

The Impact of unemployment on the rise of banditry and kidnapping in Osun State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The rise of banditry and kidnapping in Osun State in recent time is worrisome. The paper assesses socio-economic factors that contribute to banditry and kidnapping; it examines the socio-economic factor that is most influential in driving individuals towards banditry and kidnapping as a result of unemployment. A descriptive survey design was employed. The population of study consists of okada riders, civil servants, motorists, and traders residing in Osun State. A sample of 220 respondents was randomly selected. Data collected were analysed using percentages and ANOVA. The study reveals lack of access to education and skill development opportunities as the most influential factor to banditry and kidnapping. The study found that there is a significant relationship between unemployment rates and the incidence of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria. The study therefore recommends that government at all levels, including private organisations should be proactive in addressing the identified socio-economic factors. The implementation of youth empowerment programmes to equip individuals with skills and resources to seek alternative livelihoods was also recommended.

RESUMO

O aumento do banditismo e dos sequestros no estado de Osun nos últimos tempos é alarmante. Este artigo avalia os fatores socioeconômicos que contribuem para o banditismo e os sequestros, examinando o fator socioeconômico mais influente que leva os indivíduos a se envolverem em tais atividades, como consequência do desemprego. Foi empregado um delineamento de pesquisa descritiva. A população do estudo consiste em mototaxistas, funcionários públicos, motoristas e comerciantes residentes no estado de Osun. Uma amostra de 220 respondentes foi selecionada aleatoriamente. Os dados coletados foram analisados utilizando porcentagens e ANOVA. O estudo revela que a falta de acesso à educação e a oportunidades de desenvolvimento de habilidades é o fator mais influente no banditismo e nos sequestros. O estudo constatou que existe uma relação significativa entre as taxas de desemprego e a incidência de banditismo e sequestros na Nigéria. Portanto, o estudo recomenda que os governos em todos os níveis, incluindo organizações privadas e indivíduos, sejam proativos no enfrentamento dos fatores socioeconômicos identificados.

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Introduction

The rate of banditry and kidnapping in Osun State in recent years is a major concern of scholars. According to Bamigbola (2023), a nurse named Mrs. Sadia Ogunyinka was kidnapped by unidentified gunmen. He gathers that Ogunyinka was kidnapped as she was leaving her farm in Osun State along Iwo/Ileogbo Road. In the same manner, Punch Newspaper (2023) reports three people were abducted in the Iwo town of Iwo Local Government Area in Osun State by a group of armed men. It was reported that the kidnappers wanted N5 million in exchanges for their release.

Another report shows that two people were abducted as they were leaving their farms in Ileogbo area of Osun State (Ogundapo, 2023). The kidnappers contacted the family members after capturing them and demanded N10 million as a ransom to be released. However, in addition to jeopardising public safety, these illicit activities are hindering the nation's economy development and citizens' well-being.

According to Asuquo (2009), it is challenging to define "kidnapping" precisely because it differs from state to state and jurisdiction to jurisdiction. In any event, it is regarded as the forcible removal, detention, and seizure of an individual against that person's will. Forcible arrest and detention of law-abiding persons by entities, people, or groups violating their fundamental rights with the intention of extorting money or causing harm to the individual is known as kidnapping. Egwu (2016) suggests that kidnapping is an offence under common law because it is an unwelcome act on the part of the victim and a restriction of someone else's liberty that violates the provision of freedom of movement as enshrined in the Federal Republic of Nigeria's constitution, from which all other laws derive.

Abraham (2010) defines kidnapping as an act of capturing, removing, and detaining a person through force or deception. Similarly, banditry is defined by Shalangwa (2013) as the act of raiding and attacking victims by members of an armed group, whether or not premeditated, using weapons of offence or defence, especially in semi-organised groups, for the purpose of overpowering the victim and obtaining loot or achieving some political goals. Such bandits are typically seen as outlaws, desperate and lawless marauders who roam around the forest and mountains in order to avoid being recognised, apprehended, and apprehended. It entails threatening or using physical force against someone with the intention of killing or raping them.

According to Uzorma and Nwanegbo-Ben (2014 pp. 132), kidnapping is the illegal, coercive, or fraudulent seizure, detention, or removal of an individual with the intent to extract a ransom from the victim's family. Nigeria has an alarmingly high rate of banditry and kidnapping, which emphasises the urgency of prompt government action. To properly solve this issue, it is necessary to identify the underlying causes of the problem.

