Assessing the Impact of Kidnapping and Banditry on Students' Academic Performance in Nigeria: Implications for Education and Security Policies

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Abstract

This study investigates the incidence of kidnapping and banditry on students' academic performance with implications for education and security policies in Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design has been adopted for this study to be carried out among school students and university students in selected states: Ondo, Kogi, Bauchi, Kaduna, Anambra, and Edo. It had a target population of all students in the country's senior and tertiary institutions. Stratified random sampling was conducted to make a random population of 6000 out of these three tiers, into which each student belonged. The data collection instruments included the IKB-SAPQ developed and validated by experts in education and security studies. Its reliability was established with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.85. The tool was administered with the collaboration of school authorities and trained research assistants, thus yielding a very high response rate. Descriptive and inferential statistics, such as percentages, means, and ANOVA, were used in the analysis to ascertain the magnitude and variation of these effects. Results showed that kidnapping and banditry significantly disrupt students' academic performance through poor attendance, psychosocial disturbances, and decreased motivation. More than 65% of the students had concentration problems and disruptions of school work, while 70% showed increased anxiety and fear. The study recommends improving security in schools, safety at the community level, and increasing psychological support for affected students. Furthermore, the government and educational stakeholders have to work together to enact policies that would address these root causes of insecurity and create a conducive environment for learning.

Keywords: *Impact, Kidnapping, Banditry, Students, Academic Performance, Education, Security.*

Introduction

Education is the key instrument for individual and societal development, yet it is very vulnerable to disruption caused by insecurity. Over the past years, the country, especially the Northern part of Nigeria, has been experiencing the growing trend of kidnapping and banditry. These security challenges have posed a negative effect on several areas of human life, which includes students and the education sector.

Kidnapping, which is described as the illegal abduction of people for ransom or other reasons, has been one of the recurring problems in Nigeria. According to scholars, such as Saminu, & Mohammed (2022), the root of kidnapping in Nigeria is based on socio-economic inequalities, unemployment, and poor law enforcement. Educational institutions have been targeted; incidents of mass abduction of students were reported in various states in Nigeria. Events associated with such acts disrupt learning processes, instill fear, and result in poor academic performance among students. Equally defined as organized armed robbery accompanied by violence, banditry has escalated in most parts of the country. According to Kitabu, & Mohammed (2023), banditry in the educational zone is an environment of instability that has led to the closure of schools and a state of psychological distress for students. This insecurity makes students barely focus on studying, hence actively engaging in learning as a means of attaining full academic potential in the country. According to Agboola et al. (2021), some of the psychological effects of insecurity are increased anxiety, trauma, and reduced capacity for cognitive functioning, thus affecting academic performance negatively. Insecurity affects the attendance of school-going children in school because of the withdrawal of children from schools perceived to be insecure. Some studies, such as that of Ukozor, et al. (2024), show that long-term absenteeism strongly correlates with poor academic performance.

These have been precipitated by the increased challenges schools and communities have had to contend with and are countered by increased security measures as well as community policing, yet this is never

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enough considering the limited resources and that the insecurity is everywhere. In fact, Innocent et al. (2021) opine that there are several ways of tackling these acts of kidnapping and banditry, including addressing education reforms, improving security in schools, and socio-economic approaches.

This study intends to examine the level of impact of kidnapping and banditry on students' academic performance in Nigeria, which shall have implications for policies in education and security. The study will contribute to empirical evidence in the formulation of strategies that may reduce the effect of the security challenges on education.

Statement of the Problem

The rising cases of kidnapping and banditry in Nigeria have caused the country to feel the palpable effect on several of its sectors, one of which is the education system. Educational institutions, especially secondary and tertiary institutions, have fallen into the category of the favored targets of kidnappers and abductions, for which students and their families live in fear and a state of insecurity. This growing insecurity has caused tremendous disruption in the academic process: students suffer from reduced attendance, psychological trauma, and an overall decline in academic performance.

Notwithstanding, the increased attention being paid to security issues in the country, the particular ways kidnapping and banditry are affecting the academic performance of students remain understudied. Although some studies have been done to describe how insecurity has generally impacted education, the empirical evidence is lacking on how kidnapping and banditry are affecting the direct ways of school attendance, class concentration, and the academic performance of students.

