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UPSURGE OF KIDNAPPING IN NIGERIA: THE NEED FOR REMEDIATION.

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Abstract

The act of kidnapping is a grave criminal violation that carries the possibility of escalating into other felonious acts, including but not limited to physical assault, financial exploitation, and homicide. This study aims to explore the ramifications of abduction and analyze the underlying causes contributing to the occurrence of kidnappings in Nigeria. Based on secondary qualitative data, the research revealed that instances of abduction have been occurring in Nigeria as a result of the actions carried out by insurgent factions in the Niger Delta area. However, the frequency of such incidents escalated significantly with the rise of terrorism perpetrated by the organization known as "Boko Haram" in the northeastern part of Nigeria. The prevalence of abduction in Nigeria can be attributed to a combination of circumstances, including poverty, unemployment, and inadequate governmental policy. Kidnapping engenders several effects, including financial victimization, allegations of rape, and the erosion of confidence. The study thus proposed that in order to effectively eliminate abduction in Nigeria, it is imperative to actively pursue poverty reduction programs that specifically target youths and women. Similarly, it is imperative for the government to address the issue of unemployment by establishing skills training centers throughout the country. The paper additionally proposed that combating terrorism and insurgency is imperative due to their involvement in the abduction of innocent individuals, with a particular focus on females and children. Therefore, in order to address the issue of kidnapping in Nigeria, it is crucial to develop a comprehensive security action plan that incorporates the utilization of contemporary technology and the training of security personnel in modern strategies. This approach is essential for effectively dismantling the activities of these groups.

Keywords: Kidnapping, Kidnapping in Nigeria, Ransom payment, consequences of Kidnapping

Introduction

The presence of civil unrest, terror threats, pervasive corruption, and persistent abductions of Nigerian citizens, notably exemplified by the high-profile abduction of schoolgirls by the terrorist organization Boko Haram, serve to highlight the ongoing security challenges faced by Nigeria. Additionally, the issue of combating modern slavery in Nigeria is a pressing concern, as indicated by The Global Slavery Index (2014). This report reveals a global increase in the prevalence of modern slavery, with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) experiencing instances of men, women, and children being abducted during village raids and subsequently subjected to enslavement by militias in the eastern region throughout 2014. During the months of April and May in the year 2014, a total of 267 women and girls were subjected to acts of sexual assault perpetrated by armed groups. Kidnapping has been a persistent issue in Nigeria since the early 1990s, as shown by Hazen and Horner (2007). The perpetuation of kidnappings in the South East, Niger Delta, and South-western area serves to perpetuate an environment characterized by a lack of safety and security. In recent times, incidents of hostage-taking have also been reported in the northern regions of Nigeria.

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According to a report by Action on Armed Violence (2013), the Nigeria Police Force documented a total of 887 instances throughout the nation between the years 2008 and 2010. Kidnapping is a pervasive phenomenon in Nigeria, constituting a significant national issue that has permeated the very essence of the country (Dodo, 2010). However, its occurrence is more pronounced during instances of terrorism, insurgency, and various manifestations of political violence. The abduction of 250 female students from a girls' secondary school in Chibok, Borno State in 2014, as well as other incidents perpetrated by Boko Haram, exemplify the growing prevalence of kidnappings in Nigeria.

According to Hazen and Horner (2007), certain factions within the Niger Delta region have resorted to the abduction of foreign oil workers as a means to garner global recognition for the challenges faced by the local population, including the detrimental environmental consequences of oil spills and the oil industry, as well as the pressing need for increased local control over natural resource extraction. The utilization of this strategy has not been exclusively driven by political motives, since there exist accounts of substantial ransom payments that have subsequently been employed to finance the operations of these factions to a greater extent. Indeed, the profitability of this strategy has been demonstrated to such an extent that certain criminal organizations seem to have undertaken this endeavor solely for financial gain. In addition to its financial implications, abduction engenders several grave repercussions for both the victims and their families, as well as the state at large. An in-depth examination is necessary to thoroughly investigate the issue, with the aim of uncovering its fundamental causes and the significant implications it has for recommendations for addressing the issue at hand in Nigeria and beyond.

