CREATING DEVIANCE: THE ISSUE OF KIDNAPPING IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The concept of kidnapping and the worrisome challenges, effects and eventual consequences it portends to any growing economy like Nigeria and the world over has been a subject matter of serious concern to both policy makers, government, political leaders as well as all stakeholders interested in the socio-economic advancement of any given nation. Most literature attributes its pervasiveness to unemployment, poverty, illiteracy and other problems besetting mankind. On this premise, we formed the basis for this study. Extant literature were consulted and overhauled all aimed at getting to a concise critique of this social scourge/malady. The researchers explored the subject matter as it concerns Nigeria where kidnapping has dramatically become an unavoidable source of livelihood/organized business to a lot of people particularly the teeming youth. The paper traced the root of kidnapping in Nigeria to the clamor for oil resource control by the aborigines of the oil producing Niger Delta region who resorted to hostage taking, hijacking and kidnapping of oil workers to challenge government's hegemonic control over oil resources. Robert K. Merton's Strain Theory was employed as a theoretical framework to interrogate how contradictions within Nigeria's social structure and cultural values create deviance. At the end, various recommendations were advanced to aid policy makers, the government and concerned institutions on possible ways of bringing this social problem to its minimal level, one of which is that government at all levels should formulate and effectively implement policies and strategies aimed at addressing the root causes of kidnapping such as poverty, unemployment, environmental degradation and political and economic marginalization.

Key Words: Crime, Deviance, Kidnapping.

Introduction/Conceptual Approach

As a sociological concept, deviance consists of those acts which do not follow the norms and expectations of a particular society or social group. It is the behavior that violates social norms and is negatively sanctioned by society. Some deviant acts include stealing, examination malpractice, corruption, rape, murder, prostitution, kidnapping, etc.

Sociological theories, point to the social contexts of deviance, tracing deviance to the nature of the social structure, social

inequalities, population compositions, cultural conflict and social disorder (Obasi, 2015). In other words, society creates deviance by the contradictions within its social, economic and political structure and so the root causes of deviance can be found within the embedded of social structure.

Over the years, the snag of kidnapping has gained notoriety mostly in African literary discourse due to the challenges it poses for man. Just like other social problems such as rape, homicide, murder, aggravated assault and even suicide, kidnapping is another global phenomenon that the economy of Nigeria has witnessed since its political independence. Nigeria as a nation has experienced and is still experiencing considerable turbulence, turmoil, civil strife, high rate of crime particularly the organized crimes of drug trafficking, human trafficking, kidnapping, human sacrifice and ritual killing and armed robbery, international terrorism, sectarian violence, political violence, communal strife, natural disaster, insurgency, militancy and pervasive normlessness, economic crimes such as advanced fee fraud, cyber-crimes, money laundering and systematic official corruption in the private and public sector.

Among these crimes, the most egregious is kidnapping. Kidnapping is a new wave of crime that is presently ravaging the country. According to a 2013 survey on global crime trends, the Nigerian Police recorded 277 kidnappings in 2007, 309 in 2008, 703 in 2009, 738 in 2010 and 600 in 2012 (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2014). Freedom House (2014) reports that Nigeria recorded one of the highest rates of kidnapping in the world in 2013. The South-East and South-South regions are said to have the highest number of kidnapping cases and it was estimated that about 600 persons were kidnapped between January 2007 and May 2010 (Thom-Otuya, 2010). This recorded number is but a total understatement/departure from what we have presently and what actually takes place as kidnapping is grossly under reported and so the actual number of kidnappings is much higher than available police records (The Economist, 2014, CLEEN Foundation, 2014). Every part of the country has heavily experienced and still experiences a high and unabated rate of kidnapping, an act which seems to have become so lucrative that kidnapping ransoms are paid in hard currency and kidnapping kingpins such as the notorious Nigerian kidnapper, Chukwudi Dumeme Onuamadike (popularly known as Evans) who was recently nabbed by the police was reportedly making billions of naira through kidnapping (Vanguard, June 11, 2017).

