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2 **Deconflicting Nigeria's Inter-agency intelligence Rivalry: An Effective**  
3 **Measure to theSecurity Operations Against Armed Banditry and**  
4 **Kidnapping for Ransom in Northwest Nigeria**

5

6 **Abstract**

7 It is a generally accepted belief among scholars and practitioners that inter-agency  
8 rivalry among inter-connected organizations or institutionstend to distort  
9 thepotentials embedded in a seamless inter-agency coordination and  
10 collaborativemechanisms. The Nigeria's national strategic security and law  
11 enforcement inter-agency policy mechanisms designed to coordinate  
12 information/intelligence to supportnationalsecurity and law enforcement operations is  
13 not isolated from the persistent menace of inter-agency rivalryamid the humongous  
14 material, logistical and operational resources committed to supporting operations.  
15 The researchtherefore explores factors that have continued to sustain inter-agency  
16 intelligence rivalry among security and law enforcement intelligence agencies in the  
17 context of the security operations against armed banditry and kidnapping for ransom  
18 in northwest region of Nigeria. In the light of this, the research adopts qualitative  
19 research methods of data collection and analysis to exploressecondary data drawn  
20 from Nigeria's national strategic security and counter-insurgency policydocuments,  
21 which is targeted at inter-agencyintelligence coordination and collaboration and from  
22 other intelligence related literaturein juxtaposition to primary data sourced from  
23 security and law enforcement officers and civilian components within the northwest  
24 region.To this end, the research explores Organizational Culture and Identity  
25 Theory as it theoretical framework to explain whyinter-agency intelligence rivalry  
26 persists.The research found that emphasis on policy document with no explicit or  
27 implicit legal framework to coordinate and bind the operational activities of these  
28 agencies together under a single unified legal framework created the gaps for security  
29 and law enforcement agenciesto exhibit the organizational cultural identity  
30 ofsuperiority among agencies. Hence, it recommends the enactment of laws with an  
31 integrated enforceable legal framework to bridge the institutional, operational and  
32 technological gaps with a view to compel and coordinate the activities security and  
33 law enforcement intelligence agencies at all levels with a view to share information  
34 and intelligence under an integrated authority.

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37 *Key words: Inter-agency Intelligence Rivalry, Nigeria's Inter-agency Intelligence Coordination and Collaboration Mechanisms, Armed Banditry and Kidnapping for Ransom*

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## 42 Introduction

43 The events of 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001, the terror attacks  
44 on Madrid in 2004 and London in 2005, has exemplified the significance of  
45 intelligence coordination, collaboration and intelligence sharing (Abioye and Alao,  
46 2020). In the context of Nigeria, the Nigeria's national strategic security and law  
47 enforcement inter-agency policy mechanism designed to coordinate the security and  
48 law enforcement intelligence agencies operations to support tactical/physical security  
49 operations (National Security Strategy, 2019), against the criminal activities of terrorist  
50 groups, armed bandits and kidnap gangs is challenged by handful of issues (National  
51 Security Summit Report, 2021), which in the context of this paper, are most often  
52 facilitated by factors, such as inter-agency rivalry among security and law enforcement  
53 intelligence agencies in the face of huge material, logistical and operational resources  
54 committed to supporting security and law enforcement operations in the country  
55 (Nte and Eyororokumoh, 2025).

56 The criminal activities of armed bandits and kidnap gangs in the northwest region  
57 have continued to pose national security threat with high economic pay-off in terms  
58 of derivable financial benefits, mostly facilitated and sustained by factors, such as the  
59 proliferation and sophistication of Small Arms and Light Weapons - SALWs across  
60 territories, the movement of illicit drugs mostly aided by criminal markets across  
61 porous borders and ill-governed spaces or ungoverned territories (National Security  
62 Strategy, 2019; Ojo, 2020; National Security Summit Report, 2021; Global  
63 Organized Crime Index, Nigeria, 2021; International Crisis Group, 2022; Ojo,  
64 Oyewole and Aina, 2023; Osason, 2023; Nwagwu and Enwelum, 2024; Ibani and  
65 Jacobs, 2024; Chinonyelum and Onwudinjo, 2024; Fidel, 2024).

**67** Thus, to effectively and proactively combat the criminal activities of armed banditry  
**68** and kidnapping for ransom in the northwest region of Nigeria, the Federal  
**69** Government has established in conjunction with inter-agency intelligence  
**70** mechanisms, a number of frontline security and law enforcement operations (Ojo,  
**71** Oyewole and Aina, 2023; Babatunde, 2023; Madubuegwu and Abah, 2023; Olubiyo  
**72** and Ibrahim, 2022; Aina, Ojo and Oyewole, 2023; Yusuf, 2023; Rufus and Ogbe,  
**73** 2025).

**74** Similarly, the government through the instrumentality of the National Counter  
**75** Terrorism Centre - NCTC in the Office of the National Security Adviser - ONSA  
**76** have established a Multi-Agency Anti-kidnap Fusion Cell with the support of the  
**77** National Crime Agency of the United Kingdom. The Multi-Agency Anti-kidnap  
**78** Fusion Cell represents a structured and a coordinated multi-agency approach aimed  
**79** at ensuring that the military, security agencies, law enforcement, intelligence and  
**80** judicial institutions work seamlessly to combat kidnapping ([www.nctc.gov.ng](http://www.nctc.gov.ng),  
**81** 3/2/2025). The government also partner with the United States in the sharing of  
**82** intelligence (US Department of State, 2022), the Economic Community of West  
**83** African States - ECOWAS and Africa Union - AU (ECOWAS, 2022; African  
**84** Union, 2022).

