

# AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECT OF BANDITRY ON FOOD SECURITY IN ZAMFARA STATE, NIGERIA

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## Abstract

Banditry as a criminal act has significantly posed a challenge in Nigeria, specifically in Zamfara State, constituting threat not only to the safety and security of the residents but also to agricultural production, distribution, and access. The aim of the study is to assess the impact of banditry on food security in Zamfara State, analyzing its effects on agricultural production, food accessibility and food production. The study employed primary data which were collected through the use of the structured questionnaire. The result showed that factors such as destruction of farm lands, kidnapping, abduction of farmers, displacement of farmers, destruction of crops, and livestock, leads to reduced food production and availability. The research hypothesis was tested with Chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2$ ). The data analysis and hypothesis testing revealed that the Bandits' activities have significant effects on food production in Zamfara state ( $\chi^2=62.58^a$ ,  $\alpha=0.05$ ,  $df=10$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.001$ ). The study highlights the need for integrated strategies to address the impact of banditry on food security, initiatives such as enhanced security measures, and support for farmers are recommended to mitigate the adverse effect of banditry on food security in Zamfara State.

**Keywords:** Farmers, Bandits, Food Security, Insecurity, Crime

## 1 Introduction

Banditry in Nigeria has emerged as a significant challenge, affecting various facets of societal life, particularly the agricultural sector and broader economic activities. Agriculture as the main stay of the economy in the North and major source of income for people in the region has been adversely affected by banditry. The activities of bandits are prevalent particularly in Kaduna, Zamfara, Katsina and other states in the Northwest region of Nigeria, although incidents have also been reported in the Northeast. The activities of these violent groups has given rise to displacements of persons, loss of lives and the erosion of the means of livelihoods for people in this region who depend primarily on farming. It is pertinent to note that of all the sectors of the Nigerian economy, the one most affected by banditry is the Agriculture sector. Activities of bandits has greatly hindered farming in the northwest. Farmers are killed, hindered from harvesting their crops and sometimes made to pay a fee to have access to their farmlands. A 2024 report by SB Morgan Intelligence claims that farmers pay between N70, 000 to N100, 000 to bandits to gain access to their farmlands. The report stated,

*States like Kaduna, Katsina, Zamfara and parts of Jigawa remain particularly affected. For farmers in these areas, working on their farms poses a dual risk: either they attempt to harvest their crops with hopes of earning a living, or they pay hefty ransoms to save themselves from abductors. The decade-long crisis spells woes on agrarian communities, with locals witnessing more terror attacks than ever. This has spiked the cost of living in the region as food prices in the Northwest experienced a panic surge, worsening the challenge of food affordability in the region. Farmers say they*

*have completely abandoned some parts of their farms because of these bandits. In recent years, a concerning trend has emerged in some communities affected by banditry in Nigeria. Farmers are now forced to pay levies to bandits to access their farmlands and harvest their crops. This practice, which began around 2019, has become more pronounced in subsequent years, particularly during the last farming season. As a result, millions of naira have been channeled to bandit groups through this shift towards farming taxation. "*

Banditry according to the International Committee of the Red Cross is the gravest security threat that Nigeria currently faces, and it is driving her worst humanitarian crisis in decades. Banditry refers to the activities of criminal groups, who engage in various illicit activities including cattle rustling, kidnapping, and displacement of farmers in rural communities where agriculture is prevalent. The activities of these bandits have been on the rise in Zamfara State leading to serious insecurity especially regarding to food production thereby impacting food security.

Food security on the hand encompasses availability` of food, access to farm and food distribution and these are affected by the activities of these bandits. For instance, attacks of farmers which most times result in their displacement, destruction of crops, loss of livestock and invaluable, reduced food production.

## **2 Theoretical Frameworks Bordering on Banditry as a Social Problem**

Two theories have been adopted to attempt an explanation of banditry as a social problem. These theories are: Social Disorganization Theory and Situational Action Theory.

