

Citizens' Perception on Effects of Kidnapping on Security in Edo South Senatorial District

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ABSTRACT: *The cases of kidnapping in Nigeria and in Edo State in particular are rising, and taking dangerous dimensions. What exists in the literature is an ample of research reports on the causes and socioeconomic implications of kidnapping. The general objective of this study is to explore citizens' perception of the effects of the rising incidence of kidnapping on the security situations in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State. The exploratory research design operated with the cross sectional research design was adopted for this study. The calculated sample size for this study was placed at approximately 816. For the collection of qualitative data, the purposive sampling techniques were used to select two interviewees from each of the local government areas. Hence, there were 14 interviewees for the collection of qualitative data that complemented the quantitative data. The majority of respondents (54.7%) believe that the death of victims during kidnappings is avoidable or preventable. There was statistically significant difference in the perception of the level of panic due to kidnapping in Edo South according to the age groups. There is statistically significant association between educational qualification and the tendency to get the Police involved in cases of kidnapping. There was statistically significant difference in perceived police effectiveness in the fight against kidnapping in Edo South according the respondents' nature of employment. In conclusion, there is a significant number of people who are concerned about kidnapping in their area, with most of affirming a high level of panic due to kidnapping. Kidnapping has a negative impact on society and is a source of fear and concern for many people. The lack of proper security measures adds to the problem, and people are left to take precautions to avoid being kidnapped. The citizens are adjusting to the panic caused by kidnapping by taking practical measures to ensure their safety and seeking solace through spiritual practices. It is recommended that the police should take proactive measures to prevent kidnappings, have the necessary resources and training to handle kidnapping cases, and work with other security agencies and organizations to provide support and services to victims after their release.*

KEYWORDS: perception, kidnapping, security, police, agencies

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria as a country and Edo as a state in Nigeria have witnessed a colossal increase in kidnapping in recent years (Mofoluwawo, 2021), and this has created the likelihood of the emergence of certain security implications. Kidnapping people for ransom is prevalent in many countries today (Owagbemi and Olaseinde, 2021). Actually, kidnapping is perpetrated and experienced all over the world, but some cities are known for having a lot of kidnappings (Owagbemi and Olaseinde, 2021). In 2001, Colombia was called "the kidnapping capital of the world" because "3600 foreigners" were kidnapped there. Iraq took the title in 2007 with "1500 foreigners," and Mexico took it in 2004 with "3000 foreigners" (Owagbemi and Olaseinde, 2021). Nigeria came in fifth place on a list of the world's most kidnapping-prevalent places (Owagbemi and Olaseinde, 2021). Since then, there has not been a single day without a report of a kidnapping in the country (Owagbemi and Olaseinde, 2021).

Despite the fact that the threat of kidnapping is a familiar crime in Nigeria, the scale and pace of its occurrence, as well as the victims, have changed significantly compared to their nature in time past (Obarisiagbon and Aderinto, 2018). Prior to this, there had been several occurrences of abduction at the local level, with the majority of the victims being minors (Sanyaolu, 2009). Some of "these kidnapping incidents" were linked to "money-making rituals" (Owagbemi and Olaseinde, 2021). Kidnapping has assumed a whole new dimension, with regards to the targets and the motivation of those who engage in it (Inyang and Ubong, 2013). Kidnapping, in the form that it is now perpetrated in Nigeria, cuts beyond "demographic and geographic" borders of states and regions. The fact that it occurs in both an "urban or rural setting is no longer" unusual (Badamsi, Ummu, Kamarul, 2019). This incidence of this fatal crime has not only spread across the nation, but it has also been monetized in many sections of the country (Emanemual and Akinlosotu, 2016). With the malicious emphasis turning away from minors and immigrants, the majority of Nigerians-adult men and females, regardless of their occupations, faiths, and other affiliations-are now the target of the criminals (Bello and Jamilu, 2017).

Edo State, Nigeria is very notorious for kidnapping; acts of kidnapping have reportedly been carried out on all classes of people and for all manner of motives and purposes at different times (Mofoluwawo, 2021). Notwithstanding several laws proscribed and put into effect to combat related crimes, a federal anti-kidnapping legislation does not exist in Nigeria. Yet, legislations prohibiting kidnapping are being enacted by the Federating units in their respective states. There is currently no Federal anti-kidnapping statute in place, despite the many laws and regulations in place to combat such offences. Legislation prohibiting abduction has, however, continued to be passed by Federating States. Since criminality and criminals push boundaries of insecurity on a regular basis, new legislations are required to be enacted to handle the inventiveness of criminality

in modern times. When the "Edo State Kidnapping Prohibition (Amendment) Law was signed into law in October 2013, it demonstrated the Edo State government's commitment cum desire to reduce the state's high kidnapping rate. Yet, in October, 2021, the Governor Godwin Obaseki, the governor of Edo State, stated that "kidnapping still tops the list of crimes, followed by homicides and drugs, in Edo State (Egbejule, 2021). Against this background it becomes pertinent to investigate effects of kidnapping on the security situation in Edo State Nigeria with particular focus in southern region of the state.

Statement of the Problem

The cases of kidnapping in Nigeria and in Edo State in particular are rising, and taking dangerous dimensions. Accordingly, both thinkers in the academia and outside the academia have made both scientific and non-scientific efforts to analyze the causes of kidnapping and the associated effects. What exists in the literature is an ample of research reports on the causes and socioeconomic implications of kidnapping (Ibrahim & Ahmad, 2020). Hence, very little but indirect efforts have been made to investigate effects of kidnapping on security situation in Nigeria from perspective public perception.

