Kidnapping and Socio-Economic Development in Rivers State between 2009-2019

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Abstract

Socio-economic processes and developmental aspirations of a country or region are usually challenged by a myriad of criminal and conflict-ridden activities, especially in 3rd world countries of Africa and particularly in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria. This paper examines kidnapping and socio-economic development of Rivers State, between 2009-2019. The paper adopted the structural-choice theory as its theoretical foundation. The design of the paper is based on the survey research design; as such data was generated quantitatively via the use of a 4 point likert scale questionnaire administered on 400 respondents which represented the sample size of the study. The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamene formula. Additional data which supplemented those generated via the questionnaire was gotten through interviews and other textual materials. The study was guide by a single hypothesis which was tested using a chi-square(x^2) at a critical value of 5% (0.05) level of significance while data was analyzed using the simple percentage statistical method. The paper revealed that there is a strong relationship between kidnapping and socio-economic development in Rivers State between, 2009-2019. Accordingly, the paper recommends amongst others; government should put mechanisms in place that will engage the youths in compulsory education and skills acquisition while social infrastructural facilities be maintained to improve human capital index and also assist in wealth creation.

Keywords: *Kidnapping, Victimization, Socio-economic, Development, Crimes, Conflict.*

Introduction

The process leading to socio-economic development of the country is challenged by a myriad of criminal and conflict-ridden activities. One of such problems bedeviling the socio-economic development of the country is the issues of kidnapping and hostage taking. Kidnapping and hostage taking in Nigeria has turned into a social problem which is affecting virtually every member of the Nigerian society in one way or the other. According to Uzorma and Nwanego (2014), kidnapping and hostage taking is among the terrorizing crimes in Nigeria. Practically, the duo entails abduction. Thus, it occurs when a person is abducted and taken from one place to another against their will, or a situation in which a person is confined to a controlled space without the confinement being from a legal authority.

Consequently, when the transportation or confinement of the person is done for an unlawful purpose, such as for ransom or for the purpose of committing another crime, the act becomes criminal (Uzorma&Nwanegbo, 2014).

According to Dodo (2010), 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. It 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 the Nigerian 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.

Unarguably, the cardinal security puzzle that seems to be quaking the Nigerian nation is the series of foreign oil and construction workers as well as the series of attacks on the oil facilities by militants in the Niger–Delta region of Nigeria. Since the beginning of this criminal act, kidnapping, Nigeria has recorded huge losses in crude oil. This has made many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to spring up in Nigeria. One of such is 'Erukaye Hope', a non-governmental organization based in Delta State. Many have and are still making effort to obstruct this criminal business (Dodo, 2010).

The awareness of the crime of kidnapping was created in the minds of many individuals after having full knowledge of figures financial gains accrue to oil and gas industries with the connivance of government to deprive the local people full access to tap from the abundance of wealth within their localities. Figures from NDDC (2006) shows that oil production accounts for about 90% of foreign exchange earnings and about 80% of government internal revenue.The overall contribution of the oil sector to the National economy grew from an insignificant 0.1% in 1950 to 87% in 1976 (Achi 2003). Between 2000 and 2004, oil accounted for about 79.5% of the total government revenues and about 97% of foreign exchange earnings (UNDP, 2006).

Given the above, the locals believed that the oil wealth would have transcended to improvement in infrastructure, especially major access to basic amenities, such as potable water, steady electricity supply, functional healthcare facilities, good roads, good schools and employment opportunities but to their chagrin, the reverse has been the case. But suffice is to state here that after overs 60 year of operation, all of these dreams seem to be a mirage. This led to agitations by the Niger-Delta youth on the government to come to their rescue culminated to the formation of Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta MEND which is a pressure group peopled by freedom fighters.

These crimes in kidnapping activities bear direct impact on the socio-economic development of Rivers State. The period from 2009 to 2019 witnessed a sudden rise in their activities and this has put a disruption to the nation's exports. Pipelines were vandalized and oil workers kidnapped, maimed, or killed. To these effects, expatriate are leaving the state in their numbers.Investors are scared to come into Rivers State to invest. To this end, the socio-economic life of Rivers people is hampered. It is on record that Rivers State is reported as being one of the states with the highest level of kidnapping in the country. In 2015, there were about 294 reported cases. Hostages are usually released unharmed after ransom payment since the middle 2000s, The House of Assembly has enacted strict sentencing laws to prevent and reduce criminal occurrences, including tackling the root causes of crime in the entire state. This has yielded no fruits as kidnapping is on the increase in the State.

It is worthy to note that the state has various ethnic groups such as Abua, Andoni, Ekpeya, Engenni, Etche, Ikwerre, Ibani, Kalabari, Ndoni, Ogba, Ogoni, Okrika and about 24 dialect groups as languages.

The issue of kidnapping has become ubiquitous and extremely rampant in the Niger Delta region in particular and Nigeria at large. This endemic challenge, caused by socio-economic condition associated to the oil-led development has the youths as the major protagonists. The situation has become so grave that virtually most persons in our society is grossly affected and has grossly undermined the security, and socioeconomic situation of the country.