### **1. Social Disorganization Theory**

The social disorganization theory is a sociological perspective that focuses on the breakdown of social structures, such as family, community, and institutions, as the primary cause of deviant behavior and crime in certain neighborhoods or communities. When these social structures weaken or fail to function effectively, individuals are more likely to engage in criminal activities. This theory emerged from the work of sociologists like Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay in the early 20th century, who studied crime patterns in Chicago neighborhoods. They found that areas with high levels of social disorganization, such as poverty, unemployment, residential mobility, and ethnic heterogeneity, tended to have higher rates of crime and delinquency.

When applied to the issue of banditry, the widespread poverty, unemployment, and economic inequality in rural communities in Nigeria create conditions ripe for criminal activities such as banditry. Brenner (2021) emphasizes this point:

Banditry has become an appealing method of income in northwest Nigeria where weak governance, youth unemployment, poverty, and inequality have left people with depleted options for livelihood.

Limited access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities can perpetuate cycles of poverty and marginalization, driving individuals towards illicit means of survival.

## **2 Situational Action Theory and Banditry in Nigeria**

SAT is a theory of crime developed in 2004 by Per-Olof Wikström. It explains what moves people to action such as crime by incorporating ecological, criminological, sociological, and behavioral sciences. Crime is an action that violates the law and is a result of the interplay between an individual's exposure to criminogenic settings and the propensity for criminality. That is, an individual's time in an unsupervised or poorly governed space and level of self-control determine the occurrence of crime. SAT posits that crime is motivated by an individual's morality and the prevailing situation. People are responsible for their actions, but the causes of their actions are situational. Therefore, an act of crime is the product of a choice made after considering various alternative scenarios and stimuli presented by a particular situation. Thus, crime is committed when perceived as a worthwhile and suitable alternative, given the prevailing situation, and/or when a person fails to apply moral restraint.

The situational stance advanced by SAT rests on four major elements: the person (psychological make-up, experience, and so on), the setting (the environment an individual is exposed to), and the situation (choices resulting from interaction with the setting), and action (the person's behaviour). SAT explicates the notion that factors that induce crime are the same for all people, regardless of their age and criminal career stage. The theory argues that people's propensity to commit a crime is

different, just as environments also vary. An individual's setting determines whether a crime will be committed or not. For example, an individual who struggles as a result of multidimensional poverty and finds themselves in an environment without guardianship, but with certain escape options and resources, is likely to commit crime. Crime occurrence, therefore, is the interaction between an individual's crime propensity and the setting's criminogenic incentive.

SAT proposes the following key basic assumptions:

1. People are essentially rule-guided creatures. They express their desires and respond to friction within the context of rule-guided choices;
2. Social order is based on shared rules of conduct. Patterns in human behaviour are based on rule-guided routines;
3. People are the source of their actions. People perceive, choose, and execute their actions;
4. The causes of action are situational. An individual's particular perception of action alternatives, the process of choice, and execution of the action are triggered and guided by the relevant input from the person-environment interaction;
5. Crimes are moral actions. Crimes are actions that break rules of conduct (stated in law) in a particular circumstance.

SAT explains different crimes ranging from theft to terrorism. In explaining radicalization and terror, SAT highlights the key problems of vulnerability, exposure, and emergence. To develop crime propensity, the individual has to be exposed to crime-supportive moral contexts; a setting that induces crime must be present and the person in regular contact with it; and the individual has to be sensitive to the influence of the crime-supportive setting that they come into contact with.

When applied to banditry in Nigeria, SAT expounds on the interaction between the person, setting, situation, and action. The individual (especially with a low crime propensity) is motivated by the situation to consider crime as an alternative to realize the desired outcome. Because the individual is a product of the society they live in, they are likely to subscribe to society's norms. Following Wikström's postulations, crime results from an interaction between a person and the environment. Therefore, in a society characterized by criminogenic inducement, the individual becomes vulnerable to crime. The situation and settings thus motivate an individual's action. The psychological experience resulting from multidimensional poverty, exclusion, unemployment, marginalization, inequality, and displacement coupled with the prevailing circumstance in the setting, such as under-governed spaces, illegal mining activities, the influx of small arms and light weapons and a poorly equipped security apparatus, engenders a negative situation which encourages deleterious action (banditry). Put differently, the increase in banditry in Nigeria is attributable to the interactions among people who are victims of adverse socioeconomic conditions in the setting. The setting is characterized by recurring social malaise. Negative choices result from interaction with the setting, which leads to criminal action.

