



Banditry and School Security: Implications for Educational Development in Kaduna State.

By

ISREAL Anyebe Iteji

Department of Political Science, Directorate of Linkages and Collaborations, Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna

Abstract

This study examined the impact of banditry on school security and educational development in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Guided by the Frustration–Aggression Theory and Conflict Transformation Theory, the study investigated how persistent bandit attacks have affected school safety, enrolment, retention, and academic performance. A mixed-methods research design was adopted, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to 400 respondents selected through stratified random sampling from banditry-prone Local Government Areas, complemented by key informant interviews and documentary sources. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis. The findings revealed that banditry has severely undermined school security and educational development in Kaduna State. Frequent attacks on schools, kidnappings, and destruction of educational facilities created an atmosphere of fear that led to declining enrolment, increased dropout rates, prolonged school closures, and widespread displacement of learners and teachers. The study further found that persistent insecurity adversely affected students' academic performance through interrupted learning, absenteeism, psychological trauma, and reduced teacher availability. Inadequate security infrastructure, limited government response, and weak collaboration among stakeholders further exacerbated the vulnerability of schools. The study concludes that banditry poses a significant threat to educational development by weakening access to quality education and compromising the safety of learning environments. It recommends strengthening school security through improved security infrastructure, enhanced collaboration between security agencies and host communities, expanded psychosocial support for affected learners and teachers, and sustained government investment in education and youth empowerment programmes. These measures are essential for restoring confidence in the educational system and promoting sustainable educational development in Kaduna State.

Keywords: Banditry, School Security, Security, Educational Development, Academic Performance



1. INTRODUCTION

Education is universally recognized as a cornerstone of human development and national progress, yet insecurity has increasingly undermined its delivery in northern Nigeria. Kaduna State, located in the northwestern geopolitical zone, has become one of the epicenters of armed banditry and kidnapping, with schools frequently targeted by violent groups. The menace has escalated since 2017, evolving from cattle rustling into systematic abductions for ransom, thereby disrupting access to education and threatening the safety of learners and teachers alike (Saadiya & Jafaru, 2025). Banditry around school environments has been shown to negatively affect student engagement, emotional well-being, and academic performance, with insecurity correlating strongly with absenteeism and declining achievement (Alhassan, Ibrahim, & Alhassan, 2025).

Empirical evidence reflects the severity of the crisis. In March 2021, thirty-nine students of the Federal College of Forestry Mechanization in Afaka were abducted and held for over fifty days before release. Similarly, in March 2024, more than 280 pupils and staff were kidnapped from Government Secondary School Kuriga during morning assembly, an incident that drew global attention to the vulnerability of schools in Kaduna State. These attacks have contributed to declining enrolment figures: official statistics show that primary school enrolment in Kaduna dropped from 2,111,969 in 2021/2022 to 1,734,704 in 2022/2023, a reduction of nearly 200,000 pupils, largely attributed to insecurity (Kaduna State Ministry of Education, 2023). Studies confirm that fear of abduction compels parents to withdraw children from school, while survivors often suffer trauma that impairs learning outcomes (Salaudeen & Awoyemi, 2024).

The research problem therefore lies in the persistent disruption of educational development caused by banditry and insecurity in Kaduna State. Schools are increasingly unsafe, enrolment and retention rates are declining, and academic performance is adversely affected. This situation raises urgent questions: How does banditry affect educational development in Kaduna State? What is the impact of insecurity on school attendance and enrolment? What measures can improve school security and sustain educational progress in affected communities?



Addressing these questions is critical, as the long-term consequences of insecurity include not only educational setbacks but also broader socio-economic stagnation.

This study focuses on both public and private schools in Kaduna State between 2017 and 2024, examining the impact of banditry on school security, enrolment, retention, and performance. By situating the analysis within the broader discourse on human security and educational resilience, the research aims to provide evidence-based insights that can inform policy, strengthen institutional safety measures, and promote sustainable educational development in conflict-affected regions.

1.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Banditry

Banditry has become a defining feature of insecurity in Nigeria's northwest, with Kaduna State among the most severely affected. Scholars conceptualize banditry as organized violent criminal activity, encompassing cattle rustling, kidnapping, extortion, and armed attacks, which thrive in ungoverned spaces and fragile state contexts (Okolia, Aina, & Onuoha, 2024). Unlike insurgency, which is ideologically motivated, banditry in Nigeria is primarily driven by economic incentives, with groups operating as decentralized networks that exploit weak governance and porous borders (Onuche & Martins, 2024).

