

## SCHOOL-BASED COUNSELLING INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENTS EXPOSED TO INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

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### Abstract

Focusing on "silent classrooms" and "hidden trauma," this study examines the psychological and educational effects of insecurity on Nigerian children. Despite students' increased exposure to violence, school-based therapy remains poorly integrated into education systems affected by insecurity. A qualitative systematic review and policy analysis design was used, drawing on peer-reviewed and institutional literature (2022–2026) from Scopus, Web of Science, AJOL, and sources from UNICEF, WHO, and the World Bank. Research grounded in trauma theory indicates that exposure to banditry, kidnapping, insurgency, and communal violence leads to anxiety, emotional dysregulation, hypervigilance, absenteeism, and subpar academic performance. School counseling programs are inadequate, underfunded, and poorly run, and stigma discourages students from seeking help, causing them to hide their pain. The study recommends the CORE trauma-informed school counseling framework. To improve early detection and intervention, it emphasizes observation, response, and empowerment. The study concludes that addressing hidden trauma is crucial for Nigeria's educational resilience, psychosocial healing, and long-term human capital development, focusing on "silent classrooms" and "hidden trauma"

**Keywords:** Nigeria; students; school counselling; trauma; insecurity

### Introduction

#### **Education under global insecurity, comparative fragile contexts, and Nigeria's positioning**

A major worldwide issue influencing students' welfare, educational quality, and access is insecurity. In many areas, educational systems are increasingly impacted by armed conflict, insurgency, terrorism, and organised violence, creating conditions where learning occurs in the face of ongoing dread and uncertainty. Hundreds of millions of students worldwide are currently exposed to interruptions in education systems that go beyond actual school closures and have profound psychological and emotional repercussions (UNICEF, 2024; UNESCO, 2023). In these situations, education is no longer just an academic process but also a psychosocial experience molded by exposure to instability and violence. The seriousness of this worldwide issue is demonstrated by comparative data from vulnerable educational environments. South Sudan Prolonged civil war has caused widespread untreated kid trauma, teacher displacement, and substantial devastation of school infrastructure (World Bank, 2023). Insurgency and insecurity continue to be the main causes of Somalia's ongoing educational instability, which restricts regular access to secure learning spaces

(UNHCR, 2024). Another aspect is Afghanistan, where students' access to education and institutional psychosocial support systems have been severely undermined by political unrest and repressive governance (UNICEF, 2025). A recurring pattern appears in all of these situations: schools may continue to function structurally, but psychological safety and emotional stability are seriously compromised.

Due to the simultaneous impact of several insecurity typologies on education, Nigeria has a particularly difficult position within this global landscape. These include the North-East's Boko Haram and ISWAP insurgency, the North-West's extensive banditry, the North-Central region's frequent communal conflict, and kidnappings for ransom that target school communities (International Crisis Group, 2024; UNODC, 2023). School closures, the forcible relocation of students and teachers, and increased anxiety among parents and communities have all resulted from these types of instability. Prominent kidnapping incidents like Chibok (2014) and Jangebe (2021) raised public awareness of school risk and profoundly changed parental trust in formal education institutions and school attendance patterns.

### **Conceptualising “Silent Classrooms” and “Hidden Trauma”**

In this setting, the ideas of concealed trauma and silent classrooms offer an analytical perspective for comprehending education under insecurity. Fear and trauma exposure diminish emotional engagement, cognitive present, and meaningful participation in classrooms that are described as "silent." According to UNESCO (2023) and UNICEF (2024), students may be physically present but psychologically disengaged, indicating disturbed attention and learning processes. The term "hidden trauma" describes the psychological impacts of violence on students that go unnoticed and untreated, such as anxiety, withdrawal, anger, PTSD symptoms, and trouble focusing (American Psychological Association, 2022; World Health Organization, 2025). There is a gap between apparent academic activity and underlying psychological discomfort because these situations frequently go unnoticed in educational settings. Research demonstrates that untreated trauma impairs pupils' long-term psychosocial growth and academic performance. (Betancourt et al,2023).

