

## **INFLUENCE OF INSECURITY ON BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study examined the influence of insecurity on business sustainability in Benue State, Nigeria. The study was guided by two specific objectives. Two research questions were raised and answered by the study, while two hypotheses were formulated and tested. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consists of 1104 SMEs in Benue State, with a sample size of 294 SMEs, which was determined using the Taro Yamane (1974) formula. The study used a questionnaire as its instrument of data collection. The instrument was subjected to face and content validity. Cronbach's alpha method was used to establish the internal consistency of the questionnaire items, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.90. Data collected for the study were analysed using descriptive statistics, precisely the mean (real limits of number) and standard deviation, to answer the research questions, while multiple regression was used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The study, after analysing the data, found that the variables of insecurity, such as terrorism and kidnapping/armed robbery, have affected the business sustainability in Benue State to a very high extent. The study recommended, among others, that the government should declare a total war on terrorism and seek collaboration with international communities that have in the past faced this kind of challenge and were able to tackle it.

**Keywords:** Business Sustainability, Benue, Influence, Insecurity, State

### **1. Introduction**

Globally, insecurity has reached alarming levels, creating widespread uncertainty and keeping individuals and nations constantly alert. Globally, insecurity has reached alarming levels, creating widespread uncertainty and keeping individuals and nations constantly alert. Thus, it has become one of the most complex and complicated phenomena of the contemporary world. The issues of insecurity have caused sufficient harm to society in areas of loss of lives and property and economic loss by diverting foreign direct investment (FDI) from target countries, which resulted in low Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to the Global Index analysis, the average country scored below 0.34 percent, indicating a decline in the level of world peace (GPI, 2019). Shortly after Nigeria's 2007 national elections, this state of affairs was widespread. Since most industrial enterprises rely heavily on the availability and consistent supply of raw materials for

production, insecurity has a negative influence on their productivity. Industrial operations are now at risk because of this. Furthermore, because of the ongoing migration of people from insecure areas, insecurity has an impact on the sale of completed goods. Spending on security has also increased because the majority of Nigerian businesses invest heavily in hiring private security firms. Many Nigerian enterprises have been destroyed as a result of property and equipment destruction, which is equivalent to a loss of capital. Thus, security is critical for the nation's business sustainability, and an absence of security means that economic growth cannot be achieved. Statistics place Nigeria as not even the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest in kidnapping cases in the world. Interestingly, Nigeria has taken over the United States of America, as the latter is not even listed among the top twenty kidnapping nations in the world (Perlberg, 2013). The concept of insecurity would be best understood by first presenting the concept of security.

According to Omede (2012), security is a dynamic state that includes a state's relative capacity to fend off threats to its fundamental interests and values. The preservation and defence of the socioeconomic order against both internal and external threats, as well as the advancement of the preferred international order that reduces the threat to fundamental values and interests and the domestic order, are the two key pillars upon which a nation's security rests. According to Rothschild and Nwagboso (2012), security has always been about people, and it makes no sense at all to discuss security without taking into account an individual's security. Igbuzor (2011) states that it demands safety from chronic threats and protection from harmful disruption. Dike (2010) and Omede (2012) have taken this argument a step further by emphasising that Nigeria's security should be based on a holistic view, which sees the citizens as the primary beneficiaries of every security and developmental deliverable that the state can offer.

The state of kidnapping is high; businessmen can't sleep with their eyes closed for fear of being kidnapped for ransom to be paid or their goods stolen away at gunpoint in the state. The CEO of Tito Yoghurt was abducted in Benue State just two months ago, and he was freed after a ransom was paid. Numerous people have been slain in the state along the Katsina Ala-Logo axis. TerkuraSuswam, the brother of Senator Swagman, was recently shot and killed in their hometown. Numerous other people have been killed nearby, forcing merchants to escape for their lives. More than 100 kidnapping instances have occurred in Benue State alone this year. To conduct rescue operations and demolish homes used to hold persons who have been abducted in the state, the governor of Benue State has recently passed legislation against abduction and hostage-taking.

