

EXAMINATION OF THE INCIDENCE OF KIDNAPPING AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study employed qualitative method that is rested on secondary sources of information to explain the phenomenon of kidnapping and its implications for educational success in Nigeria. The study has uncovered that incidence of kidnapping is on the increase in the recent time with consistent incursion of educational facilities within the country. The paper also established that there are different dimensions by which the perpetrators execute their heinous plan. Factors mostly responsible for kidnapping in Nigeria are corruption, unemployment among the youth, poverty, religion intolerance, political factor among others. Kidnapping has a variety of devastating effects on education. These range from psychological, social, physical and cognitive effect which the victims bear as consequences of their painful experiences of kidnapping. The study recommended among others that schools should be built in such a way that it will disallow invasion, students and teachers should be security conscious in and outside the school, use modern information technology for advanced security approach (for example, the use of CCTV camera) to monitor movement of people around the school premises, increase the level of awareness of students and teachers on prevailing security challenges in their locality and other places.

Keywords: Incidence, Kidnapping, Implication, Educational Progress, Nigeria.

Introduction

Kidnapping has become a serious concern and burden in the recent years in Nigeria. The phenomenon of kidnapping is growing in the recent years like a wide fire that knows no bound. However, studies on kidnapping have been relatively new with more of its literature emanated from America, Europe and Asia. Gyong (2014) maintained that there are few

empirical studies that are carried out on kidnapping in Nigeria despite series of reports on cases of kidnapping in various parts of the country on all sorts of media.

The phenomenon of kidnapping currently in Nigeria has taken into a fearful and threatening dimension going by what some released captives of the vicious kidnappers shared as their experiences in the dens of their kidnappers, which involves serious life threatening inhuman treatment like torturing, maiming, raping and even killing of innocent and defenseless victims in order to create fear in the mind of their victims and mounting undue pressure on their relatives for quick and timely payment of ransom over their relations in the captive. The spate of occurrence kidnapping incidence in Nigeria is becoming more worrisome and even national embarrassment as hardly a day passes now without hearing one case of kidnapping occurrence or the other with no exception of age, religion, gender, ethnic background and so on of the individuals. Recently, students have become cheap target of notorious kidnappers in Nigeria with its antecedent consequences on individuals, schools, government and the society at large.

Concept of Kidnapping

In criminal law, kidnapping has been viewed as unlawful asportation and confinement of a person against his or her will, or false imprisonment by means of abduction, both of which are separate crime that when committed simultaneously upon the same person they are merged as a single crime called kidnapping. According to Black's Law Dictionary (2017), kidnapping is a forcible abduction or stealing away of a man, woman, or child from their own country, and sending them into another. It is an offence punishable at the common law by fine and imprisonment. In America law, this word is seldom, if at all, applied to the abduction of other persons than children, with the intention to send them out of their country does not seem to constitute a necessary part of the offence.

In another attempt of defining kidnapping, Cornell Law School (2017) sees kidnapping as a crime that constitutes an unlawful restrain of a person's liberty by force or show of force so as to send the victim into another country and under the modern law, this crime will usually be found where the victim is taken to another location or concealed. Cornell Law School (2017) maintained that in some jurisdiction, kidnapping accompanied by bodily injury, sexual assault, or a demand for ransom elevates the crime to first-degree or aggravated kidnapping act. The above source also stressed that although the two terms (that is; kidnapping and abduction) are used interchangeably by many authors, abduction in its scope is broader than kidnapping, and is not generally accompanied by threat or use of force as it is applied to the later.

