

# Social Studies Teachers' Perception of Banditry and Kidnapping in Nigeria

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## Abstract

The study adopted the descriptive research design. Two Social Studies teachers were randomly selected from each school, making a total of 20 teachers. In all, a total number of 20 Social Studies teachers participated in the study. One instrument was used for data collection which was Social Studies Teachers' Perception of Banditry and Kidnapping Questionnaire ( $r=0.78$ ). Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentage scores, mean and standard deviation. Findings of the study revealed that the weighted mean is 2.83, which is above the criterion mean of 2.50. It also revealed the cluster mean of 14.16, which is greater than the normative mean of 12.50. It indicated that the weighted mean is 2.85, which is higher than the criterion mean of 2.50. It also revealed the cluster mean of 14.34, which is greater than the normative mean of 12.50. The weighted mean (2.92) was obtained, which is higher than the criterion mean of 2.50. Also, the cluster mean (14.71), which is higher than the normative mean (12.50) was obtained. This means that social studies teachers and students agreed that the stated items above were the solutions to the menace of banditry and kidnapping. The social studies teachers' perception of banditry and kidnapping was negative because the weighted mean of 2.38 was below the threshold set at 2.50. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that teachers should be sensitised to have negative perception of banditry and kidnapping, security operatives should be more proactive in curbing the menace of kidnapping and banditry, there should be effective community policing and government should provide employment opportunity for the unemployed youth.

**Keywords:** Social Studies Teachers, Perception, Banditry, Kidnapping

## Introduction

The spike in Jihadist activity in the Northwest has brought about fears which should make the region to soon become a land bridge connecting Islamic insurgencies in the central Sahel with the decade-old insurgency in the Lake Chad region of north-eastern Nigeria. Sources of security pointed to a resurgence of the long-dormant Boko Haram splinter group, Jamaatu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan (Group of Partisans for Muslims in Black Africa), better known as Ansaru, which was active in North-western Nigeria between 2011 and 2014. Elements of other Boko Haram offshoots, notably the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP), are also getting to the area. An international boundary that is not secured enables that influx of arms and ammunition through the movement of Jihadists to and from the Sahel, where the Islamic state is expanding its influence.

Prior to, and since return to democratic rule, Nigeria has faced serious internal security challenges — the most critical ones currently being the Jama'a Ahl as-Sunna Li-da'wa wa al-Jihad, popularly known as Boko Haram, the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP), the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) and the Jama'at Nusrat al Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) insurgency, predominantly in the North eastern state the "Fulani Herdsmen" attacks in states like Benue, Plateau, Zamfara, Taraba and Kaduna; Niger-Delta militancy

and spates of kidnappings all over the country. There are also security challenges posed by ethno-religious conflicts, resource-based conflicts, crimes, and election related violence (Dodo, 2010)

Another crisis that recently emerged in the north western part of the country is the ongoing activities of armed groups referred locally as banditry which has affected most of the people living in Kaduna, Katsina, Niger and Zamfara States. Largely, unconnected to the terrorist activities in the northeast, banditry became noticeable in 2014 with cattle rustling activity. It became progressively worse in 2016 when the bandits started killing people in the focal states. Obviously, these challenges hindered socio-political stability and economic development not only in Nigeria but in the West African sub-region. (Adamu, Maduagwu and Crispina, 2014).

Causes of banditry in the northwest are complex and interrelated. At its root, environmental degradation caused by pressures of climate change and rapid population growth has aggravated resource competition between predominantly Fulani herders and mostly Hausa farmers, both of whom have over time mobilised armed groups in form of bandits for protection. Conflicts over land prompted both farmers and herders to form armed self-defence groups, fuelling a cycle of retaliatory violence that has taken on a communal dimension. In the middle of a flourishing trade in small arms and light weapons,

organised groups of criminals operating from ungoverned forest spaces have proliferated, engaging in armed robbery, kidnapping for ransom to extortion and cattle rustling. The recent space of violence in the northwest has led to the death of many people. About 1,527 people were killed by bandits in 2020, higher than 1,508 persons reportedly killed by terrorist groups in the northeast in the same year. From January to March 2021, armed groups in Kaduna state killed 323 people (compared to 628 in 2020) and kidnapped 949 others. (Asadu, 2021).

