

BANDITRY AND TERRORISM ON EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF NORTH EAST AND NORTH WEST GEO-POLITICAL ZONES

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Abstract

Banditry and terrorism are two social evils that have had intense damaging effect in North East and North West geopolitical zones of Nigeria. The Boko Haram Insurgents and its splinter group, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) has unleashed monumental terror in the North East while bandits have been prevalent in the North West. However, the acts of terrorism and banditry have been felt across the two zones though there had been more intensity of terrorism in the North East and banditry in the North West. The activities of the two criminal groups have had similar consequences of causing displacement of people from their settlements and dislocations on their economic endeavours which has crystallized in poverty and unemployment. More so, it has led to an increase in the number of out of children in the zones which has had the adverse consequence of providing a ready pool of recruits into terrorism and banditry, thereby making the problem cyclical. The study adopted the descriptive historical method, and anchored the study on the Frustration-Aggression theory and the systems theory. Thus, while the former guided the explanation of the variable causing acts of banditry and terrorism, the latter guided the understanding of the impact of the acts on the educational development in Nigeria. In view of the obvious challenges posed by the foregoing, recommendations for a proactive step to be taken in solving farmer-herder conflicts, blocking the infiltration of terrorists and arm through the borders, effective school system in the camps as well as incentives to woo children back to school were recommended as panacea.

Keywords: Banditry, Terrorism, Unemployment, Poverty, Education, Development

Introduction

Terrorism is a global act that has been a challenge to many countries of the world. Banditry and other forms of criminality are also not peculiar to the Nigerian society alone as acts of violence and criminal behaviours are reported across the globe. Magstadt (2009) writes that “more than 600 identifiable terrorist groups exist worldwide” (p. 514). The Nigerian State is inflicted with an array of acts of violence and insecurity which finds expression in terrorism, banditry, and other criminal acts that have tended to portray the country within Hobbes conception of man at the state of nature where life was short, nasty and brutish. The resultant effect therefore is that a strong and focused government is needed in order to ensure that there is law and order and ultimately security in all its ramifications. Almond, Powell, Dalton and Strom (2008) aver that “Government activities partially reflect Hobbes belief that only strong government can make society safe for their inhabitants. Providing security and law and order is among the most essential tasks that governments perform. Externally security means protecting against attacks from other political systems. Army, Navy and Air Force typically perform this function. Internally security means

protecting against theft, aggression and violence from members of one's own society. In most societies providing this protection is the function of the Police" (p.4). There had been the Niger Delta agitation for resource control which gave rise to acts of violence in the area, demand for self determination by some sections of the country and other forms of social unrest which tended to have adverse consequences on the Nigerian security architecture. However, at present, the Nigeria state is basically challenged by the continually rising profile of the terror groups and bandits who though are heavily present in the North East and North West respectively have spread their tentacles to other parts of the country thereby causing tension and making fear to pervade the length and breadth of the Nigerian Society.

The operations of the Boko Haram insurgents, in the North East and the rise in banditry and other forms of criminality in the North West which took off from its epicentre in Zamfara and escalated to all the states in the North East including other States in North Central and beyond has become a matter of serious concern to everybody. Attempts have been made to distinguish between terrorism and banditry. Conflict and Resilience Monitor 2022/1 unveils that "while the term terrorism entails the premeditated use of violence by an ideologically motivated individual or group to create a general climate of fear in a population with the intention of bringing about a particular political objective, banditry refers to economically motivated armed violence perpetrated by gangs driven primarily by the intention to extort, dispossess or plunder their targets – individuals, groups or communities". Okoli and Nwangwu (2022) writing on the phenomenon of crime-terror nexus from the standpoint of the Boko Haram and bandits linkage reveal that "both groups have functionally adapted each other structures and strategies".