Conceptually, rural banditry derives from the word "bandit," which refers to an unlawfully armed organisation that terrorises people and takes their belongings, according to

Sanchi, Alhassan, Ajibade, and Sabo (2022, pp. 79). It is akin to starting gangs and using little, light weapons to assault individuals. Thus, a crime that is intentionally planned and executed for one's own benefit may be referred to as banditry. Moreover, researchers like Mustapha (2019), Suleiman (2017), and Olaniyan and Yahaya (2016 pp. 97-100) have proposed a number of factors that contribute to the occurrence and severity of banditry in Nigeria. Using weapons of offence or defence, especially in semi-organized groups, banditry is defined by Anka (2017) as the practice of raiding and attacking victims by members of an armed group, whether planned or unplanned, with the intention of overpowering the victims and obtaining loot or achieving political goals.

The majority of people view these bandits as lawless, desperate marauders without a place to live. Rather, they stray across the mountains and woodland in an attempt to elude discovery, capture, and imprisonment. The weak state institutions in Nigeria, particularly the security agencies, the existence of blatantly ungoverned areas, the porous nature of Nigeria's borders with its neighbours and the proliferation of armaments, poor leadership, corruption, unemployment, and widespread poverty are a few of the factors they raised.

Businesses and investors consider security when choosing places to invest; nothing grows well in a hostile environment (Verwimp et al., 2019; Imhonopi & Urim, 2016). This is due to the fact that making investments in a hostile environment will result in a waste of funds and national resources. Saying that Nigeria's worrisome banditry rate is complemented by a feeble security apparatus is pointless. This might have resulted from the government's security arm's lack of proper training and weaponry (Achumba et al. 2013 pp. 81).

A notable contributing factor to the prevalence of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria is the elevated rate of joblessness. Nigeria's unemployment rate is 23.1%, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) as at 2019. Similarly, the Northwest has a 77.7% poverty index (NBS, 2012; Rosenje & Moliki, 2016).

According to the findings of the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) study in Nigeria, 133 million Nigerians, or 63% of the country's population, are multidimensionally poor (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). Furthermore, data indicates that 86 million people, or 65 percent of the extreme poor, live in the north, with the remaining people residing in the south (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). These numbers have been consistently increasing yearly as Nigerian universities continue to graduate a big number of young people in the hope that they will have greater employment and prospects following graduation (Adegoke, 2019 pp. 21).

Most of these bandit attacks and security threats in Nigeria have their roots in the anxiety that Nigerian graduates feel, which later turns into frustration and finally into aggression against the government (Suleiman, 2017; Mustapha, 2019). Numerous people have even attributed it to the incapacity and inefficiency of the leadership (Imhonopi & Urim, 2016).

Nigeria has long struggled with high rates of unemployment, which have persisted over time. With the increasing number of young people, the lack of opportunities for gainful employment has resulted in frustration, hopelessness, and a tendency towards criminal activity. In addition to negatively impacting people's financial security, unemployment has serious effects on the stability and security of society as a whole. The majority of young people without jobs faced a lack of opportunities, which put others in the community in grave danger and threatened their survival (Verwimp et al., 2019; Egbegi et al., 2018).

The dynamism and scope of terrorist activities on the continent will decrease if the unemployment problem is resolved. Numerous studies have looked at the relationship between crime and unemployment in a variety of settings, highlighting the possible influence of unemployment on criminal behaviour. For example, Mustard's (2010) study discovered a positive correlation between property crime and unemployment rates in the US. In a similar vein, Chetty and Raghunadan's (2016) study in South Africa found a strong correlation between unemployment and crime rates, with property crimes accounting for the majority of these crimes. According to Kilishi et al. (2014, pp. 881 as cited in Abdulkabir, 2017), there is a growing body of evidence linking rising unemployment to Nigeria's crime wave.

Few studies explicitly address how unemployment affects the rise in banditry and kidnapping in Osun State, Nigeria. Therefore, carrying out a thorough analysis of this relationship is essential for developing strategies that effectively address the rise in criminal activity that may be associated with unemployment in the study area.