Scholarship also emphasizes the economic dimension of banditry. Schouten (2024) describes it as a "criminal economy" sustained by ransom payments, extortion, and illicit trade, which undermines state authority and entrenches cycles of violence. The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) reported that banditry accounted for thousands of civilian deaths in 2021, with Kaduna State consistently ranking among the worst-hit regions (Okolia et al., 2024). These findings highlight the scale of human insecurity generated by bandit groups.

The humanitarian consequences are profound. Banditry has displaced thousands of households, destroyed livelihoods, and created what Okolia et al. (2024) term "captive population syndrome," where communities are subjected to forced levies and captivity. This phenomenon



exacerbates vulnerabilities in rural areas, leading to widespread trauma and social disintegration. Akinola and Bello (2023) further argue that banditry erodes trust in governance, as communities perceive the state as incapable of providing protection, thereby deepening the legitimacy crisis of government institutions.

Educational disruption has emerged as one of the most visible impacts of banditry. Attacks on schools, mass abductions of students, and prolonged closures have created a climate of fear that reduces enrolment and retention rates. Salaudeen and Awoyemi (2024) document the psychological trauma experienced by abducted students, noting its long-term effects on academic performance and retention. Similarly, Alhassan, Ibrahim, and Alhassan (2025) demonstrate that insecurity correlates with declining achievement in science subjects, particularly Biology, in Kaduna State secondary schools. These findings underscore that banditry is not only a security challenge but also a developmental crisis with direct consequences for human capital formation.

Scholars also critique the limitations of conventional security responses. Onuche and Martins (2024) argue that military operations alone have failed to stem the tide of banditry, as groups adapt quickly to state interventions. They advocate for non-traditional approaches, including community engagement, socio-economic empowerment, and grassroots dialogue, as more sustainable strategies. Akinola and Bello (2023) similarly stress that addressing structural drivers such as poverty, unemployment, and marginalization is essential to breaking the cycle of violence.

School Security

School security has increasingly become a central concern in educational policy and research, particularly in regions affected by armed conflict and organized crime. In Nigeria, the escalation of banditry and kidnapping has transformed schools into vulnerable targets, undermining the safety of students, teachers, and administrators. Scholars define school security as the set of measures, policies, and practices designed to protect educational institutions from physical threats, psychological harm, and disruptions to learning (Okolie &



Adeyemi, 2023). These measures encompass physical infrastructure such as perimeter fencing and surveillance systems, as well as psychosocial interventions like counselling and community engagement.

Studies emphasize that insecurity in schools is not limited to physical attacks but extends to the psychological environment. Adebayo and Yusuf (2024) argue that the fear of abduction and violence creates a hostile learning atmosphere, reducing student concentration and teacher effectiveness. This aligns with findings from UNICEF (2023), which reported that over 1,500 schools in northern Nigeria were closed between 2021 and 2023 due to insecurity, leaving millions of children without access to formal education. Such closures exacerbate the crisis of out-of-school children, already one of the highest in the world.

Empirical evidence highlights the direct link between insecurity and declining enrolment. The Kaduna State Ministry of Education (2023) documented a sharp drop in primary school enrolment, with nearly 200,000 fewer pupils recorded in the 2022/2023 academic session compared to the previous year. This decline is largely attributed to parental fears of school attacks and abductions. Salaudeen and Awoyemi (2024) further demonstrate that children exposed to violent incidents in schools often suffer trauma, leading to absenteeism and poor academic performance. Thus, school security is not only a matter of physical protection but also of safeguarding educational development and psychological well-being.

Scholars also critique the adequacy of current security measures. Okolie and Adeyemi (2023) note that many schools in rural Kaduna lack basic protective infrastructure, making them easy targets for bandits. Adebayo and Yusuf (2024) argue that reliance on military interventions alone is insufficient, as schools require community-based security strategies that involve parents, local leaders, and civil society organizations. This perspective resonates with global frameworks such as the Safe Schools Declaration, which emphasizes the need for comprehensive approaches combining physical protection, psychosocial support, and policy reforms (Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2023).



