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Kidnap for Ransom in Nigeria: Implications for National Security

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Abstract

The study examined the impact of kidnapping for ransom on the people of Nigeria with implications for National security. The general objective of the study was to examine the extent to which kidnapping activities have affected the right to life, personal liberty, freedom and progress of people in Nigeria and to determine the implication for Nigeria's National security. The scope of the study covered the period between 2014 and 2022. The paper posits that kidnapping and kidnapping for ransom activities have negatively affected the life and freedom of people living in Nigeria and thus are a problem for National security. The study adopted the critical discuss analysis approach in the analysis of the phenomena of the study. Themes were generated from the research questions and the phenomena of the study were thus examined under various sub-headings for patterns and analysis. The findings show that kidnapping for ransom in Nigeria have negatively and mostly affected the right to life, freedom and progress of people in Nigeria and hurt National security; hence, the Nigerian security architecture is weak. Consequently, the study recommends that the government security forces should be complemented by private security outfits and vigilantes in all towns and villages; the security and intelligence capacity of the military and the police forces should be built up for effective management of information; and that people in Nigeria should be allowed by an act of parliament to carry arms for self-defence among others.

Keywords: *Kidnapping, Kidnap for ransom, Renegade groups, National security, Unger-governed spaces*

1. Introduction

National security is an embodiment of state-centric security and human security framework that ensures the stability, healthiness, prosperity, freedom, and peace of a nation-state. The absence of mitigation or effective control of existential threats to the peace, security and safety of the citizens and the state indicates the incapability of the state's security architecture to manage its internal and external security challenges. This fact proposes

that the level or degree of insecurity in the state and the harm to citizens will be minimal in a general atmosphere of order and stability. The existence of existential threats in the state that create an atmosphere of fear, insecurity and substantial harm to the citizens on the other hand presupposes the incapacity of the state's security architecture to ensure the peace and security of the state and its citizens. In this wise, an atmosphere of uncertainty of the security of the people and even the state and its institutions will become prevalent. This scenario is the prevailing atmosphere in Nigeria. In Nigeria, insecurity activities such as terrorism, banditry, kidnapping for ransom and others have become prevalent across the state with most states in the North East, North West, North Central and South East the worst hit. The above assertions have been corroborated by Mayer (2021) and Aljazeera (2021).

The activities of armed groups have put the citizens in a state of perpetual fear and danger daily. These groups' activities have resulted in the control of some ungoverned spaces in some states in Nigeria like Niger and Katsina States; where the security apparatus of the armed forces has grown so thin and the renegade and non-state groups have taken advantage to subjugate and terrorize the citizens in these including subjecting them to the payment of royalties amid killings, maiming, rape and other atrocities. Kidnapping activities have become active occurrences in Nigeria regularly posing a threat to the safety of the citizens in their houses, farmlands, and highways. Some people have resulted to flying to their destinations to avoid being killed or kidnapped by bandits on the highways. Examples of kidnapping activities include the Chibok Secondary School Girls (204) kidnapped in 2014, the Dapchi Secondary School Girls kidnap in 2018, and the Kaduna–Abuja train kidnapped in 2022 to mention a few (Amnesty International, 2021; Channels Television, 2021).

Kidnapping activities have also extended to the demand and payment of ransom for kidnapped victims. The renegade groups have turned kidnapping activities into a lucrative business venture. Between 2014 and 2022, kidnapping for ransom has been on the rise and millions of naira have been lost to bandits and kidnappers as the victims and their relatives and at times the government are made to negotiate and pay various sums of money as ransom to secure the freedom of kidnapped victims (Sanni, 2022; Peterside, 2022). Thus, the lives of the citizens of Nigeria have been plagued by the threat to the right to life, personal liberty, freedom of movement and association, including an atmosphere of fear, and psychological and mental disorientation, all of which are guaranteed constitutional provisions in Nigeria. The federal government have made attempts to arrest the drift in security, but the efforts and imparts seem to be spread too thin which explains the ascendancy of criminals and armed activities in Nigeria despite the existence of the government and all its security architecture. This assertion has been corroborated by Lenshie *et al.* (2020), The Conversation (2022), Jannamike (2021) and Barnett and Rufai (2021).

