



## **Assessment of the Educational Implications of Armed Banditry in the North-Western Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

*This study is designed to examine and assess the educational implications of Armed Banditry in the North-Western Nigeria. Five specific objectives and five research questions were raised to guide the conduct of the study and review of related literature. The study adopted the descriptive research design, where copies of the questionnaire were distributed to 600 respondents selected from the sample states of Kaduna, Katsina and Zamfara States using purposive sampling method. The secondary data were collected through literature review while primary data were collected from the respondents using questionnaire. The data collected were analysed using the mean and Standard Deviation methods of data analysis to answer the research questions. The paper concluded that the menace of banditry is becoming rampant as a result of high level of unemployment, weak security system, poverty, porosity of Nigeria's borders and arms proliferations which has plunged the region into a state of insecurity in all spheres of life. Based on the conclusion, the following recommendations were put forward: Government at all levels should put in place functional security system and Government should intensify efforts to mobilise financial and human resources to fund disarmament to curtail the problems of arms proliferation across the region.*

**Keywords:** Assessment, Educational Implications and Armed Banditry

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### **Introduction**

A closer look at the situation in Nigeria revealed that it is, arguably, a country under distress. The country's woes are most evident in the torrential spate of armed violence and criminality in various parts of the country. The situation revealed that the north-eastern Nigeria is still patently under the Boko Haram scourge, amidst the precarious counter-insurgency endeavours of the government (Okoli, 2017a & Zenn, 2018), the north-central region has been afflicted by herdsmen militancy, which has plunged the region into dire humanitarian crisis (Okoli & Ogayi, 2018) while the north-western region has recently been enmeshed in the rapid upsurge of armed banditry.

The prevalence of armed banditry in Nigeria appears to have been high and rising over the years. In Nigeria, since 2013, incidents of violence caused by armed bandits have heightened, by the year 2014, nearly all the states of the North has had a share of farmers/herder's crisis which resulted into many killings by armed bandits, as many states which were hitherto insulated from the crisis have been drawn into it unwittingly (Olayoku, 2014).

Scholars like Gaye (2018), Olaniyan and Yahaya (2016), Suleiman (2017) and Mustapha (2019) have advanced several reasons for the prevalence of banditry in Nigeria. Some of the reasons include: the fragility of Nigerian state, weak state institutions, especially the security agencies, availability of grossly ungoverned spaces, porosity of Nigeria's borders with its neighbouring countries and arms proliferation, weak leadership, corruption, unemployment and mass poverty.

The impacts of armed banditry are numerous and it include: Killing, maiming, destruction of house hold properties, destruction of farm produce, burning of houses, unlawful taxation, Rapes, kidnapping and abduction, among others have occurred as a result of armed banditry, this have led to the total collapsed of political, religious, economic, cultural, agricultural and educational activities in the areas affected. In the area of education, banditry is responsible for the abduction and kidnapping of students and teachers, killing of students and teachers, destruction of educational facilities, disruption of academic activities and closure of schools in the affected areas.

Several attempts have been made to tackle or reduce the impacts' of these menaces in the Nigerian society (Luechinger, 2013). Despite these, the level of insecurity in the country is still high, this has made Nigeria to consistently rank low in the Global Peace Index (GPI, 2012), signifying a worsened state of insecurity in the country. It is against this background that this study is to examine and assess the educational implications of Armed Banditry in the North-Western.

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## Statement to the Problem

Armed banditry has become persistent and pervasive with debilitating consequences on human lives, their sources of livelihoods and educational activities. Although scholars, policy makers and development workers have given attention to the conflict, the trends and dynamics of the conflict, as well as the direct and indirect actors in the conflicts, are constantly changing. The constantly changing nature of the conflict makes it impacts especially on education devastating and efforts at resolving it by both state and non-state actors difficult. As Nigeria is re-strategizing on ways to control the educational menace of insurgency and having suffered from the Boko Haram insurgency which has crippled its socio-economic development, armed banditry has recently become rampant in Nigeria and posed a threat to Nigeria's socio-economic and educational development.

This therefore, has created a real fear and anxiety in the minds of educational practitioners, parents and students especially in North Western States, making many of them to abandon schools and if left unchecked will lead to more undesirable consequences on western education in particular and the civilians in general. More so, the gap in knowledge which my study intends to fill is that despite of all the efforts of government to curb armed banditry insurgency with huge budget to security, there is hardly any significance reduction on the insurgents in Northern Nigeria. Hence, the need for this study is to assess the effects of armed banditry on western education in Nigeria with particular reference to North Western States.

