

Impact of Banditry and Cattle Rustling on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPS) in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone: Implications for Counselling

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Abstract

The study examined the impact of banditry and cattle rustling on internally displaced persons (IDPS) in Sokoto east senatorial zone: implications for counselling. Descriptive survey research design was used in this Study. The target population is thirty three thousand and sixty six household (33066) within fifteenth 15 internally display persons (IDPs Camps) in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone. A purposive and proportionate sampling technique is employed in selected 381 household Participants across 10 IDPs camps in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone. The instrument used for this study is a researcher designed instruments entitled; Impact of Banditry and Cattle Rustling on IDPs (IBCRIDPS). The questionnaire is a closed-ended type with four-points rating scale which were coded as Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1); The reliability index was founded 0.762, using Cronbach Alpha coefficient. The data collected were analyzed using frequency count and mean statistics. The decision rule is such that any mean score of 2.50 and above were regarded agree and mean scores less than 2.50 were deemed as disagree. The study findings shows that religion plays a supportive role for internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) affected by banditry and cattle rustling in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone. The religion promotes tolerance, peace, acceptance of God's will, and creativity among victims. The findings reveal that various counselling strategies have been effectively applied to support IDPs affected by banditry and cattle rustling in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone. E,g sensitization, motivational talks, behavioural therapy, psycho-educative, and cognitive techniques are helping victims manage trauma, rebuild resilience, and recover from the psychological and emotional impact of violent displacement., some part of the recommendations the government should Complementing livelihood programs, direct and targeted financial assistance (e.g., cash transfers or micro-grants) should be provided to vulnerable IDP households. This helps address immediate needs, stimulates local economies, and empowers IDPs to make their own recovery choices.

Keywords: Banditry, Cattle and Rustling, counselling strategies, Religion impact, Economic Impact, Internal Displace Persons (IDPS)

Introduction

Banditry and cattle rustling have plagued Nigeria for decades, posing significant challenges to security, socio-economic development, and human rights. According to Mustapha (2019) banditry in Nigeria often involves armed attacks, robbery, kidnapping for ransom, and other forms of violence targeting civilians, communities, or specific groups. Banditry is a term used to refer to acts of robbery and violence in areas where the rule of law has broken down (Collins, 2021). According to Warty (2024) defines banditry as an act of crime committed either by the residents of a village or people in the low economic and social strata in order to fulfill their basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter. Ahmed & Mohammed (2020) elucidates that cattle rustling is a prevalent form of organized crime in Nigeria, often perpetrated by armed criminal groups or individuals operating in rural areas where pastoralism is prevalent. These criminal activities involve the forcible taking of cattle from livestock owners through armed attacks, raids on villages, or clandestine theft, leading to economic losses, social disruption, and insecurity within affected communities. According to Cohen & Deng (2018), IDPs often face similar challenges to refugees, including displacement, loss of livelihoods, lack of access to basic services, and heightened vulnerability to exploitation and abuse, but they remain within the borders of their own country.

The concept of cattle rustling is almost generally applied to represent the act of stealing cattle from a grazing herd notwithstanding the motivation or contextual specifics (Bashar & Mustapha 2021). Cattle rustling as being practiced today in Nigerian states of Zamfara, Sokoto, Kaduna and Katsina experience the robbery of cattle at a large scale by heavily armed organized gun-men whose activities also extend to terrorizing villages, community banditry and other related and more devastating operations (Bashar & Mustapha 2021). Aisha & Nasir (2019) emphasize that cattle rustling often involves armed attacks, raids on villages, and collusion between criminal networks and corrupt officials, posing significant challenges to law enforcement and governance in affected areas. Idris (2018) have highlighted how the loss of cattle due to rustling can devastate pastoralist households, leading to decreased income, food insecurity, and increased poverty levels. The economic consequences extend beyond immediate losses, as the

disruption of livestock production and trade networks undermines long-term agricultural productivity and rural development efforts.

