

Highlighting the Social and Economic Consequences of Conflict, Insecurity, Banditry, and Kidnapping in Nigeria

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Abstract: *The article highlighted the social and economic consequences of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria using a systematic review method. Relevant information, ranging between 2015 and 2024 were sought for through google scholar, google, and other search engines to explore several secondary sources such as journal articles, books/e-books, databases of publishers, websites, and others. The PEO and SPIDER framework were used to develop the search strategy and to inform the search process and strategy. The information was subjected to data extraction, and the thematic analysis was used to analyse the materials and findings were provided and presented to further achieve the research aims of the article. The findings revealed that there is an increasing rate of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria. Also, this has posed social and economic consequences on people and the nation at large. In addition, this could also affect social and economic development of the nation in the long run. The article recommends that the government should set up and establish emergency response mechanisms, such as hotlines and response teams, to provide immediate support to victims of conflicts, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping.*

Keywords: social consequences, economic consequences, conflict, insecurity, banditry, kidnapping, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Conflict, Insecurity, Banditry, and Kidnapping have become major threats in Nigeria, posing significant and tremendous effects on the well-being of its citizens, couple with its effects on the nation. According to Akinyetun (2022), conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping have

constituted an elastic effects to development, leading to increasing rate of crimes in Nigeria. It encompassed varying dimensions across the geopolitical zones of the nation which include Boko Haram, cybercrime, armed robbery, kidnapping, domestic crime, extrajudicial killings, herder-farmer conflicts, ritual killings, banditry, ritual killings, commercial crime, secessionist agitation, attacks by unknown gunmen, and others.

These challenges have had a negative impact on several aspects of the nation's economy, leading to widespread poverty and displacement. Ojewale (2024) revealed that such activities have created devastating effects on the nation, with over 1,087,875 individuals in rural areas and its environs displaced as of December 2022, and over 13,485 deaths, revealing that this statistics would have increased in 2025. Akinyetun (2022) noted that between the years 2018 and 2020, over 4900 people have lost their lives to such attacks, while there are over 309,000 internally displaced persons and 60,000 refugees recorded. The cumulative significant effects of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping are extensive, and tend to complicate the security issues in the country (Ojewale, 2024). ACAPS (2020) and Akinyetun (2022) noted that this has increased the rate of forced migration, poverty, displacement, crises, and death.

Moreover, such devastating effects cut across the socio economic activities on the nation (Abdulrasheed, 2020; Brenner, 2021; Ojewale, 2024). The social and economic consequences of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria are far-reaching and devastating. Social and economic activities in Nigeria cuts across agriculture which include crop and livestock farming, healthcare, education, gold mining, community services, local markets, marketing of agricultural produce such as crop and livestock, and others. Social aspect could also imply displacement of people and businesses from their homes and offices respectively.

The World Bank group (2025) noted that these social and economic activities posed several elastic effects on the development of Nigeria. Also, Okunlola, Sani & Ayetigbo (2023) accounted that social and economic activities could increase the economic growth in Nigeria. However, these social and economic activities are being truncated by several activities of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping. Abdullahi & Mukhtar (2022) noted that the threats of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping has, in recent times create certain level of fear in people and has become a recurring menace that have threatened the peace and survival of the population in Nigeria. In addition, it turns to disrupts economic stability and growth of the nation as producers would be often unable to access their production materials and inputs to perform their production activities towards meeting the population needs and also in extension posing significant effects on national growth and development in Nigeria.

In extension, this could be responsible for the increasing rate of poverty in Nigeria, reaching 38.9%, inequality, poor service delivery, insecurity and violence, couple with an approximately 87 million Nigerians living in poverty (World Bank group, 2025). Ojewale (2024) noted that the increasing level of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria have impoverished

farmers and hamper agricultural activities, couple with its significant negative effects on other several trades in rural and urban communities in Nigeria.

Moreover, the psychological effects of these conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping challenges on the population cannot be overlooked because of the constant fear of violence on the mental health and well-being of nationals, which in turn impacts productivity and social interactions. This has also lead to issues of trauma and anxiety among the people, hindering their ability to engage fully in economic activities hence, posing significant negative effects on the social and economic activities that could affect development in the long run.