This study thus, focuses on the impacts of kidnapping and kidnapping for ransom in Nigeria and the implications for national security. The study posits that kidnapping for ransom has negatively impacted the right to life, personal freedom, freedom of movement and association and psychological disorientation of the people living within Nigeria. Studies by scholars and bodies such as Goodluck Jonathan Foundation (2021), Lawal (n.d.), Ebonine (2022) and others, have focused on banditry and terrorism and its economic and national security implications for Nigeria, but none have taken their research to the perspective and focus outlined in the present study. Thus, the study is novel in the sense that it not only seeks to determine the effectiveness of the state security architecture in ensuring the maintenance of human security, in general but focuses on specific physical, psychological and humanistic security frameworks that are vital for human existence and the good life. Furthermore, studies have not particularly focused on kidnapping for ransom to examine specifically the effect on human freedom, safety and progress. The study's scope thus, encompasses selected cases of kidnapping and kidnapping for ransom from affected states in Nigeria especially, where the incidences of kidnapping are rife. The study is qualitative and relies on both primary and secondary sources of data from newspapers, articles, television and the Internet.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Kidnapping activities have been on the rise in Nigeria especially since the year 2014. Various renegade groups have risen and taken up arms against the members of society and the state. Several persons have been raided, robbed, rapped, maimed and killed by bandits. Kidnapping activities have been perpetrated by these renegade groups including terrorist groups who have now turned kidnapping for payment and ransom into a lucrative

business. Though, the law against kidnapping was passed in March 2002, kidnapping and subjugation of victims to payment of ransom are still rife. Kidnapping activities have negative impacts on the security of the citizens and thus, on national security.

Kidnapping activities have impacted negatively on the freedom, peace and progress of society. They lead to loss of economic goods, and money, harm to peace, safety, freedom of movement and association, and lives. Kidnapping activities impinge on the capacity of the state to fulfil its obligation to guarantee the right to life, peace, freedom of movement and association and engage in the production of economic goods and material wellbeing. The federal and other tiers of government are struggling to ensure the security of their citizens as these renegade groups have continued to carry out illicit activities despite government efforts to curtail them, to the extent that some local government areas in Nigeria like Niger and Katsina states are under the control of bandits. This study is meant to critically analyze the activities of kidnapping for ransom and to determine the effects these illicit activities have on the security, peace, freedom, and progress of the people within the Nigerian geographical space and on national security.

1.2. Research Questions

1.2.1. To What Extent

1) How has kidnapping for ransom affected the safety, freedom, economy, psychology, and progress of the people in Nigeria?

2) How has kidnapping for ransom affected the capacity of the Nigerian state to guarantee the safety, freedom, peace and progress of the people in Nigeria?

1.2.2. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to determine the effect of kidnap for ransom on the lives of the people in Nigeria and the security implications.

The specific objectives are:

1) To examine the extent to which kidnapping for ransom has affected the safety, freedom, economy, psychology, and progress of the people in Nigeria.

2) To determine the extent to which kidnapping for ransom have affected the state's capacity to guarantee the safety, freedom, peace and progress of the people in Nigeria.

1.2.3. Scope of the Study

The study is limited to the activities of kidnapping and kidnapping for ransom from selected cases between 2014 and 2022 in Nigeria.

1.2.4. Conceptual Elucidation

Contemporary security (rural or urban) referred to as banditry has become a major problem in Nigeria particularly, in the northern part. This has led to a serious security threat to the lives, freedom, infrastructure, environment, and economy of Nigeria and Nigerians. Incidences of kidnapping have become a daily occurrence and conversation in Nigeria. This concept is explained within the context and operational understanding of the study.

Kidnapping represents or connotes the act of taking people hostage (away from the kidnap point) to achieve a particular objective (Abdullahi, 2019). Kidnapping for ransom thus connotes the act of taking people hostage or abducting them to demand and collect ransom. The abductee is released after such ransom has been paid (Okoli and Ugwu, 2019). Bandits and insurgents are most often associated with the activities of kidnapping and kidnapping for ransom. According to Murtala (2018), bandits are involved in the mass killings of mostly civilians, kidnapping, sexual violence, rustling of cattle and other associated human rights abuses. These various atrocities committed variously by bandits have harmed the safety, freedom of movement, and association; led to psychological dysfunctions, trauma from family separation and economic disarticulation of Nigerians and political instability in Nigeria. The above scenario termed the political economy of banditry and insecurity in Nigeria by this study continues to thrive despite the efforts of the state security apparatus to stem the tide. In

line with the above assertions, Murtala (2018) avers that structures and mechanisms put in place to arrest the upsurge of banditry activities in the Northern part of Nigeria by both state and non-state actors have been futile.