Banditry and cattle rustling have emerged as significant security challenges in Sokoto East senatorial zone, Sokoto State, Nigeria, with profound implications for the welfare of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the region. According to Ilo *et al.* (2018), Sokoto State has experienced a surge in banditry and cattle rustling activities, driven by factors such as rural poverty, ethnic conflicts, and weak law enforcement. The escalation of violence has led to the displacement of communities, exacerbating the vulnerability of IDPs who have been forced to flee their homes in search of safety. Abdulmalik & Yahuza (2019) highlight the devastating impact of banditry and cattle rustling on affected communities in Sokoto East senatorial zone. The violence has resulted in loss of lives, destruction of property, and disruption of socio-economic activities, leading to widespread fear and insecurity among residents. As noted by Ibrahim & Aliyu (2020), the insecurity in Sokoto East senatorial zone resulting from criminal activities hinders economic growth, disrupts agricultural productivity, and undermines social cohesion in affected communities.

The situation is further compounded by the displacement of individuals and families, as IDPs face heightened risks of food insecurity, malnutrition, and disease outbreaks. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) refer to individuals or groups who have been forced to flee their homes or places of habitual residence due to armed conflict, violence, natural disasters, human rights violations, or other emergencies, but who have not crossed an international border. Onyekuru (2019) have emphasized how economic hardships and lack of livelihood opportunities push individuals and families to migrate in search of better prospects, often resulting in displacement. Vulnerable populations, including women, children, and internally displaced persons, are disproportionately affected by socio-economic disparities, further exacerbating their risk of displacement. Addressing socio-economic inequalities through poverty reduction initiatives and inclusive development policies is crucial for preventing and mitigating internal displacement in Nigeria.

Intersection of religion on banditry and cattle rustling among internally displaced persons (IDPs) have highlights the complex dynamics at play in shaping the region's security landscape. Yusuf & Mohammed (2020) have explored how religious ideologies and beliefs influence the behaviour and motivations of bandits and cattle rustlers operating in the area. Religion,

particularly Islam, plays a significant role in shaping social norms, values, and perceptions of justice among both perpetrators and victims of violence.

Economic effects among internally displaced persons (IDPs) have highlights the significant challenges faced by displaced individuals and communities in accessing livelihood opportunities, financial resources, and basic necessities. Aliyu & Musa (2018) have documented how displacement disrupts economic activities, leading to loss of income, assets, and productive resources for affected. Moreover, research findings underscore the role of economic factors in driving displacement and perpetuating cycles of vulnerability and marginalization. The displacement crisis disrupts market dynamics, labour markets, and agricultural production, leading to increased competition for scarce resources and heightened socio-economic tensions among displaced and host populations (Sani & Ahmed, 2020).

Counselling strategies employed to support internally displaced persons (IDPs), underscores the importance of psychosocial support and mental health services in addressing the unique needs of displaced populations. Yusuf and Hassan, (2020) have explored various counselling approaches and interventions aimed at promoting resilience, coping mechanisms, and emotional well-being among IDPs in the region. Counselling strategies encompass a range of psychosocial interventions, including individual counselling, group therapy, trauma focused interventions, and community-based support programs (Yusuf & Hassan, 2020). Moreover, research findings emphasize the role of culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate counselling techniques in addressing the diverse needs of IDPs in Sokoto State.

Additionally, inadequate funding, human resource constraints, and weak institutional capacity pose challenges to the implementation and scale-up of counselling programs for IDPs. In conclusion, counselling strategies are essential for supporting internally displaced persons affected by banditry and cattle rustling in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone, Sokoto State. The humanitarian crisis resulting from banditry and cattle rustling has attracted attention from both local and international organizations. Given the complex and multifaceted nature of the challenges posed by banditry and cattle rustling in Sokoto East senatorial zone, there is a critical need for empirical research to assess the impact on internally displaced persons and inform evidence-based interventions. Thus, this study aims to investigate the impact of banditry and

cattle rustling among IDPs in Sokoto East senatorial zone, providing insights that can inform policy formulation and humanitarian action.