Statement of the Problem

The prevalence of kidnapping and banditry in recent times in Osun State, Nigeria, has become a major argument. These criminal activities have not only resulted in significant financial losses for individuals and businesses but have also led to loss of lives, displacement of people, and a general sense of insecurity in the state. While various factors may contribute to the rise of kidnapping and banditry, one critical factor that has been identified as a potential driver is unemployment.

Unemployment can have negative impact on individuals and society as a whole. When people are unable to secure legitimate employment, they may resort to criminal activities as a means of survival. Kidnapping and banditry, in particular, can provide a means for individuals to access financial resources that they might not otherwise have access to.

The relationship between unemployment and crime is well-documented in the literature, with high unemployment rates often associated with increased crime rates. In the context of Osun State, it is essential to understand the impact of unemployment on banditry and kidnapping to develop effective strategies to address these issues. However, looking at the relationship between unemployment and kidnapping/banditry, this study aims to contribute

to the existing body of knowledge on the causes of these criminal activities and inform policy interventions on how to mitigate their impacts, especially in Osun State.

The general objective of this study is to examine the impact of unemployment on the rise of banditry and kidnapping in Osun State, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to: examine the relationship between unemployment rates and the prevalence of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria; identify the socio-economic factors that contribute to individuals resorting to banditry and kidnapping due to unemployment; examine which of the socio-economic factors are most influential in driving individuals towards banditry and kidnapping as a result of unemployment; and assess the socio-economic impact of banditry and kidnapping on affected communities in Osun State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the objectives of the study: To what extent has unemployment in Osun state correlate with the occurrence of banditry and kidnapping? What are the socio-economic factors that drive individuals to engage in banditry and kidnapping as a result of unemployment? Which of the socio-economic factors are most influential in driving individuals towards banditry and kidnapping as a result of unemployment? What are the socio-economic impact of banditry and kidnapping on affected communities in Osun State?

Research Hypothesis

One null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis was formulated and tested in the study as follows:

- There is no significant relationship between unemployment rates and the incidence of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria.
- There is significant relationship between unemployment rates and the incidence of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria.

Empirical Review

Academics have debated the relationship between unemployment and the rise in social crimes in society. Nigeria has a high rate of kidnapping and banditry as a result of the government's failure to address the problem of unemployment. The force behind poverty is unemployment. Furthermore, kidnapping and other crimes are motivated by poverty (Obijiofor, 2019 pp. 48). Youth without jobs are compelled to find means of subsistence in the precarious financial state of the nation.

The number of people in the economically active population who are unemployed but available for work and actively seeking it, including those who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left their jobs, is defined by the International Labour Organisation (ILO)

as the unemployed (World Bank, 1998). Fajana (2000) defines unemployment as the state in which individuals who are able and willing to work but are unable to locate appropriate paid employment are considered unemployed. It is one of the macroeconomic issues that any responsible government ought to keep an eye on and control. He further states that poverty and related welfare issues would rise in an economy with a higher unemployment rate.

Every country faces unemployment on a regular basis, but in a different way, as it is both a social and economic problem. Actually, according to the theories of the classical economists, there can never be complete employment in any economy (Ogunyomi & Oginni, 2013). But things in Nigeria have gotten to an unthinkable level. Research reveals that nearly 75% of people who are able and willing to work, particularly recent graduates and school dropouts, are unable .

The national unemployment rates for Nigeria between 2000 and 2011 indicate that the percentage of unemployed people was 31.1% in 2000 and decreased to 11.9% in 2005, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (2009). Once more, it increased to 29.5% in 2012 and 23.9% in 2011. According to NBS projections, the unemployment rate is expected to surpass 35% in 2013 and 2014, respectively. According to BLG (2012), the average rate of youth unemployment in Nigeria in 2012 was 46.5%. Numerous sources have attributed Nigeria's high violent crime rate to unemployment, particularly among young people. According to research, young people without jobs are disproportionately more likely to commit crimes and be victims of violence (Okafor, 2011 pp. 369). Violence is one way that the widening wealth and poverty divide impacts society.

In Nigerian society today, unemployment is the primary cause of the bulk of social crimes committed by young people. The rise in violent crimes, including rape, armed robberies, and other forms of violence, is primarily related to the rate of unemployment (Ezie, 2012). The author pointed out that a significant portion of young people who participate in criminal activity are those who do not have a paying job, based on a review of the majority of the arrested offenders. A portion of them possess the ability to work for a living but have not been given the chance. She makes it clear that one of the main reasons for the growing degree of social unrest and insecurity that permeates Nigeria as a whole is unemployment. According to Abdulkabir (2017), the increase in crime in Nigeria has been attributed to the country's rising unemployment rate.