This paper is discoursed in five interrelated parts. The first part is the introduction which is just concluded. The second part covers the theoretical foundations and a brief review of relevant concepts of the paper. The third part mentions the method adopted in generating data and analyzing same. The fourth part covers the presentation and analysis of data. While the fifth part outlines conclusion and recommendations.

Theoretical Foundations
Structural-Choice: theory by Cohen, Kluegel and Land (1981) gained popularity in the fields of social sciences and has been constantly used to analyse social phenomena. Theory was used in the *"Analysis of Social Character, Behaviour and Socio-economic Activities"* by Miethe and Meier in 1993. Their perspectives collectively highlight certain important conditions that drive kidnapping as follows:
  i.   Physical proximity of victims to motivated offenders,
  ii.   Exposure of victims to a high-risk environment,
  iii. Attractiveness of suitable targets, and
  iv.   The absence of capable guardianship.
It is noteworthy to observe that these factors-economic, political, psychological, or religion amongst others, are fundamental conditions for kidnapping, as proposed by this model.
Proponents of this model according to Gongs, Famave, Maxwell &Annagu (2021) emphasize macro dynamic and micro level attributes for kidnapping of suitable targets. In this regard, Macro dynamic attributes involves: physical proximity and the exposure of suitable targets. This informs the pattern of social interaction that pre-dispose individuals to circumstances that result to their kidnapped. Micro level attributes involves the processes that determine the selection of particular targets; as identified by this theory micro level processes include: attractiveness of

targets and lack of capable guardianship. This reflects the processes and the socio-spatial context, within which kidnapping of suitable targets occurs. They argue that every kidnap situation underplays both macro dynamic and micro level processes that bring about suitable target selection, as well as the socio-spatial context within which a successful perpetration of kidnapping.

Contributors to this modelconceptualized the opportunity of predatory victimization, which considers the time-space relationship in which victimization is greatest. According to them; "the risk of criminal victimization is seen as largely dependent on the lifestyle and routine activities of persons that bring them and their property into direct contact with potential offenders in the absence of capable guardians, who could potentially prevent the occurrence of a crime … in our judgement, the key to understanding why wealth, race, religion, class, sex and age appear to affect the likelihood of victimization in the ways they do is to focus on the mediating role played by the five attributive conditions earlier identified-exposure, guardianship, proximity to potential offenders, attractiveness of potential targets, and definition properties or victims" (Alemika, 2013, pp. 9 – 10).

In this regard, the model observes that, exposure, physical proximity, and capable guardianship all have significant spatial effects on the likelihood of being kidnapped. Finally, Miethe and Meier (1993) argue that capable guardianship as a concept has social (interpersonal) and physical dimensions. To them, social guardianship or social security includes neighbourhoods where people pay closer attention on each other's interest. They observe that availability of well-equipped law enforcement officers, vigilante among others could prevent kidnapping. Physical guardianship to them involves target hardening structures such as: Iron doors, gates, window locks, burglary-proofs, street lighting, alarm-traps, tracking devices and participation in physical (martial) arts, would boost the significance of capable guardianship, as it would require greater efforts, and greater risks of detection and apprehension and a contingent decrease in the opportunity for victimisation (Alemika, 2013).

From the foregoing, kidnapping is a crime of opportunity of predatory victimisation, in which victims are not accidentally marked as targets. This suggests that, kidnapping is not a haphazard predation of random individuals. It is premeditated victimisation that involves intelligence and calculable approaches to acquiring suitable targets without being foiled. Thus, kidnapping in whatever form is situated within a criminal opportunity structure aimed at yielding desired intention for a motivated abductors and their accessories.

A close look at the theory revealed that before kidnap targets are acquired, there must be physical proximity of suitable and attractive targets, and motivated kidnapper or sponsors. Attractive victims must be exposed via routine activities, such as going to school, church, cinema, or visiting relatives at particular periods. And there must be lack of capable security around targets. This forms the socio-spatial context where kidnapping of attractive victims is possible. This model views kidnapping as crime of opportunity, as such, victims serve as a means to an end, as envisaged by ransom, political, religious among other forms of kidnappings.In Rivers State, the assumption is that a person's thinking processes and attitudes are constructed by the interactive situations and behavior which occurs in an area where social institutions, norms and values are no longer functioning. It presents an absence of normative

constraint, a state of "anything goes" and hence crime such as kidnapping flourishes. On the other hand, order exists when there is a high degree of internal binding of individuals and institutions in a conventional society. This cohesion consists largely of agreement about goals that are worth striving for and how to behave and how not to behave (Oriola, 2004). The implication of the theory for the study is that delinquent or criminal behaviour like kidnapping thrives well in a disorganized society. The theory posits that certain environment or geographical area especially towns or cities are prone to criminal behaviour including kidnapping. This is as a result of many years of neglect by oil companies causing degradation with their official collaborators to cause poverty on the people and leave their environment unclean thereby destroying the livelihood of the people because of the economic and social potentials of the area. Social change induced by government, industrialization and urbanization, have precipitated kidnapping in Rivers State.