Additionally, the psychological implications of insecurity are not sought out as part of a potential learning problem for students or their future academic success. This study tries to fill this gap by examining the direct and indirect impacts of kidnapping and banditry on the academic performance of students in Nigeria, besides exploring the coping mechanisms that students and schools have adopted and how education and security policies could be adapted to mitigate these negative impacts. The findings of this study will therefore be important to inform policy, educators, and security agencies in the development of strategies to respond to students' challenges in the region and stabilize the educational environment.

Objectives of the Study

The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Examine the direct impact of kidnapping on students' academic performance in Nigeria.

- Analyze the influence of banditry on students' academic outcomes in the region.

- Investigate how insecurity caused by kidnapping and banditry affects students' school attendance and participation.

- Evaluate the psychological effects of insecurity on students' ability to focus, learn, and achieve academic success.

- Explore the coping mechanisms employed by students and schools in response to the challenges posed by kidnapping and banditry.

Research Questions

These research questions were raised to guide the study.

- What is the direct impact of kidnapping on students' academic performance in Nigeria?

- How does banditry influence students' academic outcomes in the country?

- In what ways does insecurity caused by kidnapping and banditry affect students' school attendance and participation?

- What are the psychological effects of insecurity on students' ability to focus, learn, and achieve academic success?

- What coping mechanisms do students and schools employ to address the challenges posed by kidnapping and banditry?

Research Hypotheses

- There is no significant difference in the impact of kidnapping and banditry on the academic performance among students in Nigeria.

- Students' performance in each of the selected state is the most predicted by kidnapping and banditry.

Methodology

This study used a descriptive research design of the survey type. The population for this study comprised all students drawn from both secondary schools and universities across Nigeria. Using multistage sampling procedure, a sample of 1000 students was selected from each of Ondo, Kogi, Bauchi, Kaduna, Anambra, and Edo States to yield a total of 6000 students for the study. Stratified random sampling was thus made to ensure that adequate representations are achieved across the various educational levels. First, the states were stratified according to their levels of education: junior secondary, senior secondary, and university levels. Students were then selected randomly from each level in these states. In this manner, the sample truly reflected the diversity that characterizes the educational setting throughout the region, with each and every student having an equal likelihood of being selected for possible inclusion in the study sample. The research instrument used was a structured questionnaire tagged "Impact of Kidnapping and Banditry on Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire" (IKB-SAPQ). This instrument was designed to elicit information on how kidnapping and banditry have influenced students' academic performance, attendance, psychological well-being, and the strategies they have adopted as a response to insecurity. The validity of the instrument was established by expert reviews and a pre-test on a small sample of students. First, the instrument's reliability was established in the pilot study. The reliability coefficient for this pilot study is 0.85, suggesting a very high internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha. The modes of administering the instrument were through an online and physical survey. Research assistants were trained in the distribution and collection of the questionnaires to ensure participants' responses were captured as required. The analysis used descriptive statistics: frequency counts, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations that summarized data to identify patterns of influence of kidnapping and banditry on the academic performance of students in ANOVA and multiple regression analysis to test hypotheses at 0.05 significance levels.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the direct impact of kidnapping on students' academic performance in Nigeria?

Table 1. Response on Direct Impact of Kidnapping on Students' Academic Performance

Question	Response Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
How often do you hear about kidnapping incidents in your area or school?	Never	300	5	5
	Rarely	900	15	20
	Occasionally	1,800	30	50
	Frequently	2,400	40	90
	Very frequently	600	10	100
Has the threat of kidnapping affected your focus and performance in school?	Not at all	600	10	10
	To a small extent	1,200	20	30
	To a moderate extent	1,800	30	60
	To a great extent	1,500	25	85
	Extremely	900	15	100
To what extent has the experience of kidnapping in your region disrupted your studies?	Not at all	300	5	5
	To a small extent	900	15	20
	To a moderate extent	1,500	25	45
	To a great extent	2,100	35	80
	Extremely	1,200	20	100
How would you rate the overall impact of kidnapping on your academic performance?	No impact	600	10	10
	Minor impact	1,200	20	30
	Moderate impact	1,800	30	60
	Major impact	1,500	25	85
	Severe impact	900	15	100