Method

The study adopted secondary sources drawing copiously from existing literature on kidnapping and other security challenges from internets ,books and unpublished materi

Statement of the Problem

The escalating incidence of kidnappings in Nigeria is a cause for great concern since it has permeated all regions of the country, rendering no area immune to this pervasive threat. The current state of affairs is cause for concern, as it has extended its reach to various regions across the country. This includes the Niger Delta region, where foreigners have been subjected to kidnappings in exchange for monetary compensation. Additionally, the northern part of Nigeria has experienced a significant increase in the number of individuals being abducted for ransom. Furthermore, the activities of Boko Haram in the Northeastern part of Nigeria have not been entirely eradicated. The prevailing circumstances have rendered existence exceedingly arduous for individuals, as a considerable number have been subjected to abduction, while others have met their demise as a result of the failure of the abducted individuals' kin to acquiesce to the demands for monetary compensation. The persistent security problem remains unabated, notwithstanding the implementation of governmental measures. Furthermore, the current scenario has resulted in heightened tensions inside the designated "catchment areas" because to perceived inadequacies in government efforts to mitigate their actions.

Concept of Kidnapping

The concept of kidnapping has been defined by scholars with different levels of success. According to Inyang and Abraham (2013, p. 532), the term "kidnapping" may be defined as the act of forcefully seizing, removing, and unlawfully detaining an individual against their own free will. The offense in question is a well-established legal principle rooted in common law, with a crucial element being the absence of consent on the side of the victim. An alternative conceptualization is presented by Fage and Alabi (2017, p. 289), who define kidnapping as the coercive or deceitful act of seizing an individual or a collective of individuals, motivated by a variety of factors including economic, political, religious, or the pursuit of self-determination. Nevertheless, the authors subsequently acknowledged that persons who were violently or fraudulently abducted are taken as hostages with the intention of demanding ransom. This suggests that although political and economic concerns may

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serve as catalysts for kidnappings, the economic rationale is the predominant predisposing element underlying this phenomena.

According to Uzorma and Nwanegbo-Ben (2014, p. 132), kidnapping can be described as the act of unlawfully taking, detaining, or transporting an individual by the use of force or deception, typically accompanied by a demand for ransom. The act entails the coercive removal of an individual from their familial unit without their voluntary agreement, with the intention of afterwards detaining the individual as a captive and extracting financial gain from their family. Based on the above discussion, it can be observed that there is no universally accepted definition of kidnapping. However, it is evident that in order for an act to be classified as kidnapping, it must entail the forcible transportation of a victim from one location to another, as well as the confinement or possession of that individual, regardless of their age. According to Inyang and Abraham (2013), this action is considered a legal infringement on an individual's freedom, which contravenes the constitutional provision of freedom of movement in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It is important to note that all other laws in Nigeria are derived from this constitution.

Moreover, the act of abduction typically stems from a desire for monetary profit or the fulfillment of political objectives. Hence, both opportunistic or conventional criminals and political dissidents may turn to the act of kidnapping as a means to unlawfully acquire economic benefits or to have their demands met. Recent typologies of abduction, originating from either the social science or business domains, primarily concentrate on the motivations behind criminal behavior. Within the realm of analytical discourse, there exist examples that reside within the sophisticated end of the spectrum. Elio Zannoni, a criminologist and risk evaluator, posits a differentiation between criminal kidnapping, driven by economic incentives, and political kidnapping, motivated by political factors (Zannoni, 2003). Zannoni further suggests that kidnapping often operates as a "business," characterized by the presence of ransom demands that can fluctuate significantly based on the nature of the perpetrators involved and the social standing of the victim (2003, p. 1, as cited in Tnazelli, 2006). This discussion revolves on two significant assertions: (a) the assertion that an element of economics is present in every instance of kidnapping, and (b) the assertion that the status of the captive plays a crucial role in determining the ransom payment.