Mingst (2004) also avers that. "Terrorism is a particular kind of asymmetric warfare that has increasingly become a major international security threat, although its origin dates back thousands of years. During Greek and Roman times, terrorist acts were often carried out by individuals against a ruler. During the Middle Ages, groups perpetrated violence against other groups, while during the French Revolution, acts of terrorism were sponsored by the state itself. Organized stated terrorism used against a state's own citizens reached its zenith in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin. Terrorism involves four major elements (1) premeditation, the decision by a perpetrator to commit an act to instill terror or fear in others (2) motivation or a cause, whether it be political, religious, or economic, (3) targets, usually non-combatants such as political figures, bureaucratic or innocent bystanders and (4) secretiveness, where perpetrators belong to a clandestine group or are secretly sponsored by states" (p. 212).

Terrorism and banditry in Nigeria have been related to several variables which include corruption and mismanagement of resources which have incidentally given rise to intense poverty, alarming unemployment and social inequality. These situations have exacerbated the gap between expectation and achievement and have invariably created frustration. Consequently, Oseni (2022) has succinctly advised that "This approach of over-reliance on military action in fighting banditry and terrorism is not the cure for nefarious activities. There is need to address the root causes of the banditry and terrorist activities in Nigeria: Unemployment and poverty lack of education, poor socio-amenities, huge gap between the government and the people and biasely fighting against corruption are just a few of the root causes to be addressed in defeating banditry and terrorism in Nigeria".

The kernel of the foregoing is that the Nigeria Government while investing in the military as a measure to counter terrorism and banditry should as a matter of utmost importance accord primacy to solving the lingering problems of corruption and mismanagement of resources and so tackle the destructive problems that have emanated from them which include poverty, unemployment etc. which incidentally are breeders of insecurity in Nigeria. Enofe and Odibo (2019) write that "In Nigeria today, there is a general agreement

among well concerned citizens and the world at large that corruption has unavoidably become a major impediment in the search for sustainable growth and development. Corruption in Nigeria is a war to war phenomenon that is killing all aspects of life and one of the dangerous social problem of any society” (p. 26)

The internal security challenges in the North East is being posed by the Jama’ a Ahl as-Sunna Li-da’wa Waal-Jihad popularly known as Boko Haram, the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) and other Islamic Fundamentalist groups who are fighting for the establishment of an Islamic State. Afzal (2020) states that “Boko Haram – which translates literally to western education is forbidden has since 2009 killed tens of thousands of people in Nigeria and has displaced more than two million others”(p.1). This internal displacement caused by the activities of the terrorist group has had consequences on educational development.

The origin and escalation of banditry in the North West which took off from Zamfara State and spread to all the States in the North West have been attributed to competition for scarce resources. International crisis Report 288 of 2020 states that “The Causes of violence in the North West are complex and inter-related. At its root, the regions security crisis derives from long-running competition over land and water resources between predominately Fulani herders and mainly Hausa farmers, both of whom have over time mobilized armed groups (referred to by the authorities as bandits and vigilantes respectively) for protection”. The farmer-herders conflict has spread to other parts of the country posing one of the enormous security challenges as the Fulani herdsmen are known to unleash monumental violent attacks on farmers across the country, killing and burning down their farms and abodes. The spate of violence in Nigeria’s North East and North West has remained a challenge to the Nigerian State and the government has responded through the deployment of large number of troops, cutting communication networks and imposing restrictions on movement. In spite of these efforts the country has continued to be a den of terrorism and banditry. It is imperative to note that terrorism and banditry are continually having a nexus which is now making their activities difficult to differentiate.