### *Objectives of the Study*

The main objective of the study is to examine the educational implications of Armed Banditry in the North-Western. Specifically, the study is designed to:

1. Identify the causes of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria.
2. Outline the general impacts of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria
3. Assess the educational impacts of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria
4. Proffer solution on how to tackle the menace of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria.

### *Research Questions*

The following research questions were raised to guide this study.

1. What are the causes of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria?
2. What are the general impacts of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria?
3. What are the educational impacts of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria?
4. What are solutions on how to tackle the menace of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria?

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## Literature Review

### *Concept of Banditry*

Conceptually, banditry is derived from the term bandit meaning an unlawful armed group disturbing people and forcefully collecting their properties. Shalangwa (2013) regards banditry as the practice of raiding and attacking victims by members of an armed group, whether or not planned, using weapons for the purpose of overpowering the victim and obtaining loot or achieving some political goals. In another vein, banditry refers to the incidences of armed robbery or allied violent crimes, such as kidnapping, cattle rustling, and village or market raids. In analysis banditry can be seen and defined as the totality of incidences of armed robbery or allied violent crimes, such as kidnapping, cattle rustling, village raids as well as highway raids which involves the use of force, or threat to that effect, to intimidate a person or a group of persons in order to rob, rape, kidnap or kill the victims.

### *Major Causes of Armed Banditry*

Armed Banditry do not emerge without factors or causes behind its emergence. Studies have indicated and discovered that: unemployment, poor security system, poverty are the major factors or causes behind the emergence of armed banditry in Nigeria. These factors and causes are briefly described below:

1. **Unemployment:** Abdulkadir, (2017) believed that the rising wave of armed banditry and other form of crime in Nigeria has been blamed on the increasing level of unemployment.
2. **Poor security system:** Nigeria's poor security system has been a major concern over the past decades. The security system faces the problem of two sides of the same coin' problem. The first one is its inadequate supply of weaponry and equipment which has been a challenge in the fight against insurgency in the country and the second face of the coin portrays the negligence of some security personnel at the point of discharging their duties.

3. **Poverty:** Adeolu (2018) noted that the failure of successive administrations in Nigeria to address challenges of poverty bewildering the nation has made life worrisome and only the fittest survive. Alao, Atere & Alao (2015) linked terrorism and banditry to poverty.
4. Another driving factor of banditry in north-western Nigeria worthy of mentioning is the issue of **arms proliferation**. There has been an incremental influx of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) into Nigeria from the Sahel since the fall of Ghadaffi's regime in Libya (Gaye, 2018).

### *Effects of Armed Banditry*

According to Maureen & Blessing (2018) banditry has effects on Nigeria and Nigerians. Some of these effects include:

1. Armed Banditry leads to increase in rape cases. Badaru (2017) argued that since 2014, there have been recorded cases of rape along the Dansadau forest by the armed bandits.
2. Mohammed (2019) noted that schools have been destroyed and so most students do not go to school and Parents are not able to send their children to far schools due to fear of being kidnapped or killed by the armed bandits.
3. Socio-economic development and activities have been crippled as people are living in constant fear of the unknown especially in Zamfara and other neighbouring states as a result of Armed banditry (Mohammed, 2019)
4. Apart from the attendant deaths and material destruction, the crisis has engendered frosty inter-group relations in the affected areas. A case in point is the Habe-Fulbe (Hausa-Fulani) tension in Zamfara and environs (Bagu and Smith 2017; Amnesty International 2018).
5. Targeted attacks on farmers throughout the year have made cultivation and harvest impossible. Bandits have warned farmers to stay away from their farms, and about 26 farmers who ignored this order were killed in Batsari LGA of Katsina state (Orjinmo, 2020).

### *Government response in tackling the menace of Banditry in Northwest*

The Nigerian government's response to the security threat has been rather slow and generally reactive.