Kidnapping as a concept poses definitional problems due to divergent positions adopted by various scholars in their bid to clarify the concept. This absence of clarity and convergence in conception has given rise to sundry definitions of the concept. As a global and historic phenomenon, kidnapping is the act of abducting and holding anybody captive, typically to obtain ransom. In criminal law, kidnapping is the abduction or unlawful transportation of a person or persons, usually to hold the person against his/her will. This may be done for ransom or in furtherance of another crime. Such crime could carry political undertones possibly to detain a person and forcibly pressure-off his political ambition by another person who has similar political ambition. Walsh and Adrain (1983) defined kidnapping as unlawful seizure and detention of a person or persons by force against their will. It is also an act of seizing a person and taking him or her to another country for involuntary servitude or the conscription of males into military or naval service by force or fraud. Abide (2008) defined kidnapping as the taking away of a person against the

person's will usually for ransom or in furtherance of another crime.

Inyang and Ubong (2013) saw kidnapping as forcible seizure, taking away and unlawful detention of a person against his or her will. In the view of Thomas and Nta (2009), kidnapping is an organized and systematic robbery which is not as deadly as armed robbery but more profitable than the former. Garner (1999), giving explanation to the term kidnapping writes that the crime is labeled abduction when the victim is a woman. Kidnapping or abduction of a child, in the contemporary usage, is often called child stealing, particularly when done without the motive to collect ransom but rather with the intention of keeping the child permanently usually where the parents are divorced or legally separated, whereupon the parent who does not have legal custody will commit the act - it is also characterized as child napping.

Onuoha (2012) saw kidnapping as the wholesale taking away or transportation of a person against the person's will, usually to keep the person in false imprisonment without legal authority. Thus kidnapping is a serious offence which deprives the victim of liberty. Arewa (2013) laid down the following ingredients of kidnapping: namely:

1. There must be taking or carrying away by another.
2. The taking or carrying away must be force or fraud.
3. The taking or carrying must be without lawful excuse.
4. The taking or carrying must be without the consent of person so carried or taken away.

The target of kidnappers include; wealthy local individuals, expatriates, business travellers, tourists, employees of high profile companies, captains and sailors of oil carrying vessels, relatives of top government officials, relatives of business moguls, top officials of political parties and their relatives. However, Okoli (2013) pointed out that today everybody is the target of kidnappers.

According to Onuoha (2012), a victim of kidnapping is in danger of risk at seven (7) different points in the course of the activity:

1. Time of capture or operational kidnapping point.
2. Period of conveyance of victim to hostage prison.
3. Period of communication and interrogation with the victim.
4. Period of victim's contact with his/her family for negotiation.
5. Point of collection of ransom.
6. Point of discharge of the victim; and
7. The trauma of re-interrogation and re-integration with the society after release.

These enumerated processes are quite germane in understanding the dangers of becoming a victim of kidnapping. From the point of capture/hostage taking, the victim's life could be lost possibly from exchange of fire (shoot-out) with armed security operatives who must have gotten a wave of the crime and have decided to forcefully obstruct the act of kidnapping in order to save the endangered victim. At the point/time of conveyance to a hostage prison, the victim of kidnapping (out of fear of unknown circumstances he envisions) may decide to engage in muscle flexing/physical exchange of unpleasantries with the kidnappers which may result to his untimely death. A kidnapped victim can decide not to grant the kidnappers audience during interrogation and the angered kidnappers can decide to end the victim's life. Also, the un-cooperating victim may decide not to contact his/her family members or the family members may decide

not to co-operate even when contacted and this can signal the knell of the victim.

Any attempt to apprehend/expose a kidnapper at the point of collection of ransom can invariably lead to the death of the victim. Some mean kidnappers who feel that their identities/hideouts hSave been known by their unfortunate victim can decide to take the life of the victim to avoid exposure.

