

ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF BANDITRY ON CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN UPPER BASIC SCHOOLS IN NORTH-CENTRAL NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study assessed the impact of banditry on curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the impact of banditry on teachers' effectiveness and the coverage of curriculum contents. The study was anchored on Systems Theory propounded by Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968) and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1943). A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 42,331 principals and teachers in 2,897 public Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria. A sample of 381 respondents, comprising 27 principals and 354 teachers, was selected from 27 public Upper Basic Schools in Benue, Nasarawa, Niger, and Plateau States through a multi-stage sampling procedure. Data were collected using a researcher-developed instrument titled Assessment of the Impact of Banditry on Curriculum Implementation Questionnaire (AIBCIQ). The instrument was validated by three experts, while Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of 0.82, 0.79, and 0.81 were obtained for the three clusters, with an overall reliability coefficient of 0.81. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while the Mann–Whitney U-test was used to test the null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that banditry negatively affects teachers' effectiveness in curriculum implementation (cumulative mean = 3.08), students' attendance and participation (cumulative mean = 2.86), and curriculum coverage and completion of academic programmes (cumulative mean = 3.03). The findings further revealed no significant differences between the responses of teachers and principals regarding teachers' effectiveness ($p = 0.603$), students' attendance ($p = 0.601$), and curriculum coverage ($p = 0.701$). The study concluded that banditry constitutes a major threat to effective curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria. The study recommended, among others, the provision of hazard allowances and psychosocial support for teachers in high-risk areas increased community support for students' regular attendance, and the development of alternative learning platforms to sustain instruction during periods of school closure.

Keywords: Banditry, Curriculum Implementation, Teachers' Effectiveness, Curriculum Coverage, Upper Basic Schools.

Introduction

Education is widely recognised as a fundamental instrument for national development, social transformation, and human capital formation. It serves as a means through which societies transmit knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes from one generation to another. In Nigeria, the school curriculum is designed to facilitate the achievement of educational goals by providing 6+structured learning experiences that promote cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development among learners (NERDC, 2013). Curriculum implementation, therefore, constitutes a critical phase of the educational process, as it involves the translation of planned educational objectives into meaningful learning experiences through teaching and learning activities. Effective curriculum implementation depends on several factors, including the availability of qualified teachers, instructional materials, conducive learning environments, regular school attendance, and adequate supervision (NERDC, 2013; Ossai & Onyekpe, 2025).

The Upper Basic Education level, comprising Junior Secondary School (JSS) 1–3, occupies an important position in Nigeria’s basic education system. It provides learners with knowledge, skills, values, and competencies that prepare them for further education and participation in society. The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) provides the curriculum framework for Junior Secondary School 1–3 as part of the Basic Education Curriculum and has developed curriculum materials and teachers’ guides to support its implementation. The effective implementation of the curriculum at this level is therefore important to the achievement of the objectives of basic education. However, the attainment of these objectives has been increasingly challenged by insecurity in several parts of Nigeria, particularly in the northern region. Persistent conflict, attacks on schools, kidnapping, displacement, and school closures have disrupted children’s access to education and created unsafe learning environments.

In recent years, banditry has emerged as one of the most serious security challenges confronting Nigeria. Banditry refers to organised criminal activities involving armed robbery, kidnapping, cattle rustling, village raids, and attacks on communities by armed groups. Although initially concentrated in the North-West geopolitical zone, the menace has spread to several states in North-Central Nigeria, including Niger, Benue, Nasarawa, Kogi, Kwara, and parts of Plateau State. The increasing activities of bandits have resulted in loss of lives, destruction of property, displacement of populations, and disruption of socioeconomic activities, including education (UNICEF, 2025).

The consequences of banditry on curriculum implementation are multifaceted. Teachers working in insecurity-prone areas often experience fear, trauma, and low morale, which may negatively affect their commitment to teaching and the effective delivery of curriculum content. In some cases, qualified teachers relocate to safer areas, resulting in teacher shortages and increased workload for those who remain. Students are equally affected through absenteeism, displacement, psychological trauma, and reduced participation in classroom activities. These challenges hinder the attainment of curriculum objectives and compromise learning outcomes. Studies have indicated that violence and attacks on educational institutions significantly disrupt teaching and learning processes and reduce the quality of education available to affected learners (Ojewale, 2024).

