

# MITIGATING INSURGENCY AND KIDNAPPING FOR RANSOM IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF ANAMBRA STATE

<sup>1</sup>Albert Ulutorti Green & <sup>2</sup>Obinwa Onyebuchi Chidozie

<sup>1</sup>Department of Religious Studies, University of the Niger  
albert.green@uniniger.edu.ng/0009-0000-3641-3948

<sup>2</sup>St. Paul's Theological College Awka  
ocbuchai@gmail.com

## ARTICLE INFO

**Article No.:** 020

**Accepted Date:** 21/06/2025

**Published Date:** 08/07/2025

**Type:** Research

## ABSTRACT

This descriptive analysis examines socio-economic, psychological and governance aspects that contribute to insurgency and ransom in Anambra State, Nigeria. Armed violence, teenage cultism and abduction are rising in Anambra, once one of the Southeast's safest states. Mixing quantitative and qualitative methods, the research collected data from a varied range of respondents from different backgrounds. To explore the causes, community experiences, government interventions and long-term remedies, a descriptive research was conducted. Fieldwork was done in rural Orumba, Aguata, Ihiala and Anambra South and high-risk districts along the Enugu-Onitsha motorway. High-risk areas for highway assaults and ransomware were chosen. A stratified and purposeful random sample of 150 people was taken from one impacted community. Thirty community leaders, forty security force personnel, forty citizens and company owners, twenty civil society representatives and twenty kidnapped or affected women were sampled. An organised questionnaire was the main data collection tool. This questionnaire was evaluated by two Nnamdi Azikiwe University Criminology and Security Studies experts. In the nearby state of Enugu, a pilot study had a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.84, indicating strong reliability. Data was collected by qualified field assistants and analysed using descriptive statistics like frequency tables, mean scores and standard deviations. Participants provided data in-person and online. Data shows that poverty, unemployment and political marginalisation are the main vulnerability factors. Youth gangs, ineffective border control and security agency miscommunication worsen the problem. The respondents found that kidnapping disrupts economic activity, affects victims' families financially and causes long-term psychological distress. Local vigilante groups and monitoring technologies are becoming effective mitigation techniques. To restore peace and stability in Anambra State and beyond, the study suggests competent governance, anti-corruption efforts, youth empowerment and surveillance infrastructure investment.

**Keyword:** Mitigating Insurgency, Kidnapping, Ransom, Nigeria, Anambra state.

## Introduction

Security challenges have long plagued Nigeria's stability and economy. Insurgency and kidnapping for ransom are particularly harmful, destabilising communities, weakening public trust in institutions and imposing high economic consequences. National security debates have often focused on Nigeria's northern areas, afflicted by rebel activity and terrorism. Recently, more kidnappings for ransom in other regions, particularly the Southeast, have raised concerns about insecurity. Anambra State, formerly tranquil and secure, has seen a worrying rise in these crimes, which affect urban and rural populations. This increase has upended many residents' lives, made them feel less secure and caused severe problems for local administration and law enforcement.

Nigeria has historically faced security issues, but insurgency and kidnapping-for-ransom have become the biggest dangers (Ogunnubi & Idowu, 2024; Osemuyi & Festus, 2024). These crises are caused by nation-historical socio-political, economic and ideological variables. Kidnapping for ransom has spread across the country, with significant spikes in the Northwest (Ogunnubi & Idowu, 2024; Oluwadele & Rahman, 2024; Onuche & Martins, 2024), Southeast and South-South regions, creating complex and deeply intertwined insecurity. Insurgency has mostly been concentrated in the north. This conceptual framework examines the causes and drivers of these security issues in Anambra State, Nigeria.

IPOB, an Eastern Nigerian separatist group, wants Biafra to be independent (Nimfel & Anjide, 2022; Okaisabor, 2023). This group's political stance resonates with many Southerners, especially given Nigerian Civil War issues. The group's military component, the Eastern Security Network (ESN), has raised regional tensions and fought security forces in guerrilla warfare, resulting in many confrontations (Amnesty International, 2023; Onuoha, 2012). Because of this, many locals fear separatist groups and the security forces meant to stop them. The Nigerian government has increased its military presence, worsening the state-separatist conflict. Ransom kidnapping is a developing issue in Nigeria, impacting all regions (Aleyomi & Olajubu, 2024). Ransom is demanded from abducted people, frequently from their relatives or employers.

