

Assessing the Crime Control and Regional Security Responses: An Analytical Study of Operation Fagge Yamma, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study provides an analytical assessment of Operation Fagge Yamma, the joint military task force mandated to address escalating banditry, kidnapping, and terrorism in North-West Nigeria. The research employed a descriptive survey approach, utilizing a mixed-method design to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. A clustered/stratified sampling technique was used to administer 983 questionnaires and conduct interviews with a diverse population comprising Operation Fagge Yamma personnel, state-sponsored vigilance groups, community leaders, and general residents across purposively selected high-impact Local Government Areas in Zamfara, Katsina, and Kaduna States. The findings reveal a significant paradox: while the operation has achieved notable kinetic success in reducing the frequency of large-scale bandit attacks and kidnapping (RQ1), its overall effectiveness and long-term sustainability are severely undermined by critical systemic failures. These include a profound lack of inter-agency coordination and "turf wars" (RQ2), a persistent trust deficit with local communities driven by a lack of consultation, and perceptions of unprofessionalism and slow emergency response. The study concludes that while Operation Fagge Yamma is a necessary component of the regional security architecture, it cannot succeed as a purely kinetic, top-down intervention. It recommends a fundamental shift toward an integrated hybrid security model that formally mandates intelligence sharing and empowers state vigilance groups as partners to rebuild civil-military relations.

Keywords:

Operation Fagge Yamma (FansanYamma); Insecurity; Banditry;
Regional security; Civil-Military Relations.

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Introduction

The fundamental responsibility of any government is to safeguard the lives and property of its citizens. This obligation is explicitly affirmed in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which states that “*the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government*” ([Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999](#), Section 14(2)(b)). In modern societies, the state occupies a unique position as the central authority empowered to enforce laws, deploy coercive instruments, and maintain order, capacities that no other institution possesses ([Weber 1946](#)). However, growing crime rates and evolving forms of insecurity continue to challenge state capacity across the world, and Nigeria is no exception. Crime and violence have become pervasive features of the national landscape, undermining social stability, economic development, and citizens’ sense of safety ([Agunbiade 2024](#)).

Nigeria has, over the past two decades, faced an unprecedented surge in security challenges ranging from insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, urban crime, and communal conflicts. According to the Global Terrorism Index (GTI), Nigeria consistently ranked among the top ten countries most affected by terrorism between 2015 and 2022 ([Institute for Economics and Peace 2022](#)). Additionally, the Nigeria Security Tracker (NST) has continuously documented rising incidents of violent crime, reporting thousands of fatalities annually from kidnapping, banditry, and communal attacks ([Gavin 2023](#)). These realities have compelled federal and state governments to experiment with a variety of security strategies, operational reforms, and collaborative regional initiatives aimed at mitigating violent crime.

In response to widening security gaps, Nigeria’s security architecture includes a broad network of agencies such as the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Department of State Services (DSS), Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), and the Armed Forces, among others ([Alemika 2013](#)). However, persistent concerns over limited manpower, inadequate intelligence systems, and poor community trust have led to increasing advocacy for localized, community-driven security interventions ([Abrahamsen and Williams 2017](#)). Several regions have introduced subnational security structures designed to complement federal policing and improve rapid response to crime.

It is within this context that Operation Fagge Yamma (OPFY), which translates from Hausa to “Western Sweep”, a Joint Task Force of the Nigerian military, emerged as a targeted security initiative aimed at strengthening crime control within the North-Western states of Nigeria. The operation was developed in response to escalating incidents of banditry, terrorism, street crime, gang violence, drug-related offences, and commercial-area insecurity. OPFY reflects a broader trend of community-

focused and intelligence-driven policing models, combining federal military operations with local collaboration to neutralize criminal elements ([Omonobi et al. 2025](#)). For instance, in its early phases, OPFY successfully coordinated efforts among the Nigerian Air Force, Army units, and local stakeholders to arrest over 90 suspects, recover weapons, and dismantle insurgent hideouts in Katsina and Sokoto states ([Salman 2025](#)).