Theoretical Framework Guiding the Study

The central objective of the sociological effort is to comprehensively comprehend and elucidate social phenomena, whereas the criminological enterprise is to develop theories of crime causation that are both true and accurate. This study will incorporate two theoretical frameworks, namely the social exchange theory as a crime causation theory and the lifestyle theory as a victimization theory. The theory of social exchange, originally formulated by George Homans in 1961 (as stated in Ibrahim & Mukhtar, 2016), is derived from the rational choice framework. This perspective posits that human behavior is driven by a hedonistic inclination towards obtaining pleasure (Ibrahim & Mukhtar, 2016, p. 81). The primary focus of individuals has been on the examination of the historical aspects pertaining to the incentives and drawbacks that influence human behavior and decision-making. In essence, individuals engage in ongoing deliberation, persisting in behaviors that have shown to be personally gratifying in previous instances. On the contrary, individuals discontinue engaging in activities that have shown to be financially burdensome in previous instances. In order to comprehend human behavior, it is important to get insight into an individual's past experiences with rewards and costs. Through the lens of exchange theory, the act of kidnapping and then obtaining a ransom in exchange for the safe return of hostages may be seen as a distinct form of reciprocal interaction. The reciprocal nature of this particular form of criminal activity is evident in its inherent exchange dynamics, as perpetrators typically want monetary compensation or make alternative demands (Ibrahim & Mukhtar, 2016: 85).

The second theoretical framework employed in elucidating the phenomenon of abduction in Nigeria is grounded in the principles and aims of the Rational Choice Theory of crime. According to the thesis put out by Cornish and Clarke (986), criminals do not engage in criminal activities randomly or by coincidence. It is strongly believed by the authors that offenders possess a significant degree of premeditation before to

engaging in criminal activities. This stance was reinforced by their assertion that humans are rational actors who engage in a process of deliberation, considering many factors like as means and goals, costs and rewards, in order to make logical decisions. The proponents of this theory believed that its use would facilitate the analysis of situational crime control and prevention. According to prevailing beliefs, crime is commonly regarded as a deliberate action undertaken by individuals with the intention of fulfilling their personal desires, which may include financial gain, social standing, sexual gratification, and thrill-seeking. The process of fulfilling these needs entails the exercise of decision-making and choice, albeit within certain limitations imposed by one's capabilities and the accessibility of pertinent information (Clarke, [year]).

According to the notion proposed in 1997, a significant number of young individuals participate in nefarious activities in order to increase their sexual and financial standing, hence seeking pleasure. In some Nigerian communities, individuals have a propensity to bestow particular reverence onto individuals, regardless of the origin of their financial resources.

Kidnapping refers to the act of forcibly seizing and unlawfully detaining or restricting an individual against their will and impeding their natural right to freedom of movement. The act of apprehending and detaining an individual, whether using coercive means or deceptive tactics, is commonly referred to as "custodial capture" (Iyang& Abraham, 2013). Kidnapping encompasses the act of forcibly seizing an individual with the intention of demanding a monetary payment as ransom in exchange (Walsh & Adrian, 1983). According to File-Muriel (2013), the concept of kidnapping involves the unlawful imprisonment of an individual by the use of force or coercion, with the intention of extorting a ransom from the victim. According to Turner (1998), kidnapping is characterized by the act of forcefully seizing someone and transporting them to a specific place, where they are unlawfully confined and kept against their volition as hostages. Kidnapping has been characterized as a form of armed robbery in some contexts. According to Okoli (2014), abduction may be characterized as a sort of organized theft that, while potentially less lethal than armed robbery, is more financially advantageous. According to KenkandOgunkuade (2020), the act of abduction has emerged as a significant terror strategy due to its relatively cheap cost and huge potential for financial gain through ransom demands, thus functioning as a type of coerced robbery. In light of this objective, an individual's susceptibility to abduction is contingent upon their possession of social, economic, and cultural resources. The incidence of kidnapping in Nigeria is now on the rise. According to statistical data, Nigeria experiences an annual occurrence of over 1,000 incidences of abduction, with a likelihood of more cases going unreported (Catlin Group, 2012). The British government has expressed its concern with the abduction of a minimum of 25 British citizens and those with dual British citizenship, together with over 200 international nationals, throughout the Niger Delta region just from January 2007 onwards. The recognition of abduction as a significant component of militancy and/or insurgency in the Niger Delta has been acknowledged by Fage and Alabi (2017). The phenomenon of abduction has proliferated throughout the nation as a consequence of the precarious conditions prevailing in the Niger Delta region. The motives for these abductions might be attributed to either economic or political incentives. Initially, the victims included predominantly of foreign oil workers. However, presently, a significant portion of the victims are local individuals, frequently employed by multinational oil and oil service businesses. It is important to note that these victims do not necessarily belong to the affluent strata of society; rather, anybody whose family possesses the means to pay a ransom becomes a potential target. In June 2012, Christian Obodo, a renowned international footballer, was successfully freed by the police subsequent to his abduction in the vicinity of a church (Catlin Group, 2012).