### **85** Research Problem

**86** While, the dynamic and complex nature of the criminal violence of armed banditry  
**87** and kidnapping in the northwest region highlights the need to improve the nation's  
**88** strategic security and law enforcement inter-agency intelligence mechanisms  
**89** (Adebayo, 2022; Transparency International, 2022; Human Rights Watch, 2022;  
**90** Adebayo, 2022; Arumede and Edwin, 2024), inter-agency rivalry persists among  
**91** security and law enforcement intelligence agencies in the northwest region of Nigeria.  
**92** Hence, the research is guided by the following research questions

### **93** Research Questions

**94** In the light of the above, the research is guided by the following research questions:

- 95** ✓ What are the factor (s) sustaining inter-agency intelligence rivalry among  
**96** intelligence agencies in the operations against armed banditry and  
**97** kidnapping for ransom in the northwest region ?
- 98**
- 99** ✓ How can Nigeria's inter-agency intelligence mechanism be enhanced to  
**100** prevent inter-agency rivalry among intelligence agencies ?

**101**  
**102** Objectives of the Research  
**104** The research examined in the context of Nigeria's strategic security and law enforcement inter-agency intelligence coordination and collaboration policy framework:

**107** ▪ Factor (s) sustaining inter-agency intelligence rivalry.  
**108**  
**109** ▪ How can inter-agency intelligence mechanisms be enhanced to prevent inter-agency rivalry among intelligence agencies.  
**110**

**119** Significance of the Research

**120** Coordinated and collaborative security and law enforcement intelligence efforts is required to effectively approach the fluid nature of violence criminal activities of **122** armed bandits. The research is also of academic relevance to researchers interested **123** in deconflicting inter-agency intelligence rivalry.

**124** Scope and Limitations of the Research

**125** The research is concerned with the factor (s) sustaining inter-agency intelligence rivalry and ways to deconflicting inter-agency rivalry as an effective measure to support **127** security operations against armed banditry and kidnapping in the northwest region of **128** Nigeria.

**129** Hence, primary data, which informed the research were drawn from respondents **130** serving in the internal security and law enforcement agencies and some civilian **131** component in some localities within the two states of northwest region of Nigeria - **132** Zamfara and Kaduna State. While, secondary data were sourced from related **133** literature and national strategic security and counter-insurgency policy documents as **134** well as other legal books.

**135** Research Methodology

**136** The research adopts qualitative research approach to examine and explore **137** government strategic policy directives and other statute books in juxtaposition to **138** primary data sourced during field interview with a view to understand government **139** inter-agency security and law enforcement intelligence mechanisms and factors **140** sustaining inter-agency intelligence rivalry and its impact on the security and law

**141** enforcement operations against armed banditry and kidnapping for ransom in the  
**142** northwest region of Nigeria.

**143** The rational for adopting qualitative research method is exemplified in the  
**144** opportunity it provides for an in-dept exploration of the experiences, perceptions, and  
**145** knowledge of participants (Creswell, 2009).

**146** In the light of this, the pilot study for the research was conduct in the month of June,  
**147** 2024 in Katsina State in the northwest region of Nigeria to test the feasibility of the  
**148** research and the tools for data collection.

**149** Mixed Purposeful Sampling embedded in Purposive Sampling technique was used to  
**150** select respondents from and across the following government agencies; the Nigeria  
**151** Police Force; the Nigerian Military, the Department of State Services, the Judiciary  
**152** and from members of the public within Zamfara, Katsina and Kaduna State  
**153** respectively. The total number of 68 respondents - informants were selected from and  
**154** across the ranks of inter-mediate senior officers, senior officers and junior officers.

**155** As suggested, a lengthy interview with two, to up to ten experienced respondents could  
**156** be good enough to provide an informed opinion on the subject under research  
**157** (Creswell, 1998). Hence, Key Informant Interview and Semi-structured Interview were  
**158** used with open-ended questions to allow for flexibility and in-dept exploration of  
**159** opinions of respondents with specialized knowledge or unique perspectives on the  
**160** topic with the view to gather detailed information. (Miles and Gilbert, 2005).

**161** The research adopted document and thematic analysis embedded in qualitative  
**162** research method to the analysis of primary and secondary data collected. The essence  
**163** of adopting document and content analysis is because data for the research were  
**164** drawn from multiple sources (Dezin, 1970; Braun and Clarke, 2006). As argued,  
**165** qualitative researcher is expected to take reference of evidence from multiple sources  
**166** with a view to seek convergence and collaboration through the use of different  
**167** methods (Bowen, 2008).

**168** Validity and reliability are crucial aspect in examining the quality of research findings,  
**169** most importantly in ensuring that the conclusions are accurate with precision  
**170** (Anderson, Boateng and Abos, 2024). Hence, the reliability of the data is based on  
**171** Lincoln and Guba (1985) criteria for credibility, transferability, conformability and

**172** dependability to ensure trustworthiness in the data collection and analytical process  
**173** through the aid of multiple data collected.

**174** The right of research participants/respondents were given due consideration during  
**175** the research process of data collection. Therefore, before the commencement of the  
**176** primary data collection process in the field, respondents were informed of the essence  
**177** of the research and the importance of guaranteeing their confidentiality. In this regard,  
**178** respondents were willing to express themselves in a very open manner that enable  
**179** them to provide detail information on their experience and opinions.

## **180** Literature Review

**181** Nte (2012), notes that, “the nature of today’s threats has blurred the lines between  
**182** traditional diplomatic, military, and law enforcement concerns, requiring all  
**183** instruments of national power to work as a seamless network to defeat our  
**184** adversaries.” (Nte, 2012).

**185** The events of 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001, the terror attacks on  
**186** Madrid in 2004 and London in 2005, has exemplified the significance of intelligence  
**187** coordination, collaboration and intelligence sharing (Abioye and Alao, 2020). The  
**188** increasing need for joint task forces, intelligence operations centers or fusion centers,  
**189** offers professionals from across the law enforcement, military, and intelligence  
**190** communities the unique opportunities to share tools and expertise to defend their  
**191** nation (Baginski, 2007).

