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Highway Kidnapping and Transportation Security along the Abuja–Kaduna Corridor in Kaduna State, Nigeria: An Assessment of Security Challenges, 2024–2026

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Abstract
Kidnapping has become serious security problem in Nigeria, especially in the North-West. This study employs quantitative analysis of incident data to analyze the incidence of highway kidnapping and transport security on the Abuja-Kaduna axis of Kaduna State from 2024 to mid-2026. Based on media reports, police data and spatial information, trends, temporal patterns, attack rates and numbers of victims were examined. Available evidence indicates a decrease in the number of incidents in 2025 with a slight rise in early 2026, which mirrors the trend of reducing incidents as seen in other studies following a peak between 2019-2021. The key result areas identified by the geospatial analysis are similar to previous analyses, including the identification of seasonal peaks (such as in 2024 Q2) and persistent hotspots (e.g. Rijana, Katari) along the route. Socio-economic drivers (poverty, youth unemployment) and low state presence make banditry possible. Resurgence of kidnappings on this important transport corridor show continuities (e.g. ambushes in forested areas) and changes (e.g. the move to semi-urban areas). This study concludes that although improved highway patrol efforts slowed the spread of *Kidnap For Ransom,* a combination of strong highway police patrol, community intelligence and community-based socioeconomic measures (echoing the suggestion for "spatial intelligence" and for community structures) may be needed to effectively counter criminal gangs. This study highlights the need to address the observable trends of the incidents as well as the causes of the incidents in order to ensure the commuter safety and security of the Abuja-Kaduna expressway.

Keywords: *Abuja–Kaduna Expressway, highway kidnapping, transportation security, banditry, quantitative analysis, commuter safety.*

1. Introduction

The current shift in the nature of kidnapping in Nigeria from 'episodic crime' to organised violence has had repercussions beyond the immediate victim-offender dynamic. Studies have shown that there is an increasing intersection of kidnapping for ransom, with banditry, weak institutional presence, and political economy of criminal enterprise, especially in North-west Nigeria (Aleyomi & Olajubu, 2024; Ojo et al., 2023; Okoli & Abubakar, 2021). The issue is particularly critical where crime and crime-related issues are linked to significant transportation

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infrastructure, as the insecurity in such areas cannot only impact personal transportation, but also the transportation of goods, labour and economic opportunities. Badiora (2015) argues that kidnapping should be considered through its regional developmental implications, rather than just the number of people kidnapped recorded.

The Abuja-Kaduna corridor is particularly important. This route links the political heart of Nigeria, Abuja-Kaduna, route is a significant northward transportation link. However, its strategic value has turned it into an appealing target for criminals who want to have an uninterrupted stream of potentially lucrative targets. According to Obodo and Onota (2025), Abuja Kaduna Expressway is a transportation corridor plagued by insecurity while Yusuf and Oladayo (2025) narrowed kidnapping for ransom to the criminological and socioeconomic environment of the corridor. The problem cannot, therefore, be accurately seen as a discrete highway crime.

It is a phenomenon that is the product of a combination of transportation geography, criminal opportunity, state capacity and the broader political economy of insecurity. Thus the development of highway kidnapping along the road must be put into the context of the development of banditry in the North West Nigeria. The earliest types of rural banditry were linked significantly to cattle-raiding and to focused armed conflict and resource disputes. However, in recent years, criminal perpetrators have become more adept in using kidnapping for ransom as one of their methods of earning money (Okoli & Ugwu, 2020; Ojo et al., 2023). Olaniyan and Yahaya (2023) illustrate this transformation from a mobile or "roving" banditry to more fixed and territorial modes of control and extraction. Similarly, Okoli and Abubakar (2021) show that current bandit groups can acquire traits of organised criminal leadership and territoriality. The transformations are significant in that they suggest that kidnapping cannot be effectively curtailed in the long term by arrests and short-term police sweeps.

