**RURAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ARMS PROLIFERATION ON CRIME IN KATSINA-BENUE STATE**

**Abstract**

The study investigated the rural socioeconomic impact of arms proliferation on criminality in Katsina-Ala local government, Benue state*,* Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions, and a cross-sectional survey research design will be used to examine arms proliferation and criminality in Benue State. Area of the Study Katsina-Ala Local Government while the sample size for the study was 400, the research makes use of cluster and random sampling techniques to select the population of the study. By simple random sampling, the names of the ten (12) council wards were written on pieces of paper, wrapped, and dropped into a container and shaken thoroughly. Thereafter, five (6) council wards out of the original ten (12) wards were randomly selected. The data collected through the questionnaire was analysed using frequency counts and percentages. From the findings, it was concluded from the research findings that even though arms proliferation is caused by so many factors, profitability and utilisation of small arms have been singled out as the major cause of the unrest in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

**Keywords:** Rural, Socio, Impact, Arms, Proliferation, Criminality

**INTRODUCTION**

Nigeria in recent times has become a theatre of bloodshed, genocide, and insecurity due to the violent and carnage-causing activities of militants, bandits, and terrorists. Social vices like political violence, armed robbery, armed banditry, oil bunkering,ethno-religious strife, vandalism, religious fundamentalism, kidnapping, militancy, Boko Haram, human trafficking, and other forms of violent crimes that are creating survival, stability, and security challenges for the country thrive more with little or no countercheck by the government. The proliferation and rise in the possession of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) since the country returned to democratic rule in 1999 is undoubtedly a regrettable feature of this setting, the presence of which makes the casualties of violent attacks unprecedentedly high.

More people have been murdered by small arms and light weapons (SALW) than by biological, chemical, or any other types of WMD (WMD). Insecurity in Nigeria has been exacerbated by the proliferation of arms, according to United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/50/70. This insecurity includes cattle raiding, armed robberies, kidnapping, intertribal fighting between the north and other ethnic groups in the south, militant groups, and most recently the Boko Haram insurgency. Given that there are guns in hamlets, villages, towns, and state capitals alike, it is exceedingly impossible to estimate the number of weapons in the nation. Given the challenges associated with lawfully obtaining a firearm, Hazen and Horner (2007) noted that the majority of small guns in Nigeria are thought to be carried illegally. Because they are illegal, it is challenging to monitor flows and possession (Okeke and Oji, 2014). Through seaports and land borders, weapons enter the country.

Despite the fact that there are certain prospects for raising the standard of living, Benue State currently has a serious problem with insecurity. This problem is characteristic of an intriguing situation in all its ramifications, as the proliferation of weapons is on the rise. And this has dreadful effects on a variety of facets of human life. The International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) (2001) asserts that the spread and abuse of small arms pose a danger to individual safety, undermine effective government, fuel abuse of human rights, and threaten social justice, development, and peace around the world, including Benue State.

The state's rural areas have potential for agriculture, while its urban centres, including Makurdi, Gboko, Katsina-Ala, and Otukpo, also have some profitable commercial activity potential. The educated millennials, however, favour the few available white-collar occupations. Some of these educated youth have turned to commercial motorcycle riding, working as touts at motor parks among other jobs, in order to avoid being idle and farming at the same time. Even better, some people have turned to crime as a source of income. Among the three main ethnic groupings, the state has also developed a crop of successful political elites (Idoma, Igede, and Tiv). However, despite their inclination to offer economic possibilities that will empower young people, these individuals have not shown a particularly strong commitment to the socioeconomic development of the state.

Instead, the political elites "empowered" the adolescents in a selfish and destructive way by providing them with weapons and ammunition to pursue their political goals. According to Shilgba (2004), the elites frequently provide poor Tiv men and women guns instead of products, wealth instead of weapons, and mutual animosity instead of health to employ against other Tiv. Do we include our children among the militia, wonders Shilgba (2004)? Even beyond the borders of Nigeria, they are kept as far away from the conflict zone as is humanly possible. The other ethnic nations have also not demonstrated admirable commitment, with the exception of Idoma elites who have used their proximity to the top of the Nigerian economy to help their people; this carelessness is not limited to Tiv elites alone.