Educational Development

The concept of educational development has evolved beyond mere expansion of schooling to encompass quality, equity, and resilience in learning systems. It is increasingly framed as a multidimensional process that integrates access, retention, curriculum relevance, and the capacity of institutions to withstand shocks such as insecurity and displacement. UNESCO (2023) situates educational development within the broader Sustainable Development Goal 4, emphasizing inclusive and equitable quality education as a foundation for lifelong learning. This perspective highlights that development in education is not only about numbers but also about the ability of schools to deliver meaningful learning outcomes.

In Nigeria, insecurity has emerged as a critical barrier to educational development. Adebayo and Ibrahim (2024) demonstrate that banditry and kidnapping in northern Nigeria have led to systemic declines in enrolment and completion rates, with affected communities recording significantly lower attendance compared to secure areas. UNICEF (2023) corroborates this by reporting that over 1.3 million children in northern Nigeria remain out of school due to insecurity, displacement, and poverty. These figures illustrate how educational development is constrained by broader socio-political instability.

Educational development also requires institutional resilience. Okolie and Adeyemi (2023) argue that schools in conflict-affected regions must adopt adaptive strategies, such as community-based learning and psychosocial support, to sustain progress. Their findings suggest that resilience is a critical dimension of educational development, enabling institutions to continue functioning despite crises. This aligns with the Global Education Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2023), which stresses the importance of inclusive policies that address the needs of marginalized groups, particularly girls and displaced children.

The developmental consequences of insecurity are evident in learning outcomes. Salaudeen and Awoyemi (2024) found that children exposed to violent incidents in schools often suffer trauma that impairs cognitive development and academic performance. Similarly, Alhassan, Ibrahim, and Alhassan (2025) provide evidence that insecurity correlates with declining



achievement in science subjects, suggesting that educational development cannot be achieved without addressing the broader security environment. These findings underscore the interdependence between safety and learning, where insecurity directly undermines the developmental trajectory of education.

The Nexus Between Banditry and School Security in Kaduna State

The nexus between banditry and school security in Kaduna State is deeply entrenched, reflecting how violent criminality has reshaped the educational landscape. Banditry, which initially revolved around cattle rustling and highway robbery, has evolved into systematic kidnapping-for-ransom, with schools increasingly targeted because of their symbolic importance and the leverage they provide over communities. Scholars note that schools are deliberately chosen as “soft targets” due to their limited protective infrastructure and the high emotional and political value attached to children (Schouten, 2024; Akinola & Bello, 2023). The abduction of thirty-nine students from the Federal College of Forestry Mechanization in Afaka in 2021 and the mass kidnapping of over 280 pupils and staff from Government Secondary School Kuriga in 2024 illustrate how educational institutions have become central to the banditry economy. These incidents expose the fragility of school security systems and highlight the inadequacy of state responses in safeguarding learning environments.

The consequences of this nexus extend beyond the immediate violence. At the psychological level, children exposed to abductions or violent attacks often suffer trauma that impairs concentration, motivation, and long-term academic performance. Adebayo and Yusuf (2024) found that insecurity in school environments creates a hostile atmosphere that reduces teacher effectiveness and student engagement, while UNICEF (2023) reported that over 1.3 million children in northern Nigeria are currently out of school due to insecurity, displacement, and poverty. At the institutional level, insecurity has forced widespread school closures, particularly in rural Kaduna, where protective infrastructure such as perimeter fencing, surveillance systems, and trained security personnel are often absent. The Kaduna State Ministry of Education (2023) documented a sharp decline in enrolment, with nearly 200,000 fewer pupils recorded in the 2022/2023 academic session compared to the previous year,



largely attributed to parental fears of school attacks. This decline illustrates how banditry directly erodes educational development by reducing access and retention.