Forms of Kidnapping

In the world over, there are various reasons trailing the act of kidnapping. These includes amongst others:-

1. Politically motivated kidnapping
2. Vengeance/reactionary motivated kidnapping
3. Religiously motivated kidnapping
4. Extortion or economically motivated kidnapping

Political Motives: Politicking has become a game of war in which everybody struggles for dominance regardless of the means and moral involvements. Most politicians can do anything humanly possible to retain their already-ascended positions. In order to actualize such visions, most of the political office-seekers mastermind the heinous kidnapping of their opponents either to "permanently" silence them or to force them to revert/withdraw from the race. This has become a welcome trend in Nigeria and in most African countries over the years. This is where political concessions such as the release of prisoners, changes to the law and policy retreats are demanded (Briggs 2009). Here kidnapping is seen as an instrument for political vendetta and settling of political scores. The operation is organized and targeted mainly on key serving politicians or contractors working directly for government. Once the victim is kidnapped, a high level of negotiation is expected which will ultimately lead to a heavy ransom.

Such ransom is used to further political goals, self-settling of aggrieved groups or a way of financially crippling an aspiring politician. Turner (1998) describes this as "money and politics" kidnapping where there are political motives for kidnapping but where ransom is also demanded. Such ransoms are often used to further the political objectives of the kidnapping organizations or simply to facilitate the survival of the organization. Based on this, Akpan (2010) asserts that it was insinuated that most top kidnapping operations are masterminded by top government officials, opposition groups, unrewarded or uncompensated members of election rigging, among others.

One glaring instance of political kidnapping was that of Chris Ngige, the former governor of Anambra State, who was kidnapped on July 10, 2003 by his fellow political party members who were in opposition to him (Emewu and Anyanwu, 2011).

Vengeance/Reactionary-Motivated Kidnapping:
Zion et al (2014) describes this type of motive behind kidnapping as the most recent trend in the evil history of kidnapping. "When politics have assumed a violent process, the poor and helpless masses (usually at the bottom part of the ladder) receive the worst impact, seeing no other means of reciprocating such unfavourable as well as unkind wickedness of political actors, they (the financially-powerless/less-privileged resort to kidnapping as a way of revenge". From this backdrop, Zion et al (2014) saw a successful kidnapper as a political hero, a freedom fighter who has learnt to react fast to the restlessness and hardship brought about by those in structures of authority.

Religious Motive: Religion which is sacred and sharply opposed to profane has become a tool for kidnapping. The kind of preaching, the increasing number of religious teachers and quality of their teachings has created a deep-rooted negative impression in most adherents. Many see it as their duty to forcefully convert people to join their sect or religious persuasion hence kidnapping becomes a sure way of winning souls and imposing religious domination and ideology. A typical example is the kidnap of two hundred and seventy six school girls from a girls secondary school in Chibok, Borno State, Nigeria by an Islamic terrorist group, Boko Haram.

Extortionist or Economically Motivated Kidnapping: Most recent kidnap cases have been directly linked to economic motives. Particularly in the Niger Delta region, 97% of kidnapping cases are purely for financial gratifications. The kidnapping of oil magnets and multinational expatriate even Nigerian staff and the demand for huge financial ransom is a shameful pointer to the economic motive for kidnapping. Economic kidnapping or kidnapping for business is where a financial demand is made which could be either hard cash or some other financial resources (Thom- Otuya 2010). It is based on this that Tzaneli (2006) describes kidnapping as a business venture that is regulated by the laws of demand and supply and is a type of social action that involves the calculation of the most efficient means to desired end. As an economic venture, kidnapping enterprise and kidnappers are business men, they just happen to be on the illegal side of it. If you deprive them of the demand then there is not going to be any supply. "Why should I kidnap who will not pay"? Kidnapping was equally employed as a weapon to fight for economic and environmental justice in Niger Delta. The economic motivation was intermittently used as a means of fund and to sustain the fight.