1.3. Theoretical Discourse

1.3.1. State Fragility and Banditry Activities

As a concept, State fragility has become an important aspect of international political tools for explaining the existence of various criminalities by stakeholders and scholars in the field. Several plausible generalizations have been put forward in this regard. For instance, the character of a collapsed state was described by Torres and Anderson (2004) while Rotberg (2004) conceptualized states that have either failed or are failing. Morcos (2005) conceptualized fragile states as countries that exhibit less capacity to evolve and execute public development-oriented policies and less capacity for political development. According to the Crisis States Research Centre (2007), state fragility is exemplified by countries exhibiting sub-systems vulnerability and are predominantly conflict-ridden internally and externally. In addition to the above, the term 'failing state' typified a country whose government has performed poorly in providing for the public good and achieving economic and people-oriented development (CRISE, 2009).

The Nigerian State typically fits into the above descriptions of a weak and failing state that lacks an effective security network to curb or mitigate kidnap for ransom and other criminalities. This position is corroborated by Falayi (2014) and Okoli and Lenshie (2018). The Nigerian State cannot exercise control over some areas of their territory (such as in Niger and Katsina) in combating internal threats of banditry, kidnapping and other forms of criminalities or insurgency (Stepputat and Engberg-Pedersen, 2008; Stewart and Brown, 2010; Lenshie *et al.*, 2020). The Nigerian state is confronted with the challenge of providing effective security for its citizens mostly in the Northern parts where bandits have seriously undermined the military capacity of the security apparatus of the state despite the military efforts (Olokor, 2014; Okoli, 2019a). The inability of the state to evolve a superior strategy to counter the kidnapping network and operations portends the state as failing.

1.3.2. The Ungoverned Spaces Thesis and Banditry Activities

The conceptual framework of the ungoverned spaces thesis was developed from the fallout of the September 9/11/2001 terrorist bombing of the World Trade Centres in the United States of America. According to Rabasa *et al.* (2017), the theoretical perspective of ungoverned spaces is a paradigm that seeks to explain the spatial territorial dimensions of a state's security problems, particularly from a fragile or weak state perspective. Lenshie *et al.* (2020) avers that the deficiency in weak or fragile states presents the context and conducive environment for anti-state forces to usurp and dominate certain parts of a state's territory. Organized crimes and insurgencies find expressions within ungoverned territories to carry out illicit activities (Ojo, 2020). The existing conditions or environment of ungoverned, poorly governed and under-governed spheres within a state creates the enabling environment for the evolution and activities of non-state actors that often compete with the state or contest its authority (Okoli, 2019a). In the evolving scenario of ungoverned spaces, the absence of strong or formidable control by the authority of a state, according to Olayoku (2014), is that the people living within the affected territory become gradually overwhelmed by an illicit governance system of the anti-state forces. In such instances, the state authority is usually subverted and usurped by irregular government established by bandits and insurgent groups.

The ungoverned spaces thesis applies to Nigeria. Nigeria's jurisdictional environment or territorial sphere is acutely under-governed in some remote areas. This assertion becomes apparent from the existence of under-controlled or under-policed hinterlands, forestlands, borderlands and international frontiers, especially in the Northern parts that anti-state groups have occupied (Albert, 2018; Okoli and Ogayi, 2018). In the Northwestern and North central parts of the Nigerian state, scores of bandits have taken over and authoritatively controlled several local communities in Zamfara, Niger, Katsina, Benue, Kaduna and Plateau states (Onwuzuruigbo, 2020). The weak or fragile state structure of the Nigerian state has manifested in various dysfunctional ways through poor management of the hinterland, and borderland, prevalence of communal, sectarian and extreme violence (Okoli and Ogayi, 2018; Okoli, 2019b); and has become a safe place for organized criminality (Olaniyan, 2017). These poorly managed territories have provided the avenue for violently organized

crimes like cattle rustling, kidnapping for ransom and village raids to thrive (Okoli and Lenshie, 2018). These scenarios have accounted for the evolution of a criminally sustained economic environment within which armed banditry is produced and reproduced.