Statement of the Problem

Although terrorism and banditry have spread to various parts of the Nigerian state, it is evident that the North East and North West have the highest preponderance of terrorism and banditry respectively and in fact it is not out of place to locate the origin of the Boko Haram insurgency and farmer-herders conflict which crystallized in banditry in the North East and North West respectively. The North East and North West host most of the states categorized as educationally backward and disadvantaged. In spite of this situation, the level of insecurity occasioned by the actions of the Boko Haram insurgents and other terrorist groups who unleash terror in the North East and beyond and the bandits and other forms of organized crimes that have taken root in the North West has become a major set back to educational development in the areas. The incidences of abduction of school children such as the abductions in Chibok and Dapchi in the North East have all had far reaching adverse effects of education in the area. The activities of the criminal elements have caused social dislocations that have impacted adversely on schools as some schools have been closed down because of the fear of attack by the terrorists and bandits. In some instances some communities were sacked by the terrorists and bandits and the affected people relocated to IDPs camps, a situation that has tended to disrupt the academic pursuit of children in the affected areas. The foregoing situation has created disillusionment and intensified social problems such as poverty and unemployment which incidentally has had sad multiplier effects on educational development.

Research Questions

The following research questions are therefore asked:

- What effect has terrorism and banditry had in the North East and North West Nigeria?
- Why is there high intensity of the activities of these terrorists and bandit groups in the North East and North West respectively?
- How has the activities of these groups affected educational development in Nigeria?

Objectives of the Study

The study has the general objective of explaining the effects terrorism and banditry have on educational development in the North East and North West Nigeria. The under-listed are the specific objectives:

- To ascertain the level of damage done to the educational development in the North East and North West by the activities of terrorists and bandits.
- To examine the consequences of the damage done to the educational sector by the terrorists and bandits in the North and North West.
- To unravel the reasons for attacks on schools.
- To provide and systematically analyze data and provide reliable information that could be used by policy makers and scholars.

Methodology

The study made use of primary and secondary data sourced from text books as well as internet sources. It adopted the descriptive historical approach and also anchored the analysis on relevant theoretical framework. Essentially, the data deployed in the study were cross matched with various sources to ascertain their level of consistency and accuracy in order to ensure that the findings and conclusions are not misguided. The data obtained from survey was also analyzed and integrated with the secondary data in the study.

A survey of 1000 subjects was carried out in which questionnaires were circulated to them through the accidental technique with the intent to extract their responses and perception on the effects of banditry and terrorism in the North East and North West Nigeria. 500 questionnaires were circulated in each of the geo-political zones. Kaduna State was randomly selected in the North West and Yobe State in the North East.

Questions requiring the selection of one choice from a range of three options were posed and in each research question, the frequency of the responses which was represented in percentages was relied upon for findings hence, the modal category stands as the position of the respondents on each question.

Table 1
Showing the retrieval rate of Questionnaires

Geopolitical Zone (State)	No of Questionnaires circulated	No of Questionnaires retrieved	Percentage of Retrieved Questionnaires
North East (Yobe)	500	468	93.6%
North West (Kaduna)	500	474	94.8%
Total	1000	942	94.2%

Source: Survey Data 2022

It is evident from the table that out of the 500 questionnaires each circulated in Yobe and Kaduna States in the North East and North West Nigeria, 468 representing 93.6% returned the questionnaires in Yobe in the North East while 474 representing 94.8% returned

theirs in Kaduna State in the North West hence in summation 942 out of the 1000 selected subjects returned their questionnaires for the study representing 94.2% which is a significant proportion of the selected subjects.

Table 2
Showing the perceived effect of banditry and terrorism in Nigeria

Question	Options	Geopolitical zone (State)	No of Subjects	Percentage of Subjects	Aggregate Percentage
What effect has terrorism and banditry had in the North East and North West Nigeria?	Positive	North East (Yobe)	-	-	-
		North West (Kaduna)	-	-	
	Negative	North East (Yobe)	450	96.2%	96.8%
		North West (Kaduna)	462	97.5%	
	Uncertain	North East (Yobe)	18	3.8%	3.2%
		North West (Kaduna)	12	2.5%	

Source: Survey Data 2022

The outcome of the survey indicates that a very high proportion of the respondents agree that banditry and terrorism have had negative effects in the North East and North West as 450 respondent representing 96.2% in the North East and 462 representing 97.5% in the North West supported the forgoing. On the aggregate 96.8% of all the respondents took the position hence the modal frequency is on the side of and in support that the twin variables of terrorism and banditry have had negative effects in Nigeria.