**192** Inter-agency intelligence coordination and collaboration may not be limited to the  
**193** military, police, and intelligence services, it may extend to other related agencies  
**194** (Udochukwu and Uchenna, 2024). In the light of this, the effective inter-agency  
**195** intelligence coordination and collaboration is critical for national stability in the face of  
**196** the multitude of security threats (Nigeria Security Tracker,  
**197** <https://www.cfr.org/nigeria/nigeria-security-tracker/p29483>).

**198** The essence and significance of inter-agency intelligence coordination and  
**199** collaboration in combating serious organized violence or threat of organized violence  
**200** like terrorism, transnational crime, and cyberattacks has been emphasized (Chen,  
**201** 2023).

**202** It is argued that, effective information gathering through multiple intelligence sources  
**203** and analysis, as well as seamless intelligence coordination, cooperation and

204 collaboration among intelligence agencies (Olowonihi and Musa, 2024; Udochukwu  
205 and Uchenna, 2024), through established fusion centers or intelligence operating  
206 centers is critical for timely identification and understanding of criminal behavior and  
207 their motivations; tracking criminal networks as well as preventing multifaceted  
208 security and law enforcement threats through informed decision making and effective  
209 national security policies (Nte, 2012; Johnson, 2024; Clark, 2016; Chen, 2023;  
210 Olowonihi and Musa, 2024; Lee, 2024).

211 However, historical fact shows that, issues such as institutional silos, secret operations,  
212 absence of trust, superiority complex among security and law enforcement intelligence  
213 agencies, poor communication infrastructure, bureaucratic inefficiencies and issues of  
214 training, has continually affected negatively the flow of information and intelligence  
215 sharing among security and law enforcement services (Smith, 2020; Udochuchwu and  
216 Uchenna, 2024; Sunday, 2024; Arumede and Edwin, 2024).

217 The gap in intelligence coordination among intelligence agencies hampers intelligence  
218 sharing among agencies, thereby enabling terrorist groups to explore and exploit these  
219 weaknesses (International Crisis Group, 2022). The prevention and management of  
220 multidimensional threats as terrorism, organized violent crime and other serious crime  
221 are hampered by the lack of effective inter-agency coordination and collaboration. To  
222 them, despite the growing need for inter-agency efforts, the response of government  
223 agencies to these issues are often done by individual agency or organization, thereby  
224 resulting to duplication of tasks and waste of resources(Okafor and Anyanwu, 2020),  
225 thereby sustaining inter-agency rivalry. Hence, the concern to address factors  
226 sustaining inter-agency rivalry in the context of Nigerian inter-agency intelligence  
227 coordination and collaboration informed the research.

228 The research theoretical frame is guided by Organizational Culture and Identity  
229 Theory. Proponents of this theory, such as, Stewart Albert and David Whetten (1985),  
230 Henri Tajfel and John Turner, Blake Ashforth and Fred Mael (1989), argued that  
231 inter-agency rivalry occurred and sustained between related agencies under the quest  
232 and influence of 'strong internal cohesion and distinctiveness' through deep rooted  
233 organizational culture and identity transmitted to members of an organization over  
234 time through recruitment and training process. This to them, often resulted to  
235 'superiority and inferiority relationship' among members of different organizations  
236 with inter-connected institutional and statutory mandatesand subsequently leading to

**237** inter-agency tension and rivalry (Ravasi and Rekom, 2003; Parker, 2000; Ravasi, **238** 2016).

**239** Nigerian security and law enforcement intelligence agencies, such as the Defense **240** Intelligence Agency DIA, the Department of State Service, Directorate of Military **241** Intelligence - DMI, the Directorate of Military Intelligence - DMI, the Directorate of **242** Airforce Intelligence - DAI, the Directorate of Naval Intelligence - DNI, the National **243** Intelligence Agency - NIA and the Nigeria Police Force - NPF Intelligence **244** Department are inter-related with blurred statutory institutional and statutory **245** mandates. However, in the light of Organizational Culture and Identity theory, the **246** historical influence from the implicit internal organizational culture of identity **247** embedded in the perceived institutional practice of superiority versus inferiority **248** relationship among these intelligence agencies, have played a significant role in **249** facilitating and sustaining the inter-agency intelligence tension and inter-agency **250** intelligence rivalry. Thereby distorting a seamless inter-agency intelligence **251** coordination and collaboration in an effective process of collecting, analyzing **252** information and sharing of intelligence for appropriate utilization.

### **253** **Definition of Terms**

**254** Understanding critical concepts is the initial step in effectively comprehending any **255** activity (Carter, 1990). Hence, for the purpose of this research, the following terms **256** were adopted and defined as follow:

**257** **Strategic Security and law Enforcement Intelligence:** The understanding of the changing **258** and fluid nature of today's criminal environment, necessitates the need to holistically **259** understand and address security issues from the lenses of strategic security and law **260** enforcement. Intelligence (Johnson, 2007). Thus, *strategic security and law* **261** *enforcement intelligence* is a process of collecting and analyzing information to **262** identify long-term trends, threats, and vulnerabilities to inform policy and proactive **263** strategies against crime and security risks. It is concerned with the understanding of **264** emerging threats, criminal patterns, and the vulnerabilities of criminal organizations **265** through strategic and operational analysis with a view to provide strategic foresight **266** and insight to support strategic decision making to prepare for future risks /threats or **267** to prevent future crime and instability (Pythian, 2006; Organization for Security and **268** Co-operation in Europe, 2017; Nte and Eyororokumoh, 2025).

**269 Inter-agency Intelligence Coordination and Collaboration:** Generally, Coordination is concerned with the development of a workable framework that is aimed at uniting inter-related components parts of a system for a harmonious and effective relationship. Wilder Research Center defines collaboration as a mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve common goals... (Roy, 2007).