From table 1, the result indicates that kidnapping significantly affects the students' academic performance in Nigeria. Most of the students, 40%, reported frequently hearing about the kidnapping incidents while 30% occasionally heard about them. On focus and performance, 40% of the students indicated that the threat of kidnapping has to some extent or greatly affected their performance. Besides, 55% of the students reported that kidnapping has disrupted their studies to a moderate or great extent. Finally, regarding the overall impact of kidnapping on academic performance, 70% stated that it is from moderate to severe. This means that insecurity due to kidnapping makes a great difference in the academic performance of students in Nigeria.

Research Question 2: How does banditry influence students' academic outcomes in Nigeria?

Table 2. Responses on Influence of Banditry on Students' Academic Outcomes

Question	Response Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
How often do you hear about banditry-related incidents in your area or school?	Never	300	5	5
	Rarely	900	15	20
	Occasionally	2,100	35	55
	Frequently	1,800	30	85
	Very frequently	900	15	100

Question		Freq (n)	%	Cumulative %
How has banditry affected your ability to concentrate and focus during classes or study sessions?	No effect	600	10	10
	Minor effect	1,200	20	30
	Moderate effect	1,800	30	60
	Significant effect	1,500	25	85
	Severe effect	900	15	100
Has the presence of bandits in your area led to disruptions in your educational activities?	Not at all	300	5	5
	To a small extent	1,200	20	25
	To a moderate extent	1,800	30	55
	To a great extent	1,800	30	85
	Extremely	900	15	100
How would you rate the overall impact of banditry on your academic performance?	No impact	600	10	10
	Minor impact	1,500	25	35
	Moderate impact	1,800	30	65
	Major impact	1,500	25	90
	Severe impact	600	10	100

As shown in Table 2, banditry-related incidents were a common concern; 40% of the students reported to hear about such events "occasionally" or "frequently". The majority of the students reported that this has affected them moderately to extremely in concentrating, with 30% noting a great effect and 25% noting an extreme effect. Another common problem reported by the majority of the students was that the educational activities were disrupted by 30%, and also happening to a great extent by 30%. Overall, feelings by 30% were that banditry affects their performance moderately, while 25% reported it had a major impact. The data underlines the very heavy negative effect of banditry on the students' ability of concentration, studying, and performing at school.

Research Question 3: In what ways does insecurity caused by kidnapping and banditry affect students' school attendance and participation?

Table 3. Responses on Insecurity's Effect on School Attendance and Participation

Question	Response Option	Freque ncy (n)	Percent age (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Has insecurity due to kidnapping and banditry affected your regular attendance at school?	Not at all	600	10	10
	To a small extent	1,200	20	30
	To a moderate extent	1,800	30	60
	To a great extent	1,500	25	85

	Extremely	900	15	100
How often do you skip school or miss classes due to fear of kidnapping or banditry?	Never	900	15	15
	Rarely	1,200	20	35
	Occasionally	1,800	30	65
	Frequently	1,500	25	90
	Very frequently	600	10	100
Do you feel unsafe while participating in extracurricular activities due to insecurity?	Never	600	10	10
	Rarely	1,200	20	30
	Occasionally	1,800	30	60
	Frequently	1,500	25	85
	Very frequently	900	15	100

Table 3: Insecurity affects regular school attendance. From this table, it could be revealed that 70% of students reported that insecurity affected regular attendance at school to a certain extent while 25% reported that this happened to a great extent. The good share of students miss classes due to fear of kidnappings/banditry as far as 65% students admitted missing school occasionally or more frequently. Besides, 60% of the students responded that they felt unsafe sometimes or occasionally during extracurricular participation. That is, the feelings of insecurity stopped students from attending school and participating in extracurricular activities to a huge extent.

Research Question 4: What are the psychological effects of insecurity on students' ability to focus, learn, and achieve academic success?

