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Curtailing the Menace of Kidnapping and Ritual Killings in Nigeria

Ishola, Tajudeen Odebode, PhD & Suleiman, Abdulsalam B., PhD

Abstract

This paper examines the geometric rise in the incidents of kidnapping and ritual killings in Nigeria. The two crimes in Nigeria have been persistent, chronic and becoming difficult to manage by the security apparatus. This is given the fact that these crimes are organized and perpetrated in clandestine manner. Kidnapping became pronounced in Nigeria in 2006, while the ritual killings have been a thing of decades. The study relied mainly on secondary sources of data drawn from textbook, journals, official publications, conference papers, internet materials, newspapers, magazines, and official documentaries that are relevant to the work. The paper posits that the rising wave of kidnapping and ritual killings became rampant as a result of "get-rich-quick syndrome" by the perpetrators and has constituted a major threat to peace and security that should have engendered socioeconomic and political development of the nation states. It recommends among others the need for inter-agency cooperation, intelligence sharing and integration of community policing system for adequate security and sustainable peace in Nigeria. Keywords: kidnapping, ritual killing, security, development, peace

Introduction The geometric rise in the incidents of kidnapping and ritual killings in Nigeria has become phenomenal and difficult to manage by the security agents. These crimes are organized and perpetrated in clandestine manner with associated negative consequences on individuals, communities and by extension the state.

Kidnapping which started in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria by some militant youths as a liberation struggle to seek national and international audience has become a criminal habit, and crept into other geo-political zones of Nigeria. Inyang and Abraham (2013) explained kidnapping as an act of

seizing, taking away and keeping a person in custody by either force or fraud in order to collect a ransom in return or settle some scores of disagreements among people. At the peak of Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast, about 209 secondary school girls were kidnapped from Government Secondary School, Chibok in Borno State in April 2014. In similar vein, another mass abduction of over 100 female students of Government Girls' Secondary School Dapchi in Yobe State in January 2018. Kidnap targets have changed from foreign oil workers to just about anyone whose relatives or employers can afford ransom payment.

Ritual killing is the act of killing (an animal or person) in order to propitiate a deity (vocabulary.com). However, in the context of this paper, it is the killing of person(s) motivated by cultural, religious or superstition beliefs that the user of a body or body part has medicinal values, possesses supernatural powers and brings good luck, prosperity and protection to the killer. These criminal and inhuman activities with various motives but majorly on get-rich-quick, "easy money syndrome" and getting along with the rave of the moment in social parlance has cut across the country most especially among the youths and the perpetrators remain undetected by security operatives. The life style of some youths that involved in internet financial fraud of no specific home stead have made the ritual killings more pronounced, as the Economic Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) go all out on them, they have now migrated from "yahoo" to "yahoo plus."

The rising wave of ritual killings has greatly assumed a dangerous and alarming rate in Nigeria, such that nobody is immune from being a victim. The trend goes unabated with little or no concrete effort by the security agents to checkmate the dangerous trend. This barbaric inhuman and criminal act is carried out in a 21st century when other advanced countries of the world are intensifying effort in technology advancement.

In 2017, activities of a group known as Badoo in Lagos State raised further question on the safety and security of Nigerians. The group members were raided in their hideout and over 200 of them were arrested by the police; with the support of members of the outlawed Oodua People's Congress (OPC), and the vigilante group otherwise known as community policing group. Their modus operandi includes storming victims' residential houses, while they are asleep and hypnotize them. Thereafter, smash their heads with a grinding stone and after use a handkerchief to clean the blood and brain before leaving the scene. During interrogation, one of the suspects confirmed that each handkerchief stained with blood was sold for five hundred thousand naira (₦500,000). He further revealed that they were mere errand boys for rich politicians within and outside of Lagos State. The blood and semen stained handkerchief were used to prepare spiritual defence for some well-to-do Nigerians (*Vanguard*, Sept 2, 2017).