Statements of the Problems

The Sokoto East senatorial zone, like many other regions in Nigeria, grapples with the complex and pervasive issues of banditry and cattle rustling, which have resulted in the displacement of numerous individuals and communities. As noted by Ibrahim & Yusuf (2020), the insecurity in Sokoto East senatorial zone resulting from criminal activities hinders economic growth, disrupts agricultural productivity, and undermines social cohesion in affected communities. However, there is a gap in understanding the specific nature and extent of this impact, as well as the underlying factors contributing to the phenomenon.

The main issue we're studying understands how banditry and cattle rustling affect IDPs in Sokoto East senatorial zone by explore the socio-economic consequences, religion effect and counselling strategies resulting from displacement due to banditry activities. Identifying the underlying factors contributing to these security challenges is essential for developing comprehensive strategies to mitigate their impact and prevent future occurrences.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this research is to investigate the impact of banditry and cattle rustling on internally displaced person (IDP) in Sokoto east senatorial zone and implication for counselling. The specific objectives are to;

1. Identify the religion effect of banditry and cattle rustling among internally displaced person (IDP) in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone, Sokoto State.
2. Identify the economic effect of banditry and cattle rustling to the internally displaced person (IDP) in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone.
3. Identify the counselling strategies to be Utilize among internally displaced person (IDP) in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone, Sokoto State.

Research Questions

This study aimed to provide answers to the following questions

1. What is the religion effect of banditry and cattle rustling among internally displaced person (IDP) in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone, Sokoto State?
2. What is the economic effect of banditry on internally displaced person (IDP) in Sokoto East Senatorial zone, Sokoto State.?
3. What are the Counselling strategies could be utilized among internally displaced person (IDP) in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone, Sokoto State?

Methodology

The research design employed for this study is a descriptive survey research design. The target population is thirty-three thousand and sixty-six household (33066) within fifteenth 15 internally display persons (IDPs Camps) in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone. A purposive and proportionate sampling technique is employed in selected 381 household Participants across 10 IDPs camps in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone. This sample size was drawn based on the guide of the research advisor, 2006 table. The instrument used is a researcher designed instruments entitled; Impact of Banditry and Cattle Rustling on IDPs (IBCRIDPS). It was arranged in two sections. Section one consists of demographic information of the respondents. Section two, consists Impact of Banditry and Cattle Rustling on IDPs (IBCRIDPS) to be measured, with (15) questions carefully arranged in clusters, A, B and C which seek to provide answers to the research questions. The instrument is closed ended with four-points rating scale which were coded and weighted as follows: Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). The instrument was validated by the experts, from counselling psychology department, faculty of education Sokoto State University, Sokoto. The instrument was considered suitable by the experts for the study after the corrections. To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, the questionnaire was administered to thirty (30), respondents. Reliability was computed using Cronbach Alpha, reliability index was founded at 0.76. The data collected were analyzed using frequency count and mean statistics. The decision rule; any mean score of 2.50 and above were regarded agree and mean scores less than 2.50 were deemed as disagree.

Results

This section highlights the analysis of the research questions earlier raised in the study. The analysis was done using frequency counts and percentage distribution.

Research Question one

What is religion effect of banditry and cattle rustling among internally displaced person (IDP) in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone, Sokoto State?

Table 1: Religion Effect of Banditry and Cattle Rustling among (IDPS)

S/N	Statement	N	Mean	Std. Devia	Remarks
1	Religion teachers how to tolerate one another in the IDP camp	381	3.63	.764	Agree
2	Followers of religion live in peace with other community	381	2.99	1.187	Agree
3	IDPs use religion as a source of forgiveness	381	2.66	1.247	Agree
4	Religion teachers how to accept the degree of God	381	3.24	1.012	Agree
5	Religion teaches IDPs victim on how to be creative	381	3.47	.769	Agree
Grand Total		381	3.198	0.996	Agree
2.50 bench mark					