In Nigeria, kidnapping has evolved into a form of organized crime that has its essence in the unlawful intentional deprivation of a person's freedom of movement in an attempt to criminally exploit the situation to extort money or other economic advantages from victims or their family members or associates (Odoma and Akor, 2019). Kidnapping undermines the social fabrics of society by eroding the sense of security and safety. Its cost could be tangible, intangible, economic, social, physical, psychological, primary and secondary on individual and society at large (Ene, 2018). Most devastatingly, it has been noted that, it is the fear of kidnapping that has contributed to the current high demand for police escort by diverse public officials in the country, thereby further depleting the inadequate police personnel that could have been deployed to street for crime control (Soyombo, 2009). Most people live in fear, as they do not know who will be next to be kidnapped. In this wise, it is pertinent to specifically ascertain citizens' perception of the level of public panic in Edo South due to rising incidence of kidnappings.

In Nigeria there is rising reported incidents of kidnapping of road users. Vehicles conveying road users are stopped and commuters are taken hostage. Recent studies on these unfortunate incidents indicate that over fifty percent of kidnapping happen on the roads (Ojugbana, Oba & Maxwell, 2018). Victims are usually taken into the bush where negotiations for ransom are conducted with their family members, friends and employers. Kidnapping on the roads have led to preventable deaths, rape, injuries, economic loss and psychological torture of road users (Ojugbana, Oba & Maxwell, 2018). In line with these factual occurrences, not much is known about the nature of the perception of highway safety in this period of rising cases of kidnapping in the highways. Hence, this study sets out to examine public perception of high way safety in line with kidnapping in Edo South.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to explore citizens' perception of the effects of the rising incidence of kidnapping on the security situations in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State. However, the specific objectives are to;

- i. Ascertain the level of public panic due to rising incidence of kidnappings in its bearing on security in Edo South Senatorial District.
- ii. Examine the perception of high way safety in line with kidnapping and its effect on security in Edo South Senatorial District.

Research Questions

Based on the nuances of the statement of the problem, the following research questions are raised:

- i. What is the level of public panic in Edo South due to rising incidence of kidnappings?
- ii. How is the perception of high way safety in line with kidnapping in Edo South?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are formulated for the study:

H₀₁: There is no difference in the perception of citizens of the level of panic induced by kidnapping according to their age group.

H₀₂: There is no difference in the perception of citizens of the level of panic induced by kidnapping according to their educational qualification.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Kidnapping in Nigeria

Just as other concepts in social sciences, there is no a universally accepted or adopted definition of kidnapping because it varies from State to State and jurisdiction to jurisdiction. However, it is the forceful seizure, taking away and unlawful detention of a person against his/her will. The concept of kidnapping seems to have originated around 1682 among those who perpetrate this crime (Mohamed, 2008). It is a common law offence and the key part is that, it is an unwanted act on the part of the victim. It is a restriction of someone else's liberty which violates the key fundamental of the freedom of movement as enshrined in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, where every other law takes its cue from (John, 2020). Hence, kidnapping is adjudged a serious offence in Nigeria.

Kidnapping is also seen as a crime of seizing, confining, abducting or carrying away of persons by force or fraud often subjecting him or her to involuntary servitude in an attempt to demand a ransom or in furtherance of another crime (John, 2020). Therefore, it is an act of snatching and seizing of a person in order to collect a ransom in return or settle some scores of disagreement among people. In the view of Thomas and Nta (2009) kidnapping is termed as robbery of the

highest rank. To them, it is an organized and systematic robbery which is not as deadly as armed-robbery, but more profitable than the former. The profitability has encouraged those that indulged in it to carry on with the act although there is a law prohibiting it. Nwaorah, (2009) defined kidnapping as an act of an angry man who wants to take any person of value hostage, and who could be rescued by loved ones. In most cases, victims are often released after payment of ransom. In criminal law, kidnapping is defined as taking away of a person by force, threat or deceit with intent to cause him/her to be detained against his or her will (Asuquo, 2009).

In Nigeria, the current wave of kidnapping began with the abduction of expatriate oil workers by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND) in late 2005 as a means of alerting the world of the many years of injustice, exploitation, marginalization and underdevelopment of Nigeria Delta region (Onduku, 2001). Statistics shows that Nigeria records more than 1,000 kidnapping incidents a year, and there are undoubtedly many that are unreported (Catlin Group, 2012). The business “of kidnapping in Nigeria can be traced to what Townsend, (2008) referred to as “natural resource nationalism” which is the tendency to seek bigger shares of the returns from nation’s natural resources. Omeje, (2010) termed kidnapping trade as “accumulation politics” which is the tendency for the ruling class to be involved in endless accumulation of natural resource rents accruing from the owner’s region through deliberate act of marginalization and deprivation. The ease with which the act was carried out and the bounties that regularly ensued with little or no resistance from law enforcement agencies led to the expansion of the heinous act to South-Eastern Nigeria, with Abia State as the ‘defacto kidnap headquarters’ of the region. The height of the onslaught of kidnapers in South-Eastern Nigeria was the kidnap of Dr. Chris Ngige, then, a sitting governor of Anambra State (Awuzie, 2004). Thus within a spate of three years, the entire Southern Nigeria was overtaken by the malaise of kidnapping. The menace eventually spread to other parts of present-day Nigeria. Following the kidnap of two hundred and seventy-six (276) secondary school girls in Chibok community of Borno State in North-Eastern Nigeria by Boko Haram terrorists on April 14, 2014, kidnapping became a lucrative criminal venture embarked upon by hoodlums from virtually all the states of Nigeria (Odoma and Akor, 2019).

Level of Public Panic due Incessant Cases of Kidnapping

Kidnapping has led to quite a high level of mistrust among people, as well as general feeling of fear. The traditional African hospitality to strangers is no longer observed and extended. Most people do not accept or return salutations by strangers nor attend to strangers asking for direction. Also, the majority people are reluctant to give help to people in distress because of the fear of being kidnapped. Few people would venture to stop to assist people calling for help on the express way. Increasingly, many people nowadays barricade themselves in their homes (Soyombo, 2009). Most devastatingly, it has been noted that, it is the fear of kidnapping that has contributed to the current high demand for police escort by diverse public officials in the country, thereby further depleting the inadequate police personnel that could have been deployed to street crime control (Soyombo, 2009).