Conceptual Review
Kidnapping
Kidnapping is being defined by various scholars in varying degrees. Inyang and Abraham (2013) defined kidnapping as "the forceful ictus, and lawless detention of a person against his/her will. It is a common law offence and the key part is that it is unwanted act on the part of the victim". Uzorma and Nwanegbo-Ben (2014), on their own part defined kidnapping as:

> the act of seizing and detaining or carrying away a person by unlawful force or by fraud, and often with a demand for ransom. They say that kidnapping has to do with taking a person from their family forcefully without their consent with the motive of holding the person as a hostage and making money from their family (p.132).

Another definition is offered by Fage and Alabi (2017) who sees kidnapping as "forceful or fraudulent abduction of an individual or a group of individuals for reasons ranging from economic, political, and religious to [struggle for] self-determination". Dodo (2010) and African research review (2017) opined that kidnapping is a serious crime and has potential for transforming into other felonious offenses, such as physical violence, financial victimization, and murder.

The Merriam Webster dictionary defines it as "an act or instance or the crime of seizing, confining, inveigling, abducting, or carrying away a person by force or fraud often with a demand for ransom or in furtherance of another crime". Guerrette and Headley (2019) in their own definition said kidnappings refer to the taking or abduction of an individual against his or her will, usually followed by some duration of captivity. Kidnapping could be accompanied by bodily injury which elevates the crime to "aggravated kidnapping."

Abraham (2013), Asuquo (2009) and Walsh and Adrian (1983)noted that the term "kidnapping" is difficult to define with precision, because it varies from State to State and jurisdiction to jurisdiction. It is the forcible seizure, taking away and unlawful detention of a person against his/her will. It is a common law offence and the key part is that, it is unwanted act on the part of the victim. It is a restriction of someone else liberty which violates the provision of freedom of

movement as enshrined in the constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria, where every other law takes its cue from. Siegel (1986) in his part sees it as a serious offence.

Furthermore, they cited the view of Townsend (2008), who saw kidnapping as a crime of seizing, confirming abducting or carrying away of persons by force or fraud often subject him or her to involuntary servitude in an attempt to demand a ransom or in furtherance of another crime. In criminal law, kidnapping is defined as taking away of a person by force, threat or deceit with intent to cause him/her to be detained against his or her will (Asuquo, 2009; Nwaorah, 2009; Ogabido, 2009 and the Chambers 21st Century Dictionary, 1996 and). Whereas viewed kidnapping as an act of an angry man who wants to take any person of value hostage, and who could be rescued by loved ones. In most cases, victims are often released after payment of ransom.

Dode (2007) saw kidnapping as a process of forcefully abducting a person or group of persons perceived to be the reasons behind the injustice suffered by another group. It is indeed a robbery of great magnitude(Thomas and Nta. 2009). The profitability has encouraged those that indulged in it to carry on with the act although there is a law prohibiting it. In the "Simplification of Criminal Law: Kidnapping, amazonaws.com (2015) says Kidnapping is defined at common law as "the taking or carrying away of one person by another, by force or fraud, without the consent of the person taken or carried away and without lawful excuse. It must involve an attack on or loss of that person's liberty. Explaining further it says, "Taking or carrying away" includes any means of causing one person to accompany another from one place to another. On one view, it conceives kidnapping as false imprisonment in motion, though the relationship between the two offences which it says is not altogether clear.

Analyzing this definition, it writes that the problems in definition and application of the offence of kidnapping, as defined, include the following. (1) The offence is over-inclusive in some respects. It is defined in extremely wide terms with the potential to criminalize very trivial conduct. For example, read literally, it would apply to a case in which D (the alleged kidnapper) tricked V (the victim) into accompanying him on a journey by some trivial deception and in which V was returned safely to their starting point. Comparatively, it says that to a large extent it overlaps with other offences, such as false imprisonment and child abduction. It concludes that the problems of over-inclusiveness and overlap are only avoided by prosecutorial discretion. From the foregoing, It could be deduced that the definition of kidnapping has various undertones, but it remains crystal clear that for an act to be deemed as kidnapping, it must involve coercive movement of a victim from one place to another, detention or seizure of that person be it a child or an adult. This accounts for why Inyang and Abraham (2013) sees the legal aspect of kidnapping as a restriction of someone else's liberty which violates the provision of freedom of movement as enshrined in the constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria, where every other law takes its cue from.

Mousavi (2015) in his article "Reviews on the elements of the crime of kidnapping and its difference with concealment sees kidnapping as a major crime against individuals and their freedom. He says in the course of kidnapping, individuals is molested, deprive of their freedom in most cases, will enter bodily harm (assault and murder) and damage to honor (honor, dignity and rape)as kidnapping is associated with some kind of force and coercion or deception

motivated by abuse. Speaking succinctly, kidnapping is usually motivated by financial gain or political demand. Thus, opportunist or traditional criminals as well as political dissidents can resort to kidnapping in order to illegally obtain economic gains or have their demands granted.