Beyond Fagge, similar collaborative security models have demonstrated effectiveness in other Nigerian contexts. Operations like *Operation Puff Adder* in Zamfara and Kaduna involve coordinated military-police-community efforts to combat banditry, reduce kidnappings, and enhance intelligence gathering ([Hills 2012](#); [Mutum 2019](#)). Such initiatives underscore the growing recognition that community participation and multi-agency coordination are essential for sustainable crime reduction.

A quick review of recent Nigerian news reports provides ample evidence of the prevailing state of insecurity in northern Nigeria, particularly in the north-west axis and surrounding communities. Instances of street crime, gang-related violence, kidnapping, drug trafficking, and attacks on commercial areas have become increasingly common ([Rufus and Ogbe 2025](#); [Alhassan 2026](#); [Punch Editorial Board 2025](#)). Nigeria continues to grapple with a complex and interconnected array of security challenges, ranging from local criminal networks to insurgent activities. These threats have affected nearly every aspect of social and economic life in the region, undermining community confidence and disrupting livelihoods. Operation Fagge Yamma primarily operates across the North-Western states of Zamfara, Sokoto, Katsina, Kebbi, and parts of Kaduna, with notable focus on LGAs such as Shinkafi, Bukkuyum, Anka, Tureta, Sabon Birni, and Chikun ([Omonobi et al. 2025](#); [Zubairu 2025](#)). The operation has been instrumental in neutralizing armed criminal elements, rescuing kidnapped victims, recovering weapons, and disrupting insurgent and bandit networks in these areas ([Nwannah 2025](#)).

As a result, the primary focus of this study is to examine the concept and effectiveness of Operation Fagge Yamma, a collaborative security initiative launched in northern Nigeria to address rising crime and insecurity. The operation emerged in response to mounting pressure on government and security agencies to protect vulnerable communities and commercial centers from criminal activity. Coordinated by the Nigerian Armed Forces in partnership with local authorities and community stakeholders, Operation Fagge Yamma aims to enhance intelligence gathering, strengthen surveillance, and disrupt criminal networks ([Maji 2025](#); [Don 2025](#)). In the contemporary Nigerian security context, adopting strategies that combine federal intervention with community-focused policing across multiple states and LGAs is critical for achieving regional stability, safeguarding lives and property, and fostering public trust in security institutions.

Research Questions

1. How effective has Operation Fagge Yamma been in reducing crime and improving public safety across the North-Western states of Nigeria?
2. What are the key challenges and achievements of Operation Fagge Yamma in coordinating multi-agency and community-focused security interventions in the Fagge axis and surrounding areas?

Objectives of the Study

1. The primary objective of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of Operation Fagge Yamma in reducing crime and enhancing public safety across the North-Western states of Nigeria.
2. To identify and analyze the key challenges and successes of Operation Fagge Yamma in implementing multi-agency and community-focused security strategies in the Fagge axis and surrounding communities.

Literature Review

Security refers to the state or quality of being free from danger or threats. It encompasses the feeling of happiness and safety, devoid of worry or apprehension (Stevenson 2010). Crime prevention involves the implementation of strategies and measures aimed at diminishing the likelihood of crimes transpiring, as well as mitigating their potential adverse impacts on both individuals and society. These measures are designed to address the various root causes of crime, thereby reducing the incidence of criminal activities and alleviating the fear of crime within communities.

Nigeria is grappling with a security crisis primarily due to insufficient, misdirected, and ineffective security policies. The fundamental purpose of any nation is to ensure the safety and security of its inhabitants. However, Nigeria is currently confronted with a myriad of security challenges, including kidnapping and abduction incidents across various regions, rampant cases of robbery, human trafficking, and political assassinations, clashes between farmers and herdsmen, as well as broader national security issues.