**275** In the light of this, inter-agency intelligence coordination and collaboration is concerned with the organized efforts and commitments to synchronize the activities of different intelligence agencies with other related stakeholders to achieve common objectives. It emphasizes the systematic sharing of information, resources, and expertise for the purpose of timely and actionable intelligence for effective operations (Al Waroi, 2024). It is concerned with established protocol of communication and leveraging on knowledge/skills, expertise, technology and resources with the aim of achieving a common objective in combating complex security and criminal threats (Hull, 2008; Sunday, 2024).

**284** The effective and seamless coordination and symbiotic collaborative mechanisms between and among intelligence agencies (Arumede and Edwin, 2024) is critical in an ever-changing and ever-evolving technological world.

**287 Inter-agency Intelligence Rivalry:** Interagency intelligence rivalry is inter-agency tension between various inter-related security and law enforcement intelligence agencies in situations in which these various inter-related intelligence agencies with almost similar statutory mandates are in constant overlap. Inter-agency intelligence rivalry may result from competition for superiority, relevance and resources by inter-related intelligence agencies with similar mandate (Abioye and Alao, 2020).

**293 Armed Banditry and Kidnapping for Ransom:** The concept of armed banditry has been changing in time, space and context (Rufa'i, 2018), defined and classified globally by its peculiar drivers (Kae, 1986). The activities of armed bandits in the northwest region are driven by economic benefits/gains: Defined as loose collection of various criminal groups involved in kidnap-for-ransom and other crimes (Osasona, 2023).

**298** Hence, in the premise of this research, *Armed Banditry and Kidnapping for Ransom* is defined as acts, absence of any ideological necessity, but in the pursuit of illicit violent use of force or threat of force to intimidate, extort, sexually assault, rape, maim or kill in order to constrain movement of their victims to undisclosed location (s) for

**302** the purpose of eliciting financial/economic benefits from the victims' family, close  
**303** associates or government as ransom (International Crisis Group, 2020; Osasona,  
**304** 2023).

### **305** Nigeria's Inter-agency Intelligence Coordination and Collaboration Mechanisms

**306** The Nigerian Strategic Security and Law Enforcement Intelligence measures to  
**307** serious violent crime, such as terrorism, armed banditry and kidnapping for ransom is  
**308** based on *inter-agency intelligence coordination and collaboration* through the Office  
**309** of the National Security Adviser - ONSA (Constitution, 1999; Police Act, 2020;  
**310** National Security Agency Act, 1986; NSS, 2014; 2019 NTAL, 2016; NACTEST,  
**311** 2016; [www.nctc.gov.ng](http://www.nctc.gov.ng)).

**312** In the light of this, the Nigeria inter-agency intelligence institutional coordination  
**313** instruments may not be limited to the following agencies of government:

**314** **The Nigeria Police Force - Department of Force Intelligence - DFI:** The Nigeria  
**315** Police Force is the lead internal security and law enforcement agency. It is the first  
**316** responder in the five strands of the National Counter Terrorism Strategy -  
**317** NACTEST, that is, *to forestall, secure, identify, prepare and implement* with support  
**318** from other security agencies. It is responsible for the updates of crime registry and  
**319** store information digitally for easy access (National Terrorism Aert Level, 2016).

**320** In the performance of its general constitutional mandates of maintaining the internal  
**321** security of the country, **the Nigeria Police Force - NPF, through the Department of**  
**322** **Force Intelligence - DFI** is responsible for the collection and collation of information,  
**323** analysis of information, assessment/evaluation, and then subsequent dissemination of  
**324** criminal intelligence to proactively prevent and detect crime and the activities of  
**325** criminals ([www.npf.gov.ng](http://www.npf.gov.ng)).

**326** **The Defense Intelligence Agency - DIA:** The Defense Intelligence Agency shall be  
**327** charged with the responsibility for the prevention and detection of crime of all  
**328** military nature against the security of Nigeria; the protection and preservation of all  
**329** military classified matters concerning the security of Nigeria, both within and outside;  
**330** such other responsibilities affecting defense intelligence of a military nature, both  
**331** within and outside Nigeria as the President may deem necessary (National Security  
**332** Agencies Act, 1986).

**333** The Defense Intelligence Agency - DIA is to coordinate the Counter Terrorism  
**334** efforts of the Directorate Military Intelligence - DMI, the Directorate Navy  
**335** Intelligence - DNI, and the Directorate Airforce Intelligence - DAI and, in  
**336** conjunction with relevant agencies, the Defense Intelligence Agency is the lead agency  
**337** for the collation of military-related intelligence within and outside the country  
**338** ((National Security Agencies Act, 1986; NACTEST, 2016). It gathers military threats  
**339** intelligence and conduct strategic reconnaissance operations and supports defense  
**340** planning operations (Olowonihu and Musa 2024).

**341** **The National Intelligence Agency - NIA:** The National Intelligence Agency  
**342** shall be charged with responsibility for the general maintenance of the security  
**343** of Nigeria outside Nigeria; concerning matters that are not related to military issues;  
**344** and such other responsibilities affecting national intelligence outside Nigeria as the  
**345** National defense Council or the President, as the case may be, may deem necessary  
**346** (National Security Agencies Act, 1986).

**347** The NIA is to serve as the lead agency for external information/intelligence  
**348** collection/collation and, in conjunction with relevant Ministry Department and  
**349** Agencies - MDAs, monitors all terror-related activities with a view to forestall, identify  
**350** and secure in the five strands of the National Counter Terrorism Strategy -  
**351** NACTEST (National Counter Terrorism Strategy, 2016).

**352** **The Department of State Service - DSS:** The Department of State Service shall be  
**353** charged with the responsibility for the prevention and detection within Nigeria of  
**354** any crime against the internal security of Nigeria; the protection and preservation of  
**355** all non-military classified matters concerning the internal security of Nigeria; and such  
**356** other responsibilities affecting internal security within Nigeria as the National  
**357** Assembly or the President, as the case may be, may deem necessary (National  
**358** Security Agencies Act, 1986).