The physical setting in which some parts of the Abuja-Kaduna corridor are located is also important. Forests and other spaces of governance resistance have been consistently named by Nigerian security scholarship as spaces that can support armed criminality through their capacity to increase the difficulty of visibility, the visibility of forest space, the difficulty of surveillance, or the facilitation of concealment (Olaniyan, 2018; Onwuzuruigbo, 2021). However, Ojo (2020) advises not to consider such spaces as "ungoverned". The concept is only applicable if it addresses the interplay of physical distance and lack of institutional control. A forest can be a security problem not only because of the ability to hide but because the ability of the state to observe the forest, patrol the forest and respond quickly in the forest is limited. The socioeconomic context adds to the explanation. Studies on kidnapping and banditry in Nigeria have related the criminal recruitment phenomenon with relative deprivation, unemployment, social exclusion and limited livelihood opportunities (Bello, 2022; Ejiofor, 2022; Osumah & Aghedo, 2011). These explanations should, however, be questioned. Economic deprivation is not a direct and automatic factor that leads to poverty, and, therefore, to kidnapping, because large populations live in poverty and do not engage in organised crime. The more powerful interpretation is that deprivation is criminogenic when it combines with criminal networks, the limited enforcement of social control, access to firearms, lucrative ransom markets, and low expectations of capture. The security response is also a complex pattern. The Nigerian military has stepped up its operations, patrolling and counter banditry efforts in North West Nigeria, and

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research has shown that heightened militarisation can help to taint banditry operations (Oyewole et al., 2023; Ojo et al., 2023). But the underlying networks are not always destroyed by military pressure. Ojo et al. (2023) illustrate the challenges that can be encountered in maintaining internal security operations in the face of dispersed and adaptive bandit groups, while Madueke (2025) underscores the enduring institutional constraints in the Nigerian police's efforts to combat banditry. Similarly, in Kaduna State, Sale and Abubakar (2025) suggest that security measures need to be evaluated in their local context.

This study looks at the highway kidnapping on the Abuja-Kaduna route from January 2024 to June 2026. This study is focused on three key questions. The first is that it gives an overview of the temporal trend of recorded kidnapping incidents and victims. Second, it examines their spatial concentration along the corridor. Third, it analyzes the consequences of these patterns on transportation security and understanding of recent security enhancements. The principal argument is that the decline in recorded incidents during 2025 should be interpreted as operational suppression rather than structural resolution. The criminal opportunities in the spatial and institutional environment of the corridor are still known and recognized from the subsequent increase in the first half of 2026. This is an important argument because it focuses on the relationship between the rate of change in crime and the rate of change in mobility, geography and guardianship.

2. Literature Review

In Nigeria, kidnapping has become more sophisticated and systematic than it was in the past, involving banditry, ransom demand, and criminal entrepreneurship. Aleyomi and Olajubu (2024) place kidnapping in the context of Nigeria's economy, and Odoemene (2024) draws attention to the growing overlap between kidnapping and rural banditry in North-West Nigeria. Okoli and Abubakar (2021) also illustrate the presence of structured criminal leadership within bandit groups, and Olaniyan and Yahaya (2023) explain the shift from mobile to territorially grounded banditry. These developments make transport corridors vulnerable as they are a concentration of mobile populations and targets.

The Abuja-Kaduna corridor is important due to its transport functions. According to Obodo and Onota (2025), the Abuja-Kaduna Expressway is one of the corridors plagued by insecurity, which affects its mobility, whereas Yusuf and Oladayo (2025) linked kidnapping for ransom with its criminological environment. Spatial properties matter, as well. However, while they can provide cover and be harder to oversee, forested areas can also be "ungoverned" (Ojo 2020) and are explained by Olaniyan (2018) how they may do so. It's their importance as a result of physical geography and differential state capability. The vulnerability of the socioeconomic drives frequently come back. Osumah and Aghedo (2011), Bello (2022) and Ejiofor (2022) equate kidnapping or banditry with deprivation, unemployment and few livelihoods. Criminogenic effects of poverty are more likely to occur when it is intertwined with criminal networks, availability of weapons, weak deterrence and ransom markets, however. While security measures can help deter crime, they do not necessarily end adaptive criminal networks, as suggested by Ojo et al. (2023), Oyewole et al. (2023), and Madueke (2025). Previous research has confirmed the role of geography, socioeconomic factors, institutional capacity and security interventions,