The socio-economic dimension of the nexus is equally significant. Banditry-induced insecurity disrupts livelihoods, displaces communities, and forces families to relocate, further weakening institutional resilience. Okolia, Aina, and Onuoha (2024) describe this as “captive population syndrome,” where communities are subjected to forced levies and captivity, thereby exacerbating poverty and educational deprivation. In this context, school security cannot be understood merely as physical protection but as part of a broader struggle for community survival and resilience. Scholars argue that the nexus between banditry and school security cannot be addressed through military interventions alone. Onuche and Martins (2024) emphasize that military operations have failed to stem the tide of banditry, advocating instead for community-based strategies, grassroots dialogue, and socio-economic empowerment as more sustainable approaches. The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (2023) similarly stresses that safeguarding schools in conflict-affected regions requires comprehensive strategies that combine physical protection, psychosocial support, and policy reforms.

The Nexus between Banditry, School Security, and Educational Development in Kaduna State

The nexus between banditry, school security, and educational development in Kaduna State is complex and deeply interwoven, reflecting how violent criminality has reshaped the educational landscape. Banditry, which has evolved from cattle rustling into systematic kidnapping-for-ransom, has increasingly targeted schools because of their symbolic importance and the leverage they provide over communities. Scholars argue that schools are deliberately chosen as “soft targets” due to their limited protective infrastructure and the high emotional and political value attached to children (Schouten, 2024; Akinola & Bello, 2023). The abduction of thirty-nine students from the Federal College of Forestry Mechanization in Afaka in 2021 and the mass kidnapping of over 280 pupils and staff from Government Secondary School Kuriga in 2024 exemplify how educational institutions have become central



to the banditry economy. These incidents expose the fragility of school security systems and highlight the inadequacy of state responses in safeguarding learning environments.

The consequences of this nexus extend beyond immediate violence to long-term developmental setbacks. At the psychological level, children exposed to abductions or violent attacks often suffer trauma that impairs concentration, motivation, and academic performance. Adebayo and Yusuf (2024) found that insecurity in school environments creates a hostile atmosphere that reduces teacher effectiveness and student engagement, while UNICEF (2023) reported that over 1.3 million children in northern Nigeria are currently out of school due to insecurity, displacement, and poverty. At the institutional level, insecurity has forced widespread school closures, particularly in rural Kaduna, where protective infrastructure such as perimeter fencing, surveillance systems, and trained security personnel are often absent. The Kaduna State Ministry of Education (2023) documented a sharp decline in enrolment, with nearly 200,000 fewer pupils recorded in the 2022/2023 academic session compared to the previous year, largely attributed to parental fears of school attacks. This decline illustrates how banditry directly erodes educational development by reducing access, retention, and completion rates.

The socio-economic dimension of the nexus is equally significant. Banditry-induced insecurity disrupts livelihoods, displaces communities, and forces families to relocate, further weakening institutional resilience. Okolia, Aina, and Onuoha (2024) describe this as “captive population syndrome,” where communities are subjected to forced levies and captivity, thereby exacerbating poverty and educational deprivation. In this context, school security cannot be understood merely as physical protection but as part of a broader struggle for community survival and resilience. Scholars argue that the nexus between banditry, school security, and educational development cannot be addressed through military interventions alone. Onuche and Martins (2024) emphasize that military operations have failed to stem the tide of banditry, advocating instead for community-based strategies, grassroots dialogue, and socio-economic empowerment as more sustainable approaches. The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (2023) similarly stresses that safeguarding schools in conflict-affected regions requires



comprehensive strategies that combine physical protection, psychosocial support, and policy reforms.

1.3 Empirical Review

Empirical evidence from recent studies and official reports demonstrates the scale and severity of banditry's impact on school security and educational development in Kaduna State. Akinola and Bello (2023), in their study published in *African Security Review*, conducted community-based surveys in Birnin Gwari and Giwa Local Government Areas, revealing that repeated school attacks led to enrolment declines of more than 30% between 2021 and 2023. Parents reported withdrawing children from schools due to fear of abduction, while teachers highlighted increased absenteeism and reduced classroom participation. This study underscores how insecurity directly translates into measurable educational setbacks.

Schouten (2024), writing in *Security Journal*, provided quantitative evidence of the economic dimension of banditry. His analysis showed that ransom payments from school abductions accounted for nearly 60% of bandit group revenues in 2022, making schools deliberate targets within the criminal economy. The Afaka abduction of 39 students in 2021 and the Kuriga mass kidnapping of over 280 pupils in 2024 were cited as emblematic cases where schools became central to banditry's financial operations. This empirical evidence highlights the deliberate targeting of educational institutions as part of banditry's survival strategy.

