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Kidnapping in Communities Adjoining Conserved Areas: The Case of Pandam Wildlife Park and Namu (Jepjan)

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Abstract:

The insecurity arising from kidnapping in communities adjoining forest reserves necessitated this study. Namu community, which has become a local business hub, has suffered from arm robbery and kidnapping in recent years. Information acquired includes conditions making the target suitable for kidnapping, like occupation, timing for kidnapping, mode of transportation and torture, major reasons for kidnapping and financial status making victims have high kidnap ransom value. The snowball sampling technique was used, and it linked victims affected since the community is clustered. To get the needed information, twenty-five victims of kidnapping and hunters were administered a questionnaire. Descriptive statistics like the frequency and percentages were used, while the correlation coefficient was used for inference. Results indicated that businessmen (64%) are mostly targeted. The most exploited time for kidnapping is from 7pm - 9pm (72%), and victims are mostly held hostage for about 1-3 days (68%). The most used mode of transportation is foot/motorcycle (88%), and beating was the dominant mode of torture (76%). Respondents indicated that unemployment (44%) is the major reason for kidnapping. It was realized that financial consideration is major in making one a target, and kidnap ransom value determines the amount demanded and ransom paid. Therefore, the correlation coefficient established that positive relationship with a significant level ($p\text{-value}=0.013$) at 0.05 alpha level. Recommendations made include hybridization of security forces; use of geospatial techniques; improved tracking devices and database creation for citizens; entrepreneurial skills in education curriculum; awareness by non-governmental organizations; and responsible children upbringing with high moral values for a secured society.

Keywords: Kidnapping, victims, ransom, insecurity, community

1. Introduction

Insecurity, on a general note, thrives more in areas where there is a poor presence of government. This is not unconnected to the fact that criminal activities would not be interrupted by state security. Natural conservation has therefore become a hotspot where nefarious activities are committed. In recent years, geographic features like forests and rugged topography have become hideouts for hosting captives in Nigeria. To be precise, kidnappers have exploited forests for that purpose and for logging to finance their activities. These two criminal activities are the order of the day in Pandam Wild Life Park. Unfortunately, Namu, a business hub adjoining the wildlife park in that locality, is suffering from this trend of crime.

Ladan (2014) reported that in Nigeria, forests and forest reserves are now the operation hub for armed robbers, criminals, cattle rustlers, kidnappers, and unknown gunmen who persistently perpetrate evil against Nigerians. The Pandam wildlife park was before now an activity place for tourism, accommodating events, and accommodation as well as education exhibitions. Restricted areas aim to conserve biodiversity and stop the destructive anthropogenic activities on natural habitats, and allow the communities to benefit from ecosystem services. The protected areas have never been under total restriction. However, restricted access is allowed for optimal use by the local community, who earlier depended on the areas before restriction (Amoru, 2000).

The changing functionality of forests, from biodiversity conservation to criminality, is worrisome. These crimes, unknown to people and their environments initially, are nowadays experienced in every nook and cranny of Nigeria due to crime migration and its sympathizers cum sponsors. When it becomes a business venture that is confidently carried out without fear, then it is a clear indication that the connection to highly influential sponsors in society is well-established (Dakagan, 2022a).

In a dramatic turn of events, places historically known for kidnapping have expanded geographically. Countries like Colombia were seen as kidnapping hubs globally in 2001. It moved to Mexico in 2004 and to Iraq in 2007. These areas were known for kidnapping far away from places experiencing it today. This means criminality in recent years has gained wide acceptance and is spreading speedily.

In an attempt to explain how organized crime works, Chukwuma and Fakumo (2014) noted that organized crime is a high-profile activity mostly carried out via transnational syndication and racketeering. On the other hand, Samuel (2019) reported organized crime as a small group of professional criminals hierarchically structured to carry out the illegality of economic value to the group. Their channel of operation spans local and international boundaries and could be through porous government officials and legitimate structures, non-governmental structures, and private ventures. They are technologically advanced and cut across ethnic, political, and religious divides. This helps them to always present unclear directions of their aims to the citizens, even when their modus operandi is contrary to societal norms (Dakagan, 2022a). Likewise, Okoli and Agada (2014) noted the wide geographic spread of kidnapping in Nigeria and how lucrative it has become, with speedy returns in the business through the precise kidnap of targets with high Kidnap Ransom Value (KRV).

Several factors appear to facilitate kidnappings in Africa. Reports indicate that the instability that led to the international intervention in Mali has increased the risk of kidnapping throughout North and West Africa. Malian-based militants and others located in Nigeria and Niger have carried out some kidnappings in neighboring countries such as Cameroon. Further kidnappings resulting from conflicts have been experienced in the North and West Africa region (Australian Government, 2014).

1.1. Insecurity in Forest Reserves and Tourist Areas

Insecurity in Nigeria is acclimatized to very remote areas of the country where ordinary social amenities are unavailable "have valuable natural resources with property rights uncertain, disputed or neglected; have high proportion of poor households; poorly integrated into national democratic institutions; and receive few public services among others. Forests and other protected areas usually have many of these characteristics yet have valuable timber, wild animals, and mineral resources which insurgents can exploit (Dakagan, 2022a).

Governments have tended to see forests and other protected areas as peripheral places with few people and little political importance or economic value and have only focused on them to extract timber or minerals. Consequently, forests have provided refuge, funds, and food for terrorists and other criminal elements. In many countries with civil unrest and violent conflicts, insurgents have used the forests to hide from government troops. As a result, the insurgents gradually build up military capacity that may not be easily contained by government forces. They as well exploit resources in the forest, including timber and mineral supplies, to fund their armed activities (Amusa, Bada, and Azeez, 2017).