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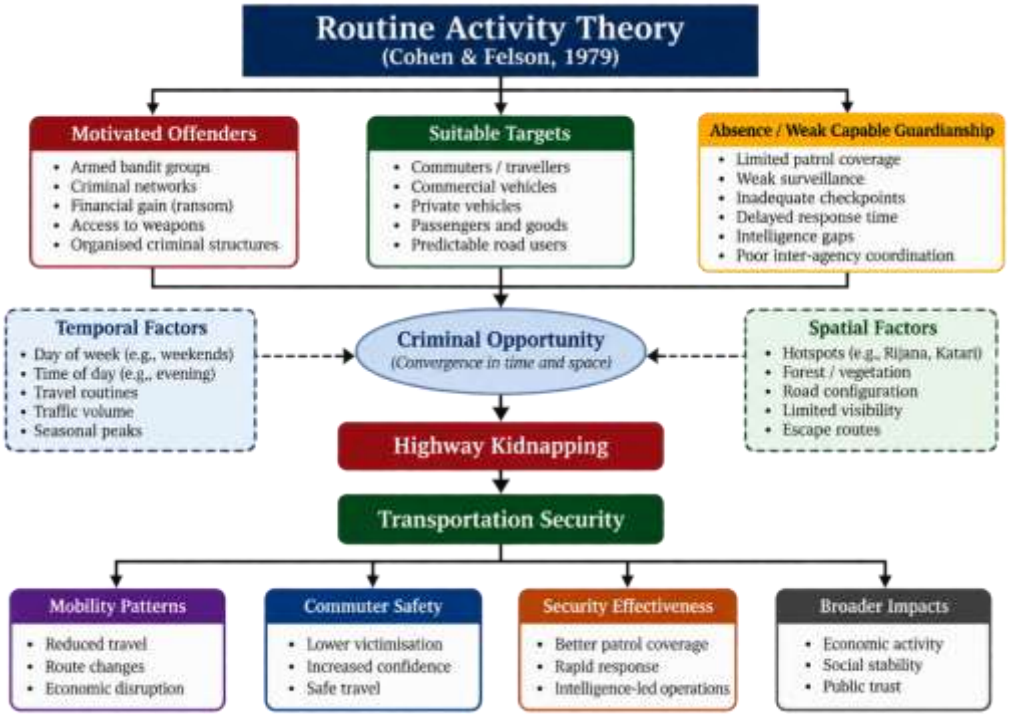
but there is limited quantitative research that incorporates temporal trends, spatial hotspots, and traffic activity around the corridor for 2024–2026.

Theoretical Framework

This study is adopted the Routine Activity Theory (RAT) which was developed by Cohen and Felson (1979). The RAT in this study helps to explain criminal incidents that combines three core elements: first is a motivated offender, second is the suitable target, and third is the lack of capable guardianship. The RAT theory shifts the focus from the offender motivation to the opportunities that enables crime. The RAT is suitable for highway kidnapping owing to the fact that transportation highways are where offenders, travellers and security meet at specific times and places. In this study, bandit groups are the motivated offenders, commuters, passengers and vehicles are suitable targets, and the police and military patrols, surveillance, checkpoints, rapid response and community intelligence are capable guardianship. These elements when combined with favourable conditions make kidnapping more likely.



The RAT framework describes the temporal and spatial dimensions of the study. Regular patterns of travel, movement by evenings, weekends and higher traffic volumes can lead to more targets being available for shooting; forest settings, limited sight, lack of response time and recurrent hotspots can reduce guardianship. There can therefore be a pattern of incidents occurring in specific time periods and places that can be understood as patterned criminal opportunity. Reduced incidents in 2025 could be due to increased guardianship and not on the same level of change as to a permanent resolution, and the rise in 2026 could be due to adaptation or to new opportunities. The RAT therefore provides a theoretical basis for examining how mobility, geography and guardianship interact to shape highway kidnapping and transportation security.

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3. Methodology

This study utilized a quantitative retrospective study design using secondary data on reported kidnapping incidents of the Abuja Kaduna corridor in Kaduna State from January 2024 to June 2026. The design was suitable, as the goal was to observe patterns of incidence, timing and location of the reported kidnapping, not to draw primary attitudinal data from victims or transport users. Reported incident dates and locations and victim numbers are included in the underlying data set created for the study. The main data sources were police information and reputable media reports with spatial information being used to locate recurrent sites. It is noted that records were cross checked if there were more than one report and that monthly and quarterly series were created for analysis. It is appropriate for a phenomenon for which there is no single institution that offers a publicly available longitudinal data set. However, using secondary incident data does present an important measurement issue. There can be a high risk of underreporting for kidnapping, as the family may wish to avoid publicity, the victim may not wish to talk about it, or negotiations may occur in private. In addition, police and media reports are not always in agreement. Discrepancies between some of the media reports and police accounts of alleged highway kidnappings are specifically called out in the source material. The results are, therefore, to be interpreted as patterns in recorded incidents, not as an exhaustive listing of all the kidnappings that were recorded on the corridor.