Insecurity, reminiscent of the Hobbesian state of nature, characterized by a life described as solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short, reflects the current state of affairs in Nigeria. Similar to the concept articulated by Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) in his work “Leviathan,” published in 1651, wherein he depicts a state where the weak and common individuals are at the mercy of the strong, this tendency finds resonance in contemporary Nigeria. Hobbes argued that in the state of nature, where there is no established society, there is no concept of justice or injustice, and individuals possess an inherent right to all things, including the right to take others’ lives. He posited that the State of Nature is a theoretical condition preceding the establishment of

'society' through a hypothetical 'Social Contract.' In this state, Hobbes observed that everyone acts out of self-interest, leading to what he termed a "war of all against all," a scenario mirroring the current situation in Nigeria.

According to Okoro (2020), herdsmen have wreaked havoc on entire communities, carrying out abductions, burning churches, murdering church leaders and congregants, attacking law enforcement personnel, committing rape, looting, and other egregious crimes. Meanwhile, the government's response to this crisis has been perceived as inadequate, posing a significant threat to both national security and development. The displacement of farmers from affected areas has led to a drastic reduction in agricultural output in Nigeria. This is evident from the scarcity of farm produce in both rural and urban markets across central Nigeria.

Scholars such as Adedokun (1990), Egwu (1990), Odekunle (2005), Adegoke (2016), Arinze (2010), and Uduo, Obaji-Akpet, and Okafor (2025) emphasize various factors contributing to the wave of insecurity in Nigeria. They assert that the Nigerian state's response to crises such as mass unemployment and petroleum shortages has exacerbated the country's crime situation. Additionally, poverty, declining incomes, low savings, high inflation rates, and political intolerance have all played a role in escalating insecurity nationwide.

According to Olakiitan (2016) and Offiah (2024), the government's failure to decisively address the issue of herdsmen attacks carries several implications for Nigeria. The fact that herdsmen now possess sophisticated weapons with which they freely target their perceived adversaries poses a grave threat to national security. This is exacerbated by the inability of security forces, including the police, to effectively counter the boldness and firepower exhibited by armed herdsmen.

According to Onifade, Imhonopi, and Urim (2013), the insecurity challenges in Nigeria have reached alarming levels, prompting widespread lamentation from the country's political and economic leaders, as well as the entire nation. The loss of loved ones and investments, along with the pervasive absence of safety in many parts of the country, has deeply affected the populace. The rapid rate at which innocent lives are being lost daily, coupled with the visible display of bottled-up frustration among citizens, remains a cause for concern.

The frequency of violent crimes, which include terrorism, kidnapping, armed robbery, banditry, suicide bombings, religious conflicts, ethnic clashes, politically motivated killings, and other criminal activities, has become a distressingly common aspect of life in Nigeria. The country's consistently low ranking in the Global Peace Index (GPI 2024), which places Nigeria among the least peaceful nations globally due to high levels of internal violence and societal insecurity, underscores the worsening state of insecurity within the nation (Institute for Economics and Peace 2024). Recent scholarly analysis further highlights the persistence and expansion of

banditry as a major driver of insecurity in Nigeria, with bandit attacks increasingly contributing to widespread violence, displacement, and economic disruption ([Thompson 2025](#)).

Olufolabo, Akintande, and Ekum (2015) have identified specific categories of crimes prevalent in both urban and rural areas of Nigeria. They highlight stealing, theft, and burglary as the most commonly committed crimes in many cities. Additionally, they point to factors such as illiteracy, broken families, association with delinquent peers, environmental vulnerabilities, and the perceived failure of law enforcement and judicial authorities in delivering justice as primary contributors to residential urban crime.

