THE CONSEQUENCES OF KIDNAPPING ON THE COMMUNITY: A CASE STUDY OF ZURMI, ZAMFARA STATE

FAISAL MUHAMMAD,
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY, FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, ANNAHADA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, MARADI, NIGER REPUBLIC
faisalmuhd100@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT
This article examines the consequences of kidnapping on the community. It contributes to the current body of literature on the menace by looking closely at how kidnapping affects the community -- an aspect that previous studies have ignored. Kidnapping exerts enormous and far reaching economic and social costs. It induces and creates a palpable ambience of fear and despairs for all citizens and stultifies economic growth and hinders sustainable development. This study adopted a mixed method, administering structured questionnaires, in-depth and key informant interviews were conducted with Traditional Rulers, Religious leader, Zamfara State Community Protection Guard (ZSCPG) personnel, Military and police officers, and Victim of Kidnapping in Zurmi, Zamfara state. The data revealed majority of the respondents believe that the consequences of kidnapping on Zurmi community are enormous including: emotional depression, anxiety, psychological trauma, and an experience of economic hardship, joblessness after victims' release, abject poverty, anxiety, depression and trauma. The research adopted the Rational Choice Theory (RCT) as its theoretical frame of reference to explain the menace of kidnapping and its consequences on the community. RCT sees individuals as rational actors, capable of making their own choices, which includes choosing to commit crime. Before kidnappers go into the menace, they must have weighed the options and concluded more rewards than punishment. The study offered recommendations to address problems of kidnapping in the study area. Among them is the need for the federal government in collaboration with the Zamfara state government, to review the current strategy of dealing with the issue of kidnapping in Zurmi, Zamfara state especially and Nigeria generally. In particular, there is the need to explore the extant laws and the extent to which they are being enforced with a view to establishing their efficacy.

Introduction

Nigeria has in recent with witnessed an upsurge in insecurity that include kidnapping, banditry, cattle rustling, brigandage, robbery, secessionist and insurgency. There is no place that the effect of insecurity is much felt than in the North. Because of all the insecurities mentioned above, only secessionist that has not manifest in the North. This scourge has brought along with it the much abhorred dangers to the people, the northern state and the nation at large. The thrust of this article is to explore some of the negative effects which are felt by Nigerians particularly those living in Zurmi Local Government of Zamfara State.

Kidnapping has great adverse effect on the nation's socioeconomic development (Okorie-Ajah, Nwokeoma & Okpan, 2018). Inyang and Ubong (2013) noted that over the last few years, the wealthy and the income earners have been picked up by kidnappers who only free their victims after payments of ransom. Kidnapping exerts enormous and far reaching economic and social costs. For them, it induces and creates a palpable ambience of fear and despairs for all citizens and stultifies economic growth and sustainable development. It is one major development challenge bedevilling Nigeria today (Okorie-Ajah, Nwokeoma & Okpan, 2018). But it is mainly practiced in the northwest, Zamfara state inclusive. Even in Zamfara, Zurmi local government has been one of the places that are worse hit and make a good "laboratory" for an experiment of the effects of kidnapping on the community.

Statement of the Research Problem

Globally, kidnapping is a problem that effects the development of nations across the world. The increasing rate of kidnapping despite all efforts to prevent and control it, constitutes a burning issue in the heart of the governments, researchers, public organizations, criminal justice system as well as the residents. Nigeria has witnessed an overwhelming increase of kidnapping involving every level of the society and motivated by many reasons such as financial or political purposes. This menace portends serious negative consequences to the nation. At times kidnappers hold their captives longer in order to demand huge amount of money from the relatives of their victim. No one is free from being kidnapped in Nigeria. Every day many people are kidnapped and forced to pay ransoms in millions, some are killed before they were rescued by their relatives (Kanu & Agbo, 2023).