### **Problem statement: inadequacy of school counselling systems**

Although Nigerian students are increasingly exposed to violence linked to insecurity, school-based counselling programmes remain underdeveloped. In many public schools, counselling services are either unavailable or delivered by personnel with limited training and no specialised expertise in trauma care. Even where counselling structures are present, they are often fragmented, reactive, and poorly integrated into broader educational planning and school health systems (Federal Ministry of Education, 2023). Due to this institutional deficit, kids' trauma-related symptoms, such as withdrawal, hostility, lack of focus, absenteeism, and deteriorating academic performance, are widely ignored. These unresolved psychological repercussions eventually compromise both the efficacy of the educational system as a whole and individual learning outcomes.

### **Research gap**

Regarding school-based trauma interventions in Nigeria, there is a significant vacuum in both empirical research and policy implementation. The political, economic, and security aspects of insecurity are the main focus of current research, with little consideration given to the psychological effects on school-age children. When mental health is taken into account, it is frequently handled within general psychological or clinical frameworks as opposed to school-specific counselling settings. In a similar vein, Nigerian counselling psychology literature seldom ever examines trauma-

informed school treatments or concentrates on conflict-affected educational environments (Okonkwo & Suleiman, 2024). Although policy documents recognise the need of counselling services in schools, their implementation is still lacking, especially in areas where insecurity is most prevalent. A substantial gap in research and practice is highlighted by this discrepancy between policy aim and actual implementation.

### **Theoretical anchoring: Trauma Theory**

The basis of this research is trauma theory, which describes how exposure to violent or potentially fatal situations interferes with normal psychological functioning, especially when people do not have sufficient institutional and emotional support networks (Herman, 2023). Learning capacity is directly impacted by trauma's effects on cognitive processing, emotional regulation, memory retention, and behavioural responses. Therefore, trauma in educational contexts is not only a psychological problem but also an academic obstacle that impacts engagement, understanding, and long-term academic achievement. Trauma theory is extremely pertinent to school-based counselling frameworks because it highlights the significance of safety, relational support, and organised response procedures.

### **Counselling psychology disciplinary positioning**

Schools are essential locations for early intervention, emotional growth, and psychosocial assistance, according to counselling psychology. School-based counselling is conceptualised as a preventive and therapeutic mechanism capable of addressing emotional distress, promoting resilience, and restoring functional learning engagement among students exposed to trauma (British Psychological Society, 2024). However, there is still little integration of counselling psychology into Nigerian educational systems, especially in areas impacted by insecurity where psychological needs are frequently the highest.

#### **1.7 Research questions**

The following research questions serve as the basis for this investigation:

1. How can exposure to violence and insecurity affect Nigerian pupils psychologically and academically?
2. Why do school counselling programs fall short in helping adolescents who are exposed to insecurity deal with trauma?
3. How might trauma-informed counselling treatments be successfully applied in Nigerian classrooms?

### **Significance of the study**

Untreated trauma in educational environments has far-reaching effects that go well beyond personal health. Students suffer from diminished academic performance, emotional instability, and cognitive impairment at the micro level. Macroeconomically, this limits future worker capacity and weakens national productivity by contributing to the depletion of human capital. Unresolved trauma perpetuates intergenerational disadvantage, societal instability, and violent cycles throughout time. In this way, quiet classrooms provide a challenge to national growth and education, with long-term effects on Nigeria's socioeconomic stability.

### **Contribution of the study**

This study contributes to existing scholarship by developing a trauma-informed school counselling framework tailored to Nigerian educational contexts affected by insecurity. Drawing on trauma

theory and counselling psychology, it offers structured approaches for identifying, addressing, and managing hidden trauma within schools. In doing so, the study advocates a shift from reactive counselling practices to proactive, system-integrated models of psychological support capable of strengthening educational resilience in environments characterised by persistent insecurity.

