

Investigative Resources on Crime Rate in Nigeria

Dr. Nwinadum Gbenenee

College of General and Communication Studies
Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike
P.M.B. 7267, Umuahia, Abia State Nigeria.
Email: gnwinadum@gmail.com

Abstract

The modern world is everything but a safe place. This sad but indisputable fact has been proven to be true by several researches. Crime rate is souring in this part of the continent and there exists many determinants to this anti-societal behavior amongst the people. In this assignment) those variables that are crime prone in Nigeria were determined using an Investigative Resource Approach (IRA); a Technique that is used to reduce the dimensionality of a large number of interrelated crime variables while retaining as much of the information as possible. Data were collected on three crime and safety report from the data bank-of Bureau of Diplomatic Security (BDS) USA. The highest and most committed crime in the country are Armed Robbery) Money laundering and Kidnapping.

Keywords: Investigation, Resources, Crime Rate, Security, Kidnapping.

Introduction

Nigeria, a land where people see bad behavior, as means of making huge money. Kidnapping is one of the major problems being experienced in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Kidnapping in Nigeria has many causes, effects, and possible solutions through which it can be resolved. In this piece of write-up, to be dealt with is critically on the kidnapping problem in Nigeria backed up with proper research work. In addition, this topic to be discussed can be included in project work of students which relates to the topic.

Before writing further on this topic, let's define kidnapping. What is kidnapping? Kidnapping according Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary is abducting and holding anybody captive, typically to obtain ransom. Though the definition given by the dictionary is to obtain ransom, some modern day kidnapping have gone beyond that. Some people kidnap, these days for the achievement of their evil motives like rituals. In this kind of kidnapping the kidnapers are not ready to accept any material or monetary gain from anybody.

Kidnapping refers to crime of seizing, confining, abducting, or carrying away a person by force or fraud, often to subject him or her to involuntary servitude in an attempt to demand a ransom. Most countries consider it a grave offence punishable by a long prison sentence or death. Kidnapping is the illegal abuse and financial exploitation of the victims of kidnapping. Kidnapping for the purpose of extortion has become a tactic of political revolutionaries or terrorists seeking concession is from a government.

Kidnapping is a trade that is difficult for the operators to quit. This trade is like child trafficking. It is a multimillion criminal industry in the world especially in Nigeria. This criminal business is

the fourth most lucrative commerce in Nigeria after oil bunkering, prostitution and child trafficking. This assignment, therefore, examines the dual domains: causes and remedies of kidnapping in Nigeria.

Kidnapping is all over Nigeria. It is a national problem that has eaten so deep into the tissues of the nation. It is a problem that must be tackled nationally. Kidnapping is growing daily in Nigeria. This criminal commerce paints an ugly picture of the already battered image of Nigeria. This kidnapping racket has become incurable disease. Kidnapping has become a life threatening ailment. For instance there is no month in Nigeria when we do not read on the pages of newspapers about cases of kidnapping. Kidnapping has become the bane of our nation. It is evident that Nigeria society has lost hope of tomorrow. The kidnapping of young and old people in Nigeria, are bane of our lives today. Nigerians who are involved in this ugly business find it difficult to quit. Kidnappers see it as a business that can never be abolished by any government in Nigeria. This is because the government of Nigeria is yet to take a bold step to find a lasting panacea to this barbaric act. Once the government comes with a stiff action against the kidnappers, the idea of seeing the trade as a type coated with much profit would be a forgotten trade.

The kidnapping of all manner of persons has gained ascendancy in Nigeria. A malady previously unknown to the people has rapidly become domesticated. In the last ten years, the volatile oil rich regions of the Niger Delta witnessed this phenomenon on a large scale with the target being mostly expatriates and Nigerians in the oil business. It has spread throughout the country extending to places as far as Kano and Kaduna in the far Northern part of Nigeria. South-East and South-South Nigeria have become known as the kidnappers' playgrounds of Nigeria.