The problem of kidnapping in Nigeria has been felt in the economic, diplomatic, security and worse still the national image of the country. It has created a state of insecurity in Nigeria, which has affected Nigeria's economic growth. It took a rather dramatic dimension in Nigeria recently with its spread to other areas of the country most especially in the northern region. This has therefore posed a serious challenge to Nigeria's socioeconomic development. Its impact on the nation has been quite enormous as it affects. Accordingly, Okoli and Agada (2014) posited that kidnapping constitutes a great threat to Nigeria's sustainable development. Previous studies have examines various aspects of kidnapping, including the meaning, types or forms, causes, consequences on the economy, foreign investment, foreign relations, tourism, agricultural production, among others (Turner, 1998); Bello, 2024; Ibrahim, and Mukhtar, 2017; Inyang & Ubong, 2013; Okoli, and Atelhe, 2014; Okoli, and Agada, 2014; Okorie, Nwokeoma, & Samuel, 2018; Osumah, & Aghedo, 2011); Sunday, Nuyong, and Nancwat, 2022; Thomas, and Nta, 2009; Yusuf, and Abdullahi, 2020). By this therefore, there exists a gap in the body of existing literature because they have not examined a very critical component; the consequences of kidnapping on the community, especially in Zamfara state, where the menace is rampant. Against this background therefore, this research was set out to address that gap in the literature by critiquing the existing scholarship and ultimately extending the existing scholarship by contributing to it through bringing forth the effects of kidnaping as experienced by the people of Zurmi in Zamfara state.

Conceptual Clarification

There are many definitions of the concept kidnapping. For instance, Thomas and Nta (2009) defined kidnapping as robbery of the highest rank. According to the duo, it is an organized and systematic robbery which is not as deadly as armed-robbery, but more profitable than the former. The profitability has encouraged those that indulged in it to carry on with the act although there is a law prohibiting it. Academic definitions also periodically tie kidnapping to terrorism, because kidnapping uses act or threats of violence to achieve an objective. Osumah and Aghedo (2011 cited in Ekechukwu

& Osaat, 2021) outlined three forms of kidnapping as follows:

1. Ritual kidnapping: The targets of ritual kidnapping are often children, the developmentally disabled. The victims of this form of kidnapping are most often killed, as the desire of the kidnappers is usually to harvest organs or other body parts for sacrifice or money-making rituals.

2. Political kidnapping: Political actors in Nigeria place a "high premium on power and employ any means to acquire power for self-regarding gains". Political kidnapping is reported to be the highest in area with large amount of politicians with a pool of available individuals ready to be dispatched for kidnapping missions by desperate politicians.

3. Business oriented, or economic kidnapping: Originally, this form of kidnapping was done to threaten rivals or curb competition, but today it has morphed into more of the money-making and ransom motivated kidnapping events.

From the above rendition therefore, this article presents a conceptual clarification by critiquing the literature and narrowing down with the concept and version of kidnapping that best describes the study area – Zurmi in Zamfara state. On the whole, ritual kidnapping does not apply to the study area because it involves organs or other body parts harvest and ultimately sacrifice and money-making rituals. On the other hand, political kidnapping deploys some sort of means to acquire power for self-regarding gains. From the outset, kidnapping in Zurmi appeared to look like politically-motivated act due to the fact that the culprits were believed to be political thugs to some top or ruling elites. But over time, it metamorphosed into a different type all together. Lastly, the business oriented, or economic kidnapping appears to best describe the pattern that occurs in Zurmi because, clearly there are camps that are in rivalry or competition to demonstrate power, domination and control. Again, kidnapping in Zurmi is purely a money-making and ransom motivated phenomenon. Conclusively, the social problem experienced in Zurmi is economic or business motivated.

A Brief History of Kidnapping

Kidnapping is a global phenomenon and every part of the world has its share of this menace. America, Mexico and other parts of the world are doing as much as they can to ensure that kidnappers are captured and dealt with, and that kidnapping is completely eradicated. The rates of kidnapping in Europe, North America and South America are attracting worldwide attention. The practice of kidnapping has become quite lucrative for some and there are criminal groups that have made it their business model. Mexico has its experience especially with its history of drug-related violence and police corruption; kidnapping is an old story. According to the U.S. Department of State, Mexico suffered an estimated 105,685 kidnapping cases in 2012 and in 2013, the number increased tremendously to 131,946, the highest number ever recorded (Ekechukwu and Osaat, 2021). Similar case of kidnapping remains a challenge to the United States. The disappearance of children in the country is not unheard of either, and such is a problem that the police and other agencies are working relentlessly to address. According to the National Centre for Missing & Exploited Children, roughly 800,000 children are reported missing annually in the country (Freeman, 2006 in Ezinwa, 2015). Furthermore, Turner (1998) has attempted a documentation of how kidnapping originated. According to him, the term 'kidnapping' originated in 17th century in England where children were 'kidnapped' and often sold as slaves or agricultural workers to colonial farmers.