**359** The DSS is to serve as the lead agency on information/intelligence collection/collation  
**360** on all non-military components of internal security as well as prevention and detection  
**361** of terror-related activities/crimes. The agency is to reactivate/resuscitate the crime  
**362** registry for the storage of digital information and collaborate with the Ministry of  
**363** information and National Orientation Agency to develop public enlightenment  
**364** program that will sensitize the public. It will also liaise with religious bodies and

**365** relevant department in the academia to develop de-radicalization programs  
**366** (NACTEST, 2016).

**367** **The Joint Intelligence Board - JIB and The Intelligence Community Committee - ICC:**  
**368** The Joint Intelligence Board - JIB and the Intelligence Community Committee -  
**369** ICC were established during the Military Government in 1986 under General Ibrahim  
**370** Babangida, the then Military President of Nigeria. The Joint Intelligence Board - JIB  
**371** and Intelligence Community Committee - ICC are charged with the responsibility of  
**372** supervising and coordinating intelligence and information analysis required for  
**373** strategic decision making. The Board collate and compiles intelligence from other  
**374** intelligence agencies, re-evaluate, synthesize and disseminate through the Office of the  
**375** National Security Adviser to the National Security Council (National Security Strategy,  
**376** 2019; Bot, 2023; Bala and Ouedraogo, 2018).

**377** **The Directorate of Intelligence - DINT:** The Directorate of Intelligence - DINT is a  
**378** department in the National Counter Terrorism Centre - NCTC in the Office of the  
**379** National Security Adviser with its analysts drawn from the Armed Forces, Intelligence  
**380** and Law Enforcement Agencies. It functions as an all-source intelligence production  
**381** facility focused on timely identification of threat to Nigeria's national security for  
**382** informed strategic response. Through collaboration with domestic intelligence  
**383** agencies and international partners, the Directorate provides a comprehensive and  
**384** integrated picture of threats, vulnerabilities and opportunities to enable the NSA take  
**385** informed decisions in the interest of national security. It monitors terrorism activities  
**386** and violent extremism, secessionist agitation groups, farmers - herder conflict,  
**387** maritime security, other criminal groups involved in banditry, kidnapping, cattle  
**388** rustling, illicit movements of Small Arms and Light Weapons - SALWs and drug  
**389** trafficking. ([www.nctc.gov.ng](http://www.nctc.gov.ng)).

## **390** Data Analysis and Results

**391** The analysis of data and the presentation of results were guided by the sequence of  
**392** the research questions examined in the context of Nigeria's strategic inter-agency  
**393** intelligence mechanisms vis-à-vis the factors sustaining inter-agency rivalry and its  
**394** effects on the security and law enforcement operations against armed banditry and  
**395** kidnapping for ransom in the northwest region. Hence, the analysis of secondary  
**396** and primary data was done through *Policy and Document Analysis*.

**397** On question of national strategic security policy directives on inter-agency intelligence  
**398** coordination and collaboration through formal channels of communication. A policy  
**399** analysis of Nigeria's national strategic security policy documents and other extant laws  
**400** expressed as follows:

**401** *“...the Joint Intelligence Board - JIB and Intelligence Community Committee - ICC*  
**402** *working in concert with the National Crisis Management Centre - NCMC will*  
**403** *continue to coordinate intelligence and information analysis required for strategic*  
**404** *decision making by National Security Council”* (National Security Strategy, 2019).

**405**  
**406** The 2019 National Security Strategy document further states: *“To balance*  
**407** *enforcement with preventive and proactive measures as a departure from reactive*  
**408** *response to insecurity through collaborative intelligence driven approach, the Police*  
**409** *at all levels are mandated to engage in active partnerships with armed forces, security*  
**410** *agencies, citizens, non-governmental organizations, government agencies, traditional*  
**411** *institutions, faith-based organizations, educational institutions and businesses to*  
**412** *collaboratively solve problems of crime, reduce the fear of crime, maintain public*  
**413** *safety and apply proactive measures that address anti-social behavioral patterns*  
**414** *before they evolve into more serious forms of criminality”* (National Security  
**415** Strategy, 2019).

**416**  
**417** In its national strategic efforts to respond to acts of terrorism through inter-agency  
**418** platforms and mechanisms at strategic and operational levels, the government  
**419** established the Counter Terrorism Centre - CTC with the strategic document of the  
**420** National Counter Terrorism Strategy - NACTEST, developed to guide and  
**421** coordinate national counter terrorism efforts. Hence, the document state:

**422**  
**423** *“The Office of the National Security Adviser will develop a single comprehensive*  
**424** *database to serve as an information sharing system for the various agencies. The aim*  
**425** *is to provide a mechanism where law enforcement, public safety and security*  
**426** *agencies can collate their various data bases for a single purpose and easy access.*  
**427** *Similar facilities will need to be created at state levels and linked to the central*  
**428** *system”* (NACTEST, 2016).

**429**  
**430** Still on collaborative efforts, the 2016 NACTEST document, further states:  
**431**  
**432** *“Security Services, Ministries, Department and Agencies are to work collaboratively*  
**433** *with one another and with the Office of the National Security Adviser - ONSA to*

**437** ensure they undertake programs and projects that are both counter terrorism  
**438** relevant and specific, according to the provisions of their mandate, to position the  
**439** Country by being resistant and responsive to terrorism" (NACTEST, 2016).