In as much as there are different reasons for kidnappings, certain unmistakeable features are observed to cut across all kidnappings. According to The Economist in Ezemenaka(2018), these features include, but not limited to:

i. Coercion and threat to inflict bodily harm and maiming, sometimes murder.
ii. Relocation of victims to some unknown location (hide outs or secret bush camps), for thorough isolation where unsuspecting or accidental disclosure is not very easy; preferably deep forests or a completely isolated property in remote locality.
iii. Victims are strip-out, restrained and restricted from access to basic social liberties, such as: accessing or participating in communicative activities.
iv. Physical and mental torture. This causes traumatic depression, anxiety, fear and most times post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD), which may last a lifetime. Ezemenaka (2018) observes that in a society where the incidence of kidnapping is high, fear limits public activities. People always move with caution as they do not know who might be the next target. The wealthy and powerful mostly surround themselves with security guards because of their fright of being abducted.
v. Threat to the continued peaceful existence of abductee.

Socio-Economic Development
There are many definitions of the term 'socio-economic development' which can be viewed from the perspective of Gross National Income (GNI), physical structures and capital, as well as access to modern luxuries. The transformation of the society and the emergence of new social and economic organizations are critical indicators of development (Nwanegbo and Odigbo, 2013) in Olabanji and Ese. Socio-economic development is a product of development and can be defined as the process of social and economic transformation in a society. Socio-economic development embraces changes taking place in the social sphere mostly of an economic nature. Thus, socio-economic development is made up of processes caused by exogenous and endogenous factors which determine the course and direction of the development. Socio-economic development is measured with indicators, such as GDP, life expectancy, literacy and levels of employment. Changes in less-tangible factors are also considered, such as personal dignity, freedom of association, personal safety and freedom from fear of physical harm, and the extent of participation in civil society. Causes of socio-economic impacts are, for example, new technologies, changes in laws, changes in the physical environment and ecological changes (Idakwoji, 2003).

The scholar noted that in recent time, however, it was defined in relation to the quality of life of the population. Thus, United Nations Development Programme, (UNDP) observed that development should focus on human development, which UNDP argued that this should be soon from the perspective of how the social and economic growth is managed and wealth in the society distributed for the benefit of the majority of the people in the society. Central to this process of socio-economic and human development is the enlargement of people's choices, having long life through how planned development can affect human life (in terms of the quality of food, health care etc), have access to education and varied resources for a docent standard of

living. While progress in human development can be measured by the degree of political freedom, guaranteed human rights and personal self-respect. On the basis of the foregoing, UNDP has evolved Human "Development Index (HDI) which includes component variables such as standard of living (purchasing power based on real Gross Domestic Product) knowledge (level of adult literacy and more years of schooling, and life expectancy).

Stephen (2006) noted that in arriving at the definition of socio-economic development, it will be rational to consider not only factors affecting economic growth that is increase in GNP per capita, but other variables in the HDI must be taken into consideration. That is why Walter Rodney (1969) said that development is a many sided process, Rodney noted that at the level of individual, it implies increase skills and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, 'self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being.

In the same way, Tudaro in Idakwoji (2005) sees development as multidimensional process involving the re-organisation and re-orientation of the entire economic and social system. This involves in addition to improvementof income and output, radical changes in institutional, social and administrative structures as well as in popular attitudes, customs and beliefs. Thus, to Tudaro, development is both a physical process and a state of mind. It therefore follows that when we are talking about development, it also includes the need for restructuring of the mental make-up of the citizens of the society.

He stressed that true development must mean the development of man- the unfolding and realization of his creative potentials, enabling him to improve his material conditions and living through the use of resources available to him. It is a process by which man's personality is enhanced; and it is that enhanced personality creative, organized and disciplined, which is the moving force behind the socio-economic transformation of society. It is clear that development does not start with goods and things; it starts with people – their orientation, organization and discipline. When the accent on development is on things, all human resources remain latent untapped potential and a society can be poor amidst the most opulent material resources. On the contrary, when a society is properly orientated, organized and disciplined, it can be prosperous on the scantiest basis of natural wealth" (Okonkwo, 2008).

HericeKoinyamin Idakwoji (2003) observed that for development to qualify as true development it must meet the following conditions:

i. For development to qualify as true development, it must be all-round, well balanced, progressive and self-sustaining; that all individual aspects must be mutually reinforcing; that development has to be multi-sectoral, multi-disciplinary and multi-dimensional and all these aspects must be effectively integrated. That development is much more than provision of road, electricity, water, communication facilities, educational and health facilities, etc.

ii. However important all these may be, development must include the exploitation of all available resources for the maximum good: vast improvement in our self-reliance and self-assurance in our creativity and managerial ability, in our productivity' and production particularly of the goods and services needed by the majority to improve the-quality of their lives. That development must include vast and rapid quantitative and qualitative improvement in our individual and collective security and well-being, and vast and rapid

quantitative, and qualitative improvement in our socio-cultural and socio-political development. That development must' include the urgent installation of a progressively more democratic, egalitarian, civil and civilized society. For development to qualify as true development, it must have a solid foundation in the Nation's communities, etc."

Going by the above, socio-economic development can be rightly defined as that aspect of national development that is concerned with the social and economic advancement, where improvements in the wellbeing of people are generated through strong partnership between all sectors, corporate bodies and other groups in the society. It is the combination of social and economic development which includes the advancement or improvement in the standard of living and the increase in economic life and conditions of the people.