It is against this background that this study seeks to assess the impact of banditry on curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria. The study is expected to provide empirical evidence that will assist policymakers, educational

administrators, school managers and other stakeholders in formulating effective measures for safeguarding education and promoting effective curriculum implementation in areas affected by insecurity.

Banditry has emerged as one of the major security challenges confronting Nigeria in recent years, particularly in the northern region of the country. The concept generally refers to organised or semi-organised criminal activities involving armed groups that engage in kidnapping, cattle rustling, robbery, extortion, village raids, and other forms of violence against individuals and communities. In the Nigerian context, banditry has evolved beyond isolated acts of rural criminality into a complex security problem involving armed groups that operate across extensive geographical areas and employ violent tactics to achieve economic and territorial objectives (Eze, 2022; Maiangwa, 2022). Bandit groups have been associated with kidnapping for ransom, cattle rustling, and destruction of property, attacks on communities, and the displacement of populations. The increasing sophistication, organisation, and persistence of these activities have made banditry a significant threat to human security, livelihoods, and the provision of essential social services, including education (Maiangwa, 2022; International Crisis Group, 2020). Banditry has significant implications for educational development because schools cannot function effectively in an environment characterised by fear and insecurity. Frequent attacks often lead to school closures, disruption of academic calendars, teacher migration, and reduced student enrolment. Consequently, the achievement of educational goals and effective curriculum implementation become difficult.

According to UNESCO (2025), curriculum implementation entails putting into practice the officially prescribed curriculum through effective teaching, learning, assessment, and supervision activities. Similarly, Offorma (2021) describes curriculum implementation as the practical execution of curriculum plans designed to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes among learners. Teachers play a critical role in curriculum implementation because they are directly responsible for translating curriculum objectives into classroom instruction. Their effectiveness determines the extent to which educational goals are achieved. Research conducted by Ojewale (2024) revealed that insecurity significantly affects teacher morale, attendance, and instructional effectiveness in northern Nigeria. Similarly, UNICEF (2024) observed that attacks on schools have forced many teachers to abandon their duty posts, thereby disrupting curriculum delivery and educational continuity. Consequently, banditry undermines teachers' ability to effectively deliver lessons, assess learners and complete prescribed curriculum contents.

Banditry negatively affects students' participation through school closures, displacement, fear of attacks, and psychological trauma. Parents often withdraw their children from school due to security concerns, while some learners are displaced alongside their families following attacks on communities. Fear and insecurity may also affect learners' concentration, motivation, and willingness to participate in classroom activities. Students who experience or witness violent attacks may suffer emotional and psychological distress that hinders learning.

Teachers' effectiveness can be described as the extent to which a teacher successfully performs professional responsibilities and facilitates the achievement of desired learning outcomes among students. An effective teacher demonstrates adequate subject-matter knowledge, pedagogical competence, classroom management skills, and commitment to professional responsibilities, effective communication, and the ability to motivate learners. According to Stronge (2018), teacher effectiveness involves the combination of professional

knowledge, instructional skills, classroom practices, and personal qualities that contribute to improved student learning and academic achievement.

Teachers' effectiveness also involves regular attendance and commitment to instructional duties. A teacher may possess the required professional qualifications and knowledge but may be unable to contribute effectively to curriculum implementation if he or she is irregular in school attendance or lacks commitment to teaching responsibilities. Regular attendance enables teachers to maintain continuity in instruction, complete planned lessons, monitor students' progress, and provide appropriate feedback. UNESCO (2023) noted that the availability and regular presence of qualified teachers are essential for ensuring continuity and quality in teaching and learning. For the purpose of this study, teachers' effectiveness refers to the extent to which teachers in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria can perform their professional responsibilities effectively in spite of the challenges associated with banditry. It includes teachers' regular attendance, commitment to teaching, morale, motivation, lesson delivery, concentration on instructional duties, and overall job performance.

Curriculum coverage refers to the extent to which the prescribed curriculum contents are taught and completed within the designated academic period. Effective curriculum implementation requires sufficient instructional time for lesson delivery, classroom assessment, revision, practical activities, and other learning experiences. The extent to which teachers are able to cover the prescribed curriculum is therefore influenced by the availability and effective utilisation of instructional time. However, insecurity and banditry can substantially reduce the time available for teaching and learning through school closures, interruptions of academic calendars, displacement of teachers and learners, and other disruptions to normal school activities. Evidence from UNICEF indicates that insecurity in northern Nigeria has disrupted schooling and restricted children's access to education, including in Niger State (UNICEF, 2025). Such disruptions can result in teachers being unable to complete their schemes of work as planned, while students may miss substantial periods of classroom instruction, thereby affecting the extent of curriculum coverage.