Notable examples of forests used for criminal purposes include the Felgore forest in Kano state along the Jos-Kano road, where arm robbery and kidnapping are recorded. Recently, the military set up a training ground in the forest to reduce such criminal activities. The most exploited forest for criminality in Nigeria is the Sambisa forest of Borno state which covers an area of about 68,600 hectares. Illegal activities taking place in the forest include the widespread felling of trees for fuel wood, agricultural encroachment, illegal grazing, poaching, and over-fishing (including chemicals, which also kill piscivorous birds). It has been taken over by Boko Haram and has now become a base for their camps, food supplies, weapons, motor vehicles, and motorcycles for launching attacks on the North Eastern States of Nigeria. Their activities have forced people to take refuge in other states and neighboring countries (Ladan, 2014).

1.2. Targets for Kidnap

Many studies and interactions with victims of kidnapping have indicated that specific targets are monitored for some time before the confrontation. Their businesses, offices, worship places, recreation areas, companions, families, and places of routine are observed for possible intrusion. In recent years, people have wondered why some residents are not security conscious and somehow, it seems they are spared. Simply, they are not the targets, kidnap targets do not enjoy the liberty of moving freely. The targets are normally those whose background check indicates they have resources directly or are linked to people who can afford ransom payment (Dakagan, 2022a).

Olulowo *et al.* (2021) revealed that in recent years, wealthy people in the society and high-income earners have been targeted and are only freed by kidnappers after payments of ransom are made. This concurs with Ekechukwu and Osaat (2021), who reported several cases of businessmen kidnapped with large sums paid as ransom before their release was secured. It has affected many businesses whose owners are not resilient enough to bounce back after they are exploited of their business resources. Some kidnapped victims are made to liquidate their houses, cars, lands, and other properties to save their lives. This is in line with the report by Wright (2009), which indicates how a victim's first-hand account of the kidnapping and ransom-bargaining attest to the fact that kidnappers investigate the potential victim's financial situation to estimate the ability to pay and as well assess their apparent liquidity.

The pressure seems to be much on local and foreign businessmen who constantly circulate money in the public domain. Accordingly, Oyemwinmina and Osazuwa (2016) noted that foreign investors and other citizens are scared to operate businesses in Nigeria because no investment thrives in an atmosphere of such insecurity. This is similar to the submission of Ugwuoke (2015), who stated that fear is created in society, and tourists and investors are threatened with negative consequences on the economy. Accordingly, Samuel (2019), Ibrahim and Ahmad (2020) also reported that kidnapping has become the order of the day as a lucrative business to criminals because of its attractive, profitable nature.

1.3. Kidnap Time and Duration

The nature of crime is such that it is preferably committed in the dark and mostly at hours favorable for it. The common trend of kidnapping shows that certain hours are preferable based on the activity of the target. Some occur in the afternoon, some in the evening, and others late at night when people are sleeping and not conscious of such occurrences.

In some communities, specific times are densely clustered with the crime events and such understanding can help security forces to put more crime deterrents (Dakagan, 2022b).

The U.S. Department of Justice National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) has shown that rates for all crimes against children, including kidnapping, mostly occur in the afternoon (Snyder & Sickmund, 1999), specifically that 41% of all juvenile kidnappings in NIBRS jurisdictions occur during afternoon hours (noon to 6 p.m.). A report by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2000) indicated that kidnapping by acquaintances and strangers is more likely than family kidnapping occur in the evening (6 p.m.) or at night (midnight to 6 a.m.) hours (46%, 41%, and 30%, respectively).

Another aspect of the kidnapping is the duration the hostages stay in custody. From 1978-2005, they could span over days, weeks, and months with less than a week covering a high percentage of 20.2% (Mickolus, 2006, as quoted in Schmid & Flemming, 2010), according to Hostage Fate, 1978 – 2005. Also, according to Gary, Dugan and Miller (2015), in terms of fatalities per attack across tactics from 1970-2014, 113,770 victims were killed when security men stormed where people are held hostage as in Beslan, North Ossetia, 2004. In some instances, the kidnappers, rather than negotiate, kill, and are eventually apprehended, like the occurrence in Westgate, Nairobi, in 2013.

1.4. Unemployment and Kidnapping

Many reasons have been identified by different scholars for kidnapping in Nigeria. Some of these reasons, by Obijiofor (2009), include greed, insecurity, poverty, unemployment, lack of contentment, social injustice, political apathy to the basic needs of the poor, as well as failed economic policies. Out of the factors for kidnapping listed above, more inclination is towards unemployment, justifying the submission by Chidi (2014), who ranked unemployment and loss of societal value as the heart of kidnapping in Nigeria. Also, Inyang and Ubong (2013) reported youth unemployment indicated by idling youths on the streets as the major reason for kidnapping in Nigeria. Added to these is the worsened poverty condition of Nigerians since 1960, indicated by declining social and economic progress, including real per capita consumption, literacy, access to clean water, and income distribution (Hino, 2005). Nigeria, as the poverty capital of the world, was only recently overtaken by India.

On the part of Dodo (2010), the desires for quick money or 'get-rich-quick' and 'moral decadence' are causative factors of kidnapping. In line with this submission is that of Inyang (2009), who observed how people acquire wealth in Nigeria is not investigated. A poor person could suddenly become rich overnight and would be celebrated with awards and chieftaincy titles. Such leaves precedencies for other people to follow as means of making cheap money from dubious means.

