# Incessant Abduction of School Children and Girl Child Education in Northwest Nigeria

**Aondowase Targba, Yusuf Bala Ribah**

**Federal University Gusau**

## ABSTRACT

The incessant abduction of schoolchildren by armed groups in northern Nigeria has posed a threat to the girl child's education in the region. These abductions were attributed to the inadequate security personnel, negligence by schools on security alerts and community members' involvement in providing information to the bandits, which increased vulnerability. The abduction of schoolchildren has affected girl child enrolment and instilled fear and trauma in girls who are willing to acquire basic education in the study area. The article presents findings from incessant abduction of school children in Northwest Nigeria to inform policy and planning on the safety of schools and education of the girl child in the region. The conditioning theory of fear was adopted by the study to explain the impact of threats and situations of fear on girl child education in Northwest Nigeria. The study is evidence-based, with data collected from 40 respondents using in-depth interviews in the Birnin Yauri Community of Kebbi State. Participants were selected using purposive and snowball sampling techniques. The data collected were analysed using thematic analysis. The study recommends, among others, that the government should be committed to school safety and, in collaboration with community leaders, embark on massive enlightenment programmes and psycho-social support programmes to encourage girls to continue their education post-attacks.

**Keywords:** Abduction, school children, girl child education, Northwest Nigeria

## INTRODUCTION

Investing in girls' education significantly impacts local communities, nations, and the world, as it leads to healthier, fulfilling lives, better futures, decision-making, and increased income. Globally, there are 129 million girls out of school worldwide, of which 32 million are in elementary school, 30 million are in lower secondary education, and 67 million are in upper secondary education (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], 2022). Girls in conflict-affected nations are more than twice as likely to not attend school as girls in non-affected countries (UNICEF, 2022). According to UNICEF, there are 18.5 million out of school children in Nigeria of which 60% of them are girls, with the majority living in Northern Nigeria (France-Presse, 2022). Reports by UNICEF also show that over 1,500 schoolchildren were abducted by armed men in 2021, while the majority of the teenage captives were eventually released in exchange for ransom, others were held captive in areas where armed groups were hiding (France-Presse, 2022).

However, it is a human right and a top priority for world development to make sure that all girls and young women obtain a good education, in order to eradicate extreme poverty and increase shared prosperity (World Bank, 2022). Educating girls goes beyond just enrolling them in classes; it involves providing them with comprehensive education, skills for the labor market, socio-emotional adaptation, decision-making, and community involvement (World Bank 2022). Despite the importance of girl child education, the incessant abduction of schoolchildren, especially female students in secondary schools in Nigeria, has become an issue of concern to both the local and international communities. Abduction is described as a situation when a child is taken or kept outside of their nation of habitual residence and the removal or retention infringes upon the custody rights of another parent or guardian (US Department of States, 2024).

Since the kidnapping of over 276 girls from the Government Secondary School Chibok in Borno State, North

East Nigeria, in 2014, there have been numerous other similar cases, including the abductions of the Dapchi School Girls and, most recently, the adoption of the Jangebe School Girls on February 26, 2021, in Zamfara State, and the kidnapping of 73 students from the Government Day Secondary School Kaya in September of the same year (Bello, 2021). In addition, in December 2020, school boys were kidnapped in Kankara, Katsina State, North West Nigeria, and Kagara, Niger State, North-Central Nigeria (UNICEF, 2021). This also includes the kidnapping of numerous schoolgirls at the Federal Government College in Birnin Yauri, Kebbi State in July 2021 (Aliyu, 2021). These incidences have brought trauma to many adolescents, and too little is being done in Nigeria to assist kids who have been traumatized by the latest wave of school attacks and mass abductions due to the social and psychological effects of these incidences (United Nations, 2021).

Targeted attacks by Boko Haram on schools and the kidnapping of schoolgirls have affected female students' access to education, and many of the female students had been forced to put their education on hold following an attack on their school or had dropped out of school permanently as a result of the attacks (Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack [GCPEA], 2018). Numerous survivors claim that the abuse they have experienced has negatively impacted their mental and physical health (GCPEA, 2018). As a result of the rape, and other forms of sexual violence, some girls recounted continuing to experience bleeding and other severe gynecological issues among other effects (UN, 2021). Many of the pupils and some of the teachers spoke of having frequent nightmares, having anxiety, being easily alarmed, having trouble concentrating, and other symptoms frequently connected to trauma. Their traumatic experiences frequently have an effect on their capacity to pursue their education and may also prevent them from making crucial life changes (UN, 2021; GCPEA, 2018).