Studies have shown that schools located in conflict-affected areas often struggle to cover curriculum contents adequately. Interrupted academic sessions frequently compel teachers to rush lessons, omit topics, or compress instructional activities. Such practices negatively affect learners' understanding and achievement of curriculum objectives. As a result, banditry creates significant barriers to effective curriculum coverage and educational quality.

This study is anchored in the Systems Theory propounded by Ludwig von Bertalanffy in 1968. Systems Theory was developed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968) to explain how various components of a system interact and depend on one another for the achievement of common goals. The theory views an organization as a system made up of interrelated parts that work together to achieve desired outcomes. In the educational context, a school is regarded as a social system consisting of inputs, processes, outputs, and feedback mechanisms. The inputs include students, teachers, instructional materials, school facilities, and financial resources. The process component involves teaching, learning, supervision, and curriculum implementation activities. The outputs consist of students' academic achievement, skills acquisition, and behavioural development, while feedback provides information for improving educational practices.

According to the theory, any disruption in one component of the educational system affects the functioning of other components and ultimately influences the achievement of

educational goals. Banditry constitutes an external environmental factor that interferes with the normal functioning of the school system. Attacks on schools, displacement of teachers and students, destruction of facilities, and prolonged school closures disrupt the teaching-learning process and hinder effective curriculum implementation. Consequently, the quality of educational outputs may be adversely affected. The relevance of Systems Theory to this study lies in its recognition that curriculum implementation depends on the interaction of several educational variables. Since banditry disrupts these variables, it inevitably affects the effectiveness of curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria. Systems Theory explains how banditry disrupts the educational system and curriculum implementation processes; the theory provides a comprehensive explanation of how banditry affects teachers' effectiveness and curriculum content coverage in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria.

Several studies have examined the effects of insecurity, armed conflict, and banditry on educational activities in Nigeria and other developing countries. Ojewale (2024) investigated the impact of banditry on education in North-West Nigeria. The study revealed that bandit attacks resulted in school closures, increased teacher absenteeism, displacement of learners, and disruption of academic activities. The findings further showed that insecurity reduced students' access to quality education and negatively affected curriculum delivery. The study recommended strengthening school security and implementing alternative learning strategies in conflict-affected communities.

Ajiboye, Adefisoye and Bamidele (2024) examined the effects of armed banditry on human capital development in North-West Nigeria. Using documentary evidence and secondary data analysis, the study found that banditry significantly disrupted educational activities through school closures, destruction of educational infrastructure, and displacement of teachers and learners. The researchers concluded that insecurity poses a major threat to educational development and human capital formation in affected regions.

Internationally, UNESCO (2024) reported that conflict and insecurity remain major barriers to educational access and curriculum implementation across many developing countries. According to the report, violence against schools often leads to interrupted learning, loss of instructional time, destruction of educational facilities, and declining educational quality. The reviewed studies collectively indicate that insecurity and banditry negatively affect educational processes through school closures, teacher displacement, student absenteeism, destruction of educational facilities, and reduced learning outcomes. Most of the existing studies focused on general educational access, human capital development, and the effects of insecurity on teaching and learning, particularly in North-West and North-East Nigeria.

However, there appears to be limited empirical evidence specifically examining the impact of banditry on curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools within the North-Central region of Nigeria. Furthermore, few studies have comprehensively investigated the influence of banditry on teachers' effectiveness, students' participation, instructional resources, curriculum coverage, and academic performance simultaneously. This gap necessitates the present study, which seeks to assess the impact of banditry on curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, North-Central Nigeria has experienced increasing insecurity involving banditry, kidnapping, communal violence, attacks on communities, and displacement. Niger State, in particular, has experienced serious security challenges that have affected communities and disrupted access to basic services, including education. A 2025 UNICEF study on insecurity in Katsina, Zamfara, and Niger States found that banditry was the most prevalent and disruptive form of insecurity reported across the study areas, while kidnapping was also identified as a major security threat. The study further established that insecurity had disrupted schooling and hindered access to education in affected communities (UNICEF, 2025).