### **3 Evolution of Banditry in Zamfara State**

The evolution of banditry in the northwest of Nigeria where it is prevalent has been attributed to environmental and ecological challenges in the region, which gave rise to fierce competition over scarce resources between nomadic Fulani herders and Hausa farmers. Brenner (2021) indicates:

*In 2011 northwest Nigeria experienced a surge in bandit attacks between the nomadic Fulani herders and sedentary Hausa farming communities. Environmental and ecological changes caused land and water to become valuable commodities, sparking fierce, and often violent, competition over resources. Over the past decade banditry has evolved from a communal rivalry into lethal militia groups.*

Several years down the line, herder-farmer clashes have not declined but instead has further exacerbated banditry to new heights as indicated by the 2022 Nigeria's Security Situation Analysis Report prepared by Nextier:

One of the factors responsible for the rise of banditry is the deteriorating farmer and herder relations. The sparse accessibility of grazing routes, pasture and water has become a deadly source of conflict.

In Zamfara State, where banditry has been rife, the origin of the menace has been attributed to the violent conflict that ensued between the Fulani and the Hausas in the state. This was stated in 2021, by the then Zamfara state commissioner for Information, Hon. Ibrahim Magaji Dosara, According to him,

*The genesis of the conflict in Zamfara began with the killing of the most popular and highly respected Fulani leader in all the neighbouring states of Zamfara, Sokoto, and Kebbi, one Alhaji Ishe, of Chilin village in Kuyambana district of Dansadai Emirate in Maru Local Government Area of the state on the 11th of April 2013.*

*“Since then, Fulani in the 3 states became aggrieved and aggressive against Hausa communities from where the Yansakai who did the killing came from.”*

“The crisis began to worsen by the day through waves of attacks against each other and a series of revenge continued unabated. With the hostilities between the Fulani and Yansakai, each decided to form a formidable group and structure, the Fulani as bandits and Hausa as Yansakai, leading to the drawing of a battle line between them with increasing waves of attacks and counter-attacks, killing scores of innocent people, destruction of valuables and burning down of houses and foodstuffs. “

The above comments by Hon. Dosara highlights how underlying ethnic tensions, the absence of effective conflict resolution mechanisms, and the proliferation of armed groups contributed to the origin and perpetuation of banditry in Zamfara State

#### 4 Causes and Driving Factors of Banditry in Zamfara State

Banditry in Zamfara State is a complex issue with several contributing factors. Here are some of the key causes and drivers:

1. **Resource competition:** Competition over dwindling land and water resources between Fulani herders and Hausa farmers is a major source of tension. Climate change and decreasing rainfall have exacerbated this competition, leading to violent clashes. Water, which is an essential resource and vitally required for agriculture production, has been very scarce due to climate change and therefore is responsible for the farmers and herders conflict (Bello and Abdullah, 2021).
2. **Under-governance of Rural Areas:** Bandits exert their influence and terror on primarily underserved and ungoverned poor communities, further impoverishing the populace (Nextier, 2023). Limited state presence in rural areas hinders law enforcement and dispute resolution. Under-governed spaces coupled with the country's porous borders have increased the influx of small arms and light weapons from the Sahel region – thus increasing the opportunities for crime (Akinyetun, 2022).
3. **Socioeconomic factors:** Akinyetun, (2022), argues that socioeconomic conditions prevalent in the North West, leaves the youth vulnerable to recruitment for criminal activities. High poverty rates and lack of economic opportunities, particularly among young people, make them more susceptible to recruitment by bandits.

Closely related to the above is unemployment among the youth, thereby making them susceptible to crime and criminality.