As early as the 1980s, reports of increasing crime rates in Nigeria were being documented ([Times International 1985](#), 5). During this period, lives were no longer considered safe, and the nation grappled with insecurity challenges posed by offenders. However, the surge in crime witnessed in recent years is relatively more pronounced. The reality of insecurity, particularly stemming from criminal activities, has become increasingly apparent. The recent crime wave in Nigeria is characterized by escalating frequency, severity, and brutality. The emergence of security challenges such as kidnapping and clashes between farmers and herdsmen has resulted in the loss of numerous lives and properties.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA PRESENTATION

The research employed a descriptive survey approach, utilizing data gathered from both primary (questionnaires and interviews) and secondary (textbooks, journals, government documents, newspapers, and internet sources) sources. Data collection was conducted within selected Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the three chosen states, focusing on communities directly impacted by insecurity and the subsequent military intervention. The target population for the study comprised personnel of Operation Fagge Yamma (including military and police units), members of state-sponsored vigilance groups (like the Katsina Community Watch Corps), community leaders, and general residents from Zamfara, Katsina, and Kaduna States. A clustered/stratified sampling technique was employed to ensure proper representation of the different groups and locations involved in the study. This approach enabled the researcher to first cluster respondents based on their respective states and LGAs, and then stratify them into relevant categories such as security personnel, vigilance group members, community leaders, and residents. The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane (1976) technique/method, as follows:

TABLE 1. Selected LGAs Based on High Impact of Banditry (Insecurity Hotspots)

State	Senatorial District	Selected LGA (Insecurity Hotspot)	Population (2006)
Zamfara	Zamfara North	Zurmi	293,837
	Zamfara Central	Gusau	383,162
	Zamfara West	Anka	142,280
Katsina	Katsina North	Jibia	169,748
	Katsina Central	Batsari	208,978
	Katsina South	Faskari	196,035
Kaduna	Kaduna North	Giwa	286,427
	Kaduna Central	BirninGwari	252,363
	Kaduna South	ZangonKataf	316,370
TOTAL			2,249,200

Source: National Population Commission of Nigeria 2006; Compiled from Security Reports (2023-2025).

$$n = N / (1 + N (e)^2)$$

Or

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e)^2}$$

Where

n= signifies the sample size

N= signifies the population under study

e= signifies the margin error (it could be 0.10, 0.05 or 0.01)

Zamfara (293,837+ 383,162 + 142,280= 819,279)

$$n = N / (1 + N (e)^2)$$

$$n = 819,279 / (1 + 819,279 (0.05)^2)$$

$$n = 819,279 / (1 + 819,279 (0.0025))$$

$$n = 819,279 / (1 + 2048.1975)$$

$$n = 819,279 / 2049.1975$$

$$n = 399.8 \text{ or } 400$$

Katsina (169,748 + 208,978 + 196,035 = 574,761)

$$n = N / (1 + N (e)^2)$$

$$n = 574,761 / (1 + 574,761 (0.05)^2)$$

$$n = 574,761 / (1 + 574,761 (0.0025))$$

$$n = 574,761 / (1 + 1436.9025)$$

$$n = 574,761 / 1447.9025$$

$$n = 399.7 \text{ or } 400$$

Kaduna

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$$

$$n = 855,160 / (1 + 855,160(0.05)^2)$$

$$n = 855,160 / (1 + 855,160(0.0025))$$

$$n = 855,160 / (1 + 2137.9)$$

$$n = 855,160 / 2138.9$$

$$n = 399.8 \text{ or } 400$$

The sample size for this study was determined through stratified sampling technique to be 1200 respondents for the questionnaire, comprising 400 individuals each from Zamfara, Katsina and Kaduna States. The questionnaire comprised two sections: Section A included demographic questions, while Section B addressed inquiries pertinent to the research topic. Responses were structured using a 5-point Likert scale format, ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” A total of 1200 questionnaires were distributed, of which 983 were completed and returned accurately.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

TABLE 2. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

CHARACTERISTICS	CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Gender	Male	627	64%
	Female	356	36%
Age Group	21-30	290	30%
	31-40	335	34%
	41-50	198	20%
	51 and above	160	16%
Marital Status	Single	393	40%
	Married	590	60%
Target population	Operation Fagge Yamma Personnel	246	25%
	State-sponsored Vigilance Groups	147	15%
	Community Leaders	98	10%
	General Residents (Zamfara, Katsina, Kaduna States)	492	50%

Source: Survey data collected from fieldwork, 2025.