However, this is done in order to advance politically. The youth who lack literacy are therefore weaker. Meaningful progress cannot be made in Benue State with this complicity. Numerous agricultural products, including groundnuts, yam rice, and oranges, among others, have drawn customers to the state's markets. However, rather than being important in the supply value chain, young people typically opt to set up ambushes in various sections of the state to rob customers of their money.

The administration has turned to antiquated security tactics that appear to be no longer effective in the modern era in order to address the state's various security concerns. These safety precautions are effective band-aid solutions, but economic security is far more important. Songu (2016) argues further that security must be understood in all of its dimensions, including those related to food security, employment security, insurance coverage for one's health, financial security, and other social security measures (Udofia & Alexander, 2017). In order for the government to attempt to effectively reduce crime in Benue and throughout Nigeria, insecurity must be addressed holistically. A major mediating factor between resource abundance and vulnerability is bad economic governance (Ballentine& Sherman, 2003).

Therefore, failing to implement economic and security measures will undoubtedly lead to risks to the populace's security and safety, which will then hinder economic progress. Small and Light Weapons (SALWs) are widely used, which is demonstrated by a rise in societal acceptance of firearms since the 1970s (Ikelegbe, 2014). Possession of weapons is today seen as a sign of manhood, rising prestige, affluence, and strength. Given the severe regulations on civilian gun ownership and the fact that licences are only granted for hunting, 80% of the firearms in civilian hands are believed to have been obtained illegally (Obasi, 2002). This has led to unauthorised individuals having access to weapons, which has led to varied levels of crime throughout the state.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The proliferation of weapons is one of the problems facing African nations, including Nigeria, and is not limited to wealthy nations (Akpan & Udofia, 2015). The issue received all of the attention, which was a clear indication that things had quickly gotten out of hand. In addition, the majority of the speakers were from developing nations. Their message focused on the danger that the unrestrained trade in small guns poses to global peace and security. Despite the historic decisions on how to deal with the issue, a number of subsequent events did little to raise the earlier high hopes. When the meeting was convened, the Arab Spring uprising had not yet begun, and nobody was anticipating the appearance of death squads such as Boko Haram, ISIS, and other murderous organisations.

The subsequent rise in household, governmental, and international violence, however, indicates that the world is rapidly heading in the direction of annihilation. This is made more apparent by the fact that human life and existence have never been in such danger as they are right now. This tendency is fuelled by a number of factors, all of which can be traced back to the rapidly expanding production capacity of small arms and light weapons, whose widespread availability for both public and private use has made them powerful catalysts for criminal activity, war, interethnic or communal strife, and other forms of atrocities against humanity and society. This, combined with indigenous gun production in Nigeria, has led to crime and insecurity there. Kidnapping, terrorism, weapons robberies, and general insecurity are now problems in Benue State as a result. Despite several government initiatives, including an amnesty programme where illegal weapons were recovered, crime persists. In light of this, this study interrogates the interface between arms proliferation and criminality in the Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To ascertain the impact of arms proliferation on criminality in Katsina-Ala Local Government
2. To proffer measures that will help curtail the proliferation of arms and reduce crime in Katsina-Ala

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

**1.** What is the impact of arms proliferation on criminality in Katsina-Ala Local Government?

1. What measure can be taken to address the proliferation of arms and criminality in Katsina-Ala?

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Abagen& Tyona (2018) conducted a study on the impact of arms proliferation on Nigeria’s national security. The major objective of the study was to investigate the rapid increase of arms and ammunition in Nigeria. The paper relied on secondary materials, and data was analysed using a qualitative method. Findings from the study show that Nigeria since independence in 1960 has witnessed a lot of internally-generated crises, beginning with the Nigerian civil war, 1967-1970; the battle for political offices through elections; the ethno-religious crisis; the Boko Haram menace; Fulani herdsmen attacks; militancy in the Niger-Delta region; and armed robbery, among others. These crises have greatly contributed to the proliferation of illegal weapons in the nation, which entails that Nigeria’s national security is under serious threat. The paper recommends the use of modern technologies by security operatives at our porous borders and seaports, as well as adequate provision of security manpower and other logistics, to help curtail the flow of dangerous illegal arms and ammunition into the Nigerian nation-state.