The sustainability of businesses largely depends on a stable socio-political environment, and when that environment is compromised, long-term business planning and growth become difficult. Eze and Nwankwo (2021) noted that insecurity contributes to frequent shutdowns of business operations, particularly in high-risk areas such as the North-East and North-West regions. Companies faced high insurance premiums, employee absenteeism and disrupted supply chains due to insecurity. These impacts significantly threaten the survival and scalability of businesses, especially in sectors such as agriculture, retail and transportation. According to Yusuf and

Adebayo (2020), insecurity has created an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty that discourages entrepreneurship, increases operational costs, and restricts market accessibility. Over 60% of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Northern Nigeria reported experiencing reduced customer flow and profit margins due to recurring attacks and displacement of communities. Furthermore, Chukwuemeka and Opara (2022) emphasised that foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows into Nigeria have declined in recent years due in part to the heightened insecurity. In the oil and gas industry, multinational firms have either dramatically scaled back their operations or moved to safer areas. In addition to having an impact on host towns' income, this movement reduces employment prospects and depresses the local economy, making it challenging to build viable businesses.

In addition, the cost of doing business has increased significantly due to insecurity. According to Ibrahim and Lawal (2023), businesses now spend more on private security, transportation, insurance and contingency planning, all of which eat into their profit margins and reduce competitiveness. Moreover, the human cost of insecurity also affects business productivity. As highlighted by Oladele and Bako (2024), workers in high-conflict zones often face trauma, forced migration and family disintegration, which leads to decreased morale, lower productivity and a decline in organisational performance. Umeh and Okon (2025) revealed that repeated attacks on farmlands have not only led to food insecurity but also disrupted the supply chain, reduced production output and pushed many agribusinesses out of operation. Business sustainability in Nigeria cannot be fully achieved unless the government implements lasting solutions to insecurity, including enhanced intelligence gathering, youth empowerment, and justice reform.

Insecurity in Nigeria continues to undermine business sustainability by disrupting economic stability, scaring away investors, and endangering both material and human capital. The country faces an alarming rise in violent crimes, including terrorism, kidnapping, herder-farmer clashes, and armed banditry, all of which directly impact commercial and industrial activities (Ibrahim & Lawal, 2023). As Onah and Dogo (2020) pointed out, no business can thrive in a context where assets, infrastructure, and lives are constantly threatened. 68% of small enterprises either closed down or relocated due to repeated attacks by non-state armed groups. The consequences of insecurity are not confined to physical violence alone. The psychological impact on entrepreneurs, employees, and consumers also affects productivity and market confidence. According to Olorunfemi and Adeoti (2021), prolonged insecurity creates emotional fatigue, disrupts goal setting, and leads to irregular attendance among staff, especially in sectors like education, transport, and retail. Fear of attack or kidnapping reduces staff morale and causes voluntary exits from business locations deemed too dangerous to operate in. This eventually limits human resource retention and continuity of service delivery.

Logistics and distribution networks are also significantly hampered by insecurity, particularly in Nigeria's rural and northern areas. Transportation of manufactured commodities and agricultural

produce is hampered by ongoing attacks on road users throughout important supply corridors in the states of Taraba, Zamfara, and Niger, according to Ebi and Tanko (2022). Some businesses altogether halt interstate trade to prevent deadly ambushes, while others face increased transportation expenses as a result of detours and bribes at unlawful checkpoints. As a result, supply chains become fractured, leading to price volatility, scarcity of inputs, and eventual business collapse. Further analysis by Nwachukwu and Esan (2023) highlighted the alarming effect of insecurity on real estate and commercial property development, which revealed that developers across Kaduna, Anambra and Bauchi states are increasingly hesitant to invest in housing and business infrastructure in high-risk zones. Rental occupancy rates decline drastically while property values depreciate by as much as 35% in areas known for violence. This loss of fixed asset value directly impacts business sustainability, particularly for firms that rely on real estate equity for financing and collateral. Alade and Oboh (2024) noted that in North-West areas, several bank branches have been shut down due to security threats. Banks are forced to operate skeletal services, reduce cash flow to avoid robbery, and adopt restrictive measures on customer access, all of which diminish profitability and customer trust. Businesses depending on such financial institutions are also affected by delayed transactions and credit inaccessibility, thereby stalling expansion efforts and long-term sustainability.