This study is carried out in Abuja-Kaduna transportation corridor of Kaduna State. The corridor is strategically important since it connects the Federal Capital Territory with Kaduna as well as part of the general transportation network between Abuja and North West Nigeria. They show that insecurity in this setting has an impact on mobility and transportation behaviour, and therefore it is a suitable environment for investigating the link between criminal activity and transportation security. The chosen analytical period (January 2024 to June 2026) was chosen to allow for an examination of relatively high incidence followed by a decrease and eventual re-emergence or resurgence. The coverage of this time is especially beneficial as it enables the research to determine if the incidents have decreased over time or are merely a transient shift. Descriptive and spatial techniques were the major methods used in the analysis. Temporal trends were determined by quarterly and monthly incident frequencies, and victim counts were analysed separately as incident frequency does not necessarily reflect the proportionate victimisation. The date and time of attacks (when available) were studied. The spatial concentration was evaluated with the identification of repeated locations along the corridor. The quantitative analysis provided also includes a chi square trend test and Pearson's correlation of monthly traffic volume and kidnapping incidents. The reported correlation was $r = .56$, $p < .01$. The correlation is taken with a pinch of salt as an association between the amount of traffic and the number of incidents of kidnapping recorded, not that traffic volume causes kidnapping

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4. Results

4.1 Quarterly Distribution of Incidents and Victims

In 2024-2026, the compiled dataset has reported 161 incidents of kidnapping with 411 victims. In 2024 Q2, 25 incidents with 80 victims were reported, the highest number of incidents reported in a quarter. Subsequent, the number of incidents decreased, ending at 6 in Q4 2025. The first half of 2026 then saw slight signs of the trend reversing with 10 incidents in Q1 and 12 in Q2.

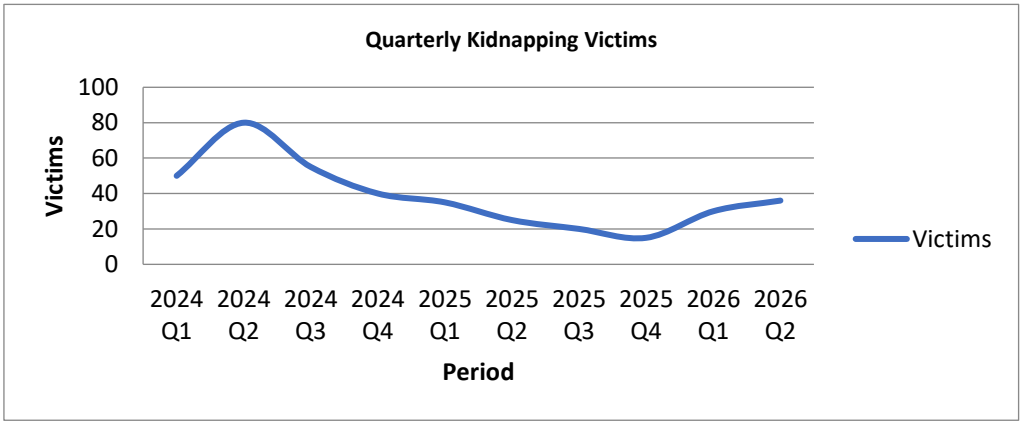
Table 1:
Quarterly Distribution of Reported Kidnapping Incidents and Victims, 2024 to Mid 2026

Period	Incidents	Victims
2024 Q1	20	50
2024 Q2	25	80
2024 Q3	18	55
2024 Q4	12	40
2025 Q1	15	35
2025 Q2	10	25
2025 Q3	8	20
2025 Q4	6	15
2026 Q1	10	30
2026 Q2	12	36

Source: *Compiled incident dataset from online reports, media, police report, etc.*

There are three phases in the quarterly pattern. The first is a high phase in 2024 ending in the Q2 high. The second is a sustained contraction that will continue till 2025. The third is an uprising that's starting in the first half of 2026. The source analysis reports that the trend was significant for a chi square trend test ($p < .01$).

Figure 1: **Quarterly Trend in Reported Kidnapping Incidents, 2024 to Mid 2026**



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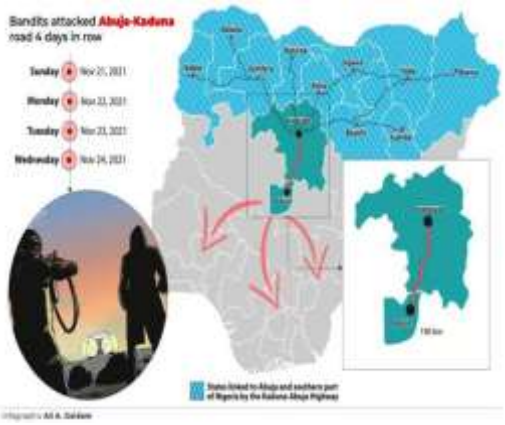



The trend is analytically significant as the 2026 increase does not bring the corridor back to the highest level seen in 2024. What is significant, therefore, is not that kidnapping is back at the same level, but that the downward trend has been halted. This distinction is relevant if you need to evaluate the effectiveness of a security intervention.