Theoretical Framework

Within the domain of sociological theories, there exists numerous and propitious perspectives that could be applied to explain the causes, consequences and panacea to the evil rituals of kidnapping in Nigeria. For the purposes of this work we shall employ the strain theory and the control theory.

Strain Theory

For Robert K. Merton, crime and deviance were evidence of a poor fit or a strain between the socially accepted goals of society and the socially approved means of obtaining those desired goals. The resulting strain led to deviance. He further argued that all societies set their members certain goals, at the same time they also provide socially approved ways or means of achieving those goals. The system worked well as long as there was a reasonable chance that a majority of people were able to achieve their goals. However, if the majority of the population were unable to achieve the socially set goals, then they become disenchanted with society and sought out alternative (often deviant) ways of behaving. Merton believed that the goal of society was economic and material wealth above all else and that the means provided to achieve these goals were hard work and educational achievements. Different forms of behavior then could be understood as a strain between goals and means:

1. Conformity: Here the individual continues to adhere to both goals and means despite the likelihood or otherwise of success.
2. Innovation: The person accepts the goals of society but devices different ways to achieve those goals. Criminal behavior is included in this response.

3. Ritualism: Here the means are used by the individual but sight of the actual goal is lost. For example, the bureaucrat or the police officer blindly enforcing the letter of the law without looking at the nature of justice.
4. Retreatism: The individual here rejects both the goals and means, for example, the person dependent on drugs or alcohol is included.
5. Rebellion: Both the socially sanctioned goals and means are rejected and different ones substituted. For example, the political activist or the religious fundamentalist (Ibrahim, 2003).

Robert Merton went one step further, for him, anomie arises from a situation in which there are seemingly insurmountable obstacles between cultural goals and the social means available to reach them. In other words, anomie develops from the disharmony between cultural goals and the institutionalized means of attaining them. While our society encourages all its members to aspire to wealth and social position, our approved ways of reaching these goals enable only a few to succeed. Unable to attain his dream position, individuals turn to crime such as kidnapping. In Merton's term, they become "deviant innovators". This encourages theft, kidnapping for ransom and other rip-offs. For example, if male success is measured by sexual experience, this encourages rape and prostitution. Also if youth success means having good clothes, they may steal money or engage in kidnapping to get it (Ibrahim, 2003).

What makes Merton's typology so fascinating is that people can turn to deviance in the pursuit of widely accepted social values and goals. In the Nigerian society where success is measured by wealth acquisition – expensive cars, designer clothes, mansions etc more and more people resort to kidnapping and other criminal behavior to realize the societal goal of acquiring material wealth.

Control Theory

Control theory as set forth by Hirschi (2002) is one of the most recent major explanations of deviant acts. Its major tenet is that deviance is exhibited by persons who have little to lose from delinquent behaviors. Society is organized so that those with power have much to lose whereas the powerless and the lower classes have little to lose from crime or delinquency. The critical element is that the pressures for conformity or non-criminal behavior reside in the bonds between society and the individual. If the bonds are strong, people will conform to society's norms and will refrain from committing crime, if the bonds are weak, the potential for crime and delinquency increases.

Control theory seems to fit the facts better than other theories. It assumes that crime can be expected wherever people have little or nothing to lose and something to gain from criminal activity. To him, morality and conformity stems from the social bonds between the individual and the society. For example, in primitive societies, the desire to commit delinquent acts such as kidnapping is low compared to the urge that can be found in modern industrial societies. The heterogeneous nature of relationship in industrialized societies where the quest for material things abound, people will attempt every available means of getting money, kidnapping inclusive (Ekpenyong, 2006). Unemployed persons in the society who are suffering under poverty may feel that they have nothing to lose as they resort to kidnapping and or other criminal behavior as means of survival.