In the informal sector, the effects are even more profound. Udo and Ibrahim (2025) found that petty traders and artisans in markets across Benue, Nasarawa and parts of Imo state suffer repeated losses from market fires, theft and extortion by armed gangs. Many lack insurance coverage and legal protection, making recovery difficult. Over 40% of women-led microenterprises in these regions have shut down or relocated to urban centres, creating a vacuum in local economies and weakening grassroots business resilience. Meanwhile, the technology and innovation sector has experienced slowdowns despite its growing potential. Startup viability is hampered by cybersecurity risks, physical safety issues, and internet outages during times of war, claim Mordi and Chukwuma (2024). Fearing instability and non-repayment, investors are hesitant to support inventions from unstable areas. Nigeria's shift to a digital economy is also halted by this, which deters young IT entrepreneurs. Additionally, the travel, entertainment, and event planning industries, all of which depend on mobility, tranquility and hospitality are impacted by insecurity. Bello and Ogundele (2021) assert that insecurity has reduced the frequency of festivals, concerts and conferences across many Nigerian cities, thus stifling income for event vendors, performers, hoteliers and transport operators. The consequences are far more severe in the unorganised economy. According to Udo and Ibrahim (2025), market fires, theft, and extortion by armed gangs frequently cause losses for minor traders and artisans in marketplaces throughout Benue, Nasarawa, and portions of Imo state. Recovery is challenging for many because they lack legal protection and insurance coverage. In some areas, more than 40% of women-led microenterprises have closed or moved to cities, leaving a void in local economies and reducing the resilience of small businesses at the grassroots level. In the meantime, despite its increasing potential, the technology and innovation sector has seen slowdowns. Mordi and Chukwuma (2024) assert that

cybersecurity threats, physical safety concerns, and internet outages during wartime hinder startup profitability. Because they are concerned about instability and non-payment, investors are reluctant to fund inventions from.

## **2 Method**

### **2.1 Research Question**

The following research questions were raised and answered by the study:

- i. To what extent has terrorism affected the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State?
- ii. To what extent have kidnapping and armed robbery affected the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State?

### **2.2 Objectives**

The broad objectives of the study are to examine the influence of insecurity on the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State. While the specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. Determine the effect of terrorism on the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State; and
- ii. Examine the effect of kidnapping and armed robbery on the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State.

### **2.3 Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested by the study:

- a. Terrorism has a significantly negative influence on the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State.
- b. Kidnapping and armed robbery have a significant negative influence on the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State.

### **2.4 Conceptual Review**

The major concepts used by the study were reviewed and defined.

#### **2.4.1 Concept of Insecurity**

According to Beland (2005), insecurity is the feeling of worry or anxiety brought on by a real or perceived lack of safety. Insecurity is defined by Achumba, Ighomereho, and Akpan-Robaro (2013) as the state of being vulnerable to danger or threat, where danger is defined as the state of being at risk of harm or injury. Being exposed to risk or experiencing worry, which is a vaguely uncomfortable emotion felt in expectation of some calamity, is a state of insecurity. Whether it be religious, cultural, social, civil, economic, or political, it is a violation of peace and disturbance that fuels ongoing disputes and results in the loss of life and property. It also describes a situation that arises from the absence of effective safeguards against hostile people, influences, and activities that could endanger people's lives and property.

### **2.4.2 Dimensions of Insecurity**

Pullah and Wilson (2020) advanced the dimensions of militancy, terrorism, kidnapping, armed robbery and ethno-religious crisis.

