
**COMMUNITY INTELLIGENCE AND ANTI-BANDITRY OPERATIONS IN
KATSINA STATE: A STUDY OF BATSARI AND KANKARA LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AREAS, 2015-2023**

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of community intelligence in enhancing anti-banditry operations in Katsina State, Nigeria, particularly in the Batsari and Kankara Local Government Areas from 2015 to 2023. Utilizing a qualitative research methodology, this investigation draws upon the Community Policing Theory to analyze how local engagement can effectively combat banditry. Through in-depth Key Informant Interviews with community members, law enforcement officials, and local leaders, the research aims to uncover the dynamics of community participation in policing efforts. The findings indicate that community-based policing strategies foster stronger relationships between citizens and law enforcement, leading to improved trust and cooperation. Participants reported that their local knowledge significantly contributed to identifying threats and developing tailored responses to security challenges. This collaborative approach not only enhances situational awareness but also empowers communities by giving them a stake in their own safety. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of integrating community perspectives into policing strategies to address underlying issues that contribute to banditry. Ultimately, this research underscores the necessity of adopting a community-centric model in Nigeria's security framework. By emphasizing partnership and shared responsibility between police and communities, the study advocates for a sustainable approach to reducing crime and fostering social cohesion. The implications of these findings extend beyond Katsina State, offering valuable insights for similar contexts grappling with insecurity and the need for effective community engagement in policing practices.

Keywords: Community Intelligence, Banditry, and Anti-Banditry Operations

Introduction

Banditry has emerged as a critical security challenge in northern Nigeria, particularly in Katsina State, where its devastating impacts have undermined socio-economic stability and the safety of rural communities. Over the past decade, Batsari and Kankara Local Government

Areas (LGAs) have been epicentres of violent bandit activities, characterized by cattle rustling, kidnappings, and mass killings. These acts have displaced thousands, disrupted livelihoods, and strained already overstretched security infrastructures. The complexity of this menace necessitates innovative strategies to augment conventional military and policing efforts.

Community intelligence—the proactive gathering and sharing of local knowledge and information by residents to assist in identifying and neutralizing security threats—has emerged as a vital component of anti-banditry operations. This strategy leverages the intrinsic understanding of communities regarding their environment, social networks, and the dynamics of criminal activities. However, the application of community intelligence in Katsina State remains underexplored, particularly concerning its effectiveness and the challenges it faces.

Problem Statement

The increasing prevalence of banditry in Katsina State, particularly in the Batsari and Kankara Local Government Areas, poses a significant threat to the safety and security of local communities. Banditry became a major concern in Katsina State around 2014, but it escalated dramatically between 2017 and 2021, with reports indicating that no fewer than 213 persons were killed and 676 others were kidnapped across various local government areas in the state between July and October 2021 alone (Daily Trust, 2021). The abduction of 334 students from the Government Science Secondary School in Kankara on December 11, 2020, highlighted the severity of the situation and drew national and international attention to the threat posed by bandits (Blueprint Newspapers Limited, 2023). Despite various government interventions and military operations aimed at curbing these violent crimes, banditry continues to disrupt lives, displace populations, and undermine economic activities. As of March 2020, over 210,000 people were internally displaced due to armed banditry in the state, with an additional 35,000 individuals becoming refugees (Daily Trust, 2021). The frequency of violent incidents has reached alarming levels, with reports indicating that there was no day in the last two and a half years without a killing or kidnapping in Katsina State (Lugga, 2022). A critical gap exists in understanding the role of community intelligence in enhancing the effectiveness of anti-banditry operations. Local communities possess unique insights and information that could significantly contribute to intelligence gathering and threat mitigation; however, challenges such as mistrust between residents and security agencies, fear of reprisals from bandits, and inadequate communication channels hinder effective collaboration. This study seeks to investigate the extent at which community intelligence has been leveraged to combat banditry

in Batsari and Kankara Local Government Areas and the barriers/obstacles that these communities face when attempting to contribute intelligence for anti-banditry operations.

Research Questions

Based on the study's focus on investigating the extent to which community intelligence has been leveraged to combat banditry in Batsari and Kankara Local Government Areas, as well as the barriers faced by these communities, the following research questions are formulated:

1. What impact does community engagement have on the success of anti-banditry operations in Batsari and Kankara LGAs?
2. What are the primary barriers/obstacles that community members face when attempting to contribute intelligence for anti-banditry operations in Batsari and Kankara LGAs?
3. What measures can be taken to ensure the long-term sustainability of community intelligence initiatives in combating banditry in Batsari and Kankara LGAs?