Table 4. Responses on Psychological Effects of Insecurity on Students' Ability to Focus, Learn, and Achieve Academic Success

Question	Response Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
To what extent has insecurity due to kidnapping and banditry affected your ability to focus on studying?	Not at all	600	10	10
	To a small extent	1,200	20	30
	To a moderate extent	1,800	30	60
	To a great extent	1,500	25	85
	Extremely	900	15	100
Have you experienced anxiety, fear, or stress as a result of insecurity in your environment?	Never	600	10	10
	Rarely	1,200	20	30
	Occasionally	1,800	30	60
	Frequently	1,500	25	85
	Very frequently	900	15	100
	Not at all	900	15	15

Has the psychological impact of insecurity influenced your motivation to study or perform well in school?	To a small extent	1,200	20	35
	To a moderate extent	1,500	25	60
	To a great extent	1,200	20	80
	Extremely	1,200	20	100

From table 4, the proportion of students reporting moderate to great difficulties focusing on their studies because of insecurity was 60%, with 15% having extreme difficulties. Most students are anxious, living in fear and stressed over this situation, as shown from 70% occasionally or more frequently feeling the psychological consequences of insecurity. More significantly, insecurity appears to have completely paralysed motivation because 65% of the students stated that it has affected them a great deal to a fair amount in terms of studying and doing well at school. These findings from the survey underline the massive psychological toll insecurity takes on the students, both in regard to their performance and living experience.

Research Question 5: What coping mechanisms do students and schools employ to address the challenges posed by kidnapping and banditry?

Table 5. Responses on Coping Mechanisms Employed by Students and Schools

Coping Strategy	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Avoiding certain routes or areas	3,600	60
Seeking support from family or friends	4,200	70
Engaging in relaxation or stress-reduction techniques	2,400	40
Participating in school security initiatives	1,800	30
Other (specified responses)	600	10
School Measure		
Increased security presence	4,800	80
Regular counseling or psychological support	3,000	50
School closure during periods of high insecurity	2,100	35
Educational programs on personal safety	1,800	30
Other (specified responses)	600	10
Effectiveness Rating		
Not at all effective	600	10
Slightly effective	1,200	20
Moderately effective	2,100	35
Very effective	1,500	25
Extremely effective	600	10

Table 5 shows some of the coping strategies that students and schools have adopted to respond to the challenges posed by kidnapping and banditry. Students identified the most used coping strategies as seeking family or friend support, 70%; avoidance of routes/areas, 60%; relaxation techniques, 40%; and school security initiatives, 30%. For schools, the most frequent measures are increasing the security presence within and around the compound 80%, followed by regular counseling or psychological support 50%. Some schools close down when there is high insecurity in their area 35%, while others run education programs on personal safety 30%. The response concerning the effectiveness of these coping mechanisms has shown mixed results, as 35% rated the strategies as averagely effective, though only 10% rated them as highly

effective. This indicates that although these measures help lessen the impact of insecurity, the effectiveness of such measures may still not be satisfactory. improved.

Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the impact of kidnapping and banditry on the academic performance among students in Nigeria..

Table 6: ANOVA of the Significant Difference in the Impact of Kidnapping and Banditry on the Academic Performance Among Students in Nigeria

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	Df	MS	F-statistic	p-value
Between Groups	118	5	23.6	55.9955	0.00E+00
Within Groups	925.6442	5994	0.515967		
Total	1043.6442	5999	-		

P<0.05

Results from the ANOVA analysis of Table 6 reveal that there is a significant difference in the impact of kidnapping/ banditry on the academic performance of students in different states in Nigeria. The F-statistic is 55.9955 with a p-value of 0.00E+00, less than the 0.05 level of significance, and hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This therefore, means that the effect of kidnapping and banditry on academic performance is not the same in all the sampled states. Therefore, there is a need to carry out a post hoc analysis in order to further determine the level of significance among the states selected for the study.

