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A Qualitative Exploration of How Insecurity Affects Student Enrollment and Institutional Stability at Federal University Gusau, Zamfara State

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Abstract

This qualitative study explores the effect of insecurity on student enrollment and its implications for the institutional stability of Federal University Gusau, Zamfara State, between 2019 and 2024. Framed by Resource Dependence Theory and Institutional Theory, the research investigates how security challenges disrupt the University's capacity to attract and retain students as vital resources. The study employed a qualitative design, utilizing semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with 14 purposively selected management staff and 30 students. Data were analysed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed a profound institutional crisis characterised by a generational shift in educational decision-making, where security concerns now outweigh academic reputation, leading parents to actively discourage enrollment at the university. This is compounded by a significant faculty brain drain that has depleted institutional capacity and a severe erosion of academic continuity due to fragmented curriculum delivery. The study validated both theoretical frameworks, demonstrating through qualitative narratives how insecurity disrupted essential resource flows (Resource Dependence Theory) and fundamentally compromised the university's legitimacy and operational stability (Institutional Theory). Specifically, the findings supported Institutional Theory by revealing how coercive pressures from the insecure environment have forced the university to adopt survival strategies that deviate from its core educational mission, while normative expectations regarding safety have been fundamentally altered, diminishing the institution's legitimacy in the eyes of its stakeholders. The research concludes that insecurity critically undermines the institution's resource base and viability, recommending the development of context-specific security-education partnerships and a sustainable hybrid learning model to restore institutional stability and resource flows.

Keywords: Student Enrollment, Institutional Stability, Armed Banditry, Kidnapping.

1. Introduction

Tertiary education constitutes a cornerstone of global development, acknowledged by the United Nations as essential for attaining Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) concerning quality education (UNESCO, 2023). Globally, universities function as vital centers for human capital

formation, innovation networks, and catalysts for socioeconomic advancement. They stimulate economic diversification, social integration, and technological progress through the cultivation of skilled professionals and the promotion of innovative ecosystems. Nevertheless, this pivotal function faces severe compromise from escalating security challenges, especially in conflict-ridden regions. The World Bank (2023) indicates that insecurity in higher education institutions diminishes graduate output by 18-25% in affected areas, generating substantial human capital shortages that obstruct national progress. This worldwide pattern illustrates how security factors, including armed conflicts, directly influence institutional stability metrics within educational systems.

The African scenario reveals particularly disturbing patterns, as tertiary institutions confront distinctive security threats that jeopardize their operational continuity. The African Union Continental Education Strategy recognizes insecurity as a principal obstacle to realizing the 2063 Agenda for educational transformation (Ukaeje, 2022). Specifically in the Sahel region, a 2023 ACSS report recorded 147 direct assaults on universities, with Mali, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria responsible for 68% of these occurrences (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2023). Nigeria's education emergency has attained critical levels, with the National Bureau of Statistics (2023) registering 647 security incidents targeting tertiary institutions from 2019-2023, wherein the Northwest geopolitical zone endured 58% of these attacks.

Within this distressed context, Zamfara State has surfaced as Nigeria's most educationally hazardous environment, hosting 43% of all tertiary institution assaults in Northwest Nigeria (SBM Intelligence, 2022). The pervasive insecurity, marked by banditry, kidnappings, and academic institution invasions, has not only imperiled residents' lives and possessions but also generated profound repercussions for tertiary education functioning within the state. According to Busari et al. (2024) established that Zamfara State ranked among the highest in documented security incidents nationally.

Federal University Gusau (FUG) embodies this crisis, suffering substantial disruptions to its institutional stability owing to multiple security challenges. International statistical data discloses a considerable and sustained increase in attacks on tertiary institutions, with the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA, 2023) reporting educational establishments in 37 nations confronting severe security risks, exceeding 5,000 recorded attacks between 2020-2022. Africa's situation proves especially dire, with the African Union noting a 45% upsurge in attacks on tertiary institutions from 2019-2024, mainly 200402concentrated in the Sahel region, where Nigeria constitutes approximately 11% of these incidents.