The persistence of kidnappings in Nigeria, spanning from the southern to the northern regions, has emerged as a significant security concern, with limited governmental intervention. In the northeastern region of Nigeria, there have been instances of Boko Haram insurgency that inflicted terror upon the area in previous years. However, it is worth noting that these issues have since diminished. The present study focuses on the actions of kidnappers, particularly in the region of WauruJabbe, a suburban town located under the jurisdiction of Yola South local government in Adamawa State.

The phenomenon of abducting western people in exchange for monetary compensation has also been ascribed to the extremist group known as Boko Haram. Several instances may be cited, such as the abduction

of Georges Vandebeusch, a French clergyman, in November 2013, and the kidnapping of a French family consisting of seven individuals, which reportedly yielded a ransom amounting to USD 3 million. Both instances of kidnapping occurred within the borders of Cameroon (Barna, 2014). Furthermore, educational institutions have also been targeted by this phenomenon. For instance, there was an incident in February 2014 where students were ruthlessly attacked while they were asleep in their dorms (Barna, 2014). On April 14th, 2014, a religious group abducted a total of 250 female students from Government Girl's Secondary School in Chibok, Borno State (Shuaibu, Salleh, & Shehu, 2015). Additionally, Ansaru, a related organization, has directed its efforts at Western individuals (via kidnappings), Christians, and governmental entities. The phenomenon is prevalent in the northern regions, particularly in Kano, Katsina, Yobe, Bauchi, and Borno. The presence of strategies like those employed by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has prompted speculation over the probable leadership of Khalid al-Barnawi within the group. Al-Barnawi, having been affiliated with AQIM and receiving training in Algeria, is posited as a potential intermediary between the two entities (Barna, 2014). According to the analysis of the Catlin Group (2012), rescue operations directed by armed forces have the potential to result in fatalities among hostages.

Factors Contributing to the Occurrence of kidnappings in Nigeria

Several reasons have been proposed to elucidate the underlying causes of abduction within the Nigerian setting, which include:

(a) Societal devaluation: The phenomenon at hand pertains to the diminishing regard for human life, diligent labor, amicability, and openness towards outsiders, in favor of an extravagant disposition. This shift has contributed to the emergence of contemporary criminal activities and social maladies. According to Okoli (2014), the prevalence of abduction in Nigeria might be attributed to a cultural inclination towards excessive materialism and avarice.

(b) The issue of an ineffective policing system in Nigeria can be attributed to several factors. One of the main causes is the insufficient funding allocated to security institutions. This lack of financial resources hampers their ability to effectively carry out their duties. Additionally, bribery and corruption among security agents further exacerbate the problem. These unethical practices undermine the integrity of the police force and compromise their ability to maintain law and order. Furthermore, the inadequate utilization of technology in policing operations contributes to the inefficiency of the system. By not fully harnessing technological advancements, Nigeria's police force is unable to leverage tools that could enhance their effectiveness in combating crime. Furthermore, the lack of a cohesive framework within the Nigerian security institution undermines the efficacy of security measures in Nigeria, since regional governments are unable to exert direct authority over security facilities within their respective jurisdictions (Okoli &Ogayi, 2018).

(c) Governance failure may be attributed to the government's lack of responsiveness towards issues of insecurity, coupled with an excessive focus on acquiring political power. This correlation is believed to contribute to the rising prevalence of abduction incidents in Nigeria. The level of insecurity in Nigeria may be attributed to the government's failure to effectively address fundamental concerns such as poverty, unemployment, decreasing income and low savings, and high inflation rate (Agunyai, 2018Agunyai&Ojakorotu 2021)..