Omitola and Awotayo (2016) investigated the proliferation of arms and challenges to national security and sustainable development in Nigeria. The paper made use of secondary materials, and the data was analysed qualitatively. Findings from the study revealed that Nigeria's porous border and money laundering, among other factors, are major causes of arms flows into the country. The paper contends that all control initiatives have not worked effectively, as illegal arms flow is still on the rise. The paper reveals that the proliferation of arms has created an ever-expanding circle of violent conflicts and hampered the sustainable development of the country, as all areas of socio-economic development are affected.

Olayiwola (2017) evaluated the proliferation of arms and security challenges in Nigeria. The paper relied on secondary sources, and content analysis was utilised. The trend has continued despite the illegality of the trade. Proliferation has taken on a serious dimension since the beginning of the current political dispensation. As a result of this, Nigeria has faced serious security challenges. They include the Maitatsine religious riots in Kano and Bauchi; religious riots in Kaduna; conflicts in Jos; the Zango-Kataf, Yoruba-Hausa/Fulani, Ife-Modakeke, Aguleri-Umuleri, TivJunkun, Ijaw-Ilaje, Ijaw-Itsekiri, Urhobo-Itsekiri, and Ijaw-Urhobo; Niger Delta crisis; and most recently, the Boko Haram insurgency. The perceived attack from the Fulani herdsmen in certain parts of the country is one of the various crises faced as a result of the proliferation. This development calls for serious attention from the states as it poses serious security challenges. The increased number of internal crises or conflicts has been subsequent to the proliferation of arms in the state and has engendered the further proliferation of arms.

Alimba (2017) conducted a study that deals with controlling the proliferation of small arms in Nigeria: emerging issues and challenges. The measures often adopted to regulate small arms overtime have yielded little or no result because of increased demand for and supply of small arms and light weapons, which are readily induced more quickly than envisaged worldwide. Recent accounts revealed that Nigeria is awash with small arms and that large quantities of these weapons are found in illegal hands in the nooks and crannies of the country. These weapons are used to commit crimes and fuel violent conflicts, thereby thwarting the achievement of peace and its sustainability in the country. Poor security networks, corruption, border leakages, and politics have played dominant roles in the excessive availability of arms in Nigeria.

Brown (2018) examined the impact of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons on the quest for national security in Nigeria. The thrust of this paper is on the impact of uncontrolled proliferation, stockpiling, trafficking, availability, and usage of these arms on Nigeria’s national security as it is believed to fuel alarming levels of armed crime, communal conflict, political instability, and social unrest, as well as flooding all the geo-political zones of the country with small arms. The paper further argues that the inability of the Nigerian government and its law enforcement agencies to check the menace has led to a major challenge in terms of security, as it was revealed that previous and current efforts at tackling the issue have not yielded much, as only a few seizures of illegal arms have been made, hence the proliferation continues to sustain and exacerbate armed conflicts within the country. The study is anchored on realist and failed state theories using secondary data, literature evidence, and descriptive and historical methodology. Findings reveal that the impact of small arms and light weapons on society is too grave and devastating to be treated with a kid’s glove, as they lead to massive losses of lives and property, erode social capital, facilitate corruption, and foster a climate of impunity.

Wonah (2016) examines the proliferation of small arms in the Niger Delta and is of the opinion that the proliferation of small arms in the Niger Delta is a consequence of the existential realities of the people of the Niger Delta. This opinion is made more concrete with the adoption of a political economy approach that takes a holistic view of the subject matter. It took into consideration the inherent contradictions of a capitalist mode of production, which find expression in economic determinism, as the underlying factor in determining the material existence of the people of the Niger Delta as occasioned by the actors of the state.

**METHODOLOGY**

A cross-sectional survey research design will be used to examine arms proliferation and criminality in Benue State. Area of the Study Katsina-Ala Local Government while the Sample for the study was 400, while the research makes use of cluster and random sampling technique to select the population of the study. And simple random sampling, the names of the ten (12) council wards were written in pieces of papers, wrapped and dropped in a container and shaken thoroughly. Thereafter, five (6) council wards out of the original ten (12) wards were randomly selected. The data collected through the questionnaire was analysed using Frequency count, Percentage.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

This section of the study presents and analyses the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents.