It deals with issues of production of food, good roads, stable electricity supply, access to potable water, health care facilities, education and skill acquisition, housing and shelter, access to communication and digital internet facilities, employment and job creation, security, etc. If the above description is in any way near what the real thing should be, it is obvious that there is no way true development can happen by sheer accident. True development through socio-economic facilities must have to be consciously and deliberately planned for and painstakingly nurtured into being and healthy growth.Socio-economic development policies give rooms for other forms of development programmes to actualize its goals for the benefit and well-being of the social system.

Method
This paperadopts the survey research design which allows for focus on a particular phenomenon and allows thoroughness on the part of the paper to collate information from large documents and analyze data from a sample or group in which their responses are used for the purpose of generalization.

Rivers State has a total population of7,034,973(2019NBS Population Projection). The state is made up of diverse people which include religious leaders, lawyers and its association, law enforcement agencies, and the general public who have some levels of experience and had witness some forms of kidnapping directly or indirectly.The elements of the population under study was given equal chances and opportunity to participate in the exercise for the purpose of making generalization. See distribution below:

Breakdown of distribution of questionnaires to participants
a.   Religious leaders   -   80 copies
b.   Lawyers within the state   -   80 copies
c.   Law enforcement agencies   -   80 copies
d.   Politicians within the state -   80 copies
e.   General public   -   80 copies
The simple random sampling method was adopted thereby giving the group equal chances to participate in the process. Due to inability to study the vast population of the state, the paper focused on representative of the religious leaders, lawyers, policemen, politicians and the general public. Thus, the population was divided into four groups for easy assessment.

The questionnaire, kidnapping and socio-economic development in Rivers State were administered and collated.

The Taro Yamane's formula was adopted to determine the sample size of a population of 7,034,973.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where: N is the population **(7,034,973)**
                 1 is constant
                 e is the sampling error
                 n is the sample size

Adopting substitution method

$$n = \frac{7,034,973}{1 + 5198716(0.05)^2} = \frac{7,034,973}{1 + 5198716 \times 0.0025} = \frac{7,034,973}{1 + 12996.79} = \frac{7,034,973}{12997.79} = 399.9$$

Sample size (n) = 400

The instruments for data collection include questionnaires, interviews and textual materials such as journal articles, published and unpublished books, etc. The internet was also regularly surfed to gather data that were relevant to the study. Closed or in another word multiple questions were included in the questionnaires. The study questionnaires were structured in 4 options Likert scale type of: strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, and disagree.

The used of tables is employed to analyse data. The responses from the respondents are arranged, grouped, tabulated and analysed using the simple percentage statistical method. By this method, it means that the degree of percentage score of one response to another or others will determine the acceptability or rejection of a particular statement or hypothesis. Chi square $(X^2)$was adopted for test of hypothesis.
Thus:

$$\frac{f}{N} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

Where;
           f   =   frequency of response
           N   =   number of respondents

Presentation of Data

Table 1: Methodological Analysis of Response Rate

Administration of Questionnaires	Frequency	Percentage
Number of questionnaires administered	400	100
Number of questionnaires not returned	95	24%
Number of questionnaires retrieved	305	76%
Number of questionnaires wrongly filled	55	14%
Number of questionnaires valid for the study	250	63%

Source: Field Work, 2021

The table above reveal that out of the 400 questionnaires administered to respondents, 95 making 24% of the questionnaires were not returned, 305 representing 76% were retrieved, 55 of the questionnaires making 14% were mishandled, roughed and wrongly filled while 250 were successfully completed and valid for proper analysis. The response rate is 63% which is good for the study.

Social and Demographic Background
Table 2: Social and Demographic Background of all Respondents

Variables	Categories	Frequency Distribution	Frequency Retrieved	Percentages (%)
Age bracket	18 - 35	200	102	41
	36 – 55	150	125	50
	56 - Above	50	23	9
	Total	**400**	**250**	**100**
Gender distribution	Male	250	140	56
	Female	150	110	44
	Total	**400**	**250**	**100**
Academic qualifications	FSLC	40	10	4
	SSCE/ND/NCE	90	60	24
	HND/BA/B.Sc/PGD	200	130	52
	MBA/MPA/M.Sc/Ph.D	70	50	20
	Total	**400**	**250**	**100**
Category of respondents	Religious leaders	80	50	20
	Lawyers	80	45	18
	Policemen	80	50	32
	Politicians	80	60	24
	General Public	80	45	18
	Total	**400**	**250**	**100**

Source: Field Work, 2021.

Table 2 above shows that 200 questionnaires were distributed, 102 were retrieved representing 41% are within the age bracket of 18-35 years; 150 were distributed with 125 validly filled and returned represents 50% fall within the age bracket of 36-55 years; while 50 questionnaires were administered with 23 retrieved indicating 9% fall in the age bracket of 56 years and above. The study has a productive number of respondents within the age brackets of 18-35 and 36-55 years

in terms of age and years of experience. This indicates that they are all adults who understand the issues under study with their responses highly considered.