Table 2: **Period Level of Reported Incidents and Victims**

Reporting period	Incidents	Victims	Incidents per reported victim group
2024	75	225	0.33
2025	39	95	0.41
2026 Q1 to Q2	22	66	0.33

Source: Derived from the supplied quarterly dataset.

The data show that there is no direct proportionality between victimisation and the number of incidents. This is an important point from a contextually relevant perspective. Although there is a reduction in incidents, it does not have to go hand in hand with a high number of victims if the

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individual attacks affect more than one traveller. Thus, incident numbers are a partial indicator of the transportation insecurity severity.

4.2 Temporal Distribution

According to available evidence curated, 58% of incidents took place either on Friday, Saturday or Sunday. The evening timeframe (around 18:00 – 22:00) was identified as particularly vulnerable. In the year 2024 Q2 (quarter 2), 72% of the attacks reported were nocturnal ambush attacks on weekend days while less than 10% were attacks on daytime days.

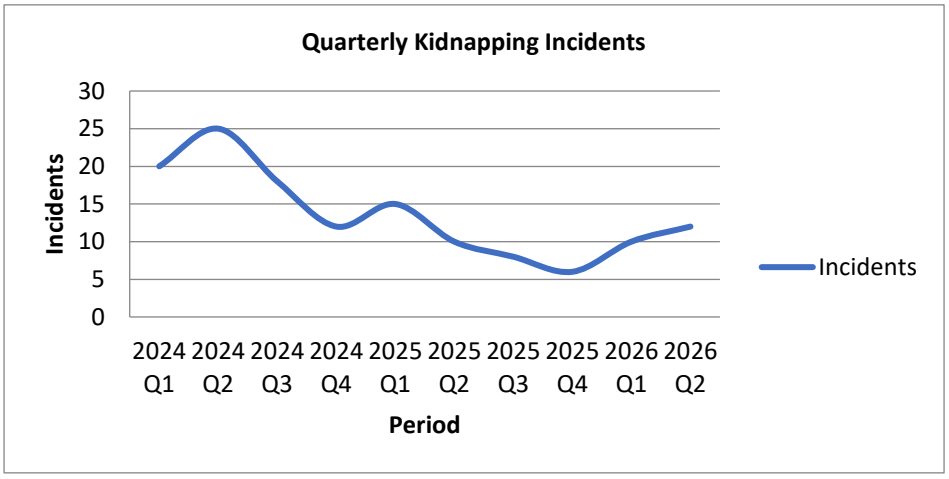
Table 3:
Temporal Characteristics of Reported Highway Kidnapping

Temporal indicator	Reported pattern
Friday to Sunday incidents	58%
Principal high risk period	6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
2024 Q2 nocturnal weekend attacks	72%
Daytime incidents during 2024 Q2	Less than 10%

Source: Compiled incident dataset.

The temporal concentration offers evidence of the association between kidnapping and identifiable travel routines. This is corroborated by the earlier study conducted by James and Ann in the corridor, which concluded that there was concentration during the evening and weekend. Most importantly, it offers the basis for the deployment of security: a uniform patrol approach may not be as effective as a patrol approach based on temporal risk.

Figure 2: **Quarterly Distribution of Reported Victims, 2024 to Mid 2026**



The victim series shows a general trend of incident levels, but there is more variation due to the fact that the number of victims depends on the number of people captured in incidents. This difference emphasizes the importance of considering security conditions via both indicators.

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4.3 Spatial Concentration

The spatial analysis showed that the number of reported incidences was clustered at a few select points. Rijana reported 22 incidents, Katari reported 18 and Jere reported 15. Maraban Rido and Goningora had 12 and eight incidents respectively.