4. **Proliferation of firearms and criminal networks:** The easy availability of weapons fuels the violence and empowers bandit groups. The former Zamfara state commissioner for Information, Hon. Ibrahim Magaji Dosara, noted that the proliferation of both light and heavy weapons, with a high influx of bandits from neighboring countries worsened Banditry situation in state.
5. **Breakdown of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms:** Weakened traditional leadership and a decline in customary dispute resolution processes have contributed to the escalation of conflicts. Nigeria's Security Situation Analysis Report of 2022 by Nextier indicates that: banditry is exacerbated by ethnic differences between the Hausa and Fulani groups in Zamfara. If such differences were quickly addressed by conflict resolution mechanisms, chances are that banditry in Zamfara wouldn't have taken the dimension it has now.

#### 5 Effects of Banditry on Food Security

One of the most pressing issues exacerbated by banditry is food security brought about by the disruption of agricultural activities. This is done in a number of ways, some of which are:

1. **Displacement of farmers:** Banditry has led to the displacement of farmers from their lands. Fear of attacks forces farmers to abandon their fields, leaving crops to wither and harvests unattended. This not only results in immediate economic losses for farmers but also contributes to long-term food insecurity as production levels decline.

2. **Lack of Access to farmlands:** The SB Morgan Intelligence report of 2024 indicates that:

"In Zamfara, bandits have imposed taxes on farmers as an additional means of earning money, in addition to kidnapping for ransom and cattle rustling. To ensure prompt payment, bandits threaten to block access to farmlands and ransack farmers' settlements."

The threat of blocking access to farmlands and ransacking farmers' settlements if taxes are not paid can result in farmers abandoning their lands or being unable to tend to their crops. This disruption in food production can lead to reduced availability of food, exacerbating food insecurity in Zamfara State.

3. **Decreased yields and productivity brought on by financial strain on farmers:** The taxes imposed by bandits create an additional financial burden on farmers, reducing their ability to invest in agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, and equipment. This financial strain may lead to decreased agricultural productivity and output. This decreased productivity translates into food shortages and higher prices for staple crops, further straining food security in the state.
4. **Disruption of market networks:** Hon. Ibrahim Magaji Dosara (2021) noted that, bandits were able to establish 24 routes network across the 14 local government areas of Zamfara state, with Two Hundred and thirty-two (232) leaders and large followership of Four Thousand, Eight Hundred and Twenty-Five bandits across the state. Through these routes and large followership, these bandits end up disrupting market networks and trade routes, hindering the distribution of food supplies across Zamfara State and beyond. Transporting goods becomes risky and costly, leading to shortages and price hikes in local markets. Additionally, traders may avoid entering areas affected by banditry, further limiting access to essential food items for both rural and urban populations.
5. **Impact on livelihoods:** The pervasive insecurity created by banditry undermines the livelihoods of farmers, traders, and other stakeholders in the agricultural value chain. Small-scale farmers, who form the backbone of Zamfara's agricultural sector, endure most of the impact, facing challenges in accessing credit, markets, and extension services. The resulting loss of income perpetuates poverty and food insecurity in the state.

## 6 AREA OF STUDY

Zamfara, a state blessed with vast arable land and other natural resources that support agriculture and farming activities, is one the seven states that make up the Northwest geopolitical zone in Nigeria. It was carved out of Sokoto State in 1996 and it shares with Niger Republic and other states like Kastina, Sokoto, Kebbi and Niger. Zamfara comprises of fourteen local government areas, with a land mass of thirty-nine thousand, seven hundred and sixty-two square kilometers (39,762m<sup>2</sup>). It has a population of three million, two hundred and seventy-eight thousand, eight hundred and seventy-three 3,278,873 (2006 census figures), and predominately agrarian. Hausas are the dominant tribe while the Fulani form about 25-30% of the total population.

The Zamfara State slogan being 'Farming is our pride' has fertile and arable land that support the cultivation of many crops approximately 80% of the population lives in agricultural produce. The State is blessed with vast forest composed of about thick grazing reserves which covers about two million, two hundred and twenty-five thousand, six hundred and forty-eight hectares (2,225,648Hectares). However, with the emergence of insecurity in the state many investments are discouraged and even stopped from operating.

This research work therefore is an attempt to assess the security situation in Zamfara state and how it affects food production, this is with a view to proffer solutions geared towards achieving increased food production and sustainable peace in the state.