The discovery and exploration of gold in Zamfara made many young herdsmen turn to kidnapping and banditry to make ends meet, having realised that it was lucrative. They make their millions in ransom collection from any large catch victim, and in rural areas of Zamfara and Katsina States, villagers were compelled to pay monthly insurance premiums for protection on their land and people. Those who default on paying this monthly and unholy imposition due to one reason or another are severely dealt with by the summary execution of the family members to compel obedience. This is the unfolding situation in the rustic areas of the north-west, where sheep and cattle roam freely.

Moreover, Yusuf and Abdullahi (2020) accounted that in the Nigerian, kidnapping was considered for social reasons and it is as old as history and not of recent development. In

ancient times, individuals, especially strangers, were often kidnapped either for ritual or burial purposes of prominent chiefs and warriors. Reasons for this trend can be ascribed to a set of factors that are greatly interlinked. These include; excessive greed for power and wealth by politicians, misplacement of value system with emphasis increment on material gains at the expense of respect and hard work for constituted authorities, unemployment, abject poverty, fraud and Corruption.

Consequences of Kidnapping on the Community

Regardless of the type of kidnapping and the factors contributing to its occurrence, the psychological and economic effects of the problem can be quite devastating, first for the victims and their significant others. Victims of kidnapping differ in age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, the level of education and the country of origin. Although anyone can be a victim of crime, certain groups are especially vulnerable to this form of victimisation (Kaylor, 2015). Kidnapping exposes children to sexual abuse as well as the chance of developing sexually transmitted illnesses. Pretence for sexual assault of kidnapped children is the forced marriage of underage victims to older men. Aside from the psychological and physiological effects on the victim and his or her family, kidnapping also has significant economic and financial consequences.

Ibrahim and Mukhtar (2017) opined that some left-behind parents revealed that they had thoughts of severe violence at the time and found peace via religious. Others spoke of their difficulty to settle while their children were away, as well as feeling unhappy and ill all of the time. These parents described losing their hair, becoming physically ill, and becoming addicted to medications. At the government level, it has created a toll on government expenditure, substantial part of the budget is allocated to security every year thereby affecting other sectors. Similarly, between 2006 and 2009 according to Ubong, (2013 as cited in Sunday, Nuyong & Nancwat, 2022) about 15 billion was paid to kidnappers. Large amounts of money spent on ransom payments can have a significant effect on the state economy, as it can be used for substantial socio-economic development.

Also, on several occasions due to fear of being kidnapped, workers (expatriates and nationals) stopped work on various sites which have dire consequences on the economy. Some folks went as far as to borrow money to secure freedom for relatives from kidnappers. The victims' workplace will likewise be negatively impacted. If the casualty is an entrepreneur, business will suffer a setback while waiting for him or her to return. Many people are held hostage in their houses from nightfall until dawn for fear of being kidnapped, which has an impact on their social lives and relationships. Night travel has become a high-risk activity as a result of kidnappings. For fear of kidnappers, many people are hesitant to purchase or operate new vehicles. People known to be wealthy are now travelling with ordinary people using taxis and okadas to keep an eye on hostage takers (Inyang & Ubong, 2013).

Kidnapping has led to a high level of mistrust when it comes to interpersonal relationships. Only a few people still extend strangers typical African hospitality. Some people do not accept or reply strangers' greetings, nor do they oblige strangers seeking directions. Most people are afraid of being kidnapped; thus, they refuse to help persons in difficulty. Few people would risk stopping to aid persons on the expressway who were in need.

The Socio-Economic Effects and the Implications of Kidnapping in Nigeria

Kidnapping has plagued the socio-economic development of northern Nigeria and has had spill-over effects on youths who see kidnapping and hostage taking as a lucrative alternative means of making money, acquiring economic power and getting social recognition. This has had adverse effects on the socio-economic development of the northern Nigeria. The social life of people has been affected and there is mistrust among people due to incidence of kidnapping in northern Nigeria (Okorie, Bonaventure and Samuel, 2018). In other words, various socio-economic factors contribute to banditry and abduction in Nigeria, with poverty being a major cause. Economic desperation among millions of impoverished Nigerians drives some to resort to criminal activities like kidnapping or banditry for financial gain. Lack of economic opportunities pushes others into crime for survival. Criminal networks exploit poverty by offering incentives, recruiting vulnerable individuals to escape economic hardships, perpetuating the cycle of crime.