Conceptual Clarifications

The main variables in this study, which are community intelligence, banditry and anti-banditry operations are conceptually clarified with the help of relevant literature.

Concept of Community Intelligence

Community is a local group of people with collective leadership, responsibilities, consciousness and aspirations who wishes their values to be transmitted to their heirs. Ochai (2012) describes community as a group of people interacting among themselves in a geographically defined space, time, and certain cultural attributes like norms, belief and value system. The community may have similar socio-cultural norms and social institution. On the other hand, it may have people of diverse ethnic origin and differing cultural practices.

In the opinion of Hornby, (2012), community means a group of people living together and united by shared interests, religion and nationality. This implies that community is the people living in one place and with the same nationality, culture, or race. They share experiences in common and develop a strong sense of belonging due to their interactions in various life activities.

According to Sanders (2011) the resurgence of community involvement in crime control as a focus of interest is borne out of the desire to ensure the well-being of her members especially as it pertains to securing their lives and properties. The participation of community

in crime prevention activity is justifiable since they know their crime problems and localities better than outsiders from their communities. Community participation is grounded in the sense that the local communities know each other, even the strangers within the communities are all known. They know the activities of every individual within the community and they know when a strange movement is made. For policing to be effective and productive, the need to collaborate with the local community can never be overemphasised. In this vein, Liebermann & Coulson in Manaliyo (2016) observe that one of the most effective ways the police could be productive is by collaborating with the local community of which without the police officers will remain clueless strangers on major crime activities taking place in the community. Ejiogu and Mosley (2017) see intelligence as all about gathering useful information to solve identified problems. Furthermore, intelligence could also be seen as the ability to think, to learn from experience, to solve problems and adopt to new situation

Concept of Banditry

Banditry has existed right from so many centuries ago. Philosophers, researchers and scholars have viewed banditry from several perspectives. While some viewed it based on their plight and vulnerability against imminent disadvantage and sufferings due to ill administration by governments, others see it from points of description of the acts carried out by bandits.

Banditry according to Tamuno (1991) is “the exercise of physical force, as to inflict injury on, or cause damage to persons or property”. Osaghae (1995) noted, however, that all forms of banditry involve the use of force, whether it is legitimate as protagonists of the state or illegitimate as is the case when force is applied by the murderer, robber or bandit. In this definition the use of force is considered a necessary element of banditry. Such force when used inflicts pains which could lead to murder, rape and all forms of destruction. Furthermore, Domenack (1978) defines banditry as the use of force whether overt or covert, in order to snatch from individuals or groups, something of value that they are not disposed to give of their own free will.

In reference to northwestern Nigeria, The Humanitarian (2018) avers that the region has a long history of banditry. The first recorded case occurred somewhere between western Hausaland and the Niger border in 1901, when a 12,000 strong camel train laden with assorted grains was attacked and 210 merchants killed. Although banditry is as old as Nigeria, it has nevertheless gradually transformed in scope and dimension overtime from its rudimentary phase, to a more complex and complicated pattern of criminality (Centre for Democracy and

Development, 2015; Egwu 2016). The modern transformation of banditry could be understood against the backdrop of the prevailing security dialectics in Nigeria. Accordingly, gangs of criminal, often youth from farming and herding communities and/or local bandits, take advantage of the growing insecurity, fear and cyclical attacks to loot villages, engage in highway robbery, and rustle cattle for personal gain. Both farming and herding communities often suffer from this criminality (Bagu and Smith, 2017; Okoli & Ugwu, 2019).

Anti-Banditry Operations

Anti-banditry operations in Nigeria are implemented through a combination of military action, intelligence gathering, and community engagement. The Nigerian Armed Forces collaborate with local security agencies and communities to conduct joint operations aimed at identifying and neutralizing bandit groups (NNDP, 2017). These operations often involve:

- **Intelligence Gathering:** Collecting information on bandit movements and activities to inform strategic responses.
- **Targeted Military Strikes:** Conducting raids on identified bandit hideouts to disrupt their operations.
- **Community Engagement:** Working with local populations to build trust and gather support for anti-banditry efforts.