Table 3
Showing reason for high frequency of terrorism and banditry in the North East and North West, Nigeria

Question	Options	Geopolitical zone (State)	No of Subjects	Percentage of Subjects	Aggregate Percentage
Why is there high intensity of the activities of terrorists and bandits in the North East and North West Nigeria?	Poverty	North East (Yobe)	223	47.6%	51.4%
		North West (Kaduna)	261	55.1%	
	Unemployment	North East (Yobe)	186	39.7%	38.6%
		North West (Kaduna)	178	37.6%	
	Bad governance	North East (Yobe)	59	12.6%	10%
		North West (Kaduna)	35	7.4%	

Source: Survey Data 2022

In the table above, the outcome of the survey indicated that 223 respondents representing 47.6% in the North East agreed that poverty is the cause of high intensity of terrorism 55.1% held the same position among the respondents from the North West and on the aggregate 51.4% of the respondents held the foregoing position.

Besides, 186 of the respondents in the North East (39.7%) and 178 respondents (37.6%) in the North West held unemployment responsible. On the aggregate 38.6% of all the respondents held unemployment responsible for terrorism and banditry in Nigeria North East and West.

On the other hand, 59 respondents (12.6%) in the North East and 35 respondents (7.4%) in the North West held bad governance as the phenomenon responsible for the high intensity of terrorism and banditry in the North East and North West Nigeria. This represents an aggregate of 10%.

Deducible from the foregoing is the fact that the major cause of the high frequency of terrorism and banditry in the North East and North West Nigeria is poverty (51.4%) followed by unemployment (38.6%) whereas bad governance with 10% was seen less as the factor responsible for the acts.

Table 4
Showing how terrorist and banditry activities have affected educational development in Nigeria

Question	Options	Geopolitical zone (State)	No of Subjects	Percentage of Subjects	Aggregate Percentage
How has the activities of terrorists and bandits affected educational development in Nigeria?	Positive	North East (Yobe)	-	-	-
		North West (Kaduna)	-	-	
	Negative	North East (Yobe)	449	95.9%	96.5%
		North West (Kaduna)	460	97%	
	Uncertain	North East (Yobe)	19	4.1%	3.5%
		North West (Kaduna)	14	3%	

Source: Survey Data 2022

The survey in respect of this research question shows that 449 (95.9%) of the respondents in North East are of the opinion that terrorism and banditry have negatively affected educational development in Nigeria. Also 460 (97%) also supported this position in the North West Nigeria and on the aggregate 909 (96.5%) of the respondents agreed that terrorism and banditry have impacted adversely on educational development in Nigeria. These are quite significant to agree that the twin variables has had negative effect on educational development in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on the Frustration – Aggression theory and systems theory. Frustration – Aggression theory locates aggression and violent behaviours in the society on the matrix of the gap between expectation and achievement. Frustration occurs when ones efforts to attain some goals are blocked and when this occurs it crystallizes in the feeling of

anger and frustration which is succeeded by violent behaviours. Nnamani and Onuigbo (2012) while writing on Frustration – Aggression theory explain that “This theory believes that when individuals or groups are denied what they feel they desire legitimately they feel disappointed which will lead to frustration and violent behaviours” (p. 193). They further explain that “The theory argued that aggression as propounded by this theory is not as a result of natural or biological instinct but due to anger, frustration and aggressive behaviour that lead to violence. In other words, the aggression is as a result that the people or groups are getting less than what they think they deserve”. (p. 194). The implication of the foregoing theory in the study is that the violent acts emanating from the terrorists and bandits in Nigeria are basically borne out of the ill feelings they have about the performance of the Nigerian state where there had been glaring evidences of misgovernance and corruption. This poverty and unemployment, which misgovernance and corruption have fueled have aided the feeling of frustration and anger which have found expression in various violent acts including terrorism and banditry.