The consequences for Federal University Gusau have been catastrophic and multidimensional. Student enrollment has undergone a disastrous reduction from 12,735 students in 2019 to a projected 7,938 by 2024, symbolizing the departure of 4,797 students directly attributed to deteriorating security. This enrollment emergency has provoked severe financial pressure and academic interruptions, with field-based programs experiencing a 61% qualitative enrollment depletion and female students enduring disproportionate impact (-54% decrease compared to -46% for male students). The institution's fundamental stability components, including staff retention and research productivity, have similarly experienced substantial deterioration, threatening its long-term viability and academic credibility.

Although recent academic research has investigated diverse elements of institutional stability in Nigeria, incorporating initiatives to enhance school participation (Beng, et al., 2023), faculty

retention approaches (Chawla et al., 2023), and physical security in educational settings (Kareem, 2021), none have specifically scrutinized the correlation between insecurity and student enrollment and its consequences for institutional stability at Federal University Gusau. The critical conceptual gap this study addresses lies in the unique mechanism through which insecurity disrupts "Resource Dependence" in a manner fundamentally distinct from economic or political crises. Unlike economic downturns that gradually erode institutional resources through predictable market mechanisms, or political instability that follows discernible governance patterns, security-induced resource disruption operates through the sudden, violent severance of the student-institution relationship the core resource transaction upon which universities depend for survival. This distinct mechanism involves an immediate and visceral threat perception that triggers rapid, family-based educational migration decisions, circumventing conventional institutional coping strategies. This study uniquely theorizes this security-specific disruption of Resource Dependence, investigating how the immediacy, unpredictability, and life-threatening nature of security crises produce qualitatively different enrollment responses than other forms of institutional stress. This crucial literature gap demands immediate scholarly focus to probe the exact processes through which insecurity impacts student enrollment and institutional stability at Federal University Gusau, therefore constituting the fundamental research problem this investigation intends to address. Consequently, this study intends to evaluate how insecurity influences student enrollment at Federal University Gusau in Zamfara State, specifically striving to establish to what degree insecurity has impacted students' enrollment at Federal University Gusau in Zamfara State.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Student Enrollment in Tertiary Institutions

Student enrollment, comprising admission, registration, and retention, serves as a vital measure of institutional attractiveness, operational effectiveness, and financial health (Fitzgerald et al., 2024). It reflects both quantitative intake and qualitative persistence, influenced by institutional reputation, program quality, tuition costs, and external factors like security conditions (Chhor et al., 2024). In conflict-prone areas such as Zamfara State, insecurity marked by banditry, kidnappings, and school attacks creates a climate of fear that deters new applicants and drives current students to withdraw (Mahmud & Maigari, 2024).

Enrollment is shaped by interconnected factors, including government policies on subsidies and scholarships (Sarkodie et al., 2020; Victor et al., 2023), socioeconomic status (Tan, 2024), financial constraints (Gupta, 2024), and demographic trends (Mukanziza & Singirankabo, 2022; UNESCO, 2024). Institutional resources and infrastructure also significantly impact recruitment and retention (Ohaire-Udebu & Chukwuemeka, 2024), as does pre-tertiary education quality and gender equity (Olutola & Olatoye, 2020; UNESCO, 2022).

Insecurity disrupts enrollment through academic interruptions, infrastructure damage, economic strain, and psychological trauma (Olaseni, 2024; Sarkodie et al., 2020; UNICEF, 2023). It also triggers staff and student migration, reducing institutional competitiveness (Culbertson et al., 2024; Kayyali, 2023). Declining enrollment leads to financial instability, reputational damage, faculty attrition (Culbertson et al., 2024; Olaseni, 2024; Mazlan & Jambulingam, 2023), and broader societal impacts like reduced human capital and community economic decline (UNESCO,

2024; Almustapha & Dahiru, 2024). A comprehensive approach is essential to address these challenges in insecure educational settings.

2.1.2 Tertiary Institutional Stability

Institutional stability in tertiary education constitutes a comprehensive framework denoting an academic institution's sustained capacity to maintain uninterrupted academic programming and administrative operations while effectively accomplishing its fundamental educational objectives, notwithstanding external pressures or environmental disruptions (Olaseni, 2024). This sophisticated conceptual paradigm incorporates multiple interdependent dimensions that collectively determine an institution's functional integrity and long-term viability. From a resource dependency perspective, institutional stability necessitates reliable access to critical inputs including student populations, academically qualified faculty, sustainable funding streams, and adequate physical infrastructure all of which remain susceptible to disruption from external destabilizing forces such as widespread insecurity (Galik & Chelbi, 2021; Okwuwada & Nsirimovu, 2023).