As a result, idle youth often turn to criminal activity in order to fit in. It's sufficient to mention that young people are easily tempted to money due to the widespread "get rich quick syndrome" in the nation. They hence frequently will stop at nothing to become wealthy rapidly. Therefore, a major factor in the large number of unemployed young people in Nigeria turning to violent crimes like banditry is the country's high unemployment rate, particularly among young people (Adeniyi, 2015).

Insecurity and violent crimes in Nigeria are largely caused by unemployment and poverty among Nigerians, particularly among the youth, claim Adagba et al. (2012). Furthermore, the increased incidence of violent conflicts in Nigeria has been attributed to youth unemployment. The inability of succeeding administrations to address issues of poverty, unemployment, and unequal wealth distribution among ethnic nationalities is another significant contributor to the nation's insecurity.

In a similar spirit, Altine (2020b) claimed that life has become difficult and that only the strongest survive because Nigeria's governments have been unable to address the issues brought on by poverty. According to Adeniyi (2018), the number of people in Nigeria living in extreme poverty has surpassed that of persons in India. Nigeria has the largest number of people living in extreme poverty—87 million, or nearly half of the country's population—living on less than \$1.90 per day.

Alao et al. (2015) connected poverty with crimes such as banditry and terrorism. It has been stated that those who are having financial difficulties are more inclined to turn to illegal means of meeting their daily necessities, even if there is no direct correlation between poverty and criminality. It was discovered that the majority of people in the Northwest of Nigeria, particularly young people, had a tendency to join bandit groups due to the benefits associated with being a bandit (Goke, 2019).

Ajaegbu (2012 pp. 316) also pointed out that the increase in violent crimes committed by young people, including terrorism, kidnapping, robbery, and thuggery, is an indication of a "gap" in society. He notes that society already sets expectations for people and provides ways for them to meet them. However, when resources are scarce, as they were in 2011, when the youth unemployment rate was 46.5% (Sanusi, 2012), people are compelled to use illegal methods in order to meet social expectations.

According to those who engage in it across the nation, kidnappings have grown to be a very profitable business. Young people without jobs can be enlisted in a number of dreadful gangs, including those engaged in political thuggery. The author emphasised that upon a student's graduation from a university or other postsecondary institution, there is a sense of excitement and high hopes. However, after a few years of unemployment brought on by the few or nonexistent opportunities society provides for recent graduates, expectations gradually fade and are replaced by a sense of frustration. As this frustration grows and the sense of being deprived of what is expected rises, there is a greater likelihood that the person or people will turn to illegal activity in order to actualize their expectations in society.

In other word, Emejulu (2014) discovered a negative correlation between violent crime and the high rate of youth unemployment in the nation, as well as a negative impact on business growth and economic development. The analysis also discovered that the government's previous attempts to lower unemployment were primarily unsuccessful as a result of a poor implementation strategy that included shoddy targeting, insufficient funding,

and unethical behaviour. According to Sanchi, Alhassan, Ajibade, and Sabo (2022, pp. 87), the goal of the several stakeholders' efforts to confront the plague has not been met. In order to address the widespread and chronic poverty that exists across the nation, it is advised that the government, among other things, adopt strategies and strategies that are more proactive in waging the war against rural banditry and create meaningful employment opportunities for the youth.

According to a study by Ezie (2012 pp. 56), one of the main reasons behind the rising levels of social unrest and insecurity that are rife throughout Nigeria as a whole is unemployment. The study by Ajufo (2013 pp. 308) also demonstrates that unemployment is a serious threat to the nation's social, economic, and political development. However, a number of studies comparing social crimes and unemployment have been carried out in the nation. Although, Osun State is thought to be one of the most peaceful states in Nigeria, recent observations indicate that the state is experiencing a worrying rise in kidnapping and banditry, with young people being the main perpetrators of these social crimes. In light of this, this study aims to investigate the relationship between unemployment and the rise in banditry and kidnapping in Osun State. Additionally, this study will be added to the body of existing literature, which will be helpful for researchers in the future who might wish to work in the field of study.