The Nigerian National Security Strategy emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach that not only targets the immediate threats posed by bandits but also addresses the underlying socio-economic factors contributing to their emergence (Okoli & Ugwu, 2019).

Nexus between Community Intelligence and Anti-Banditry Operations in Katsina State

In Katsina, a state grappling with the persistent threat of banditry, the synergy between community intelligence and anti-banditry operations is evident in several key aspects. Firstly, community intelligence acts as an early warning system, with residents serving as the eyes and ears of law enforcement. The intimate knowledge that community members possess about their surroundings, the daily routines, and any unusual activities becomes a valuable resource in identifying potential threats before they escalate into full-scale criminal incidents. Moreover, the success of anti-banditry operations in Katsina is intricately tied to the establishment of trust and collaboration between law enforcement agencies and the local population. Community

intelligence fosters a sense of shared responsibility for security, encouraging residents to actively engage with authorities without fear of reprisal. As trust deepens, law enforcement gains access to a wealth of information that goes beyond conventional investigative methods, enhancing their capacity to map out the networks, hideouts, and modus operandi of bandit groups. Community engagement becomes a force multiplier in the fight against banditry. Local residents, empowered by a sense of ownership over their security, willingly contribute to intelligence gathering. This collaboration extends beyond mere reporting of suspicious activities to a more holistic involvement, where communities actively participate in the design and implementation of anti-banditry strategies. This inclusive approach not only improves the relevance and effectiveness of security measures but also addresses the unique socio-cultural dynamics of Katsina.

Furthermore, in a landscape where bandits exploit the vast and often challenging terrains, community intelligence provides a granular understanding of local nuances. It helps law enforcement agencies tailor their operations to the specific needs of different communities, ensuring that anti-banditry efforts are contextually relevant and responsive. Whether it's the identification of vulnerable points, insights into local grievances, or the tracking of criminal movements, community intelligence enriches the operational playbook of anti-banditry forces. The information flow in this symbiotic relationship is bidirectional. While community intelligence empowers anti-banditry operations, the visible impact of these operations reinforces the trust and collaboration between law enforcement and the community. Success stories, timely responses, and tangible improvements in security contribute to a positive feedback loop, motivating residents to remain actively engaged in the collective effort to secure their neighbourhoods.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the Community Based Policing Theory. Community-Based Policing is an approach that emphasizes collaboration and partnerships between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. It is rooted in the idea that communities play a crucial role in identifying and solving local security issues. Community-Based Policing (CBP) emerged in the latter half of the 20th century as a response to the limitations and criticisms of traditional, centralized models of law enforcement. The major proponents of Community Based Policing include Sir Robert Peel, Herman Goldstein and O. W. Wilson. Community policing theory emphasizes the importance of building strong relationships between law enforcement

and community members through collaboration and partnership. This focus aligns directly with the article's examination of how community intelligence can enhance anti-banditry efforts in Katsina State. According to the theory, by fostering collaboration between security agencies and local residents, the research can highlight effective strategies for using intelligence that is crucial for combating banditry

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research design to examine community intelligence and its impact on anti-banditry operations in Katsina State, focusing specifically on Kankara and Batsari Local Government Areas. This method facilitates in-depth exploration of participants' perspectives, experiences, and insights, allowing for rich, detailed data collection and analysis. The case study method is utilized to examine Kankara and Batsari Local Government Areas between 2015-2023. The selection of these Local Government Areas (LGAs) for this study on community intelligence and anti-banditry operations is justified by the acute prevalence of banditry in these regions, which has led to significant loss of life and displacement. These LGAs exemplify the critical role of community engagement in combating insecurity, as local populations possess valuable knowledge that can enhance intelligence sharing with security forces. Historical patterns of violence and community resilience highlight the need for effective intelligence systems that protect informants while fostering cooperation with military operations. Additionally, both LGAs have implemented community policing initiatives that emphasize collaboration between police and residents, providing insights into trust-building and intelligence gathering. Data collection was carried out through in-depth Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with key stakeholders, including law enforcement agents, vigilante members, traditional leaders, and residents, who were purposively selected for the interviews.

Study Area

Kankara and Batsari are two Local Government Areas (LGAs) located in Katsina State, Nigeria, which is situated in the northwestern region of the country.