Similarly, Gongs *et al.* (2021) reported unemployment as the dominant factor influencing the abduction of victims in Shendam, Plateau State. Also, the denial of privileges and inequality in sharing natural resources, poverty, and unemployment warranting elevated socio-economic hardship has made life miserable for the masses, leading to crimes including kidnapping (Ogabido, 2009; Akpan, 2017).

A study carried out by Chidi (2014) correlated unemployment and criminality, particularly kidnapping, and argued that if people are employed, the crime rate will reduce. Unfortunately, as Olorunfemi (2021) stated, the unemployment rate in Nigeria has been on a steady increase from 7% in 1995 to 28% in 2011 and from 12.1% in 2016 to 27.1% in 2020.

1.5. The Nature of Kidnapping

Keenly understood is the fact that kidnapping is not a new concept in Nigeria; rather, it has assumed a new dimension with ransom payment accompanied. Earlier in the history of Nigeria, movement to strange communities was prohibited for fear of being seized for the slave trade business since the 18th and 19th centuries. Some victims were kidnapped from their homes and assassinated as a result of quarrels over farmlands, and child napping for money-making rituals was common in an uncivilized society then (Sanyaolu, 2009), but the money-making rituals and the kidnapping syndication have outlived the uncivilized age.

One technicality employed by kidnappers is the deliberate planting of accomplices in business communities where their targets are domiciled. They take time to strategically monitor and carry out research about their targets before nailing them. The place of informants in the community cannot, therefore, be overemphasized. No wonder, Ajao (2019) indicated that criminals are harbored within the community as a token to betray a member of the community, with consequential havoc if their identity is disclosed. This is an unpleasant situation in communities where the fear of being attacked lives with informants. Insights coming from some sources indicate that some informants have become tools in the business because of economic hardship (Dakagan, 2022b).

The accomplices within the community normally expose victims to field criminals who subject their victims to different levels of torture intending to enhance speedy payment of ransom as well as speedy revelations of financial assets and wealth. As submitted by Odoma and Akor (2019), "the experiences of victims from torture, being masked, having to trek long distances on foot for hours into thick forests, going without food for several days to the threat of rape. Others include demand for huge ransom ranging from N850, 000, N10m, N30m to N60m with the threat of being killed should they fail to pay such amounts." Evidence has shown that the ransom demand is proportionate to the financial capability and linked to wealthy relations by the victim. In other places, melted nylons and battery acids are poured on the back of the victims. Some are beaten and cut with knives to forcefully extract information, in some cases leading to the victim's death where ransom payment is delayed. Painfully enough, some victims are killed even when the ransom is paid, and one wonders why (Dakagan, 2022b).

The weapons of operation carried out by kidnappers vary across the board. However, the risk involved and the intensity of the threat to targets have made the use of guns very paramount and are common in almost all kidnap cases. The terrorists are humans and would want to escape with their prey alive, so they need maximum defense within their understanding. In line with this thought, Davidson (2010) reported most kidnap incidents as situations where criminals armed with guns and cell phones attack unsuspecting victims and take them to secluded custody and begin demanding ransom. The disturbing narrative is how phone calls are made hostage until the ransom is paid without digital tracking.

1.6. Kidnap Ransom Value (KRV)

Kidnapping is not an activity that people engage in as an unskilled venture due to poverty, unemployment, and other factors. Rather, it is an organized crime that requires mastery or professionalism for results to be achieved with high precision (Dakagan, 2022b). Kidnappers are trained on the strategy to operate, psychology on torture and information extraction, and arm proficiency in order not to miss their targets. Their targets must have the potentials to be kidnapped through what is called kidnap ransom value (Okoli & Agada, 2014). The kidnap Ransom Value (KRV) of a target is the strategic net worth of a kidnappee that the victim is worth a ransom value and can pay by self or proxy. Benjamin *et al.* (2018) reported that most kidnapped victims are released unharmed after the payment of ransom. However, instances occur where some are killed after the payment of ransom.

Kidnappers are rational, as in any other business, with well-calculated intents, so they do not kidnap by chance. Many people thought it could happen by chance, but that, again, can only happen in cases of mistaken identities, and as Ritzer (1996) puts it, they are out to maximize profit. Sometimes, when the ideal target becomes very difficult to track and kidnap, kidnappers turn to the target's most valued ally because the difficult target will meet the ransom demand. This is in line with Samuel (2019), who asserted that the kidnapped ally could be a relation of a wealthy person, politician, influential, or criminal, whether young or old, male or female. Okoli and Agada (2014) also outlined factors determining kidnap ransom value, including:

- Personal affluence of the victim, like material standing;
- Family premium of the victim, like the only child or male child;
- Corporate premium of the victim, like business executives;
- Public relevance, like politicians and traditional rulers;
- Social connections, like members of eminent social networks;

The type of kidnappers, meaning petty ones, will collect cheap ransom and the negotiation process can also determine it. The main aim of this study was to analyze the nature of kidnapping in Namu, a community adjoining a conserved area, for prompt monitoring and prevention.

1.7. Objectives of the Study

- To examine conditions making targets suitable for kidnap in the area.
- To examine the timing for kidnapping.
- To examine how victims are transported and tortured.
- To examine the reasons for kidnapping.
- To examine the financial consideration for kidnapping.

1.8. Statement of the Problem

Kidnapping is an age-long phenomenon that has evolved and spread to become a serious threat in many parts of the world. It has disrupted businesses and caused them to migrate to relatively safer places and kidnap targets are forced to relocate due to threats on them and their families. Businesses have been forced to close earlier than usual, making profits and growth to be on the decline. This eventually affects the socio-economic status of those affected at a time when the economy is biting harder.