Kidnapping-for-ransom is most widespread in the Northwest, Southeast and South-South (Ikechukwu & Agbo, 2022; Uloko et al., 2024). Northwest states Zamfara, Katsina and Kaduna have seen school kidnappings and targeted attacks on famous people. In Anambra State, religious leaders and businesses are kidnapped for ransom, a significant Southeast crime. Niger Delta insurgents kidnap oil workers and conduct similar atrocities (Eze, 2020; Forest, 2012). These kidnappings have disrupted local economies and caused widespread fear and instability, forcing many families and companies to pay large costs to release their loved ones or employees (ACLED, 2022; Onuoha, 2012). (Nwokedi, 2025; Preya, 2022). These organisations take advantage of victims' financial vulnerabilities and ineffective legal enforcement. Law enforcement is finding it harder to discover and arrest perpetrators due to cryptocurrency and ransom demand (Forest, 2012; Eze, 2020).

## Statement of the Problem

Anambra State's geopolitical climate and proximity to major highways make it more vulnerable to these crimes. The rise in rural and highway kidnappings, especially on the Enugu-Onitsha motorway, is concerning. Due to the fear of ransom kidnappings, many families and

local businesses have experienced significant financial losses. These attacks have caused physical harm and shattered daily life and economic activities by instilling fear and uncertainty. Insurgency and ransom abduction in Anambra State are caused by sociopolitical, institutional and economic factors, which this article examines. Assessing community and government reactions will help this study identify gaps in current methods and suggest practical mitigation measures. The report adds to Nigeria's security discourse, focusing on the Southeast, by offering recommendations for legislators, security organisations and local communities to restore peace and security.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study is to examine how to mitigate insurgency and kidnapping for ransom in Nigeria: A study of Anambra State. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To find out the causes of insurgency and kidnapping in Nigeria, particularly in Anambra State.
2. To measure kidnapping's socioeconomic and psychological effects on victims and communities.
3. To assess security measures' efficacy.
4. To suggest sustainable crime-reduction solutions.

### **Research Questions:**

- 1) What causes insurgency and kidnapping for ransom in Nigeria, particularly in Anambra State?
- 2) How does kidnapping affect Anambra State victims and communities socioeconomically and psychologically?
- 3) How well do present security measures and policies combat insurgency and kidnapping for ransom in Anambra State?
- 4) What sustainable methods can reduce insurgency and abduction for ransom in Anambra State and Nigeria?

### **Theoretical Frameworks**

Understanding Nigeria's complicated and multidimensional insurgency and kidnapping-for-ransom problems necessitates a multi-theoretical approach. The Failed State Theory and the Relative Deprivation Theory are two significant theoretical frameworks that are pertinent to the analysis of these events.

Failed State Theory was propounded by Jean-François Bayart and other scholars, popularized in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Failed State Theory argues that when a government is unable to deliver essential services such as security, rule of law and economic stability, it creates a vacuum where insurgency, organized crime and civil unrest can flourish. In order to mitigate insurgency and kidnapping for ransom in Anambra State, this theory emphasizes the need to strengthen local governance, improve trust in security agencies and ensure that government institutions are visible, responsive and effective. The Failed State Theory is particularly relevant to the escalating issues of insurgency and abduction in Anambra State. The idea elucidates how feeble or ineffectual governmental institutions, inadequate security frameworks and deficient service provision engender a power vacuum that is exploited by insurgents and criminal organisations. The research findings for Anambra indicate a

deficiency in coordinated security responses, inadequate law enforcement presence in rural regions and insufficient intelligence sharing—evident indicators of state fragility. These vulnerabilities enable armed factions and abductors to prosper, occupying the void created by deficient or incompetent governance. The theory emphasises the critical necessity for enhanced state presence, superior police and improved governance frameworks to diminish opportunities for criminal conduct.

Relative Deprivation Theory was propounded by Ted Robert Gurr in 1970. According to the Relative Deprivation Theory, people are more likely to use violence when they feel like they don't get what they deserve. When there are no peaceful solutions, this feeling of unfairness or exclusion can rise to resentment, criminal activity, insurrection, or communal violence. Relative Deprivation Theory explains why young Anambra State residents are joining cults, insurgencies and kidnapping. The study found that poverty, unemployment and perceived economic and political isolation cause insecurity. When persons or organisations feel poor compared to others or their own aspirations, they may use violence or crime to express their frustration. Many Anambra youths saw kidnapping or joining armed groups a way to survive or gain power. Therefore, addressing the root causes of deprivation through young employment, equitable resource distribution and democratic government is crucial to reducing insecurity.

