigeria has been allowed to degenerate into a complex national emergency with dire territorial implications. This mirrors exactly what happened with the Boko Haram Insurgency. From sporadic incidents, Boko Haram began launching systematic attacks targeted at individuals, communities and eventually the state.

There is no more effective solution than forceful inland and frontier policing which must deal with the regions' peculiar circumstances of diverse borderlines, forestland and hinterlands. This requires a tactical synergy between grassroots vigilantes and the state security operatives. The current counter banditry effort based on military reconnaissance and raids is good and commendable. The implications of banditry perpetrate with direct as well as indirect effects. From the individual perspective, it causes damages including huge economic resources lost as ransom. The preventive and expending steps approach of hiring private security experts and the increment it often incurs on budget for 2019 on national security is N109.8 billion, which covers the expenses on security and its agencies.

Psychological effects of kidnapping according to Soyombo (2016), claims that kidnapping barricades so many people's social relations and social life by keeping them indoors day and night. It resulted in Post-Traumatic stress disorder due to horrifying incidences of the menace. Most devastatingly, travelling in the night has become risky and overrated, successful people disguise in a taxi because they are afraid to buy a new vehicle. Soyombo (2016), noted that due to heated kidnap incidence, public officials demand more police escorts, thereby led to insufficient police force that be positioned at some crime-spot areas in order to eliminate heinous crime in the country.

Socio-Economic effects: Insufficient security budget and expenditure to tackle criminal activities, as well as corruption among law enforcement agencies, often paralyzed the efforts for crime prevention.

### **Forms of Banditry and Kidnapping**

There are different forms of banditry in Nigeria, namely:

1. Political kidnapping or banditry: This is the banditry where the foremost objective is the further the political aims of a particular group. In this further the political aims of a particular political group. In this case, a ransom is usually demanded to obtain money for the group to fund their such banditry are distinct from emotional or pathological which involve for instance, the kidnapping of children by estranged parents or relatives of kidnapping for the purpose of rape or other sexual aberration.
2. Criminal kidnapping or abduction: This where the main motive is to obtain a ransom from the family or business of victims. This category also includes instance where criminals take hostage as a shield to help them escape from the scene of a crime, or use them to obtain money or valuables. Other forms of banditry are Religion, economic.

### **Problems of Banditry and Abduction**

Banditry and abduction are on the increase and the deteriorating nature of security in the country account for the malady. Infiltration of banditry and abduction is much broader than national security which tends to focus on the security of the state in military for the protection of the state from external aggression. Human security situation in the country has remained unprecedented in the rebasing of the Nigerian economy and the challenge declaiming global status as a peaceful country where people can live in joyfully.

Many countries like Nigeria around the globe are facing problems of insecurity and security threat in the society. The global community in under increasing insecurity around the world. These threats range from emerging new terrorist groups to renewed Middle East turbulence and also failing states in Africa. There are rising insecurity in many developing countries especially those in the continent of Africa. This is manifested in Civil war in countries like (Central African Republic, Libya and South Sudan), attack by terrorist groups (Cameroun, Kenya and Somalia), Political upheavals (Guinea Bissau and Sudan), Militant attacks (Dr. Congo and Egypt) among other issues in insecurity on the extent that foreign troops are invited to come to assist in tackling the insecurity (Osamba, 2008).

In Nigeria, it was observed that the level of insecurity has increased since the return to democratic governance more especially may, 1999. These insecurities are caused by communal clashes, ethnic tribal conflicts, religious riots, militancy ritual killing, cultism and ethnic militia attacks and the farmers herdsman conflict (Akinola, 2016).

This violence has taken terror dimensions such that violent agitations have claimed thousands of lives other thousands. Displaced and inestimable properties have been destroyed rendering the region one of the most dangerous zones to live in Nigeria today.

Threats to human and national security ranges from the menace of separatist demands, illegal militia armies, ethnic and religions, conflicts, terrorism, armed robbery, corruption and poverty to sabotage public properties, economic sabotage and environmental degradation. This predominant threats and security challenges in the area are emanating from unabating

attacks on arm proliferation, youth restiveness, kidnapping and hostage taking among others becomes order of the day. Ahmed (2021), Yusuf and Abdullahi (2020), collaborate crime thrives in context where there is little deference in the most communities. This renders them vulnerable to banditry and worse by the absence of effective community policing mechanism capable of addressing the hinterlands security challenges.

The incidence and prevalence of banditry and abduction in Nigeria raises a fundamental question about the government in ability to govern effectively. The state security machinery has so far failed to tackle the scourge of banditry and kidnapping. This failure stems for lack of political will and operational challenges.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The misconception of security threat had been raised bordering and hindering effective national development in Nigeria. Insecurity threats on the premise that the problem of internal security in Nigeria derives from and is aggravated by a number of causal factors for example structural imbalance inherent in Nigeria and the gross inequality socio-economic crisis, political, and social problems both of which erode banditry and abduction in the country. The fundamental problem of banditry connotes youth unemployment, corrupt politicians, quick money syndrome, economic sabotage and incessant attacks by armed bandits could be seen as a failure on the part of government to fulfil its part of the social obligation. This could lead to social unrests in curtailing and preventing act of armed banditry on victim.

The paper recommends that the security apparatus of the country should be re-organized to be able to tackle contemporary security challenges. The strategic neglect of border communities also provide sites for the development of poorly managed forest reserves which provided cover and hideouts for the armed bandits. Government should address the issues of poverty, unemployment, neglect of the border communities and social injustice. There is need for urgency in tackle the issues of Banditry and abduction which aggravates insecurity and lawlessness with society.

Government should develop strategies and programmers to disarm bandits of their dangerous weapons. It was observed that bandits use AK 47 to unleash terror attacks on victims and with other dangerous weapon of safe destruction. Efforts should be geared towards the enthronement of a credible leadership in the country where the social contract will be respected will be respected and implemented to prevent a further slide into the state. There is need to review the current strategy of dealing with the issues of banditry and hostage taking in Nigeria. Similarly, the establishment of a welfare state where there would be Jobs, houses, healthcare, qualitative education and security for every citizen. The crime prevention and management is not that of the security alone as all hands must be on desk so as to achieve effective peace and order.

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