When people are kidnapped randomly, their mental, socioeconomic, and economic well-being is significantly impacted (Onyishi, 2011). Owagbemi and Olaseinde (2021) noted that some panic effects that kidnapping could engender.

Traumatic Effect - Kidnapping and keeping a person captive have a detrimental effect. Their captives are traumatized by being blindfolded and taken to unknown areas by kidnappers who conceal them in the trunk of their automobiles (Owagbemi and Olaseinde, 2021). Occasionally, kidnappers employ inhalant tranquilizers in order to keep their captives sleeping until they arrive at their secret locations (Onyemaizu, 2006). The victims' mental distress spans from melancholy, emotional assault, wrath, and anxiety of the unexpected when they discover their condition.

Relatives of Victims' Emotional Impact - The families of victims are often left reeling from the ordeal. To obtain the release of their kidnapped loved ones, kidnapping victims' relatives get engaged as financial negotiation partners with the kidnappers (Owagbemi and Olaseinde, 2021). Victims' families bear a severe financial burden as a result of kidnappings. The families of the victims may seek funds from friends, family, and well-wishers in an attempt to gain their release.

Nation's Negative Effect - The abduction actions have a detrimental impact on the World News Report since they generate unpleasant headlines; according to this sort of study, the nation is one of the world's most unsafe locations to visit (Owagbemi and Olaseinde, 2021). This has resulted in a massive boycott of the nation by visitors and businesses alike, which has a negative impact on the economy. Because of the regularity with which these criminal models appear, they have gained notoriety and elevated the country's reputation as the world's most hazardous place to live (Onyishi, 2011).

Fear and Uncertainty - Kidnapping instills anxiety in both locals and visitors; fear of kidnapping pervades the lives of many people (Owagbemi & Olaseinde, 2021). Due to the threat of kidnapping, certain global multinational oil firms, construction businesses, production sectors, and international investors shut down their operations in the country. Ene (2018) noted that kidnapping affects the social life and social relations of many people who are held hostage in their homes from dusk to dawn, for the fear of being kidnapped. As a result of kidnapping, night travel has become a high risk venture. Furthermore, many people have been forced out of their newly completed houses by kidnappers. People are compelled to present an unfinished look on their houses depicting poverty by not painting the external walls of their houses. Many people are afraid to buy or use new motor vehicles for fear of kidnappers. It was reported that rich people in most states of Nigeria have resorted to riding in taxi cabs and commercial motorcycles popularly called *okadato* markets, schools and social outings as a means to check hostage takers (Ene, 2018).

Capturing the panicky situation that kidnapping could cause, The Nation (2016) reported that kidnapping engenders emotional upset, palpable fear and trauma, which the incidence leaves on

residents that witnessed the crime during the time of the operation. This insecurity treat can be worrisome when one considers the network of innocent looking individuals that take security surveillance for these culprits (before, during and after laying hold of the victim). The Nation (2016) also reported that after the successful abduction of two business men, and looking to locate houses of some of the victims and possibly speak with some of them, one *The Nation* reporter, narrated his plight saying: “*not a soul was willing to help the moment they learnt of my intention or mission. some, immediately retreated to their shells.*” The response of one volunteer (Femi), to the reporter, shows how large the insecurity line was drawn between residents and reporters. He said: It is a dangerous topic to discuss. I am not even sure if you (the gentleman) posing as a reporter is not actually one of the kidnappers on the mission to feel the pulse of the people (The Nation, 2016 March 13:20). This becomes more challenging when the interrogation is coming from a person or group of persons suspected to be a police or member of any law enforcement agent respectively. The legal implication of this shows the gap in police-community relations in the country, making investigations that could lead to the apprehension of the culprits more difficult for ‘uniform men’. As expounded by Ottuh and Aituf (2014), many of this kidnapers are, “suspected to work with unsuspected individuals like call girls, relations, bankers, business partners, close associates, disabled and/or disguised beggars.” They recruit these persons to stand on-the-look-out for possible disturbances that could hinder the successful completion of their operation. Evidently, this is why everyone present and not present in the crime scene (at the time of the kidnap), is usually taken for a suspect. Hence, every one lives in fear of the next man or woman living next door, including: the young boys in the barber’s shop, that innocent looking boy selling ‘recharge card’ (network airtime) at a corner of the street, and even that “*aboki*”-Fulani man with his battery-powered radio, selling wares in his kiosk (Ottuh & Aituf, 2014).

Involving Security Agencies in Kidnapping Cases

The frequency of holding people captive in Nigeria is probably caused by the enormous monetary gains the perpetrators enjoy from the crime and the seeming inability of the nation’s security operatives to arrest and promptly punish offenders. The entire Nigerian landscape appears to be under the siege of kidnappers as virtually every part of the country has suffered from the menace. Scholars have argued that aside from the kidnap related crime statistics, several kidnap cases often go unnoticed because the victims did not involve security agencies by way of reporting such cases (Chidi, 2014). The reason for the unreported kidnap cases is not far-fetched as victims, and their loved ones prefer to play along with the kidnappers to guarantee the release of victims from captivity alive. Even with several unreported cases, kidnapping no doubt appears widespread and is fast becoming very lucrative in Nigeria.