**440**

**442** On the collaborative efforts to regulate the flow and use of fire arms and explosive  
**443** devises, the 2016 NACTEST further states:

**445** *"The Nigeria Police Force in conjunction with the Department of State Services -*  
**446** *DSS, Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps - NSCDC, Nigerian Immigration*  
**447** *Service - NIS, Nigerian Customs Service - NCS, Federal Airport Authority of*  
**448** *Nigeria - FAAN, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency - NIMASA,*  
**449** *National Intelligence Agency - NIA and the Ministry of Solid Minerals, will ensure*  
**450** *that firearms and explosive are not illegally imported and unlawfully used in the*  
**451** *country" (NACTEST, 2016).*

**452**

**454** *Similarly, "the Nigeria Police Force in partnership with the Department of State*  
**455** *Services - DSS, maintain and monitor information on quarries and industrial*  
**456** *explosive sites in the country. It institutes measure to monitor and control the sales,*  
**457** *distribution and use of materials that may be used in making Improvised Explosive*  
**458** *Devises - IEDs. Also, in collaboration with National Space Research Development*  
**459** *Agency - NASRDA, the Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Finance,*  
**460** *Ministry of Information, the Nigeria Police Force - NPF shall develop mechanisms*  
**461** *to control the activities of cybercriminals (NACTEST, 2016).*

**462**

**463** In line with the need for a well-developed and holistic system to respond to serious  
**464** organized violence and transnational organized violent criminal activities, through  
**465** intelligence gathering, analysis and intelligence sharing, necessitated the need for the  
**466** establishment of the Nigeria's National Terrorism Alert Level - NTAL system in the  
**467** Office of the National Security Adviser. Thus, the 2016 Nigeria's National  
**468** Terrorism Alert Level document states:

**469** *"The National Security Adviser is to issue threat levels upon assessment of risk and*  
**470** *threat analysis in receipt of assessment from Joint Terrorism Analysis Branch -*  
**471** *JTAB, whose work is dependent on inputs from relevant intelligence gathering and*  
**472** *security intelligence agencies" (NTAL, 2016).*

**473** Furthermore, to underscore the commitment of the Nigeria's national strategic  
**474** policy directives, the 2019 National Security Strategy document also states:

**476** “To meet the challenges posed by serious crimes to internal security, we will  
**477** improve the intelligence-gathering, logistical, technological, forensic and rapid  
**478** response capabilities of the Nigeria Police Force. In specific terms, the Nigeria  
**479** Police Force will be upscaled in five key areas, namely; recruitment, training  
**480** platform and equipment modernization, data collection, management and retrieval  
**481** as well as technology-driven command, control, communication and intelligence  
**482** networks to meet modern standards” (NSS, 2019).

**483** In juxtaposition to the responses of respondents during the field interviews in the  
**484** context of Security and Law Enforcement Operations Against Armed Banditry and  
**485** Kidnapping for Ransom in the Northwest Region of Nigeria vis-à-vis factor (s) sustaining  
**486** inter-agency rivalry and its affects on the operational compliance among  
**487** security and law enforcement intelligence agencies and other agencies on the  
**488** channels of formal communication between agencies as specified in the national  
**489** strategic security policy documents and extent rules:

**490** The key theme in the responses from multiple respondents vis-à-vis field operational  
**491** inter-agency intelligence coordination and collaboration among security and law  
**492** enforcement intelligence agencies, shows that:

**493** “The channel of communication is of policy dominated with little operational  
**494** compliance in terms of adequate and seamless coordination and collaboration  
**495** among/between security and law enforcement intelligence agencies and other  
**496** agencies” (Interview, 2024).

**497** Also, it is also evident in the response of the respondents that:

**498** “Historical factors embedded in bureaucratic bottle neck, the traditional orientation  
**499** of silo and secret operations by individual agency, as well as other factors, such as the  
**500** establishment of multiple security and law enforcement agencies with similar or  
**501** differing mandate, institutional superiority complex, paranoid relationship (issue of  
**502** trust), inadequate and up-to-date inter-agency training, collaborative training and  
**503** technological gap within and between agencies are some of those factors sustaining  
**504** inter-agency intelligence rivalry” (Interview, 2024).

**505** On the question of legal obligation on individual security and law enforcement intelligence agency to collaborate with other agencies under a single institutional coordination. Respondents notes that;

**508** *“The absence of legal obligation on individual agency or group of agencies to collaborate with a view to share information and intelligence to support security and law enforcement operations in the region has facilitated and sustained inter-agency intelligence rivalry, thereby affecting the effective response to the violence of armed banditry and kidnapping ransom in the northwest region.”* (Interview, 2024).

**513** On how timely, accurate and frequency do the security and law enforcement agencies received actionable intelligence through inter-agency intelligence coordination and collaboration mechanisms to respond to threats of armed banditry and kidnapping in the region. The central theme in the responses shows as follows:

**517** *“Community led-intelligence has been instrumental to the proactive and reactive operations against armed banditry and kidnapping for ransom in the northwest region”* (Interview, 2024).

**520** The response further states:

**521** *“The Police are mostly the first responder in the event of armed violent attack on communities, but mostly, the Police are often reacting to these attacks, rather than been proactive or preventive”* (Interview, 2024).

**524**

**525**

**526**

### **527** Research Findings

**529** Based on the analysis of data, the following findings emerged:

- 531** The need to adjust and align the strategic thinking of Nigeria’s security and law enforcement intelligence agencies and other security and law enforcement agencies to proactively respond to the ever-evolving and complex criminal environment, necessitated the need for the development of strategic security and law enforcement inter-agency policy documents, aimed at guiding and

536 coordinating efforts of agencies through the Office of the National Security  
537 Adviser as a formal means/channel of communication with various relevant  
538 agencies to prevent, detect, investigate and contain all kinds of threats in the  
539 country, including armed banditry and kidnapping for ransom.  
540