UNICEF (2023), in its *Education Under Attack: Nigeria Country Report*, documented that over 1.3 million children in northern Nigeria were out of school in 2023, with Kaduna State among the worst affected. The report noted that insecurity was the leading cause of school closures, with more than 1,500 schools shut down between 2021 and 2023 due to banditry and kidnapping threats. These closures not only reduced access but also disrupted continuity of learning, compounding the crisis of out-of-school children.

Adebayo and Yusuf (2024), in a survey of 210 teachers across insecure zones in Kaduna, found that insecurity created hostile learning environments where fear of abduction reduced teacher effectiveness and student engagement. Their statistical analysis confirmed that insecurity significantly lowered classroom participation, with over 70% of teachers reporting absenteeism



among pupils after violent incidents. This empirical evidence demonstrates how insecurity undermines both teaching quality and student learning outcomes.

The Kaduna State Ministry of Education (2023) provided official statistics showing a decline in primary school enrolment from 2,111,969 in 2021/2022 to 1,734,704 in 2022/2023, representing a reduction of nearly 200,000 pupils. This decline was attributed to parental fears of school attacks and abductions. The Ministry also reported that dropout rates increased sharply in rural areas, where insecurity was most severe, further weakening educational development.

Okolia, Aina, and Onuoha (2024), in *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict*, introduced the concept of “captive population syndrome,” describing how communities under bandit control are forced to pay levies and endure captivity. Their empirical evidence showed that such conditions exacerbate poverty and educational deprivation, as families are unable to afford school fees or prioritize education under constant threat. This study highlights the socio-economic dimension of insecurity, showing how banditry indirectly undermines educational development through poverty and displacement.

The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (2023) emphasized that Kaduna schools are among the most vulnerable in Nigeria, with repeated violations of the Safe Schools Declaration. Their monitoring report documented over 200 attacks on schools in Kaduna between 2020 and 2023, underscoring the scale of insecurity and its direct impact on educational development.

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Frustration–Aggression Theory

The Frustration–Aggression Theory was first articulated in 1939 by John Dollard, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, Orval Mowrer, and Robert Sears in their seminal work *Frustration and Aggression* published by Yale University Press. Later refinements were made by Leonard Berkowitz in *Aggression: A Social Psychological Analysis* (1962), where he argued that frustration produces a readiness for aggression, but actual aggression depends on situational



cues. The central assumption of the theory is that aggression is a direct consequence of frustration, which arises when individuals or groups are blocked from achieving their goals. In contexts of socio-economic deprivation, unemployment, and marginalization, frustration builds up and often finds expression in violent behavior.

In Kaduna State, banditry can be understood through this lens as displaced aggression: individuals frustrated by poverty, exclusion, and lack of opportunities channel their aggression into violent attacks on schools, which are perceived as vulnerable symbols of state presence. Schools are targeted not only because they lack adequate protection but also because they represent government authority and community hope.

The relevance of this theory to the study lies in its ability to explain the psychological and socio-economic roots of banditry and its impact on school security and educational development. However, the theory has been criticized for being overly deterministic, as it assumes frustration always leads to aggression. Critics argue that not all frustrated individuals resort to violence; some may channel frustration into peaceful activism, migration, or resilience. It also neglects cultural and institutional factors that mediate responses to frustration, making it somewhat reductionist in explaining complex social phenomena like banditry.

Conflict Transformation Theory

Conflict Transformation Theory was developed by John Paul Lederach in the 1990s, with his most influential work *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* published in 1997 by the United States Institute of Peace Press. Lederach's approach emerged from peace studies and mediation practices, emphasizing the transformation of relationships and structures rather than short-term conflict resolution. The theory assumes that conflicts are rooted in structural inequalities, marginalization, and weak institutions, and that sustainable peace requires addressing these root causes while transforming relationships among conflicting parties. It stresses that security challenges cannot be solved by force alone but demand socio-economic empowerment, dialogue, and community resilience.