### **Conceptual Clarifications and Operationalisation**

This study explains important ideas that are essential to comprehending how insecurity affects students' psychological and academic well-being. Trauma is a psychological reaction to experiencing upsetting or potentially fatal situations; it frequently shows up as emotional dysregulation, anxiety disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (American Psychiatric Association, 2022; World Health Organization, 2023). Trauma can manifest in school-age populations as intrusive memories, hypervigilance, avoidance behaviours, sleep disturbance, and decreased focus, all of which have a detrimental effect on learning ability (UNICEF, 2024).

In this setting, organised and violent activities like banditry, kidnapping, insurgency, and communal violence are referred to as crime and insecurity. These types of insecurity increase students' susceptibility to psychological distress by exposing them, either directly or indirectly, to fear, displacement, damage, or loss (UNODC, 2023; Amnesty International, 2023). Such instability is especially noticeable in Nigeria's North-East and North-West, where armed attacks and school kidnappings have become frequent dangers (International Crisis Group, 2024).

Three dimensions are used to operationalise student outcomes. Anxiety, fear, melancholy, emotional numbness, and persistent worry are the first emotional indications (UNICEF, 2024). Second, disengagement, hostility, restlessness, absenteeism, and social isolation are examples of behavioural indicators (World Health Organization, 2023). Third, academic signs include diminished focus, subpar academic achievement, limited engagement in class, and dwindling attendance at school (UNESCO, 2023).

Differentiating between stress, fear, and trauma is crucial. Fear is an instantaneous emotional response to perceived danger, whereas stress is a transient psychological reaction to pressure that goes away as the stressor is eliminated. However, trauma is more severe and lasts longer; it happens when exposure overwhelms coping strategies and results in long-term functional and psychological impairment (American Psychological Association, 2023). The study uses operational indicators for analysis, such as exposure to insecurity (e.g., kidnapping incidents, armed attacks), psychological reactions (anxiety, emotional dysregulation, avoidance), behavioural manifestations (truancy, aggression, withdrawal), and academic outcomes (performance decline, disengagement). For students who are exposed to insecurity, these indications offer a methodical foundation for evaluating hidden psychological injury.

### **Theoretical Framework: Trauma Theory**

The foundation of this research is trauma theory, which describes how exposure to stressful or potentially fatal situations interferes with regular psychological processes when coping mechanisms are inadequate (Herman, 2023; Van der Kolk, 2024). According to the hypothesis, trauma is a complicated neuropsychological process that affects behaviour, memory processing, emotional control, and cognition rather than just an emotional response. The exposure-response-disruption pathway is a fundamental tenet of trauma theory. First, people are exposed to stressful incidents like armed conflict, kidnapping, or violence. Second, they exhibit avoidance tendencies, intrusive thoughts, emotional numbness, and hyperarousal as trauma reactions. Third, especially in structured

settings like schools, these reactions cause behavioural and educational disruptions (World Health Organization, 2023; UNICEF, 2024).

Students in Nigeria who are exposed to insecurity, such as insurgency in the North-East, banditry in the North-West, and communal violence in the North-Central region, exhibit this pathway. According to the International Crisis Group (2024), trauma reactions can be triggered even indirectly through media reporting or community narratives, which can have an impact on academic achievement and classroom participation. As a result, impacted kids may exhibit aggressive, disruptive, withdrawn, or inattentive behaviours; nevertheless, these behaviours are frequently signs of unresolved trauma rather than intentional wrongdoing (Okonkwo & Suleiman, 2024).

The need for school-based counselling interventions is one of the main implications of trauma theory. Trauma symptoms endure in the absence of organised psychosocial support, which results in emotional instability and long-term academic underachievement (British Psychological Society, 2024). Therefore, counselling services are essential for helping impacted students regain emotional control, increase classroom participation, and develop resilience. But there are drawbacks to trauma theory. It has been challenged for under-representing larger structural and sociopolitical causes of trauma, such as poverty, poor governance, and systemic insecurity, while overemphasising individual psychological processes (Miller & Rasmussen, 2022). Despite this drawback, it is pertinent to understand the psychological and academic effects of exposure to insecurity among Nigerian students.