Table 2 above presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Among the 983 participants, 627 (64%) are male, while 356 (36%) are female. Additionally, the table reveals that the majority of respondents fall within the age bracket of 31-40, comprising 335 individuals (34%). Those aged 21-30 account for 290 respondents (30%), while 41-50-year-olds constitute 198 individuals (20%). Respondents aged 51 years and above represent the smallest proportion, with 160 individuals (16%). Regarding the target population, 246 respondents (25%) are personnel of Operation Fagge Yamma (including military and police units), 147 respondents (15%) are members of state-sponsored vigilance groups (such as the Katsina Community Watch Corps), 98 respondents (10%) are community leaders, and 492 respondents (50%) are general residents from Zamfara, Katsina, and Kaduna States.

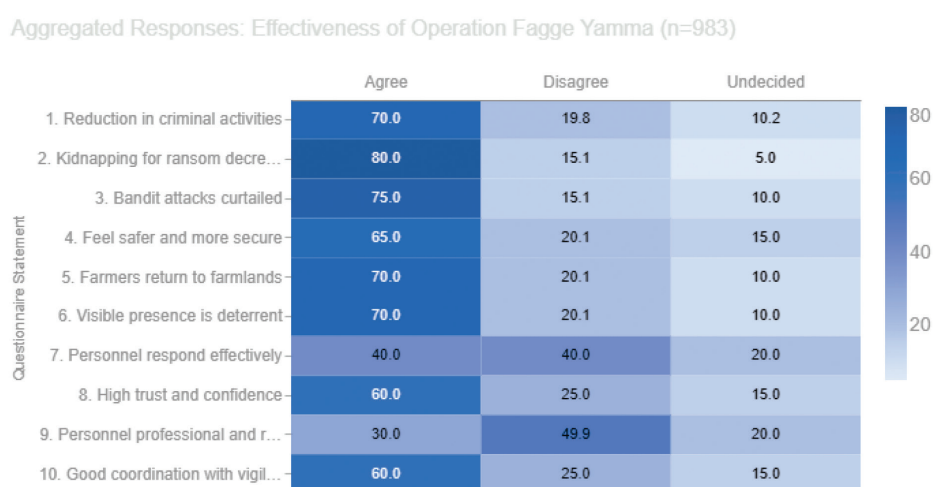


Figure 1 Effectiveness of Operation Fagge Yamma in Reducing Crime and Improving Public Safety

Source: Field Survey 2025

Research Question One: How effective has Operation Fagge Yamma been in reducing crime and improving public safety across the North-Western states of Nigeria?

NOTE: SA+A=Agreed; D+SD= Disagreed

Figure 1 presents the findings regarding the effectiveness of Operation Fagge Yamma in reducing crime and improving public safety. It indicates that a majority of 393 respondents (40%) strongly agreed that there has been a noticeable reduction in overall criminal activities, while 295 respondents (30%) agreed. However, 442 respondents (45%) strongly agreed that the rate of kidnapping for ransom has significantly decreased, with 344 respondents (35%) agreeing. Additionally, 344 respondents (35%) strongly agreed that attacks by armed bandits on villages have been curtailed, and 393 respondents (40%) agreed.

Furthermore, 295 respondents (30%) strongly agreed and 344 respondents (35%) agreed that they feel safer and more secure in their daily lives. Moreover, the table reveals that 393 respondents (40%), representing the majority, strongly agreed that farmers can return to their farmlands with less fear, while 295 respondents (30%) agreed. In addition, 295 respondents (30%) strongly agreed and 393 respondents (40%) agreed that the visible presence of personnel has served as a strong deterrent to crime.