The systems theory on the other hand studies the society as a complex arrangement of elements which includes individuals and their beliefs as they related to the whole which in this case is the Nigerian state. Thus, systems theory would help us to understand how the activities in various sub systems have impact on others. Thus, the failures of the Nigerian state which have fueled terrorism and banditry have had an effect on the educational sub sector and this relational effect has the potency of making criminality cyclical as the effect on the educational sub sector continues to culminate in large number of out of school children and thus making students ready recruits to terrorism and banditry.

Results:

North East Geo-political Zone, Cases of Terrorism and Educational Development

The North East geo-political zone of Nigeria has been infested with series of acts of terrorism perpetrated by the Boko Haram insurgents and also their splinter group the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP). The groups are Islamic terrorist organizations. Boko Haram has been in operation in Nigeria since 2002 and has been under various leaders viz. Mohammed Yusuf (2002-2009), Abubakar Shekau (2009-2021) and Bakura Doro (alleged 2021 – present); Bakura Saa’aba (alleged 2021-present. Wikipedia article entitled ‘Boko Haram’ states that “Founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2002, the group was led by Abubakar Shekau from 2009 until his death in 2021, although it splintered into other group after Yusuf’s death and also in 2015. The group has been known for brutality and since the insurgency started in 2009, Boko Haram has killed tens of thousands of people in frequent attacks against the police, armed forces and civilians. It has resulted in the deaths of more than 300,000 children and displaced 2.3 million from their homes and was the world’s deadliest terror group during part of the mid-2020s according to the Global terror index”.

The Boko Haram terrorist group and later the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) have indeed unleashed monumental terror in the North East. With Borno State as its epicentre the terrorist attack has escalated beyond the North East and has affected states in the North West and North Central. International Crisis Group Briefing 137 of 2018 reports that “Boko Haram insurgents have killed some 2,300 teachers and destroyed some 1400 schools throughout Nigeria’s three north-eastern states, Borno, Adamawa and Yobe since 2009. Insurgents have kidnapped hundreds of students among thousands of other civilians. The abduction of 276 school girls from Chibok in Borno State in 2014 was the most notorious case of such kidnapping... fifty seven of the girls escaped within hours of their kidnapping, 103 were released following negotiations between the government and insurgents while four reportedly escaped.” The remaining Chibok girls are yet to be released by the insurgents. The kidnapping of school children in Dapchi and burning down of some

schools in the north east attest to Boko Haram and ISWAP brutality in the area. The raging acts of violence being perpetrated by the insurgents in the north east is a matter of concern as the situation has given rise to the prevalence of out school children in the north east.

Owolabi Temitope J. avers that “Nigeria currently has 20 million out of school children, 13.2 million children out of this are victims of Boko Haram’s activities in north east Nigeria, making it the highest in the world. The dislocation of families and destruction of basic infrastructure have rendered several children of school age to be out of school”. It is imperative to state without equivocation that Boko Haram is against western education and especially the girl child education. This of course accounts for why schools have been their target. The activities of these insurgents therefore, create a cyclical chain of terror as these out of school children easily becomes easy recruits into criminal and terrorist activities”. Writing on the visit of the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres to Bulumkutu Interim Care Centre, the UN News Global Perspective Human Stories (2022) writes that “The UN Chief visited Bulumkutu Interim Care Centre which opened in June 2016. The transit centre has provided shelter, protection and other life saving services to 7,036 people, including 4,018 children (2,756 boys and 1,262 girls) in preparation for reintegration back to the communities. Many of these children were forced or chose through lack of other opportunities to join terrorist groups and take up arms as combatants”. This is indeed the evil effect that terrorism can have on any society as it creates with ease a succession of children that have been dislocated from social and educational life.