Emmanuel and Akinlosotu (2016) observed that due to cases on unsuccessful apprehension of culprits, and successful collection of ransom by captors, many Nigerians have seemingly lost interest in security operatives whom they sometimes see as collaborators with the perpetrators. It is a known fact that in event of a kidnap, concerned families usually never reported to law

enforcement agents for the fear of murder of the victims. In Ekiti State, Nejo (2021) captured how a middle age man was abducted less than one kilometers from the police checking point where he was checked, and the policemen escaped into the bush when the kidnappers fired shots into the air. The victim said: "That is what is happening now and causing controversies. A lot of people that were kidnapped, who the police claimed were rescued by them are now coming out to say they paid ransoms, as a matter of fact, the police are not being truthful" (Nejo, 2021). Another victim as Nejo (2021) reported said: "In my case, I had to disagree with a top police officer in Akure, the Ondo State capital, when I went to the Anti-Kidnapping Unit in Akure and he said no ransom was paid, when I knew N2m was paid before my release. In fact, the money was brought to the kidnappers by my brother and the kidnappers even counted the money and ascertained it was complete before I was released."

Ewokor (2019) reported that a trader in Abuja who has family that he visits every weekend in Kaduna, was kidnapped on the Abuja-Kaduna highway earlier in 2019, and held for five days. After his release, the victim told the BBC that he paid his abductors \$1,300 (£1,000) for his freedom, and he added that "it was a traumatic experience." He was affected by polio as a child and said he could not run away when kidnappers attacked the vehicle he was travelling in. at the end he avowed that "since then, honestly I don't use car transport because I am afraid of the road. It's better for me to take the train because of its safety." By road the 150km (93-mile) journey between Abuja and Kaduna is cheaper and shorter, but it has become unsafe and great security risk as dozens of travellers are kidnapped along the highway, and several persons are killed (Ewokor, 2019). Looking for and plying alternative means of transportation, and not travelling at all choices many are happy to make rather than use what has been dubbed Nigeria's most dangerous road. Ewokor (2019) also noted that the Abuja-Kaduna highway is bordered on each side by thick rows of neem and baobab trees, providing excellent cover for kidnappers to wait and abduct on their victims. He further noted that "At its height, the road had 10 kidnappings per day with 20 different groups operating on the route," this was as confirmed by police commander Abba Kyari, who headed a special unit fighting kidnappers.

Causes of Death before and During Kidnapping

This section of this chapter of this study is necessitated by the lack of empirical literature on lead to the death of kidnap victims at any point of the kidnapping process. It is how kidnapped victims are treated and how to react to the kidnapping, as well as the interaction between the kidnappers and the family members of the kidnapped victims that contribute to the death of the victims. In terms of treatment of kidnap victims, the Economist reported that victims of express kidnappings are "rarely kept for more than a fortnight" and most are freed after paying the ransom. Sources report on other instances of treatment of kidnap victims by captors, including: sexual assault, killing of the victims after the payment of ransom, wounding and killing of kidnap victims by abductors, and the response by authorities (CLEEN Foundation, 2014).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

As part of the cross-sectional design, the exploratory design was seen as the best way to carry out this study. An exploratory design is used in a research project when there are very few or no previous studies that can help predict what will happen. Thus, exploratory designs are often used to make sure that they know the best way to get information about what the problem is (Christoph, 2010). Typical exploratory research is supposed to make people aware of basic details, settings, and concerns; give them a good picture of the situation they are working on; come up with new ideas and assumptions; and set the stage for more systematic research and new research questions (Christoph, 2010). People choose to use the explorative research design instead of another research design because it is good at getting background information on a subject of interest. It is very flexible, which means that it can handle research questions of many different types (what, why, how). The cross sectional research design requires only one gathering of data from people who were chosen to be sampled. In this study, efforts were made to ensure that a suitable way was found to get information about the security implications of the many kidnappings in Edo State. It would make for an opportunity to spread new ideas and spread old ones that are related to the study's main point.

Because exploratory research is usually done with a small number of people, the survey design was needed to complement the qualitative data. Using a survey design in this study ensured that important and relevant facts were collected from the people who are chosen as a sample. In turn, the analysis of the data collected would help make inferences about a larger group of people more likely.

Population of the Study

People who lived in the 7 local government areas in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State made up the population of this study. They were at least 20 years old and had lived there for at least two years. When the National Population Census was conducted in 2006, the total number of people in this area was 2,208,700 (Table 1). Based on a projection made for this study, the population is expected to be 3,279,097 as at 2021.

Table 1: Population of Edo South Senatorial District

Local Government Area	2006 Population	Projected 2021 Population
Egor	445,800	661,793
Ikpoba-Okha	487,400	723,548
Oredo	490,600	728,298
Orhionmwon	241,000	357,766
Ovia North-East	203,500	302,198
Ovia South West	180,900	268,636
Uhunmwonde	159,500	236,858
Total	2,208,700	3,279,097

Source: NPC, 2010.

Sample Size

A sample is a representative portion of the entire population which retains all the character of the larger population. A sample size was derived for this study since the whole population being studied was too large. This does not make for a convenient access to the over two million people who make up the population due to constraint of resources. With the obtaining of 3,279,097 as the total number of the population of this study, the sample size was derived with the sample size calculation formula of Taro Yamane as shown below:

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

n = sample size

N = Population

e = Margin of error (0.035)

N = 3,279,097

$$n = \frac{3,279,097}{1 + 3,279,097 (0.035)^2}$$

n = 816.12336

The calculated sample size for this study was placed at approximately 816. Accordingly, 816 copies of questionnaire were administered to 816 sampled residents of Edo South.

Sampling Technique and Sampling Procedure

In a given population, the stratified random sampling ensures that the varied units, segments, or groupings within that population are all represented in a proportional manner. In addition, stratified random sampling ensures that any unit within a particular group of the population has an equal probability of being selected while the sample is being constructed. These characteristics of stratified random sampling encouraged its use in this study because the unit of analysis – residents

of Edo South – can be found in a variety Local Government Areas; and it was critical that residents in each of these groupings be proportionately represented in the study, with each having an equal opportunity to participate.