### 6.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

- i. To find out the effect of banditry on food production in Zamfara State?
- ii. To investigate the causes of banditry in Zamfara State?
- iii. To know how effective are security agencies in curbing the activities of Bandits in Zamfara State?

- iv. To present possible solutions to banditry in Zamfara State?

## 6.2 REASEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were posed to guide the study

- i. Does banditry have effect on food production in Zamfara State?
- ii. What are the causes of banditry in Zamfara State?
- iii. How effective are security agencies in curbing the activities of Bandits in Zamfara State?
- iv. What are the solutions to banditry in Zamfara State?

## 6.3 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

For the purpose of this study, the following hypothesis will be tested:

1. Bandits have no significant effects on food production in Zamfara State.

## 6.4 SAMPLING PROCEDURE AND SAMPLE SIZE

A four stage sampling technique was used to determine the sample size of the study. In the first stage, one Agricultural Development Project Zone out of the zones was purposively selected for the study due to the high number of farmers in the Zone. Two Local Government Areas (Mafara, Bakura and Talata) were randomly selected. In the third stage, two districts each from the selected LGAs were randomly selected. In the fourth stage, three villages were randomly selected from each of the selected districts and finally, thirty (30) farmers were randomly selected from the villages, giving a sample size of one hundred and eighty (180) respondents for the study.

## 7 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Results of data analysis and findings based on research questions taking into consideration the research survey objectives. Results are presented individually in tables according to the order of the research questions and hypotheses.

**Table 1: SOCIO – DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTIC OF THE RESPONDENTS: AGE**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18 – 27	13	7.22
28 – 35	27	15
36 – 43	33	18.33
44 – 51	41	22.78
52 – 59	45	25
60 – 67	14	7.78
68 and above	7	3.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2024

Table1 showed that 25% of the farmers were within the age range of 52 – 59 years, 22.78% of them were within 44 – 51 years and 18.33% were within 36 – 43years. 15% were within 28 – 35years. Also, 7.78% were between 60 – 67years and 7.22% of the respondents were in 18 – 27 years. Finally, 3.89% were at age 68 and above. The mean age reveal that majority of the farmers were in their active and youthful age and hence expected to be energetic and productive age.

**Table 2: Gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	171	95
Female	9	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2024

Table 2 shows that majority of the farmers were males constituting 95% while 5% were females.

**Table 3: What is your level of educational attainment?**

Educational attainment	Frequency	Percentage
Adult education	9	5
Primary	29	16.11
Secondary	53	29.44
Tertiary	25	13.89
Qur'anic education	64	<b>35.56</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2024

Results in Table 3 also indicated that **35.56%** of the respondents had Qur'anic education only, 29.44% attained secondary school education while 16.11% of the respondents had Primary education. 5% have adult education, indicating that most of the farmers had one form of formal education or the other.

**Table 4: Marital status**

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Married</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>87.22</b>
<b>Single</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8.33</b>
<b>Divorced</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.67</b>
<b>Widowed</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2.78</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2024

Table 4shows that majority (87.22%) of the respondents were married, 8.33% were single, and few (2.78% and **1.67%**) of them were widowed and divorced respectively. The findings indicate that majority of the farmers were married and have family responsibilities to cater.

**Table.5: What is your other occupation?**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Hand working	88	48.89
Civil servant	33	18.33
Trading	59	32.78
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2024

Table 5 indicated that 48.89% of the respondents were engaged in hand working; 32.78% were traders while 18.33% were civil servant.

**Table 6: Land acquisition**

<b>Land acquisition</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Inheritance</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>50.56</b>
<b>Purchased</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>26.11</b>
<b>Rent</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>18.33</b>
<b>Borrowing</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2024

**Table 6** indicated that majority (50.56 %) of the respondents acquired their land through inheritance while 26.11% of them acquired their farmlands through purchase; 18.33% of them through rent and few (5%). through borrowing. According to these findings, most of the farmers possessed their land through inheritance.