The employment of state fragility and ungoverned space perspectives to explain the criminality of banditry activities in Nigeria is very apt. The theories succinctly capture the dysfunctional and weak networks of institutions, resulting in poor governance, poor policy implementation, poverty, corruption and weak state capacity to respond to security threats such as bandits and other anti-state forces. This scenario thus leads to the evolution of various criminalities and organized criminal groups that have outstretched the state's capacity to authoritatively manage, control, and ensure the safety of the people within the Nigerian territory. The failure of government to properly coordinate the social institutions and ensure equity, effective participation and good governance, resulted in the fragility of these institutions, especially the state security architecture. This failure led to the emergence and volatility of criminalities buoyed by the lack of effective control of the territorial spheres that have left some spaces either poorly governed or scarcely without government or security forces' presence. These poorly governed spaces have thus been taken over by bandits and other organized criminal groups who carryout kidnapping activities often demanding for ransom. The pervading security threats in Nigeria have thus, impacted negatively on the right to life, freedom of movement and association, psychological orientation, safety and economic progress of the people.

These scenarios of ungoverned spaces controlled by bandits now create a situation where Nigerians live under the control or at the mercy of criminals and anti-state forces within the territorial spheres that the Nigerian government swore to protect and administer. There are no more appropriate and apt theoretical explanations of the Nigerian security dilemma than the above analyzed theories.

2. Methodology of the Study

The study adopts the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach in the analysis of the phenomena. It is a qualitative research method adopted in the social sciences and humanities disciplines. Thus political discourse is used in this study to examine the effects of kidnapping for ransom on the abuse and dominance of society by renegade groups. The critical discourse analysis includes four steps. These are defining the research questions and selecting the content of analysis, gathering data and theory on the context, analyzing the content for themes and patterns, reviewing results and drawing conclusions (Luo, 2019/2023). The study is qualitative and relies on both primary and secondary sources of data from newspapers, articles, television and the Internet.

The discourse was structured into themes which were hypothesized and discussed under the following subheads.

1. Kidnapping for ransom have impacted negatively on the security and right to life of people in Nigeria.

2. Kidnapping for ransom have negatively affected the right to personal liberty and freedom of movement of people in Nigeria.

3. Kidnapping for ransom have created an atmosphere of fear, psychological disorientation and food insecurity in Nigeria.

4. Kidnapping for ransom have negatively impacted the economy of households in Nigeria.

5. The capacity of the Nigerian security apparatus to ensure adequate protection for people in Nigeria is weak.

2.1. Analysis of Data and Discussion of Findings

This section is discussed and analyzed according to the hypothesized themes constructed from the cases and activities of kidnapping and kidnapping for ransom in Nigeria.

2.2. Kidnapping for Ransom Impacts the Safety and Life of People in Nigeria

Kidnapping activities in Nigeria have resulted in a high degree of insecurity and safety for the people in Nigeria. Armed bandits and other criminal gangs have carried out unprecedented acts of kidnapping, killings

cattle rustling and targeted attacks on the public that have led to displacements and socio-economic disruptions in Nigeria, especially the Northern parts.

These gangs have contributed to widespread violence leading to looting, rape, kidnapping, murder, and others. In line with the above assertions Ojo *et al.* (2023) reported that between 2018 and 2020 about 4,900 people were killed by bandits and hundreds of thousands internally displaced in the North-West of Nigeria. In parts of the country, between January and June 2021, 1,405 persons were kidnapped in the Northwest; 942 persons in the North-Central; 210 persons in the Northeast; 169 persons in the Southwest; 140 persons in the South-South; and 77 persons in the Southeast (Sahara Reporters, 2021).

From 2014 to 2022, a host of people have been attacked and kidnapped and often made to pay ransom for their release. For instance, in 2014, 276 secondary school girls were kidnapped in Chibok, Borno state; 110 secondary school girls were kidnapped in Dapchi, Yobe state; in 2020, over 300 secondary school boys were also kidnapped from Kankara in Katsina state (Amnesty International, 2021; Orjinmo, 2021). According to Obiezu (2023), between July 2021 and June 2022, about 653.7million naira was paid as ransom for kidnapped victims in Nigeria. The report stated that over 500 cases of kidnapping were recorded, 3,420 victims of kidnapping were abducted while about 540 others lost their lives to violence associated with kidnapping (Obiezu, 2023).