For a resident to be eligible to participate, the following criteria were observed altogether:

Inclusion criteria

- i. Any resident who is 20 years and above.
- ii. Any resident who has stayed in the study area for at least two years.
- iii. Ability and willingness to give consent.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of the quantitative data collected through the semi-structured questionnaire was done with the aid of the Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. The analysis of the different categories of the quantitative data was done with frequencies, percentages, tables, charts, and cross tabulations. Additionally, the analyses and testing of formulated hypotheses was done with inferential statistical techniques such as chi-square, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Chi-Square. In analyzing the qualitative data got from the various in-depth interview sessions, the recorded files were replayed and subsequently transcribed. The transcribed responses was then processed with manual content analysis which involved the identification of recurring themes that was then interpreted to support inferences.

DATA ANALYSIS

Characteristics of Respondents

Data on the background characteristics of the respondents are contained in this section. These characteristics range from the age group, gender, marital status, highest educational qualification, religion, and the nature of employment status of the respondents. All of these are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Socio-demographic features of the respondents

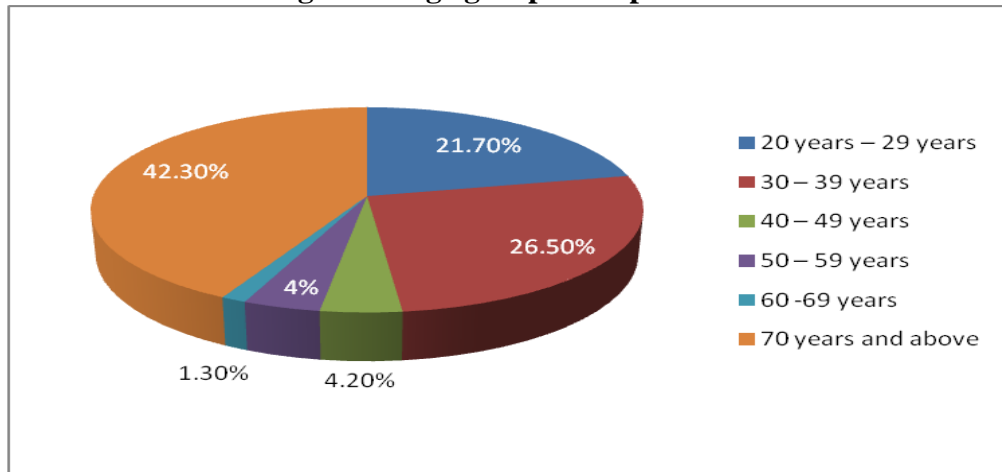
Variables	Frequency (n= 816)	Percentage
Age group		
20 years – 29 years	345	42,3
30 – 39 years	177	21.7
40 – 49 years	216	26,5
50 – 59 years	34	4.2
60 -69 years	33	4.0
70 years and above	11	1.3
Gender		

Male	304	37.3
Female	512	62.7
Marital status		
Married	308	37.7
Never married	344	42.2
Divorced	55	6.7
Others	109	13.4
Highest educational qualification		
School Certificate and below	358	43.9
B.Sc./HND	337	41.3
Masters	77	9.4
Ph.D.	44	5.4
Religion		
Christianity	717	87.9
Islam	66	8.1
African Tradition Religion	22	2.7
Others	11	1.3
Nature of your employment status		
Unemployed	182	22.3
Self employed	491	60.2
Government employee	77	9.4
Private Organization employee	66	8.1

Source: Researcher's survey, 2024

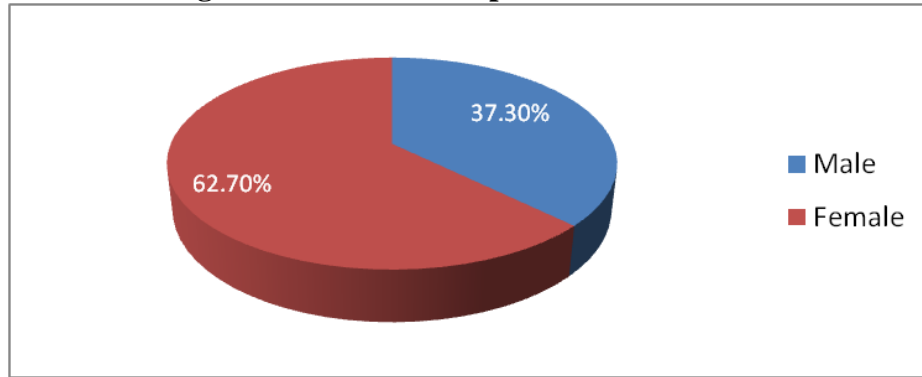
The data on the respondents' responses on their age groups can provide insight into the age demographic of those who participated in to the survey. The data in Table 4.1 shows that the largest age group represented in the survey was the 30-39 years group, with 26.5% (216) of the respondents belonging to this group. The second-largest age group was the 20-29 years group, with 21.7% (177) of the respondents belonging to this group. The age group with the third-largest representation was the 40-49 years group, with 4.2% (34) of the respondents belonging to this group. The age groups of 50-59 years and 60-69 years have similar representation, with 4.0% (33) and 1.3% (11) of the respondents belonging to these groups, respectively. It is important to note that these data could have implications for the overall results of the study, as different age groups may have different perceptions and experiences regarding the topic of kidnapping and security. Further analysis and comparison of the responses between different age groups may provide deeper insight into the relationship between age and citizens' perception on the effects of kidnapping on security in the Edo South Senatorial District.