## **Methodology**

This study adopts a qualitative systematic review and policy analysis design to examine school-based counselling interventions for students affected by crime and insecurity in Nigeria. This approach is particularly suitable in contexts where insecurity and restricted field access make primary data collection both ethically and logistically difficult (UNICEF, 2024; UNESCO, 2023). It also facilitates the development of conceptual frameworks by synthesising existing literature on trauma, educational disruption, and counselling responses in conflict-affected settings. The choice of this design is further justified by Nigeria's evolving security challenges, where access to schools remains unstable due to incidents of banditry, insurgency, and kidnapping in states such as Borno, Zamfara, Katsina, and Niger (UNODC, 2023; International Crisis Group, 2024). Secondary evidence becomes crucial in these situations to identify patterns of psychological and educational influence.

## **Data sources**

Data came from African Journals Online (AJOL), Web of Science, PubMed, and Scopus. UNICEF, UNDP, World Bank, OECD, and WHO publications on education in vulnerable and conflict-affected environments provided further institutional and policy data (World Bank, 2023; WHO, 2023).

## **Inclusion and exclusion criteria**

The selected studies focused on education, trauma, insecurity, or school counselling, were published between 2022 and 2026, and offered empirical or policy-relevant data. Studies outside the time period, non-English sources without translation, and publications unrelated to psychological or educational outcomes were all excluded.

## **Evidence hierarchy**

Peer-reviewed journal studies were given priority in a tiered evidence strategy, which was followed by systematic reviews and reports on international policy (UNICEF, 2024). This guaranteed the synthesis's dependability and methodological rigour.

### **Analytical method**

Thematic synthesis was used in this study, which involves methodically classifying and coding the results into institutional, psychological, educational, and structural topics. This approach enables the integration of various qualitative data into logical analytical categories pertinent to educational settings in Nigeria.

### **Ethical considerations**

There is a little ethical concern in this study as it uses solely secondary data. Strict adherence to proper citation, avoidance of misrepresenting vulnerable populations, and appropriate interpretation of trauma-related findings was upheld, albeit (WHO, 2023).

### **Limitations**

The dependence on secondary data, which might not accurately reflect actual classroom experiences in Nigeria, is one of the limitations of this study. Interpretive depth may also be impacted by differences in data quality between sources.

## **Findings and Analytical Discussion**

### **Psychological impact of insecurity exposure**

Research shows that students in Nigeria who experience insecurity frequently display signs of PTSD, anxiety, hypervigilance, and emotional dysregulation (UNICEF, 2024; WHO, 2023). Practically speaking, students in impacted states like Borno and Zamfara frequently exhibit increased terror reactions, trouble focusing, emotional disengagement, and sleep-related issues. Rather than being separate stress reactions, these symptoms are a result of prolonged exposure to violence.

### **Educational disruption**

The continuity of schooling is greatly impacted by insecurity. Results indicate that pupils in conflict-affected areas have higher rates of absenteeism, dropout risk, and subpar academic performance (UNESCO, 2023). Parents withdrawing their children from school in northern Nigeria out of fear of kidnapping has been reported as a coping mechanism, especially after multiple school abductions (UNICEF, 2024). Trauma-related cognitive impairment lowers learning outcomes and classroom participation even while education continues.

### **Institutional counselling deficits**

The lack of qualified school counsellors and the restricted integration of psychosocial services into school systems are recurring findings (Federal Ministry of Education, 2023). Counselling is either nonexistent or provided by inexperienced professionals at many public schools. Schools' ability to effectively address students' psychological needs is hampered by the lack of trauma-informed education frameworks, especially in states that are prone to insecurity.

### **Socio-cultural constraints**

The stigma associated with mental illness continues to be a significant obstacle to intervention. Instead of using clinical or psychosocial lenses, religious or cultural frameworks are frequently used in Nigerian communities to interpret psychological suffering (WHO, 2023). This makes trauma less visible in school settings and decreases the number of students and parents who seek help.