The implication is always felt particularly within the family, whereby members of such families will have to feed themselves and adjust to their normal daily activities, until they secure the release of the victim. If the victim is a businessman or woman the business will suffer, if the victim is a civil servant, his work will be affected adversely. In both cases there is going to be a setback. If he works in an organization, the challenges to be experienced are enormous as the victim's absence will have impact in the system and the output may drop.

Victims of kidnapping also suffer indirect cost from the incidents. Some of the victims are killed in the process of kidnapping; and some sustain various levels of injuries like bullet wounds which may deform them forever. Many victims suffer various degrees of assault, abuse and torture in the hands of the kidnappers. Some of the female victims are even raped by the kidnappers. Generally, most victims suffer severe traumatic pains from their experiences in the hands of the kidnappers (Bello, 2024). Kidnapping has contributed to high level of mistrust among people. This has reduced the traditional high-level hospitality among the south eastern Nigeria. People do not freely help those in distress for fear of being kidnapped. Wealthy individuals now demand for police escort in their daily activities and public outings for fear of kidnappers. This demand for police escort depletes the number of police that are available for their main functions in the states.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopted Rational Choice Theory (RCT) as its Theoretical Framework. It is rooted in classical criminology during the late 18th century, as seen in the work of Cesare Beccaria. Since then, the theory has been expanded upon and extended to other perspectives, such as deterrence, situational crime prevention and routine activity theory. RCT adopted a utilitarian belief that humans are reasoning actors who weigh means and ends, costs and benefits, in order to make a rational choice. The originator of rational choice theory anchored its argument on the economic principle of *cost-benefit analysis*. According to these neo-classical criminologists, people commit crimes after weighing their options and being convinced that the benefits of committing the crime outweigh its risks and costs. How individuals decide what will serve them best is dependent on personal preferences. For example, one individual may decide that abstaining from smoking is best for them because they want to protect their health. Another individual will decide they want to smoke because it relieves their stress. Although the choices are opposite, both individuals make these choices to get the best result for themselves. They insist that crime will decrease when opportunities are limited, benefits are reduced, and costs are increased (Schmalleger, 1997).

This dysfunction within the society causes deprivation as well as marginalisation. It also causes high levels of poverty, unemployment and low per capita. The result is visualised in the high crime rate of kidnapping and banditry at the forefront. This crime has been identified as profitable and functional to its perpetrators and disastrous to the economy at large. It is a theory for understanding and often modelling social and economic as well as individual behaviour. RCT sees individuals as rational actors, capable of making their own choices, which includes choosing to commit a crime. In any course of action, individuals weigh up the likely benefits and disadvantages of each action. It was developed by Clarke and Cornish (1985) and generally begins with the consideration of the choice behaviour of one or more individuals before jumping into action. It holds that individuals, as reasoning actors, usually act under free will and, in doing so, seek to avoid costs and weigh the rewards of an action or behaviour against those costs before making a choice. The theory suggests that individuals are unlikely to go through such deliberate, calculating mental processes and intuit the values and costs of an action, being unable to process information to the level assumed by this normative model (Cherniak, 1986).

Rational choice theory is based on numerous assumptions, one of which is individualism. The offender sees himself as an individual. The second is that individuals have to and maximise their goals, and the third is that individuals are self-interested. Offenders are thinking about themselves and how to advance their personal goals. The above assumptions of rational choice theory show that the offenders (kidnappers) see themselves as individuals who have freedom of choice and action. They use calculations to make choices and achieve outcomes that are aligned with their personal goals. This indicates that criminals (kidnappers) in Zurmi, Zamfara state choose to commit the act of kidnapping for them to achieve their personal goals. The theory also assumes that the offenders (kidnappers) as

individuals are rational actors using rational information to actively try to maximize their advantages and goals in every situation. Individuals, therefore, are assumed to be sensitive to the consequences of their actions and thus make reasoned judgments after considering the costs and benefits. Unfortunately, there are consequences on the kidnapped persons (the victims), their immediate family members, the community, the economy, foreign relations, tourism, food security, and a sense of mistrust in the society.