Kidnapping seems easier compared to other forms of serious crimes. According to Davidson (2010), a group of criminals armed with guns and cell phones apprehend unsuspecting victims and drag their victim into a secluded spot and begin to make phone calls to whomever and demand for a ransom. The police with a mandate to provide security for the people are often unprepared for the task at hand. They think their job is done if they manage to secure the kidnapped, but of the kidnappers nothing much is ever heard. As we all know, the police are poorly trained and poorly equipped, but beyond these inadequacies there are worrying signs that their loyalty is suspected. Some whistle blowers have come to grief for confiding in them. The primary role of government is the provision of security for its own people. In Nigeria this role has been largely ignored. The Nigerian state no longer provides security for the Nigerian people. Nigerians have compulsorily become religious as whole families barricade themselves at night in prison-high walls and pray for God's protection. But kidnapping as a variant of armed robbery is infinitely more disturbing as it often occurs in the open among persons going about their normal business.

The widening scale of insecurity in Nigeria is a cause for concern as all are affected by it. Churches, mosques, markets, schools, homes and the highway, all are susceptible to this menace. The abductees and their families are traumatized by the ordeal of kidnapping. Foreign investors are scared away from Nigeria. Nigerians are paying the price of poor governance and failures of leadership. Davidson (2010) points out that the general state of insecurity in some parts of the country has no doubt reached a stage where virtually everybody is now worried the direction the region is going. Presently, hardly can people sleep because of the fear of being robbed or

kidnapped. Businessmen have taken flight with their businesses for fear of being kidnapped or robbed. Let us now take a look at the history of kidnapping in Nigeria.

A Concise Review of the History of Kidnapping in Nigeria

Kidnapping in Nigeria started in this new millennium. Kidnappings in Nigeria began rising in 2006 when militants in the Niger-Delta started kidnapping expatriates for ransom (Internet: Naijafeed). Another source has it that; it all started on September 16th 2005, when a group named Ijaw Youth Council (IYC) threatens to attack British nationals and facilities in the Nigeria-Delta if the British police failed to release a former governor who was arrested in London for money laundering offences. However, the federal government dismissed the threat and couples of days after, Nigerian military troops were deployed to the region.

On September 20th 2005, a leader of another group named Alhaji Asari Dokubo, leader of the Niger-Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF) was arrested by the Nigerian government in connection with the rising tension in the Niger-Delta. On January 11th 2007, what appeared to be the first reported case of abduction of expatriates took place when four foreign oil workers working on the AE fields of Shell Petroleum were kidnapped by militants in Port Harcourt. This resulted in a further cut-back of 120,000 barrels per day in crude oil production.

The most memorable kidnapping incidence in Nigeria is the one carried out by the religious insurgency group called Boko Haram. This group of persons have been causing great problem in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. On the night of 14:-15 April 2014, 276 (Fox News 2014) female students were kidnapped from the Government Secondary School in the town of Chibok in Borno State, Nigeria. Some other sources said the number of the female students is 219. Responsibility for the kidnappings was claimed by Boko Haram, an Islamic Jihadist and terrorist organization based in northeast Nigeria (Wikipedia 2015). Many countries of the world have aired their views and concern on the kidnapped girls including United States, Canada, United Kingdom, France, China and many others. The wife of the American President, Michelle Obama, showed her concern in the kidnapped girls through the campaign titled "Bring Back our Girls".

There have been reports on the rich and famous men and women in Nigeria whom have been abducted by kidnapers in the country. Documentations by various companies have shown that Pete Adochie a popular Nigerian Nollywood actor was once kidnapped by these hoodlums. Pete Adochie was abducted by kidnapers at Afor-Nkpor in the Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State (Nigeria Films.com 2009) on August 16, 2009. Kenneth, who was the first runner-up of Mr. Nigeria 2010 and Nollywood actor, was reportedly kidnapped on December 18th, 2012 in Owerri, Imo state according to the report from Nigeria Films. The kidnapers demanded 100 Million Nigerian naira before the release of the man. In fact, members of the Nollywood industry In Nigeria have really experienced serious challenges from kidnapers. Nkiru Syvalnus is another actress industry who was also kidnapped in Imo States and the kidnapers demanded the same amount (100 Million naira) from the family of the woman.