Creating Deviance: Background of Kidnapping in Nigeria

According to Townsend (2008), the root of kidnapping in Nigeria can be traced to "Natural resources nationalism" – the tendency to seek bigger shares of the returns from natural resources. That is, the clamor by aborigines of the oil producing Niger Delta region to get better and bigger share of the fortune made from the resources gotten from their land. This problem is worsened by accumulation politics - the tendency for the ruling class to be involved in endless accumulation of natural resource/rents accruing from the region through deliberate act of marginalization and deprivation (Essien and Ema, 2013).

Concerns for the development of the Niger Delta region are age-old phenomenon. The communities of the region have been protesting the injustices peacefully for decades, until recently when such protest took on a violent form. The parties involved in the conflict do not only include the federal government but also the oil multinationals. Onduku (2001) summarized the grievances of the people into three interrelated but analytically distinct issues which include:-

1. That laws relating to oil exploration and land ownership be abrogated.
2. The issue of natural resources control and self-determination; and
3. That appropriate institutional and financial arrangement should be put in place by the oil producing communities or the development and environmental problems associated with oil exploration.

The government, according to Essien and Ema (2013), seemed not to be taking this matter seriously given its attitude of using military option to suppress the people's demands. The people therefore opted for hostage taking, hijacking and kidnapping of oil workers in all the Niger Delta states. Supporting this view, Arewa (2013) writes that as a criminal offence, kidnapping was made a contemporary solution to the plight of the aggrieved people of Niger Delta by their struggle ruthlessly demonstrated in the move known as Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) in 2006. Kidnapping as seen above was used by the Niger Delta militants to make a case for the development of the region. At the initial stage, the kidnappers did not ask for ransom. According to Thom-Otuya (2010), one of the foremost recorded cases of kidnapping was when the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) kidnapped nine (9) foreign workers in Delta State to bargain for the release of detained Mujahid Asari Dokubo, leader of the Niger Delta People Volunteer Force (NDPVF). She noted that they did not ask for ransom, only that their leader should be released in exchange for the hostages. The federal government offered money (hard currency) to the boys and they took the money and released the hostages.

Essien and Ema (2013) explain that of late, kidnapping of foreign workers have become one of the key elements of such conflicts as a deliberate attempt to challenge government's hegemonic powers over their resources. The government of Yar'adua granted amnesty to Niger Delta militants in a bid to end the violent crimes in the region; but the crime of kidnapping in particular degenerated from targeting oil workers and multinationals to targeting politicians, successful clergymen, entrepreneurs and business owners.

Creating Deviance: The Root Causes of Kidnapping

Kidnapping is a global issue which many countries have been experiencing including Nigeria. Every good government is

struggling to bring the scourge to its low ebb bearing in mind the accompanying socio-economic backwardness it creates in any given nation. This is a national challenge Nigeria as a nation has been confronting for several years now which, as a matter of concern has been increasing in geometric progression. It is not ideal to overlook the fact that there exist challenges in other facets of the Nigerian system namely, educational, political, religious and cultural superstructures. There are many causes of kidnapping in Nigeria which includes unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, religion, political reasons and many others. These factors inherent in the social structure all contribute to create kidnapping and other deviance acts.

Illiteracy: A person is said to be an illiterate when he cannot read or write. Therefore, an illiterate person has low mental acumen to fully grasp the consequence of any action he/she takes. It is through religious indoctrination and teachings that most illiterate citizens are taught the negative side of life such as violence, kidnapping, killing in the name of fighting for God/kingdom message etc since such illiterate minds may not be able to discern between what constitutes morality and compliance to laws as opposed to immorality and false teachings.

For example, in the Niger Delta region, majority of the restive youths are illiterates who were dramatically persuaded into accepting their actions as the only way out of their lives of misery. This is one bedeviling challenge confronting most African nations.

Unemployment: For the purpose of clarity, it is pertinent to create a distinction between unemployment and underemployment. Unemployment is the total absence of any form of job that can enable one to wrest a living while underemployment is a situation in which an individual's employment cannot cater for his/her immediate needs and that of his dependents. Unemployment in Nigeria has become an epidemic which has given rise to different forms of crime. The bulk of unemployed Nigerians delve into all forms of degrading and socially-maladjusted forms of behavior which includes kidnapping for financial re-enforcement.