Based on the foregoing, the rational choice theorists advocated for very stringent punishment in order to deter further commission of crime. Essentially the central points of the Rational Choice Theory are:

i. That, the human being is a rational actor;

ii. Rationality involves ends/means calculation;

iii. People freely choose behaviour, both conforming and deviant, based on their rational calculation;

iv. The central element of calculation involves a cost-benefit analysis: pleasure versus pain or hedonistic calculus;

v. Choice with all other conditions equal will be directed towards the maximization of individual pleasure;

vi. Choice can be controlled through the perception and understanding of the potential pain or punishment that will follow an act judge to be in violation of the social goal;

vii. The state is responsible for maintaining order and preserving the common goals through a system of laws (this system is the embodiment of the social contract) and,

viii. The swiftness, severity and certainty of punishment are the key elements in understanding a ruling class ability to control their citizen's behaviour.

Igbo (2017) agreed with the notion that free will and hedonistic tendencies of man as a rational pleasure, seeking pleasure-seeking animal that chooses what will bring pleasure and not pain or suffering. Corroborating the above, Agha (2010) observes that one desirable thing for man is pleasure or happiness to be sought by an individual. To control crime with this orientation in mind, severe punishment will serve as an adequate deterrent to intended offenders by making the crime unattractive to all potential criminals in society. According to this theory, therefore, people choose to commit crimes (such as kidnapping) after they analyse the costs and benefits. The weight of the options of potential cost and benefit of an illegal act led to choosing the violation of crime in their pursuit of societal goals. Furthermore, rational choice theory shows that the offenders (kidnappers) are self-interested. Self-interest refers to actions that elicit personal benefit.

Consequently, kidnapping acts are premeditated, conceived, planned and executed for the personal and idiosyncratic goals of the perpetrators. Kidnappers are conscious and voluntary violators of the common law, which guarantees freedom of movement for every law-abiding citizen of Zamfara. Kidnappers willingly and wilfully transgress against the common good, which amounts to flagrant abuse and disobedience to the Nigerian Constitution. They may be considered atavists and recidivists who are aware of the social, economic, psychological and political implications of their dastardly criminal disposition. It could be stated that the Rational Choice Theory took a clear position concerning crime and criminal behaviour. They expressly stated that (1) choice can be controlled through the perception and understanding of the potential pain or punishment that will follow an act judged to violate the social goal, the social contract, (2) the state is responsible for maintaining order and preserving the common good through a system of laws; and (3) that the swiftness, severity and certainty of punishment are the key elements in a law's ability to control human behaviours. Conclusively, Rational Choice Theory helps us in understanding kidnapping in Zurmi as it provides a rigorous framework for analyzing kidnappers' behavior. By assuming that individuals act rationally, the theory provides a clear and systematic way to analyze the motivations and decisions of the culprits.

The kidnappers in Zamfara state and Zurmi local government, in particular, are acting with their self-interests in mind, which they think can create benefits for them at the expense of the community. Thus, this theory facilitates our understanding of the actors' (kidnappers')

motives but with attendant consequences on the community. As a result, the RCT is a suitable theory to be adopted a Theoretical Framework because it serves as a roadmap for the research. It encompasses a theory as well as the narrative explanation about why kidnappers act and the effects of their irrational, albeit "rational" to them on Zurmi community. It justifies and contextualizes the research as well serves as critical step for the study.

Methodology

This study adopted a mixed method, administering structured questionnaires, in-depth and key informant interviews were conducted with Traditional Rulers, Religious leader, Zamfara State. The research design was adopted because it is appropriate for gathering information on factors responsible for kidnapping in Zurmi, Zamfara State. Therefore, this research design assists in producing good responses from people concerning the study. The population of the study consist of the people of Zurmi local government area, both males and females who are 18years and above. The population also include the traditional rulers, civilian joint task force, military and police officers and victims of kidnapping.