### **Structural causes of the counselling gap**

Underfunding of school mental health systems, legislative neglect, and a security-focused governance style that puts military responses ahead of psychosocial healing are all fundamentally related to the counselling deficit (UNDP, 2024). Counselling services are acknowledged by national education regulations, but their implementation is still lacking, especially in high-risk areas.

### **Comparative anchoring**

Comparative evidence provides valuable points of reference. In South Sudan, humanitarian organisations have supported school-based psychosocial programmes aimed at addressing student trauma (World Bank, 2023). In Kenya, counselling and peer-support strategies have been integrated into basic education systems as responses to violence. Similarly, in Somalia, NGO-supported initiatives provide structured psychological support within schools despite limited state capacity (UNHCR, 2024). These examples demonstrate that counselling interventions can be successfully implemented even in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

### **Counter-argument and critical balance**

One major criticism is that in areas of ongoing war where instability endures, therapeutic interventions might not be as successful. Evidence indicates that psychosocial interventions are nevertheless crucial for stabilising emotional functioning and promoting learning continuity, even while structural insecurity clearly limits impact (British Psychological Society, 2024). By addressing the psychological effects of violence, counselling strengthens students' resilience and promotes long-term healing rather than taking the place of security actions.

## **Trauma-Informed School Counselling Framework**

### **1 Framework Logic**

In order to address the psychological and educational effects of insecurity among Nigerian students, this study suggests a CORE Trauma-Informed School Counselling Framework. The concept is based on the knowledge that not all students are affected by exposure to violence in the same way; rather, outcomes are influenced by a variety of institutional, contextual, and individual factors (UNICEF, 2024; WHO, 2023).

**The framework is based on the following conceptual pathway:**

**Exposure to Insecurity → Trauma Reaction → Moderating Contextual Factors → Counselling Intervention → Resilience Results**

According to this approach, being directly or indirectly exposed to banditry, kidnapping, insurgency, or communal violence constitutes insecurity exposure (UNODC, 2023). Anxiety, emotional dysregulation, avoidance behaviours, and cognitive disruption are among the trauma reactions brought on by this experience (American Psychiatric Association, 2022). However, a number of moderating factors affect the severity and manifestation of trauma:

- a) Gender, since female students can be more vulnerable in crisis situations (UNICEF, 2024).
- b) Socioeconomic position, which influences the availability of support networks and coping mechanisms
- d) The location of the school, with rural schools frequently having less institutional protection
- d) The intensity and regularity of exposure, including recurrent violent occurrences or threats of kidnapping
- e) The standard of the school's infrastructure, including the availability of counselling services and secure learning environments

These elements influence how trauma presents itself and the efficacy of therapies.

Figure 1: Conceptual Structure

Exposure to insecurity → Trauma Response → Counselling Interventions → Psychosocial & Academic Outcomes (all stages of the process are influenced by moderating variables)

### **2 Counselling Interventions**

In fragile circumstances, the CORE framework incorporates evidence-based psychological therapies tailored for educational environments. Among them are:

a) **TF-CBT**, or trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy, is useful in lowering PTSD symptoms in kids who have experienced violence (WHO, 2023).

b) **Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)**: Promotes emotional control and cognitive reorganisation of fear-based ideas.

c) **Narrative Therapy** Students can safely and meaningfully reproduce traumatic events using narrative therapy (UNICEF, 2024).

d) **Psychological First Aid (PFA)**: This is especially important in Northern Nigerian school assault situations since it offers prompt emotional stabilisation after exposure to crisis events.

### 3 Core Components of the Framework

The CORE concept uses five interconnected parts to operationalise school counselling:

1. Tools for trauma screening to identify impacted students early
2. One-on-one therapy sessions for pupils experiencing significant trauma reactions
3. Group counselling programs that promote peer learning and shared emotional processing
4. Peer support programs to improve school-based resilience networks
5. Programs for teacher training that allow for the early identification of behavioural abnormalities in classrooms linked to trauma (UNESCO, 2023)

These elements guarantee that counselling is integrated into the school ecosystem rather than existing on the periphery.