Infiltration of banditry in Nigeria is a common phenomenon in recent times. Banditry in Nigeria can be traced to the pre-civil war when government deteriorated in certain parts of the old western region resulting into political violence, crime and organised insurgency (Ekhomu, 2021). The bandits were reportedly stealing domestic animals in pre-colonial history. Recently, infiltration of banditry in Nigeria has become a evil child of necessity that rooted from Al-Qoeda and Islamic states, ISIS terrorist groups from the West African subregion into Nigeria has become a central focus in security challenges across the regions, states, geo-political zones and the country as a whole (Chidi, 2018). Activities of bandits have been particularly worrisome. They are kidnapping, murder, robbery, rape, cattle rustling and the likes. Their modus operandi involves maiming and killing their victims when they least expected to continue unleashing terror in the communities and society.

Numerous studies have described bandits as assortment of criminal gangs that involved in large scale business such as armed robbery, sexual violence, kidnapping, pillage and attacks. Ekhomu (2021) argues that since Nigeria's porous borders have made it hard for authorities to prevent infiltration of both the local and foreign terrorists into the country. The law enforcement agencies should detect and arrest these terrorists. Nduka (2020) noted that banditry techniques and its dimension have gradually penetrated its pores and claiming victims in hundreds. Many children are now orphans and women become widows overnight while the issues of food security as well as humanitarian tragedy further makes life unbearable for many Nigerians. This implies that Nigeria government needs to strengthen the country's security infrastructure whereby members of the public could report bandits or suspected terrorist activities to the whistle blowers and they were equally required for protection and motivation.

The invasion of common citizens as enemy were the utmost priority among the banditry group and unleashed of agony on the victims, pain, emotional and psychological trauma as well as provocation in the society. Chris (2020) maintains that the infiltration of banditry and counter strategy

involves series of advanced and well-articulated decisions formulated in a coherent plan to achieve policy objectives. The collaboration of security experts, law enforcement agencies, stakeholders and government is germane to nip the ugly phenomenon bedeviling human society in the country in bud.

Contemporary social issues and challenges on banditry in Nigeria such as civil unrest, terrorist threats, banditry attacked, abduction, kidnapping, corruption, extortion, political delusion and organised crime are at alarming rate in Nigeria. In Zamfara alone, 8000 people were murdered in the last decade, 200,000 displaced internally and others fleeing to neighbouring states. The situation is so porous already that the religious leaders and Sultan opined that bandits now move in the north from house to house with AK47 and lamented that the reform has become the worst place to live in Nigeria (Nadama, 2019).

The safety of persons in Nigeria and their properties cannot be guaranteed. Kidnapping is an offence punishable under the law in Nigeria. Anybody caught involving in the act is expected to be imprisoned for ten years as penalty for such bad act. Apart from the above observation, some states like Abia, Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Enugu, Imo, Ebonyi and Rivers have passed into law, a bill termed "Prohibition of Hostage Taking and Related Offences Law", with death penalty as punishment for offenders (Inyang, 2009). Meanwhile, bills with capital punishment against kidnapping are awaiting subsequent readings for implementation by the National Assembly.

Despite all these stringent laws, no kidnapper has been successfully prosecuted to serve as deterrent to other potential kidnappers. Nigerians and non Nigerians residing in the country are living in fear as regards who will be the next victim, since kidnappers spare no one for their motives to be achieved. Over the last few years, some people were kidnapped and were set free after payments of ransom. Old people as well as children between the ages of two and five years were taken hostage. The incident of kidnapping has dent the image of the country and it has affected the country's attempt to develop a viable tourism industry because foreigners are regularly warned by their countries to be wary of coming to Nigeria. Many would-be investors have also stayed away for fear of being kidnapped.

Presently, a number of security challenges are facing the country and have led to loss of lives, injuries, migration, destruction of properties, and poverty across the country. This have more severe impacts in some parts of the Northern region. These crises, have cumulatively affected almost all facets of our lives including education at all levels. Boko Haram adherents in the North-East, though decimated to a certain extent, are still attacking

people and seizing their properties including farmlands and forcing them to migrate to other areas thereby forcing children to stop attending schools and negatively affecting enrolment figures. This has also been the trend in some states in the North-west and North-central geopolitical zones where banditry and kidnappings have become virtually a daily occurrence, especially in remote areas. Aliyu (2021) states that the scale of insecurity has threatened the very fabric of the Nigerian society: with every attack, human lives are lost and faith in democracy and the country is diminishing.