### **Literature Review**

Empirical study has focused on Nigeria's social, political and economic factors affecting insurgency and kidnapping. Researchers like Forest (2012) and Eze (2020) have linked corruption, structural poverty, insurgency and kidnapping. Studies on Anambra State show that criminal gangs, separatist groups and local militias worsen these issues and complicate security. These studies have shown how governance and socioeconomic disparity cause violence, but little is known about how successfully current security measures can address these issues. The role of criminal syndicates and kidnapping profits have also been overlooked. This study highlights the complexity of security challenges. Researchers have linked these issues to political instability, poverty and poor governance, which foster crime and violence. Boko Haram, ISWAP and local banditry have made several places unstable, especially the Northeast and Northwest. Separatist groups like IPOB and ESN have fuelled Southeast violence, complicating the matter. Kidnapping-for-ransom, driven by criminal syndicates, has major social and economic effects nationwide. Empirical study on inequality and governmental weakness that sustains insecurity has not assessed the effectiveness of current security measures (Liu & Eisner, 2024). Understanding these factors is necessary to develop successful security solutions. This section discusses Anambra State kidnapping and insurgency causes and effects.

Several factors contribute to the prevalence of kidnapping and insurgency in Anambra State. These include:

1. **Economic Hardship:** Socioeconomic deprivation, resulting in high youth unemployment and poverty rates, is a significant driver of insurgency and kidnapping. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the unemployment rate in Nigeria was 33% in 2023, with many

young people struggling to find meaningful employment (NBS, 2023). This economic hardship pushes youths into crime, including kidnapping and insurgency.

2. **Weak Policing:** Corruption and underfunding limit the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies, creating an environment conducive to kidnapping and insurgency. Human Rights Watch (2022) has highlighted the need for security sector reform to address these challenges.

3. **Ransom Economy:** The payment of ransoms to kidnappers has created a lucrative industry, with an estimated \$18 million paid in ransoms between 2016 and 2020 (SBM Intelligence, 2021). This ransom economy incentivizes kidnappers to continue their activities.

4. **Political Violence:** Election-related violence and weak democratic institutions contribute to the insecurity in Anambra State. The lack of trust in the political system and the use of violence to achieve political goals create an environment conducive to kidnapping and insurgency.

5. **Poor Intelligence Gathering and Surveillance:** Security agencies often lack the necessary equipment and coordination to gather intelligence and conduct effective surveillance, making it difficult to prevent and respond to kidnapping and insurgency.

6. **Weak Border Control:** The porous borders of Nigeria allow for the movement of weapons and insurgents, exacerbating the security challenges in Anambra State.

7. **Lack of Trust in Law Enforcement:** Citizens are often reluctant to report crimes due to fear of retaliation or police corruption, making it difficult for law enforcement agencies to effectively address kidnapping and insurgency.

### **Impacts of Kidnapping and Insurgency**

The impacts of kidnapping and insurgency in Anambra State are far-reaching and devastating. These include:

1. **Economic Loss:** Kidnapping and insurgency substantially undermine local and regional economy by fostering an atmosphere of fear and instability (Berebon, 2025). Enterprises cease operations or move locations due to security apprehensions, resulting in losses in tourism, commerce and investment. Local entrepreneurs and informal sector workers suffer income loss, while families frequently face exorbitant ransom demands, depleting both personal and communal resources. The economic growth of impacted areas and the state is hindered over time.
2. **Psychological Trauma:** Kidnapping victims and their family frequently experience enduring psychological repercussions, such as anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), sadness and persistent fear (Abiola, & Fajimolu, 2024). The unpredictability and aggression linked to these occurrences undermine the mental health of both direct victims and community members who perpetually fear becoming targets. Trauma can hinder individuals' capacity to operate adequately at home, in the workplace, or in educational institutions.
3. **Displacement:** Insurgency and recurrent abductions compel individuals and families to abandon their residences in pursuit of more secure surroundings (Anyagou, 2024). This internal displacement undermines social networks, livelihoods and access to vital services such as healthcare and education. Displaced individuals frequently find themselves in congested and inadequately equipped regions, with additional vulnerabilities and adversities that exacerbate their distress and restrict their prospects for rehabilitation.