1. The first attempt came in 2014 when the then Inspector-General Suleiman Abba, launching the Task Force on Cattle Rustling and Associated Crime. The task force was to be responsible for patrolling and operating in the context of intelligence gathering on anti-rustling and related crimes, in addition to investigating and possibly prosecuting reported cases of such crimes (Yusuf, 2015). However, the task force has been relatively inactive since its creation.
2. By 2015, some governors of northern states also started showing interest in the anti-rustling fight. Between July and October of that year, they held two meetings in which they agreed to pool their resources to fund a joint operation involving the military, the police, the state security service, and the Civil Defence Corps in order to comb the forests that are believed to be havens for cow thieves in the affected states (Binniyat, 2015).
3. The initiative was effectively put into practice by the Niger State government when it established its own joint patrol, codenamed Operation Sharan-Daji. The operation which brings together the military, police, security service, civil defence corps, and local vigilante groups works by proactively engaging with the bandits in the forests. Within a week of its establishment, a total of 118 cows and 23 sheep had been recovered from bandits (Channels TV, 2016).
4. In addition, in order to alternatively manage the crisis situation, the idea of peace deal and amnesty was initiated between Zamfara State government and the Leadership of these bandits in 2016 after reviewing the impacts of the cohesive measures especially the use of Military and Mobile Police (Tangaza, 2014).
5. The government also proposed some strategic measures of integrating the bandits back to their communities by providing soft grant for them to commence business as well as bringing some of them closer to the government (Anka, 2017; Mustapha, 2019).

### *Theoretical Framework*

This study will be anchored on **Frustration-aggression theory**: This theory as propounded by Fererabend and Feirauben, (1972) stipulates that aggression is as a result of frustration which results from an individual's inability to attain their goals. Accordingly, banditry is the product of aggressive behaviour which results from issues such as poverty and unemployment among others. Applying this to the study, banditry in the country has resulted in absence of infrastructure and insecurity which leads to the close down of schools thereby negatively affecting education.

## Methodology

### *Design of the study*

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design was used because data was collected from a sample size of (1500) respondents. Survey design also affords researcher the opportunity of discovering a complete description of the cause and effect relationship of the research variables. It further provides objectivity and in-depth study within a limited time frame.

### *Area of the Study*

The study was carried out in the North-Western region of Nigeria. The north-western Nigeria encompasses seven states namely Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Kaduna, Zamfara, Jigawa and Sokoto. Five of these states, which are Katsina, Kaduna, Zamfara, Kebbi and Sokoto, have been mostly affected by the scourge of rural banditry. Of these five states, Katsina, Kaduna and Zamfara have been the most critical hotspots.

### *Sample and Sampling Techniques*

The target population was the total number of security agents, Government officials, teachers, students and parents in the North-Western Nigeria. Due to the large number of states in the North- Western Nigeria, the researchers will use three states of Kaduna, Katsina and Zamfara (Critical Hotspots for Armed Banditry) as the sample states for the study. The researchers will select a sample of 1500 respondents from the three states. The respondents will include: security agents, Government officials teachers, student and parents. The method of sampling to be used for this study is purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling method is also known as the judgment sampling.

### *Instruments for Data Collection*

The primary data for the study was collected from the respondents in the three states namely Katsina, Kaduna, and Zamfara. The technique used in collecting primary data for this study was the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of well-structured 28 closed ended items targeted at acquiring useful information connected to the respondents on the government efforts in tackling the Menace of Banditry in North-West, Nigeria.

### *Methods of Data Analysis*

The mean and Standard Deviation method of data analysis was used to answer the research questions raised in the study..

### *Decision Rules:*

An item will be accepted if the mean score is greater than or equals to 2.5 while an item is rejected if the mean score is less than 2.5.

## Result and Discussion

### *Answering the Research Questions*

**Research Question one:** What are the causes of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria?

The data for answering the research question one was analyzed using mean score and standard deviation and the summary is presented in table one below

**Table 1: Causes of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria**

S/N	ITEM	Mean	Standard Dev.	Decision
1	Unemployment	2.58	0.76	Accepted
2	Poor security system	2.72	0.80	Accepted
3	Poverty	2.67	0.78	Accepted
4	Arms proliferation.	2.91	0.99	Accepted
5	Porosity of Nigerian Border	2.78	0.88	Accepted

From the above analysis it is clear that the major causes of armed banditry are: unemployment, poor security system, and poverty and arms proliferation. This assertion is supported with calculated mean score ranging between 2.58 and 2.91 and a standard deviation of 0.76 and 0.99. This finding agreed with the findings of Abdulkabir, (2017), Adeolu (2018), Alao, Atere & Alao (2015) and Gaye, (2018).