The increasing rate of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria have increased, protruding in the various facets of national sphere hence, having complex and multi-dimensional effects on all areas of the country and in some states, it is gradually sliding into a state of emergency. This revealed that the social and economic consequences of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria are severe and far-reaching and could pose significant elastic effects on many areas of the national economy. To this end, it is very germane to comprehensively highlight the socio-economic effects of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria towards informing policies that could cushion the prevalence and its effects on the people, their social and economic activities and also on the development of the nation. Therefore, this present article focuses on highlighting the social and economic consequences of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the past decade, there has been increasing rate of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria manifesting in diverse kind posing significant threats to lives and properties in the nation. Nigeria has been struggling with several security issues that have directly affected its economy, which have not only undermine the stability of the nation, and the rule of law but have also pose significant adverse effects on the nation's economy cutting across social and economic activities of inputs and outputs of the nation. This in extension has also pose significant negative impetus on price, employment, poverty, trade balance, inequality, government budget patterns, defense expenditure, socio-political environment, and others (James, 2024). The social and economic consequences of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping have been extensively studied in the literature. Several studies have highlighted the devastating impact of these security challenges on individuals, communities, and the economy.

According to James (2024), it has deter prospective investors from being engaged in several business activities opportunities that could have added and contributed to the development of the nation hence, leading to stagnation in several commercial and industrial operations in Nigeria. In addition, many businesses and industries in Nigeria have seized from operation because of the elastic impact of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria. Thus, the elastic effects of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping could pose severe and far-reaching consequences

for the economy and the people, and also creating certain pervasive sense of fear and insecurity on their psychological wellbeing, which could also have direct impact on certain economic activity (James, 2024).

Social consequences of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping cuts across the displacement of people from their homes and business offices while economic consequences include destroying several business economic activities such as crop and livestock farming, healthcare, education, gold mining, community services, local markets, marketing of agricultural produce such as crop and livestock, and others. A study by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (2020) found that conflict and insecurity in Nigeria resulted in the displacement of over 2 million people in 2020 alone. Similarly, a study by the United Nations Africa Renewal (2025) found that the Boko Haram insurgency in northeastern Nigeria resulted in the displacement of over 2.5 million people. This could be grave and could pose significant negative impetus on social and economic activities that could also in extension affect the national development in the long run.

Also, the economic consequences of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping are equally severe. A study by the Nigerian Economic Summit Group (2019) estimated that the conflict in northeastern Nigeria resulted in losses of over ₦4.2 trillion, which is approximately USD 11 billion. Similarly, a study by the World Bank (2021) found that the conflict in northeastern Nigeria resulted in a decline in economic growth, with the region's GDP declining by over 50% between 2015 and 2020. This also, could be grave and could pose significant negative impetus on social and economic activities that could also in extension affect the national development in the long run.

Banditry and kidnapping have also had a significant impact on agriculture and food security. A study by the Food and Agriculture Organization (2020) found that the conflict in northeastern Nigeria resulted in a decline in agricultural production, with many farmers unable to access their farmlands due to insecurity. Similarly, a study by Rufus & Ogbe (2025) found that banditry and kidnapping in northwestern Nigeria resulted in a decline in livestock production, with many herders unable to access grazing land due to insecurity. Also, the World Health Organization (2020) found that the conflict in northeastern Nigeria resulted in a significant increase in mental health disorders, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression. Similarly, a study by the International Rescue Committee (2025) found that banditry and kidnapping in northwestern Nigeria resulted in a significant increase in trauma and anxiety among affected communities.

Juxtaposing these elastic effects of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria could result in a multiple and complex situation that may need urgent attention to cushion towards a peaceful nation that could enhance the social and economic development of the nation. However, to achieve this, there may be the need to further examine the issues related to conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria cutting across their negative impetus on social and economic activities that could also in extension affect the national development in the long run. To this end,

this present article aims at highlighting the social and economic consequences of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria.

RESEARCH METHODS

This article deploys a systematic review method to highlight the social and economic consequences of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria. Relevant information were sought for through google scholar, google, and other search engines to explore several secondary sources such as journal articles, books/e-books, databases of publishers, websites, and others. In addition, relevant information and materials used are between 2015 and 2024 to ensure that quality of the outcome of the article is attained. The PEO and SPIDER framework by Cooke et al. (2012) was used to develop the search strategy and to inform the search process and strategy. The meaning of the acronym is provided below.