4. **Decline in Education:** The pervasive climate of fear stemming from kidnapping and insurgency frequently results in the shutdown of educational institutions, especially in high-risk areas (Omuya, 2023). Parents may opt to retain their children at home to mitigate the risk of abductions, while educators may evacuate hazardous areas. These interruptions impair educational access and quality, elevate dropout rates and undermine the long-term development of human capital in the impacted regions.

### **Current Security Measures and Their Limitations**

The Anambra State government has initiated several programs to address security challenges, including insurgency and kidnapping. However, these measures have limitations that hinder their effectiveness.

#### *Vigilante Groups*

There has been some hope in the creation of the Anambra Vigilante Group (AVG) and collaborations with federal security agencies for local police. But these organisations frequently lack enough control and oversight, which can result in violations of human rights and other problems (Ojokorotu, 2020). To solve this, the government may set up explicit rules and supervision systems for vigilante organisations, guaranteeing that they follow the law.

#### *Legislation*

Although the Anti-Kidnapping Law is a positive move, it is not well enforced. Nwagbara (2020) claims that a lack of political will, corruption and insufficient funding all contribute to the law's ineffectiveness. The government might make sure that offenders are held accountable, give security personnel training and capacity-building initiatives and boost financing for law enforcement organisations in order to fortify the law.

#### *Youth Empowerment Schemes*

Youth empowerment programs have been implemented with the intention of reducing unemployment, however their impact has been minimal. According to Egbo (2019), these initiatives usually don't address the root reasons of unemployment and poverty and aren't sustainable. To address this, the government might design programs that are tailored to the needs of the state's young people and provide vocational training, employment development and microfinance.

#### *Surveillance Drones and Community Engagement Forums*

Although there is potential, the use of community participation forums and surveillance drones is not well-coordinated or coherent (Okeke, et al., 2024). For these programs to be successful and focused, Nwankwo (2020) asserts that efficient coordination and communication are necessary. To guarantee that these projects are properly thought out and carried out, the government may set up a centralised coordination system.

### **Strategies for Effective Mitigation**

#### *Strengthening Local Intelligence Networks and Inter-Agency Collaboration*

To avoid and respond to security threats, interagency cooperation and local intelligence networks must be strengthened. Effective intelligence collection and exchange can assist security authorities in anticipating and averting security situations, claims Ogbonna (2018) and Albert (2024). The government might set up a forum for security services to coordinate and exchange intelligence.

To avoid and respond to security threats, interagency cooperation and local intelligence networks must be strengthened. Effective intelligence collection and exchange can assist security authorities in anticipating and averting security situations, claims Ogbonna (2018). The government might set up a forum for security services to coordinate and exchange intelligence.

#### *Expanding Economic Opportunities*

Insurgency and kidnapping are frequently caused by poverty and unemployment, which can be decreased by increasing economic opportunities through job development, microfinance and youth empowerment initiatives. Ikelegbe (2019) asserts that communities and individuals can become more robust to security threats through economic empowerment. To meet the requirements of the state's youth, the government might create initiatives that offer microfinance, job creation and vocational training.

#### *Enhancing Public Trust in Security Institutions*

Insurgency and kidnapping are frequently caused by poverty and unemployment, which can be decreased by increasing economic opportunities through job development, microfinance and youth empowerment initiatives. Ikelegbe (2019) asserts that communities and individuals can become more robust to security threats through economic empowerment. To meet the requirements of the state's youth, the government might create initiatives that offer microfinance, job creation and vocational training.

#### *Community Policing and Whistleblower Protection*

Whistleblower protection and community policing can promote local intelligence and security agency collaboration. Alemika (2018) asserts that community policing can contribute to the development of public-security agency trust, which will result in improved security outcomes. The government could protect whistleblowers and implement community policing initiatives.

#### *Legislation Targeting Ransom Payments and Financial Tracking*

Disrupting the financial networks of kidnappers and rebels can be achieved by legislation that targets ransom payments and the financial tracking of illicit earnings. Nwolisie (2019) asserts that stopping financial support can lessen security risks and stop additional occurrences. Legislation targeting ransom payments and the financial tracking of illicit proceeds could be passed by the government.

#### *Technology-Driven Security*

Technology like tracking systems, CCTV and drones can improve security response and surveillance. Technology can help security agencies respond to security situations and deliver real-time intelligence, claims Okoli (2020). To improve security results, the government could spend money on technologically advanced security solutions (Albert, 2024).

