PERCEPTIONS ON SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF KIDNAPPING IN EKITI STATE, NIGERIA
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Abstract

The study examined the perception of the people about social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study specifically examined the causes of kidnapping in Ekiti State; and the difference in perception of the social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State based on the gender and location of the respondents. The descriptive research design of the survey type was used in this study. The sample for the study consisted of 300 adults from 6 Local Government Areas in Ekiti State. The sample was selected using multi-stage sampling procedure. A self-designed research instrument tagged Social Implications and Kidnapping Questionnaire (SIKQ) was used to collect relevant data for the study. The data collected through the instrument were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings of the study revealed that the social implications of kidnapping are sexual harassment of women victims, reduction in ceremonies, reduction in quality of social relationship, fear of rendering public assistance and fear of association with strangers. Also, it was revealed that the perception of the social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State is not gender biased but location biased. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among

others that there is need for proper re-orientation on various mass media of the essence of social interaction irrespective of the present challenge of kidnapping.

Keywords: Social, Implications, Kidnapping, Gender, Rural and urban.

Introduction

Kidnapping in Nigeria and especially in Ekiti State seems to have turned into a social problem that is affecting virtually every member of the Nigerian society in one way or the other. According to Uzorma and Nwanegbo (2014), kidnapping 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. Abraham (2010) defined kidnapping as the forceful seizure, taking away and unlawful detention of a person against his/her will. It includes snatching and seizing a person in order to collect a ransom in return or settle some scores of disagreement among people.

It can be argued that the environment in which Nigerians live and their experiences of governance practices like the high level of corruption, high handedness, unemployment, and selfish interests of politicians could be contributory factors to the emergence of kidnapping. It is this that gives groups the initiative to take on the Nigerian State because of its perception as unjust, demeaning to the citizen, without guarantees of individual safety and security and exploitative.

According to a report released by the Nigerian Police, no fewer than 42 people were reportedly kidnapped by suspected criminals in Ekiti State in year 2018. The report shows that kidnapping has now probably turned into a business venture and a daily affair in Ekiti State. Currently, the targets are no longer popular or rich people; every Nigerian is now a target. In fact, the safety of persons in Ekiti State and their property cannot be guaranteed owing to the near-daily incidence of kidnapping.

Kidnapping appears to be assuming an alarming rate in Ekiti

State. The menace is also a source of worry in other neighbouring states of Nigeria. Apart from loss of lives, the affected families pay through their nose in order to free their loved ones from the captors thereby dragging such families at times into economic hardship (Adibe, 2017). Ekiti State has been on the news for the wrong reasons because of this. The recurring cases of kidnapping and its attendant consequences appear to have crippled the social lives of the indigenes and non-indigenes, to the point that visitors fear coming into Ekiti State for activities.

It appears that a lot of money is usually given out as ransom when relatives are kidnapped. Some people went as far as borrowing to bail their relatives out from the hands of hoodlums. In many instances, it is often the bread winners of families that are usually targeted, the implication appears to be felt particularly within the family, whereby members of such families will have to find every means to raise money, until they secure the release of the victim. Apart from this proximate impact on the victims, kidnapping seems to exert enormous and far-reaching social costs. Kidnapping appears to induce and create a palpable ambience of fear and despair for all citizens. People are no longer sure of their safety and the security of the places they stay such as churches, markets, homes and social gatherings since these callous human beings are everywhere (Diara, 2010).

As a result of kidnapping, the researcher observed that many people seem to have been forced out of their newly completed houses. People are compelled to present an unfinished look of poverty by not painting the external walls of their houses. Many people are afraid to buy or use new motor vehicles for the fear of kidnappers. The inter-personal relationship, kidnapping seems to have contributed to a relatively high level of mistrust among people. Few people still extend the traditional African hospitality to strangers. Some people do not acknowledge or return greeting by strangers nor oblige strangers asking for direction most people are unwilling to render help to people in distress for fear of being kidnapped. The overall implication is that social activities seem to be fast deteriorating. These observations have attracted the attention of this study to investigate the social implication of kidnapping in Ekiti State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the perception of the people about social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study specifically examined:

i.   the causes of kidnapping in Ekiti State;
ii. the social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State;
iii. the difference between male and female perception of the social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State; and
iv. the difference between rural and urban dwellers' perception of the social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for this study:

i.   What are the causes of kidnapping in Ekiti State, Nigeria?
ii. What are the social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were tested infor this study:

$H_0$1: There is no significant difference between male and female perception of the social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State.