Politics: In Nigeria and in most African countries, kidnapping for political gains have, from time immemorial, taken the centre stage of politics. Kidnapping now characterize the result of elections in Nigeria. Most political office holders hire the services of thugs to kidnap their political opponents either to coerce him to sign out of the race or to permanently slaughter his ambition in the altar of inhuman cruelty. This accounts for the incessant reports of death, missing persons and unfortunate deaths during every season of election.

Poverty: Poverty is simply a state of lack. A pitiable situation whereby an individual lacks the financial "will" to provide for himself all the exigencies that make life worth living. Majority of Africans are now beset with abject poverty and this awful situation has signaled the advent of various forms of crime such as robbery, kidnapping, prostitution etc.

Ibrahim (2003) saw this challenge as the major cause of all forms of criminal behavior in circulation today. Some criminal actors who cannot fend for themselves commit crime as an unavoidable reaction to the laws and uneven disparities in life chances occasioned by the powerfully rich minority. Thus, crimes like kidnapping, armed robbery, vandalism and so on are mere reactionary measures according to the radical-marxist scholars.

Religion: Karl Marx in his treatise on religion saw it as the opium of the masses, the cry of the helpless, and the last resort of the poor and helplessly oppressed. Religion has gradually lost its original taste of uniting people into a single moral entity. Most religious organizations have derailed from this focus, rather now propagates violence in their acclaimed teachings. Several groups (religious groups) have risen with false and unprintable negative versions from the original teaching, drawing into their circle mostly people of low education and financially-less privileged citizens as members. It is easy to recruit such mean set or personalities as long as there is an accompanying promise to proffer solutions to their numerous needs. This accounts for the increasing number of suicide bombers, kidnapping and serial killings across the globe.

Greed/Financial Consideration and Corruption: Greed is synonym for insatiability, that is, the inability of a person to be contented with what he or she has. On the other hand, in a society where corruption forms the basis of enrichment, where office holders embezzle public funds with much impunity etc, the citizen's map out diverse strategies to get their share of the national cake and kidnapping could be considered as one of the beneficial ways of meeting financial needs. Both greed and corruption are endemic and remain untamed causes of kidnapping and other crude forms of financial enrichment in Nigeria today.

Consequences/Effects of Kidnapping in the Society

The effects of kidnapping remain enormous and require a collective effort to abate. The following are some of the effects of kidnapping:-

- Poor investment by foreign companies

- Fear to participate in politics
- Lack of trust
- Unstable economy/government

Insecurity/Poor Investment by Foreign Multinationals: The evil of kidnapping/hostage taking has gradually scared off many multinational companies operating in Nigeria. The fear of being kidnapped, killed or maimed has reduced foreign investment in Nigeria; they now prefer to invest in other countries that are business-friendly and free from ugly kidnappers who have upgraded it to an organized business. This reduced foreign investment has caused Nigerian people the attendant result of unemployment/massive retrenchment of workers and hunger, which now ravage the people since the economy is incapable of sustaining the needs of the Nigerian people. This is a major challenge confronting African nations.

Lack of Trust: Business hardly thrives when there is no trust. There must be some element of confidence in parties before they can go into any business venture. The unabated kidnapping cases in Nigeria has instilled the gory idea of mistrust into everyone that people now make extra efforts (unlike what it used to be) whenever they have anything to do with their fellow man in Nigeria and beyond. Even the law enforcement agencies that are saddled with the responsibility of safe- guarding lives and properties have fallen out of focus. No one seems to have confidence reposed in them; even the expatriates no longer have total reliance on their credibility. This is a very pathetic time for a nation like Nigeria.