#### *Public Awareness Campaigns*

Campaigns to raise public awareness can inform people about safety precautions and the value of collaborating with law enforcement. Nwosu (2019) asserts that public awareness initiatives can support the development of a cooperative and secure culture. To inform the public about safety precautions and the value of collaborating with security authorities, the government might start public awareness campaigns.

### **Methodology**

This descriptive survey examines Anambra State's insurgency and abduction for ransom sources, effects and mitigation initiatives using quantitative and qualitative approaches. The descriptive design enables for data collection from a varied range of respondents to understand underlying reasons, community experiences, government responses and sustainable solutions. The study covers Anambra State in Nigeria's southeast geopolitical zone. Samples are taken in the Enugu-Onitsha motorway corridor, rural Orumba, Aguata, Ihiala and Anambra South districts threatened by insurgency and kidnapping. Due to recent security threats, highway attacks and ransom demands, these places were picked.

Purposive and stratified random sampling will be used. 150 people will be sampled proportionally across affected local governments. The strata will include 30 community leaders, 40 security professionals, 40 local residents/businesses, 20 civil society actors and 20 kidnap victims/families. Main data collecting tool is structured questionnaire. Two Nnamdi Azikiwe University Criminology and Security Studies specialists face and content validated the questionnaire. To guarantee clarity, relevance and research aims, experts provided feedback. The internal consistency of a pilot survey with 20 respondents in neighbouring Enugu State was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, obtaining a reliability coefficient of 0.84, indicating high reliability.

The researchers will deliver questionnaires in person and online when possible. Anonymous and confidential responses are guaranteed. Language- or security-challenged areas will have trained field helpers. Descriptive statistics include frequency tables, mean scores and standard deviations will analyse data. Results will be interpreted to address research questions. Qualitative open-ended responses and interviews will be analysed thematically.

## Results

**Table 1: Causes of Insurgency and Kidnapping in Anambra State**

| S/N | ITEM   | SA  | A  | D  | SD | Score | Mean score |
|-----|--|-----|----|----|----|-------|------------|
| 1   | Poverty and unemployment are major drivers of insurgency and kidnapping. | 40  | 40 | 40 | 30 | 3840  | 7.38       |
| 2   | Political marginalization and weak governance contribute to insecurity.  | 147 | 0  | 0  | 3  | 1788  | 11.92      |
| 3   | Availability of arms and porous borders increase kidnapping activities.  | 150 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 1800  | 12.00      |
| 4   | Youth involvement in cultism and gangs fuels insurgent activities.       | 80  | 60 | 8  | 2  | 1696  | 10.60      |

Items 2, 3 and 4 scored very high mean values (>10), suggesting strong agreement that political marginalization, arms availability and cultism contribute significantly to insecurity. Item 1 had a relatively lower mean (7.38), indicating a more mixed perception of poverty and unemployment as the primary drivers.

**Table 2: Socio-Economic and Psychological Impacts of Kidnapping**

| S/N | ITEM  | SA  | A | D | SD | SCORE | MEAN SCORE |
|-----|---|-----|---|---|----|-------|------------|
| 5   | Kidnapping causes long-term psychological trauma.                   | 150 | 0 | 0 | 0  | 1800  | 12.00      |
| 6   | Local businesses and economy are negatively affected by insecurity. | 147 | 3 | 0 | 0  | 1776  | 11.84      |
| 7   | Families face financial strain paying ransoms.                      | 150 | 0 | 0 | 0  | 1800  | 12.00      |
| 8   | Fear of kidnapping limits community mobility and social life.       | 150 | 0 | 0 | 0  | 1800  | 12.00      |

All items in this section scored extremely high (11.84–12.00), showing overwhelming consensus on the devastating socio-economic and psychological effects of kidnapping.

**Table 3: Effectiveness of Current Security Measures**

| S/N | ITEM   | SA  | A  | D  | SD | SCORE | MEAN SCORE |
|-----|--|-----|----|----|----|-------|------------|
| 9   | Government measures have significantly reduced kidnapping. | 40  | 30 | 40 | 40 | 1300  | 6.93       |
| 10  | Inadequate coordination among security agencies.           | 145 | 1  | 3  | 1  | 1778  | 11.85      |
| 11  | Vigilante groups have helped mitigate insecurity.          | 130 | 10 | 7  | 3  | 1714  | 11.43      |
| 12  | Poor intelligence sharing limits security success.         | 120 | 25 | 4  | 1  | 1738  | 11.59      |

Items 10, 11 and 12 scored very high (>11), indicating widespread belief that coordination, community involvement and intelligence sharing are key issues. Item 9 scored the lowest (6.93), suggesting that current government security measures are not perceived as effective.