**Table 7: Farm size(ha)**

<b>Farm size (ha)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>0.5-5</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>79.44</b>
<b>5.5 ha and above</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>31.67</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2024

Farm Size: Table7 further revealed that majority (79.44%) of the respondents had between 0.5-5 hectares of the farmland, while few (31.67%) had 5.5 hectares and above. The mean farm size of hectares indicating that majority of the farmers owned small farm.

**Table 8: What is your income monthly?**

<b>Income</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
N0 - N15,000	23	12.78
N16,000 - N30,000	37	20.56
N31,000 - N45,000	35	19.44
N46,000 - N60,000	29	16.11
N61,000 - N75,000	25	13.89
N76,000 and above	31	17.22
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2024



As shown in Table 8, 20.56% of respondents had monthly income of N16,000 - N30,000 and 19.44% had N31,000 - N45,000. Also, 17.22% of the respondents had N76,000 and above. Meanwhile 16.11% earned between N46,000 - N60,000; 13.89% generated N61,000 - N75,000 and 12.78% earned N0 - N15,000. The modal income category was N16,000 - N30,000.

**Table 9: Respondent perceptions on Banditry**

Items	Frequency	Percent
They are very destructive	156	86.67
They are Fighting a just cause	3	1.67
They are Fighting the government	2	1.11
They are fanatics with extreme	19	10.56
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2024

Table 9 shows that most respondents (86.67%) see Banditry as being destructive while (1.679%) of them view the sect as people fighting a just cause. 1.11% of the respondents see them as people who are fighting the government of the day while 10.56% of them are of the view that Bandit are fanatics with extreme views of life.

**Table 10 Respondents view on factors responsible for the formation of Bandits**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Misinterpretation Religion	8	4.44
Political	2	1.11
Ethnicity	3	1.67
Economic	149	82.78
Corruption	5	2.78
Influence from established terrorist organization	13	7.22
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2024

Tale 10 indicates that misinterpretation of religion, political factors, ethnicity, economic factors, corruption and influences from established terrorist organization were the major factors responsible for the emergence of banditry.

**Table 11: Respondents views on why banditry is existing in Zamfara state**

Items	Frequency	Percent
Level of poverty	156	86.67
High level of illiteracy	5	2.78
Closeness to border	11	6.11
Idleness of youths in the region	8	4.44
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2024

Most the respondents (86.67%) indicated in table 11 that bandit in Zamfara state is influenced by level of poverty in the region; illiteracy (2.78%), closeness to border (6.11%) and idle youths (4.44%). Most of the participant in the key informant interview was of the views that the presence of youths called the Alma-Jiri who has limited or non-western education gave impetus to why there are more bandits.

**Table 12: Respondents views on whether or not Banditry could be Eradicated**

Items	Frequency	Percent
Yes	167	92.78
No	5	2.78
I don't know	8	4.44
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2024

Table 12 shows that over three quarter of the respondents (92.78%) are of the opinion that banditry could be eradicated, while 4.44% of them did not agree that it could be stopped. Also 4.44% of them stated they do not know whether or not banditry could be eradicated from the country.

**Table 13: Respondents views on impacts of banditry on socio-economic development of Zamfara state**

Items	Frequency	Percent
Fluctuation of economic activities	65	36.11
Low investments and low patronages	19	10.56
Low inflow of customers from neighboring towns and cities	48	26.67
Fear of poisonous food	15	8.33
Reductions of goods in markets	17	9.44
High cost of available few goods in markets	16	8.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2024

Table13 shows that 36.11% of the respondents believed that banditry reduces the inflow of customers from neighboring states and towns; while (22%) of the respondents view that commercial activities are no more stable, while (12%) admitted that goods and services in the markets reduces drastically. Furthermore, (8%) said that little available goods in markets become very costly where the poor cannot afford. (5%) of the respondents agreed that people no longer go to buy goods because of the fear of poisonous food by the while (4%) of them responded low investors and low patronage.

**Table 13: Respondents views on ways of stopping the activities of bandit**

Items	Frequency	Percent
By using military action against them	156	86.67
By negotiating with them (Bandits)	5	2.78
By creating employment in the region	8	4.44
By giving orientation to the Bandits	6	3.33
By policing the borders effectively	5	2.78
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2024

The respondents view in table 13 shows that almost half of the respondents (86.67%) believed that military action should be used against the bandits; 2.78% of them advocated for effective policing of the borders while 3.33% of them maintained that re-orientating the bandits is what is needed to curb the activities of the bandits, furthermore, 2.78% of the respondents are of the opinion that government should negotiate with the bandits.