The unemployment rate in Nigeria is at an alarming rate, affecting mostly the youth populace. According to Olorunfemi (2021), the unemployment rate in Nigeria has been on a steady increase from 7% in 1995 to 28% in 2011 and also from 12.1% in 2016 to 27.1% in 2020. This increasing trend indicates the tendency of more crimes in developing countries; Soyombo (2009) also reported unemployment among graduates in Nigeria as a threat to national peace and security.

The kidnapping wave currently sweeping across the community signals danger to the livelihood of people in the area. Many business ideas are stocked in the bud, and intensive and extensive farming is threatened as rich farmers are targeted. Civil servants and politicians are scared of the community, as they are seen as potential targets. The unemployment of formal youths and skilled youths is making them handy informants to criminals who only need to give them peanuts. Thuggery is also a seasonal political business that breeds crime out of political season and abandoned turn to the community for means of survival when their masters are far gone into the city after winning or losing elections.

1.9. Research Questions

The objectives were achieved through responses to the following questions:

- What occupations are majorly targeted for kidnap in the area?
- What time do most kidnappings occur?
- How are kidnapped victims transported and tortured?
- What reasons are responsible for the kidnap?

- How is financial consideration a factor in the kidnapping?

1.10. *Origin and Transformation of Namu into a Business Town*

The insecurity in the environments around the Pandam wildlife park manifests more in areas with businesses with high socio-economic income. In this regard, Namu has become a major target for kidnapping. The present Namu has a history of descent from Kofyar. Insights from Netting (1968) are quite impactful in understanding the growth of the Namu settlement. Kofyar means the home state of the ancestor has grown.

Kofyar Federation since the 1940s is originally a combination of three pan tribes: Doemak, Merniang, and Kwalla, as designated by colonial officers. The three tribes have a common language, economic pattern, and origin myth. The Kofyar are the people who were found living in the rugged hills in the South Eastern corner of the Jos Plateau. They were in peace with colonial Britain officers until 1930, when Barlow, a young assistant district officer, was killed in Latok hills by a rock that targeted his head. This act forced the relocation of the Kofyar people to other places to avoid the anger of the Britain officers. The death of Barlow caused the rounding up of seven villages and some 3000 hill Kofyar natives' evacuation to the plain (Netting, 1987).

The military invaded the hills annually and removed people and livestock, and repeatedly burned huts for 9 years before allowing the Kofyar people to return to the hills (Netting, Stone & Stone, 1989). The people had a desire for their ancestral homes, and some returned to the hills. History has it that the originator of Kofyar is Dafyar, meaning a child has grown. Dafyar descended from the Eastern part of Nigeria and when he left the Eastern part of the country, he moved with tribes like the Angas, Mahvul, Ankwe, Gwai, and the Bokous. Dafyar had a brother named Daram; they both moved from Garam to Chip. In Chip, Dafyar left Daram and settled in Kofyar Payer.

Dafyar gave birth to so many children, among which were a set of twins called Dajan and Dajin. Dajan went to Namu and Dajin stayed in Doemak, meaning my movement ends here. The settlement of Dajan in Namu led to the naming of geographical features tied to the ancestral connection of the Pan People. The most prominent feature in Namu, the Pang Matlong, is major evidence of undisputed proof of ownership by the Pan Nation. Tribal names of villages and rivers, amongst other features, are proven facts of originality. It must be noted that nature embedded in territories are cultural preservations for posterity.

In 1951, wandering reduced and permanent settlements began with about 30 Doemak households settled in Mangkogom, south of Kwande. In 1953, the Chief of Kwa set up an agrarian settlement known as Gonan Sarkin Kwa (GS Kwa) south of Namu alongside his people. There they metamorphosed beyond smallholder farming for more food, income, and tax payment. He encouraged his people to follow him, growing extra food for subsistence and perhaps for trade and tax payments. It was crucial for their livelihood since they were populous with the lowest per capita crop and livestock production (Stone, Johnson-Stone & Netting, 1984).

Migration indeed continued as land became insufficient due to population densities exceeding 200 per km². About 76% of the households had established migrant bush farms in Namu (Jepjan) area by 1966. For example, the hill village of Bong that had depended solely on its homesteads and local shifting cultivation in 1961 had 26.5% of its households going to distant plain farms by 1966 (Stone, Johnson-Stone and Netting, 1984). Bong, the farthest and most remote village in Pan land, was almost deserted, with only two of the original 17 homesteads still occupied. As people discovered easier land cultivation for farming around Namu (Jepjan), the size of the Kofyar population in Namu town speeded up to 24~ to 1661 between 1980-1984 alone (Netting, Stone & Stone, 1989). The Pan population in Namu and its environments up till today remains more than other tribes combined.

Gradually, Namu metamorphosed from an agrarian economy into a business hub. It has become a center of agribusiness where grains, yams, and other farm products from farming localities are sold and stored. The business of farm inputs like chemicals, fertilizers, and equipment is growing daily. Agribusiness makes the area attracts businessmen and women from all parts of Nigeria. The establishment of business areas like the Jepjan Integrated Agro Resources Limited is a booming center for agricultural products like yams, rice, maize, corn, and millet and farm inputs ranging from chemicals to fertilizer. In recent years, lumbering in the Pandam Conservation area made the business a lucrative activity in communities adjoining the Park. However, insecurity (especially kidnapping and arm robbery) is a nightmare to the transformation of the Namu community.

In the words of Okoli and Agada (2014), the consequences of kidnapping in Nigeria include:

- Loss of life, a threat to public safety;
- Sabotage of economic growth and development by way of capital and investment flight;
- Negative perception of Nigeria on the international scene with its negative consequences on trade, tourism, and foreign direct investment (fdi);
- Creation of an atmosphere of public insecurity, thereby endangering the prospects of societal progress and
- The loss of investment capital, closure of businesses, and unemployment

Many researchers have investigated kidnapping in the general space. This study, therefore, examines insecurity in communities adjoining restricted areas for prompt monitoring and prevention.