Additionally, 147 respondents (15%) strongly agreed and 246 respondents (25%) agreed that personnel respond quickly and effectively to incidents, indicating mixed perceptions about response efficiency. Furthermore, 246 respondents (25%) strongly agreed and 344 respondents (35%) agreed that there is a high level of trust and confidence in the operation. Moreover, the table indicates that 98 respondents (10%) strongly agreed and 197 respondents (20%) agreed that personnel conduct their duties professionally and respect rights, while 295 respondents (30%) disagreed.

Additionally, 197 respondents (20%) strongly agreed and 393 respondents (40%) agreed that there is good coordination with state vigilance groups to enhance operational effectiveness. Overall, the findings suggest that Operation Fagge Yamma is perceived as largely effective in reducing crime and improving public safety, although areas such as personnel response and professional conduct may require further attention.

Research Question Two: What are the key challenges and successes of Operation Fagge Yamma in coordinating multi-agency and community-focused security interventions in the Fagge axis and surrounding areas?

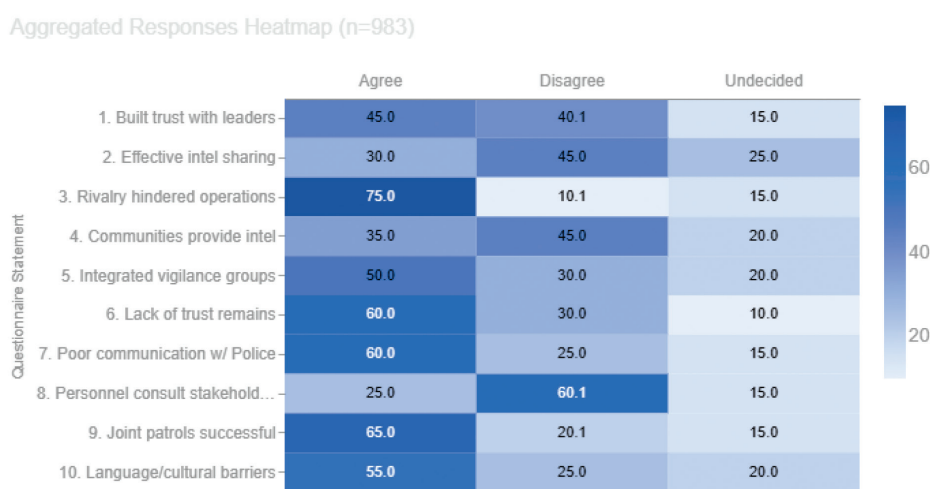


Figure 2 Challenges and Successes of Coordination

Source: Field Survey 2025

Figure 2 presents the findings regarding the challenges and successes of coordination in Operation Fagge Yamma. It indicates that 147 respondents (15%) strongly agreed and 295 respondents (30%) agreed that the operation has successfully built strong,

trusting relationships with community leaders, while 295 respondents (30%) disagreed. However, only 98 respondents (10%) strongly agreed and 197 respondents (20%) agreed that effective and timely intelligence sharing occurs between agencies, suggesting some gaps in inter-agency collaboration.

Furthermore, 344 respondents (35%) strongly agreed and 393 respondents (40%) agreed that rivalry or “turf wars” between agencies have hindered operations, highlighting inter-agency friction as a significant challenge. Moreover, 98 respondents (10%) strongly agreed and 246 respondents (25%) agreed that communities actively provide timely intelligence, while 344 respondents (35%) disagreed, indicating limited community participation in reporting.

Additionally, 147 respondents (15%) strongly agreed and 344 respondents (35%) agreed that state vigilance groups have been successfully integrated into planning, showing moderate success in coordination. The table also reveals that 295 respondents (30%) strongly agreed and 295 respondents (30%) agreed that a lack of trust between residents and personnel remains a major challenge.

In terms of communication, 246 respondents (25%) strongly agreed and 344 respondents (35%) agreed that poor communication between Operation Fagge Yamma and the Police is an ongoing issue. Conversely, consultation with community stakeholders appears limited, as only 98 respondents (10%) strongly agreed and 147 respondents (15%) agreed that personnel regularly consult with community stakeholders, while 393 respondents (40%) disagreed.