The dislocation of families by the insurgents has also created poverty which impacts adversely on the capacity of parents to train their children in schools. Hence, in all dimensions terrorism impacts adversely on educational development following closure of schools, kidnapping and killing of teachers, abduction of school children etc.

Banditry and Educational Development in North West

The North West geo-political zone of Nigeria which consists of Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Kastina, Kebbi and Sokoto have become a theatre of violent and criminal activities perpetrated by the bandits. They have unleashed several violence that has created fear and perplexity in the area. International Crisis Group Report 288 of 2020 States that “Nigeria’s arid North West is beset by violence between herders and farmers which has been compounded by an explosion in criminal activity and infiltration by jihadist groups into the region”.

The herder-farmer conflicts in the North West which has given rise to what is now referred to as banditry centres on competition for resources between the farmers and the herders. The foregoing Report also writes that “More recently, starting in 2011 and accelerating since 2014, the North West has also suffered a surge of violence between pastoralists and allied armed groups frequently called bandits on one hand and farmers supported by community and state sponsored vigilantes in the other hand” Banditry in the North West Nigeria has claimed thousands of lives and the terrorist groups viz Boko Haram and ISWAP have also extended their tentacles to the region unleashing monumental terror and creating rabid fear. Conflict and Resilience Monitor 2022/1 reveals that “Nigeria’s main geopolitical intelligence platform, SBM intelligence estimated that between 2011 and 2020, Nigerians paid at least US \$18.34 million (#7 billion) in ransoms to kidnappers. In the first half of 2021, 2371 people were kidnapped and the sum of about US \$23.84 million (#10 billion) was demanded in ransoms in Nigeria”, banditry and terrorism have therefore a point of convergence as both have become a money making endeavour for the perpetrators. Thus, the foregoing also elaborate that “whether they are referred to as terrorists or bandits, what has become more apparent is that criminal groups that engaged in kidnapping for ransom (K4R) in Nigeria have adopted different types of operational models”. The variations in their

operational models have made the issue more complex by creating a difficulty in identifying which group has perpetrated which act.

The activities of bandits and the terrorist groups have no doubt had a debilitating effect on educational development in the North West as there has been kidnapping of school children and several other acts of banditry and terrorism have displaced homes causing several children to be out of school. Ojewale (2021) writing on the topic 'Rising Insecurity in northwest Nigeria: Terrorism thinly disguised as banditry' points out that "The recent abductions of school boys in Kankara Community, Kastina State and in Niger State are more examples of the deplorable state of security in the country". Besides, Nextier SPD (Security, Peace and Development) 2022 states that "Ubiquitous terror significantly constrains school enrolment in Nigeria. The country has an out of school children problem estimated at 18.5 million children. The figure is a sharp rise from 10.5 million recorded in 2021. UNICEF links the surge to northeast terrorism and banditry in northwest and north central regions".

It is expedient to point out that banditry in the northwest having caused displacement of families has had the consequences of increasing the unemployment level in Nigeria. The National Bureau of statistics reported in 2021 that unemployment in Nigeria was 33.3 percent, underemployment 22.8 percent and Youth unemployment 42.5 percent". The spate of unemployment no doubt compounds the problem of enrolling more youths into criminal activities in Nigeria.

Discussion of Results

Although terrorism and banditry have become a phenomenon cutting across the North East and North West geo-political zones, yet the intensity and prevalence of each varies in both geo-political zones such that the North East is majorly identified with terrorists attacks by the Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province while the North West is principally associated with banditry. This does not mean that incidences of both criminal acts are not being felt across the zones.

The survey indicated that terrorism and banditry have had negative effects in Nigeria. It specifically found that the twin variables have negative effect on education development in Nigeria. It also indicated that the variables have significant relational effect with poverty and unemployment and was less related to bad governance.