Types of Kidnapping

Scholars have come with different types of kidnapping and some countries have given different names for the type of kidnapping that occurred in their regions such as India. However, there are common forms of kidnapping that are recognized beyond the boundary of a nation. The following according to Threat Rate Risk Management (2017), are some of common types of kidnapping:

1. **Basic Kidnapping:** Basic kidnapping is by far the most common form of kidnapping, this can be accomplished in some parts of the world with minimal preparation, with a relatively low risk of failure. Kidnappers will generally target local business men or their families; those personalities regarded as being “well-off”, without having to risk a great deal of security challenges and generally, the kidnappers request relatively easy ransoms from the relatives of their captures.
2. **High Net-worth Individual Kidnapping:** This is the most cinematically popular form of kidnapping (Threat Rate Risk Management, 2017). Generally speaking, the intended target is studied for some time prior to the actual period when the kidnapping will be carried out, allowing the perpetrators to gather enough intelligence information or security procedure and personal habits of the targeted victim. After the victim has been kidnapped, his or her family or employer will be contracted with for huge ransom. Generally, a negotiation process follows. This type of kidnapping is however perpetrated by the experienced kidnapping gangs.
3. **Tiger Kidnapping:** This type involves taking a victim into hostage in order to force him or her to assist in a theft. In his situation, the victim is held hostage until he or she has met the demands of the criminals. These types of victims usually work in places like bank, currency exchange firm, post office or any other location where cash or huge money is being handled.
4. **Express Kidnapping:** This type of kidnapping involves the victim once is being adducted, and then he or she is forced to withdraw their own ransom from a bank or ATM. If all things go well, he may be released without general public being aware of what is going on, generally after having been relieved of all valuables in their possession as that time and at times, they may go further to their victim residence. This type of kidnapping is more popular in urban areas due to the prolific of ATM's machines. In some cases, the victim may be held overnight, in order to get a full day withdrawal limit and drain up all the cash in their victim's account.
5. **A Virtual Kidnapping:** A virtual kidnapping is more a scam than an actual kidnapping. In this case, the perpetrators will nail unto their target is unreachable (visiting an area with no GSM coverage, for instance), then the perpetrators will contact their target's family or company, claiming they have kidnapped the target and demanding an immediate ransom. The target eventually returns, unaware that anything untoward has occurred, Moreover, due to the need for haste under the disguise of kidnapping exercise, the ransoms usually demanded for by the fake kidnappers are generally relatively low. Another common technique used by the perpetrators of virtual kidnapping is to call the target pretending to be a cellular phone company representative, and ask them to turn off their phone for a short while for a technical reason, during which the virtual kidnapping is conducted. This type of kidnapping is far more common in Latin America, specifically in Argentina, Brazil and Colombia and Mexico (Threat Rate Risk Management, 2017).

6. **Political Kidnapping:** It is a form of kidnapping conducted in order to extort political concession from governments or security forces or agencies as monetary ransom is no longer enough to meet the release condition of their victim, it becomes more difficult to negotiate kidnapped victims freedom under this condition as in many cases, the political concessions or demands cannot be met by the involved governments putting the victim's life at greater risk and danger.
7. **Bride Kidnapping:** This is a form of forced marriage in which the groom arranged for the kidnap of his bride. In some cases, the would-be couples have never met until the day of the kidnapping. This way of marriage is practiced in the Caucasus Region, Central Asia, and some nations in Africa. In some cases, the bride is raped in order to convince her to stay with her husband, as in many traditional cultures the loss of virginity is harshly judged by not accepting that lady again for marriage expect if she is known as being divorced . In some cultures, a bride price is customary, so the kidnapper may contact his victim's family to pay compensation to them.

Prevalence of Kidnapping Incidence in Nigerian Schools

In Nigeria, John (2016) reported that the first case of kidnapping for financial payment occurred between the year 1999 and 2000 when the Niger Delta criminal gangs abducted expatriate oil workers and made demands for payment of huge amount of money as ransom for their release since that time, the criminal business of kidnapping of people for ransom has now become a nationwide occurrence with more target on defenseless in-school adolescents. Meanwhile, the dastardly act of kidnappers in recent time spears nobody again as victims of this vicious criminal act have cut across the upper, middle and lower classes of people in Nigeria.