Causes of Kidnapping in Nigeria

A person who is new in Nigeria or visiting this article for the first time from foreign country will ask "what causes kidnapping in Nigeria"? Causes of kidnapping in Nigeria have made many headlines of news publication companies in the country because of the nature of the incidence. In

many schools in the country, this is included as part of the academic syllabus of primary, secondary and even tertiary institution students.

In a nutshell, causes of kidnapping in the Federal Republic of Nigeria are:

- ✓ Unemployment;
- ✓ Poverty;
- ✓ Corruptions;
- ✓ Grievances; and
- ✓ High quest for money.

Unemployment

Joblessness or unemployment is one of the root causes of kidnapping in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Nigeria has very high unemployment rate. A news publication company, Vanguard online news, reported on May 19, 2014, that an estimate of 60 million Nigerians are unemployed.

Unemployment in the country is one the major reasons why many Nigerian youths picked kidnapping as avenue to generate money which they will use to establish themselves in the society. It is one of the major challenges in Nigeria and the rate keeps increasing every day. Unemployment is a global problem but Nigeria is one of the countries that has it in high rating.

Politicians

The rapid increase in kidnappings in Nigeria is said to have been caused by politicians using militants for their own political programmes. Politician in Nigeria who have failed in elections, have no other options than to look for every means to spark-off trouble for those in office or government. They go as much as grooming youths for kidnappings. The politicians are sponsors of many cases of kidnappings in Nigeria today. Again, politicians who are not politically inclined also seek avenue to thwart the efforts of their opponents in any way. This method is a strategy to disorganize the polity of their political opponents.

Lack of Stiffer Punishment by Government

The lack of stiffer penalty on the kidnappers IS one of the many reasons why this ugly practice still thrives in Nigeria. The kidnappers see this criminal business as a huge profit making venture and therefore find it difficult to quit. This business is like child trafficking. If the government imposes a strict penalty on those caught for kidnapping, this trade will die completely. In the words of Dodo, and Ohwonohwo (2008:64), "this is because there is little risk of prosecution for traffickers hence, the trade thrives on."

Poverty

Poverty is another factor that has been pushing many Nigerians into kidnapping business. A poor man needs money to keep life going and because of that can easily be convinced to venture into the field of kidnapping to make money and live above poverty line. A poor man is a hungry man and he needs resources to reduce and say no to his poverty challenge.

One reports has it that there are rich people who have been into the business of kidnapping in the Eastern part of Nigeria where kidnapping is everyday occurrence. The rich men who are into the

business recruit the poor and made them get involved into the dirty business. When the relations of any who are held captive pay ransom, these poor men are given their own cut.

Corruptions

Corruption is another driver of kidnapping in Nigeria. In the year 2014, Nigeria ranked 136 out of 174 on the list of the surveyed nations alongside with Cameroon, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, and Russia. That is to say that Nigeria was the 38th most corrupt country in the world in 2014 according to Transparency international ranking.

The members of the political class in Nigeria are known for high embezzlement of the public fund for their individual or personal use. Because of the level of embezzlement being carried out by this class, some of the youths in' the country are being compelled to kidnap members of the class to get some money from them through paying of ransom. You can go through the topic on corruption in Nigeria to know more on the level of this menace in the country.

Another phase is that because corruption is high in the country, men see kidnapping in the country as a game and nothing bad. This concept adds to the increasing number of kidnapping in the country.

Grievances

Some men do not feel happy when they see others progressing in life. This is a major problem among the Igbo tribe of the country, Nigeria. Some men who are not doing well financially sometimes ask themselves questions on why the other person should progress more than them. When this category of people feels very bad on the progress of the other, the next is to make plans on how to bring down the other. This sometimes led to kidnapping of the innocent man who does not know that the other is planning badly for him. The kidnapped in this kind of situation sometimes die in the hands of the kidnapers.