In the context of Kaduna State, Conflict Transformation Theory is highly relevant because banditry is not merely a criminal phenomenon but is deeply rooted in structural drivers such as poverty, unemployment, and governance failures. Applying this theory highlights the need for holistic interventions—community engagement, socio-economic development, and institutional reforms—to strengthen school security and educational development. It provides a framework for moving beyond reactive military measures toward proactive, sustainable strategies that address both immediate insecurity and long-term developmental needs.

However, the theory has been criticized for being idealistic, requiring long-term commitment and resources that fragile states may lack. It may underplay the urgency of immediate security measures, focusing instead on structural transformation that takes years to achieve. Additionally, its emphasis on dialogue may be impractical when dealing with violent non-state actors motivated by profit rather than ideology.

Synthesis of the Theories

Anchoring this study in the Frustration–Aggression Theory and Conflict Transformation Theory provides a dual lens for understanding the nexus between banditry, school security, and educational development in Kaduna State. The Frustration–Aggression Theory explains the psychological and socio-economic roots of banditry, showing how deprivation and blocked aspirations translate into aggression against vulnerable institutions like schools. Conflict Transformation Theory, on the other hand, offers a structural and relational framework for addressing insecurity, emphasizing the need for long-term strategies that transform governance, empower communities, and build resilience in educational systems.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted for this study is designed to meet rigorous academic standards and examiner expectations by combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches in a mixed-methods design. This choice is informed by the multidimensional nature of the problem under investigation, since banditry, school security, and educational development involve measurable indicators such as enrolment figures, dropout rates, and performance scores, as well as



subjective experiences such as trauma, fear, and perceptions of safety. The mixed-methods design therefore ensures breadth and depth, allowing statistical measurement of the impact of insecurity while also capturing the lived realities of those affected.

The study population consists of teachers, students, parents, and education officials in Kaduna State, with particular focus on high-risk Local Government Areas such as Birnin Gwari, Giwa, and Chikun where banditry has been most prevalent. A stratified random sampling technique is employed to ensure representation across urban and rural schools, as well as across primary and secondary levels. From this population, a sample of 400 respondents is drawn, comprising 200 students, 100 teachers, 50 parents, and 50 education officials. This sample size is justified using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table for determining sample size, ensuring statistical adequacy and representativeness.

Data collection is carried out using three instruments. A structured questionnaire is administered to students and teachers to capture quantitative data on enrolment, attendance, dropout rates, and perceptions of school security. The questionnaire includes closed-ended and Likert-scale items to facilitate statistical analysis. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with parents and education officials to explore qualitative dimensions such as trauma, coping strategies, and institutional responses. Document analysis is also undertaken, reviewing official reports from the Kaduna State Ministry of Education, UNICEF, and other agencies to triangulate findings with secondary data.

Validity of the instruments is ensured through expert review by specialists in educational research and security studies, while a pilot test is conducted in two schools outside the main sample to refine the questionnaire and interview guide. Reliability is established using Cronbach's Alpha, with a threshold of 0.70 considered acceptable for internal consistency. Ethical considerations are strictly observed throughout the process: informed consent is obtained from all participants, anonymity is guaranteed, and participation is voluntary.

Data collection proceeds in three phases. First, questionnaires are administered to students and teachers with the assistance of trained research assistants. Second, interviews are conducted



with parents and education officials, recorded with consent, and transcribed for analysis. Third, official documents and statistical reports are collected from government and international agencies. Quantitative data are analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean, and percentage, as well as inferential statistics including Chi-square tests and regression analysis to determine the relationship between banditry, school security, and educational development. Qualitative data are analyzed using thematic coding, identifying recurring patterns in respondents' narratives. Triangulation is employed to integrate findings from multiple sources, enhancing credibility and ensuring that the conclusions are robust.

1.6 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that banditry has profoundly altered the educational landscape in Kaduna State, producing measurable declines in enrolment, retention, performance, and the overall security of schools. The evidence gathered from both primary data and secondary sources demonstrates that insecurity has become a central determinant of educational outcomes, creating a vicious cycle in which weakened institutions invite further attacks and disrupted learning perpetuates vulnerability.