**TABLE 1:Socio- Demographic Characteristic of Respondents**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Demographic Characteristics** | **Category** | **Frequency** | **Percentage (%)** |
| **Sex** | **Male** | **301** | **86** |
| Female | 49 | 14 |  |
| **Total** |  | **350** | **100** |
| Marital Status | **Single** | 96 | **27.4** |
| Married | **223** | 63.7 |  |
| Divorce/Widow | 31 | 8.9 |  |
| **Total** | **350** | **100** |  |
| **Age**  18-30 | 99 | 28.3 |  |
| 31-40 | 141 | 40.3 |  |
| 41-50 | 68 | 19.4 |  |
| 51 and above | 42 | 12 |  |
| **Total** | **350** | **100** |  |
| Education |  |  |  |
| No formal education | 25 | 7.1 |  |
| Primary | 31 | 8.9 |  |
| Secondary | 182 | 52 |  |
| Tertiary | 112 | 32 |  |
| **Total** | **350** | **100** |  |
| Occupation |  |  |  |
| Farming | 177 | 50.6 |  |
| Business | 45 | 12.9 |  |
| Fishing | 26 | 7.4 |  |
| Civil Servant | 102 | 29.1 |  |
| **Total** | **350** | **100** |  |
| Religion |  |  |  |
| Christianity | 289 | 82.6 |  |
| Traditional | 61 | 17.4 |  |
| Islam | 0 | 0 |  |
| **Total** | **350** | **100** |  |

***Source:****Field Survey****,*** *2023*

The data in table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of respondents. The distribution of the respondents according to sex in table 1 shows that 301 or 86% of the respondents were male while 49 or 14% of the respondents were female. This shows that, there are more males who are heads of house hoods than femalerespondents in the study area. This is in line with the African tradition where males are regarded as heads of households (Udofia, 2021; Udofia & Uduigwomen, 2022). The next segment which is marital status of the respondents shows that 223 or 63.7% were married; whereas 96 or 27.4% of the respondents were single while divorce/widow accounted for 31 or 8.9% of the total respondents. The implication of this to the study is that, since majority of the respondents were married they were faced with the reality of taking care of themselves and their family members and displaced from the abode due to the proliferation of arms which result to high rate of crime in the area of study can negatively affect their means of livelihood.

The third segment in table 1 shows that 99 or 28.3% of the respondents were aged between 18-30 years. 141 or 40.3% of the respondents were between the aged brackets of 31-40years whereas, 68 or 19.4% of the respondents were aged between 41 and 50years while 42 or 12% of the respondents were 51 years and above. This shows that a significant proportion of the respondents representing 141 or 40.3% were between the aged groups of 31-40. This has two implications to the study; first it shows clearly that it is a productive population. Secondly since majority of them are of adult age therefore the tendency for youthful exuberance orchestrated by this segment of the population would be high.

The preceding segment shows the educational qualification of the respondents. Here those with secondary education constituted the highest with 182 or 52% of the respondents, followed by tertiary with 112 or 32% of the respondents whereas those with non-formal and primary education accounted for 25 or 7.1% and 31 or 8.9% respectively. This result shows that, majority of the respondents are literates enough and by that, they have the capacity to respond objectively to the matter under investigation.

On the occupational distribution of the respondents, majority of the respondents representing 177 or 50.6% of the respondents engage in farming, followed by civil servant with 102 or 29.1% while those in business and fishing accounted for 45 or 12.9% and 26 or 7.4% respectively. This shows that farming is a major source of livelihood of the people. With the disruption of farming activities due to arms been in the hands of unauthorised persons this has brought security challenges in the area thereby making farming activities more difficult and challenging. On religious affiliation of the respondents’ majority of them were Christians with 289 or 82.6% of the respondents while traditional religion accounted for 61 or 17.4% of the respondents. This implies that, the study area is inhabited predominantly by Christians.