### 4 Cultural Adaptation

In Nigeria, cultural and contextual modification is necessary for effective implementation. The CORE structure incorporates:

- a) **Religious coping strategies**, acknowledging the importance of faith-based assistance in Nigerian communities (WHO, 2023)
- b) **Indigenous healing systems**, which frequently include structures for collective psychological support
- c) **Networks of community psychosocial** support that include local organisations, parents, and traditional leaders

In rural and conservative cultures in particular, this integration guarantees that therapy interventions are both locally sustainable and culturally acceptable.

### 6.5 Evaluation Criteria for Effectiveness

Measurable indicators are used to evaluate the CORE framework's efficacy:

- a) A decrease in students' symptoms of anxiety and PTSD
- b) Higher rates of attendance at school
- b) Improved participation in class and academic achievement
- d) Enhanced emotional stability and control over behaviour

These metrics are in line with international criteria for tracking mental health and education in conflict-affected areas (UNICEF, 2024).

### Implementation Strategy

#### 1 Phased Model of Implementation

There are three stages to the CORE framework's implementation:

- a) **Short-term phase**: Pilot counselling programs are introduced in several schools afflicted by insecurity, especially in Northern Nigeria.
- b) **Medium-term phase**: Including trauma-informed techniques in teacher education curricula and expanding counsellor training programs.
- c) **Long-term phase**: Ensuring sustainability and institutionalisation through complete integration of

school-based counselling into national education policy and curriculum frameworks (Federal Ministry of Education, 2023).

## **2 Key Stakeholders**

Collaboration across multiple sectors is necessary for effective implementation, including:

- a) Governmental organisations, especially the Federal and State Ministries of Education
- b) School administrations, which are in charge of day-to-day operations
- c) Professional psychologists and counsellors for clinical and managerial positions
- d) Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that offer financial and technical assistance
- e) Security organisations, guaranteeing secure educational settings for the implementation of interventions (UNDP, 2024)

## **3 Implementation Constraints**

Implementation may be impacted by a number of issues:

- a) Financial constraints, limiting the hiring and education of counsellors
- b) The lack of qualified mental health specialists at educational institutions
- c) Persistent security instability, especially in high-risk areas like Zamfara and Borno
- d) Inadequate rural infrastructure that restricts access to supervision and counselling services (World Bank, 2023)

## **4 Operational Specificity**

The framework proposes quantifiable operational benchmarks for successful implementation:

- a) Depending on school size and risk exposure level, a counselor-to-student ratio of 1:300–500 is advised (UNESCO, 2023).
- b) School counsellors must complete a minimum of three to six months of training in trauma-informed work.
- b) Allocating resources specifically for psychosocial support units, such as referral networks, screening instruments, and private counselling spaces These guidelines guarantee that counselling is incorporated into educational systems in a functional rather than symbolic manner.

## **Policy and Practice Implications**

The study's findings underscore the urgent need to integrate trauma-informed counselling frameworks into Nigeria's national education strategy. As students face increasing exposure to violence linked to insecurity, schools must evolve beyond their traditional academic role to serve as structured environments for psychosocial support. Achieving this requires deliberate policy coordination between the education sector and national mental health initiatives (WHO, 2023; UNDP, 2024). A major implication of the study is the necessity of institutionalising counselling services across all levels of basic and secondary education. Current implementation gaps suggest that counselling is still widely regarded as a supplementary service rather than an essential component of the educational system. Therefore, the creation of effective counselling units in schools should be required by policy change, especially in states like Borno, Zamfara, Katsina, and Niger that are prone to instability (UNICEF, 2024). Standardised trauma screening and intervention procedures should be used to support these units, which should be manned by qualified clinicians.