- 541 ▪ Historical factors embedded in bureaucratic bottle neck, the traditional  
542 orientation of silo and secret operations by individual agency, the  
543 establishment of multiple security and law enforcement agencies with similar  
544 or differing mandate, institutional superiority complex, paranoid relationship  
545 (issue of trust), inadequate and up-to-date inter-agency training, collaborative  
546 training and technological gap in information collection, gathering and analysis  
547 within and between agencies are some of those factors sustaining inter-agency  
548 intelligence rivalry. Thereby hindering seamless coordination and  
549 collaboration that could lead to all source of intelligence in the field of  
550 operations in the northwest region.  
551
- 552 ▪ This formal means/channel of communication as a basis for inter-agency  
553 intelligence coordination and collaboration is not so visible at regional, state  
554 and local level to proactively guide and coordinate efforts of security and law  
555 enforcement intelligence agencies and other security agencies to support the  
556 operations against armed banditry and kidnapping for ransom in the  
557 northwest region.  
558
- 559 ▪ The absence of a legal document binding and obligating agencies to  
560 collaborate and share information/intelligence at strategic and operational  
561 level under a single coordinating agency - Fusion Centre have sustained inter-  
562 agency intelligence rivalry, which has affected seamless inter-agency  
563 intelligence coordination and collaboration among security and law  
564 enforcement agencies.  
565
- 566 ▪ The proactive and reactive security and law enforcement operations against  
567 armed banditry and kidnapping for ransom in the northwest region is being  
568 supported by community driven-intelligence.  
569
- 570 ▪ The Nigeria Police Force is designated by the Nigeria's national strategic  
571 policy document as the first responder in the event of impending threat or  
572 escalated violence through inter-agency coordination and collaboration.  
573 However, it lacks any legal power or institutional legal instrument to compel  
574 security and law enforcement intelligence agencies withholding or hoarding  
575

579 information/intelligence to share their information/intelligence to facilitate  
580 prompt coordination for the purpose of timely, accurate and actionable  
581 intelligence.  
582

- 583 ▪ The fluid and highly flexible nature of the activities of bandits and kidnap  
584 gangs in the region and the ability to adapt to relevant influences, such as  
585 propaganda with the intention to confuse authorities have given the criminal  
586 gangs the operation edge to resist security and law enforcement operations in  
587 the region.  
588

### 589 **Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendation**

590 The findings in the preceding section revealed significant evidence in the context of  
591 the research.Hence, this section presents Discussion of the research findings,  
592 Conclusion, Implications of the study, Recommendations and Contribution to  
593 knowledge and policy improvement in the context of Nigeria's security and law  
594 enforcement intelligence inter-agency coordination, collaboration and information  
595 sharing. And finally, the section presents suggestions for further study.  
596

597 Therefore, a comprehensive examination and assessment of Nigeria's strategic inter-  
598 agency institutional and policy response to complex security and law enforcement  
599 issues revealed a holistic strategic institutional and policy coordinated response  
600 center, domiciled in the Office of the National Security Adviser - ONSA through  
601 the institutional mechanisms like the National Terrorism Alert Level - NATL  
602 system, the Joint Terrorism Analysis Branch - JTAB, the Directorate of Intelligence  
603 in the office of the National Counter Terrorism Centre - NCTC, Joint Intelligence  
604 Board - JIB and Intelligence Community Committee - ICC. For example, according  
605 to National Terrorism Alert Level policy document states:

606 *“The National Security Adviser is to issue threat levels upon assessment of risk and  
607 threat analysis in receipt of assessment from Joint Terrorism Analysis Branch -  
608 JTAB, whose work is dependent on inputs from relevant intelligence gathering and  
609 security intelligence agencies”* (National Terrorism Alert Level, 2016)

610 This represents an established fusion center at central strategic level to aide, guide  
611 and coordinate information collection from all-sources, information sharing,  
612 information analysis - connecting the dots and intelligence sharing among related  
613 agencies to provide a comprehensive and integrated picture of threats, vulnerabilities  
614 and opportunities to enable security and law enforcement agencies to respond  
615 proactively, and to allow for the National Security Adviser - NSA, to take informed

616 decisions at strategic level in the interest of national security and law enforcement  
617 agencies. This ensconced and aligned with the works of Baginski (2007), Nte (2012),  
618 Gill and Webb (2023), Abioye and Alao (2020) and Cross (2023) on inter-agency  
619 intelligence coordination, collaboration and information/intelligence sharing,  
620 intelligence operating centers and fusion centers in today's dynamic and ever-  
621 evolving complex criminal environment.

622 However, at operational level in the context of the research, the data suggests that,  
623 such fusion centers or intelligence operating centers were not visible at regional, state  
624 or local government level to aide, guide or facilitate successful proactive or reactive  
625 security and law enforcement operations against armed banditry and kidnapping for  
626 ransom in the northwest region. Rather, community driven intelligence through  
627 Human Intelligence - HUINT has been instrumental most often for reactive  
628 operations against armed banditry and kidnapping for ransom in the region. Signal  
629 Intelligence - SIGINT, Communication Intelligence - COMINT, and Geospatial  
630 Intelligence - GEOINT is underutilized to collect and gather information in the  
631 region.

632 Hence, this operational communication gap at regional, state or local level as well as  
633 the underutilized use of technology has sustained inter-agency intelligence rivalry.  
634 Thereby preventing information/intelligence sharing among intelligence agencies and  
635 providing operational edge for the armed bandits and kidnap gangs to thrive in the  
636 region. According to International Crisis Group (2022), the gap in intelligence  
637 coordination among intelligence agencies hampers intelligence sharing among  
638 agencies, and enabling terrorist groups to explore and exploit these weaknesses.

639 Aside the absence of fusion centers or intelligence operating centers at the regional,  
640 state and local government levels, the research identified challenges to seamless inter-  
641 agency intelligence coordination and collaboration at the tactical operational level.  
642 Thereby facilitating and sustaining inter-agency intelligence rivalry. These challenges  
643 include, bureaucratic bottle neck, silo and secret operations by individual agency, the  
644 establishment of multiple security and law enforcement intelligence agencies with  
645 similar or differing mandate, institutional superiority complex, paranoid relationship  
646 (issue of trust) among agencies, inadequate up-to-date intra and inter-agency training  
647 and technological gap within and between agencies. All these factors are enabled and  
648 active to sustaining inter-agency intelligence rivalry in the absence of legal framework

**649** obligating and compelling individual security and law enforcement intelligence  
**650** agencies to de-conflict under a single legal framework.