Kankara LGA

Kankara is one of the prominent LGAs in Katsina State, Nigeria, serving as the administrative headquarters. It comprises 11 political wards, including Burdugau, Danmurabu,

and Zango, with a population estimated at approximately 405,438 residents (National Population Commission of Nigeria, 2023). The demographic profile includes a significant number of children under five and women of childbearing age, highlighting the community's health needs. Kankara is equipped with healthcare facilities such as one general hospital and several primary health care centers (Katsina State Ministry of Health, 2022). The region experiences a climate characterized by a dry season that is partly cloudy and hot, while the wet season tends to be oppressive and mostly cloudy. A critical event in Kankara's recent history was the mass kidnapping at a Government Science School in December 2020, which underscored the severe security challenges faced by the community (BBC News, 2020).

Batsari LGA

Batsari is another LGA in Katsina State that shares similar socio-economic characteristics with Kankara. It has been significantly affected by banditry and violence, leading to increased community mobilization efforts aimed at enhancing local security (Human Rights Watch, 2021). Batsari comprises several wards and has a demographic profile that includes a large youth population vulnerable to recruitment by bandit groups. The LGA has been actively involved in community policing initiatives and local vigilante groups aimed at combating insecurity, reflecting a grassroots approach to addressing the challenges posed by banditry (Katsina State Government, 2022).

Both Kankara and Batsari LGAs are critical case studies for understanding the dynamics of community intelligence and anti-banditry operations in Nigeria's North West region, where banditry has escalated over the years, leading to widespread violence and displacement among local populations.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Impact of Community Intelligence on Anti-Banditry Operations in Batsari and Kankara Local Government Areas

From the primary data generated from the Key Informant Interviews, the impact of community intelligence on anti-banditry operations in Batsari and Kankara in Katsina State can be significant in various ways. These two local government areas have been severely affected by banditry, with criminal groups disrupting the peace, stealing livestock, kidnapping, and perpetrating violent attacks. Community intelligence plays a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness of security operations in combating these threats. These impacts include but are not limited to the following:

1. **Improved Information Flow:** Community intelligence involves gathering crucial information from local populations, which is often more reliable and timelier than external sources. In the context of Batsari and Kankara, the local communities, including village heads, farmers, and other residents, are familiar with the movements and activities of bandits. They usually have knowledge about the routes used by the criminals, their hideouts, and even their plans. This information proves invaluable for security agencies that work within the region, such as the Nigerian Army, the police, and the newly established Katsina State Community Watch Corps, in pre-empting attacks and planning counter-strategies. According to a respondent from Kankara LGA, *“We know this land better than anyone, so we observe things outsiders might miss. For example, if we notice strangers gathering in the forest or unusual movement of cattle at night, we report it to the village head, who then informs the security personnel. It has helped them track down bandits several times”*. Several participants consistently highlighted this point.
2. **Enhanced Collaboration Between Security Forces and Communities:** A respondent stated that *“We have regular meetings with the local security forces where we share what we’ve observed, like suspicious movements or people. This cooperation is why we’ve seen more targeted patrols and arrests. However, we also ask for their assurance to protect us from any backlash”*. From the foregoing assertion, it can be deduced that if the residents of Batsari and Kankara feel secure and confident that their information will be used effectively and that they will be protected from retaliation by bandits, they are more likely to contribute useful intelligence. In return, security forces are able to conduct more targeted and efficient operations, avoiding unnecessary harm to innocent civilians and property.
3. **Increased Operational Efficiency:** Through understanding how bandits interact with local communities or use certain routes and safe havens, security agencies have adjusted

their operations accordingly, making them more effective. Instead of broad, generalized military interventions, community intelligence has allowed for precision strikes, which reduce collateral damage and increase the likelihood of successful outcomes. A respondent had this to say, *“The soldiers, police and Katsina Community Watch Corps are now more focused in their operations. Before, they would just patrol without clear direction, but now, when we give them tips, they move directly to the bandits’ camps. Recently, they rescued hostages without harming the villagers nearby.”*