i. **Sample Size:** The study draws a sample size of Three Hundred and Seventy-Two (372) respondents out of which 360 respondents were drawn from the public. Zurmi has 11 wards namely: Zurmi, Dauran/BirninTsaba, Yanbuki/Dutsi, Kwashabawa, Rukudawa, Moriki, Kanwa, Dole, Mashema, Mayasa/Kuturu and Boko wards. As many as 6 wards were selected. In-depth and key informant interviews were conducted with 1 religious leader, 3 traditional rulers, 3 Zamfara State Community Protection Guard (ZSCPG) personnel, 1 military and 1 police officer and 3 victims of kidnapping.

ii. **Sampling Techniques:** Multi-stage sampling techniques were used to select respondents for the study. At first stage, 6 wards were purposely selected namely: Zurmi, Rukudawa, Mashema, Mayasa/Kuturu, Kwashabawa and Yanbuki/Dutsi wards because there were mostly affected with the menace of kidnapping. At the second stage, 2 streets were selected in each of the 6 wards using lottery method. The names of the streets were written on small pieces of papers, folded, squeezed and put in a container thoroughly mixed and drawn without replacement to select street from the wards, respectively. In stage three, 30 respondents were selected from each of the two streets of the wards using the accidental method, making a total of 360. Purposive sampling method was used to select 12 respondents for in-depth interview. The interview was conducted with 1 religious leader, 3 traditional rulers, 3 members of the civilian joint task force, 1 military and 1 police officer and 3 victims of kidnapping.

iii. **Instruments of Data Collection:** The instrument for data collection includes a structured questionnaire and In-depth Interview guide. Both open and close-ended questionnaire was used which allowed the respondents to pick from the predetermined options and also allowed the respondents to freely express their opinions without restrictions. The justification for adopting the two is to enable the researcher to elicit in-depth information concerning the phenomenon under study from the relevant stakeholders.

iv. **Methods of Data Collection and Data Analysis:** The data were collected from primary and secondary sources. The primary data were collected through the questionnaires, In-depth and Key Informant Interviews. The secondary data were generated from textbooks, journals, newspapers, magazines, etc. The interviews were conducted by the researcher. A Tape recorder was used and notes were taken during the interviews. The interview was conducted in-person by the researcher with the help of three research assistance. The questionnaire was made in English and translated into Hausa language were applicable. The questions have both open-ended and close-ended, this is to allow respondents to express their opinion freely on the topic (open-ended) and gather empirical data (close-ended). The researcher employed the service of three research assistant to ease the task of distribution and collection of the questionnaire as well as conducting the interviews, considering the time-frame, distributions of the sample, and the researcher`s human capability. On every visit for data collection, the researcher and the three research assistants administered the instrument to the respondents for filling and retrieve the filled instrument and also make clarification of items where need arise.

With regard to the qualitative data, researcher scheduled, in line with the convenient time of the respondents. The researcher and the research assistants conducted the interviews while simultaneously recording and jotting key responses from the discussion.

The quantitative data generated were processed with the Social Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) vision 20. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used during the analysis; and presented in the form of tables, frequencies, charts and percentages. For the qualitative data, no software was used in the analysis. Instead, the researcher uses thematic analysis to analyse the data, focusing on the major themes that made up the research objective: the causes of kidnapping in Zurmi local government area of Zamfara state, the effects of kidnapping in the study area and recommendations that will facilitate in addressing the menace in the study area. A thematic analysis is a method for analysing qualitative data, which that describe opinions, thoughts, feelings, and other information. It is a method in social sciences research that helps researchers to identify broad themes across a variety of qualitative sources.

Data and Discussions

As with most social science studies, this research had inquired about the socio-demographics of the respondents and the results are captured in the Table below:

Table 1.1: The Consequences of Kidnapping

Responses	**Yes (%)**	**No (%)**	**Total (%)**
Emotional depression	202 (76.5)	62 (23.5)	**264 (100.0**
Anxiety	208 (78.8)	56 (21.2)	**264 (100.0)**
Psychological trauma	216 (81.8)	48 (18.2)	**264 (100.0)**
Economic hardship	228 (86.4)	36 (13.6)	**264 (100.0)**
Joblessness	193 (73.1)	71 (26.9)	**264 (100.0)**
All of the above	221 (83.7)	43 (16.3)	**264 (100.0)**

Source: Field Work, September, 2023

The above Table 1.1 above indicates that majority - 76.6% of the respondents are of the view that the emotional depression was the major consequences of kidnapping. 78.8% are of the view that anxiety was the consequence of kidnapping and 81.8% said psychological trauma was main consequences of kidnapped victims experienced. Up to 86.4% are of the view that the victims of kidnapping experienced economic hardship and 73.1% stated that the victims of kidnapping experience joblessness after release while 83.7% said that they experienced multiple consequences ranging from abject poverty, economic hardship, anxiety, depression and emotional trauma in the study area.