In recent years, Boko Haram has taken the woe of kidnapping into relatively peaceful North Eastern region of the country. On the night of 14- 15 of April 2014, about 276 between 16-18 years of age Chibok School girls were kidnapped by the members of Boko Haram Sect. Not very long time ago that, the same Boko Haram sects launched another attack on Government Girls' Science College, Dapchi, Taraba State, where they kidnapped another set of female students totaling about 105 in number, among them is Leah Sharibu who was reportedly recalcitrant on denouncing her faith a condition that was set out for their release by Boko Haram, unfortunately, Leah is still in the captivity of Boko Haram sect, like many other students who are still held captive by Boko Haram.

Schools were also attacked recently in Lagos State with students and staff been abducted. However, this experience is so alien to the people of this region, putting majority of parents and member of the public into perpetual shock. Ezeobi (2017) on May 24, 2017 gave an account of how kidnappers invaded Lagos State Model College, Igbonla, in Epe area of Lagos State where six senior secondary school students were abducted. The school according to the source in the above was attacked twice by kidnappers in an interval of seven month period.

More recently, according to Ibrahim (2020), armed bandits were said to have attacked a secondary school in a village called Damba-Kasaya in Chikun Local Government Area, of Kaduna State, Northwestern Nigeria, at about 7:45 a.m. on August 24, 2020 where they have kidnapped four students and a class teacher. The attackers who invaded the school on motor bicycles, have first of all, raided the community Benjamin Auta, a passant farmer and resident of the village. After the attack carried out on the community, the same armed proceeded to Prince Academic Secondary School and kidnapped a teacher called Christiana Madugu, and four pupils of the school whose names are; Favour Danjuma, a 9-year old pupil, Miracle Danjuma, a 13-year old pupil, Happy Odoji, a 14-year old student, and Ezra Bako, a 15-year old pupil. Happy's father, Mr. Isiaka Odoji, told Daily Trust Newspaper that the gunmen demanded a ransom of 20 million naira (about \$ 53,000 USD) for the release of their wards, an amount of money that far above their reach. The students were said to be writing their final junior secondary school examinations which had been postponed due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Causes of Kidnapping

Uzochukwu (2013) outlined certain factors among various factors that are responsible for Kidnapping in any given society. These are as follows:

1. **Unemployment:** The high unemployment rate in a society might push citizen to unhealthy thought of making money through criminal way. This might be connected to the axiom that says an idle hand is the work shop of devil.
2. **Poverty:** Any person who lives below \$ 1.25 a day is affirmed to be poor across the globe (Uzochukwu, 2013). Poverty is propelling force for thinking otherwise for survival, especially among less morally adjusted personalities. Many people engage in kidnapping and all sorts of other social vices just because of poverty and believe they will get a way out from kidnapping activity turn-over.
3. **Religious Factor:** Some people love their religion and somewhat believe that certain action has to be taken to enforce its doctrine on other people even when that religion does not teach them so. Many kidnappings around the world today have been linked to religion (Uzochukwu, 2013).
4. **Greed:** Because of greediness in the life of some people who wish to have everything in the world, they turn themselves to kidnappers. For instance, a wicked businessman might kidnap his fellow businessman rival to take some money from him and become richer. This is act of greediness, and it might lead some people to kidnapping indeed.
5. **Politics:** Because of bitter politics, there are instances where some thugs were sponsored by the desperate politicians to arrange for the kidnapping of their political opponents. And perceived adversaries. Sometimes, they do this just to silence their opposition.
6. **Corruption:** This is the greatest factor, responsible to tiding wave of criminal activities in some parts of developing nations, especially Nigeria. A society where corruption is customary is likely to have experience of incessant cases of kidnapping. The truth of the matter is that a corrupt government has laid a bad example for its citizenry and when such a government indulges in corruption by embezzling public funds and loots

the treasury, the citizens might not have other option than to kidnap their politicians in an attempt to regain the money that was stolen from them (that is, from the public treasury).