Also, the table above shows that 250 questionnaires were distributed with 140 retrieved representing 56% were administered to male while 150 were administered with 110 returned representing 44% were female. This demographic statistics reveals that the staff of the respondents who attended to the questionnaires were mainly males. Notwithstanding, responses from both genders were analysed for a valid judgement.

The table also depicts that out of 40 questionnaires administered, 10 were duly filled with 4% of the respondents have FSLC; 90 questionnaires with 60 accurately filled representing 24% have SSCE/ND/NCE; 200 questionnaires which were administered only had 130 returned representing 52% of the respondents possess HND/BA/B.SC/PGD while 70 questionnaires had 50 respondents returned representing 20% are holders of MBA/MPA/M.SC/Ph.D. This shows that the respondents are dominated by different levels of graduates with various certificate holders. This suggests that the respondents have good knowledge about ethnicity and political instability in Nigeria.

The table also shows that religious leaders, lawyers, politicians, policemen and the general public were administered 80 questionnaires each with 50 retrieved representing 20%, 45 returned represents 18%, 50 validly filled represents 32%, 60 (24%) while 45 returned questionnaires represents 18% of the respondents respectively.

Data Analysis

Table 3: The relationship between kidnapping and socio-economic development in Rivers State between 2009-2019.

Questionnaires	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Total
Did kidnapping discourage education and skill acquisition in socio-economic development in Rivers State?	130 (52%)	70 (28%)	20 (8%)	30 (12%)	250 (100%)
Did kidnapping demotivate self-sufficiency in agricultural production in socio-economic development in Rivers State?	95 (38%)	85 (34%)	50 (20%)	20 (8%)	250 (100%)
Did kidnapping affect human development index in wealth creation in socio-economic development in Rivers State?	125 (50%)	55 (22%)	50 (20%)	20 (8%)	250 (100%)
Do you think that kidnapping result to abandonment of social infrastructural	80 (32%)	95 (38%)	50 (20%)	25 (10%)	250 (100%)

facilities in socio-economic development in Rivers State?				
Health care facilities were abandoned due to kidnapping in socio-economic development in Rivers State?	102 (41%)	101 (40%)	37 (15%)	10 (4%)	250 (100%)

Source: Field Work, 2021.

Table 3 shows the views of respondents on the relationship between kidnapping and socio-economic development in the Rivers State. In their view on whether kidnapping discourages education and skill acquisition in socio-economic development in Rivers State, the table shows that 130 respondents which represent 52% of the 250 respondents strongly agreed with 70 respondents representing 28%. However, 20 (8%) "Strongly disagreed" while 30 (12%) "disagreed" that kidnapping discourages education and skill acquisition in socio-economic development in the Rivers State. This infers that kidnapping discourages education and skill acquisition in socio-economic development in Rivers State.

The table also reveals that 95 (38%) and 85 (34%) respondents confirmed to "strongly agreed" and "agreed" that kidnapping demotivates self-sufficiency in agricultural production in socio-economic development in Rivers State. 50 respondents representing 20% strongly disagreed with 20 respondents which represents 8% disagreed with the claim that kidnapping demotivates self-sufficiency in agricultural production in socio-economic development in Rivers State. It indicates that kidnapping demotivate self-sufficiency in agricultural production in socio-economic development in Rivers State.

On whether kidnapping affect human development index in wealth creation in socio-economic development in Rivers State, 125 (50%) respondents strongly agreed, with 55 respondents representing 22% agreed that it affects human development index in wealth creation in socio-economic development in Rivers State. While 50 respondents represent 20% strongly disagreed with 20 respondents representing 8% disagreed. This implies that kidnapping affects human development index in wealth creation in socio-economic development in Rivers State.

The question of whether kidnapping result to abandonment of social infrastructural facilities in socio-economic development in Rivers State. The table above also displays 102 respondents representing 41% "strongly agreed" and 101 which represents 40% "agreed". 37 respondents which represent 15% strongly disagreed while 10 respondents with 4% disagreed that kidnapping result to abandonment of social infrastructural facilities in socio-economic development in Rivers State. The majority of the respondents strongly agreed that kidnapping result to abandonment of social infrastructural facilities in socio-economic development in Rivers State.

On whether Health care facilities were abandoned due to kidnapping in socio-economic development in Rivers State, the table above shows that 80 (32%) respondents strongly agreed and 95 (38%) agreed that Health care facilities were abandoned due to kidnapping in socio-economic development in Rivers State. 50 representing 20% and 25 representing 10% of the respondents state that Health care facilities were abandoned due to kidnapping in socio-economic development in Rivers State. This implies that Health care facilities were abandoned due to kidnapping in socio-economic development in Rivers State.