P – The Population: Which focuses on Nigeria

E – The Exposure: Conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria.

O – The Outcome(s): Social and economic consequences in Nigeria

Also, the acronyms of SPIDER framework are provided as Sample, Phenomenon of Interest, Design, Evaluation and Research type. The initial process of the search commenced on February 3th, 2025, another search process was done on February 17th and 19th, 2025, while another one was repeated on March 20th – 23rd towards ensuring relevant and quality information and resources obtained and gathered for the study. In addition, materials were subjected to appraisal by evaluating the appropriateness of the materials' study design, methodology features that was used, authors' of the articles and also their sources and other relevant information of the articles. Also, the Cochrane reviews style was used in the review process as stated by Chapman (2014). In addition, data extraction, synthesize and analysis were done, and eleven (11) articles were subjected to thematic analysis to analyse the materials and information obtained while the findings were provided and presented to further achieve the research aims of the article.

RESULTS

The article focuses on highlighting the social and economic consequences of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria using a systematic review method. Adegoke (2020) examined insurgency, armed banditry and corruption in Nigeria, focusing on its major effects on the socio-economic underdevelopment of Nigeria, using systematic review method. The study of Adegoke (2020) revealed that Nigeria is under a serious internal socio economic and security threat arising from the increasing activities of armed banditry. These have affected the social, economic, political and environmental aspects of the nation leading to instability, poverty, ethnic and religious conflicts, terrorism, corruption, armed robbery, economic sabotage, environmental degradation, loss of lives and properties and others. This has also hampered the socio-economic development

of Nigeria due to the elastic prevalence of kidnapping, insurgency, armed banditry, corruption, cybercrime among others.

Faruk and Abdullahi (2022) examined the effect of armed banditry and kidnapping on the socio economic activities, eliciting information from 430 respondents selected from six local governments in Katsina State, Nigeria The information elicited were subjected to descriptive quantitative analysis using tables and frequency. The results found that armed banditry and kidnapping posed significant negative consequences on the socio-economic activities of people leading to excessive poverty, food insecurity, unemployment, education problems, health problem, low income and also affected the standard of living of the people seriously. This revealed that the rate of armed banditry and kidnapping is very high in Katsina, which is a major state in Nigeria hence, posing significant negative impetus of socio-economic activities in the state leading to higher incidence of poverty, unemployment, and others.

Ebonine (2022) assessed the Impact of banditry on the educational and socio-economic development in Northern Nigeria using systematic review method, and noted that over the last few years, there has been issues of students' abductions and ransom demands in Nigeria which have thrown parents, security agents, and the government into confusion. This have been found to be rooted in achieving financial gains by the bandits and affecting the nation's education sector, which could also affect development of the nation in the long run.

Okwuwada (2023) investigated kidnapping, terrorism, banditry, and violent crime in Nigeria and their consequences, causes, and nature through a comprehensive analysis using secondary data and found that kidnappings, terrorist attacks, and banditry are increasing in Nigeria and has become and pose chronic challenge to the nation's development because, it tends to manifest and transform into a modern-day enslavement where people are afraid and are psychologically affected to carry out their daily human and business activities. This has thereby created negative, devastating and contagious impacts on the Nation's economy and growth as vulnerable members are disoriented from their homes and businesses, because they have been disillusioned and displaced from their homes and business activities which was supposed to bring comfort to them, and leading to increasing rate of casualties among children and women. The results also pin pointed that the various causes of such increasing level of kidnapping, terrorism, banditry, and violent crime are attributed to the increasing unemployment, social and economic neglect, unequal distribution of national wealth, low or the lack of economic opportunity poverty, and others