Methodology

The current study utilizes a descriptive survey design to examine the impact of unemployment on the rise of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria. The target population consists of okada riders, civil servants, motorists, and traders residing in Osun State. A sample of 220 respondents were randomly selected from the population of the study (this selection procedure provided an equal chance of being selected to all individuals within the targeted population).

Both primary and secondary sources were employed for data collection in this study. For the primary source, a self-designed questionnaire was utilized, employing a 4-likert rating scale to capture the necessary information. This method enabled the researcher to gather firsthand information from the respondents.

The questionnaire focused on gathering data about the impact of unemployment on the rise of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria. Additionally, secondary sources such as textbooks, academic journals, media sources, and online databases were consulted to gather relevant related data.

These sources provided a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. The collected data were then analyzed using various statistical techniques including percentages, frequency counts, and ANOVA. These analytical methods allowed for a robust examination of the data and enabled the researcher to draw meaningful conclusions.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 above reveals the gender distribution of questionnaires. Analysis shows that 149 (67,7%) of respondents were male, while 71 (32,3%) of respondents were female.

Table 1.

Analysis on Respondent's Gender Distribution in Osun State

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	149	67.7%
Female	71	32.3%
Total	220	100%

Source: Author's fieldwork

The table 2 presents the occupation analysis of the respondents that were involved in the study.

Table 2.

Analysis on Respondent's Occupation Distribution among the selected LGAs in Osun State

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Civil servants	55	25%
Okada riders	55	25%
Motorists	55	25%
Traders	55	25%
Total	220	100%

Source: Author's fieldwork

The result shows that the questionnaires were equally distributed among the 220 respondents that were involved in the study; civil servants with 55 (25%), Okada riders with 55 (25%), motorists with 55 (25%), and traders with 55 (25%), respectively.

The findings of the study shows that 171 (77.7%) and 49 (22.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that unemployment rates contribute to an increased prevalence of banditry and kidnapping, while none of the respondents neither strongly disagreed nor disagreed. The findings of the study also reveals that 187 (85%) and 33 (15%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that unemployed individuals often get involved in criminal activities like banditry and kidnapping as a mean to make money, while none of the respondents neither strongly disagreed nor disagreed.

Table 3.

Analysis of Responses on Relationship between Unemployment Rates and the prevalence of Banditry and Kidnapping in Nigeria

Item description	SA (%)	A (%)	SD (%)	D (%)	Total
Unemployment rates contribute to an increased prevalence of banditry and kidnapping	171(77.7%)	49(22.3%)	-	-	220(100%)
Unemployed individuals often get involved in criminal activities like banditry and kidnapping as a mean to make Money	187(85%)	33(15%)	-	-	220(100%)
Lack of employment opportunities make individuals more vulnerable to recruitment by criminal gangs involved in banditry and kidnapping	159(72.3%)	51(23.2%)	-	10(4.5%)	220(100%)
Laziness on the part of youth contributes to banditry and kidnapping act.	207(94.1%)	13(5.9%)	-	-	220(100%)
Ineffective or bad leader is also considered as one of the factors that lead to banditry and kidnapping	209(95%)	11(5%)	-	-	220(100%)
State of security in the country also contribute to banditry and kidnapping	217(98.6%)	3(1.4%)	-	-	220(100%)

Source: Author's fieldwork

The results of the study equally shows that 159 (72.3%) and 51 (23.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that lack of employment opportunities make individuals more vulnerable to recruitment by criminal gangs involved in banditry and kidnapping, while 10 (4.5%) of the respondents disagreed. Laziness on the part of youth has been considered as one of the contributing factors to banditry and kidnapping act in Nigeria; as 207 (94.1%) and 13 (5.9%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed, while none of the respondents neither strongly disagreed nor disagreed.

The findings of the study also shows that 209 (95%) and 11 (5%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that ineffective or bad leader is one of the factors that lead to banditry and kidnapping, while none of the respondents neither strongly disagreed nor disagreed. The finding of the study reveals that 217 (98.6%) and 3 (1.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that state of security in the country also contribute to banditry and kidnapping, while none of the respondents neither strongly disagreed nor disagreed.

From the table below, the results present shows that 153 (69.5%) and 67 (31.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that lack of access to education and skill development opportunities is one of the socio-economic factors that can drive individuals to engage in banditry and kidnapping, while none of the respondents neither strongly disagreed nor disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.