Theoretical Framework

The essence of theoretical framework in a study of this nature is to establish scientific justification reasons why certain phenomenon occurs as it were, with possibility of empirical verification to our claims as researchers based on universally acceptable reasoning premises. The theoretical framework of this study therefore is based on Existentialism Theory.

Existentialism Theory

Existentialism theory is grounded on the basic premises of choice theory, which asserted that human-beings are naturally self-determining beings. Based on this, every human-being has the capacity to choose his/her total behaviours and as such they are responsible for acting, thinking, feeling in certain ways, and for their physiological state of being. The main philosophy of ET is that behaviours are borne out of an attempt to control the perceptions of the external world so they suite the individual's internal and need-satisfying world. The emphasis of reality therapy is for individuals to assume personal responsibility on their multifarious challenges and dealing decisively with their present situations. The ET is also meant to assist individuals find healthy alternatives within their reach to meet their pressing needs for survival, love and belonging, power, freedom and fun and so on. The ET held a view that changes in behaviour should evolve satisfaction of basic needs in the life of an individual. The main task of the ET therapist is to help clients acquire adequate psychological strength, to accept personal responsibility for their lives and gain control over their challenges and learn to live more effectively by inculcating in them the principle of self-growth, improvement, enhanced lifestyle, and better decision making. Some of the specific procedures that are enshrined in the practice of ET are summed-up in an acronym tagged (WDEP) model which depicts the following clusters of procedures:

W = Wants: exploring wants, needs and perceptions of the individual.

D = Direction and Doing: focusing on what clients are doing or what they are engaging in at present time and the direction that this is taking them.

E = Evaluation: Challenging clients to make an evaluation of their total behaviours.

P = Planning and commitment: assisting clients in formulating realistic plans and helping in making decisive commitment to implement those plans.

Although, humans generally posses five needs, individual fulfills these needs more individually. People tend to develop an inner "mental picture album" otherwise known as "quality world" of wants, which contains precise images of how people would best like to fulfill their needs. The core principle of ET is that no matter how terrible the circumstances, human beings always have a choice. The standing point of existentialism is that one must able to face the consequences of his action. It is the belief of the proponents of this theory that in every situation there is always an alternative choice.

Solutions to Incidence of Kidnapping

Few studies that are available on incidence of kidnapping have made some recommendations on how to curb this incredulous act of kidnappers. Among these studies is that of Wilson (2017) who suggested the following solutions to the problem of kidnapping in Nigeria.

1. Government should make laws with other measures that will discourage any form of criminal business across the nation.
2. Youths must be fully engaged in all parts of the nation in productive activities.
3. There should be enactment of stiffer anti-kidnapping law.
4. All the three tiers of government should embark on public enlightenment campaign on the need to shun kidnapping and others forms of criminal behaviours.
5. Poverty alleviation programmes should be fully implemented and be extended to all nook and cranny of the nations, especially for the less privileged member of the society.

In another attempt, Uzochukwu (2013) suggested among others, the following solutions:

1. Training strong special anti-kidnapping security agents.
2. Effective monitoring of the activities of the security agents.
3. Serious punishment for any kidnapper being caught.
4. Massive creation of jobs for the citizens.

The present study having gone through some recent available records on incidence of kidnapping in Nigeria, it suggests the following as proactive measures to curb the menace of kidnapping in Nigerian schools:

1. Building schools in such a way that it will discourage incursion of invaders and unwarranted intruders into the school premises.
2. Train students and teachers on how to be security conscious in and outside the school.
3. Take measures that will resist all forms of attacks on school such as engaging the service of military and para-military personnel for proper protection of lives and properties within the schools.
4. Effect physical plan schools alongside with security perspective of proper protection of all in education system.
5. Use modern information technology for advanced security approach (for example, the use of CCTV camera) to curb the incidence of kidnapping.
6. Increase the level of awareness of students and teachers on prevailing security challenges in their locality and other places.
7. Sensitize parents to avoid unnecessary showoff of affluence through their wards while in school to dispel being target for kidnapping activity.
8. Adopt various security strategies for intelligent information gathering on the notorious people of their society.
9. Engage the participation of all stakeholders in security architecture of the school.
10. Organising public guidance and counselling programmes for all youth in each community on danger inherent in anti-social behaviours such as drug abuse, kidnapping and so on.