2.3. Kidnapping for Ransom Impacts on Personal Liberty, Freedom of Movement, and Educational Development in Nigeria

The activities of armed bandits and kidnappers in Nigeria between 2014 and 2022 seriously limited and threatened the liberty and freedom of people to move from place to place. It also curtailed or disrupted mainly secondary educational development especially, in the Northern parts of Nigeria. Across the Nigerian states several roads, constituted deaths trap as bandits frequently attack and kidnap victims who travel along these roads. For instance, it was estimated that over US $18 million was paid as ransom between January 2011 and March 2020 (The Conversation, 2022). In 2019, several travellers were abducted by gunmen on the Owo-Benin road including the killing of Oba Adeusi- the Olufon of Ifon by gunmen (Alagbe, 2021). Furthermore, in 2020, many travellers were abducted on the Akure Road and Owo-Benin Road which were released after the payment of ransom (Alagbe, 2021). Likewise in 2021 score of travellers were abducted by gunmen in Akure-Oyo express-way; these people were also released after the payment of ransom to the abductors. These incidences can result in a phobia of travelling on the roads (Alagbe, 2021; Mayer, 2021). Some of the roads considered highway risks and death traps in Nigeria include-Kano-Kaduna, East-West, Ibadan-Ilesha, Akoko-Kogi-Lokoja-Abuja, Akure-Benin, Akure-Lagos, Ife-Ibadan, Owo-Benin, Lagos-Ibadan and others (Omorogbe, 2021; Alagbe, 2021). Travellers and transporter were robbed, abducted, raped and killed by bandits and criminal gangs on these roads (Omorogbe, 2021). These heinous activities by bandits and other criminal elements across the Nigerian state have limited and threatened the liberty and freedom of people living in Nigeria to move about and travel to conduct their legitimate businesses. For example, between July 2021 and June 2022, a total of 500 incidences of kidnapping occurred in Nigeria leading to the abduction of 3,420, with 564 people killed (Obiezu, 2023).

Apart from the threats to liberty and freedom of movement, kidnapping activities have also disrupted the education system through targeted abductions of school children to the extent that some schools closed their boarding facilities and even their sessions for fear of kidnappers' activities. Aside from the 2014 Chibok secondary school girls abduction and the 2018 Dapchi school girls abduction, Aljazeera stated that between 2020 and 2021, over 700 students were abducted, especially in the northern parts of Nigeria (Aljazeera, 2021; Amnesty International, 2021). Aljazeera (2021) quoting a report from UNICEF noted that the massive student abductions have disrupted the academic activities of more than 5 million children. Shiklam *et al.* (2021) reported that 618 schools were closed down in six Northern states for fear of kidnappers, abducting the children. The states included Sokoto, Zamfara, Kano, Katsina, Niger, and Yobe. These incidences and actions have further exacerbated the already low enrollment and standard of education in the Northern parts of Nigeria.

2.4. Kidnapping for Ransom in Nigeria: A Creation of Extreme Fear, Psychological Disorientation and Food Insecurity in Nigeria

Banditry and other criminal elements have turned the various highways and society, especially the Northern

parts of Nigeria into a theatre of fear, apprehension, and psychological disorientation. Travellers and commuters have been thrown into a state of commotion as they daily live in fear of being killed, kidnapped or raped as they travel along the Nigerian roads. According to a report by Omoregbe (2021), in the East, West, North and South of Nigeria, commercial drivers and travellers decried the spate or rate of attacks by bandits and kidnappers that have resulted in the loss of lives, economy and valuables. Thus, motorists and travellers have been subjected to a constant state of fear as the attacks continued without stiff opposition from the security forces (Omoregbe, 2021). For instance, the interview conducted by the Nigerian tribune revealed that a commercial driver (Daniel Aibinuori) plying the Akure-Lokoja route stated that kidnapping on that route was a daily occurrence as empty vehicles are frequently seen on the roads with the occupants abducted. Another driver interviewed (Wale Adenrele) plying the Ikare-Akoko route recounted how he and others including a military officer were kidnapped and spent ten days in the forest before a ransom was paid for their release (Omoregbe, 2021).

Banditry has also affected people living within the various communities especially the rural people in Nigeria. According to Peterside (2022), in 2022 about 45 people were kidnapped during a vigil of the cherubim and seraphim church in Zamfara State. The kidnappers demanded a ransom of N200 million from their relatives for their release. These situations were very traumatic for the abductees and relatives who had to go scrabbling to meet the demands of the abductors in an already prevailing condition of poverty and food security crisis (Goodluck Jonathan Foundation, 2021).