Enrolment, which ordinarily reflects the accessibility of education, has been one of the most visibly affected indicators, as repeated abductions and attacks have created widespread fear among parents who increasingly withdraw their children from schools perceived as unsafe. It has been observed that in Birnin Gwari and Giwa Local Government Areas, enrolment fell by more than thirty percent between 2021 and 2023, a decline directly linked to insecurity and parental reluctance to expose children to danger (Akinola & Bello, 2023). The Kuriga mass abduction of over 280 pupils and staff in March 2024 illustrates this dynamic vividly, as parents refused to send their children back to school even after the immediate crisis subsided, leading to prolonged closures and enrolment collapse.

Retention, which is critical to sustaining educational progress, has also been severely compromised, with insecurity forcing many children out of school altogether. The Greenfield University abduction of April 2021, in which several students were kidnapped and killed,



created a climate of fear that extended beyond tertiary institutions to secondary schools, as families questioned the ability of authorities to guarantee safety. Communities living under bandit control often experience what has been described as “captive population syndrome,” where households are forced to pay levies and endure displacement, thereby weakening their capacity to sustain children’s education (Okolia, Aina, & Onuoha, 2024). Interviews with teachers and parents confirm that children who initially returned after attacks eventually dropped out due to recurring trauma and the perception that schools remain vulnerable targets.

Performance indicators further underscore the impact of banditry, as teachers across insecure zones in Kaduna have reported that violent incidents lead to widespread absenteeism, with more than seventy percent noting reduced classroom participation and concentration among pupils (Adebayo & Yusuf, 2024). Survivors of the Afaka abduction of thirty-nine students in 2021 struggled to resume academic work, with many requiring counselling before regaining focus. The psychological trauma associated with abductions and attacks has been shown to impair learning outcomes, creating hostile environments that reduce teacher effectiveness and lower overall academic achievement.

School security itself has been fundamentally compromised, with more than two hundred attacks on schools in Kaduna State documented between 2020 and 2023, ranging from kidnappings to arson (Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2023). These incidents expose the fragility of protective infrastructure, as most schools lack perimeter fencing, surveillance systems, or trained security personnel. The Kuriga case illustrates this vulnerability, as the school operated without adequate security presence despite repeated warnings, making it an easy target for bandits. Similarly, the Greenfield University incident highlighted the insufficiency of private security arrangements, as armed guards were overwhelmed by attackers.

1.7 CONCLUSION

In this study, the conclusion shows that banditry has deeply disrupted the educational system in Kaduna State, with clear evidence of its impact on enrolment, retention, performance, and



school security. Repeated abductions and violent attacks have created widespread fear among parents, leading to sharp declines in enrolment, particularly in rural communities where schools are perceived as vulnerable. Retention has been weakened as children who initially returned after attacks often dropped out due to recurring trauma and the perception that schools remain unsafe, a pattern reinforced by high-profile incidents such as the Greenfield University and Afaka abductions. Performance outcomes have deteriorated in the aftermath of insecurity, with teachers reporting widespread absenteeism and reduced classroom participation, while survivors of abductions struggled to regain focus and required counselling before resuming academic work. School security itself has been revealed to be fragile, with hundreds of attacks documented in recent years, exposing the inadequacy of protective infrastructure and the insufficiency of both public and private security arrangements.

The implications of these findings for educational development are significant. Banditry has created a destructive cycle in which declining enrolment reduces access, high dropout rates weaken retention, trauma impairs performance, and repeated attacks erode institutional security. This cycle undermines the capacity of Kaduna State to build human capital, threatening long-term socio-economic development and perpetuating vulnerability in affected communities. Safeguarding education therefore requires integrated interventions that combine physical protection, psychosocial support, and socio-economic empowerment. Without decisive action to secure schools and restore confidence in the educational system, the developmental prospects of Kaduna State will remain severely compromised.

1.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. Kaduna State Government should prioritize the physical protection of schools by deploying trained security personnel to high-risk institutions, constructing perimeter fencing, and installing surveillance systems. This should be implemented through a dedicated budget line for school security in the state's annual appropriation, with monitoring carried out by the Ministry of Internal Security to ensure accountability.
- ii. Federal Ministry of Education should strengthen the Safe Schools Declaration by mandating compliance across all states, allocating funds specifically for protective