Similarly, an in-depth interview conducted with the Kidnap Victim narrated that, apart from anxiety, depression, emotional trauma there is the problem of starvation, stigmatization, which her fiancée defies to marry her. In an interview with Traditional Ruler posited that:

> *Kidnapping brought many consequences to the lives of people of Zurmi, these consequences include, under-development, chronic diseases like hypertension, HIV/AID, separation, divorce, abject poverty, starvation people can't afford three-square meal, not buying of new cloths and items even if you have the means. People cannot longer farm which is the major occupation in Zurmi (IDI with a Traditional Ruler, 2023).*

In another interview with a Traditional Leader, he opined that:

> *There are cases of kidnapping, of recent there was a man who was kidnapped in his farm and he spent a week with them and was seriously tortured for not agreeing to have had wealth but he was lucky to be released after collecting a ransom of one million naira. After his released he was invited and interviewed by JTF to give a statement of what happened to him and he gave them the true narration but unfortunately he was asked to give money to the police but he told them that he has none and was expecting to have some assistance from them but they pressurized him until he gave*

them the only five hundred naira in his possession (IDI with Traditional Leader, 2023).

Looking at the qualitative data above, it can be attested that the victims of kidnapping has experience an undeniable inhuman treatment from kidnappers in the study area during the period under stay in their custody and cannot be ascertained.

Table 1.2: Respondents' Views on whether the Consequences mentioned above have Effects on the Community

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	308	85.6
No	52	14.4
Total	**360**	**100.0**

Source: Field Work, September, 2023

On the effects of the consequence on the community, the above Table 1.2 above shows that 85.6% of the respondents believe that the consequences mentioned have effect on the community, while 14.4% said its does not. Thus, the overwhelming of the respondent indicates that the consequence has effects on the community.

Table 1.3 Respondent's Views on the Effects of Kidnapping on the Community

Responses	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
Unplanned relocation	246 (79.9)	62 (20.1)	**308 (100.0)**
High rate of suicide	274 (89.0)	34 (11.0)	**308 (100.0)**
Fear and lack of trust	268 (87.0)	40 (13.0)	**308 (100.0)**
Post-traumatic stress syndrome	240 (78.0)	68 (22.0)	**308 (100.0)**
Forceful closure of business	301 (97.7)	7 (2.3)	**308 (100.0)**
All of the above	241 (78.2)	67(21.8)	**308 (100.0)**

Source: Field Work, September, 2023

The above Table 1.3 above indicates that as many as 79.9% of the respondents said that the effect of kidnapping on the community was unplanned relocation while 89.0% said the community experiences high rate of suicide. 87.0% explained that they experience fear and lack of trust within the community as a result of kidnapping issue in the study area and 78.0% said that the community member's experiences post-traumatic stress syndrome due to kidnapping issue. On the other hand, 97.7% said the kidnapping has affected the community members which lead to forceful closure of businesses and 78.2% of the respondent identified several effects of kidnapping on the community. The above indicates that kidnapping has tremendous effects on Zurmi LGA of Zamfara State. Looking at the response, it can be deduced that the intensity of kidnapping activities has pushed people out of their community. In an interview with Community leader, he affirmed that:

Actually, there were communities displaced because of the high level of insecurity caused by the kidnappers. People ran out of many communities to save themselves from the indiscriminate killing by the kidnappers (IDI with Community Leaders, 2023).

A Police officer in Zurmi Ward also revealed that:

Many communities were displaced due to attacks by the kidnappers, an act which claims many lives and loss of public and private properties (IDI with Police Officer, 2023).

A ZSCPG personnel revealed that:

Certainly, some people were displaced from their communities although many of them were accommodated in the government own schools and were

taken care of by the government with the support of some NGOs but the security still continue to protect them (KII with ZSCPG Personnel, 2023).