Figure 1: Age group of respondents



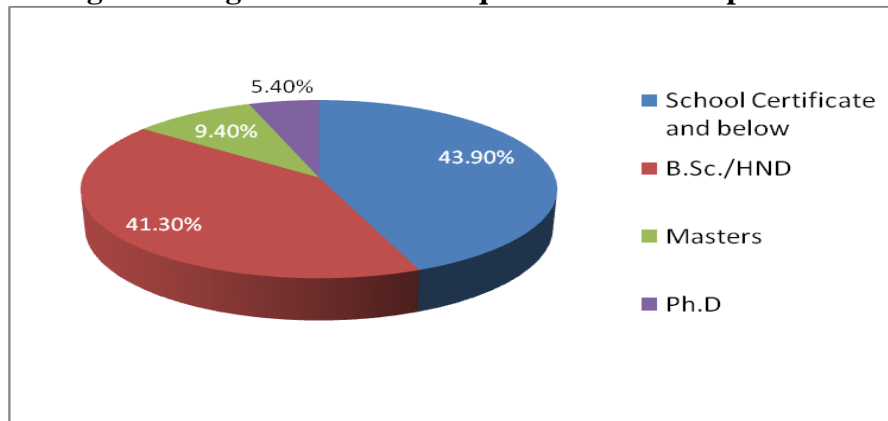
The data represents the responses of 816 respondents in the study. The data shows that the respondents were divided into two groups based on their gender: male (304 respondents) and female (512 respondents). The distribution of responses by gender is shown as a percentage of the total number of respondents, with 37.3% of respondents being male and 62.7% of respondents being female. Table 4.1 also contains the data on respondents' marital status, and the data that 308 individuals, or 37.7% of the total respondents, were married. This indicates that a significant portion of the study participants were in a committed relationship, indicating a relatively stable and committed family structure. The next largest group of respondents was those who have never married, accounting for 42.2% of the total. This group indicates individuals who were single or not yet in a committed relationship, which may be due to a variety of reasons, such as career, personal preference, or other circumstances. A smaller portion of the respondents, 6.7%, reported being divorced. This group represents individuals who had ended their marriage, potentially due to factors such as irreconcilable differences, infidelity, or other issues. Divorced individuals may be undergoing significant life changes and may have had unique experiences compared to other groups. Finally, 13.4% of the respondents selected "Others" as their marital status. This category could include individuals who were separated, widowed, or in a non-monogamous relationship. Understanding the reasons why respondents chose "Others" may provide additional insight into their personal lives and experiences.

Figure 2: Gender of respondents



The data shows that among the 816 respondents in the study, 358 (43.9%) had the highest educational qualification of School Certificate or below. Another set of respondents, 337 in number (41.3%) held a B.Sc. or HND degree, 77 respondents (9.4%) had a Master's degree, and 44 respondents (5.4%) had a Ph.D. This indicates that a majority of the respondents had a lower level of educational qualification, while a smaller percentage had a higher degree. The data in Table 4.1 also represents the religion affiliation of 816 respondents in a study. The majority of the respondents, 87.9%, identified as Christians while 8.1% identified as Muslims. A few of them, 2.7% of the respondents identified as followers of African Traditional Religion, and the remaining 1.3% identified as other religions. It can be concluded that Christianity is the predominant religion among the respondents, followed by Islam. The number of respondents following African Traditional Religion and other religions is relatively small compared to Christianity and Islam.

Figure 3: Highest educational qualification of respondents



The data in Table 3 which partly contains the respondents' responses on their employment status in the study shows that the majority of the participants (60.2%) were self-employed. This suggests that a large portion of the population in the study area is engaged in independent businesses or

freelance work. This result could be a reflection of the growing trend of entrepreneurship and big-economy work in the area. The second-largest group of participants (22.3%) was unemployed, which implies that there was a considerable percentage of individuals in the study area who were not actively engaged in any form of employment. This result could be due to various reasons, including the lack of job opportunities in the area, the absence of skills or training required for available jobs, or other socio-economic factors. And then, 9.4% of the participants were employed in the government sector, while 8.1% work in private organizations. These results indicate that while there is a significant presence of government employment in the area, private-sector employment was also present, but in a smaller proportion.

Figure 4: Nature of your employment status

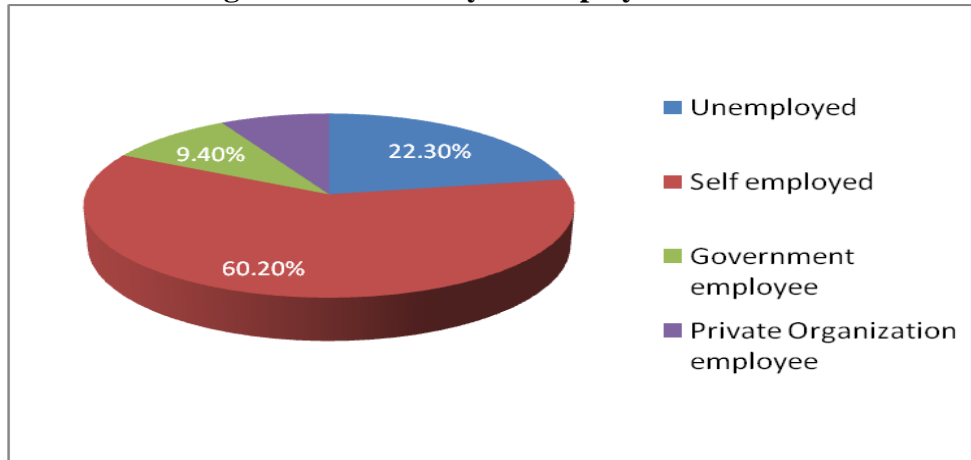


Table 3: Rating of the incidence/occurrence of kidnapping in your area

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Rating of the incidence/occurrence of kidnapping in your area		
1 point	164	20.1
2 points	307	37.6
3 points	217	26.6
4 point	84	10.3
5 points	44	5.4
Total	816	100.0

Source: Researcher’s survey, 2024

The data in Table 3 shows that the majority of the respondents rated the incidence/occurrence of kidnapping in their area as 3 points on a scale of 1 to 5. This suggests that there is a moderate perception of the occurrence of kidnapping in the area. The number of respondents who rated it as

4 points or higher are only 128, which is only 15.7% of the total respondents. This suggests that the majority of the respondents felt that the occurrence of kidnapping was not very high in their area. However, it is worth noting that the number of respondents who rated it as 2 points or lower is 371, which was 45.7% of the total respondents. This suggests that there was still a significant portion of the population that feels that the occurrence of kidnapping is not low in their area. The implication of these findings is that the overall perception of the occurrence of kidnapping in the area is moderate, with more respondents rating it as low to medium compared to high.