Table 1, show the religion effect of banditry and cattle rustling among internally displaced person (IDP) in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone, Sokoto State. The Item 1 shows respondents agreed that Religion teachers to tolerate one another in the IDP camp, with the mean score, 3.63 which greater than 2.50 bench mark. Items 2 indicated the respondents agreed that Followers of religion live in peace with other community, with the mean score 2.99 which higher than 2.50 bench mark. Item 3 indicated the respondents agreed that IDPs use religion as a source of forgiveness, with the mean score 2.66 which is higher than 2.50 bench mark. Item 4 indicated the respondents agreed that religion teachers how to accept the degree of God with mean score 3.24 which higher than 2.50 bench mark. Item 5 indicated the respondent agreed that Religion teaches IDPs victim on how to be creative with the mean score 3.47 which higher than 2.50 bench mark. The analysis shows that religion plays a supportive role for internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) affected by banditry and cattle rustling in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone. The respondents agreed that religion promotes tolerance, peace, acceptance of God's will, and creativity among victims, grand mean of 3.19 which significantly greater than 2.50 bench mark.

Research Question Two

What is the economic effect of banditry and cattle rustling on internally displaced person (IDP) in Sokoto East Senatorial zone, Sokoto State?

Table 2: Economic Effect of Banditry and Cattle Rustling among (IDPS)

S/N	Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remarks
1	Various Shops in the area were burnt	381	2.94	1.210	Agree
2	Markets in the affected area were closed	381	2.96	1.180	Agree
3	Animal rearing activities was crippled in the affected area	381	3.36	.881	Agree
4	Business activities affected	381	3.09	1.157	Agree
5	Money and property were also lost in the affected area	381	3.09	1.178	Agree
Grand Total		381	3.088	1.117	Agree

2.50 bench mark

Table 2, shows the economic effect of banditry and cattle rustling on internally displaced person (IDP) in Sokoto East Senatorial zone, Sokoto State. Item 1 shows the respondents agreed that Various Shops in the area were burnt, with the mean score 2.94 which higher than 2.50 bench mark. Items 2 indicated the respondent agreed that markets in the affected area were closed, with mean score 2.96 which higher than 2.50 bench mark. Item 3 indicated the participants agreed that animal rearing activities was crippled in the affected area with the mean score 3.36 which higher than 2.50 bench mark. Item 4 indicated the participants agreed that Business activities affected the degree of God, with the mean score 3.09 which higher than 2.50 bench mark. Item 5 indicated the participants agreed that money and property were also lost in the affected area, with the mean score 3.09 which higher than 2.50 bench mark. The results reveal that banditry and cattle rustling have had severe economic impacts on IDPs in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone, with the grand mean 3.088 of the respondents confirming the destruction of shops, closure of markets, collapse of animal rearing, disruption of business activities, and loss of money and property as greater than bench mark.

Research Question Three

What is the Counselling strategies could be utilized among internally displaced person (IDP) in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone, Sokoto State?

Table 3: Counselling Strategies among Internally Displaced Person (IDP)

S/N	Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remarks
1	Sensitization, orientation, motivational talk	381	3.43	.890	Agree
2	The counsellor used creative strategies in the IDP camp	381	3.18	1.145	Agree
3	Behavioural method was used in IDP	381	2.99	1.221	Agree
4	Psycho-educative strategy in the IDP camp	381	2.99	1.22	Agree
5	Cognitive Techniques was use in the IDP Camp.	381	3.07	1.166	Agree
Grand Total		381	3.132	1.128	Agree

2.50 bench mark

Table 3 show the Counselling strategies could be utilized among IDPs in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone, Sokoto State. Item 1 shows the respondents agreed that Sensitization, orientation, motivational talk, with the mean score 3.43 which higher than 2.50 bench mark. Items 2 indicated the participants agreed that, the counsellor used creative strategies in the IDP camp with the mean score 3.18 which higher than 2.50 bench mark. Item 3 indicated the respondents agreed that Behavioural method was used in IDP with mean score 2.99 which higher than 2.50 bench mark. Item 4 indicated the respondents agreed that Psycho-educative strategy in the IDP camp the degree of God, with the mean score 2.99 which higher than 2.50 bench mark. Item 5 indicated the respondents agreed that Cognitive Techniques was use in the IDP Camp, with mean score 3.07 which higher than 2.50 bench mark. The results reveal a various counselling strategies have been effectively applied to support IDPs affected by banditry and cattle rustling in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone. With the grand mean 3.132 of the respondents agree that, approaches such as sensitization, motivational talks, behavioural therapy, psycho-educative, and cognitive techniques are helping victims manage trauma, rebuild resilience, and recover from the psychological and emotional impact of violent displacement.,

Summary of Major findings

1. Religion plays a supportive role for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) affected by banditry and cattle rustling in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone.
2. Banditry and cattle rustling have had severe economic impacts on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone.
3. Counselling strategies have been effectively applied to support IDPs affected by banditry and cattle rustling in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone.