2. Materials and Method

2.1. *The Study Area*

Namu lies between Longitudes 9°04'14 E and 9°07'24 E and Latitudes 8°40'20 N and 8°42'05 N. The south-westerly winds bring the rain from the Atlantic Ocean, marking the onset of the rain season, while the north-easterly winds

originate from the Sahara desert across Northern Nigeria down to Namu, marking the onset of the dry season. The wet season extends from April to November, while the dry season starts in December and ends in March.

Namu has an average high temperature of 39.3°C and an average low temperature of 25.3°C. March is the warmest month in Namu. The coldest month in Namu is August, with an average high temperature of 28.4°C and an average low temperature of 22°C. The month with the most rainfall in Namu is August, when the rain falls for 28.1 days and typically aggregates up to 200mm of precipitation. Namu town is bounded by Pandam forest to the Northwest (Nimmak & Onwuadiochi, 2020), Kopsua'as to the South, Kopmoejak to the North, Dadin Kowa to the Northeast, and Dungkung to the Southeast.

The location of the Namu community along the Shendam-Lafia Federal road makes it a nodal town (connecting Shendam, Lafia, Shindai, and Langkaku), serviced with farm products by agrarian communities like Shindai, Langkaku, Kundum, Pandam, Gidan Dabat, Kwari, Aningo, Janta among others.

2.2. Research Design

The study was carried out in the Namu community on targeted people who directly have information on insecurity in the area and hunters. Twenty-six respondents comprising 9 hunters, 3 victims' relatives, and 13 kidnapped victims, were contacted.

2.3. Research Instrument

This research used primary data of both qualitative and quantitative nature from the questionnaire.

2.4. Data Acquisition

2.4.1. Sampling Method

The Namu community is seen as a hotspot for kidnapping adjoining the Pandam Wild Life Park more than any other community in the area. Twenty-six (26) respondents were each administered the same questionnaire. The snowball sampling technique was used in the study area. By snowballing, other respondents were connected to the research as insecurity in the area is topical. The justification for using the snowball method was to ensure that the questionnaire was administered directly to relevant people who had requisite information.

2.5. Data Analysis

Statistical analysis was done using Microsoft Excel and SPSS at 0.05 alpha level.

2.5.1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics like frequency, percentages, and sums were used. The results were presented in tables and bar charts.

2.5.2. Inferential Statistics

Correlation analysis was conducted to establish the relationship between the amount demanded by kidnappers and the ransom paid. In testing the hypothesis, the relationship between the two financial variables was used for the study area. The acceptance level for the correlation coefficient adopted was the p-value at 0.05.

2.5.2.1. Hypothesis

- H0: There is no significant relationship between the amount demanded and the ransom paid to kidnappers.

3. Results

3.1. Category and Occupation

The respondents targeted in the study area were diligently selected to get the most reliable information. The majority of residents contacted were victims forming 52% of the sampled population (Figure 1).

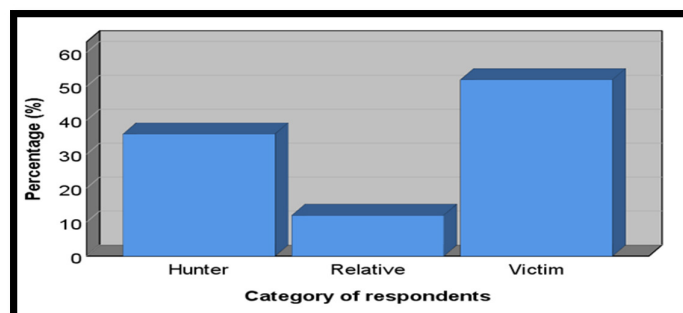


Figure 1: Category of Respondents

The respondents in the study area comprised mostly businessmen and businesswomen (Figure 2). This is because Namu is a business-oriented environment. People come from every part of Nigeria to buy yams and transport them back, mostly to southern Nigeria and bring back products from their end. Though initially an agrarian community, most of the farmers are now in foodstuff business like rice milling and food storage. In recent years, some residents have involved themselves in lumbering. Agrarian communities like this one are vulnerable to food insecurity as great farmers are also targeted.

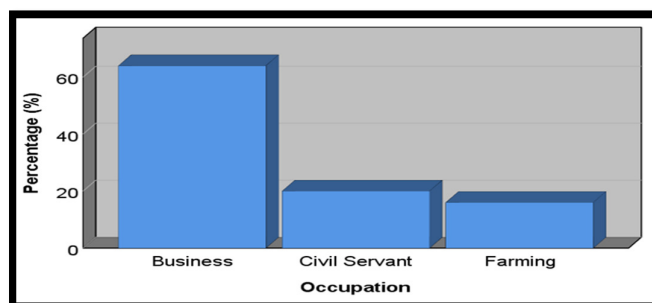


Figure 2: Occupation of Respondents

Already, there is a negative influence on the economy of the Namu community. It has already scared many investors and businessmen from investing, even though it is a good business environment. Some businesses have already migrated to more secure environments.

3.2. Timing for Kidnapping

Information from respondents indicated that most of the kidnappings (72%) occurred around 7-9 pm (Figure 3). This timing has caused most businesses in Namu to close before 7 pm daily. The implication is that businessmen are faced with declining sales and profits. This is not unconnected with the fact that this timing gives them ample time to move their captives in the night to the desired location before daybreak. If this critical time is not diligently monitored, criminals will keep targeting people at the time, causing low returns to businesses.