Test of Hypotheses
Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between kidnapping and socio-economic development in Rivers State between 2009-2019.
Table 4: shows the various responses for calculating Expected Frequency (Fe)

Frequency of Response

Variables	SA	A	SD	D	Total
Male	20	15	70	35	**140**
Female	10	5	60	35	**110**
Total	**30**	**20**	**130**	**70**	**250**

Expected Frequency (Fe) = $\dfrac{\text{(Row total)(Column total)}}{\text{Cumulative total}}$

Computation of Expected Frequency (Fe)

a.	Fe	=	(30 × 140)	÷	250	= 17
b.	Fe	=	(30 × 110)	÷	250	= 13
c.	Fe	=	(20 × 140)	÷	250	= 11
d.	Fe	=	(20 × 110)	÷	250	= 9
e.	Fe	=	(130 x 140)	÷	250	= 73
f.	Fe	=	(130 x 110)	÷	250	= 57
g.	Fe	=	(70 × 140)	÷	250	= 39
h.	Fe	=	(70 × 110)	÷	250	= 31

Computation of Chi-Square (X^2)

Cells	Fo	Fe	Fo - Fe	$(Fo - Fe)^2$	$\sum (Fo - Fe)^2 \div Fe$
A	20	17	-3	9	0.529
B	10	13	-3	9	0.692
C	15	11	4	16	1.455
D	5	9	-4	16	1.778
E	70	73	-3	9	0.123
F	60	57	3	9	0.158
G	35	39	-4	16	0.410
H	35	31	4	16	0.516
			X^2		**5.661**

Degree of freedom (df) = (R-1)(C-1) = (2-1)(4-1) = 3.

A critical value of 5% (0.05) = 7.815 level of significance is used to compare the X^2 =5.661.
Decision Rule: The hypothesis is rejected if the value of X^2 is greater than the critical value. However, the hypothesis is accepted if X^2 value is less than the critical value. This indicates that there is a relationship between kidnapping and socio-economic development since the calculated value of X^2 (5.661) is less than the table or critical value of 7.815.

The Strength of the hypothesis/relationship: It is important to note that there is a strong connection between kidnapping and socio-economic development in Rivers State. The result from our chi square test indicates that there is a strong relationship between the two variables.From the study, the result in table 4.3.1 shows that social status of kidnapped victim has a significant relationship with socioeconomic wellbeing of the family. This view is supported by Ngwama (2014) who observed that kidnappers target the executive, legislature, the judicial branch of the government, and their family members in spite of the tight security at their disposal. He maintained that government expatriates, religious leaders and their children are also the target of kidnappers. The findings are also in line with Akpan-Nsoh (2008) who commented that most people are victims of kidnapping because of their social status in the community. He argued that this is so because kidnappers believed that prominent people of high social status and their family members can negotiate and afford to pay ransom demanded by them before the release of the kidnapped victim(s).

Also, the results from our primary and secondary data indicate that kidnapping often times causes socio-economic development slur when so many political and economic actors are affected. The result shows that poverty induced kidnapping has a significant relationship with socioeconomic wellbeing of the state. The result is consistent with Ogabido (2007) cited in Inyang and Ubong (2013), he averred that "the issue of poverty and unemployment of youths as well as social injustice and unfair distribution of the nations resources are potent causes of kidnapping in Nigeria. These factors have caused the youths to engage in kidnapping and criminal activities as a way of getting their share of the nation wealth". The findings are also in agreement with Okorie-Ajah, Nwokeoma and Okpan (2018), they maintained that kidnapping has plagued the socio-economic development of Nigeria and has had spill-over effect on some jobless youths and graduates who see kidnapping as lucrative and alternative means of making money, acquiring economic power and getting out of poverty.

In agreement with the result of hypothesis Okonkwo (2008), notes that education and skill development is the key to any socio-economic development sector of a state. It is an important indicator of national development. No meaningful development will take place when the population is not educated or acquire a form of skill. It is education that enhances the efficiency of labour and makes modernity possible. According to Abah (2000):

> the emergence and entrenchment of kidnapping in Rivers State has its
> manifestation within the various democratic experiments. The feeling
> of belonging and rejection became the basis for distinguishing
> individuals within the polity as evidenced in youth behaviour with lack
> of cohesiveness and increased threat to the lives and property of
> citizens. Education and skill development cannot survive in an
> atmosphere of conflict where kidnapping of aspiring young ones are
> place in danger of ransom and death in between (p.55).

It is unfortunate that the result of the hypothesis also revealed that kidnapping has been conceptualized not only as theoretical ideology but as a weapon for the furtherance of demotivating self-sufficiency in agricultural and food production to the detriment of socio-economic development. Socio-economic development can said to be achieved when a state or country can feed their citizen that is when a state has attained high level of security in food

production. To achieve self-sufficiency in food production, means mechanized agriculture and technology. However, when kidnapping crops in, most of the processes leading to self-sufficiency in food production were frustrated with the scourge of constant kidnapping. The effect of this ugly crime/trend is that the socio-economic development of the state is stagnated. The hypothesis also revealed that health care workers, social infrastructure, security architecture, business owners, politicians, etc were potential victims of the crime of kidnapping. Hence, socio-economic development was frustrated due the illicit or nefarious crime of kidnapping in the state.