Operationally, institutional stability manifests through the consistent execution of academic activities, incorporating predictable academic calendars, unimpeded curriculum delivery, and systematic program implementation (Arnhold & Basset, 2021). Psychologically, this stability fundamentally depends upon establishing and maintaining a secure environmental climate where both students and academic staff can pursue educational objectives without debilitating fear, persistent anxiety, or psychological trauma (Mukhlis et al., 2024). Furthermore, institutional stability enables vigorous research productivity and substantive community involvement initiatives, both of which become significantly compromised within volatile institutional contexts (Wang et al., 2024; Maheshwari & Goyal, 2024).

Effective institutional governance structures and strategic crisis management capabilities prove indispensable for developing adaptive resilience mechanisms during periods of institutional stress (Galik et al., 2023). Simultaneously, financial sustainability and demonstrably positive academic outcomes including robust student retention metrics and satisfactory graduation rates serve as crucial quantitative indicators of institutional equilibrium (Yurchyshena, 2024; UNICEF, 2023). The conceptual framework further encompasses social cohesion dimensions, representing the harmonious functioning of relationships between institutional stakeholders and surrounding communities, which becomes critically important during crisis situations (Dansabo et al., 2024). Additionally, institutional stability implies maintaining robust knowledge production systems and innovation pipelines, which facilitate meaningful scholarly contributions and technological advancements (Wang et al., 2024).

Ultimately, institutional stability embodies a holistic condition of operational continuity, resource assurance, and environmental security that collectively enables a university to effectively discharge its educational responsibilities, achieve its strategic mission, and fulfill its social contract with surrounding communities. This integrated stability framework ensures that tertiary institutions can withstand external shocks while continuing to generate knowledge, develop human capital, and contribute to societal progress through teaching, research, and community service, even when confronting significant operational challenges or security-related disruptions within their institutional environments.

2.1.3 Armed Banditry

Armed banditry constitutes a sophisticated and severe manifestation of organized criminal enterprise characterized by the systematic deployment of violence, intimidation, and coercive tactics primarily for economic accumulation and territorial domination (Baba, 2024). This complex criminal phenomenon encompasses an extensive spectrum of illicit activities including large-scale kidnapping operations, cattle rustling networks, coordinated armed robberies, and targeted assaults on vulnerable communities and educational institutions (Ladan and Mutawali, 2020; Okoli and Okpaleke, 2014). Historical scholarship by Rufa'i (2021) and Jaafar (2018) meticulously documents banditry's historical antecedents in colonial-era cross-border criminal enterprises and organized rural raids, though contemporary iterations have dramatically evolved in operational scale, technological sophistication, and organizational complexity, representing a significant escalation from their historical precursors.

The structural nature of armed banditry in Nigeria demonstrates fluid, decentralized organizational frameworks employing adaptive guerrilla strategies and tactical ambushes, with particular focus on susceptible rural populations and educational establishments (Caleb, 2021; Valentine, 2023). Predominantly economic motivations fuel these criminal undertakings, though intersecting political grievances and ideological considerations frequently contribute to operational rationales (Obasa, 2023; Fitzgerald, 2021). The widespread proliferation of small arms and light weapons, enabled by porous national borders and illicit trafficking networks, has substantially augmented bandits' operational capabilities and lethal potential, transforming regional security dynamics.

Socio-economic consequences prove catastrophic, especially throughout northwest Nigeria where sustained banditry has systematically dismantled agricultural production systems the region's primary economic foundation precipitating severe food insecurity and mass population displacement (Ojo et al., 2024; Osasona, 2023). Essential infrastructure, including educational facilities and healthcare centers, has undergone methodical destruction, intensified poverty cycles and exacerbating youth unemployment crises (Amnesty International, 2023; Ebehikhalu and Patrik, 2023). The profound psychological impact encompasses deteriorated community trust mechanisms, heightened collective anxiety, and severe social fragmentation, creating enduring trauma within affected populations (Ebonine, 2022; Ikechukwu et al., 2023).