Analysis of the Responses on Socio-Economic Factors that drive Individuals to engage in Banditry and Kidnapping as a result of Unemployment

Item description	SA (%)	A (%)	SD (%)	D (%)	Total
Lack of access to education and skill development opportunities	153(69.5%)	67(31.5%)	-	-	220(100%)
Income inequality	111(50.5%)	89(40.5%)	3(1.36%)	17(7.7%)	220(100%)
Lack of basic amenities and infrastructure	141(64.1%)	63(28.6%)	-	16(7.2%)	220(100%)
Lack of social support systems	71(32.3%)	123(55.9%)	-	26(11.8%)	220(100%)

Source: Author's fieldwork

From the table above, the results present shows that 153 (69.5%) and 67 (31.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that lack of access to education and skill development opportunities is one of the socio-economic factors that can drive individuals to engage in banditry and kidnapping, while none of the respondents neither strongly disagreed nor disagreed with the statement. The findings of the study also reveals income inequality as another socio-economic factor that can drive banditry and kidnapping; 111 (50.5%) and 89 (40.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed, while 3 (1.36%) and 17 (7.7%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed, respectively.

The finding of the study indicates that 141 (64.1%) and 63(28.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that lack of basic amenities and infrastructure is another socio-economic factor that can drive individuals to engage in banditry and kidnapping, while 16 (7.2%) of the respondents disagreed. The results finally show that 71 (32.3%) and 123 (55.9%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that lack of social support systems constitutes another socio-economic factor that lead individuals to engage in banditry and kidnapping, while 26 (11.8%) of the respondents disagreed.

Table 5.

Analysis of the Responses on Socio-Economic Factors that is most influential in driving Individuals towards Banditry and Kidnapping as a result of Unemployment

Item description	Frequency/percentage	Ranking
Lack of access to education and skill development opportunities	131(65.5%)	1 st
Lack of basic amenities and infrastructure	79(39.5%)	2 nd
Income inequality	7(3.5%)	3 rd
Lack of social support systems	3(1.5%)	4 th

Source: Author's fieldwork

The findings on the table above present the responses on socio-economic factors that are most influential in driving individuals towards banditry and kidnapping as a result of unemployment. Based on the analysis of the results, lack of access to education and skill development opportunities was ranked 1st, lack of basic amenities and infrastructure was ranked 2nd, income inequality was ranked 3rd, while lack of social support systems was ranked 4th. The study implies that lack of access to education and skill development opportunities is the most influential factor on why individuals engage in banditry and kidnapping.

Table 6.

Analysis of Responses on Socio-Economic Impact of Banditry and Kidnapping on affected Communities in Osun State

Item description	SA (%)	A (%)	SD (%)	D (%)	Total
Do you agree that the communities affected by banditry and kidnaping experienced a decline in economic activities?	167(75.9%)	59(24.1%)	-	-	220(100%)
There is decrease in investments and business opportunities in the affected communities because of these criminal activities	139(63.2%)	71(32.3%)	-	10(4.5%)	220(100%)
The residents of affected communities facing financial difficulties and struggling to meet daily expenses	121(55%)	51(23.2%)	11(5%)	37(16.8%)	220(100%)
There is fear and tension in the affected area	201(91.4%)	19(8.6%)	-	-	220(100%)

Source: Author's fieldwork

The findings of the study as presented in the table above reveals that 167 (75.9%) and 59 (24.1%) of the total respondents strongly agreed and agreed that the communities affected

by banditry and kidnaping experienced a decline in economic activities, while none of the respondents neither strongly disagreed nor disagreed. The finding also shows that there is decrease in investments and business opportunities in the affected communities because of these criminal activities; as 139 (63.2%) and 71 (32.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed, while 10 (4.5%) of the respondents disagreed.

The results of the study indicate that 121 (55%) and 51 (23.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that the residents of affected communities are facing financial difficulties and struggling to meet daily expenses, while 11 (5%) and 37 (16.8%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed. The finding of the study also shows that 201 (91.4%) and 19 (8.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that there is fear and tension in the affected area, while none of the respondents neither strongly disagreed nor disagreed.

Table 8.