$H_0$2: There is no significant difference between rural and urban dwellers' perception of the social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State.

Methods

A descriptive design of the survey type was adopted which enabled the researchers to collect and analyze data from a sample of the entire population without any manipulations. The population of this study consisted of all adults in Ekiti State who are above the age of 18 years old. The sample for the study consisted of 300 adults from 6 Local Government Areas in Ekiti State. The sample was selected using multistage sampling procedure. In stage one,

two local government areas were selected from each of the senatorial districts in Ekiti State using simple random sampling technique. In stage two, one urban town and one rural town were selected from each of the Local Government Areas using stratified random sampling technique. In stage three, 25 adults were purposely selected from each of the urban and rural towns.

An instrument titled "Social Implications and Kidnapping Questionnaire (SIKQ)" was used to collect relevant data for this study. The SIKQ consisted of two sections namely A and B. Section A sought information on demographic data of the respondents which include gender and town location. Section B consisted of 20 items which sought for information on causes of kidnapping and perception of respondents on social implications of kidnapping. Likert 4 – point rating scale was adopted to rate response options which are Strongly Agree (SA) – 4, Agree (A) – 3, Disagree (D) – 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1. A mean cut-off mark of 2.50 was used to either accept or reject the items raised. The 2.50 was gotten by finding the average point of the 4 – point rating scale $(4+3+2+1)/4 = 2.50$.

The face and content validity was ascertained by giving the designed questionnaire to experts of Tests and Measurement for vetting before distributing it to the respondents. The reliability of the instrument was determined by finding the internal consistency of the instrument. In doing this, a pilot study was carried out outside the sampled locations. The instrument was administered on 20 respondents. In order to ascertain reliability of the instrument, data collected were tested using Cronbach's alpha which yielded reliability co-efficient of 0.89.

The researcher personally administered the instrument as this made it possible for the researcher to explain and interpret some items of the questionnaire to the respondents. The researcher's personal contact and visit to the respondents helped in ensuring better understanding of the items of the questionnaire and also eased retrieval of the questionnaire. The data generated through the instrument were analyzed using the descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentage, mean, standard deviation while

the hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics of t-test analysis. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the causes of kidnapping in Ekiti State?

Table 1: Causes of Kidnapping in Ekiti State

S/N	Causes	N	Mean	Remark
1.	High rate of unemployment	300	3.8	Accepted
2.	High rate of poverty	300	3.3	Accepted
3.	Wealth gap between the rich and the poor	300	2.7	Accepted
4.	Corruption and high handedness among the political class	300	2.8	Accepted
5.	Repressive style of leadership	300	2.9	Rejected
6.	High rate of materialism	300	2.2	Rejected
7.	Unequal distribution of resources	300	2.4	Rejected
8.	Little attention given to public interest by government	300	2.8	Accepted
9.	High rate of inflation	300	2.3	Rejected
10.	Proliferation of arms and military uniforms	300	2.2	Rejected

Mean Cut-off: 2.50

Based on the mean cut-off mark of 2.50, Table 1 reveals that the major causes of kidnapping in Ekiti State were high rate of unemployment (mean = 3.8), high rate of poverty (mean = 3.3), wealth gap between the rich and the poor (mean = 2.7), corruption and high handedness among the political class (mean = 2.8) and Little attention given to public interest by government (mean = 2.8). It can be summarized that the causes of kidnapping in Ekiti State are unemployment, poverty, wealth gap, corruption, high handedness of political class and little attention given to public interest by government.

Research Question 2: What are the social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State?