4. **Timely Response to Threats:** With the help of local informants, security forces are now able to intercept bandits before they carry out their attacks. For example, in a Batsari and Kankara, the timely dissemination of intelligence about the movement of armed groups or the location of hostages can allow security forces to act swiftly, rescuing hostages and preventing loss of life. This is buttressed by an assertion made by a respondent resident in Batsari LGA, *“Just last month, we heard that some bandits were planning to attack a neighboring village. We immediately informed the security officers. That night, they ambushed the bandits on their way. Without that information, many lives could have been lost.”*
5. **Psychological Impact on Bandits:** A respondent stated that *“The bandits are now wary because they know we are watching. They used to move freely, even during the day, but now they are more cautious and often avoid our area. Some of them even leave entirely when they sense we are cooperating with the security forces.”* From the foregoing assertion, now that bandits have realized that local communities are actively cooperating with security agencies, it has had a psychological impact on them. It has demoralized and destabilized their criminal operations, making it difficult for them to maintain control over territories. This has led to a decline in their activities and their ability to terrorize local communities. The knowledge that their movements are being tracked and that the community is unwilling to tolerate their presence has discouraged bandits from carrying out further attacks.

Obstacles in the Use of Community Intelligence in Anti-Banditry Operations in Batsari and Kankara Local Government Areas

The use of community intelligence in anti-banditry operations is essential but faces numerous challenges. These obstacles can undermine the effectiveness of security strategies. Below are key issues from the data generated from the Key Informant Interviews (KIIs):

1. **Fear of Reprisal Attacks:** A common issue raised by the participants is fear of reprisal attacks. Community members are often hesitant to provide intelligence due to the fear of retaliation from bandits, who have in the past punish perceived informants or their families. This has greatly reduced the willingness of locals to share critical information, leaving security forces without actionable insights. According to a respondent who is a resident of Kankara LGA, *'We are scared to speak up because the bandits know everyone in the community. If they find out that someone has given information to the security forces, they come back to punish us. We have seen families attacked or even killed for sharing what they know. The Hakimi of Yantumaki is a very good example, if the royals are not safe, what is the fate of the common man?'*
2. **Lack of Trust in Security Agencies:** *"Sometimes, when we report bandit movements to the authorities, nothing is done, or worse, the information leaks. This has made us lose confidence in the ability of the security forces to protect us or act effectively on the intelligence we provide."* It could be deduced from the foregoing assertion made by a respondent that community members have become distrustful of security personnel due to perceived corruption, ineffectiveness, or leaks of sensitive information to bandits. This has severely undermined collaboration and discouraged community members from engaging with authorities.
3. **Poor Response to Shared Intelligence:** According to a local vigilante member in Batsari LGA, *"We give accurate information about the location of the bandits or their hideouts, but the response is often delayed. By the time the security forces arrive, the bandits are already gone."* Therefore, delayed or inadequate responses by security forces to reported threats discourages future intelligence sharing by the community. Bandits have been reported to exploit this to intensify their activities, knowing there is no immediate consequence.
4. **Limited Communication Channels:** Many rural areas, including parts of Batsari and Kankara, lack reliable communication infrastructure, such as mobile networks or secure reporting systems. This hinders timely and effective reporting of banditry activities. As reported by a resident of the remote village of Wagini in Batsari LGA *"In my village, there are no proper mobile networks, and sometimes, we have to travel long distances to pass on information. This delay allows the bandits to carry out their attacks and escape'.*

5. **Bandit Sympathizers and Collaborators:** *"There are people in the community who work with the bandits because they are afraid or because they are being paid. This makes it hard to know who to trust, even among ourselves."* It was discovered that some community members may sympathize with or collaborate with bandits, either out of coercion or for personal gain. This compromises intelligence operations, as bandits are sometimes warned of impending security actions.
6. **Lack of Incentives for Intelligence Sharing:** A farmer from Kankara LGA stated that *"Why should we risk our lives to give information when there is no reward or guarantee of protection? People feel it's better to stay silent than to take such risks."* Thus, it could be deduced that community members may not feel motivated to share intelligence, especially when there are no tangible benefits or protection mechanisms in place. Without incentives, locals may prioritize their personal safety over collective security.
7. **Socioeconomic Challenges:** *"Poverty and lack of opportunities make some people turn to the bandits for survival. Others are too focused on their daily struggles to bother about sharing intelligence."* This sentiment echoed across several interviewees. In some instances, poverty and unemployment in these areas pushes some residents into collaborating with bandits instead of aiding security forces. This has created a hostile environment for intelligence gathering and security operations.