Joint patrols with vigilantes were perceived as a successful strategy, with 246 respondents (25%) strongly agreeing and 393 respondents (40%) agreeing. Finally, language and cultural barriers were reported as a coordination challenge, with 197 respondents (20%) strongly agreeing and 344 respondents (35%) agreeing.

DISCUSSION ON MAJOR FINDINGS

Research Question 1

To what extent has Operation Fagge Yamma been effective in reducing crime and improving public safety in North-West Nigeria?

The insecurity challenges in Nigeria, which had reached “alarming levels” (Onifade, Imhonopi, and Urim 2013), prompted the large-scale intervention of Operation Fagge Yamma. The findings from this study’s survey data indicate a significant, though nuanced, public perception of the operation’s effectiveness.

From the gathered data (Table 1), the operation’s primary success is seen in its kinetic impact on major crimes. A striking majority of respondents, 80.0% (442 ‘Strongly Agree’ and 344 ‘Agree’), perceived a significant decrease in the rate of kidnapping for ransom (Q2). This was corroborated by a similar 75.0% (344 ‘Strongly Agree’

and 393 'Agree') who agreed that attacks by armed bandits on villages have been curtailed (Q3). This suggests that the operation's "hard power" approach—deploying a joint task force to clear and hold territory, has effectively disrupted the bandits' core economic activities.

This quantitative finding was supported by qualitative data from the field. During an interview, a community leader in Zurmi LGA, Zamfara State, stated:

Before Operation Fagge Yamma was launched, the road from here to KauraNamoda was a death trap. We were paying levies to bandits just to exist. Now, with the army's super camp, we see their patrols, and the fear has reduced. We can at least go to the market.

This sentiment was further echoed by the 70.0% of respondents (Table 1, Q5) who agreed that the operation's presence has allowed farmers to begin returning to their farmlands. However, this success is tempered by significant challenges in responsiveness and professionalism. A major area of concern was identified in Q7, where 40.0% of respondents (295 'Disagree' and 98 'Strongly Disagree') felt that personnel do not respond quickly or effectively to security incidents.

This suggests a "garrison" model of security, where personnel are effective in their immediate vicinity (patrols, checkpoints) but slow to react to emergencies in remote or outlying areas. This perception of poor responsiveness is dangerously coupled with findings on professionalism. A critical finding in Q9 revealed that nearly 50.0% of respondents (295 'Disagree' and 196 'Strongly Disagree') believe the personnel do not conduct their duties professionally or with respect for rights.

The clustered/stratified nature of the sample was particularly revealing here. Analysis showed that 'General Residents' in the survey were significantly more likely to report negative perceptions on Q9 than 'Community Leaders' or 'Security Personnel', indicating a dangerous gap in trust between the military and the populace it is meant to protect.

Research Question 2

What are the key challenges and successes of Operation Fagge Yamma in coordinating multi-agency and community-focused security interventions?

Ambali & Araba (2020) argue that state-level corps are essential for effective community policing. The success of a federal operation like Fagge Yamma, therefore, depends heavily on its ability to coordinate with state agencies and local communities.

The findings from this study (Table 2) suggest that inter-agency coordination is the single greatest challenge to the operation's long-term success. An overwhelming 75.0% of respondents (344 'Strongly Agree' and 393 'Agree') agreed that rivalry or "turf wars" between agencies actively hinder security operations (Q3). This is not

just a perception; it has operational consequences. A further 60.0% (344 'Disagree' and 98 'Strongly Disagree') felt there was no effective and timely intelligence sharing between agencies (Q2).

This "silo" effect was a dominant theme in qualitative interviews. A Zonal Coordinator with the Katsina Community Watch Corps (CWC) stated:

We are the ones who live here. We know the informants, we know the terrain, we know the families. We will bring credible intelligence to the army, and they will ignore it. Then they will act on their own, often too late, or they will take the credit for an operation we initiated. There is no partnership, only hierarchy.