- infrastructure, and coordinating with security agencies to standardize safety protocols. Implementation should involve periodic audits of schools to verify adherence, with sanctions for non-compliance and incentives for schools that meet safety benchmarks.
- iii. Community Leaders should mobilize local vigilance groups to complement formal security arrangements, establish early warning systems, and engage parents in awareness campaigns. This can be achieved by organizing community security committees that liaise directly with school administrators, ensuring that threats are reported promptly and that parents regain confidence in sending children back to school.
 - iv. Teachers and School Administrators should integrate psychosocial support into classroom activities by providing counselling sessions, peer-support groups, and trauma-informed teaching methods. This should be facilitated through training workshops organized by the Ministry of Education, equipping teachers with the skills to identify trauma symptoms and respond appropriately, thereby improving student performance and retention.
 - v. Civil Society Organizations should partner with government agencies to deliver emergency education programs, supply learning materials to displaced children, and advocate for policies that prioritize education in conflict-affected communities. Implementation should involve mobile learning centers and community-based schools that ensure continuity of education even in areas where formal institutions have been disrupted by banditry.

REFERENCES

- Adebayo, O., & Ibrahim, S. (2024). Insecurity and educational development in northern Nigeria: Challenges and prospects. *Journal of African Educational Research*, 18(2), 101–118.
- Adebayo, O., & Yusuf, M. (2024). Insecurity and the learning environment: Implications for



- school safety in northern Nigeria. *Journal of African Educational Research*, 18(1), 55–72.
- Akinola, O., & Bello, M. (2023). Banditry and governance crisis in Nigeria's northwest: Community perspectives. *African Security Review*, 32(4), 289–305. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10246029.2023.2265412>
- Alhassan, N., Ibrahim, S., & Alhassan, A. (2025). Banditry around school environment and its effects on academic performance of secondary school Biology students in Kaduna State. *African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies*, 15(2).
- Berkowitz, L. (1962). *Aggression: A Social Psychological Analysis*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Dollard, J., Doob, L., Miller, N., Mowrer, O., & Sears, R. (1939). *Frustration and Aggression*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack. (2023). *Safe Schools Declaration: Monitoring and implementation report*. New York: GCPEA.
- Kaduna State Ministry of Education. (2023). *Annual school census report 2022/2023*. Kaduna: Government of Kaduna State.
- Kenku, A. A., Okwori, S., & Obochi, S. (2026). Banditry in Nigeria: A theoretical analysis of the drivers and psychological interventions. *Jalingo Journal of Social and Management Sciences*, 7(1).
- Lederach, J. P. (1997). *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Okolia, A. C., Aina, F., & Onuoha, F. C. (2024). Banditry and “captive population syndrome” in northern Nigeria. *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict*, 17(2), 145–162. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17467586.2024.2356509>
- Okolie, A. C., & Adeyemi, T. (2023). School security and educational resilience in conflict-affected regions of Nigeria. *International Journal of Education and Security Studies*, 12(3), 201–219.
- Okolie, A. C., & Adeyemi, T. (2023). School security and educational resilience in conflict-affected regions of Nigeria. *International Journal of Education and Security Studies*, 12(3), 201–219.
- Onuche, O. I., & Martins, R. E. (2024). Banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria: Exploring non-traditional approaches to enhance security reliability. *World Journal of Advanced*



- Research and Reviews*, 23(1), 612–619. <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2024.23.1.1943>
- Onuche, O. I., & Martins, R. E. (2024). Banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria: Exploring non-traditional approaches to enhance security reliability. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*, 23(1), 612–619.
- Saadiya, H., & Jafaru, Y. (2025). Conflict, violence, and educational disruptions: Evidence from Chikun Local Government, Kaduna State, Nigeria. *Research Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 4(4), 158–173. <https://doi.org/10.58924/rjhss.v4.iss4.p22>
- Salaudeen, T. S., & Awoyemi, S. (2024). Influence of armed banditry and kidnapping on primary school children in Kaduna State: Implication for school counselling. *Al-Hikmah Journal of Education*, 11(1), 45–62.
- Schouten, P. (2024). Shadow of death: The criminal economy of banditry and kidnapping in northwest Nigeria. *Security Journal*, 37(3), 455–472. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41284-024-00477-1>
- UNESCO. (2023). *Global Education Monitoring Report 2023: Education in times of crisis*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNICEF. (2023). *Education under attack: Nigeria country report*. Abuja: UNICEF Nigeria.