Table 4: Level of panic in the community due to kidnapping

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
There is some level of panic in the community due to kidnapping		
Yes	304	37.3
No	228	27.9
Partially	218	26.7
Don't know	66	8.1
Total	816	100.0

Source: Researcher's survey, 2024

The data in Table 4 indicates that a majority of respondents (64%) believed that there was either some level of panic (37.3%) or partial panic (26.7%) in their community due to kidnapping incidents. This indicates a general sense of concern and unease among the population. On the other hand, 27.9% of respondents believed that there was no panic in their community, indicating that the issue may not be perceived as severe by everyone. The 8.1% of respondents who answered "Don't know" highlights a lack of information or uncertainty about the situation. The implications of these findings may be that authorities need to take measures to address the perception of insecurity in the community, such as increasing public safety measures, providing more information and reassurance to the public, or addressing the root causes of the kidnapping incidents. In addition, the data may also be used to target resources and efforts towards areas and populations that are most affected by the issue.

Figure 5: Level of Panic in the community due to kidnapping

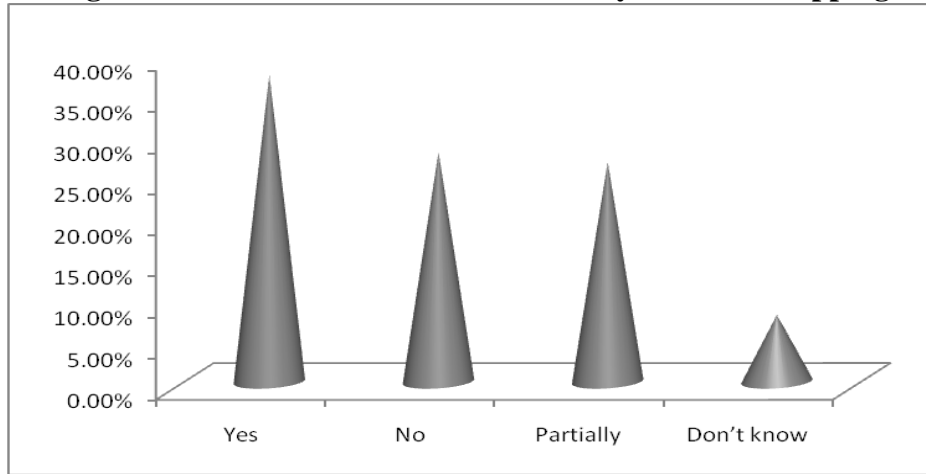


Table 5: Vices/criminal elements currently causing the most panic

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Vices/criminal elements currently causing the most panic in the area		
Armed robbery	242	29.7
Criminal herdsmen	64	7.8
Cultism	209	25.6
Kidnapping	129	15.8
Fraudsters	172	21.1
Total	816	100.0

Source: Researcher’s survey, 2024

The data on the respondents’ responses on the vices and criminal elements causing the most panic in the area highlights some important trends in criminal activity. As it is shown in Table 4.4 armed robbery, with a response rate of 29.7%, was the most common crime that is causing panic among the respondents. This means that people were concerned about the level of violence and threat to their safety posed by armed robbers. It also highlights the need for improved security measures and better law enforcement to protect the public from this type of crime. Cultism, with a response rate of 25.6%, was also a major concern among the respondents. This is a worrying trend as cultism is often associated with violence and poses a serious threat to the public. It also suggests that there is a need for more effective measures to address the issue, such as increased education and awareness campaigns, and greater enforcement of laws against cult activities. Kidnapping, with a response rate of 15.8%, is also a significant concern among the respondents. This highlights the need for increased efforts to prevent and respond to kidnapping incidents, such as increased police presence, public awareness campaigns, and better victim support services. Fraudsters, with a

response rate of 21.1%, are also causing concern among the respondents. This suggests that the public is concerned about the financial and personal losses that can result from fraudulent activities. It also highlights the need for greater public education and awareness about how to detect and prevent fraud. The data also highlights the relatively low response rate for criminal herdsmen, with only 7.8%. This suggests that this type of crime may not be as prevalent or of major concern in the area. However, this does not mean that the issue should be ignored, as even a small number of incidents can cause significant harm and disrupt the community.

Figure 6: Vices/criminal elements currently causing the most panic

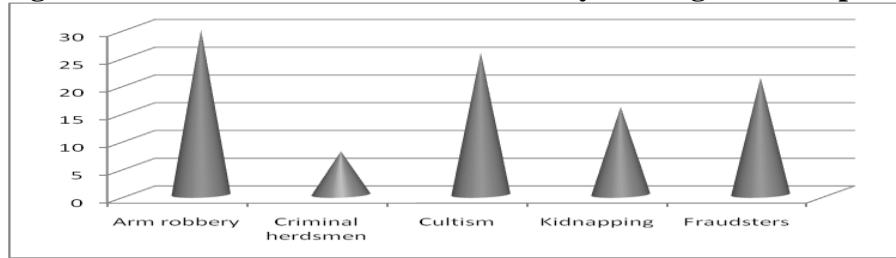


Table 6 Rating of the level of panic due to kidnapping in your area

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Rating of the level of panic due to kidnapping in your area		
1	164	20.1
2	231	28.3
3	237	29.0
4	118	14.5
5	66	8.1
Total	816	100.0

Source: Researcher’s survey, 2024

Table 6 shows the responses of a group of respondents on the level of panic they experience due to kidnapping in their area. The data is presented on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. The results indicate that the majority of respondents, 237 (29%), rated their level of panic as 3 on the scale, which means that they have some level of concern about kidnapping in their area. Another 231 respondents (28.3%) rated their level of panic as 2, indicating a low level of concern. On the other hand, 164 respondents (20.1%) rated their level of panic as 1, which means that they have very little or no concern about kidnapping in their area. Meanwhile, 118 respondents (14.5%) rated their level of panic as 4, which shows a moderate level of concern. The smallest group of respondents, 66 (8.1%), rated their level of panic as 5, which means they have a high level of concern about kidnapping in their area.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypotheses were formulated for the study. These hypotheses were tested and presented in the section. The test of significance was based on the less than 0.05 p-value benchmark.