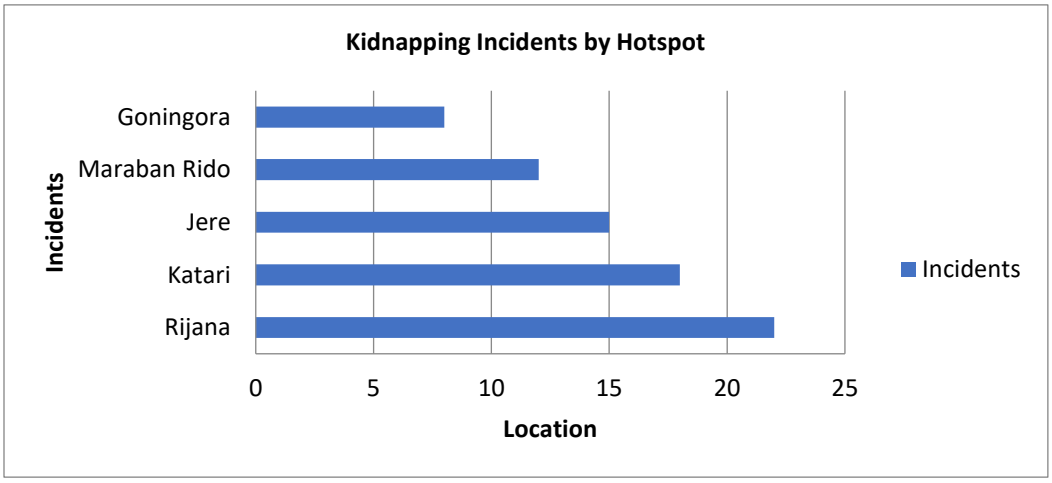
Table 4:
Principal Reported Kidnapping Hotspots Along the Abuja Kaduna Corridor

Rank	Location	Incidents	Percentage of reported total
1	Rijana	22	13.7%
2	Katari	18	11.2%
3	Jere	15	9.3%
4	Maraban Rido	12	7.5%
5	Goningora	8	5.0%

Source: Compiled incident dataset.

High incidents in these areas lend credence to the suggestion of spatial structuring in highway kidnapping. The source document states that the five areas that were identified made up a significant proportion of incidents recorded and that they matched areas identified as flash points earlier. The exact percentage of the total should be used with caution, however, due to the numerical inconsistency in the source table.

Figure 3: **Reported Kidnapping Incidents by Principal Hotspot**



The important spatial pattern is the one because the same places were found in previous studies. James and Ann noted that there were a number of flashpoints identified, including Rijana, Katari, Jere, Maraban Rido and Goningora, which indicated a significant degree of geographical continuity, rather than a new spatial pattern. This continuity is consistent with the idea that environments and infrastructure features limit offender options and some areas of the corridor are consistently desirable.

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4.4 Relationship Between Traffic and Kidnapping

The analysis shows moderate positive correlation between monthly traffic volume and the number of kidnapping incidents, $r = .56$ and $p < .01$.

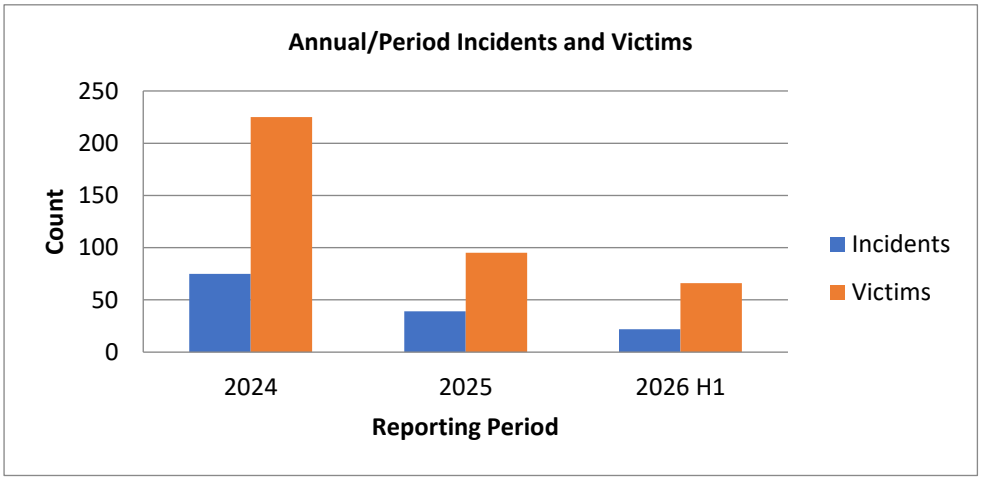
Table 5:
Summary of Reported Statistical Relationship Between Traffic and Kidnapping

Variable relationship	Pearson *r*	Reported significance	Interpretation
Monthly traffic volume and kidnapping incidents	+0.56	$p < .01$	Moderate positive association

Source: Compiled quantitative analysis.

This computed evidence revealed that there was a tendency for higher number of incidents to occur during heavier traffic periods. It does not make a causal claim. Instead, it implies that more mobility can provide more appropriate targets if other factors, such as poor guardianship and a favorable geographic location, exist.