### **2.4.3 Terrorism**

Terrorism is a dimension of insecurity. It is a premeditated use of threat or violence by subnational groups to obtain political or self-interest objectives through intimidation of people and attacks on states and territories by bombing, hijackings, and suicide attacks, among others. It implies a premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents (Ogbonnaya and Ehigiamuose, 2013). Two types of terrorism have been identified: domestic and transnational. Domestic terrorism involves the activities of terrorists in a host country, and their targets are fellow citizens, their properties and the country's institutions and policies, either for political reasons or otherwise.

### **2.4.4 Kidnapping and Armed-Robbery Dimension**

Kidnapping is the crime of seizing and taking away a person by force, often with a ransom demand. Kidnapping as a national challenge has resulted in unquantifiable loss of lives and property and has also affected economic development (Ikpang, 2008). Kidnapping is the act of illegally taking somebody away and keeping them as a prisoner to get money or something in return before releasing them.

### **2.4.5 Business Sustainability**

Business sustainability can be explained as the process of managing an organisation by considering three different aspects, viz. economic, social and environmental (Mahajan and Bose, 2018). Nidumolu, Pralahad and Rangaswami (2009) proposed a five-stage process of sustainability, which is compliance, sustainable value chain, design of sustainable goods and services, development of a new business model and creation of next-practice platforms. Essentially, business sustainability is about ensuring that the business doesn't run out of the resources (whether human or material) it needs to thrive. This also means that it doesn't just take a short-term view of profit but instead operates in such a way that it is profitable now (even though it may not be maximising its profits) and it will be profitable in the future because it is using its resources well, has hedged its risks and can take any shocks that may occur.

### **2.4.6 Dimensions of Business Sustainability**

According to Danciu (2013), the four stages of business sustainability include sustainability management, sustainable innovation, eco-efficiency and sustainable competitive advantage.

#### **Sustainable innovation**

This refers to the creation of something new that improves performance in the three dimensions of sustainable development: social, environmental and economic. Such improvements are not limited



to technological changes in process, operational practices, business models, thinking and business systems (Szekely and Strebel, 2013). Adams, Jeanrenaud, Bessant, Denyer and Overy (2016) opined that sustainability-oriented innovation relates to changing philosophy and organisational values, as well as products, processes or practices, to attain the specific purpose of creating and realising social and environmental value, beyond economic returns. Sustainable development and the creation of value ask the company for innovation not only in technical areas but also in environmental, social and organisational fields. The sustainable innovations are critically dependent on a qualified workforce, management systems results and stakeholder orientation, dialogue between stakeholders along the value chain, interactions between the actors of the economy, state and civil society, and changes in business development and job creation (Lemken, Helfert, Kuhndt, Lange and Merten, 2010) as cited in (Anekwe, Ndubusi-Okolo and Uzoezie, 2019).

### **Sustainable competitive advantage**

Sustainable competitive advantage is that competitive advantage which could be maintained over a long-term period, in opposition to a competitive advantage which results from short-term strategies and operations. The sustainable competitive advantage can leverage the sustainability to increase all business value if it becomes an integrated part of the global sustainable strategy of the business (Danciu 2013). Integrating sustainability into operations and processes across the value chain is another source of sustainable competitive advantage. The company could build an operational model that takes into account the potential costs and benefits associated with sustainability in four areas: supply chain, demand chain, emerging technology and new regulatory requirements. Finally, setting up a governance structure that is supported by the right infrastructure can enhance the value of the company and derive a sustainable competitive advantage.

### **2.5 Theoretical framework**

The study adopted the frustration-aggression theory by Dollard (1939) as its theoretical framework. The theory was developed by Dollard in 1939 and was expanded and modified by Berkowitz in 1969. The psychological underpinnings of conduct and motivation served as the foundation for the theory's reasoning. According to the view, violent behaviour is a result of people's incapacity to meet their basic requirements. It is predicated on the broad idea that all people have basic needs that they strive to satisfy and that any obstruction to these demands by either individuals or organisations causes violent reactions. The severe reaction, however, increases with the slightest difference between what is desired and what is obtained. When these expectations are not met, a group is more likely to act violently and destructively or to already be exploited as a crisis-causing force. This theory revolves around the idea that frustration naturally leads to aggressiveness. When a person's or group's rightful desires are denied, either directly or indirectly, as a result of the way society is set up, the frustration can drive them to use violence to vent their resentment towards those who they believe are to blame for their bad luck or those who

are indirectly connected to those who are not meeting their expectations. Because the theory seeks to achieve corporate sustainability with sufficient security of life and property, it is thus suitable for the study.