Hypothesis One: There is no difference in the perception of citizens of the level of panic induced by kidnapping according to their age group.

Table 7: ANOVA test result for Age group and level of panic due to kidnapping

Rating of the level of panic due to kidnapping in your area					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	110.716	5	22.143	17.225	.000
Within Groups	1041.273	810	1.286		
Total	1151.989	815			

Sources: Researcher’s survey and SPSS Computation, 2024.

Table 7 show the one-way ANOVA test result on age group of respondents as the independent variable, and level of panic due to kidnapping as the dependent variable. This inferential statistical test was run to infer whether there was or there was no difference among respondents based on their age groups and the level to which they perceive the existence of panic in Edo South due to kidnapping. With a Mean Square of 22.143, F of 17.225, and Sig. of 0.000 (p-value < 0.05), the result from the One-Way ANOVA test showed that there was statistically significant difference in the perception of the level of panic due to kidnapping in Edo South according to their age groups. This implies that despite the prevalence of kidnapping in Edo South, the citizens perceive or observe the level of panic differently according to their age.

Hypothesis Two: There is no difference in the perception of citizens of the level of panic induced by kidnapping according to their educational qualification.

Table 8: ANOVA test for Educational qualification and level of panic due to kidnapping

Rating of the level of panic due to kidnapping in your area					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	72.931	3	24.310	18.294	.000
Within Groups	1079.058	812	1.329		
Total	1151.989	815			

Sources: Researcher’s survey and SPSS Computation, 2024.

Table 8 show the one-way ANOVA test result on educational qualification of respondents as the independent variable, and level of panic due to kidnapping as the dependent variable. This inferential statistical test was run to infer whether there was or there was no difference among respondents based on their educational qualification and the level to which they perceive the existence of panic in Edo South due to kidnapping. With a Mean Square of 24.310, a F of 18.294, and Sig. of 0.000 (p-value < 0.05), the result from the One-Way ANOVA test showed that there was statistically significant difference in the perception of the level of panic due to kidnapping in Edo South according to respondent's educational qualification. This implies that despite the prevalence of kidnapping in Edo South, the citizens perceive or observe the level of panic differently according to their educational qualification.

FINDINGS

Based on the analysis of the data collected for this study, it was found that:

Objective 1: Ascertain the level of public panic due to rising incidence of kidnappings in its bearing on security in Edo South Senatorial District. There was still a significant portion of the population that feels that the occurrence of kidnapping is not low in their area. A majority of respondents (64%) believe that there is either some level of panic (37.3%) or partial panic (26.7%) in their community due to kidnapping incidents. Arm robbery, with a response rate of 29.7%, is the most common crime that is causing panic among the respondents. Kidnapping, with a response rate of 15.8%, is also a significant concern among the respondents. The majority of respondents, 237 (29%), rated their level of panic as 3 on the scale of 1-5, which means that they have some level of concern about kidnapping in their area. The responses from the in-depth interviewees indicate that kidnapping is a major concern in the society, causing panic and fear among the people. The in-depth interviewees in the area are adjusting to the panic caused by kidnapping through a combination of practical measures and spiritual practices.

Objective 2: Examine the perception of high way safety in line with kidnapping and its effect on security in Edo South Senatorial District. A majority of the respondents (64.1%) have concerns about the safety of the highways in the area due to the incidence of kidnapping. A significant number of respondents (45.2%) believe that the use of the highway has been reduced due to the activities of kidnappers. The majority of respondents, 46.3%, agree that the presence of checkpoints by the police has made the highway safer in terms of kidnapping. A significant majority of the respondents (45.1%) believe that the highway is the most used location by kidnappers. A majority of respondents, around 45%, rated the safety of highways in their area as a 3 on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. The interviewees believe that the roads are not safe and one has to pray and have faith to avoid any harm while travelling on the highways.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The incidence or occurrence of kidnapping in the area highlights the need for continued efforts to address this issue. The authorities can use the data to develop targeted strategies and allocate resources to address the problem effectively. Kidnapping and a multiple vices and criminal elements are causing panic in the area and that action is needed to address them. There is a significant number of people who are concerned about kidnapping in their area, with most of affirming a high level of panic due to kidnapping. Kidnapping has a negative impact on society and is a source of fear and concern for many people. The lack of proper security measures adds to the problem, and people are left to take precautions to avoid being kidnapped. The citizens are adjusting to the panic caused by kidnapping by taking practical measures to ensure their safety and seeking solace through spiritual practices.

Based on the conclusion, the following recommendations are made:

- i. It is essential to take steps to ensure that travelers on the highways feel safe and secure, and to address any issues that may pose a threat to their safety. This can be done through improved training and resources, better communication with the public, and greater accountability and transparency within the police institution.
- ii. Strategic measures should be made to improve the perception of the Nigeria Police's effectiveness and reliability in handling serious incidents such as kidnapping.
- iii. Valuable information on public perception of police effectiveness in handling kidnapping cases and can be used by law enforcement agencies to improve their performance and build public trust.

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