Figure 4: **Comparison of Reported Incidents and Victims by Reporting Period**



The comparison also underscores a key methodological lesson: the severity of an incident and the severity of its victims are two distinct aspects of highway insecurity. A security plan that is based only on the number of incidents that may occur can fail to address the issue of the gravity of mass kidnappings.

5. Discussion

The results demonstrate that highway kidnapping along the Abuja-Kaduna corridor is characterised by temporal fluctuation, spatial concentration and a measurable relationship with transport activity. The results also make it more difficult to take the 2025 reduction as a sign that the security issue was addressed. Reductions in reported incidents from the 2024 highs to 2025 reflect what is often said: increased levels of security can reduce the opportunity for crime. Ojo et al. (2023) showed the ability of military operations to halt armed banditism, but said its impact is dependent on the factors limiting its operations and the adaptive capacity of armed criminal

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groups. The results of the present study also indicate that the access of kidnappers was restricted on the main corridor due to increased guardianship. The decrease is thus consistent with the deterrence rationale.

The 2026 resurgence is, however, not easily understood in this perspective. The drop could have been more likely to be a continuation of the disintegration of the criminal networks that operated in kidnapping. The resurgence, on the other hand, indicates that enforcement did not eliminate the opportunity for offenders to engage in the conduct but, rather, decreased it. This interpretation aligns with the findings of Okoli and Abubakar (2021) that bandit groups have organised themselves into structured groups; and Olaniyan and Yahaya (2023) that bandit organisations have shown a strong sense of adaptation, transitioning from mobile to more territorially rooted forms of crime. This finding thus lends weight to the argument for a separation between suppression and transformation. Security operations can help to contain incidents on a road that is of strategic importance without affecting the broader criminal environment from which they originate. If the pressure is put on one route, then the offenders can shift the direction towards the neighboring settlements that are covered by forests or less protected. The source material also states that increased security in the main corridor will likely shift criminal activity to communities nearby. This is not a run-of-the-mill security success.

The temporal findings offer more evidence of organized criminal opportunity. The concentration of incidents on Friday-Sunday and especially on the evening of this period suggests that the offenders take advantage of the regularity of travel and supervision. This is consistent with the earlier analysis done by James and Ann in the corridors and consistent with Routine Activity Theory. However, the outcome has implications that go beyond a theoretical confirmation. It proposes that the intensity of patrolling transportation to improve security can be increased in line with the times of high risk. This is better than a blanket increase in security forces. The resources should also be strategically focused if the risk is geographically and temporally focused. A model like this does not have to involve adding people to the entire corridor. It would need improved intelligence about the timing and location of the need for the existing resources. The spatial results are more important than the overall decrease. The remaining sites, Rijana, Katari, Jere, Maraban Rido and Goningora, remain significant sites in the literature and in the current data source. This persistence buttresses the larger argument of Usman and Ogbole (2023) which posited that insecurity in Kaduna State has geospatial influence on the activities of road transportation. It is also in line with what Olaniyan (2018) referred to as a ‘security space’ in a forested environment and Onwuzuruigbo (2021) described forest enclaves as environments where criminal groups can operate without effective state control. However, physical environment should not be seen as separate and independent factors for kidnapping. A forest does not produce a kidnapper. Its importance becomes apparent in areas where concealment, lack of surveillance and road geometry, coupled with sluggish response capacity, create a favourable opportunity structure. Ojo (2020) is thus relevant in challenging the simple designation of such spaces as “ungoverned”. What is really important is the spatial variation of state capacity. The positive correlation among traffic volume and kidnappings is also significant but should not be misinterpreted.

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The reported correlation of about .56 shows that traffic levels were correlated with the number of incidents reported, as higher levels of traffic tended to occur in months with more incidents. The outcome is in line with the idea that a busy corridor can provide access to a greater number of potential targets. However, the linkage cannot prove that higher traffic leads to higher kidnapping rates. Holidays, commercial activity, travel patterns and other factors that can impact criminal opportunity are likely to impact traffic as well. Most significantly, the correlation supports the thesis put forward by the authors that the nature of mobility must be considered a central element of transport security. The highway is useful to criminal groups just because it's useful to legitimate users. It provides opportunities for criminals and the security of the server becomes an economic interest to the public. Similarly, Obodo and Onota (2025) show that the insecurity impacts on the functioning of the corridor even after attacks occur. The socioeconomic literature also offers an explanation for why it is difficult to achieve lasting effects from operational security. Banditry and violence share links with relative deprivation and socioeconomic conditions can be linked to the growth of kidnapping markets as demonstrated by Ejiofor (2022) and Bello (2022) respectively. Osumah and Aghedo (2011) had previously found the business of kidnapping among Nigerian youths, which was a good illustration of the economicization of kidnapping. It is not to be assumed that poverty necessarily produces kidnapping. Instead, the risk of socioeconomic vulnerability expands the population of people who might be vulnerable in environments where criminal networks, illegal trade networks and weak institutional deterrence can all exist. This is a more plausible explanation based on the evidence than a deterministic 'poverty' explanation.