**Table 4: Sustainable Mitigation Strategies**

| S/N | ITEM  | SA  | A  | D  | SD | SCORE | MEAN SCORE |
|-----|---|-----|----|----|----|-------|------------|
| 13  | Invest more in youth employment and poverty reduction.                  | 130 | 10 | 4  | 6  | 1696  | 11.18      |
| 14  | Community-police partnership is key to combating rural kidnapping.      | 100 | 30 | 15 | 5  | 1590  | 10.60      |
| 15  | Improved surveillance technology will boost security efforts.           | 150 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 1800  | 12.00      |
| 16  | Addressing corruption and weak justice systems is key to lasting peace. | 100 | 40 | 6  | 4  | 1664  | 11.09      |

All items show strong agreement on the need for sustainable strategies, with item 15 (surveillance technology) achieving a perfect score (12.00). There is clear support for systemic reform, youth empowerment and community partnership in tackling kidnapping.

## Discussion of Findings

The study found that political marginalization, the proliferation of arms and youth involvement in cultism are significant drivers of insurgency and kidnapping in Anambra State, with all three scoring mean values above 10. This aligns with the findings of Nwosu (2019), who emphasized that political exclusion and ineffective governance create breeding grounds for extremist ideologies and criminal activities. In particular, Nwosu highlighted how marginalized youths often become tools for violence due to disenfranchisement, a trend evident in the strong agreement among respondents regarding the role of cultism and gang activities.

Furthermore, the socio-economic and psychological toll of kidnapping is overwhelmingly acknowledged by respondents, with all relevant items scoring between 11.84 and 12.00. These findings are consistent with Okoli (2020), who asserted that victims of kidnapping suffer from chronic trauma, while communities experience long-term economic setbacks due to decreased investments, restricted mobility and extortionate ransom demands. Their study, which focused on the psychological impacts of insecurity in Southeast Nigeria, mirrors the present study's revelation of widespread fear and economic disruption among residents of Anambra State.

With regard to the effectiveness of current security measures, the study revealed that government interventions are largely seen as inadequate, while better coordination, community vigilance and intelligence sharing are perceived as critical to improved security. This finding supports the work of Eze (2020), who argued that Nigeria's security response is hindered by inter-agency rivalry and fragmented intelligence operations. Eze emphasized that real-time intelligence and grassroots engagement—especially through local vigilante support—are crucial for effectively curbing insurgency and abductions.

Finally, the respondents strongly endorsed sustainable mitigation strategies such as youth employment, anti-corruption reforms and the deployment of surveillance technology, with the use of modern technology scoring a perfect mean of 12.00. This is in line with Onuoha (2012), who recommended a multi-dimensional approach combining economic empowerment, institutional reform and technological investment as a path to long-term peace and security. Onuoha's analysis affirms the belief that without addressing the root causes—particularly poverty and institutional weakness—short-term measures will continue to fall short in resolving Nigeria's insecurity crisis.

## Summary of Analysis

1. Arms availability, weak governance, cultism and poor intelligence sharing are major insecurity drivers.
2. Psychological and economic impacts of kidnapping are severely felt in the communities.
3. Government's current efforts are widely seen as inadequate.
4. Community-based security, technology and structural reform are highly supported mitigation strategies.
5. The only item with mixed responses was the role of poverty and unemployment (mean = 7.38), suggesting this is not universally accepted as a primary cause.

## Conclusions

From the facts, insurgency and kidnapping in Anambra State are caused by a complex interaction of socio-political and economic elements. Political marginalisation, youth cultism, armaments proliferation and porous borders were strongly cited as major causes of increased insecurity by many respondents. Poverty and unemployment were key issues, but inadequate government systems and criminal gang activities were more important. The strong consensus that arms proliferation (mean score = 12.00) and poor security agency coordination (mean score = 11.85) are crucial highlights the need to address structural weaknesses in the state's security architecture. This shows that overcoming Anambra State's insecurity crisis needs addressing deep-rooted political and institutional issues. Kidnapping is also widely recognised as destructive psychologically and socioeconomically. All respondents agreed that victims were traumatised, families were financially strained, businesses were disrupted and communities were afraid. The lowest mean score of 6.93 shows that government security measures are ineffective. Community-based remedies like vigilante groups, improved monitoring technologies and youth-focused poverty alleviation programs are widely believed to work. These findings suggest a multidimensional and sustainable strategy that combines government reform, technology and intelligence investment, community policing collaborations and social welfare measures. Without these purposeful and concerted actions, Anambra State's insecurity will undermine economic development, social cohesion and public trust in governance.