The terrorist and banditry acts in the zones have had a common tendency of engendering unemployment and poverty as people are displaced from their settlements thereby causing dislocations in their social and economic endeavours. Conversely, unemployment and poverty also give rise to acts of terrorism and banditry hence they are mutually reinforcing. Ayegba (2015) writing about insecurity in northern Nigeria established that "there exists a strong connection in unemployment, poverty and prevailing insecurity in the region". Also Evans and Kelikume (2019) reported in their study that "the results show that poverty is significant cause of herdsmen attacks in Nigeria, meaning that increased herdsmen attacks is caused by poverty. Inequality is positively related to herdsmen attacks and is statistically significant. Unemployment is also positively related to herdsmen attacks, meaning the higher the level of unemployment, the higher the level of herdsmen attacks". The relationship between unemployment and poverty is such that they create and recreate each other.

While these have the potency of retarding educational development the attacks on schools, whereby students are abducted and teachers killed have compounded the matter and have given rise to the increase in the number of out of school children in the North East and North West geopolitical zones. Bertoni, Maio, Molini and Nistico (2018) found that the activities of the Boko Haram terrorists in the North East Nigeria during the period 2009-2016 impacted on the educational outcomes of children in the North East Nigeria as they wrote

thus “This paper quantifies the impact of the Boko-Haram conflict on various educational outcomes of children living in North East Nigeria during the period 2009-2016. Using an individual panel fixed effects regression and exploiting overtime and across villages variation in conflict intensity, we show that conflict reduces school enrolment”. Besides, in a study conducted in secondary schools’ educational development in Yobe State – Nigeria, Akali Kolo and Hamza reported that “the findings revealed that Boko Haram insurgency has serious effect on secondary school educational development in Yobe State”. These children have been constrained by the insecurity circumstance to be easy tools in the hands of terrorists and bandits.

The overall effects of banditry and terrorism on educational development in the zones have been debilitating and challenging requiring a comprehensive approach that would transcend mere deployment of military troops to counter terrorism and banditry. (Sanchi Alhassan, Ajibabe and Sabo 2022) in their study found that “rural banditry has harmed Nigeria’s whole educational system. As a result of insecurity in the administration of the Nigerian educational system, the paper identified loss of manpower in educational institutions, poor quality of education, destruction of infrastructural facilities, brain drain, closure of educational institutions, discouragement of educational pursuit by children , internal displacement of learners, reduction of private investment in education and inadequate funding of education” as the effects of banditry on education in Nigeria (p. 86).

The effect of banditry and terrorism therefore, does not end with having many children being out of school but the fact that it creates more complex social problems by making criminality a cyclical phenomenon. The fact that the foregoing engenders unemployment and poverty points to the direction that it has the tendency of affecting educational development not only in the short run but also in the long run.

Consequently, it becomes imperative for government to make a spirited effort to tackle the menace as no society can grow beyond its educational level. An educated society is a progressive society and vice versa. It is acknowledged that providing a secured environment is an onerous task especially where there has been the infiltration of many criminal groups and where the activities of the terrorist and bandits are not predicated on a streamlined demand that has not been met by government. It however, behoves the government to improve on governance as mismanagement and corruption have been implicated as being factors engendering violent attacks in the zones.

Conclusion

The North East and North West geo-political zones of Nigeria have been a theatre of terrorism and banditry and these criminal activities have caused series of social problems which affects various sectors. However, the educational sector has been destabilized as some schools have been closed down and the number of out- of school children has increased making Nigeria to have the highest number of out-of-school children in the world. This fact portends a grave danger as it creates a space for easy recruitment of children into banditry and terrorism.

Recommendations

In view of the dangers posed by this development, the following recommendations are therefore made:

- A proactive and sincere step should be taken by the Federal Government to solve the farmer-herders conflict by enforcing a legislation that would require herding to be restricted to ranches.
- Federal Government should make efforts to contain the infiltration of terrorist and arms through the borders.

- There should be an effective school system for displaced persons in the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps with the intent to reduce the number of out of school children which at present is outrageous.
- The Federal and State Governments should provide incentives to win disenchanted students back to school.

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