The results also impact on the conversation around militarisation. The findings of Ojo et al. (2023) and Oyewole et al. (2023), indicate that military action in the form of air raids and other military activities have the potential to disrupt bandit groups. The results of this research reinforce the notion that security operations are important, as the number of incidents recorded is decreasing. However, Madueke (2025) points to structural issues in policing that hinder its ability to be effective. A military or police surge can consequently create temporary suppression with little or no local intelligence, trust and institutional presence that can secure long-term peace. Community intelligence plays a more crucial role in this regard. The results suggest that contextual knowledge may exist for residents and transport workers around recurrent hotspots due to their geographical concentration. The study by Olorunsuwa and Aleyomi (2024) underscores the relevance of non state responses to kidnapping, and the informal policing study by Ojedokun and Aderinto (2024) highlights the role of community based security arrangements in complementing formal policing. This should, however, be within institutions that are accountable not as an alternative to proper policing.

There are significant transportation implications. The social cost of kidnapping is higher than the number of times that travellers change their plans for departure times, avoiding certain places and using the services of escorts due to their insecurity. The insecurity has been proved to impact the operation of the Abuja-Kaduna corridor by Obodo and Onota (2025). So the security of transportation should be assessed by objective events and the behaviour of road users. The most critical policy implication is thus the need for integrating spatial intelligence, temporal intelligence and socioeconomic intelligence. Spatial intelligence is the ability to determine where security resources should be directed. Temporal intelligence is the ability to recognise when

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vulnerability is rising. Socioeconomic intelligence is the ability to recognize in the community the conditions that allow for recruitment and criminal resilience. Considering them separately yields a series of interventions, but considering them together yields the potential of preventive security

6. Conclusion

This study investigated reported highway kidnaps in the Abuja Kaduna highway from January 2024 to June 2026 in Kaduna State. The results provide three major features of the phenomenon. First, incidents dropped significantly following a peak in 2024 and were comparatively low in 2025, but rose moderately in the first half of 2026. Second, the spatial distribution of kidnapping cases was clustered around identifiable areas such as Rijana, Katari, Jere, Maraban Rido and Goningora. Thirdly, incidents showed a temporal concentration, especially on weekends and during the night hours. The findings contradict one way of thinking about the reduction in incidents as a solution to highway insecurity.

The decrease in 2025 is aligned with rising pressure and improved guardianship, but the uptick in 2026 indicates that the criminal ability lives on. That established hotspots persist suggests geography of vulnerability is not fundamentally changing. Based on this, the study concludes that the security situation in the Abuja-Kaduna is not a security crisis, but rather a contested security situation. It is important to consider the impacts of security interventions on criminal networks and the reduction of hotspot vulnerability, as well as the overarching conditions that are conducive to recruitment and concealment, rather than simply impacts on incident numbers in a given year. There should be a combination of targeted patrols and community intelligence, combined with rapid response, surveillance and environmental interventions at recurrent hotspots in a sustainable transportation security strategy.

In addition to uniform deployment strategies, the results should be used to direct security deployment to be more concentrated in time. In addition to enforcement, there is a need for socioeconomic initiatives towards vulnerable communities since relative deprivation and a low presence of institutions can perpetuate the conditions that foster criminal networks. This study also highlights the need for an integrated database of highway security incidents. There are differences between the reporting of police, media and independent security reporting, which can lead to a distortion of the scale and direction of kidnapping. A well-developed long-term database that correlates the location, time and number of incidents, security response, and outcome would greatly enhance the evaluation of future policies. Addressing the loss of trust in the Abuja-Kaduna corridor is more than just a matter of reducing kidnappings. It needs to change the association between mobility and insecurity, enabling the user to move from one place to another without worrying about the time, place and visibility that might be involved in a normal trip. This is possible only if operational security is coupled with local intelligence, and institutional reforms and actions that tackle the socioeconomic context in which criminal resilience is maintained.

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