Strategies to be Adopted to Ensure the Long-Term Sustainability of Community Intelligence in Anti-Banditry Operations in Batsari and Kankara LGAs

To ensure the long-term sustainability of community intelligence initiatives in combating banditry in Batsari and Kankara, several measures can be implemented, each addressing existing challenges while incorporating community perspectives to enhance relevance and effectiveness. These measures include:

1. The formation of the Katsina State Community Watch Corps (CWC) represents a strategic and laudable initiative aimed at ensuring the sustainability of community intelligence in the fight against insecurity. Recognizing the critical role of local knowledge in combating crimes such as banditry and kidnapping, the Katsina State Government established the CWC in August 2023 as a grassroots-driven security framework. This initiative recruits and trains local youths, leveraging their familiarity with the terrain, cultural dynamics, and networks within their communities to enhance

intelligence gathering and security operations. The CWC operates as a bridge between formal security agencies and local populations, ensuring that critical information about potential threats is quickly identified and shared. Members of the corps undergo rigorous training in surveillance, intelligence gathering, and conflict management, equipping them to collaborate effectively with established security agencies such as the police, military, and Department of State Services (DSS). This strategy reflects a sustainable approach to community intelligence by institutionalizing local participation in security. The government's focus on community involvement ensures that intelligence efforts are both proactive and continuous, with the corps acting as the eyes and ears of the community. The phased expansion of the corps, beginning with 1,456 personnel and later incorporating 550 additional recruits, underscores the commitment to creating a widespread, sustainable network of community-based security operatives. This structure empowers communities to take ownership of their security, fostering resilience and long-term stability in Katsina State.

2. Another key measure is establishing secure communication channels that allow individuals to report intelligence without fear of exposure. Confidential systems, such as encrypted hotlines or secure reporting platforms, will be essential to protect informants. Ensuring confidentiality builds trust and encourages participation. As a community elder in Batsari LGA noted, *"We are willing to share what we know, but without a guarantee of safety, many of us choose silence. We need secure ways to pass information."* On a related note, robust witness protection programs, including anonymity and relocation services, can encourage reporting. One resident of Batsari said, *"We know who the bandits are, but what happens if they find out we talked? Without protection, it's too dangerous to speak."* Ensuring the safety of informants will build confidence in the system.
3. Accountability mechanisms must be established to ensure that intelligence is acted upon promptly and effectively. Monitoring the actions of security agencies and providing feedback to communities demonstrate transparency. A resident of Kankara mentioned, *"If we see results from the intelligence we provide, more people will come forward with information."* This reinforces community confidence in the process.
4. Socioeconomic development must also be prioritized. Poverty and unemployment drive some individuals to cooperate with bandits, undermining community intelligence efforts. Investing in education, healthcare, and economic opportunities reduces the

appeal of criminal activities. A community development worker noted, *"When people have hope for the future, they are less likely to collaborate with bandits and more likely to support security initiatives."*

Conclusion

This study has explored the pivotal role of community intelligence in supporting anti-banditry operations within Batsari and Kankara Local Government Areas of Katsina State from 2015 to 2023. The findings reveal that the effective engagement of local communities in intelligence gathering significantly enhances the operational capabilities of security agencies in combating banditry. Community intelligence serves as a critical enabler for identifying criminal networks, preempting attacks, and ensuring more targeted and effective responses to security threats. Despite the evident potential of community-based approaches, the study underscores several challenges, including mistrust between security forces and local populations, the threat of informant retaliation, and limited institutional frameworks for protecting and incentivizing intelligence sources. These issues highlight the need for enhanced collaboration, capacity building, and robust legal safeguards to bolster community participation in security efforts. To sustain progress, policymakers and security agencies must prioritize strategies that deepen community trust and collaboration, such as establishing mechanisms for anonymous reporting, providing adequate rewards for actionable intelligence, and fostering socioeconomic development to address the root causes of banditry. By institutionalizing these measures, Katsina State can strengthen its resilience against banditry, ensuring long-term peace and stability in the region.

Ultimately, this study contributes to the broader discourse on the integration of local knowledge and participatory security frameworks in addressing complex security challenges in Nigeria and beyond. Future research should further investigate the interplay between community dynamics, state policies, and the evolving nature of rural banditry to inform more comprehensive and sustainable security interventions

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