Ojo, Oyewole & Aina (2023) examined the forces of terror by focusing on armed banditry and insecurity as major causes, particularly in the North-west Nigeria through a systematic review method by using secondary sources of information and data. Their study revealed that there is an increasing unprecedented wave of kidnappings, killings, maiming, displacements of people, and also the disruption of various socio-economic activities, particularly due to the increasing rate of armed bandits and insecurity in Nigeria, particularly in the North-West region. These have led to increasing level of uncertainty affecting the citizenry and even the government. The findings also

revealed that between 2013 and 2022, there have been 909 bandits' incidents with Jigawa experiencing 5, Kaduna experiencing 342, Kano experiencing just only one, Katsina experiencing 208, Kebbi experiencing 14, Sokoto experiencing 54 and Zamfara experiencing 275. This reveals that most of the bandits' incidents were centred on Kaduna, followed by Katsina State, Zamfara State, and then Sokoto State. Furthermore, social and economic activities such as trains, rail lines, military bases and several academic activities were targeted by these bandits which could lead to disruption of these activities and in the long run could hamper development of this nation.

Ogar, Hamisu & Sa'ad (2023) examined banditry as an impediment to socio-economic development of rural communities in Nigeria, focusing on Maradun local government area of Zamfara state, Nigeria, where the villages have been rendered homeless hence, posing significant effect on the socio-economic activities which include crop and livestock farming, educational activities, and others. The study of Ogar et al. (2023) deploys both the quantitative and qualitative methods of questionnaire and in-depth interview respectively to elicit information from selected respondents through a multi-stage cluster and purposive sampling methods. Their findings showed that banditry activities are high in these villages and this has led to socio-economic instabilities. This could affect social and economic development of the nation in the long run if not cushioned. Shehu, Ismail & Hassan (2024) examined the effects of banditry and kidnapping on the socio-economic activities in Zamfara North LGA, Nigeria using a survey method and a sample size of 353 selected from four (4) LGAs, while information and data were elicited using a structured closed ended questionnaires and information collated, were analysed using SMART—PLS3model and the stated hypotheses were also subjected to test using bootstrapping and pls-algorithm. The findings of the study showed that banditry and kidnapping activities posed significant impacts on the socio-economic activities in Zamfara North by reducing the economic activities of people hence, could affect development of this area in the long run

Adegbami & Kugbayi (2024) examined armed banditry and their effect and challenges on national development, particularly in Nigeria, using systematic review strategy to analyse secondary information obtained from different secondary sources. They revealed that the increasing incessant bandits' activities which has resulted in continuous kidnapping of people and demanding for ransom, robbing of their possessions, raping and eventually killing has become a worrisome issue in Nigeria. This has affected the wellbeing of people, and also affecting national development through its effects on political and economic activities, high unemployment, increasing poverty, and others. Hence, if not quickly tamed, it could continue to inhibit the political, social, and economic development of Nigeria and also, could truncate the evolving democratic governance and also affect the corporate existence of the nation.

Igiebo (2024) examined the banditry in Nigeria by focusing on its implications for national security focusing on selected periods between 2014 and 2022, and using critical discuss analysis to discuss themes generated from the research questions. The findings showed that the activities of banditry have posed negative effect on the right to life, freedom, peace, and also the progress of the people and of Nigeria. These have resulted in increasing killing, exposure to psychological issues and

torture, displacements from homes and businesses, subjected to several increasing harsh economic, among others. This could pose significant effects on the development of the people and the nation at large in the long run.

Usu, Gbede, Aka, Aernyi & Daagu. (2024) examined the impact of kidnapping and banditry on economic activities in Katsina-Ala local government area of Benue State, Nigeria, using a descriptive survey research design through a multistage sampling techniques, 300 respondents were selected and information were elicited through the help of structured questionnaire and subjected to descriptive analysis. The findings revealed that the banditry activities which include kidnapping and extortion, among others are prevalent in the region leading to devastating impact on the economic activities such as leading to disruption of various commercial activities, leading to migration, particularly among the rural population, and also the extortions of rural markets, and this has led to the abandonment of various economic activities such as farming with regards to the elastic prevalence of human displacement among the rural population. Such menace could in extension affect the social and economic activities and development in Nigeria, which could hinder development efforts in the nation.