Banditry activities have also affected the agricultural sector negatively. As a result of the attacks and raids by bandits in most rural areas of Nigeria especially the Northern parts, the killing and displacements of people by bandits not only reduce the capable hands to engage in agriculture but renders people homeless turning them into IDP's with no means of livelihood that increases the crisis of food security. Furthermore, those kidnapped for ransom are thrown into a state of penury after making payment for their release thus depleting their economic and agricultural empowerment. For instance, in 2021, more than 1,000 kidnappings for ransom took place in the Northwestern and North central states of Nigeria (Ojo *et al.*, 2023). The terror campaign by bandits have culminated in the killing and kidnapping for ransom of farmers and pastoralists, that have further worsened food insecurity, poverty and inequality (International Crisis Group, 2018).

2.5. Kidnapping for Ransom Impact on the Economy of Households in Nigeria

The activities of kidnappers have adversely affected the economy of households across states in Nigeria. Millions of Naira has been lost through ransom payments for victims of kidnapping. Sanni (2022) stated that research conducted by S.B. Morgan Intelligence published in August 2022, indicated that incidences of banditry and the associated cost of kidnapping for ransom are huge for both people and the country. According to the report, a recorded N6, 531 billion was demanded by bandits as ransom while the sum of N657.3 was paid between July 2021 and June 2022. In addition to the above sum, N100 million was collected from eight Nigerian hostages and N200 million from a Pakistani hostage on July 25, 2022 (Sanni, 2022; Peterside, 2022).

According to The Conversation (2022), between January 2011 and March 2020, an estimated US$18 million was lost to ransom payments to free victims from kidnappers' dens. The cost of kidnapping implies that reasonable resources that could be used to empower individuals- human capacity- and grow the economy are lost to kidnappers making the individual victims economically and financially vulnerable, deprived of livelihood and in a helpless condition (Arvin, 2021; Mayer, 2021).

2.6. Kidnapping for Ransom in Nigeria: The Effectiveness of Government Security Forces Response

Kidnapping activities pose a threat to the peace, stability, progress, and security of the people in Nigeria and to national security. It is the duty of the Nigerian state by extension the government of Nigeria to ensure the safety of life and property and to ensure the physical and mental wellbeing of the people in Nigeria as provided by the constitution. However, the rate of banditry, kidnapping activities and other criminal vices across Nigeria has placed a big question mark on the capacity of the Nigerian security forces to provide adequate security for the life and property of the people within Nigeria. The Conversation (2022) stated that more than 3,000 people were kidnapped in the first six months of 2021 and 571 in January 2022. Thus, banditry and criminal elemental activities cut across Nigeria.

Several military operations have been launched by both Federal and State Governments to curtail and mitigate the criminalities of banditry and kidnapping for ransom. The capacity of the Nigerian police force to contain criminality in Nigeria is limited. According to Arvin (2021), in a country of about 200 million people, there are only 350,000 police officers; about 50% of them are attached to VIPs (Governors, Companies and Private Citizens); 20%, attend to administrative duties leaving about 30% to fight crime across the country. Moreover, in Katsina state, there were only 30 police officers to police in 100 villages in August 2020 (Arvin, 2021). Thus, the capacity of the police to fight crime in Nigeria is grossly limited. The limited personnel of the police force give more room for the bandits and other criminal gangs to operate in mostly rural areas in Nigeria. In line with this notion, Hassan (2021) reported that the bandits operating in the Northwest of Nigeria in 2020 were about 30,000 divided into over 100 separate gangs with sophisticated weapons such as the AK 47 riffles (Anyadike, 2023). Because of the limitations of the police force in terms of shortage of personnel, the military was drafted in to help. The Nigerian federal Government has launched several military operations to fight banditry, kidnapping and other forms of criminality in Nigeria. However, the military suffers from inadequate personnel to commit to fighting banditry as they are involved in almost every part of the country fighting renegade groups, terrorism, oil thieves and others (Arvin, 2021).

2.7. Analysis of Results and Implications for National Security

Two questions were proposed to be answered by the study. These were: (1) To find out if kidnapping for ransom activities have negatively affected the security, peace, freedom, and progress of people in Nigeria; and (2) To find out if kidnapping activities have affected the capacity of the Nigerian state to guarantee the safety, freedom, peace, and progress of people in Nigeria. In line with the above research questions, the objectives of the study were thus, to determine the extent to which kidnapping activities have affected the security, peace, freedom, and progress of people in Nigeria; including the capacity of the Nigerian security forces to guarantee safety. To this end, five themes were structured out of the research questions under which the various subjects of the study were analyzed.