The effect of insecurity on education extends beyond individual incidents of violence. UNICEF reported that attacks on schools and the abduction of students and teachers have resulted in school closures, interrupted learning, and reduced children's access to education, with north-central and north-western Nigeria particularly affected by attacks on educational institutions. More recently, UNICEF's 2026 humanitarian assessment noted that conflict and violence continue to disrupt learning in north-central, north-western, and north-eastern Nigeria, while attacks on schools and abductions contribute to frequent school closures and prevent children from receiving consistent education.

The persistent attacks on schools and communities have created an atmosphere of fear and insecurity among teachers, students, parents, and educational administrators. Consequently, insecurity can contribute to irregular school attendance, teacher absenteeism, displacement of learners, and interruptions in the teaching and learning process, making it difficult for schools to complete planned curriculum content within the stipulated academic calendar. Recent evidence from UNICEF indicates that insecurity, including banditry, abductions, and communal conflicts, has disrupted schooling and hindered access to education in affected communities, particularly in northern Nigeria (UNICEF, 2025). Furthermore, UNICEF reports that attacks on schools have resulted in school closures and interruptions to learning, while concerns about school safety continue to affect the ability of children to learn in secure and supportive environments (UNICEF, 2024).

Despite the growing body of literature on insecurity and education in Nigeria, much of the existing research has focused on the North-East and North-West regions, with relatively limited empirical attention given to the specific impact of banditry on curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools within the North-Central region. Consequently, there is insufficient evidence regarding the extent to which banditry influences the various dimensions of curriculum implementation in these schools.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to assess the impact of banditry on curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. examine the impact of banditry on teachers' effectiveness in curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria; and
2. examine the impact of banditry on the coverage of curriculum contents in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the impact of banditry on teachers' effectiveness in curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria?
2. What is the impact of banditry on the coverage of curriculum contents in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of teachers and principals on the impact of banditry on teachers' effectiveness in curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of teachers and principals on the impact of banditry on the coverage of curriculum contents in curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. According to Creswell and Creswell (2023), a survey research design is a quantitative procedure in which researchers administer questionnaires or interviews to a sample of a population to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviours, or characteristics of that population. Similarly, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018) explain that descriptive survey research is suitable for obtaining information from a large group of people regarding current conditions, practices and issues. Therefore, the descriptive survey research design is deemed appropriate for this study because it provides an effective means of collecting reliable data from a relatively large population and facilitates the generalization of findings to the target population.

This study's target population consisted of all 42,331 Upper Basic schools' principals and teachers in North-Central Nigeria, focusing on public schools due to their majority representation and diverse sample. According to the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC, 2025), there are 2,897 public Upper Basic schools, with 2,897 principals and 39,434 teachers across the North-Central Nigeria, consists of six states, namely Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau, as well as the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The study focuses on public Upper Basic Schools because they constitute a major component of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme and are more likely to experience the direct effects of insecurity and banditry in affected communities.

The sample for this study was drawn from public Upper Basic Schools located in selected banditry-prone states in North-Central Nigeria, namely Niger, Benue, Plateau and Nasarawa States. These states are selected because they have experienced recurring incidents of bandit attacks, kidnappings, community violence and other security challenges that have affected educational activities. The study employed a multi-stage sampling technique involving four stages.

In the first stage, purposive sampling technique was used to select Niger, Benue, Plateau, and Nasarawa States from the North-Central geopolitical zone. The selection is based on the prevalence of banditry and insecurity in these states, which makes them suitable for investigating the impact of banditry on curriculum implementation. In the second stage, purposive sampling was used to select Local Government Areas (LGAs) that have recorded frequent incidents of banditry and insecurity within each selected state. This will ensure that respondents possess adequate experience and knowledge regarding the phenomenon under investigation. In the third stage, simple random sampling technique was used to select public

Upper Basic Schools from the identified LGAs. This technique provided all schools within the selected LGAs an equal chance of being included in the study. In the fourth stage, proportionate stratified sampling technique was employed to select respondents from the sampled schools. The respondents were stratified into two categories: principals and teachers. Thereafter, proportionate sample was drawn from each category to ensure adequate representation.

A sample of 381 respondents participated in this study. The sample size is determined using the sample size selection table developed by Research Advisors (2006). According to this table, for a population of 42,331, a sample size of 381 is considered adequate to generalise findings at a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error. The instrument for data collection in this study was a researcher-developed questionnaire titled "Assessment of the Impact of Banditry on Curriculum Implementation Questionnaire (AIBCIQ)". The questionnaire is considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to collect data from a large number of respondents within a relatively short period and at a lower cost. The questionnaire consisted of two sections, namely Sections A and B. Section A elicited demographic information of the respondents such as state, gender, designation (principal or teacher), years of teaching experience, educational qualification and location of school (urban or rural). Section B contained items designed to obtain information on the impact of banditry on curriculum implementation. The section was organised into two (2) clusters corresponding to the specific objectives of the study using four points modified Likert scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) in line with Nworgu (2024), with the values of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The choice of a four-point Likert scale is intended to encourage respondents to make definite choices regarding each statement without a neutral option.