Hence, the growing incidence of abduction in Nigeria poses a significant challenge to the government's responsibility of ensuring sufficient security measures to effectively address the issue of kidnapping.

(d) The escalating incidence of unemployment in Nigeria can be attributed to a multitude of variables. According to Adebayo (2013), the issue of unemployment may be attributed to the government's failure in providing sufficient infrastructure and industries that can provide job opportunities and enhance trade.This perspective is often regarded as the primary factor contributing to the economic disparity and widespread impoverishment that defined the social landscape in Nigeria. However, Adebayo (2013) conducted research that demonstrated how factors such as the expansion of educated workforce, namely among university graduates, rural-urban mobility, and rapid population increase, contribute to the emergence of kidnapping as

a lucrative activity in Nigeria. Hence, it may be inferred that jobless young individuals may resort to engaging in abduction activities as a means of sustaining their livelihood.

Additionally, poverty serves as a contributing factor to the occurrence of abduction incidents in Nigeria. This phenomenon can be observed in several manifestations, including the parents' incapacity to provide sustenance for their offspring, the inability to afford educational expenses, health-related concerns, and other adversities encountered in life. The aforementioned issues have the potential to render young individuals susceptible to exploitation, since their parents are unable to adequately provide for their necessities. Consequently, they may become susceptible targets for recruitment by delinquent elements within the society.

(e) Illiteracy is a significant contributing element, since a majority of individuals affected by this issue lack formal education or have discontinued their schooling. Education has a crucial role in fostering individuals' moral development and cultivating their cognitive abilities. The absence of education renders young people susceptible to many negative attitudes and behaviors.

(f) The desire to get rich quick syndrome, sometimes referred to as "get rich quick syndrome," is identified as another contributing factor. This phenomenon is observed among certain young individuals who possess a strong eagerness to amass substantial financial resources without exerting significant effort or according to proper procedures. This will prompt individuals to resort to various questionable methods in order to get funds to follow their aspirations.

Moreover, the proliferation of abduction in Nigeria and other emerging nations in Africa and Asia may be attributed to various political causes, widespread poverty, and a dearth of viable economic opportunities for the younger population. Consistent with the aforementioned, Tepperman (2006, as reported in Ibrahim & Mukhtar, 2016) noted that Nigeria exhibits a substantial population of teenagers who reside and engage in economic activities inside the street environment. The aforementioned phenomenon has been ascribed to economic variables and the extent of individuals' exposure to various types of dangers.

The act of kidnapping, as a form of violent criminal offense, is a multifaceted issue. The occurrence of this phenomenon is observed across many contexts and can be attributed to a multitude of factors. There are several causes and repercussions associated with it. According to Hazen and Horner (2007), the act of taking hostages may be attributed to two main motivations: political negotiation and economic gain. The comprehensive categorization of abduction has significant importance in comprehending the fundamental causes contributing to the issue, particularly in the context of kidnapped for ransom. However, in addition to these overarching classifications, individuals are subjected to abduction and kidnapping by criminals for a multitude of reasons and motives. These include but are not limited to adoption, solicitation, participation in camel racing, engaging in illegal sexual activities, entering into marriage, involvement in prostitution, extortion of money, seeking retribution, trafficking for profit, trading of body parts, enslavement, engagement in unlawful activities, perpetration of homicide, and various other objectives (NCRB, 2014). The impact of globalization on the rise of trans-border crimes, such as commercial sexual exploitation of minors and human trafficking, has become a significant concern. Ibrahim and Mukhtar (2016) have referred to these crimes as trans-border crimes due to their ability to transcend national boundaries. Presently, the movement of individuals across borders by (il)legal organized syndicates has become a frequent occurrence.