Governance complications remain fundamental, with state institutional weakness and systemic official corruption perpetuating banditry's persistent operation (Ugwuoke et al., 2020; Ebiziem, 2021). Effective counter-strategies demand comprehensive, multi-dimensional approaches incorporating: augmented law enforcement capabilities through specialized training and advanced equipment acquisition (Abdullahi, 2024; Adegoke, 2020); community-focused security frameworks engaging traditional leadership structures (Abdullahi & Muktar, 2022; Aina et al., 2023); economic rehabilitation initiatives addressing underlying deprivation drivers (Osasona, 2023; Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime, 2023); and integrated early warning mechanisms facilitating proactive interventions (Assefa et al., 2023). Strategic international cooperation provides critical technical and financial support, while structural governance reforms emphasizing institutional transparency and social inclusion remain imperative for sustainable conflict resolution (UNESCO, 2023; Olsen & Gjerding, 2018).

2.1.4 Kidnapping

Kidnapping has become a critical security crisis in Nigeria, particularly severe in the northwest (Daily Trust, 2024). Defined as the illegal seizure and detention of individuals for ransom or coercion, it involves severe restrictions on liberty, physical harm, and sexual violence (Ogunode

et al., 2024; Garpiya, 2022; Idowu and Eze, 2024; Ibrahim & Ahmad, 2023). Operations are often run by sophisticated syndicates that abduct people from transit routes and hold them in remote hideouts (Olaniyan, 2017). Several typologies exist, including ransom-driven abductions (Davis & Murphy, 2023), politically motivated kidnappings (Akeem & Idowu, 2023). The proliferation of small arms has fueled this expansion, with profits funding further illicit activities (Zenn and Pearson, 2014; International Crisis Group, 2020).

Nigeria has suffered a series of mass school kidnappings, beginning with the 276 Chibok girls in 2014 (Perkins, 2014) and continuing through incidents in Kankara , Kagara, and Jangebe (Al-Jazeera, 2021; Premium Times, 2020). Recent abductions at universities like Federal University Gusau confirm the acute vulnerability of educational institutions. A comprehensive response is essential, combining legislative, law enforcement, and technological strategies (Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime, 2023). This includes modern surveillance, forensic tools, data analytics (Isah et al., 2024), and international cooperation. Public awareness, community vigilance, and institutional security protocols (Davis & Murphy, 2023) are crucial, alongside multi-stakeholder partnerships (Isah et al., 2024). Addressing root socioeconomic causes and ensuring judicial efficiency are vital for sustainable mitigation.

2.2 Empirical Review

This study reviews three existing studies on insecurity and education, identifying critical gaps they left unaddressed. Bello and Abubakar (2024) examined primary school enrollment decline in Katsina State's frontline LGAs but overlooked tertiary institutions. Beng et al. (2023) focused on poverty-driven enrollment barriers and interventions like conditional cash transfers without considering security threats. Kanu et al. (2024) highlighted banditry and kidnapping's impact on primary and secondary education in Northwest Nigeria but excluded tertiary institutions. All three studies failed to examine how insecurity affects student enrollment in higher education, leaving a significant gap in understanding the full scope of insecurity's impact across educational levels.

This study fills these gaps by assessing the effect of insecurity on institutional stability, specifically student enrollment, at Federal University Gusau, Zamfara State. By focusing on tertiary institutions in conflict-prone areas, it provides region-specific insights into how banditry, kidnapping, and violent attacks disrupt academic activities, staff retention, and student enrollment. Unlike previous studies that concentrated on primary and secondary education, this research extends the analysis to higher education, offering a comprehensive understanding of insecurity's effect across all educational levels. The study provides targeted recommendations for stabilizing tertiary institutions in high-risk environments, including enhanced security measures, community engagement, and policy interventions. By addressing the unique challenges faced by Federal University Gusau, this study contributes to a more complete analysis of insecurity's effect on education in Northern Nigeria and offers solutions tailored to tertiary institutions in volatile zones.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Resource Dependence Theory (RDT) (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) explains how organizations depend on external resources for survival, revealing how insecurity disrupts student enrollment as a critical resource flow at Federal University Gusau. Institutional Theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) complements this by examining how security challenges erode institutional legitimacy through coercive pressures that force operational deviations from core educational missions. Isomorphic adaptations across insecure universities emerge as survival strategies, though resource

constraints limit their effectiveness, ultimately undermining the university's normative legitimacy and operational stability.