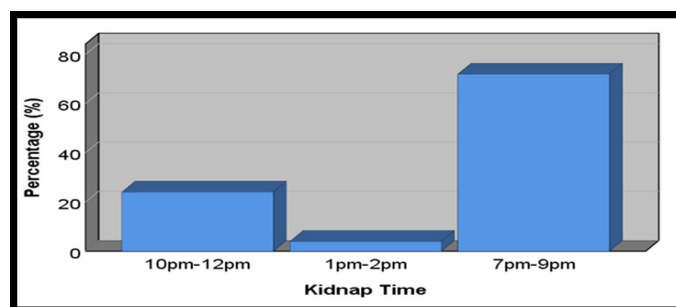


Figure 3: Targeted Time of the Kidnap

Likewise, the result of time spent in the custody of kidnappers indicated that victims do not stay long as most financial requirements to secure them are met. Victims are mostly held hostage for 1 – 3 days (68%) (Figure 4). It implies that urgent steps are always taken to pay for ransom and that the criminal elements are aware of the fact that, once they succeed, their demands will be met. This likely is the reason for recurring kidnap incidences in the area.

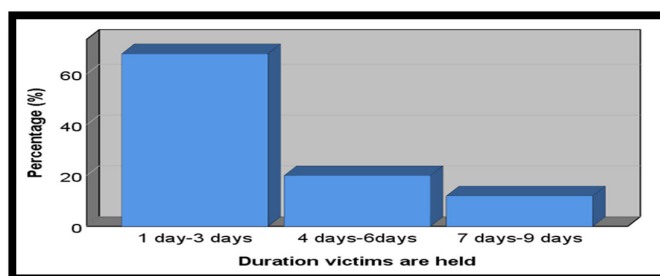


Figure 4: Duration of Victims in Custody

While kidnapping in the area may be seen to be haphazard, timing indicators have shown the contrary. The result has shown that evening (72%) is the preferred time for ransom payment required by the kidnappers (Figure 5).

Technically, they can get the money into the night and avoid security and community intervention, which is a logical intelligence.

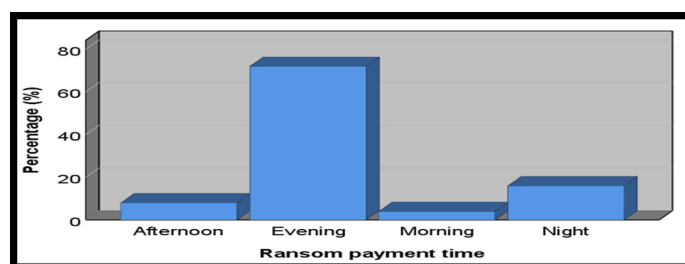


Figure 5: Time of Ransom Payment

3.3. Nature of Kidnapping

There is variation in how crime thrives in different environments. Distances to remote locations where victims are held hostage determine the means of transportation. Plain lands in the bushes allow vehicular transportation of kidnapped victims, as obtained in the study area. The victims here are mostly taken on foot before motorcycles are used to convey them to distant rugged and forested environments (Figure 6). The victims of kidnap are mostly kept deep in the Pandam forest.

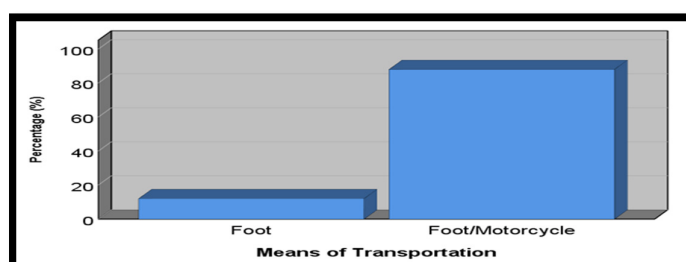


Figure 6: Means of Transportation

In most kidnappings, victims are likely to make reflex decisions because they are never ready for such occurrences. Resistances and confusion can lead to certain levels of pain inflicted on the victims. The result from this study indicated that most of the victims (76%) are beaten and put under duress to fasten the payment of ransom (Table 1). This is traumatic, with consequential psychological effects directly on the victim, after exposure to terrorists with their weapons and threats. It normally takes time before they get over it through counseling and sleeping pills in most cases. However, the shocks are activated when victims get to know of similar tragedies that befell them.

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Beating | 19 | 76.0 | 76.0 | 76.0 |
| Cuts | 1 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 80.0 |
| Killing | 4 | 16.0 | 16.0 | 96.0 |
| Tightening | 1 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 25 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 1: Pains Inflicted

Inquiries from the respondents on like causes of kidnapping showed most respondents reporting unemployment (44%), followed by ethnic reasons (28%) (Table 2). It means that if the youths are not gainfully employed, many of them may exploit this negative avenue to meet up their demands.

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Ethnic | 7 | 28.0 | 28.0 | 28.0 |
| Poverty | 5 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 48.0 |
| Quick money | 1 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 52.0 |
| Religion | 1 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 56.0 |
| Unemployment | 11 | 44.0 | 44.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 25 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 2: Reasons for Kidnap

3.4. Financial Engagements

Kidnapping has become a lucrative underground business financed by wealthy sponsors. The field marshals are mostly youths who run errands for their masters. These are people who do not do blind businesses but target their victims precisely. Their demands vary across their victims. They place their demands based on the financial strength of those kidnapped. Most of the demands from victims ranged from 0-20,000,000 (Figure.7). Again, the security vulnerability of the community is exposed to criminal elements, which may be used to perpetrate more crimes. In some cases, it is such exposure that eventually transforms into a wide-scale community attack.