Available records by SBM Intelligence in 2020-2021 show that in the north-west, 25 educational institutions were attacked and 1,470 learners abducted along with 24 education personnel (Nigeria Education in Emergency Group, 2022). In the north-east also 51 schools experienced armed attacks, and 64 schools were targeted by suicide bombing (JENA, 2021). In 2021, 11,500 schools in the country were closed due to fear of attacks. The frequency of these attacks in 2020 disrupted the education of more than five million children. In 2021, about 618 secondary (boarding) schools, mostly in Sokoto, Zamfara, Adamawa, Kano, Katsina, Niger and Yobe States were also closed. An estimated one million children did not start the 2021-2022 academic year due to insecurity (UNICEF, 2021).

The level of violence in Nigeria puts schoolchildren at serious risk. Numerous educational institutions have been reduced to rubble as a result of attacks by armed non-state actors. In the northeastern region of Nigeria, where the insurgency has lasted for well over a decade, cases are more common. Due to widespread kidnappings at educational institutions, banditry also poses serious risks to education in the northwest and northcentral zones. The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the southeast zone halt school operations on Mondays and other specified sit-at-home days (Nextier, 2022). The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, Virginia Gamba, made it clear that education is vital for everyone's peace, stability, and prosperity not only the children themselves. Even during times of violence, it is our shared duty to guarantee that every kid has access to an education, and schools should be viewed as havens (GCPEA, 2020). According to data, 1 in 5 children nationwide (22%) are not in school, 1 in 3 children in rural areas (31%) and 1 in 10 children in urban areas (10%) are not in school. Dropout rates are common across all age groups, but they begin to progressively rise for those aged 12 and up (boys tend to pursue informal training or employment, while some attend Islamic schools) (World Bank, 2020). Beyond the violence, there are limitations, often based on security risks, in supporting many children trapped in conflict-impacted environments. Also, many children live in conflict zones with limited social services. Education services appear to be secondary in the face of a prolonged humanitarian crisis (Nextier, 2022). It is against this backdrop that the study is focus on examining the impact of incessant abduction of school children on girl child education and the major challenges affecting school safety in North-West Nigeria.

**Statement of the Research Problem**

Education is the most important tool for human capital development in any society. Investing in girls' education benefits not only the individual, but also the family, community, and society as a whole. Education for girls boosts economies and lowers inequality as well as helps build more resilient and stable societies that enable everyone, including boys and men, to reach their full potential (UNICEF, 2022). Unfortunately, attacks on

schools in northern Nigeria pose a threat to children's right to an education since approximately 1,000 students have been kidnapped from schools in the region, most of them in the north-west, which has recently been the hotspot of attacks on schools in Nigeria (UNICEF, 2021). It is a matter of concern that the majority of the schoolgirls kidnapped in Nigeria had promised never to return to class (GCPEA, 2018).

Despite the emphasis by the World Bank (2020a) that investing heavily in girls' education is the best way to hasten Nigeria's human capital development, records have shown that Northern Nigeria is still characterized by the lowest level of female school enrolment, the highest level of poverty, and the highest number of out-of-school children in Nigeria. It is concerning that Nigeria has 65 million illiterates, 10.5 million out-of-school children aged 5-14 years, 60% of whom are girls, in the northern part of the country (UNICEF, 2019), a figure that UNICEF estimated that rose to 18.5 million by the end of 2022 (France-Presse, 2022). Since December 2020, more than 11,000 schools have been closed nationwide as a result of widespread violence and kidnapping, according to UNICEF (France-Presse, 2022). About 487 schools were destroyed, with 2.8 million children in need of education in emergency situations (UNICEF, 2019). These factors have contributed to the endemic problems of poverty, malnutrition, maternal mortality, and illiteracy in the region (UNICEF, 2019).

It is concerning that if urgent steps are not taken to address the already precarious state of girl child education in Northern Nigeria, the constant abduction of schoolgirls may have a significant impact on the attitudes of many young girls toward education in the region. These abductions may also have some psychological effects on both the parents and the girls, which may discourage young girls from pursuing their education. Existing literature has not adequately addressed the post-traumatic issues associated with these abductions, especially the impact they have on girl child education in Northwest Nigeria. The study achieved the following objectives (1) Investigate the major factors affecting the safety of schools in Northwest Nigeria. (2) Examined the effects of abduction of school children on girl child education in Northwest Nigeria.

# METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a cross-sectional survey research design in Northwest Nigeria with a focus on Birnin Yauri, one of the settlements that was heavily affected by abduction of school children in recent times. The population of study comprises parents and guardians of abducted schools girls, Teachers at FGGC Birnin Yauri and other relevant stakeholders who were aged 18 years and above. Using purposive and snowbow sampling techniques, in-depth interview was used to collect data from 40 respondents in Birnin Yauri settlement, of Kebbi State. Purposive sampling was used in selecting 30 community members in Birnin Yauri. Also, purposive sampling was used to select five (5) teachers in the affected school in the study area. Snowbow sampling was used to select five (5) parents of the abducted school girls in Birnin Yauri community. Data was analysed using thematic analysis. The research was guided by ethics as respondents received a thorough explanation of the research's goal and verbal agreement to participate, as well as other ethical considerations such as maintaining information confidentiality. Participants' information-gathering techniques and procedures were well-defined. Additionally, participants were free to leave the process at any moment if they felt uncomfortable doing so.

**Conditioning Theory of Fear**

The paper adopts the conditioning theory to explain how threats and situations of fear of abduction affect girl child attitudes toward education in Northwest Nigeria. However, fear is frequently indirectly learnt through social transmission in social creatures. Social cues influence learning and the extinction of learnt fear, according to a wealth of data from research on both humans and animals (Golker et al. 2013). According to research, fear contagion, a concept used by Keum and Shin (2016), occurs when people are exposed to social cues that indicate danger, such as the sight, sound, or scent of a fearful conspecific but can also signal safety. Indeed, the physical presence of a familiar conspecific may attenuate fear responses and impair fear learning in an individual that is subjected to FC, a phenomenon known as social buffering of fear (Gunnar et al. 2015). Therefore, the social environment has a significant impact on controlling fear. Additionally, anxiety is modulated by social circumstances. Furthermore, similar circumstances can spread anxiety and panic (Lebowitz et al., 2014). We will refer to these findings as social fear/anxiety learning when mentioning research that suggests the transmission of either anxiety alone or fear and anxiety together. According to Debiec and Olsson (2017), through repeated exposure to the pairing of a neutral event with threat, fear conditioning is an associative learning

process that causes one to associate threat with otherwise neutral stimuli, situations, surroundings, or behaviour.

When a person is exposed to a dangerous stimulus, such as an electric shock, they experience terror. It has been possible for researchers to examine both inherent and learnt fear reactions, as well as the neural correlates that underlie them, by eliciting defence responses through pain or the prospect of harm. A naturally unpleasant experience (the unconditioned stimulus, US) paired with a neutral stimulus (the conditioned stimulus, CS) gives the CS the ability to elicit threat responses in fear conditioning (FC), the most widely employed type of fear learning. Olsson & Debiec (2017).

## Overview of School Enrolment in Nigeria

The global challenges of poverty, conflict, and climate change disproportionately impact today's girls, as does resistance to hard-won victories for gender equality and human rights (UN, 2024). Too many girls continue to be denied their rights, which limits their options and their prospects for the future (UN, 2024). However, new research indicates that girls are not just brave during times of distress but also optimistic about the future. They are working towards a world where all girls are respected, empowered, and safe every single day. However, girls cannot achieve this goal on their own. They require allies who pay attention to their needs and act upon them (UN, 2024). In addition to these crucial formative years, teenage girls also have the right to a safe, educated, and healthy existence as they grow into women. As today's empowered girls and tomorrow's mothers, workers, entrepreneurs, mentors, heads of households, and political leaders, girls have the power to transform the world if they receive the right kind of assistance during their adolescent years (UN, 2024). In order to acknowledge the rights of girls and the particular difficulties they encounter globally, the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 66/170 on December 19, 2011, designating October 11 as the International Day of the Girl Child (UN, 2024).

Several studies have been conducted on the education of the girl child in Nigeria and globally. Reports have shown that gender parity in elementary education has only been reached in 49% of the world's nations, with only 24% of countries having achieved gender parity in upper secondary education and 42% in lower secondary education (UNICEF 2022). This is largely attributed to poverty, child marriage, and gender-based violence, which are just a few of the obstacles to girls' education that differ between nations and groups (UNICEF 2022). In low-income nations, girls' secondary school completion rates also remain below average, with only 36% of female students finishing lower secondary school, compared to 44% of male students. Similar inequalities may be seen in the upper secondary completion rates; in lower-income nations, the figure is 26% for young men and 21% for young women (World Bank, 2020).