Onota, Ogbonna & Alfred-Igbokwe (2024) did an analysis of cross-border migration, banditry and the various challenges on development in Nigeria using information from various secondary sources such as from researchers, textbooks, journal articles, online resources, published dissertations, international organizations report, newspapers and periodicals, and others to achieve the aim of the study. Also, content analysis was used for analyzing the information collated through extracting relevant information, that are pertaining to the study. The findings revealed that Nigeria's borders are very permeable, and causing incisive entry of bandits who eventually inflict several forms of crimes and violent activities such as kidnapping and homicides, leading to various disruption of social and economic activities in Nigeria. The findings also revealed that several businesses in Nigeria have being shut down because of these excessive increase in banditry, also leading to increasing youth unemployment and illiteracy, creating negative significant negative impetus on the living standard and wellbeing of people.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The article highlighted the social and economic consequences of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria using a systematic review method. The findings revealed that there is an increasing rate of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria. Also, this has posed social and economic consequences on people and the nation at large. This concurs with the works of Abdurashied (2020); Brenner (2021); Abdullahi & Mukhtar (2022); Okunlola et al. (2023) and Ojewale (2024) that the activities of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping have caused serious devastating effects on the socio economic activities of the nation. This bolsters the work of James (2024), that the activities of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping have deter the attraction of prospective investors to do business in Nigeria hence, affecting the development of the nation.

This could also affect social and economic development of the nation in the long run. This supports the findings of Akinyetun (2022) that conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping have imposed elastic effects on the nation's development. This also concurs with the work of Ojewale (2024) that the activities of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping have created devastating effects on the nation. This also concurs with the works of ACAPS (2020); Akinyetun (2022); Okunlola et al. (2023); Ojewale (2024); World Bank Group (2025); and others that the activities of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping have increased the rate of poverty, displacement, crises, and death in nation, that could affect development efforts. This supports the findings of the World Bank (2020) that the several activities of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping have declined the economic growth of Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

The article highlighted the social and economic consequences of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria using a systematic review method. The findings revealed that there is an increasing rate of conflict, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping in Nigeria. Also, this has posed social and economic consequences on people and the nation at large. In addition, this could also affect social and economic development of the nation in the long run.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were provided:

Short-term Recommendations

- i. The government should set up and establish emergency response mechanisms, such as hotlines and response teams, to provide immediate support to victims of conflicts, insecurity, banditry, and kidnapping.
- ii. Governments and other national and international agencies should provide humanitarian assistance, such as food, shelter, and medical care, to the affected communities and individuals.
- iii. Governments and other national and international agencies should support internally displaced persons by providing temporary shelter, food, and non-food items.

Medium-term Recommendations

- iv. Governments and other national and international agencies and policy makers should implement community-based Initiatives, such as community policing and conflict resolution programs, towards promoting social cohesion and address underlying causes of conflict.
- v. Governments and policy makers should provide necessary policy tools and provide necessary resources to support economic empowerment Programs, such as vocational training and microfinance initiatives, to provide alternative livelihoods for individuals affected by conflict.

- vi. There is also the need for the provision of Improved Infrastructure and Basic Services, such as roads, schools, and healthcare facilities, in affected areas to promote economic development and social stability.

Long-term Recommendations

- vii. Governments, policy makers and other national and international agencies should focus on addressing the root causes of conflict, such as poverty, inequality, and unemployment, through sustainable development programs and policies.
- viii. There is also the need to promote national reconciliation and healing through initiatives, such as truth-telling and reconciliation commissions, to address historical grievances and promote social cohesion.
- ix. The need for government to strengthen institutions and governance, including the security sector, towards promoting accountability, transparency, and the rule of law.

Economic Recommendations

- x. The need for Governments and other national and international agencies to support Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), which are critical to Nigeria's economic growth, through initiatives, such as access to finance and business development services.
- xi. Governments and other national and international agencies should also promote diversification and industrialization, including the development of strategic sectors, such as agriculture, manufacturing, and mining, to reduce dependence on oil exports.
- xii. Governments and other national and international agencies should also invest in human capital development, including education and healthcare, to promote economic growth and development.

Social Recommendations

- xiii. Governments and other national and international agencies should promote social cohesion and inclusion, including the promotion of national values and identity, to address social divisions and promote national unity.
- xiv. There is also the need to support vulnerable populations, including women, children, and IDPs, through initiatives, such as protection services and economic empowerment programs.
- xv. There should be the need to promote access to justice, including the promotion of the rule of law and the protection of human rights, to address impunity and promote accountability.

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