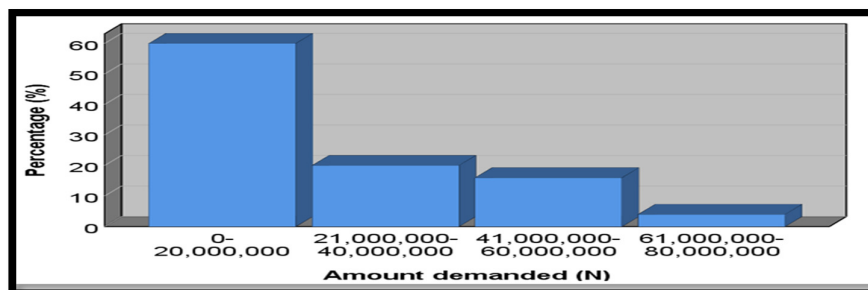


Figure 7: Amount Demanded by Kidnappers

The amount finally paid as ransom to kidnappers mostly ranged from 0-3,000,000 (Figure 8), with 64% of the respondents. Though the ransom payment is in the lower category, it is being exploited to achieve the results of higher demands that may not be met.

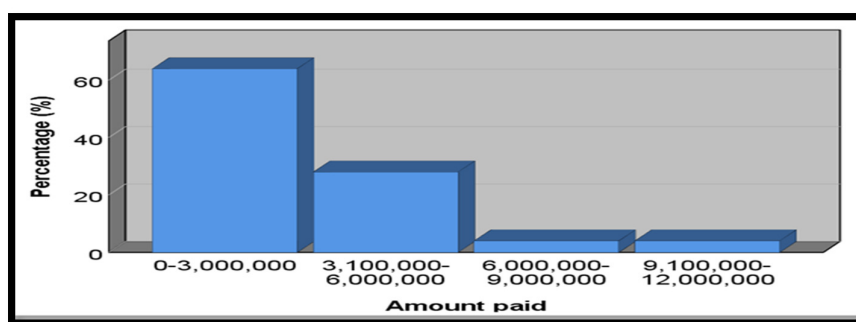


Figure 8: Ransom Paid

3.5. Correlation Relationship between Financial Variables

The kidnapping business is tight to the issue of money, mostly cash at hand before the victim is released. The demand is mostly related to the personality in question. There is a strong relationship between the amount demanded and the ransom paid (Table 3).

| | | Amnt. Demanded | Amnt. Collected |
|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Amnt. Demanded | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .488* |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .013 |
| | N | 25 | 25 |
| Amnt. Collected | Pearson Correlation | .488* | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .013 | |
| | N | 25 | 25 |

Table 3: Correlation Coefficient

*. Correlation Is Significant at the 0.05 Level (2-Tailed)

The hypothesis was tested at a 0.05 significance level. If $p < 0.05$, we reject the null hypothesis. If $p > 0.05$, we accept the null hypothesis. Since the significant level is 0.013, which is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis, which shows there is a significant relationship between the amount demanded and ransom paid to kidnappers in Namu, of Qua,anpan LGA of Plateau state. This can drain resources directly from victims, their relatives, and as well from the government through state security forces.

4. Discussion

Information from this study indicated that most of the victims of the attack are businessmen. This aligns with the submissions by Ugwuoke (2015), Oyemwinmina and Osazuwa (2016), and Ekechukwu and Osaat (2021), where they all

stated that businessmen are the major targets for kidnap in their respective studies. Common businesses are agribusinesses like farming, trading in foodstuffs, pharmaceutical shops, filling stations, vehicular spare parts, and yam businesses in Northern and Southern Nigeria. Consequently, the majority of victims of insecurity in Namu fall under either of these categories and owners of such businesses close early and avoid their houses in the night for fear of kidnappers. Wealthy people in the community in this study area are also targets by criminals, in line with the submissions of Olulowo *et al.* (2021) and Dakagan (2022a).

The major time for kidnapping in this study, which is 7 pm-9 pm, coincides with the submission by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2000), where kidnapping by acquaintances and strangers spread from the evening (6 pm) or nighttime (midnight to 6 am) hours. The committing of crime within these hours gives the terrorists ample opportunity to reach the forest at midnight when the community is asleep. The 1-3 days duration that dominated kidnapping in the area concurs with less than a week, covering a high percentage of 20.2% as reported by Mickolus (2006), as quoted in Schmid and Flemming (2010). Again, the short duration of hostage-keeping is a clear manifestation of a low connection with professional kidnappers. It also indicates the disconnection of the forest with farther difficult terrain. Prolonged keeping of victims means they are either killed or tortured and allowed to die, as noted in some cases in this study.

The result from this study which indicated that victims are made to trek short distances before motorcycles are used to convey them to the forest, collaborates with the findings of Odoma and Akor (2019), who reported long distance trek for hours without food into thick forests secluded from the community and presence of governance under serious death threats. The presence of guns for heating and shooting with other instruments agrees with Davidson (2010) and Dakagan (2022a and 2022b), who reported the use of guns, phones, and other instruments on victims in custody while demanding ransom. It is painful that most of the victims were secured with wounds of different categories at their backs, from melting leather, battery acid, knife cuts, and wounds from different degrees of beatings. The torture is to the extent that some victims were tied to trees and allowed to die unattended.