Discussion

The study found that Religion plays a supportive role for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) affected by banditry and cattle rustling in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone. Religion promotes tolerance, peace, acceptance of God's will, and creativity among victims. The finding is in line with Yusuf & Mohammed (2020) have explored how religious ideologies and beliefs influence the behaviour and motivations of bandits and cattle rustlers operating in the area. Additionally, Yusuf and Mohammed (2020) research findings underscore the role of religious leaders and institutions in mediating

conflicts and promoting peace building efforts among IDPs affected by banditry and cattle rustling. However, views were divided on religion as a source of forgiveness, with many struggling to forgive due to the trauma caused by the violence. Overall, religion helps IDPs cope with the emotional and social effects of displacement in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone.

The study reflected that Banditry and cattle rustling have had severe economic impacts on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone. The finding confirming the destruction of shops, closure of markets, collapse of animal rearing, disruption of business activities, and loss of money and property. The above is in line with Yusuf (2024) the study found that the presence and negative impacts of Banditry and cattle rustling include killing and kidnapping of farmers, chasing farmers out of their farmlands, seizing farmlands, theft of cattle, burning and raiding grain silos, and blocking local trade routes and negatively affected food security. Equally with Bashir & Mustapaha (2021) revealed that farmers–herdsmen conflict precipitates the acts of cattle rustling and banditry. It also revealed that conversely cattle rustling and banditry contributed to the farmers–herdsmen conflict and pose serious threat to the safety and security of the people.

The study found that Counselling strategies have been effectively applied to support IDPs affected by banditry and cattle rustling in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone. The counselling approaches such as sensitization, motivational talks, behavioural therapy, psycho-educative, and cognitive techniques are helping victims manage trauma, rebuild resilience, and recover from the psychological and emotional impact of violent displacement. The above finding is inconsistently with Kolo (2019) emphasized the need for comprehensive counselling strategies to address the root causes of banditry and cattle rustling, including socio-economic marginalization, ethno-religious tensions, and ineffective law enforcement. Moreover, there is a growing recognition of the importance of incorporating the perspectives and experiences of IDPs into policymaking and intervention efforts. Equally Nwogu (2017) supported the Collaborative of counselling approaches involving government agencies, civil society organizations, and local communities are seen as essential for mitigating the impact of banditry and cattle rustling on IDPs and restoring stability in affected regions.

Conclusion

The finding shows that Religion plays a supportive role such as promotes tolerance, peace, acceptance of God's will, and creativity among victims. The finding confirming the had severe economic impacts e.g. destruction of shops, closure of markets, collapse of animal rearing, disruption of business activities, and loss of money and property. Similarly, Counselling strategies have been effectively applied such as sensitization, motivational talks, behavioural therapy, psycho-educative, and cognitive techniques are helping victims manage trauma, rebuild resilience, and recover from the psychological and emotional impact of violent for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) affected by banditry and cattle rustling in Sokoto East Senatorial Zone. Conclusively, the study found that, there is negative impact of banditry and cattle rustling on internally displaced person (IDP) in Sokoto east senatorial zone and implication for counselling.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the result of the findings:

1. Formalize Partnerships with Religious Institutions: Recognizing the supportive role of religion, government, policymakers, and NGOs should establish formal frameworks for collaboration with religious leaders and organizations.
2. Provide Targeted Financial Assistance: Complementing livelihood programs, direct and targeted financial assistance (e.g., cash transfers or micro-grants) should be provided to vulnerable IDP households.
3. Scale up Effective Counselling Strategies: Since counselling strategies have been effectively applied, there's a clear imperative to significantly expand and normalize access to these proven methods.

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