Similar to poverty and location, gender plays a significant role in the pattern of educational marginalisation. More than half of the girls in the northeast and northwest states do not attend school, with female primary net attendance rates of 47.7 and 47.3 percent, respectively. Economic obstacles as well as sociocultural norms and practices that hinder formal education attendance, particularly for girls, are among the reasons contributing to education deprivation in northern Nigeria (UNICEF, 2024).

## School Safety in Nigeria

Globally: 11,000 education attacks: 22,000 learners and educators affected in 8,300 incidents (2015-19) (GCPEA, 2020). 9,272 school closures affecting 1.91 million children and 44,000 teachers (2019). Nigeria: 25 schools attacked; 1,470 learners abducted; 200 still missing; over 1 million children afraid to return to schools (2021). 11,500 schools closed in 2020 due to attacks (SB Intelligence, 2021). Northwest accounts for 76% of attacks. 4 Over 11,500 schools closed (June-September 2021). The Ministry of Education Kaduna, Zamfara, and Sokoto states reported that 5 million children lost a quarter academic session in 2020 (UNICEF, 2022). Increased school dropout is due to increased actual and potential violence, with a direct impact particularly on the girls. Poor teacher concentration and capacity to cope, especially female teachers Overstretching of school resources and inability of the system to cope with influx of IDP learners Life-long emotional distress, affecting the wellbeing of children, especially the girls (health issues, unwanted pregnancy, stigma) $3.4 billion lifetime economic loss (UNICEF, 2022). Northwest: Armed banditry 1,446 learners and 24 personnel abducted (2021). A report by SB Intelligence (2021) shows that in Northeast, 108 head teachers were hit by bullets, shells, or shrapnel; 51 schools

experienced armed actor attacks, and 64 schools (10% of assessed) were targeted by suicide bombing in 2021. In North Central, communal clashes displaced 1,254 persons (627 children) due to a multi-dimensional crisis (UNICEF 2022).

In the north-east, JENA reported that 51 schools experienced armed attacks, and 64 schools were targeted by suicide bombing (UNICEF, 2022). In 2021, 11,500 schools in the country were closed due to fear of attacks. The frequency of these attacks in 2020 disrupted the education of more than five million children. In 2021, about 618 secondary (boarding) schools, mostly in Sokoto, Zamfara, Adamawa, Kano, Katsina, Niger, and Yobe States, were also closed. An estimated one million children did not start the 2021-2022 academic year due to insecurity (UNICEF, 2021). In May 2015, the Safe Schools Declaration (SSD) was opened for endorsement by countries at an international conference held in Oslo, Norway, to provide countries with the impetus to express support for the protection of learners, teachers, and learning environments from attack during times of armed conflict, as well as protect schools from military use and respond to and mitigate the impact (National Policy on Safety, Security, and Violence-Free Schools with its Implementing Guidelines, 2021).

Reports indicate that most school environments in Nigeria now represent a universe in which learners are exposed to violence, and as a result, they perceive violence as inevitable and normal (NPSSVIG, 2021). A comparative study conducted by Oluwashakin (2022) on gender equality and protection for the girl child revealed that the girl child is more vulnerable than the boy child in conflict environments as there is a deliberate assault on girl child education. However, intervention to ensure the continuity of high-quality education and protection of learners and school personnel shall be formulated based upon adequate analysis of the conflict situation. Such intervention shall take into account the nature and dynamics of local conflicts, the area's vulnerability and exposure to armed conflicts, the availability of resources, and existing partnership links (NPSSVIG, 2021).

## Armed Conflicts and Girl Child Education in Nigeria

In Nigeria, teenage girls confront numerous obstacles in their quest to enrol in and complete secondary education. Additionally, the northern part of Nigeria is home to about 80% of impoverished households, which makes it extremely difficult for them to afford the direct and indirect costs of education, which has reduced girls' secondary school enrolment (World Bank 2020). If nothing is done, 1.3 million of the 1.85 million girls who started elementary school in northern Nigeria in 2017/2018 will drop out before attaining the final year of junior secondary school (World Bank 2020b). However, NPSSVIG (2021) emphasised that **g**ender equity is critical in harm prevention and in responses to safety and security concerns; therefore, all protocol and intervention must be in accordance with the principles of gender equality. According to reports, there are still obstacles to education in Nigeria, and they are most severe in the northern areas. In addition to the more obvious extremism of the Islamist militant group Boko Haram and its targeting of girls' education, issues with school access, family and school resources, and attitudes towards education all hinder school attendance in northern Nigeria (Hatch, 2012). The group opposes the Western-style education associated with formal schooling in Nigeria and seeks to keep women exclusively in the home. In an atmosphere where female educational success is continuously low, girls and young women are therefore at greater risk when it comes to attending school (Hatch, 2012).