To ensure the validity of the Impact of Banditry on Curriculum Implementation Questionnaire (IBCIQ), the instrument was subjected to construct and content validity procedures. The drafted questionnaire was presented to two experts for scrutiny and assessment. The experts comprised of specialist in Measurement and Evaluation and in Curriculum and Instruction from the Faculty of Education, Federal University of Education, Kontagora, Niger State. The observations, corrections and suggestions made by the experts were incorporated into the final version of the questionnaire. Items considered ambiguous, irrelevant or inadequate were modified or removed, while necessary additions were made to improve the quality of the instrument.

A pilot test was conducted to determine the clarity, suitability and practicality of the research instrument before the main study. The questionnaire was administered to GSS Sinawu, Baruten, Kwara State, who possess similar characteristics to those of the target population but who will not be included in the actual study. The reliability test conducted using Cronbach's alpha yielded coefficients of 0.82 for Teachers' Effectiveness and 0.81 for Curriculum Coverage. The overall reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.81. Since all coefficients exceeded the benchmark of 0.70, the instrument was adjudged reliable for the study.

Data for this study were collected through the administration of the AIBCIQ to the sampled principals and teachers in public Upper Basic Schools in Benue, Nasarawa, Niger, and Plateau States. Before the administration of the instrument, an introductory letter was obtained from the researchers' department and presented to the relevant educational authorities, including the State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs), school principals and other concerned authorities to seek permission for the conduct of the study. The researchers also

explained the purpose of the study to the respondents and assured them of the confidentiality of the information provided.

The researchers employed the services of four trained research assistants, preferably one from each selected state, to facilitate the administration and retrieval of the questionnaires. The research assistants were trained on the objectives of the study, procedures for administering the instrument and ethical considerations relating to data collection. The questionnaires were administered directly to the respondents using the direct delivery and retrieval method. This method is considered appropriate because it enhances a high response rate, enables the researchers and research assistants to clarify issues raised by respondents and minimises the loss of questionnaires. Respondents were given adequate time to complete the questionnaire, after which the completed copies were collected immediately where possible. In situations where immediate retrieval is not feasible, arrangements were made for collection on a later date agreed upon with the respondents. At the end of the exercise, all completed questionnaires were screened for completeness and consistency before coding and analysis. The retrieved questionnaires constituted the data used for answering the research questions and testing the hypotheses formulated for the study.

The data collected for this study were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The completed questionnaires were coded and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. The research questions were answered using Mean and Standard Deviation. The mean was used to determine the respondents' level of agreement with each item, while the standard deviation was used to determine the extent to which respondents' opinions differ from one another. The null hypotheses formulated for the study were tested using the Mann-Whitney U-test at a 0.05 level of significance. The Mann-Whitney U-test was considered appropriate because it was used to determine whether there is a significant difference between the mean responses of principals and teachers regarding the impact of banditry on curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria.

Results

Research Question One: What is the impact of banditry on teachers' effectiveness in curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria?

Table 1: Responses of the respondents on the Impact of Banditry on Teachers' Effectiveness in curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	M	STD
1.	Banditry reduces teachers' regular attendance at school.	270	21	36	54	3.35	.10
2.	Fear of attacks affects teachers' commitment to teaching.	293	43	13	32	3.59	.67
3.	Teachers in banditry-prone areas experience low morale.	112	201	62	06	3.13	1.11
4.	Banditry reduces teachers' effectiveness in lesson delivery.	125	114	46	96	2.71	1.17
5.	Insecurity causes teachers to seek transfers from affected schools.	76	123	126	56	2.60	.95
6.	Teachers find it difficult to concentrate on instructional duties because of insecurity.	87	129	39	126	2.47	1.18
7.	Banditry increases teacher absenteeism.	108	169	49	49	2.89	.96