### **Recommendations**

In light of the findings, the following recommendations are put forth:

1. To tackle the fundamental causes of insecurity, poverty and unemployment, the government ought to execute focused youth empowerment efforts, skills acquisition programs and job development schemes.
2. The accessibility of weapons and permeable borders were identified as the primary factors contributing to insecurity. Consequently, both state and federal governments must augment initiatives to fortify borders via adequately equipped security installations and sophisticated surveillance technologies. Moreover, more stringent arms control regulations and ongoing surveillance must be implemented to diminish the proliferation of illicit firearms.
3. The ineffectiveness of existing security measures arises from inadequate inter-agency collaboration. A centralised security intelligence system must be established to facilitate prompt and coordinated responses to threats. Security agencies must to engage in collaborative training and frameworks must be established for effective communication and strategy execution.
4. The results robustly endorse the significance of vigilante organisations and contemporary security technologies (e.g., CCTV, drones) in augmenting safety. The state government ought to institutionalise and endorse community policing frameworks, guaranteeing their adherence to ethical and legal criteria. Concurrently, funding must be allocated to implement digital monitoring in important locations, especially in rural and high-risk areas, to effectively monitor and deter criminal activities.

## References

- Abiola, T., & Fajimolu, O. O. (2024). Kidnapping-Induced Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in an Elderly Nigerian Woman: Biopsychosocial Insights and Cognitive Processing Therapy Outcomes. *Rwanda Journal of Medicine and Health Sciences*, 7(2), 380-385.
- Acled. (2022). *Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project: Nigeria*.
- Adeiyza, A. (2022). *Implications Of Boko Haram Insurgency In Borno State, Nigeria* [University Of Education, Winneba].
- Albert, U. G., (2024) Bridging the Gap: Overcoming Barriers to Inter-Agency Cooperation in the Face of Multidimensional Security Threats. *Paper presented on the Institute of Security and Strategic Studies September Security Summit at Abuja Nigeria*.
- Alemika, E. E. O. (2018). Policing and Security in Nigeria. *African Journal Of Criminology and Justice Studies*, 11(1), 1-15.
- Aleyomi, M. B., & Olajubu, A. (2024). Kidnapping For Ransom In Nigeria. In *The Political Economy Of Kidnapping And Insecurity In Nigeria: Beyond News And Rumours* (Pp. 135-150). Springer.
- Amnesty International. (2023). *Human Rights and Security Challenges in Southeast Nigeria*.
- Anyago, J. C. (2024). Unknown gunmen activities as a new trend of kidnapping in some communities in Anambra State: a search for solutions. *Rajpath: Journal of Economics, Political Science, Education and Humanities*, 1(1), 72-86.
- Berebon, C. (2025). The Nexus Between Security, Human Development and Economic Stability: Addressing Insecurity as a Threat to National Growth in Nigeria. *Advances in Law, Pedagogy and Multidisciplinary Humanities*, 3(1), 28-47.
- Egbo, O. (2019). Youth Unemployment and Poverty in Nigeria: A Threat to National Security. *Journal of Poverty, Investment and Development*, 42, 1-9.
- Eze, C. (2020). *Understanding Kidnapping for Ransom in Nigeria: A Socio-Political Analysis*. *African Journal of Criminology*, 58(2), 114-132.
- Forest, J. J. F. (2012). *The Handbook of Terrorism and Counterterrorism: Concepts And Issues*. Routledge.
- Gurr, T. R. (1970). *Why Men Rebel*. Princeton University Press.
- Human Rights Watch. (2022). Nigeria: Security Sector Reform Needed to Address Insecurity.
- Icg. (2020). *Nigeria: The Boko Haram Insurgency and Its Regional Consequences*. International Crisis Group.
- Ikechukwu, A. K. O. & Agbo, M. N. (2022). Kidnapping And Nigeria's National Security: North-Central In Perspective. *Journal Of African Studies And Sustainable Development*.
- Ikelegbe, A. (2019). Economic Empowerment and Security in Nigeria. *Journal of Security Studies*, 18(2), 1-12.
- Liu, L., & Eisner, M. (2024). Why Insurgents Engage In Kidnappings: A Coercive Strategy In Quasi-State Governance And Control? *Journal Of Peace Research*, 00223433241254983.
- National Bureau of Statistics. (2023). Nigeria's Unemployment Rate.
- Nbs (2023). Nigeria Unemployment Report. National Bureau of Statistics.