Furthermore, there is an urgent need to improve the national connection between education and mental health. This entails coordinated arrangements between the Federal Ministry of Health and the Federal Ministry of Education to guarantee that school governance structures incorporate psychological wellbeing. This kind of integration aligns with international guidelines for school mental health in crisis-affected environments (UNESCO, 2023). Incorporating social-emotional

learning (SEL) as a fundamental element of basic education also necessitates curricular revision. When students are exposed to violence, SEL programs can improve their emotional control, resilience, empathy, and peer support. Research indicates that in delicate situations, these interventions enhance both academic performance and psychological stability (World Bank, 2023).

### **Contribution to Knowledge**

Significant advances are made in the theoretical, practical, and policy domains by this work. In theory, it expands on trauma theory by placing it in the context of the relationship between education and security in developing nations. Although trauma theory has historically been used in clinical psychology, this study shows its applicability in understanding how students in Nigeria experience classroom disengagement, behavioural disturbance, and academic underperformance due to insecurity (Herman, 2023; UNICEF, 2024). Practically speaking, the study presents the CORE framework, a scalable trauma-informed school counselling model designed for delicate educational settings. This methodology is suitable for both rural and urban school settings impacted by insecurity since it offers structured intervention paths that include screening, counselling, peer support, and teacher training.

From a policy standpoint, the study provides a useful framework for school mental health that connects psychosocial intervention and education policy. To help national and subnational governments institutionalise school-based counselling services, it offers precise implementation plans, stakeholder responsibilities, and operational benchmarks. This contribution is especially pertinent to Nigeria, where formal psychological support services are still scarce and insecurity continues to disrupt education (UNDP, 2024; UNESCO, 2023).

### **Limitations**

The primary limitation of this study lies in its reliance on secondary data sources, including peer-reviewed literature and institutional reports. Although these sources provide credible and diverse evidence, they may not fully reflect the lived experiences of children currently affected by insecurity within specific Nigerian school settings. Owing to the absence of field-based data collection, the study did not include direct validation through interviews, classroom observations, or school counselling evaluations.

In addition, while the study draws on evidence from different parts of Nigeria, its findings may still be limited by contextual variations, particularly given the differing patterns and intensity of insecurity across regions such as the North-East, North-West, and North-Central zones. Therefore, it is important to use caution when interpreting the generalisability of conclusions, particularly when applying them to schools in generally stable southern regions. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, the methodical synthesis of the material that is currently available still offers insightful information on trauma patterns and therapy deficits in Nigerian educational systems.

### **Conclusion**

The relationship between trauma, insecurity, and school-based therapy in Nigeria's educational system has been investigated in this study, with a focus on the psychological effects of violence on pupils that are frequently overlooked. The results support the occurrence of concealed trauma in classrooms, as students continue to engage in formal schooling while still dealing with unresolved psychological issues. This study contributes to what has been called "silent classrooms," where academic instruction continues in spite of students' emotional disengagement and cognitive disruption. The investigation shows that pupils' mental stability, conduct, and academic achievement are greatly impacted by exposure to banditry, kidnapping, insurgency, and communal violence. However, because of inadequate counselling services and other factors, these effects are often overlooked in educational settings, creating little awareness of trauma among teachers. The existence

of this disparity underscores the critical need for organised psychological interventions in the field of education.

The study also highlights how urgent it is to incorporate frameworks for trauma-informed counselling into Nigerian schools. Without such measures, the educational system runs the risk of generating students who are intellectually present but psychologically unsupported, endangering both national stability and long-term human capital development. Therefore, school counselling is an essential part of educational resilience in unstable contexts rather than just an extra service. From a policy standpoint, the study emphasises how crucial it is to integrate psychological well-being into school governance structures by coordinating education reform with national mental health initiatives. Psychologically speaking, it encourages the value of counselling psychology in addressing how trauma affects school-aged populations' development. In summary, this study advances counselling psychology and education by showing that addressing insecurity in schools necessitates a structured, long-term, and culturally sensitive psychosocial intervention system that can restore safety, learning capacity, and emotional wellbeing among Nigerian students.

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