High quest for Money

There are many Nigerians who need money either by hook or by crook. This kind of persons can even kill for rituals to make money as quick as possible. They prefer to get this money today and die tomorrow. These kinds of persons have prosperity as their watchword. Whenever you engage in discussion with them, what you will be hearing from them is usually how to make quick money even through bloodshed. High quest for money has made many impatient Nigerian youths take kidnapping as "clean business". On daily basis, what they have as their action plans is on the next, person they are to kidnap for them to be paid ransom before the release of the victim.

The Effects of kidnapping in Nigeria

It is not all about advancing in what is bad but where problem comes in on the consequences. So many people have missed opportunities in Nigeria because of the problem of kidnapping in the country. Kidnapping in Nigeria has paid many citizens of the country very badly. Among the effects of kidnapping in Nigeria are:

- ✓ Poor investment by foreign companies;
- ✓ Lack of trust; and
- ✓ Fear

Poor Investment by Foreign Companies

The problem of kidnapping in Nigeria has scare away many companies that would have invested in the country. During the kidnapping incidence that took place in the Niger Delta areas of the country, many foreigners who were working in those areas were kidnapped. Some who were not victim of kidnapping refused to work because of the experience their fellow had.

When foreign companies that want to invest in Nigeria hear of the problem of kidnapping in the country, they prefer to invest in other countries that are risk free instead of spending a lot of money as they are likely to receive ugly visit from kidnappers in the country. These are companies that would have help solve the national challenges, especially unemployment, because these companies will employ Nigerians if when established in the country. But because of unemployment in the country, the country misses such opportunity.

Lack of trust

Nigerians are now losing trust in their fellow humans because of the effect of kidnapping in the country. Before kidnapping became rampant in the country, the rich give out their phone numbers to people with clean mind because they believe they are one. Today in Nigeria, the rich find it difficult to do the same. The reason is because the person you want to issue your phone number may be a kidnapper without your knowledge or linked to any of them. It is a big problem in the country today.

In business, businessmen and women do not open up to people again because the person you want to open up to might be a spy being sent by group of kidnappers to come close and know the worth of your business to estimate the amount of ransom they will demand from you when kidnapped. Men who are seeking for information from their good hearts are not given authentic feedback because of lack of trust in the society.

Fear

What is fear? Fear according to Oxford English dictionary is an unpleasant emotion caused by the threat of danger, pain, or harm. Do we call the kidnapping in Federal Republic of Nigeria a threat or pain? Kidnapping in Nigeria is a serious societal threat. The threat has made many Nigerian rich men to hide when they move on the road. Some of them have decided not to move around in the day because of kidnappers.' Some that are not yet wealthy enough are making plans on how to employ policemen to guard them whenever they move around. Notwithstanding the fact that some rich and politicians are being guarded by security men, many of' them still have fear in themselves.

Solutions to Kidnapping in Nigeria

This subheading would have been better titled "possible solutions to kidnapping in Nigeria". In this subheading, we will be dealing on the possible ways through which kidnapping in Nigeria can be reduced. Among the possible solutions are:

- ✓ Amendment of state and federal Law;
- ✓ Employment generation; and
- ✓ Proper sensitization to the masses.

The Law of every country is there to guide the people on what right to do and the wrong to abstain from. On the other hand, Law can be amended when a new challenge comes up in any

country or state. The amendment of the part of Law that will strictly address kidnapping in Nigeria will compel the kidnappers to stop such dirty business they have been into for years.

A notable example is the amended by the Anambra State House of Assembly. Because every town in the state were being disturbed by kidnappers when the bad practice started newly, the members of the State House made a strict Law to address the social threat in the state. Part of the Law concerning it is that the property and belongings of anyone found as kidnapper in the state will be destroyed (example buildings). Since the introduction of this Law, many buildings being owned by any detected to be a kidnapper in the state has been destroyed.