## **2.6 Empirical Studies**

Okoro (2019) studied the effect of insecurity management on the Nigerian economy and development. The study's precise goals were to determine how the Nigerian economy was affected by insurgency, insecurity, corruption, murders, bombings, kidnappings, armed robberies, and operations. A descriptive statistic was used in the investigation. SMEs in Delta State were the study's respondents. Questionnaires were used to generate the data. The study's conclusions demonstrated that Nigeria's economy and development are significantly harmed by security issues. The report said that in order to provide a safe atmosphere and enable operations to be carried out without fear of uncertainty, the federal and state governments should keep stepping up their efforts to combat insurgency.

Ndubusi-Okolo and Anigbuogu (2019) investigated Nigerian insecurity and its effects on sustainable development and industrialisation. The study's goals were to draw attention to the reasons behind Nigeria's insecurity and offer suggestions for how to address the problem. They decided to use an exploratory research design. The internet, the library, and other relevant documented materials were used to generate data for the study. The results showed that one of the main things impeding Nigeria's industrialisation and sustainable development is insecurity. This discovery led to the conclusion that removing the threat of insecurity is the only way to achieve sustainable development and fast industrialisation progress.

Pullah, Wilson, 2020. Nigeria's situation in regard to economic growth and national insecurity. The research aimed to identify the issues of terrorism, ethno-religious crises, robbery, and herdsman-farmers conflict, as well as to suggest remedies for the resulting detrimental effects on the economy. Descriptive analysis was adopted as a method of the study. In addition to impeding the achievement of sustainable economic growth, it was found that national insecurity has caused a sharp drop in economic activity across the nation's geopolitical zones. According to the report, the government should create plans to improve good governance, raise ongoing and particularly capital investments in internal security, implement practical counterterrorism measures, and establish reliable and strong institutions that can effectively reduce the threat of insecurity.

## **2.7 Methodology**

The study adopted a survey research design. The population of 1102 registered SMEs in Benue State. The sample size of the study was 294 SMEs in Benue State using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula. The sampling technique used was convenience sampling. A questionnaire was employed in the study as a means of gathering data. The instrument was validated using face and content validity, and reliability was assessed using the Cronbach's alpha technique. In order to address the



study question, the acquired data were examined using descriptive statistics, namely the mean (actual boundaries of numbers) and standard deviation. Multiple regression statistics were then employed to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

In answering the research questions, the real limits of numbers were used for decision-making as follows: 3.50 – 4.00 = very high extent; 2.50 – 3.49 = high extent; 1.50 – 2.49 = low extent. 1.00–1.49=very low extent.

The decision rule for testing the hypotheses was based on the p-value and alpha value. A hypothesis of no significant effect was not rejected for any cluster of items whose p-value was equal to or greater than ( $\geq$ ) the alpha value of 0.05, while it was rejected for any cluster of items whose p-value was less than the alpha value of 0.05.

### 3.Result and Discussion

The data obtained during the field survey in the selected SMEs in Benue State were presented and analysed in this part of the paper using descriptive statistics, precisely the mean (real limits of numbers) and standard deviation.