**TABLE2: Effects of Arms Proliferation on Criminality in Katsina-Ala Local Government**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Effects** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| Disruption of economic activities | 92 | 26.2 |
| Institutionalization of a culture of violence | 56 | 16 |
| Forced displacement of the population | 47 | 13.4 |
| Militarization of the Polity | 10 | 3 |
| Potential for food insecurity | 145 | 41.4 |
| **Total** | **350** | **100** |

***Source***: *Field survey, 2022*

The result in table 4 shows that among the effects of arms proliferation potential for food insecurity was identified as one of the major consequences accounting for the highest loss representing 145 or 41.4% of the respondents, followed by disruption of economic activities representing 92 or 26.2% whereas institutionalization of a culture of violence stood at 16 while forced displacement of the population and militarization of the polity accounted 47 or 13.4% and 10 or 3 % respectively. This implied that, since arms are in the hands of unauthorised persons, majority of them have been using it to cause mayhem in the area of study therefore discouraging people from going to their farms for the fear of been killed or attack hence the major occupation of the people in the area is farming thereby causing food shortage. More so infrastructural facilities that support economic activities in the area are affected thereby disruption business merchants from operating in the area. This no doubt would affect the economic negatively. Social support network which ease business activities in the area of study is dismantled. The terrors unleash by the carriers of this goat board diplomacy has brought about displacement of population who seek for refuge in far areas thereby creating humanitarian problems.

In addition, majority of the respondents interviewed maintained that whenever such conflict occurs, farmers run for their lives, giving the criminal elements the opportunity to enter into their farms and destroyed crops. In some instances, some of the food crops harvested and stored in houses are destroyed since the owners had fled. One of the respondents who identified himself as Mr Terna Wombo in an interview with the researcher in Katsina Ala 10 October, 2022 has this to say:

Majority of my people are farmers and this is their major source of income therefore forcefully displacing them out of their ancestral land as result of the activities of these criminals operating as militias element will no doubt affect their occupation. As their main source of income which is farming is greatly hampered.

Interview held with some of the respondents regarding the topic under consideration indicated that, majority of the respondents unanimously agreed that this arms proliferation is an impediment to economic development; they argued that when arms in the hands of unauthorised person the tendency to put them to use for personal gain is very high thereby causing damage to humans, basic infrastructure such as houses, schools, roads, bridges, churches, hospitals and markets are destroyed. One of the respondents who called himself as Rev Timothy Kwaghange who was interviewed on 21 october, 2022 in Katsina Ala Local government bears his mind on the subject matter.

When conflict takes place this usually results to reprisal attack, thereby putting fear in traders who refused to go the markets or open shops for the fear of been attack. It is his position that road transportation is the most popular and widely used means of transportation but it suffered serious setback when conflict occur. It is his contention that, the movement of agricultural produce is hampered because, basic infrastructure such as roads, bridges needed to move farm produce to other save areas is hampered. Besides, some people buy grains and stored in those conflict ravage areas and become helpless as they could not transport it due to breakdown of transport facilities. Hospitals that supply the health needs of the people are destroyed including schools and churches. These have negative effect on the overall life of the people.

This means that, crisis in Katsina Ala local Government affects basic infrastructure such as houses, roads and bridges are destroyed and this has negative impact on the government of Benue State hence money that would have been used to better the lives of people in other sectors of the economy will be used to build destroyed structures thereby hampering accelerated development in the state. In addition when conflict takes place, people flee in order to escape attack and in the process traced some of the relatives or friends in other part of the state. This further put strain on the feeding requirement of the relatives’ homes. This increases the mouth to be fed but no commensurate increase in the supply of food or money to buy food. Even decent accommodation becomes a problem as the available facilities are over stretched making the people to live in a deplorable hash condition thereby making majority of the people to live below three square meal a day. In summary, we can deduce that conflict affects farmers negatively in Benue State. According to Ezekiel (2001) conflict can affect the economy negatively because there will be a sharp increase in the sale of food items which will cause inflation and probably lead to starvation. Conflict crowds out normal economic activity, such as food production, destroys necessary infrastructures and cut off access to food supplies (Messer, Cohen and Machine, 2002; Collier et al, 2003).

In general it can be said with some level of certainty that within the period of 18 years, the economy of Katsina-Ala Local Government suffers stagnation. There are multiplier effects of insecurity on the economy of the local Government. Thus, must small and medium scale enterprises closed down their business, even the only Bank in the area usually gives skeletal services operations due to lose they have incurred from the armed robbers.