Implications of Kidnapping Activities for Nigerian Educational Progress

The experience of kidnapping could be more devastating by its attendant emotional, cognitive, social and physical consequences for Nigerian students, teachers, school administrators, parents and governments at all levels. Each of the concerned stakeholders can be affected by the following discourse:

1. Emotional Effects: Kidnapping can create different psychological problems in the life of students who fall victim of being kidnapped. In general term, the psychological impact of being kidnapped is similar to that of being exposed to other trauma, including witnessing a terrorist incident and life threatening disaster (Alexander & Klein, 2009). According to the above authorities, emotional effects such as shock, numbness, fear and anxiety (but panic is not common), helplessness, and hopelessness, dissociation (feeling numb and switched off emotionally), anger (at everybody), anhedonia (loss of pleasure in doing what was previously pleasurable) feeling of depression (a reaction loss) feeling of guilt (for example, at having survived should other people that were involved died) and so on, are some of the psychological effects of being kidnapped.

2. Cognitive Effects: These include impaired memory and concentration, confusion, and disorientation, instructive thoughts (flash backs) and memories, denial (that is, that the event has happened) hyper vigilance and hyper arousal (a state of feeling too aroused) with a profound fear of another incident of kidnapping.

3. Social Effects: Some of the social effects of kidnapping include withdrawal, irritability, and avoidance behaviour, stigmatization among other socially disadvantages that attached to the phenomenon of kidnapping among others.

4. Physical Effects: Kidnapping also has certain physical effects on the victims. For example, hostages are likely to have endured a long term of captivity, an exacerbation of pre-existent physical conditions, such as asthma, and diabetes. Also, the detention itself might have generated a new problematic condition due to a lack of basics of healthy living, such as a nutritious diet, supportive warmth, exercise, good fresh air and adequate rest and sleep.

Effectively, kidnapping is one the most psychologically damaging crimes of the world. It may take the victims many years to heal from its scourge due to the psychological wounds inflicted upon them by their kidnappers, especially among young children who have been enjoying good home atmosphere right from their birth. Indeed, kidnapping can cause deep emotional and mental scares that leave victims to battle through issues of trust, independence, love, sex, respect, and a litany of others (Akwash, 2016).

Conclusion

Problem of kidnapping is becoming a life threatening phenomenon in Nigeria nowadays. Some routes have been abandoned by the commuters (for instance, Brinnu Gwarin - Kaduna axis) in Kaduna State, some schools have been closed down as a result of incessant invasion on them, while some people are still counting their losses to the incidence of kidnapping which seems ongoing unabated. It is therefore a clarion call for the three tiers of government in Nigeria not to rest on their oars but rise up to this challenge and defeat the menace of

incessant kidnapping witnessing in the nation nowadays. There should be collaborative efforts among the forces to stop the tiding wave of all acts of criminality such as kidnapping in every part of the country. It is glaring that majority of the perpetrators of kidnapping are youth, hence, the need for them to be at the centre of every government's programme that will engage them for productive gain. Also, victims of the kidnapping incidence in the country must not just left to their own destiny, rather government should try to identify them and make plan towards assisting them to adjust to normal life by engaging them in palliative programmes and psychosocial adjustment training. Nigerian people as highly enterprising and determined individuals are desirous of government that will lead them by examples, with equitable distribution of their common wealth and justice in the national affairs. In the case of the past, where these virtues were openly demonstrated by the political elites and religious leaders, hardly anybody could heard of any incidence of kidnapping in the country. However, it is rational self-validating truth that if all these virtues can be applied to the conduct of our national affairs in Nigeria, the problems of kidnapping will be thing of the past in the country.

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