Payment of Ransom

Maigari, Dantani, and Arafat (2021:56) assert that an analysis of the qualitative data reveals that the narratives and statements obtained from the interviews offer a contextual elucidation of the increasing prevalence of ransom kidnappings in Nigeria. The provision of ransom payments has facilitated the emergence of other groups of abductors and has also led to the accumulation of funds in their possession. The remuneration is contingent upon the negotiated arrangement between the abductors and the family members of the victims. The amount of money gathered reaches a value in the millions of Nigerian naira. The substantial funds obtained from the malicious deed have facilitated the proliferation of the threat. I recently conducted an

interview with one of the individuals who had been released from captivity, during which they recounted the inhumane treatment they endured. This included instances where they were subjected to exposure on open terrain, even in inclement weather conditions, without access to shelter. The individuals affected by this situation experience severe food scarcity, being provided only minimal sustenance in the form of bread and water.

Method of Operation

The danger poses a significant security hazard within the nation in contemporary times. The aforementioned observation arises from the empirical evidence gathered via my interactions with individuals who have been freed from captivity. These interactions have revealed that kidnappers possess a well-established network of informants who provide them with crucial intelligence pertaining to the specific areas in which they intend to carry out their operations. The activities of the informants will entail the surveillance of individuals who possess thriving enterprises, high-ranking government officials, or those who maintain relationships with influential figures within society. Upon obtaining the necessary information, the individuals proceed to infiltrate the premises of their targets during the nocturnal hours spanning from midnight to 2:30 a.m. The authorities seize the mobile devices of the victims, which serve as a means of communication with their family members, with the intention of negotiating a settlement. Noncompliance with the demands of the perpetrators leads to the fatal outcome for their victims. Furthermore, regardless of the circumstances, the individuals responsible for the kidnappings consistently get information due to the presence of their informants who are located in the vicinity where the incidents occur. In certain instances, individuals who have been subjected to abduction may appeal to their family members, urging them to comply with the demands of the perpetrators. Additionally, the kidnappers often issue warnings, indicating that failure to meet the specified deadline for delivering the requested funds will result in the victims being subjected to severe harm, including potential fatality or inhumane treatment.

The presence of security risks within the country is a matter of concern, since captors often employ deceptive tactics by falsely claiming involvement in a highly profitable enterprise, promising their captives substantial financial gains within a short period of time. In a scenario when kidnappers find themselves content with the ransom obtained, a notable contrast arises when juxtaposed with previous iterations of robbery, wherein a comparatively lower sum of money was acquired.

Consequences of Kidnappingon Victims

The condition can have a profound psychological impact, causing severe distress for both the individuals directly affected and their close relationships. The demographic characteristics of abduction victims encompass a wide range of factors, including age, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, level of education, and country of origin. While it is true that individuals from all walks of life can fall victim to human trafficking, there are specific demographics who exhibit heightened vulnerability to this particular kind of victimization (Kaylor, 2015).

In addition to the psychological distress experienced by the victim and their family, as well as the bodily consequences, abduction also entails significant economic or financial ramifications. Based on the findings of Catlin Group (2012, p. 2), it has been proposed that the worldwide value of ransom payments might potentially reach US$500 million each year. However, because to the considerable uncertainty surrounding the overall number of events, it is not feasible to establish an authoritative figure. A significant proportion, around 70 percent, of kidnappings remain unreported due to concerns of potential retaliation or a lack of trust in law enforcement authorities. The issue is further compounded when taking into account the substantial sum of money that is paid as ransom. The perpetual state of terror experienced by victims will hinder their ability to truly embrace their lives, so robbing them of the opportunity to properly recover from their initial abduction. This situation leads to feelings of frustration, as individuals are unable to focus their attention on productive tasks that might enhance their means of sustenance.

Frequently, individuals who have experienced victimization are compelled to undertake unplanned relocations to alternative locations. It has become imperative to relocate from the aforementioned location due to the ongoing abduction incidents, which persistently endanger their lives. Consequently, individuals will encounter unfamiliar and challenging terrain or environments, so departing from their accustomed comfort zones. Communities where these abductors flourish are characterized by a prevalence of suspicions and distrust. The abduction of certain victims can be attributed to the involvement of informants who reside among individuals and surveil their actions, afterwards relaying this information to the kidnappers. Consequently, the community would experience a persistent state of apprehension due to the government's inability to provide the required level of protection. Similarly, those who have experienced victimization will no longer engage in social interactions to the same extent as they previously did. Victims of crime are often compelled to maintain a low-income lifestyle even after being transferred in order to prevent further victimization. The experience described might be characterized as traumatic, as it engenders a state of apprehension that impedes the individual's ability to get pleasure from their financial resources, thus diminishing their inclination towards activities that promote personal enjoyment and fulfillment.