According to Jimada (2021), teachers, students and other staff are often victims of unpredicted violence that generates insecurity in the school. Official report has it that terrorist sect attacks had sent over 900 innocent people to early grave, counting since 1999. Moreover, it is obvious that some of these challenges may lead to incomplete delivery/implementation of the basic education curriculum which is the foundations of all other levels of education. There is a belief that if basic education is fully and well implemented there is possibility that all future levels of education would be effective and lead to the achievement of national goals.

Despite the efforts of government in solving the problems of banditry and kidnapping, success has not been recorded. As a way of addressing the problem previous studies have focused on rethinking security (Ammerdown, 2016) the social problem of kidnapping and its implication on socio-economic development (Abraham, 2010), causes and remedies of kidnapping in Nigeria (Dodo, 2010), how does insecurity affect Nigeria education (Eseibo, 2013), causes of kidnapping in Nigeria and proposed solution (Ibrahim and Ahmed, 2020) and intelligence reports and kidnapping (Kyrian, 2009). All these studies came up with useful insights to solving the problem of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria but with less research focus on social studies teachers' perception of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria.

Perception is the process of using senses to acquire information about the surrounding environment or situation (Bonjour, 2001). The information is then organised and interpreted to explain what is happening around us. It is the way something is regarded, understood or interpreted. Romanov (2011) stated that perception included senses, feelings, ideas, thought and theories. According to Rollinson (2008), it is a mental process that involves the selection, organization, structuring and interpretation of information in order to make inferences and give meaning to the information.

## 1.2 Statement of the problem

One of the major problems affecting the educational development of the country is high banditry and kidnapping. Despite the effort of government and security operatives at solving the problem, success has not been recorded. As a way of addressing this problems, researchers and scholars have carried out studies on rethinking security, causes and remedies of kidnapping and how does insecurities affect Nigeria. All these studies came up with useful insights to solving the problems of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria but with less research focus on social studies teachers and students' perception of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria. Therefore, this study investigated social studies teachers and students' perception of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria.

### Research Questions

**The following research questions were answered:**

1. How does banditry affect Nigeria?
2. What are the impacts of banditry and kidnapping?
3. How can we solve the menace of banditry and kidnapping?
4. What is social studies teachers' perception of banditry and perception?

### Significance of the study

This studies revealed social studies teachers' perception of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria. Through the findings of this studies, government, community leaders, and educational stakeholders would be guided on identifying and working on factors that could contribute to security challenges of the country and solutions to them. Also this study would add to the pool of research on banditry, kidnapping and social studies.

### Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive research design. Two Social Studies teachers were randomly selected from each school, making a total of 20 teachers. In all, a total number of 20 Social Studies teachers participated in the study. One instrument was used for data collection: Social Studies Teachers' Perception of Banditry and Kidnapping Questionnaire ( $r=0.78$ ). Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentage scores, mean and standard deviation.

## Results

**Research question 1:** How does banditry affect Nigeria?

**Table 1: Effect of banditry and kidnapping on Nigeria**

S/N.	Statements	Mean	SD
1.	Banditry is a threat to unity of the country	3.10	0.71
2.	Banditry inhibits socio-economic development of the nation	2.62	0.90
3.	Banditry disturbs educational advancement in the country	3.08	0.77
4.	Banditry results in loss of lives	2.73	0.90
5.	Banditry caused disruption in academic calendar of institutions	2.64	0.96
Weighted mean = 2.83			
Criterion mean = 2.50			

Table 1 shows that the weighted mean is 2.83, which is above the criterion mean of 2.50. It also revealed the cluster mean of 14.16, which is greater than the normative mean of 12.50. This means that social studies teachers and students agreed that the stated items the effects of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria. It shows the mean ranking of the five items as follow: banditry is a threat to unity and stability of

the country ( $3.10 > 2.50$ ), banditry disturbs educational advancement and development of the country ( $3.08 > 2.50$ ), banditry results in loss of life of students and teachers ( $2.73 > 2.50$ ), banditry caused disruption in academic calendar of institutions ( $2.64 > 2.50$ ), lastly, banditry inhibit socio-economic development of the nation ( $2.54 > 2.50$ ).