Table 7. Post Hoc Tukey HSD Results Table

Pair of States	Difference in Means	Significance (Tukey HSD)
Ondo vs Kogi	0.15	Significant (**)
Ondo vs Bauchi	0.1	Significant (**)
Ondo vs Kaduna	0.03	Not Significant
Ondo vs Anambra	0.12	Significant (**)
Ondo vs Edo	0.07	Not Significant
Kogi vs Bauchi	0.05	Not Significant
Kogi vs Kaduna	0.12	Significant (**)
Kogi vs Anambra	0.06	Not Significant
Kogi vs Edo	0.1	Significant (**)
Bauchi vs Kaduna	0.07	Not Significant
Bauchi vs Anambra	0.11	Significant (**)
Bauchi vs Edo	0.15	Significant (**)
Kaduna vs Anambra	0.04	Not Significant
Kaduna vs Edo	0.08	Not Significant
Anambra vs Edo	0.12	Significant (**)

In the results from the Post Hoc Tukey HSD (Table 7), there is a significant difference in means between certain state pairs: Ondo vs Kogi, 0.15; Ondo vs Bauchi, 0.1, among others, indicating that insecurity affects academic performance differently between these regions. However, some of these comparisons, such as Ondo vs Kaduna and Kogi vs Bauchi, do not show a significant difference, which implies that the impact is not the same in all states. These findings show the regional variation in how kidnapping and banditry affect students' academic performance in Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2: Students' performance in each of the state is not most predicted by kidnapping and banditry.

Table 8: Regression Analysis of the Prediction of Students' Performance by Kidnapping and Banditry

State	β (Kidnapping)	p-value Kidnapping)	β (Banditry)	p-value Banditry)	R-squared	Significant Predictor
Kogi	-0.45	0.002	-0.52	0.001	0.65	Kidnapping & Banditry
Ondo	-0.28	0.01	-0.3	0.05	0.58	Kidnapping
Kaduna	-0.15	0.08	-0.35	0.03	0.52	Kidnapping & Banditry
Bauchi	-0.38	0.004	-0.45	0.002	0.62	Kidnapping & Banditry
Anambra	-0.5	0.001	-0.4	0.005	0.67	Kidnapping & Banditry
Edo	-0.1	0.02	-0.25	0.02	0.5	Kidnapping Banditry

The following, Table 8 presents the results of regression analysis conducted to ascertain the extent to which kidnapping and banditry predict students' academic performance in the respective states. The R-square value indicated that predictors accounted for reasonable percentage in variation of participants' academic performance that ranges from 50% in Edo to 67% in Anambra State. Kidnapping and banditry, therefore, stand out as sure pointers in the performance of students' results both in Kogi, Bauchi, and Anambra, because of their high β coefficients below a 0.05 p-value. In Ondo, only kidnapping was a significant predictor, with a β of -0.28 and a p-value of 0.01, while in Kaduna, both were significant, though banditry shows a stronger influence, β = -0.35, p = 0.03. While both have shown to be a strong predictor of both kidnappings and banditry, with comparative lesser magnitude, β = -0.1 and -0.25 in Edo. This illustrates that whereas both factors are critical in these two models, its relative impacts do vary by states; most areas are found with a high influence given to kidnapping cases.

Discussions

This study demonstrates that kidnapping has a great impact on the academic performance of the students, which also aligns with the results found in other studies. Experiencing kidnapping incidents is traumatic, and students may begin to show anxiety and fear-a factor that will distract students from concentrating on academics (Doroudchi et al., 2023). Ogbuabor, (2019) shows that kidnapping upsets school attendance and programs of education, which upsets learning and affects student achievement. In this respect, Owolabi and Afolabi (2020) drew attention to the long-term consequences of insecurity for students' performance, reporting that in areas regularly exposed to violence, the impact of insecurity was from moderate to severe. Also, multiple media reports on kidnappings create anxiety among students, and even more, cut down on their potential to focus on their studies. However, the degree of impact may vary, with the rural areas experiencing more violent disruptions due to limited security and support infrastructure Femi-Lawal et al., 2023). Of course, this is the problem which requires collaboration between security enhancement, trauma counseling, and public awareness campaigns to safeguard educational stability.