## 8 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

This section deals with the analysis and interpretation of hypotheses of this study. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) application was used to calculate the Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) statistic to test the hypotheses. The level of significant used in the analysis is 5% (i.e. 0.05). The decision rule is that if p-value is greater than 0.05, we accept the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and

conclude that there is no significant relationship between the variables. On the other hand, if p-value is less than 0.05, we accept the alternative hypothesis ( $H_i$ ) and conclude that there is a significant relationship between the variables. The hypotheses are as follow:

**HYPOTHESIS**

- $H_0$ :
- Bandits have no significant effects on food production in Zamfara State.
- $H_i$ :
- Bandits have significant effects on food production in Zamfara State.

Table 14: Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Calculated Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) Results

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “I believe that Bandit is a significant threat to farming activities.”	What is your Occupation?			
	Hand working	Civil Servant	Trading	Total
Agree Strongly	41	17	7	65
Agree Moderately	27	9	12	48
Agree Slightly	11	3	5	19
Disagree Slightly	3	9	3	15
Disagree Moderately	2	4	11	17
Disagree Strongly	3	1	12	16
Total	87	43	50	180
$\chi^2= 62.58a$	DF=10		P-value=0.001	

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2024

In the table above, since p-value (0.001) is less than the level of significant (0.05), we will accept  $H_i$  and conclude that the activities of Bandits have significant effects on socio-economic development of Zamfara state.

**9 Recommendations**

Tackling banditry in Zamfara State requires a comprehensive approach that addresses both the immediate security concerns and the underlying socioeconomic factors contributing to the problem. Here are some recommendations:

- Sensitization programmes on the negative effects of banditry:** The government should commence a radical sensitization programme across the affected states to dissuade young people from joining or enabling bandit activities (Nextier, 2024). Such a senitization programme will help educate young people on the negative effects of banditry.
- Strengthen security measures:** Security measures must also be improved upon in Zamfara State. There must be an increased security presence to deter criminality, more intelligence gathering and inter-agency collaboration to curtail the social problem of banditry. The government should also reform the security apparatus with an emphasis on increasing the size, funding, training, intelligence, support, and communication equipment of security forces (Akinyetun, 2022).
- Stakeholders collaboration:** Collaboration with relevant stakeholders can play a crucial role in curbing banditry in Zamfara State by leveraging their expertise, resources, and influence to address the multifaceted nature of the problem. Both primary and secondary stakeholders like the community, security agencies, traditional leaders, politicians, government and NGO should focus on providing information for early warning; organize training, workshop and seminar on peace building processes and reconciliations. Promises made during such gatherings should be respected and redeemed (Sanchi et'al, 2022).

4. **Tackling socio-economic issues:** Addressing socio-economic issues like poverty and unemployment is crucial for curbing banditry in Zamfara State because these issues are often root causes or contributing factors to the emergence and perpetuation of banditry. Government at all levels should come up with credible and implementable people-oriented policies and programmes to address the basic livelihood problems of poverty, unemployment and the like (Hannatu, 2022).

## 10 Conclusion:

Banditry poses a significant threat to food security in Zamfara State, exacerbating existing challenges and undermining the well-being of its residents. Addressing this complex issue requires a multifaceted approach that combines security measures with efforts to support agricultural livelihoods, strengthen market systems, and promote resilience among vulnerable populations. By addressing the root causes of banditry and investing in sustainable solutions, Zamfara State can work towards a future where all citizens have access to adequate food.

The effects of banditry on food security in Zamfara State extend beyond immediate disruptions. The cycle of violence and instability hampers investments in agriculture, discourages youth engagement in farming, and erodes the resilience of communities to withstand future shocks. Without effective intervention, the vicious cycle of banditry and food insecurity threatens to perpetuate poverty and instability not just in Zamfara State alone but the entire country.

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