**Research question 2:** What are the impact of banditry and kidnapping?

**Table 2: Impact of banditry and kidnapping**

S/N.	Statements	Mean	SD
1.	Loss of life of students and teachers	3.17	0.75
2.	Payment of huge amount in ransom by victims	3.01	0.82
3.	Loss of students time through disruption of academic calendar	2.67	0.96
4.	Attack on individual resulted in bad economy of the overall host community	2.51	0.95
5.	Results to psychological problem and trauma on victims	2.99	0.81
Weighted mean = 2.87			
Criterion mean = 2.50			

Table 2 shows the responses of the respondents to the impact of banditry and kidnapping. It indicate that the weighted mean is 2.85, which is higher than the criterion mean of 2.50. It also revealed the cluster mean of 14.34, which is greater than the normative mean of 12.50. This means that social studies teachers and students agreed that the stated items are the impact of banditry and kidnapping on their personal life. Table 2

reveals the mean ranking of the five items as follow: loss of life of students and teachers ( $3.10 > 2.50$ ), payment of huge amount in ransom by victims ( $3.01 > 2.50$ ), results to psychological problem and trauma on victims ( $2.99 > 2.50$ ), loss of students time through disruption of academic calendar ( $2.67 > 2.50$ ), lastly, attack on individual resulted in bad economy of the overall host community ( $2.51 > 2.50$ ).

**Research question 3:** How can we solve the menace of banditry and kidnapping?

**Table 3: Solutions to banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria**

S/N.	Statements	Mean	SD
1.	Educate citizens on becoming a patriotic citizen through social studies	3.22	0.74
2.	Introduction of banditry and kidnapping into social studies curriculum at all level of education	2.56	0.99
3.	Creating environment that will enable citizens to be gainfully employed	3.08	0.73
4.	Promote peace and unity through campaigning for mutual co - existence of diverse tribes and culture in the nation	2.83	0.75
5.	Establish laws that will discourage individuals from indulging in banditry and kidnapping	3.02	0.82
Weighted mean = 2.94			
Criterion mean = 2.50			

Table 3 reveals the responses of the respondents solutions to the menace of banditry and kidnapping. The weighted mean (2.92) was obtained, which is higher than the criterion mean of 2.50. Also, the cluster mean (14.71), which is higher than the normative mean (12.50) was obtained. This means that social studies teachers and students agreed that the stated items above were the solutions to the menace of banditry and kidnapping. It reveals the mean ranking of the five items as follow: educate citizens on becoming a

patriotic citizen through social studies (3.22>2.50), Creating environment that will enable citizens to be gainfully employed (3.08>2.50), Establish laws that will discourage individuals from indulging in banditry and kidnapping (3.02>2.50), Promote peace and unity through campaigning for mutual co-existence of diverse tribes and culture in the nation (2.83>2.50), lastly, introduction of banditry and kidnapping into social studies curriculum at all level of education (2.51>2.50).