Many reasons have been opined for the kidnapping in Namu, but the most occurring among respondents is unemployment (44%). This concurs with Chidi (2014), Inyang and Ubong (2013), Gongs *et al.* (2021) and Ogabido (2009), Akpan (2017), Olorunfemi (2021), and Chidi (2014), who reported unemployment as a major factor for kidnapping. Unfortunately, kidnapping in Nigeria is increasing, as reported by Olorunfemi (2021). This is not unconnected to the population explosion and the dozens of graduates bred daily. The 4% response of quick money is one of the lowest. However, it coincides with reports by Dodo (2010) and Inyang (2009), which saw the desire to get rich quickly and aspirations for wealth against all odds as the cause of kidnapping in Nigeria. It also indicates the decay in core values, as all moral values to avoid terrorism are ignored.

Financial consideration is a major factor considered by kidnappers before engaging in any criminal activity. The concept of KRV is highly used to determine potential kidnapped victims. The highest category of those targeted falling within ransom payment of 0-20,000,000 attests to the fact that most KRV is within that category, as reported by Benjamin *et al.* (2018), Dakagan (2022a) and Dakagan (2022b). Moreover, as Samuel (2019) puts it, some of the kidnapped victims are relatives of the main targets. They were kidnapped because their main targets eluded their traps.

It reached an extent that information was sent to targets in the community to be ready for death in the event they were kidnapped. The Correlation between money demanded and ransom paid indicated the level of KRV attached to each victim. Those from whom lesser money was demanded paid less, while those who were attached higher KRV ended up paying relatively higher ransom amounts. The 0.013 significant level indicated that (Table 3).

5. Conclusion

Communities adjoining forests in Nigeria have come under serious insecurity, especially kidnapping. This is mainly because of the absence of governance in those areas. Criminals, knowledgeable about that fact, have made conserved forests their base for all kinds of atrocities ranging from arm robbery, kidnapping, lumbering, and setting up of camps for hostages. Apart from these adjoining communities to forests, kidnapping is now widespread across Nigeria based on the peculiarity of communities. Kidnappers have mastered the geographic terrain of communities and just a little information from informants domicile in communities is enough for them to perpetrate crime. The much-talked-about technology in Nigeria has not been practical in fighting crime. More needs to be done through tracking by security agencies via network providers and citizen database creation. Citizens who have high kidnap ransom values live in fear and are forced to move with their businesses to safer areas. It is, therefore, the responsibility of government and citizens to be proactive in securing communities.

6. Recommendations

The study revealed the foundational issues responsible for the alarming rate of kidnapping in the study area. These include unemployment, ethnicity, and desire for quick money, poverty, and religion, with consequential effects on the economy. The following recommendations are hereby opined to curb the effects of kidnapping in the Namu community and the society at large.

- There is a necessitous to make the security network robust through hybridization with non-state security actors like hunters and vigilantes. Integrating the non-state security actors inbuilt communities will help tame kidnapping in Nigeria.

- Every modernized society emanated from some traditional foundation. Activating the hunting tradition under traditional institutions will help in monitoring the environment. Hunters should be made to conduct routine patrols into the Pandam forest.
- The prescription of banditry and kidnapping as terrorism is not enough to curb crime. It must be seen working. If criminals are seen prosecuted, it will deter others from committing such crimes. Failure to prosecute criminals is a major reason for the proliferation of arms in the community.
- Let the presence of governance cut across all communities in Nigeria. The communities are not too remote for the presence of executive, legislative, judicial, and other philanthropically inclined initiatives to be felt. That will go a long way to reducing poverty, thereby reducing crime.
- The rate of unemployment is alarming for the skilled and unskilled populace. There should be some deliberate entrepreneurial skills in the education curriculum to stop the idleness experienced by those who pass through the classroom condition. Being occupied in some income ventures can reduce idleness that leads to crime.
- Communities need to be enlightened on the danger of harboring criminals and informants. Crime is faceless and may only hide under ethnic, religious, political, and geographic guises. If it is not decisively exposed, it will graduate to consume the community harboring it. Most wide-scale invasions started this way.
- Technological advancement of our contemporary age seems to be weak in Nigeria. The use of sophisticated equipment for tracking down criminals has not granted Nigerians the needed confidence. Kidnappers communicate for ransom through phones, yet tracking them is grabbed as though the country is still in the analog age. They successfully negotiate and collect ransom through this means; such success only gives criminals the confidence to do more. The phone Sim-cards registration widely conducted in Nigeria through the network providers seems not to be yielding the requisite results.
- The geographic environment varies across communities. The use of geospatial techniques for terrain analysis will aid hunters and vigilantes inbuilt communities to be more effective in securing their communities.
- Traditional, religious, political, and wealthy elites found collaborating with kidnappers and sympathizing along these lines must be decisively investigated and dealt with without any form of impunity.
- There should be an effective campaign to present targets with high kidnap ransom value as unfavorable targets for kidnap. Security should be everybody's business. Non-governmental organizations can be effective partners.
- The home front remains the smallest unit of society. Responsible families will produce responsible societies; families are responsible for the decay in societal values today. Many have sacrificed good cultures for the Western culture that is alien to Nigeria and only breeds crime daily.
- Communities adjoining conserved areas have continued to suffer from the government's poor regulation. Regulations guiding the establishment of such areas should be strictly enforced. Governments at the Federal and State levels should incorporate hunters into the activities of forest guards to prevent kidnappers from using restricted areas as bases for crime.
- In this digital era, there is a need for a database for all citizens in the country. This will help track the activity of everyone. Until such is properly done, criminals will keep outsmarting the intelligence of security men, and Nigerians will remain a hotspot for kidnapping as it is now.
- The reading to establish the Nigerian Hunters and Forest Security Service (NHFSS) bill just passed the third reading in the 9th Senate. Community leaders should encourage citizens of good behavior to register with NHFSS to secure their communities and the Pandam forest.

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