Looking at the above data, it can be deduced that people Zurmi were seriously terrorized by the activities of kidnappers and bandit, which forced many of them to flee to other places to escape from the indiscriminate destruction and killings. This implies that the kidnappers were strong and determined and thus have the courage to perpetrate their atrocities in the study area.

In summary, the study revealed that the kidnaped victims have experiences different inhuman treatment from kidnappers, such as torture like burning rubber on body, flogging with wire cable every day, placing hot food on our palm, closing of our eyes with black rag for weeks, luck tightly with chain both hands and legs, leaving, raped insult and many other. The consequences are multiple, ranging from abject poverty, starvation, stigmatization, economic hardship, anxiety, depression and emotional trauma. Others consequences include chronic diseases like hypertension, HIV/AID, divorce, starvation people can't afford three-square meal, not buying of new cloths and items even if you have the means. People cannot longer farm which is the major occupation in the study area. These have affected the community members, which led to unplanned relocation, high rate of suicide, fear and lack of trust within the community as well as post-traumatic stress syndrome due to kidnapping issue. More so, the consequences have affected the community members which lead to forceful closure of businesses.

Conclusions

Kidnapping exerts enormous and far reaching economic and social costs. It induces and creates a palpable ambience of fear and despairs for all citizens and stultifies economic growth and hinders sustainable development. This study adopted mixed methods – quantitative (questionnaires) and qualitative (interviews) design to examine the negative consequences of kidnapping on Zurmi community. The study gathered stakeholders to gather the required data. The research adopted the Rational Choice Theory (RCT) as its theoretical frame of reference to explain the menace of kidnapping and its consequences on the community. RCT is a branch of criminology that sees individuals as rational actors: individuals are capable of making their own choices, which includes choosing to commit crime. In any course of action, individuals weigh up the likely benefits and disadvantages of each action. Before kidnappers go into the menace, they must have weighed the options and concluded more rewards than punishment.

The results revealed that majority of the respondents believed that kidnapping on Zurmi community has enormous negative consequences. They are emotional depression, anxiety, psychological trauma, and an experience of economic hardship, joblessness after victims' release, abject poverty, anxiety, depression and trauma. The study offered recommendations to address problems of kidnapping in the study area. Among them is the need for the federal government in collaboration with the Zamfara state government, to review the current strategy of dealing with the issue of kidnapping in Zurmi, Zamfara state especially and Nigeria generally. In particular, there is the need to explore the extant laws and the extent to which they are being enforced with a view to establishing their efficacy.

This article concludes that the people of Zurmi local are faced with devastating consequences of kidnapping which include abject poverty, starvation, stigmatization, economic hardship, anxiety, depression and emotional trauma were the consequences of kidnapping. Other consequences include chronic diseases like hypertension, HIV/AID, which led to unplanned relocation, high rate of suicide, fear and lack of trust within the community as well as post-traumatic stress syndrome due to kidnapping issue. More so, the consequences have affected the community members which lead to forceful closure of businesses. It induces and creates a palpable ambience of fear and despairs for the community and stultifies economic growth and sustainable development.

Policy Recommendations

Considering the data and the findings, the following recommendations are hereby proffered:

1. The federal government should also try to create jobs and job opportunities as well as enabling environment so that

private sector can employ the youth, especially the young generation.

2. There should be the proper protection of the identities of the public members that supply useful information to security agencies particularly on kidnapping.

3. Any body found committing or conniving with kidnappers should be dealt with no matter how wealthy, politically or religiously exposed the person may be.

4. In order to reduce the vices of kidnapping in Nigeria, politicians should not use their money and influence to conscript youths as a political ruffian during campaign.

5. The military, security agencies and community members, having realized that they need each other more than they can both imagine, need to take some pro-active measures towards enhancing the relationships among security agencies.

6. There is the need to have a constant forum with opinion leaders (traditional rulers, religious and political leaders, journalists and NGOs, among others) to discuss some issues that could help in strengthening the relationship between civil populace and the security.

7. There is the need to review the current strategy of dealing with the issue of kidnapping in Nigeria. In particular, there is the need to explore the extant laws and the extent to which they are being enforced with a view to establishing their efficacy.

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