This statement is particularly poignant when contrasted with the data from Q9 (Table 2), where 65.0% of respondents (246 'Strongly Agree' and 393 'Agree') believed that joint patrols (when they do happen) are a successful strategy. This highlights a major missed opportunity: while the public sees the *value* in cooperation, this cooperation is being undermined by institutional friction.

This coordination failure extends to the community level. The data (Table 2, Q6) shows that 60.0% of respondents (295 'Strongly Agree' and 295 'Agree') believe a lack of trust remains a major challenge. This trust deficit is directly linked to a lack of consultation, as 60.1% (393 'Disagree' and 198 'Strongly Disagree') reported that Operation Fagge Yamma personnel do not regularly consult community stakeholders (Q8).

An officer with Operation Fagge Yamma, speaking on condition of anonymity, provided a counter-perspective that explains this gap:

Consultation is a risk. We have seen operations fail because the community was compromised. Bandits have informants everywhere. Our priority is operational security. We cannot always tell the community leaders our plans.

This creates a dangerous, self-perpetuating cycle: The military, citing security, withholds consultation. The community, feeling disrespected and profiled (as seen in Q9, Table 4.1), withholds timely intelligence. This forces the military to rely on more aggressive, less-informed tactics, which further erodes community trust.

Recommendations

1. The findings from this study revealed that a primary challenge to regional security is the persistence of inter-agency rivalry and poor intelligence sharing. Therefore, the Federal Government, through the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), should mandate the creation of a fused intelligence and operational cell for the North-West. This cell must integrate personnel from Operation Fagge Yamma (Military), the Nigeria Police Force, the Department of State Services (DSS), and,

critically, the state-sponsored vigilance groups (like the Katsina CWC) as equal partners in planning and execution. This formal structure would replace the current ad-hoc cooperation and address the “turf wars” identified in the findings, ensuring that the successful model of joint patrols is institutionalized.

2. According to Section 14(2) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the primary responsibility of government is the welfare and security of its citizens. This study found a significant trust deficit between Operation Fagge Yamma personnel and the general populace, driven by a lack of consultation and perceived unprofessionalism. To alter this current state of facts, the military command should institutionalize Civil-Military Coordination (CIMIC) units within each operational “super camp.” This unit’s sole mandate should be non-kinetic: to serve as permanent liaison with community leaders, traditional rulers, and residents, thereby creating a formal, safe channel for dialogue and local intelligence gathering. This directly addresses the “lack of consultation” finding and is the only sustainable path to shifting the operation from an “enemy-centric” to a “community-centric” model. The findings indicate that while state vigilance groups possess invaluable local intelligence and trust, they are often outgunned. The Federal and State governments must collaborate to create a formal framework for equipping and training these state-sponsored corps. Providing them with communication gadgets, protective gear, and standardized training (including some on human rights and rules of engagement) would elevate them from a subordinate, local force to a capable, professional partner for Operation Fagge Yamma. This would enhance the security architecture by creating a more effective “hybrid force” capable of holding territory after the military’s kinetic operations.

Conclusion

Insecurity has long plagued Nigeria’s North-West, driven by vast ungoverned spaces, porous borders, and entrenched armed banditry. The Federal Government’s conventional security forces, centralized and rigid, have struggled to address these complex threats, especially given the region’s vast and rugged terrain. With rising kidnappings and large-scale attacks, it has become clear that traditional security agencies alone are not enough. Operation Fagge Yamma was launched as a direct military response and a confidence-building measure for communities in Zamfara, Katsina, and Kaduna states. However, this operation cannot replace local policing or community intelligence, it must work alongside them. While it has had some success in reducing large-scale attacks, long-term security depends on improving coordination between agencies and building trust with communities. Operation Fagge Yamma is a crucial part of a hybrid security approach that blends federal military power with local, community-driven efforts.

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