Table 2: Social implications of Kidnapping in Ekiti State

S/N	Effects	N	Mean	Remark
1.	Sexual harassment of women victims	300	2.9	Accepted
2.	Reduction in ceremonies	300	2.8	Accepted
3.	Increase in cult related activities	300	2.2	Rejected
4.	High drugs intake	300	1.8	Rejected
5.	Acquiring of Weapons/Arms	300	2.3	Rejected
6.	Reduction in quality of social relationship	300	3.1	Accepted
7.	Fear of rendering public assistance	300	2.9	Accepted
8.	Loss of human life	300	2.4	Rejected
9.	High cases of rape	300	2.4	Rejected
10.	Fear of association with strangers	300	2.9	Accepted

Mean Cut-off: 2.50

Base on the mean cut-off of 2.50, Table 2 reveals the social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State. The respondents agreed that the major social implications of kidnapping are sexual harassment of women victims with mean of 2.9, reduction in ceremonies with a mean of 2.8, reduction in quality of social relationship with a mean of 3.1, fear of rendering public assistance with a mean of 2.9 and fear of association with strangers with a mean of 2.9.

It can be summarized that the social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State are sexual harassment of women victims, reduction in ceremonies, reduction in quality of social relationship, fear of rendering public assistance and fear of association with strangers.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between male and female perception of the social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State.

Table 3: **t-test analysis for Social Implications of Kidnapping based on Gender**

Variations	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	t-tab
Male	173	25.6	1.77	298	1.85	1.96
Female	127	26.0	1.91			

P<0.05

Table 3 shows that the t-cal value of 1.85 is less than t-tab value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significant, this implies that the null hypothesis is not rejected at $\alpha = 0.05$. Hence, there is no significant difference between male and female perception of the social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State. This implies that the male and female adults have the same perception of the social implications of kidnapping.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between rural and urban dwellers' perception of the social implication of kidnapping in Ekiti State.

Table 4: t-test analysis for Social Implications of Kidnapping based on Location

Variations	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	t-tab
Rural	150	25.2	1.52	298	6.37*	1.96
Urban	150	26.3	1.47			

*P<0.05

Table 4 shows that the t-cal value of 6.37 is greater than t-tab value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significant, this implies that the null hypothesis is rejected at $\alpha = 0.05$. Hence, there is significant difference between rural and urban dwellers' perception of the social implication of kidnapping in Ekiti State. The perception of adults on the social implications of kidnapping differs based on their location.

Discussions

Findings from this study revealed that the major causes of kidnapping in Ekiti State are unemployment, poverty, wealth gap,

corruption, high handedness of political class and little attention given to public interest by government. This result agrees with the findings of Adibe (2017) and Diara (2010) who concluded that the causes of kidnapping are unemployment and poverty, governmental insincerity and development, proliferation of small and medium arms, greed and inordinate ambition to amass wealth. Diara (2010) asserts that kidnapping in Nigeria is a kind of social revolution by the youths especially the unemployed ones who are not satisfied with their condition.

The findings of this study also revealed that the major social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State are sexual harassment of women victims, reduction in ceremonies, reduction in quality of social relationship, fear of rendering public assistance and fear of association with strangers. The result agrees with the findings of Uzorma and Nwanegbo (2014) and Inyang and Ubong (2013) who found out the social effects of kidnapping are panic, tension, feelings of insecurity, sexual harassment, fear of associating with strangers and weakens citizens' confidence in the government.

Findings on hypotheses testing revealed in hypothesis 1 that no significant difference existed between male and female perception of the social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State. This implies that the male and female adults have the same perception of the social implications of kidnapping. The finding agreed with the conclusion of Inyang and Ubong (2013) who concluded that the perception of social implications of kidnapping by adults is not gender biased.

Finding on hypothesis 2 revealed that significant difference existed between rural and urban dwellers' perception of the social implication of kidnapping in Ekiti State. The perception of adults on the social implications of kidnapping differs based on their location. The reason for this finding might be because of the reported cases of kidnapping which appears to be prevalent in urban areas than rural areas.

Conclusion

This paper explores social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State. It can be concluded that the causes of kidnapping in Ekiti State are

unemployment, poverty, wealth gap, corruption, high handedness of political class and little attention is given to public interest by government. The social implications of kidnapping are sexual harassment of women victims, reduction in ceremonies, reduction in quality of social relationships, fear of rendering public assistance and fear of association with strangers. It was further concluded that the perception of the social implications of kidnapping in Ekiti State is not gender biased but location biased.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, Government should find every means to reduce the rate of unemployment among the youths. There is also need for proper re-orientation on various mass media of the essence of social interaction irrespective of the present challenge of kidnapping. Poverty alleviation programmes should be rolled out and properly implemented by the Government while government should be firm and fair in its resolution and implementation of decisions to curb kidnapping.

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