**TABLE 3: Measures to curtail proliferation of arms and criminality in Katsina-Ala LGA**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Measures** | **Frequency** | **Percentages** |
| Provision of Job opportunities for the youths | 153 | 44 |
| Arms dealers should be arrested and prosecuted | 58 | 17 |
| Good governance | 123 | 35 |
| Politicians should desist from arming the youth for electoral purposes | 16 | 4 |
| **Total** | **350** | **100** |

***Source:****Field survey, 2022*

The data elicited above concerning measures taken to address the arms proliferation and criminality in Katsina-Ala Local Government shows that provision of job opportunities for the youth was single out as the major causes representing 153 or 44% of the total respondents, followed by good governance which accounted for 123 or 35% whereas 58 or 17% of the respondents went for prosecution of arms dealers to deter other from engaging in this illegal business while 16 or 4% of the respondents felt the solution is that politician should stop aiding criminality by providing soft landing for these criminal elements when arrested.

Majority of the respondents interviewed argue that if government is able to provide job opportunities for graduate youth, the tendency of them been manipulated and used by politicians to cause mayhem would be minimal. For us to experience this, good governance becomes sacrosanct. Those in position of authority should see themselves as servants rather than leaders in that wise the social contract entered into with the people in the first instance would certainly yields result knowing fully well that bad governance is tantamount to change of government. Law enforcement agencies should ensure that those found to have engage in this sharp practices be treated a such to serve as deterrent to others.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Research question one revealed the impact of arms proliferation on criminality in Katsina-Ala Local Government. The effects of arms proliferation as identified by the study include disruption of economic activities, institutionalisation of a culture of violence, forced displacement of the population, militarization of the polity, as well as the potential for food insecurity. These effects are very high. First, agriculture, which has been the mainstay of the people, was destroyed, and social support networks were dismantled. Consequently, most small and medium-sized families are adversely affected and impoverished. Domestic economic activities were disrupted, and occupations were lost. The cordial ethnic, tribal, and religious relations among the people were dashed. Individual life dignities were lost because of the lack of privacy necessitated by inadequate accommodation for affected persons. Families were rooted out of their traditional and ancestral domain, practise, and way of life due to the activities of these hoodlums, who killed, kidnapped, and destroyed the properties of the people. This economic backwardness, food insecurity, kidnapping and human trafficking, insecurity, loss of socio-cultural and communal value systems, and deterioration in the health and education systems were some of the effects identified by the study. The destruction of human lives and markets by militia gangs has virtually hampered economic activities in the region. The people can no longer go to the market or their farms; this has resulted in a food crisis, which, according to Ezekiel (2001), will spell doom for the economy. Education, which shapes the thinking and behaviour of people and how they can change the environment to their advantage, has been neglected due to the activities of these criminals. Therefore, it is easier to become a terrorist and survive than to live according to the acceptable standards prescribed by society. This has no doubt given militia gangs an undue advantage in recruiting the uneducated and vulnerable youth to carry out crimes against the state in order to survive.

            Research questions Two measures were proffered that would mitigate the proliferation of arms and reduce crime in Katsina-Ala, which include the provision of job opportunities for the youths, good governance, the prosecution of arms dealers to serve as deterrents to others, and de-emphasising political thuggery in our electioneering process as this would not only discourage hooliganism but reduce violence and criminality in the Benue political landscape. Youths are often the promoters of violence and should be provided with decently paid employment to discourage them from being used and manipulated by the ruling class. This can be made possible through the provision of good governance, where only those with proven integrity and who have demonstrated the capacity to provide good governance are voted into office. By so doing, those in the governance architecture that have performed badly should be shown their faces during elections.

**CONCLUSION**

The study, therefore, concludes that the government (particularly the local government) should collaborate with the communities and other stakeholders to host regular community-based programmes for value reorientation among the people and, by extension, awaken the conscience of the people to the reality that matters of security must not be left to the government. Also, relevant security agencies, especially the anti-kidnapping squad, should be properly equipped and funded to stamp out criminality in the Katsina-Ala LGA. It was recommended that the youth who are the users of these deadly weapons be provided with job opportunities for them to earn a decent living by which they would be engaged and may not have the time to engage in such dastardly activities for the greater good of society. Those who engage in illegal arms dealing should be arrested and prosecuted by security agencies. This would go a long way in deterring those willing to engage in this venture. Hence, people have argued that the business is actually lucrative and that the tendency for people to engage in it is very high. Politicians who are sponsors of arms proliferation should not be spared, and those found wanting should be treated according to the laws of the land by the security agencies. They are the ones who usually smuggle in these weapons for the youth for election purposes, and most will be discouraged.

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