The results of the analysis of theme one shows that people are being kidnapped daily and killed, villages are raided and razed. Thus, the activities of bandits and kidnappers have posed an existential threat to the generality of people in Nigeria. These results have achieved research objectives one and two and research questions one and two.

The results of the cases and incidences of kidnapping for ransom examined in theme two shows that kidnapping activities have grossly limited the rights to personal liberty and freedom of movement of people in Nigeria. Due to the high rate of kidnapping in towns and villages and on the highways in Nigeria, people's liberty has been curtailed as they live in fear and secluded. Thus, freedom of movement has been limited as they seldom travel for fear of being kidnapped, robbed, and killed by bandits. These results achieved and answered research objectives and questions one and two.

The results of the theme three analyses show that kidnapping for ransom activities have caused the people in Nigeria to live in a disoriented state of perpetual fear and agricultural retardation. The victims of kidnap and their relatives pass through agony, as the victims are subjected to torture, rape, hunger, death and more. Even after their release, their experiences continue to hunt them. On their part, the kidnap victims' relatives pass through a lot of traumas because of the incident and the process of raising the ransom payment. Thousands of people have fled several rural areas, especially in the Northwest, displaced and put in IDP camps because of bandits' attack. Many schools in the Northwest were closed in 2021 because of the incessant banditry attacks and mass abductions of secondary school students. Banditry and kidnapping activities have also, negatively affected agricultural activities. Farming activities have suffered neglect as people in Nigeria are afraid of being kidnapped in the farms and many people in the Northwest have fled their homes and have been displaced and turned IDPs while many able-bodied men and women have been killed. The farming communities have thus been depleted causing a serious food security crisis in Nigeria, especially in the Northern parts. Pastoralists' economic power has been depleted as bandits and other criminal elements rustle cattle, especially in Northern Nigeria. These activities of bandits have affected the livelihood of cattle owners, members of the public and the economy negatively because of cattle loss, money loss and shortage of beef; thus, increasing food insecurity. The analysis shows that the activities of bandits have caused colossal damage to the Nigerian economy and agriculture. These scenarios posed an existential threat to the peace, and physical and mental

well-being of people in Nigeria. These results thus, achieved the research objectives and research questions one and two.

The results of the analysis of theme four show that the activities of kidnappers have negatively and grossly affected the economy of households in Nigeria. Billions of naira has been lost by people in Nigeria to kidnappers. The payment of ransom to kidnappers has depleted the purchasing power of households affected by the kidnapping and reduced their investment capacity. The ransom payment could lead to bankruptcy as some victims' relatives or parents have sold houses, properties or borrowed to pay the humungous amount usually demanded by the bandits. The billions of naira lost to kidnappers could harm the Nigerian economy because the kidnappers would not normally invest the money gotten from kidnapping in projects that would bring growth to the economy but on arms, ammunition, drugs and other wasteful ventures. The results thus answered and achieved research questions and objectives one and two.

The results of the analysis of theme five show that the Nigerian security architecture and capacity to guarantee the security, peace, and well-being of the people in Nigeria is weak, fragile, and limited. The Nigerian police force suffers from inadequacy of personnel and is thus ineffective in fighting banditry and kidnapping activities. Although the military has been brought in to complement the police, the various joint operations and air bombardments have only yielded momentary success. The military lacks adequate manpower to commit to fighting banditry as they are almost in every part of the country fighting criminal gangs, terrorism, oil thieves and others. The existence of large ungoverned areas especially in the Northern part of the country has provided a haven for bandits and criminal gangs to habit, breed and carry out their activities. It also provided the bandits the opportunity to relocate from one place to the other and to evade and avoid attack by the Nigerian security force. Thus, the incapacity of the Nigerian security forces to effectively check kidnapping in Nigeria has left the state fragile and has created an environment and sense of insecurity in the people living in Nigeria. The results of theme five align with research question and objective three.