**Table 1: Mean Rating and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the extent to which Terrorism Affects Business Sustainability of SMEs in Benue State**

<i>S/N</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Remark</i>
1.	Youth taking arms and terrorising traders affected the business sustainability of SMEs negatively.	294	2.00	4.00	3.73	.813	<i>Very high extent</i>
2.	A weak security system affected the growth of SMEs' businesses negatively.	294	1.00	4.00	3.61	.653	<i>Very high extent</i>
3.	Inequality and absence of fairness affected the business sustainability of SMEs negatively.	294	2.00	4.00	3.51	.543	<i>Very high extent</i>
4.	Fear of terrorism by SMEs has affected their growth negatively.	294	2.00	4.00	3.75	.651	<i>Very high extent</i>
5.	Acts of killing innocent traders have affected the performance of SMEs negatively.	294	2.00	4.00	2.58	.719	<i>High extent</i>

**Source:** Field survey data, 2021.

Data presented in Table 1 revealed that all 5 items had their mean values range from 2.58 to 3.75, which were real limits of 3.50 to 4.00. This shows that terrorism affects the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State to a very high extent. The table further showed that the standard deviation of the items ranged from .54 to .81, indicating that the respondents were not too far from the mean

and the opinion of one another in their responses on the extent to which terrorism affects the business sustainability of SMEs.

**Table 2: Mean Rating and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the extent to which Kidnapping and Armed Robbery Affect Business Sustainability of SMEs in Benue State**

<i>S/N</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Remark</i>
6.	Taking people for ransom has put fear into SMEs, which affected their performance negatively.	294	2.00	4.00	3.83	.714	<i>Very high extent</i>
7.	Invading business premises and stealing properties of SMEs has negatively affected their sustainability and growth.	294	2.00	4.00	3.68	.621	<i>Very high extent</i>
8.	Killing and kidnapping have led to disruption of business activities that affected SMEs' growth negatively.	294	2.00	4.00	3.54	.642	<i>Very high extent</i>
9.	Kidnapping and armed robbery have hindered the growth and existence of SMEs' businesses.	294	1.00	4.00	3.79	.657	<i>Very high extent</i>
10.	Kidnapping and armed robbery affected the business sustainability of SMEs negatively.	294	1.00	4.00	3.57	.715	<i>Very high extent</i>

**Source:** Field survey data, 2021.

Data presented in Table 2 revealed that all 5 items had their mean values ranging from 3.54 to 3.83, which were real limits of 3.50 to 4.00. This shows that kidnapping and armed robbery affect the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State to a very high extent. The table further showed that the standard deviation of the items ranged from .62 to .71, indicating that the respondents were not too far from the mean and the opinion of one another in their responses on the extent to which kidnapping and armed robbery affect the business sustainability of SMEs.

### **Test of Hypotheses**

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the effect of the variables being studied. The independent variables (terrorism, kidnapping and armed robbery) were regressed against the dependent variable (business sustainability). The outcomes of the analysis were summarised below:

**Table 3: Model summary**

<i>Model</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>RSquare</i>	<i>Adjusted R Square</i>	<i>Std. Error of the Estimate</i>	<i>Durbin-Watson</i>
1	.846a	0.843	0.608	.6341	1.901

According to Table 3 above, R-squared is the coefficient of determination, indicating the change in the dependent variable due to variations in the independent variables. The R-squared value is at

0.843, indicating that an 84.3% change in the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State was due to variations in terrorism and kidnapping/armed robbery. Hence, 15.7% of the variation in the dependent variable (business sustainability) could only be explained by other factors that were not part of the study model and were unstudied in this research.

The Durbin-Watson statistic, which is employed to check for autocorrelation, recorded 1.901 as its value, which is within the acceptable threshold. This shows that the variables used in the model are not autocorrelated and are therefore reliable for predictions.

**Table 4: ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)**

<i>Model</i>		<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>Regression</i>	<i>73.615</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>18.7250</i>	<i>54.89</i>	<i>.0000a</i>
	<i>Residual</i>	<i>36.039</i>	<i>119</i>	<i>0.30285</i>		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>109.654</i>	<i>131</i>			

**Source:** Field survey data, 2021.

- Predictors: (Constant), terrorism, kidnapping/armed robbery
- Dependent Variable: Business Sustainability

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is made up of tests that give data on the variability levels within a regression model and are the basis on which the model's significance is determined. The "F" column gives the statistic for determining the hypothesis that all  $\beta \neq 0$  against the null hypothesis that  $\beta = 0$ . From the results shown in Table 4 above, the significance value is .0000, which is lower than the given significance level of 0.05, showing that the regression model was statistically significant in determining the way terrorism and kidnapping/armed robbery affected the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State. Further, the outcome of the F critical at a level of significance of 5% is 2.58. Because the value of F calculated at 54.89 was higher than the value of F critical at 2.58, this is enough affirmation that the used regression model was significant.