Fear to Participate in Political Life: Fear is simply an unpleasant often strong emotion caused by anticipation or awareness of danger, a feeling of being afraid. According to Louis Baron Montesquieu, a renowned French philosopher in his book "the spirit of

the law", "any relationship that is based on fear is fundamentally corrupt and is at the threshold or beginning of self-destruction". We are now in a stage in our development when everyone is afraid of the other; no one seems to be safe or free. Nigerian politics and electoral process is now characterized by witch-hunting, violence and all forms of wickedness. Politics and indeed politicking in Nigeria is now a strange anathema and many are too scared to participate actively in politics. The unavoidable partiality of the government in critical issues especially when a close ally or relation is to be favoured into positions of power has caused the powerless majority of Nigerians to accept every election result with a pint of salt. Thus, Abdullahi (2003) concludes that "the state is not an impartial referee in the power game, rather a vehicle for the realization of the interest of the dominant class, an agency for class domination which only gives the illusion of serving the interest of the entire populace. Hence, the idea of democracy, equality, fundamental human right and egalitarianism is a farce."

Unstable Economy/Government: kidnapping brings about a down-turn in any economy where it manifests freely and untamed. When people, particularly government functionaries and foreign multinationals are arbitrarily kidnapped, tortured, oil facilities vandalized, confusion rage in the power zones and uncertainty looms everywhere, the economy will become and remain unstably backward, poverty and unemployment becomes the order of the day. Kidnapping has also affected agriculture and food supply as many farmers have had to abandon their farms for fear of being kidnapped in big and small farms that are usually located at the hinterlands and outskirts of the city. These and many more becomes the fate of any government and economy where kidnapping

is rampant and there remains no considerable hope in sight.

Conclusion

Having explored relevant literatures that has scholarly connection with kidnapping as a sure way of creating deviance, It is agreeable to conclude that no economy, business, relationship or socio-political system can thrive were kidnapping has become an organized business and a way of life like in Nigeria today.

Kidnapping is a social problem challenging Nigeria nation and requires urgent solution. This partly accounts for why many multinational corporations have closed down business in Nigeria and a lot more are only but struggling to survive the terror of kidnapping. Beyond this, variegated causes of this malady have been identified which include poverty, unemployment, underemployment, societal/moral decadence, religious fundamentalism, political marginalization, arms proliferation, environmental degradation, illiteracy, political instability, unpopular governance amongst other reasons. Kidnapping damages the image of a country and makes foreign investors to look elsewhere. Government both at national and state levels have made several efforts geared at curbing the crime of kidnapping, such efforts include the granting of amnesty, setting up of joint task force made up of police, armed forces, state security service and civil defense. The movement of army headquarters to war-torn Northeastern part of Nigeria is another veritable measure taken by the government in their bid to curb kidnapping in Nigeria. Some state governments, in their own effort to nullify the act of kidnapping have also passed bills designating capital punishment for anybody involved in kidnapping. Despite these measures, kidnapping has remained

unabated, thriving on daily basis and most victims ended up being raped.

Recommendations

From the foregoing, the following recommendations are deemed favorable to policy makers in our collective bid to bring kidnapping to a minimal level.

1. Government at all levels should formulate and effectively implement life changing policies and programmes that have direct effect and capable of addressing the root causes of kidnapping which includes poverty, unemployment, environmental degradation, electoral policies and reforms etc.

2. Periodic orientation and sensitization programmes for the indigenous people of Nigeria on the negative effects of kidnapping are highly recommended. National programmes targeted at reviving our national values and socio-cultural framework is also an important and adoptable solution to the problems of kidnapping in Nigeria.

3. The government should re-organise the country's security network and build a more proactive security apparatus which will add additional value in checking incessant kidnapping and other violent crimes in Nigeria.

4. Peace studies, conflict resolution and security management should be made part of our academic curriculum both in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions.

5. The issue of community policing should be reviewed and revitalized. There is need for us to uphold the community/local security system once again. This will make the dissemination of information, security alertness/awareness with armed federal security agencies faster, effective and more efficient.

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