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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-59722

Title: Towards a Communication-Based Approach to Combating Armed Terrorist Groups in the Commune of MatÃ©ri, Northern Benin.

Recommendation:

Accept as it is .....

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision .....

Do not accept (*Reasons below*) .....

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality			✓	
Clarity			✓	
Significance		✓		

Reviewer Id: JPR-386

Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

The manuscript addresses an important and contemporary security issue by examining the role of communication in combating armed terrorist groups in the commune of Matéri, northern Benin. The study offers a relevant perspective by highlighting the limitations of relying exclusively on conventional military strategies and emphasizing the importance of community participation, institutional communication, and civil-military collaboration. The research adopts an exploratory sequential mixed-methods approach, combining interviews with military officials, questionnaires administered to military personnel and civilians, and documentary analysis. The theoretical framework, based on Watzlawick's theory of human communication and the participatory communication approaches of Freire and Servaes, provides a relevant foundation for the study. The findings highlight the importance of word of mouth, radio, and internet-based communication, as well as the willingness of local populations to support security forces. The manuscript also identifies poverty and unemployment as important factors associated with youth recruitment into armed terrorist groups. The discussion establishes meaningful connections between the empirical findings and existing literature on community engagement and countering violent extremism. However, some inconsistencies in the reported percentages and sample descriptions, particularly the distinction between the total number of participants and the questionnaire respondents, affect the presentation of the findings. Certain methodological details and the interpretation of survey results also lack sufficient clarity. Overall, the manuscript contributes to research on communication, community participation, and security management in conflict-affected regions. It has academic and practical significance, particularly for understanding the role of communication in strengthening community cooperation and preventing violent extremism. **The manuscript is recommended for acceptance after minor revision.**