The relationship between kidnapping and socio-economic development in Rivers State between 2009-2019: In response to research question 1, interviewee 1 spoke strongly concerning the negative impact the activities of kidnappers have on the socio-economic situation of Rivers State. The interviewee argued that the current economic situation in the state is unhealthy. This implies that unemployment is on the increase, channels of revenue generation are declining or have declined and this has affected the development policies of the state government. Interviewee 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 all agreed that the economic situation in Rivers State is a shadow of its former self owing to the security situation in the state. This invariably means that the kidnapping activities in Rivers State I've contributed in a large way to the current ugly economic condition of the State. The interviewees attributed the rate of unemployment in Rivers State to the kidnapping situation in the state.
Ngwama (2014) observed that:

> kidnappers target the executive, legislature, the judicial branch of the government, and their family members in spite of the tight security at their disposal. He maintained that government expatriates, religious leaders and their children are also the target of kidnappers (p.17).

The findings are also in line with Akpan-Nsoh (2008) who commented that most people are victims of kidnapping because of their social status in the community. He argued that this is so because kidnappers believed that prominent people of high social status and their family members can negotiate and afford to pay ransom demanded by them before the release of the kidnapped victim(s).

Also, the results from our primary and secondary data indicate that kidnapping often times causes socio-economic development slur when so many political and economic actors are affected. The result shows that poverty induced kidnapping has a significant relationship with socioeconomic wellbeing of the state. The result is consistent with Ogabido (2007) cited in Inyang and Ubong (2013):

> the issue of poverty and unemployment of youths as well as social injustice and unfair distribution of the nations resources are potent causes of kidnapping in Nigeria. These factors have caused the youths to engage in kidnapping and criminal activities as a way of getting their share of the nation wealth. This notwithstanding has an adverse relationship with the socioeconomic development (p. 215)

The findings are also in agreement with Okorie-Ajah, Nwokeoma and Okpan (2018) who maintained that kidnapping has plagued the socio-economic development of Nigeria and has had

spill-over effect on some jobless youths and graduates who see kidnapping as lucrative and alternative means of making money, acquiring economic power and getting out of poverty.

In agreement with the result of test of hypothesis, Okonkwo (2008) notes that education and skill development is the key to any socio-economic development sector of a state. It is an important indicator of national development. No meaningful development will take place when the population is not educated or acquire a form of skill. It is education that enhances the efficiency of labour and makes modernity possible. According to Abah (2000):

> The emergence and entrenchment of kidnapping in Rivers State has its manifestation within the various democratic experiments. The feeling of belonging and rejection became the basis for distinguishing individuals within the polity as evidenced in youth behaviour with lack of cohesiveness and increased threat to the lives and property of citizens. Education and skill development cannot survive in an atmosphere where kidnapping of aspiring ones are place in danger of ransom and death in between (p.55).

It is unfortunate that the result of the test of hypothesis also revealed that kidnapping has been conceptualized not only as theoretical ideology but as a weapon for the furtherance of demotivating self-sufficiency in agricultural and food production to the detriment of socio-economic development. Socio-economic development can said to be achieved when a state or country can feed their citizen that is when a state has attained high level of security in food production. To achieve self-sufficiency in food production, means mechanized agriculture and technology. However, when kidnapping crops in, most of the processes leading to self-sufficiency in food production were frustrated with the scourge of constant kidnapping. The effect of this ugly crime/trend is that the socio-economic development of the state is stagnated. The hypothesis also revealed that health care workers, social infrastructure, security architecture, business owners, politicians, etc were potential victims of the crime of kidnapping. Hence, socio-economic development was frustrated due the illicit or nefarious crime of kidnapping in the state. It is in line with the above that most of the respondents believe that kidnapping has a very strong connection with socioeconomic development but does not impact positively on socioeconomic development of the state between 2009-2019. Most respondents who contributed to the literature in the course of soliciting information with respect to the relationship between kidnapping and socio-economic development in Rivers State between the period under review revealed that:

> between the period of 2009-2019, kidnapping in Rivers State was extremely high and has made companies to fold-up. It has reduced the revenue base of the state. It has also reduced unemployment in the state. The social-economic life of the residents and the state is heading towards a total breakdown of law and order if not checked (B. Mgbere, personal communication, November 18, 2021).

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It is based on this that most of the respondents agreed that before the advent of kidnapping in Rivers State, so many residents of the state were gainfully employed, but most of them are now jobless owing to organization shutting down due to insecurity and fear of staff members being kidnapped. Investors are packing up and leaving to other climes while potential investors are

staying away despite her huge natural resource endowment. So the current economic situation in Rivers State is nose diving with major causative factor being kidnapping.

Conclusion/Recommendations

The paper revealed that there is a strong relationship between kidnapping and socioeconomic development. However, kidnapping is a scourge that discourages education and skill acquisition amongst innocent younger ones, demotivated self-sufficiency in food production, affect human capital index, and abandon social infrastructural facilities. The study therefore concludes that there is a strong connection but significant negative relationship exists between kidnapping and socioeconomic development in Rivers State during the period under review.The conditions discoursed above revealed that kidnapping was responsible for the dwindling socioeconomic activities experienced in Rivers State between 2009-2019.

The paper identified several issues of kidnapping that bedevil socioeconomic development in Rivers State as such the paper recommends youths should be engaged in compulsory education and skill acquisition while social infrastructural facilities are maintained to improve human capital index and assist in wealth creation.

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