The impact of banditry on the education of girls in conflict-affected areas was examined by Ahmed, Muhammad, and Omache (2024) in Katsina State, Northwest Nigeria. The study involved 164 teachers, 230 out-of-school girls, and 244 in-school girls. The results showed that banditry negatively affects the education of girls in Katsina State. reveals that among girls who left school, 42.1% did so for personal safety, 21.1% for family safety, and 10.5% for the impossibility to get to and from school securely and the closing of schools for security reasons. The report also shows that those who dropped out because of economic reasons were 15.8%. For most (57.9%) of the out-of-school girls, the duration of banditry or insecurity has lasted for more than 5 years (Ahmed et al, 2024). But 21.1% were of the view that the insurgency in their areas has lasted between 1 and 2 years and between 3 and 5 years (Ahmed et al, 2024).

Schools have also been used militarily by pro-government militias and Nigerian government soldiers. According to the UN, as of May 2017, the Nigerian government forces were using 17 schools for military purposes (GCPEA, 2018). The government claims security forces near schools protect students and teachers, but their presence can lead to retaliatory attacks, increased risks, and interruptions in instruction(GCPEA, 2018). Persistent barriers to

education will exacerbate poverty by depriving the younger generation of educational chances, which will impact their vulnerability, productivity, self-reliance, and self-development (Nextier, 2022). Since non-state armed groups are becoming more prevalent, they require recruits to bolster their ranks. Accordingly, aggressive entrepreneurs' pranks can target unproductive, unskilled, and out-of-school populations (Nextier, 2022). According to a study by Ahmed et al. (2024) on the effects of banditry on girls' education in conflict-affected areas, with a focus on Katsina State, Nigeria, banditry in schools leads to fear of assault, kidnapping, closures, and impaired teaching, affecting students' learning and enrollment, particularly among females.

# RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion are based on factors affecting the safety of schools and the effects of school girls' abduction on girl child education.

**Factors Affecting School Safety**

Based on the findings of the study, gold mining and economic factors contribute to banditry and the abductions of school children in Kebbi State. 6st 6f the respondents stated that there are inadequate security personnel in the communities where school children were abducted and th4s has given the criminals the ability to run over the few security personnel attached to such communities or schools. Other respondents identified poor infrastructure as one of the reasons why school children are vulnerable to attacks. Also, some members of the community served as informants to the abductors. One of the guardians in the area stated that "*Inadequate security personnel and informants among the community (members) are the major challenges of safety of schools in this community*" (A key informant from Birnin Yauri, personal interview, 2024).

In order to ensure the safety of schools in the area, respondents believe that the use of modern technology equipment and proper intelligence gathering will assist in obtaining real-time information and averting security breaches at schools. Findings revealed that that materialism and the sabotaging of efforts of government in some places are responsible for the lingering kidnapping of schoolchildren in North West Nigeria. Respondents also decry the complicity of security agents in the safety of schools in the region. "*There are trustworthy security agents and there are bad elements… Government should not employ criminals or individuals that are not trustworthy as security agents. Patriotic people should be employed as security agents*" (A key informant from Birnin Yauri, personal interview, 2024).

The submission above corroborates with other respondents that the government should sanitize the security operations in the area and deploy enough security operatives to safeguard schools in the area. In another submission, some of the respondents believe that the schools are not adequately secured to guaranteed the safety of school children "*The schools security measures are very poor; the schools are not adequately safe*" (A key informant from Birnin Yauri, personal interview, 2024).

It was found that unemployment and lack of job opportunities for the youth exacerbate the banditry and abduction of schoolchildren in the area. However, in order to ensure school safety, security guards should be put in strategic positions, the schools should be fenced, and surveillance cameras should be in strategic positions within and outside the school. Others believed that schoolgirls should be taught self-defence strategies to defend themselves from abductors.