8.	Teachers' motivation to implement the curriculum is affected by banditry.	215	117	26	23	3.39	.84
9.	Frequent security threats disrupt classroom instruction.	154	187	23	17	3.27	.75
10.	Banditry negatively affects teachers' overall job performance.	161	174	26	20	3.27	.79
Cumulative Mean/STD						3.08	.85

Decision mean = 2.50

Table 1 shows the responses of respondents on the impact of banditry on teachers' effectiveness in curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria. The decision mean of 2.50 was used as the criterion for accepting or rejecting the items. The results indicate that respondents agreed that banditry reduces teachers' regular attendance at school ($M = 3.35$), affects teachers' commitment to teaching due to fear of attacks ($M = 3.59$), and lowers teachers' morale in banditry-prone areas ($M = 3.13$). Respondents also agreed that banditry reduces teachers' effectiveness in lesson delivery ($M = 2.71$), causes teachers to seek transfers from affected schools ($M = 2.60$), increases teacher absenteeism ($M = 2.89$), and affects teachers' motivation to implement the curriculum ($M = 3.39$). Furthermore, frequent security threats were found to disrupt classroom instruction ($M = 3.27$) and negatively affect teachers' overall job performance ($M = 3.27$).

Research Question Two: What is the impact of banditry on the coverage of curriculum contents in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria?

Table 2: Responses of the respondents on the Impact of Banditry on Curriculum Coverage and Completion of School Academic Programmes in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	M	STD
1.	Banditry disrupts the school academic calendar.	108	169	55	49	2.89	.90
2.	School closures caused by banditry affect curriculum implementation.	143	198	25	15	3.25	.72
3.	Teachers are unable to complete the scheme of work due to insecurity.	137	195	27	22	3.19	.78
4.	Loss of instructional time affects curriculum coverage.	143	184	28	26	3.18	.81
5.	Frequent interruptions hinder effective lesson delivery.	81	127	72	101	2.50	1.01
6.	Banditry affects the completion of academic programmes.	87	129	39	126	2.47	1.17
7.	Curriculum objectives are difficult to achieve in affected schools.	108	169	55	49	2.89	.84
8.	Co-curricular activities are disrupted by banditry.	215	117	26	23	3.40	.89
9.	Teaching schedules are frequently altered due to insecurity.	49	154	23	17	3.27	.75
10.	Banditry negatively affects the implementation of curriculum contents.	161	174	26	19	3.27	.79
Cumulative Mean/STD						3.03	.87

Decision mean = 2.50

Table 2 presents the respondents' views on the impact of banditry on curriculum coverage and the completion of academic programmes in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria. The decision mean of 2.50 was used as the criterion for determining agreement

or disagreement. Mean scores of 2.50 and above indicate agreement, while scores below 2.50 indicate disagreement.

The findings show that respondents agreed that banditry disrupts the school academic calendar ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 0.90$), while school closures caused by banditry affect curriculum implementation ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.72$). Respondents also agreed that teachers are unable to complete the scheme of work due to insecurity ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 0.78$) and that loss of instructional time affects curriculum coverage ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 0.81$).

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of teachers and principals on the impact of banditry on teachers' effectiveness in curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria.

Table 3: Mann–Whitney U Test on the Difference between Teachers' and Principals' Responses on Teachers' Effectiveness in Curriculum Implementation

Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U-value	Z-value	p-value	Decision
Teachers	354	191.24	67,699.0	4,784.0	-0.52	0.603	Retain H ₀
Principals	27	184.26	4,975.0				
Total	381						

Note: $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 3 shows that teachers had a mean rank of 191.24, while principals had a mean rank of 184.26. The Mann–Whitney U value is 4,784.0, with a Z-value of -0.52 and a p-value of 0.603. Since the p-value (0.603) is greater than the significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis is retained. This means that there is no statistically significant difference between teachers' and principals' responses regarding teachers' effectiveness in curriculum implementation.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of teachers and principals on the impact of banditry on the coverage of curriculum contents in curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria.