**Research Question Two:** What are the general impacts of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria?

The data for answering the research question two was analyzed using mean score and standard deviation and the summary is presented in table two below:

**Table 2: General impacts of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria**

S/N	ITEM	Mean	Standard Dev.	Decision
1	Armed Banditry leads to increase in rape cases.	3.69	0.80	Accepted
2	Socio-economic development and activities have been crippled	2.70	0.78	Accepted
3	Armed Banditry leads to deaths	2.61	0.74	Accepted
4	Armed Banditry leads to destruction Private and public properties,	3.09	1.65	Accepted
5	Armed Banditry leads have engendered frosty inter-group relations in the affected areas.	2.79	0.88	Accepted
6	Targeted attacks on farmers throughout the year have made cultivation and harvest impossible.	2.69	0.80	Accepted

From the analysis in table two it is clear that the general impacts of armed banditry are: Armed Banditry leads to increase in rape cases, Socio-economic development and activities have been crippled, Armed Banditry leads to deaths, Armed Banditry leads to destruction Private and public properties, Armed Banditry leads have engendered frosty inter-group relations in the affected areas and targeted attacks on farmers throughout the year have made cultivation and harvest impossible. This is supported with calculated mean score range of 2.61 and 3.69. This finding agreed with the findings of Badaru (2017), Mohammed (2019), Bagu and Smith (2017) and Orjinmo, (2020).

**Research Question Three:** What are the educational impacts of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria?

The data for answering the research question three was analyzed using mean score and standard deviation and the summary is presented in table three below:

**Table 3: Educational impacts of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria**

S/N	ITEM	Mean	Standard Dev.	Decision
1	Destruction of Schools facilities	2.80	0.98	Accepted
2	Killing of students	2.82	0.88	Accepted
3	Kidnapping and abduction of students	2.70	0.78	Accepted
4	Decline in students' enrolment	2.73	0.81	Accepted
5	Decline in school attendance	2.72	0.80	Accepted
6	Increasing rate of school withdrawal and dropout rates	2.86	0.98	Accepted

The analysis in table three above revealed that: Destruction of Schools facilities, killing of students, Kidnapping and abduction of students, Decline in students' enrolment, decline in school attendance and increasing rate of school withdrawal and dropout rates. This finding is supported with calculate mean score range of 2.72 and 2.86 and standard deviation range of 0.80 and 0.98. The finding agreed with the findings of Mohammed (2019) and Badaru (2017).

**Research Question Four** What are solutions on how to tackle the menace of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria?

The data for answering the research question four was analyzed using mean score and standard deviation and the summary is presented in table four below:

**Solution on how to tackle the menace of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria**

S/N	ITEM	Mean	Standard Dev.	Decision
1	Launching of Task Force on Cattle Rustling and Associated Crime.	2.77	0.87	Accepted
2	Governors of affected states pooling their resources to fund a joint operation involving the military, the police, the state security service, and the Civil Defence Corps	2.67	0.78	Accepted
3	State like Niger State government establishing state organised joint patrol,	2.98	1.09	Accepted
4	Initiation of peace deal and amnesty	2.68	0.79	Accepted
5	Integrating the bandits back to their communities by providing soft grant for them to commence business	2.70	0.78	Accepted

The analysis in table four above shows that: Launching of Task Force on Cattle Rustling and Associated Crime, Governors of affected states pooling their resources to fund a joint operation involving the military, the police, the state security service, and the Civil Defence Corps, State like Niger State government establishing state organised joint patrol, Initiation of peace deal and amnesty and integrating the bandits back to their communities by providing soft grant for them to commence business are the major attempts at proffering solutions on how to tackle the menace of armed banditry in north-west, Nigeria. This assertion is supported with calculated mean score ranges of 2.67 and 2.98. The finding agreed with the findings of Yusuf (2015), Binniyat (2015) and Tangaza, (2014).

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper examined the impact of banditry on Nigeria's educational system with reference to the north-western region of the country. The paper revealed that Nigeria security has been quite tense and volatile in the northwest due to the alarming rate of banditry. The paper conclude that the menace of banditry is becoming rampant as a result of high level of unemployment, weak security system, poverty, porosity of Nigeria's borders and arms proliferations., which has plunged the region into a state of insecurity in all spheres of life. Based on the conclusion, the following recommendations were put forward:

1. Government at all levels should put in place functional security system
2. Government should intensify efforts to mobilise financial and human resources to fund disarmament to curtail the problems of arms proliferation across the region.
3. Nigeria government should sustain the military efforts in prosecuting the war against banditry
4. Nigerian government should continue to collaborate with external states such as the United States of America and the United Kingdom which have succeeded in Fighting against terrorism
5. Nigerian government should strategise to create meaningful employment for the youths trapped in the phenomenon.
6. There should be re-orientation to inculcate ethical values and reverence for life and human right in the people and also the need to co-exist irrespective of religious or ethnic inclinations.

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