In another submission, both teachers and parents advocated for security awareness campaigns among members of the community as well as parameter fencing of the schools in the area. Respondents reported that laxity and a lack of proactive measures on the part of the concerned authorities contributed to worsening the safety of schools in the area. One of the parents stated that "*The school authority was briefed prior to the incident, but adequate measures were not taken. There was carelessness from the part of the authority concerned*" "*The schools security measures are very poor; the schools are not adequately safe*" (A key informant from Birnin Yauri, personal interview, 2024). This was corroborated with the submission of one of the girls, who was a victim of the kidnapped incidence in Birnin Yauri, that the government should take security issues seriously as the school authorities were informed that bandits were going to attack the school, but nothing was done to avoid the

incidence. She suggested that security agencies should be permanently stationed in the area to avoid a similar incidence in the future.

The study revealed that negligence on the part of the school was also responsible for the attacks. He, however, believed that the government is trying but making more efforts by providing sophisticated arms to security personnel to make schools in the area secure so that children can freely go to school. It was also found that parents under the umbrella of the Free FGC Birnin Yauri Students Movement with over 500 members contributed to mounting pressure on the authorities to ensure the release of the abducted schoolgirls.

### The Effects of School Girls' Abduction on Girl Child Education

Based on the findings, the incessant abduction of schoolgirls has affected girl child education in North West Nigeria. One of the respondents from Birnin Yauri in Kebbi State stated that many of the girls in the area are afraid and do want to return to school. However, it was discovered that the enrolment of students in the schools where scores of female students were abducted and other schools in the area have drastically reduced while the population of schools in neighbouring towns has been on the increase since the attack occurred. *"Yes it (attacks on schools) did. It even affected the other schools around here. The annual enrolment of children in FGC has gone down drastically, but in other schools in Yauri, the environment has increased. The higher emphasis on Islamic school for girls also contribute to low enrollment of girl child in western education"*(A key informant from Birnin Yauri, personal interview, 2024).
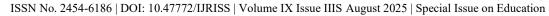
The study discovered that despite the kidnappings, some of the girls with determination to go to school are still willing to do so. Furthermore, the abduction of the FGC girls has affected the annual enrolment of students. This also corroborated with other respondents who stated that the level of annual enrolment of girls has dropped in the area. Parents now prefer their children to other schools, especially in Yauri town, which is relatively safer than Birnin Yauri. He stated that the FGC had been relocated to Yauri town.

It was found that the kidnapped incidents have drastically reduced the enrolment of female children in the area. It was also reported that parents are unwilling to enroll their female children to boarding schools for the fear of being kidnapped. However, providing security tips to the students and a downward review of school fees would encourage female children's enrolment in schools around the area. Findings further revealed that students from other parts of the country are afraid of enrolling their female students in the area after the kidnapped incidence. He also proposed that the school fees should be reduced to an affordable rate to encourage parents to send their children to the schools. It was also found that the security situation has affected the effectiveness and efficiency of teachers in the affected school. One of the teachers stated that "*I became more concerned and cautious about the safety and well-being of my students which potentially affected my other priorities*"(A key informant from Birnin Yauri, personal interview, 2024).

It was discovered that most of the abducted girls that were released were taken to other schools in Kano State, while others vowed never to return to school. In a passionate submission, one of the girls who was a victim of the kidnapping in the FGC Birnin Yauri incident stated that"*Government should create awareness on the importance of education because some abducted girls have decided to give up. Government (should help) those whose parents are not well to do so that they can continue with their schooling*" (A key informant from Birnin Yauri, personal interview, 2024).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the paper concluded that the incessant abduction of schoolchildren has affected girl child education in North West Nigeria. The enrolment of students in the schools where scores of female students were abducted have drastically reduced. The paper also found that negligence on the part of the school authority contributed to making the schools vulnerable to attacks. The study also found that security around the schools is not enough to secure schools in north-west Nigeria. Unemployment and lack of job opportunities for the youth exacerbate the banditry and abduction of schoolchildren in the area. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. There should be commitment on the side of the government to provide more security and build parameter fencing around the schools, as well as leveraging technology to defend schools from attacks in Northwest Nigeria.

2. There should be proper orientation and post-trauma management programs for both the parents and young girls to encourage them to support and prioritise their education after the attacks on schools in the area.

3. The community leaders should conscientise their subjects who are serving as informants or aiding banditry to attack their communities in Northwest Nigeria.

4. The government, in collaboration with the community leaders, develops robust emergency preparedness as well as structured community reporting systems in the security-vulnerable areas of Northwest Nigeria.

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