**651** The implication is in the fragmented intelligence community and the practice of  
**652** *suspicion or paranoid* relationship based on *mutual distrust and rivalries*. As Nte,  
**653** (2012), argued there is absence of cooperation between Nigeria Military Intelligence  
**654** and State Security Services on one hand and between the intelligence agencies and  
**655** law enforcement agencies on the other hand. Sanda (2011), argued that every security  
**656** agency in Nigeria has its own security policy that drives its operations, with this comes  
**657** a lack of effective coordination among the different security and government agencies  
**658** and the ensuing interagency rivalry (Alli, 2012). This have resulted to poor  
**659** information coordination and intelligence sharing among intelligence agencies. As  
**660** argued, Inter-agency rivalries and lack of coordination hinder information sharing  
**661** and collaboration efforts (Adebayo, 2022).

## **662** Conclusion

**663** The Nigeria's inter-agency intelligence coordination and collaboration mechanisms  
**664** against serious organized violence of armed banditry and kidnapping for ransom is a  
**665** complex inter-web institutional mechanisms with institutional focus on both internal  
**666** and external threats (Constitution, 1999; Police Act, 2020; National Security Agency  
**667** Act, 1986; NSS, 2014; 2019 NTAL, 2016; NACTEST, 2016; [www.nctc.gov.ng](http://www.nctc.gov.ng)).

**668** A policy analysis on impact assessment into Nigeria's inter-agency intelligence  
**669** measure to the security and law enforcement operations against armed banditry and  
**670** kidnapping for ransom in the northwest region of Nigeria revealed that factors, such  
**671** as distrust among agencies, bureaucratic bottle neck, superiority complex among  
**672** intelligence agencies led to inter-agency rivalry in the absence of legal instrument to  
**673** compel agencies to share information/intelligence, rather than operate in silo. These  
**674** factors have negatively affected inter-agency intelligence coordination and  
**675** collaboration in the region. This has resulted to a situation of incident-based reactive  
**676** and investigative intelligence approach with little effect on the growing complexity  
**677** and dynamics in the criminal behavior of the armed bandits and kidnap gangs in the  
**678** northwest region.

**679** Hence, the failure of the Nigerian security and law enforcement intelligence agencies  
**680** to provide accurate and timely intelligence assessments through inter-agency  
**681** intelligence coordination and collaboration have provided the fluid and highly

**682** flexible nature of the criminal activities of these bandits and kidnap gangs the  
**683** operational edge over the security and law enforcement operations in the region.  
**684**

### **685** Recommendation

**686** Base on the research findings, the following feasible and actionable  
**687** recommendations are proposed to de-conflict inter-agency intelligence rivalry and  
**688** enhance strategic inter-agency intelligence coordination and collaboration to support  
**689** security and law enforcement operations:

- 690** • To enhance effective and seamless inter-agency intelligence coordination and  
**691** collaboration among security and law enforcement intelligence agencies, there  
**692** is need to reform the operational perception and legal processes and  
**693** procedures of the Nigerian security and law enforcement intelligence agencies  
**694** to enable it function under a coordinating and collaborating inter-agency  
**695** mechanism with clearly delineated laws to guide, bind and compel security and  
**696** law enforcement intelligence agencies to collaborate in training, technology and  
**697** information/intelligence sharing at operational level.
- 698** • The Nigeria Police Force is the first responder to any form of security and law  
**699** enforcement threats by its proximity to the public and the community safety, there  
**700** is need to legally empower the Nigeria Police Force to serve as a fusion  
**701** center or an intelligence operating center to enabled it coordinate  
**702** information/intelligence through inter-agency collaboration to support security  
**703** and law enforcement operations to proactively respond to impending threats  
**704** or escalated criminal violence.
- 705** • There is need to establish under a single legal framework an inter-agency  
**706** intelligence operating center or fusion center that is context-specific, and based  
**707** at regional, state and local government level to holistically assesses the roots  
**708** causes of criminal threats that are peculiar within the community in order to  
**709** provide timely, accurate and actionable intelligence to support security and law  
**710** enforcement operations. As McNamara argued, the state and local fusion  
**711** centers “are a critical component of the Information Sharing Environment  
**712** because they can dramatically enhance efforts to gather, process, and share  
**713** locally generated information regarding potential terrorist threats and to  
**714** integrate that information into the Federal efforts for counterterrorism” (Ron,  
**715** 2007).
- 716**
- 717**
- 718**

720 • Armed banditry and kidnapping for ransom in the context of northwest  
721 geopolitical region of Nigeria is an organized crime, fluid and highly flexible  
722 with adapting nature of tactics within the community. Hence, there is need to  
723 enhance community driven-intelligence approach in partnership with inter-  
724 agency intelligence mechanisms for holistic analysis of information and  
725 assessment of situation to support security and law enforcement operations.  
726

### 727 Contribution to Knowledge

728 Serious organized violence, such as armed banditry and kidnapping for ransom is  
729 increasingly multidimensional, fluid and often transcending national boundaries  
730 and resisting security and law enforcement measures. Having examined the effects of  
731 inter-agency intelligence rivalry to the security and law enforcement operations in the  
732 context of armed banditry and kidnapping for ransom in the northwest region. It is  
733 worth to note that, the research has added value significantly to the existing  
734 discussion on inter-agency intelligence rivalry in the context of Nigeria.  
735

### 736 737 Further Research

738 Based on the findings and limitations of the research, the following windows for  
739 further research could be suggested:

740 • Community Engagement and Information/Intelligence sharing: Exploring Local  
741 Information/Intelligence Sharing Model to National Security and Law  
742 Enforcement, Experience from Practical Successful Community Initiatives.  
743 • Regional, State and Local Intelligence Fusion Centre: A Recipe to De-conflicting  
744 Multi-Security and Law Enforcement Operations.  
745 • Local Intelligence Fusion Centre: Exploring Community Trust and Community  
746 Engagement to National Security and Law Enforcement.  
747

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