One-Way ANOVA Analysis of the Responses on Significant relationship between Unemployment rates and the incidence of Banditry and Kidnapping in Nigeria

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	25.262	4	6.316	145.483	.000
Within Groups	9.333	215	.043		
Total	34.595	219			

Source: Author's fieldwork

The significant level is tested at $P < 0.05$

The result on significant relationship between unemployment rates and the incidence of banditry and kidnaping in Nigeria in the table above shows that F is 145.483, $p < 0.000$. This shows that there is no adequate proof to accept the null hypothesis. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between unemployment rates and the incidence of banditry and kidnaping in Nigeria, was rejected. This indicates that the alternate hypothesis, which states that, there is significant relationship between unemployment rates and the incidence of banditry and kidnaping in Nigeria, was accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The study was an attempt to examine the impact of unemployment on the rise of banditry and kidnaping in Osun State, Nigeria. A self-designed questionnaire was administered to 220 respondents.

The first research objective was to examine the relationship between unemployment rates and the prevalence of banditry and kidnaping in Nigeria. The findings of the study show

that unemployment rates contribute to an increased prevalence of banditry and kidnapping. The findings of the study also reveal that unemployed individuals often get involved in criminal activities like banditry and kidnapping as a mean to make money. The results of the study equally show that lack of employment opportunities makes individuals more vulnerable to recruitment by criminal gangs involved in banditry and kidnapping.

The findings of the study align with those of Verwimp et al. (2019), and Egbegi et al. (2018), whose findings show that lack of opportunities for most of the unemployed youth poses a great danger and threat to the peace and survival of others within the community. Laziness on the part of youth and ineffective or bad leaders have been considered contributing factors to banditry and kidnapping acts in Nigeria. The findings of this study are in line with the study conducted by Abdulkabir (2017), who found that the rising wave of crime in Nigeria has been blamed on the increasing level of unemployment.

The second objective was equally raised to examine the socio-economic factors that contribute to individuals resorting to banditry and kidnapping due to unemployment. The findings of the study identified lack of access to education and skill development opportunities, income inequality, lack of basic amenities and infrastructure, and lack of social support systems as socio-economic factors that can drive banditry and kidnapping.

The third objective was an attempt to examine which of the socio-economic factors are most influential in driving individuals towards banditry and kidnapping as a result of unemployment. The findings of the study reveal that, lack of access to education and skill development opportunities is the most influential factor on why individuals engage in banditry and kidnapping.

The fourth research objective assesses the socio-economic impact of banditry and kidnapping on affected communities in Osun State, Nigeria. The findings of the study reveal that the communities affected by banditry and kidnapping experienced a decline in economic activity. The finding also shows that there is a decrease in investments and business opportunities in the affected communities because of these criminal activities. The results of the study indicate that the residents of affected communities are facing financial difficulties and struggling to meet daily expenses. The findings of the study also show there is fear and tension in the affected area.

The null hypothesis was formulated to test the significant relationship between unemployment rates and the incidence of banditry and kidnapping in Osun State, Nigeria. The findings of the study show that there is no adequate proof to accept the null hypothesis. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis, which states that, there is a significant relationship between unemployment rates and the incidence of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria, was

accepted. This finding is in consonance with Mustard's study (2010), which found a positive association between unemployment rates and property crime rates in the United States.

Conclusion

It could be inferred from the findings of the study that unemployment has led to an increase in banditry and kidnapping acts in Nigeria. Among the identified socio-economic factors that drive banditry and kidnapping, the study ranks lack of access to education and skill development opportunities as the most influential factor. The finding also shows that there is a decrease in investments and business opportunities in the affected communities because of these criminal activities. The study found that there is a significant relationship between unemployment rates and the incidence of banditry and kidnapping in Osun State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations were made:

The study suggests that unemployment crisis should be addressed by creating more job opportunities through economic diversification and investment in key sectors.

The study also suggests that governments at all levels, including private organisations and individuals, should be proactive in addressing the identified socio-economic factors.

The study recommends the implementation of youth empowerment programmes to equip individuals with skills and resources to seek alternative livelihoods.

The Nigerian environment should be made conducive to attracting foreign investments to create job opportunities. Strengthening law enforcement and security measures to combat banditry and kidnapping activities effectively will help to achieve this.

Engaging local communities through awareness campaigns and collaborative efforts to prevent and address incidents of banditry and kidnapping is also suggested.

There should be improvement in accessing quality education and vocational training.

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