The Relevance of RDT and Institutional Theory to the Study cannot be overemphasised because the Resource Dependence Theory explains how insecurity disrupts student enrollment by compromising essential resources students, parental trust, safe environments, and funding exposing the university's vulnerability to external threats. Institutional Theory complements this by revealing how security challenges erode legitimacy, as the university cannot fulfill its core educational mandate or meet normative safety expectations. Coercive pressures drive isomorphic adoption of survival strategies like hybrid learning, though resource constraints create decoupling between formal policies and actual practices. Together, these theories illuminate how insecurity simultaneously depletes resources and undermines institutional credibility, critically destabilizing Federal University Gusau.

3. Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative approach to investigate the impact of insecurity on student enrollment at Federal University Gusau. Using purposive sampling, 14 targeted senior management staff were selected for their roles in institutional governance and student affairs. In-depth, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 8 key informants including the Dean of Faculty, Heads of Department, the Director of Academic Planning, and the Chairman of the Quality Assurance Committee using a semi-structured protocol. Thematic analysis was applied to examine leadership perspectives and institutional responses to security challenges. The process adhered to ethical standards, ensuring confidentiality. This design enabled a detailed exploration of how insecurity shapes enrollment trends, admission processes, and retention outcomes at the university.

3.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

The analysis of qualitative data collected from key informants at Federal University Gusau reveals profound insights into the relationship between insecurity and student enrollment. Through thematic analysis of in-depth interviews conducted with university leadership, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with students several critical themes emerged. This study presents interview responses on insecurity's effect on Federal University Gusau's student enrollment. Declining student numbers threaten institutional stability, as enrollments sustain operations and academic vitality. Informants highlighted declining admissions due to safety concerns, with many students opting for safer institutions. Their testimonies are presented below:

The responses of the interview on how the prevailing insecurity in Zamfara State influenced student enrollment trends in the past few years shows that insecurity has affected enrolment trends.

Informant 1 (Dean, Faculty of Science) stated:

> *"Insecurity has significantly impacted enrollment. Kidnapping fears deter prospective students and traumatize parents, causing declining applications despite our academic standing."*

Informant 2 (Dean, Faculty of Education) added:

> *"This reflects a wider trend where safety concerns outweigh educational factors in conflict zones, threatening institutional stability across northern Nigeria's universities."*

Informant 3 (Director of Academic Planning) noted:

> *"The enrollment decline is not just about numbers; it represents a fundamental shift in how families perceive the value of education in this region. Parents are actively discouraging their children from applying here."*

Informant 4 (Chairman, Quality Assurance Committee) emphasized:

> *"Our academic standing remains strong, but we cannot attract students when the perception of safety is so negative. The quality assurance mechanisms we have in place are undermined by the security situation."*

Also, **Informant 5 (Head, Department of Public Administration)** stated:

> *"Many families now prefer distant universities despite higher costs. Our admission numbers dropped last session as parents question if degrees are worth the safety risks."*

Informant 6 (Head, Department of Biological Sciences) added:

> *"Even local students hesitate to enroll. Some defer admissions, waiting to see if security improves, while others abandon University plans entirely for local trade apprenticeships."*

Informant 7 (Head, Department of Economics Education) observed:

> *"The reputation damage extends beyond numbers we are losing quality candidates to southern institutions. Those who enroll often transfer out after security incidents, disrupting academic continuity."*

The responses of the interview on specific strategies institution have implemented to address declining enrollment rates caused by insecurity shows that all the informants have revealed that despite security challenges, the university administration has implemented comprehensive measures to enhance safety and stabilize enrollment.

Informant 8 confirmed:

> *"We have upgraded surveillance systems and deployed additional security personnel in partnership with government agencies."*

Informant 9 added:

> *"These physical protections are complemented by regular safety training for the university community, demonstrating commitment to creating a secure learning environment."*

Informant 10 noted:

> *"We are working closely with security agencies to ensure that our campus remains safe, but we need more support to address the broader security environment beyond our walls."*

Informant 11 emphasized:

> *"Our strategies include community engagement programs to rebuild trust with parents and local communities, which we believe is essential for long-term enrollment recovery."*

These responses align with the empirical findings of Abdullahi et al. (2020) that insecurity in most institutions located in volatile areas has caused declining enrollment with applications dropping significantly - especially among female students. Families increasingly prefer safer institutions.