Conclusion

The incidence of kidnapping in Nigeria has been seen to be on the rise, with prevalence observed across all geopolitical zones. Indeed, it can be argued that no region inside Nigeria is exempt from the pervasive nature of this issue. The issue at hand is a cause for concern, as seen by the situation in the Niger Delta Region, as well as the South-South, South-East, North-East, and North-West regions of Nigeria. Militant groups have adopted the strategy of abduction as a means of insurgency, targeting foreign individuals with the intention of securing ransom payments to fund their violent endeavors. In the northern region of Nigeria, particularly in the North East, opportunistic criminals engage in the act of kidnapping for the purpose of obtaining ransom. Furthermore, the actions of Boko Haram, armed banditry, and other criminal elements persistently inflict significant harm upon the populace, resulting in numerous abductions. The frequency of occurrences in the northern region of Nigeria, particularly in the Yola South district of Adamawa, is seeing an upward trend. In Nigeria, it may be argued that there is a causal relationship between poverty and the occurrence of kidnapping. This assertion is based on the observation that a portion of the jobless young population has resorted to engaging in kidnapping activities, mostly driven by the substantial financial gains obtained via ransom payments, which serve as a means of sustenance. The causes of abduction in Nigeria may be attributed to moral degradation and the prevalence of the fast money syndrome.

Recommendations

The paper made the following recommendations in order toaddress the scourge of kidnapping in Nigeria. Therefore, the following recommendations are suggested:

- The government should develop poverty alleviation initiatives and job prospects that specifically target young individuals who are predominantly engaged in abductions and kidnappings due to economic distress, primarily stemming from unemployment.
- Efforts to alleviate poverty should prioritize the inclusion of women and children, who constitute a vulnerable part of the population and are often kidnapped by terrorists or rebels.
- The government is committed to actively and resolutely combatting insurgency within the country, with the objective of effectively ceasing the operations of insurgents that pose a threat to national security.
- Efforts to strengthen collaborations between securities and the general public should be prioritized, particularly in the area of reporting individuals suspected of engaging in illicit activities.
- The government should actively pursue international cooperation in order to effectively combat transnational crime and reduce its occurrence.

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- Non-governmental organizations should be actively involved in combating the issue of kidnapping in Nigeria and its bordering states. Their participation is crucial in raising awareness and implementing measures to effectively mitigate the operations of these criminals.
- The government should prioritize the acquisition of contemporary technological assets, such as helicopters and other devices, to enhance their capacity for monitoring and surveillance.
- Law enforcement personnel, including the police and other organizations dedicated to combating human trafficking, will enhance their monitoring efforts in the battle against abduction. The individuals will undergo specialized training sessions focused on the recognition of abduction victims and the safe extraction of these victims from their captors, minimizing harm to the individuals in question.
- In accordance with constitutional provisions, there should exist distinct sections within the legal framework that stipulate the precise and stringent punishments to be imposed upon those involved in the act of kidnapping. This measure might potentially act as a deterrent for individuals who are currently engaged in illicit activities, as well as those who are contemplating engaging in such activities.
- peopleshould be encouraged to aid security personnel by providing them with crucial information regarding those who are suspected of engaging in unlawful activities.
- The establishment of vigilante groups in a community, along with the provision of locally sourced firearms, serves to bolster their patrol capabilities due to their intimate knowledge of the surrounding area.
- The government should enhance its monitoring of forested and bushy areas by employing aerial surveillance methods such as helicopters and other advanced technological devices.
- Mobile service providers like MTN, GLO, and ZAIN, in conjunction with security officers, will enhance their efforts to trace the handsets used by kidnappers.
- Finally,the establishment of self-help groupsshall be formed to provide peer counseling aimed at preventing kidnappings and delivering therapeutic interventions for those who have experienced kidnapping incidents, both as primary targets and secondary victims.

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