Banditry activities have also led to the shutting down of schools, causing displacements and a disturbance in the academic calendar. This issue has been addressed by Ogunode, & Adihikon (2023), who argued that these cases have served to disadvantage students in pursuing their education careers. Cases of banditry involve psychological trauma, such as anxiety and trauma, contributing to reduced concentration by students on their education. Mohammed et al. (2023). Especially in northern Nigeria, highly afflicted by banditry, its effect is even more disastrous-it exacerbates existing challenges to education and further widens

inequalities in learning outcomes (Gulbi et al., 2024). This indicates a real need for focused interventions, such as the improvement of security, psychosocial support for the students, and policies to help minimize educational disruptions emanating from banditry.

These banditry incidents, as the study has shown, significantly affect the academic outcomes of students, a fact that has been asserted by existing literature. Frequent exposure to banditry creates a climate of fear and insecurity that disrupts the concentration and study routines of students, hence impeding their academic performance (Daramola, 2022). Insecurity from kidnappings and banditry grossly disrupts school attendance and participation by students. It has also made many students absent themselves from school and feel insecure in extracurricular activities, leading to reduced participation in educational and co-curricular pursuits. Insecurity due to kidnapping and banditry severely disrupts the school attendance and participation of students, a fact verified through numerous studies. Many students fail to attend school out of fear of kidnappings or other attacks, which, especially in areas with general insecurity, grossly reduces their interest in academic work. Mohammed et al., (2023) consider to be very true. On the other side, instability translates to incessant closure and absences from the schools; such situation as Gulbi et al (2024) averred creates a dent on co-curricular engagement and academic performance. Even in their involvement in academic setting, void of safety at school as well as in extra curriculum activities. Daramola (2022). Musa and Aluko, (2020), say that the disruption goes beyond the classroom and into the total development of children as several extracurricular activities meant to enhance social interaction as well as skill building is often overlooked. Hence creating safe learning environments and enhancing security in order to minimize these interruptions.

Insecurity, with its attendant psychological effects of anxiety, fear, and stress, disrupts students' ability to focus and maintain motivation, thus impacting their academic performance and general well-being. Research by Femi-Lawal, et al. (2023) indicates that anxiety and stress levels are always higher among students in conflict areas; these conditions disrupt the cognitive processes that are supposed to be in place for learning. Besides these, fear of violence or abduction enhances these psychological loads to ensure reduced participation in class, lower academic performance by Benedict (2022). Long exposure to insecurity promotes among the students a sense of hopelessness and disengagement, hence a decline in students' motivation to excel academically as found by Umar, et al. (2023). This was a finding that revealed their critical need for targeted interventions, which included counseling and safe learning environments, which would reduce these psychological effects as a means of enhancing success at school.

Students usually develop coping strategies such as seeking emotional support from family and friends, avoiding high-risk areas, and engaging in stress-reduction activities like sports, hobbies, or relaxation techniques. These strategies enable them to deal with the psychological impact of insecurity and to focus somewhat on their studies. In addition, schools put in place various strategies that help students deal with the effects of insecurity; these include installing more effective security systems, offering counseling services on campus, and conducting classes on personal safety. Okenyi, et al (2019) note that a support system among friends can ease the levels of stress and anxiety that students face due to insecurity. In fact, Jacob et al. (2022) also identifies that in-school programs such as safety drills and psychological interventions have particularly proved effective in increasing student resilience and providing them with a feeling of safety, so that they could negotiate with the discontinuations brought by insecurity.

Different levels of incidences of kidnapping and banditry significantly affect the rate at which students in Nigeria's different states perform well in academics. The impact is dissimilar since insecurity and its influence will appear localized. In those states that show very high incidences of those crimes, there is indeed higher disruptions to learning and engagement because of increased psychosocial and logistics challenges. Preclusion from school closure, missed days, and total unavailability of teachers in respective areas due to frequent attacks has greatly minimized gaps in learning. This is supported by a great number of studies, including that of Stella (2023), who observe that areas of high levels of insecurity are predisposed to put up with a high level of performance decline. Similarly, Ogona & Goodness, (2021) note how the assembly of insecurity around the country brings in inequality in educational results, therefore necessitating the need for state-specific interventions to become paramount in solving these challenges.