Employment Generation

This should not be left for the government alone. All of us need to work together to close the gap between the rich and the poor in the country. If you are a rich man, employ your neighbour since you can help him out of that his unemployment state. When you do not employ him, he may be compelled to plan evil because that which you know you can do to help him you failed to.

On the other hand, political rulers should say no to embezzlement and map out plans on how to make the citizens secure employment. When the youths are busy with the work they do and get paid in return, the challenge of kidnapping in the country will be reduced.

Proper Sensitization to the Masses

This is another bold step that the government of Nigeria needs to take to reduce kidnapping in the country. The masses should be sensitized on the punishment that awaits any who is caught through kidnapping. The citizens should be taught on the bad sides on kidnapping in the country through radio, televisions, community gathering and other channels. There is power in the spoken words and it is believed that a kidnapper can be changed through this channel.

Conclusion

This vividly captured the point raised by an analyst in "Public Relations for Maximum Productivity" that "no matter the level of international diplomacy and brinkmanship we employ, if we do not work conscientiously to rid our country of negative tendencies that abound here and show our determination to build a new foundation for collective development and progress, Nigerians will be wasting their time and money because the international community will not take us seriously." Genuine investors now shy away from venturing into the Nigerian business environment that is already enmeshed in dearth of infrastructure, epileptic power supply, high cost of finance and unfavourable political climate. It started in the Niger Delta Region with the toga of kidnapping to drive home militants agitation for the development of the region. Today, it is assumed a business status for unscrupulous .criminals who kidnap for ransom. This has remained one of the greatest drawbacks to investment In Nigeria.

Today, social vices in the form of armed robbery, murder, assassination and lately kidnapping' have assumed a frightening proportion thus giving vent to full realization of productivity. Though investors had always found the Nigerian business environment suffocating, kidnapping capped it all and made investing in the country both discouraging and unattractive.

Recommendations

Government should Partner with Labour Market Institution

It is high time the government revisited some institutions that facilitate information between the potential employee and the employer. In the good old days, there were job centres in ministry of Labour, and other private consulting organizations that helped to bring the suppliers and demanders of labour together. Since labour market is an abstract concept, although jobs may be in existence and the suppliers of labour resources are not aware of the existence of such vacancies.

Applying Appropriate Sanction on the Culprit

Curbing this social malaise is a collective effort, while we advocate that the culprits should be apprehended and punished as appropriate, more importantly public officers should shun corruption and ostentatious display of wealth. Focus should be centered on good governance with accountability, transparency and fair play. With these variables in place, kidnapping will become less attractive and in turn stimulate more sense of compassion patriotism, sustainable development and nation building.

Fair Distribution of Resources

The government should ensure that the resources of the country are harnessed and they should also promote national prosperity. This government has a responsibility, without being told, to ensure that every Nigerian is secured. The government must ensure that every Nigerian is gainfully employed and that social infrastructure is provided for the people of the country.

Diversifying the Economy to create employment

Solution to the problem of youth unemployment must therefore be found in the diversification of the economy from oil to agriculture and agro-allied industries. If employment must be generated, the curriculum in both secondary and tertiary institutions must be reviewed in line with the demands of economic diversification.

Equipping the Youth with Appropriate skill and training for Entrepreneurship

The government should revamp NDE programme, this will assist in providing training for young people who were out of school and out of work, but caution that the training had to provide the young people with marketable skills. Inadequate and faulty educational system in Nigeria is really a source of concern, there is a disturbing and growing mismatch between the skills of those looking for work and the skills employers seek to hire. If left unchecked, this lead to a situation of a "lost generation," where those with the necessary skills do very well while those without the desired skills will struggle economically for the remainder of their lives. We may be seeing a shift in the labour force widening the gap here between haves and have-nots. As long as this situation is unchecked, it will be difficult contending with restiveness, crimes, kidnapping and other negative tendencies associated with our young people.

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