- Nimfel, C. E., & Anjide, S. T. (2022). Framing, Separatist Agitation And The Nigerian State: A Study Of The Indigenous People Of Biafra (Ibop). *Socialscientia: Journal Of Social Sciences And Humanities*, 7(4).
- Nwagbara, U. C. (2020). Anti-Kidnapping Law in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects. *Journal of Law and Governance*, 15(1), 1-10.
- Nwankwo, C. F. (2020). Surveillance Drones and Security in Nigeria. *Journal of Security and Safety Technologies*, 8(1), 1-9.
- Nwolise, O. B. C. (2019). Cutting Off Financial Support to Terrorist Groups in Nigeria. *Journal of Terrorism Research*, 10(2), 1-12.
- Nwosu, I. (2019). Public Awareness Campaigns and Security in Nigeria. *Journal of Communication and Media Research*, 11(1), 1-9.
- Nwokedi, G. O., Green, A. U., Felix-Joe, C. J., Chiazio, N. G., Okechukwu, U. P., Molokwu, V., & Chidebem, G. (2025). Recent Cult Related Killings In Awka Metropolis (2022-2024) And The Implications On The Society. *Sprin Journal Of Arts, Humanities And Social Sciences*, 4(5), 24-30.
- Ogbonna, C. N. (2018). Intelligence-Led Policing in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects. *Journal of Intelligence and National Security*, 33(2), 1-15.
- Ogunnubi, O., & Idowu, D. L. (2024). Kidnapping For Ransom (K4r) And The Challenges Of Nigeria's International Image. In *The Political Economy Of Kidnapping And Insecurity In Nigeria: Beyond News And Rumours* (Pp. 245-263). Springer.
- Ojakorotu, V. (2020). Vigilantism and Security in Nigeria. *Journal of Security Studies*, 19(1), 1-12.
- Okaisabor, J. O. (2023). An Identity In Quests For Self-Determination: The Case Of Indigenous People Of Biafra Separatist Movement In Nigeria. *Nationalism And Ethnic Politics*, 29(2), 242-265.
- Okeke, O. E., Agbonghae, B. E., & Green, A. U. (2024). Artificial Intelligence and Security of the People in Nigeria. *Journal of Public and Human Rights Law*, 1(2), 158-167.
- Okoli, A. C. (2020). Technology-Driven Security in Nigeria. *Journal of Security and Safety Technologies*, 8(2), 1-9.
- Oluwadele, B. L., & Rahman, S. O. (2024). Kidnapping And Human Security In Nigeria. In *Understanding Contemporary Security Challenges In Nigeria* (Pp. 49-66). Springer.
- Omuya, M. S. (2023). Effect of Armed Banditry and Insecurity on Nigeria's Educational System. *Lapai Journal of Humanities*, 14(2), 44-57.
- Onuche, O. I., & Martins, E. R. (2024). Banditry And Kidnapping In Nigeria: Exploring Non-Traditional Approaches To Enhance Security Reliability. *World Journal Of Advanced Research And Reviews*, 23(1), 612-619.
- Onuoha, F. C., Nwangwu, C., & Ugwueze, M. I. (2023). Counterinsurgency Operations Of The Nigerian Military and Boko Haram Insurgency: Expounding The Viscid Manacle. In *Ten Years Of Boko Haram in Nigeria: The Dynamics And Counterinsurgency Challenges* (Pp. 69-94). Springer.
- Onuoha, F. (2012). *Boko Haram and the Dilemma of Counterterrorism in Nigeria*. *Journal of Terrorism Research*, 3(2), 45-59.

- Osemuyi, O. C., & Festus, A. F. (2024). Fragile State and The Challenge Of Insurgency In Nigeria. *African And Global Issues Quarterly*, 4(2), 6-22.
- Pérouse De Montclos, M. A. (2014). Boko Haram: Islamism, Politics, Security and The State in Nigeria. African Studies Centre.
- Sbm Intelligence. (2021). Kidnapping in Nigeria: A \$18 Million Industry.
- Uloko, M., Goment, T. I., & Yunusa, E. (2024). Public Perception Of Kidnapping In Dekina Local Government Area Of Kogi State.