The results from the thematic constructs have dire implications and consequences for Nigeria's National security. National security in the context of the study encompasses the state-centric security and human security frameworks. National security encompasses the concepts of military security, economic security, environmental security, cyber security, political security, and energy and natural resources security (Longley, 2021). It is the responsibility of the state to ensure the provision and management of the above-mentioned elements or variables of security. It is from these elements that the concept of human security is gleaned. The concept of state-centric security expanded to accommodate the provision of security to encompass all spectrums of human well-being. Thus, human security embodies the individual and the society in areas of economy, environment, food, health, personal security, community security, and political security (United Nations, 2018).

These core elements of human security are categorized into three broad divisions. These are the assurance or provision of security to ensure that human survival is protected and promoted, thus ensuring freedom from fear, the provisions for human's daily needs, that is, freedom from want, and the protection and promotion of human dignity (United Nations, 2018). As shown from the results of the study, it is apparent that the security forces and by extension the Nigerian state have failed to provide effective police and military protection to the people living in Nigeria. This failure has resulted in a myriad of crises and problems of human environmental insecurity, economic insecurity, personal insecurity, physical insecurity, and others. Kidnapping activities in Nigeria have caused many people to live in constant fear of being kidnapped and exploited to pay ransom. These criminal activities have limited the freedom of people to move from place to place in Nigeria and have hampered economic and agricultural activities.

The problem of insecurities is thus, the bane of National Security. The reality is that Nigeria is faced with challenges of economic insecurity, environmental insecurity, natural resources insecurity, and human insecurity that could result in political instability and legitimacy crisis. A state that cannot ensure and assure the protection and promotion of peace, safety, and progress of society, cannot earn the loyalty and support of the people.

3. Conclusion

The study examined the impact of kidnapping for ransom activities on the right to life, personal safety, and freedom of movement of people in Nigeria between 2014 and 2022. It also examined the effect of the criminal activities of kidnapping on Nigeria's national security. The study set forth basic research questions and

research objectives which have been successfully answered and achieved. The results from the analysis show that kidnapping for ransom has negatively affected the rights, freedom, and progress of people in Nigeria and National security. The analysis from relevant literature shows that thousands of people have been kidnapped and billions of naira lost to kidnappers. The Nigerian Federal government and various states government have made several efforts to curtail the activities of the bandits and other criminal gangs operating in Nigeria, but their efforts have been retarded by inadequate personnel and the existence of very large and poorly managed or governed spaces that have provided a haven for various criminalities. Thus, the Nigerian state is faced with various human security and military security challenges that pose serious threats to socio-economic progress, political stability, and sovereignty.

4. Recommendation

Given the above submission and in line with the findings of the study, the following suggestions towards mitigating the problem of kidnapping for ransom in Nigeria are made below.

1. The government security forces should be complemented by private security outfits and local vigilantes in all towns and villages in Nigeria. Security management is no longer the exclusive preserve of the state as criminal actors and their activities have become more complicated and sophisticated. The Nigerian state should thus regularize and support the private and local security outfits.

2. The security and intelligence capacity of the military and the police forces should be built up to effectively manage information and to check the activities of bandits, kidnapping and other criminal activities in Nigeria. Without adequate and effective intelligence and information management, the fight against banditry and kidnapping for ransom would be very difficult to mitigate.

3. The state government should run their security outfits to complement the federal government security forces. The various state governments in conjunction with the federal government should establish a joint state security network in each State; comprising of the federal security forces, state security forces, private security forces and the vigilantes or community security networks to simultaneously launch attacks against criminalities from every state, based on joint-security cooperation. Thus, a simultaneous security operation would flush out the bandits and other criminal gangs inhabiting the Nigerian forests.

4. The personnel capacity of the military and police forces should be improved to ensure that more security personnel are drafted to combat crime since a portion of the forces, especially the police force, perform other duties like protecting government officials, political elites, companies and private individuals.

5. The Nigerian state should enact a law that would allow people living in Nigeria to carry guns for self-defence. The guns should be licensed. The possession and right to carry guns would limit the incidences of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria. This would break the monopoly of illegal possession of guns by criminals who usually attack and abduct defenceless people at will.

5. Contribution to Knowledge

The study made the following contributions to extant literature and knowledge. The study of kidnapping for ransom in Nigeria linked with national security.

The study of the impact of kidnapping for ransom on the right to life, personal liberty, progress and freedom of movement of people in Nigeria.

6. Prospects for Further Research

The study was mostly based on desk research. A field research on the study variables. Such a study would help to further reveal the psychological and emotional trauma suffered by victims of banditry and kidnapping in Nigeria.

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