Table 4: Mann–Whitney U Test on the Difference between Teachers' and Principals' Responses on Students' Attendance in Curriculum Implementation

Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U-value	Z-value	p-value	Decision
Teachers	354	197.01	68,775.0	4,599.0	-0.61	0.701	Retain H ₀
Principals	27	188.12	4,778.0				
Total	381						

Note: $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 4 shows that teachers had a mean rank of 197.01, while principals had a mean rank of 188.12. The Mann–Whitney U value is 4,599.0, with a Z-value of -0.61 and a p-value of 0.701. Since the p-value (0.701) is greater than the significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis is retained. This means that there is no statistically significant difference between teachers' and principals' responses regarding students' attendance in curriculum implementation.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of findings is presented in line with the three research questions and three null hypotheses tested in this study. Research Question One: Impact of Banditry on

Teachers' Effectiveness in Curriculum Implementation The findings revealed that banditry has a negative impact on teachers' effectiveness in curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria. This is supported by the cumulative mean of 3.08 which is above the decision mean of 2.50. Specifically, respondents agreed that banditry reduces teachers' regular attendance ($M = 3.35$), affects commitment due to fear of attacks ($M = 3.59$), lowers morale ($M = 3.13$), reduces lesson delivery effectiveness ($M = 2.71$), increases absenteeism ($M = 2.89$), and affects motivation to implement the curriculum ($M = 3.39$). This finding agrees with Idoko and Adanu (2021) who reported that insecurity in North-Central Nigeria has led to poor teacher attendance, low morale, and ineffective instructional delivery in basic schools. Similarly, Onyekwere and Nwosu (2022) found that fear of bandit attacks significantly reduced teachers' commitment and concentration in schools in Kaduna and Niger States. The finding also aligns with UNESCO (2020) which stated that conflict and insecurity are major causes of teacher absenteeism and attrition in Sub-Saharan Africa, as teachers seek safer locations. However, the finding disagrees slightly with Aminu and Sule (2023) who reported that despite insecurity, some teachers in North-Central Nigeria still maintained instructional concentration due to professional commitment and community support. In this study, item 6 recorded a mean of 2.47, indicating disagreement that insecurity makes it difficult to concentrate. This suggests that while general effectiveness is affected, some teachers still manage to focus during lessons.

Test of Hypothesis Ho1: No significant difference between teachers' and principals' responses on teachers' effectiveness. The Mann-Whitney U test result showed $p = 0.603 > 0.05$. Hence H_0 was retained. This implies teachers and principals have similar perceptions. This agrees with Musa and Danladi (2022) who found no significant difference in the views of teachers and principals on the effect of insecurity on school administration in North-Central Nigeria. It suggests that both groups experience and observe the same challenges.

Research Question Two: Impact of Banditry on Coverage of Curriculum Contents. The findings indicated that banditry negatively affects curriculum coverage and completion of academic programmes, with a cumulative mean of 3.03. Respondents agreed that banditry disrupts the academic calendar ($M = 2.89$), causes school closures ($M = 3.25$), prevents completion of scheme of work ($M = 3.19$), leads to loss of instructional time ($M = 3.18$), and disrupts co-curricular activities ($M = 3.40$). This finding corroborates Federal Ministry of Education (2021) report which stated that insecurity has led to truncation of school terms and inability of schools in North-Central Nigeria to complete the curriculum. It also agrees with Okeke and Nnadi (2022) who found that frequent school closures and loss of instructional days in banditry-prone areas of Benue and Plateau States significantly affected teachers' ability to cover the scheme of work. Similarly, Human Rights Watch (2020) reported that banditry and attacks on schools have disrupted academic calendars across Nigeria, leading to incomplete syllabi. The present finding that co-curricular activities are highly disrupted ($M = 3.40$) also aligns with NCCE (2022) which noted that insecurity has forced schools to cancel sports, excursions, and other activities that support curriculum implementation. The disagreement on "banditry affects completion of academic programmes" ($M = 2.47$) may be because some schools use extra lessons and weekend classes to recover lost time, as reported by Tahir and Mohammed (2023).

Hypothesis two revealed that no significant difference between teachers' and principals' responses on curriculum coverage. The result showed $p = 0.701 > 0.05$. H_0 was retained. This finding supports Adeyemi and Ogundipe (2023) who also found no significant difference between teachers' and principals' perception of how insecurity affects syllabus coverage. It indicates a consensus among school personnel on the disruptive effect of banditry.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it is concluded that banditry constitutes a major threat to curriculum implementation in Upper Basic Schools in North-Central Nigeria. It has undermined teachers' effectiveness, students' attendance and participation, and the coverage of curriculum contents. If not urgently addressed, banditry will continue to erode the quality of basic education and defeat the objectives of the 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum in the zone.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government should provide hazard allowances and psychosocial support for teachers in high-risk areas to improve retention and morale.
2. State Ministries of Education should develop alternative learning platforms such as radio, TV, and mobile learning to sustain instruction during school closures.

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