**Table 5: Regression coefficients results**

	<i>Unstandardized Coefficients</i>		<i>Standardized Coefficients</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Beta</i>		
<i>(Constant)</i>	<i>3.724</i>				
<i>Terrorism</i>	<i>0.706</i>	<i>.151</i>	<i>.573</i>	<i>3.781</i>	<i>.000</i>

<i>Kidnapping/armed robbery</i>	0.834	.187	.647	4.625	.000
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**Source:** Field survey data, 2021.

From the findings obtained from the regression coefficients in Table 6 above, the regression model is given as

$$Y = 3.724 + 0.706X_1 + 0.834X_2 + \epsilon$$

According to the above equation, taking the 2 predictor variables (that is, terrorism and kidnapping/armed robbery) at a constant level of zero, the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State would be 3.724.

#### 4.1 Discussion of the Findings

The findings from research question 1 in Table 1 revealed that 5 variables of terrorism affected the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State to a very high extent. The variables were youth taking up arms and terrorising traders, weak security systems, inequality and absence of fairness, fear of terrorism and acts of killing innocent traders. In addition, the hypothesis tested in Table 5 showed that terrorism has a significantly negative effect on the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State ( $\beta_1 = 0.706$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). The study's conclusions concur with those of Okoro (2019), who discovered that the economy and development of Nigeria are significantly harmed by insecurity management. The study's conclusions also concur with those of Ndubusi-Okolo and Anigbuogu (2019), who discovered that insecurity is a major barrier to Nigeria's industrialisation and sustainable development. The study also supported Pullah and Wilson's (2020) assertion that national insecurity has significantly reduced economic activity throughout all of the nation's geopolitical zones, in addition to impeding the achievement of sustainable economic growth.

The findings from research question 1 in Table 2 revealed that 5 variables of kidnapping/armed robbery affect the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State to a very high extent. The variables were taking people for ransom, invading business premises and stealing properties, killing and kidnapping. This has led to disruption of business activities, kidnapping and armed robbery, and kidnapping and armed robbery have negatively affected the business sustainability of SMEs. In addition, the hypothesis tested in Table 5 showed that kidnapping/armed robbery has a significantly negative effect on the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State ( $\beta_2 = 0.834$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). The study's findings are consistent with those of Ndubusi-Okolo and Anigbuogu (2019), who discovered that insecurity is a major barrier to Nigeria's industrialisation and sustainable development. The study's findings concur with those of Okoro (2019), who discovered that armed robbery and kidnapping had a detrimental impact on Nigeria's economic growth. The study also confirmed Pullah and Wilson's (2020) claim that, in

addition to preventing the attainment of sustainable economic growth, national insecurity has resulted in a precipitous decline in economic activity throughout the country's geopolitical zones.

#### **4.1 Conclusion**

The study aimed to examine the effect of insecurity variables, such as terrorism and kidnapping/armed robbery, on the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State. Based on the findings, the study concluded that insecurity has a negative significant effect on the business sustainability of SMEs in Benue State because they have affected the lives of businesses in the state through terrorism and kidnapping/armed robbery; as such, this has discouraged business activities in the state, and most people feel unsafe living in Benue State, and their businesses aren't able to expand and be sustained.

#### **4.2 Recommendation**

The study recommended that:

1. The government should declare a total war on terrorism and seek collaboration from international communities that have in the past faced this kind of challenge and were able to tackle it.
2. To lower the rate of poverty and unemployment in the country and address the issue of insecurity, the government must redirect its resources to other areas, such as entrepreneurship education, agriculture, and providing grants to young people so they can start businesses that will allow them to hire other young people.

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