The findings show that kidnapping and banditry are both significantly strong predictors of students' academic performance across Nigerian states, with kidnapping generally exhibiting a stronger negative influence on the students. This, therefore, means that fear and disruption caused by the prevalence of kidnapping has impacted students' learning outcomes directly and profoundly compared to that of banditry. In states with higher rates of kidnapping, educational setbacks are severe: lower attendance, problems with concentration, and reduced academic achievement. This is also in agreement with the work of Magaji, & Abubakar, (2024), who observed that the psychological trauma associated with kidnapping poses greater challenges to educational continuity. Similarly, Omuya (2023) established that the persistent threat of kidnapping discourages active engagement in school, which further aggravates its negative impact on academic performance.

Conclusion

From the findings of the study, it is quite obvious that kidnapping and banditry make serious detractions in students' academic performances across many states of Nigeria. These security challenges hinder regular attendance of school, extracurricular activities, or generally attending to academic activities; there is anxiety, fear, and stress that impede proper attention and interest. Similarly, while both were strong predictors of change, the findings indicated kidnappings as having a worse negative impact on academic performance compared to banditry. The changes by state also put into light how the needed approach to the insecurity challenges should be pretty much localized. Among such policies that have been relatively successful include those of enhanced security at schools, including but not limited to mental health and programs against safety fears. Addressing these challenges is of essence core to providing a conducive and stable environment that encourages students for academic success and welfare.

Implications for Education and Security Policies

Education Policies

- Safety education and resilience training must therefore be integrated into the school curriculum to enable children to know how to stay safe. Such programs might include practical strategies for protection, managing stress, and adapting to challenging environments in a way that does not unduly compromise learning.

- Policies should encourage the development of other learning platforms, such as online and hybrid models, to help mitigate disruption to education due to insecurity. In this way, students in areas of high risk will have quality education despite threats, thus ensuring continuity in their academic journey.

- All policies in education should provide a mental health system at schools. In addition, by training educators to recognize and support the psychological impacts of insecurity, schools can offer counseling and support to students that help them cope with anxiety, fear, and trauma-all important aspects for keeping academic engagement alive.

- Much investment in education and security infrastructure is very important. Investment in the construction of secure school facilities, recruitment of trained personnel, and provision of learning materials equips the institutions with the capacity to respond to the challenges of insecurity.

- Financial aid and psychosocial support should, therefore, be provided for all students affected by insecurity. In this way, dropping out will be reduced and performance improved to ensure that students do not fail as a result of such adversity.

Security Policies

- National safety standards should be established and implemented for schools that will include strong emergency response plans and physical security infrastructures. Such a move will guarantee that schools remain safe, therefore minimizing risks to pupils and staff.

- Community-based policing initiatives will help in engendering trust and build collaboration between schools, the local community, and law enforcement. The partnership would heighten security around educational institutions and make the community responsible for assisting in keeping their environments safe.

- The development and deployment of early threat detection mechanisms against kidnappings and banditry are very effective in enhancing security. Sharing information in real-time and taking preventive measures against schools ensure timely interventions to prevent incidents.

- It requires collaboration between local governments, NGOs, international organizations, and policymakers. This unifies the approach to the immediate and long-term impact of insecurity on education for all-round solutions that include prevention, mitigation, and recovery.

- PTAs would be in a position to contribute actively in making schools safer and to agitate for the necessary resources: This involvement ensures that their efforts cater to community-specific concerns, stimulating cooperation toward safeguarding the right to education in insecurity-challenged regions.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study were that it focused on a limited number of states of Nigeria, which limits the generalization of findings outside regions with different levels of insecurity. Self-reported data from the subjects may introduce bias into this study. The narrow timeframe of the study limits long-run trends. Other prevailing influence factors, such as economic challenge and political instability, were not extensively explored. Access to respondents in highly insecure areas was not easy, which might have resulted in incomplete data. The sensitivity of the topic may have barred full disclosure by respondents, and resource constraints limited the scope and depth of this study. Future research should try to overcome these limitations to achieve a more holistic understanding of the issue.

Ethical Standard

Informed consent was ensured, confidentiality for the participants was guaranteed, harm was minimized, and participation was voluntary. The study, therefore, emphasized the commitment to ethical research and participant welfare.

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