**Research Question 4:** What is social studies teachers' perception of banditry and kidnapping?

**Table 4:** Social Studies Teachers' Perception of Banditry and Kidnapping

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. D.
1	Banditry and Kidnapping are dangerous for the society.	-	7 (28%)	7 (28%)	11 (44%)	1.84	.85
2	Banditry and Kidnapping affect many lives.	3 (12%)	7 (28%)	6 (24%)	9 (36%)	2.16	1.06
3	Banditry and Kidnapping affect the unity of the country.	4 (16%)	7 (28%)	9 (36%)	5 (20%)	2.40	1.00
4	Banditry and Kidnapping have negative impacts on education	1 (4%)	9 (36%)	10 (40%)	5 (20%)	2.24	.830
5	Banditry and Kidnapping affect the peace of the country	4 (16%)	5 (20%)	5 (20%)	11 (44%)	2.08	1.15
6	Banditry and Kidnapping restrict people's movement to some parts of the country	6 (24%)	3 (12%)	11 (44%)	5 (20%)	2.40	1.08
7	Banditry and Kidnapping make many people not to believe in their country	13.6%)	5 (22.7%)	10 (45.5%)	4 (18.2%)	2.31	.945
8	Banditry and Kidnapping make many people not to be patriotic	7 (28%)	7 (28%)	9 (36%)	2 (8%)	2.76	.969
9	Banditry and Kidnapping make the country to lose good people	9 (36%)	3 (12%)	10 (40%)	3 (12%)	2.72	1.10
10	Banditry and Kidnapping disallow investors from coming into the country	2 (8%)	11 (44%)	10 (40%)	2 (8%)	2.52	.770
11	Banditry and Kidnapping make people not to trust one another.	2 (8%)	9 (36%)	6 (24%)	8 (32%)	2.20	1.00
12	Banditry and Kidnapping make people not to be willing to help one another	1 (4%)	10 (40%)	10 (40%)	4 (16%)	2.32	.802
13	Banditry and Kidnapping affect people's thinking	5 (20%)	4 (16%)	6 (24%)	10 (40%)	2.16	1.17
14	Banditry and Kidnapping make many people to be selfish	3 (12%)	7 (28%)	5 (20%)	10 (40%)	2.12	1.09
15	Banditry and Kidnapping promote hatred among the people	4 (16%)	7 (28%)	5 (20%)	9 (36%)	2.24	1.12
16	Banditry and Kidnapping are bad sources of income	5 (20.8%)	6 (25%)	7 (29.2%)	6 (25%)	2.41	1.10
17	Banditry and Kidnapping affect health of many people	4 (16%)	10 (40%)	6 (24%)	5 (20%)	2.52	1.00
18	Banditry and Kidnapping affect how people perceive the world	5 (20%)	8 (32%)	8 (32%)	4 (16%)	2.56	1.00
19	Banditry and Kidnapping do not make people to have good plans	6 (24%)	6 (24%)	11 (44%)	2 (8%)	2.64	.952
20	Banditry and Kidnapping do not make people to be focus	7 (28%)	10 (40%)	7 (28%)	1 (4%)	2.92	.862
	<b>Weighted mean = 2.38; Threshold = 2.50</b>						

Table IV shows the social studies teachers' perception of banditry and kidnapping. The social studies teachers' perception of banditry and kidnapping was negative because the weighted mean of 2.38 was below the threshold set at 2.50.

### Discussion of Findings

**Table 1** revealed that there was social studies teachers and students agreed that the stated items are effect of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria. The result of finding supported the finding Echeburua, Corral and Armor (2018) who found that kidnapping for a ransom is a violent crime, a negative event that usually happen suddenly, generating fear and helplessness, threaten people physical or psychological well-being and leave victims in an emotional state which they are unable to deal with using their normal psychological resources. Any kind violent crime is a trauma for the victim involves a collapse of the persons feelings of insecurity, also affecting indirectly their immediate family circle. Apart from the suffering of the direct victim the entire family structure is affected. Moreover, cultural and religious beliefs may also shape the perception of banditry and kidnapping.

Table II revealed that there was social studies teachers and students agreed that the stated items are the impact of banditry and kidnapping on their personal life. The result of finding supported the finding Akinkuotu (2021) who found that banditry and kidnapping are on the increase and the deteriorating nature of security in the country account for the malady. Infiltration of banditry and Kidnapping is much broader than national security which tends to focus on the security of the state in military for the protection of the state from external aggression. Human security situation in the country has remained unprecedented in the rebasing of the Nigerian economy and the challenge declaiming global status as a peaceful country where people can live in joyfully. Many countries like Nigeria around the globe are facing problems of insecurity and security threat in the society. The global community in under increasing insecurity around the world.

Table III results revealed that there was social studies teachers and students agreed that the stated items above were the solutions to the menace of banditry and kidnapping. The result of finding supported the finding Akinkuotu (2021), stated that Synergic Approach between the Security Agencies and Community Police Security personnel needs to be well-equipped, such as the police and other law enforcement agencies, with all required operational facilities as well as intelligence gathering on kidnapping in order to properly function and overpower the ugly threat of kidnapping in Nigeria. Also, the new security outfits formed to police the

community deserves to be proactive in reporting any suspicious movement about kidnapper's hideouts. They should be provided with vehicles and communication gadgets as well as good relations with security agencies in order to attain their required operations.

Table IV revealed that social studies teachers' perception of banditry and kidnapping was negative. This is in line with the study of Jimada (2021) who reported that teachers and students are unpredicted violence that generates insecurity in the school and as a result they have negative perception of banditry and kidnapping.

### Conclusion

The study has shown that teachers have negative perception of banditry and kidnapping. The study has provided a better understanding of effects of solving banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the following are recommended:

1. Teachers should be sensitized to have negative perception to banditry and kidnapping.
2. Security operatives should be more proactive in curbing the menace of kidnapping and banditry
3. There should be effective community policing
4. Government should provide employment opportunity for the unemployed youth.

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