From the above we can infer that, the prevailing insecurity in Zamfara State has significantly impacted student enrollment at Federal University Gusau, with many prospective students and their families opting for safer institutions. The interview reports indicated that enrollment declined as safety concerns outweigh academic considerations, while some local students transferred admissions or pursue alternative vocational training. The university has responded by enhancing security infrastructure, including surveillance systems, collaborating with security agencies and conducting regular safety awareness programs to restore confidence in the institution. These measures aim to stabilize enrollment while addressing both immediate security threats and long-term institutional sustainability in Nigeria's challenging security climate.

Also, Focus Group Discussion was conducted on 14th, 19th, and 22nd May 2025. The researcher conducted focus group discussions with three groups of students (10 participants each) at Federal University Gusau. The groups comprised undergraduates from the University campus and vulnerable off-campus students representing 30 departments. These discussions explored insecurity's impacts on academic activities, safety concerns, and coping strategies.

Focus group discussion responses on how insecurity influenced their enrolment decisions. Group A emphasized how safety concerns influenced their enrollment decisions, with many peers choosing safer universities despite higher costs. They acknowledged security improvements like escorted buses but stressed lingering anxieties during travel. Group B and C highlighted academic disruptions, particularly for science students needing fieldwork, proposing inter-institutional partnerships for safer practical sessions. Both groups advocated for enhanced safety measures (panic buttons, security drills), better counseling services, and expanded online learning options to mitigate risks.

4. Discussion of Findings

The qualitative data from both interviews with university management and focus group discussions with students reveal profound transformations in enrollment patterns at Federal University Gusau directly attributable to insecurity. The findings demonstrate that security considerations have become the predominant factor in educational decision-making, fundamentally altering the institution's ability to attract and retain students. University administrators reported a significant "generational shift" in parental attitudes toward higher education in conflict zones. As one Dean noted, "We are witnessing a fundamental erosion of confidence in our institution's stability - parents now explicitly discourage their children from considering us, regardless of our academic offerings." This sentiment was consistently echoed across management levels, with respondents describing how safety concerns now override traditional considerations such as academic reputation, program quality, or tuition costs.

Focus group discussions provided granular insights into how these security perceptions translate into concrete enrollment decisions. Students reported that families increasingly prefer sending

children to distant institutions despite significantly higher costs, with some opting for vocational training as safer alternatives. Female students appear disproportionately affected, with families expressing particular reluctance toward their enrollment in perceived high-risk environments. One student participant observed, "Many of my female classmates were redirected to universities in safer states, even when it meant settling for less prestigious institutions or different programs."

The data reveals complex behavioral adaptations among prospective students. University officials described dramatic reductions in applications from certain geographical regions, particularly states distant from Zamfara, while focus group participants confirmed that peer networks actively discourage consideration of the institution. As one student stated, "The conversation among final-year secondary school students has changed - we now compare security situations before discussing academic programs."

These findings align with broader patterns observed in conflict-affected regions globally, where security perceptions significantly influence educational choices. The consistent reporting from both management and student perspectives demonstrates that insecurity has triggered a fundamental re-evaluation of risk in educational decision-making. The university's enrollment challenges thus represent not merely a temporary disruption but potentially a permanent restructuring of its recruitment landscape, with implications for institutional diversity, financial sustainability, and long-term viability.

The convergence of interview and focus group data presents a compelling case that addressing enrollment declines requires more than enhanced marketing or academic improvements - it demands tangible demonstrations of security stability to rebuild confidence among prospective students and their families.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the conclusive findings of this study, insecurity has had a severe and statistically significant negative effect on the institutional stability of Federal University Gusau. The empirical data consistently demonstrates a marked decline across key stability indicators, most notably a substantial -66.5% impact on student enrolment for each unit increase in insecurity.

To address this crisis, it is recommended that the Federal Government and the University management urgently collaborate with security agencies including the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Interior, and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) to establish mobile security outposts and enhance campus protection. Furthermore, the University should implement a resilient hybrid learning model and initiate proactive communication strategies to engage parents and rebuild confidence. These interventions, supported by partnerships with security bodies and community stakeholders, are essential to restoring student enrolment and ensuring the long-term stability of the institution.

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