It is reported that those who patronize cemetery officials are usually herbalists, herbal traders and even some prominent Nigerians who usually engage intermediaries. Human parts are sold in some markets in Nigeria with fixed prices. A fresh human head goes for N60,000, a skull for 20,000. Fresh legs are sold for 30,000 each, while a decomposed leg is sold for N20,000. A fresh finger is 43,000.00, fresh intestines 20,000, while dry intestines are sold for 5,000 (Vanguard, September 19, 2017). The involvements of Nigerian youths in the acts of kidnapping and ritual killings has greatly increased that one begins to ask the questions on moral value of the society as well as the significant of cultural values and the dignity of human being as a special creation. All these had been thrown to the dumping site by the perpetrators of kidnapping and ritual killings in Nigeria. It is against this backdrop, this paper therefore, attempts to look at the menace of kidnapping and ritual killings in Nigeria and propose as suggestions, the curtailment measures in the interest of peace, security and development in Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is to theoretically look at the menace of kidnapping and ritual killings with quality options to get rid of the menaces that seriously affects the peace, socioeconomic and political development of most if not all Nigeria states.

Methodology

The study relied mainly on secondary sources of data drawn from textbook, journals, official publications, conference papers, internet materials, newspapers, magazines, and official documentaries that are relevant to the work. The analysis of data was based on deductions from the issues raised in the paper in the light of available data gathered.

Theoretical Explanation

The primary goal of sociological enterprise is to understand and explain social phenomena; and the criminological enterprise is to create valid and accurate theories of crime causation. However, the peace enterprise is to bring the understanding, creativity and accuracy of the theory on the workability (achievable result) of the proposition on the conflict. The paper adopts two theories: Crime Causation Theory (Social Exchange Theory) and Victimization Theory (Lifestyle Theory). Social Exchange Theory propounded by George Homans (1961, as cited in Ibrahim & Mukhtar, 2017) and the theory is an offshoot of rational choice approach, which views “human behaviour as being guided by “hedonistic principle or pleasure-seeking” tendency (Ibrahim & Mukhtar, 2017, p. 137).

Homan's main interest was on the history of rewards and costs, which lead people to do what they do. Homan argued that people continue to do what they found to be rewarding in the past. Conversely, they cease doing what has proved to be costly in the past. To understand behaviour, we need to understand an individual's history of rewards and costs. Using exchange theory, kidnapping and receiving a ransom for returning hostages can be viewed as special kind of give and take. The reciprocal characteristic of this type of crime is that, it involves give and take because the kidnappers ask for money or make demands for something other than money (Ibrahim & Mukhtar, 2017 p. 137).

The second theory used in explaining kidnapping/ritual killings in Nigeria is Lifestyle Theory. The major premise of lifestyle theory is that victimisation risk increased when people have a high-risk lifestyle. The theory contends, "Placing oneself at risk by going out to dangerous places results in increased the likelihood of victimisation" (Siegel, 2010, p. 81; Ibrahim & Mukhtar, 2017 p. 137). Thus, victimisation risk is by such behaviours as associating with young men, travelling along the corridor of the kidnapping den, going out in public places late at night, and living in an urban area. Conversely, one's chances of victimisation can be reduced by staying home at night, moving to a rural area, staying out of public places, earning more money, and getting married (Siegel, 2010). The basis of lifestyle theory is that crime is not a random occurrence but rather a function of the victim's lifestyle. For example, due to their lifestyle and demographic makeup, college campuses contain large concentrations of young women who may be at greater risk for rape and other forms of sexual assault than women in the general population. The strength of the theory, according to Siegel (2010), is that it explains victimisation patterns in the social structure. Males, young people, and the poor have high victimisation rates because they have a higher-risk lifestyle than females, the elderly, and the affluent. Based on some empirical data, Siegel (2010, p. 77) mentioned that groups that have an extremely risky life, such as young runaways living on the street, are at high risk for victimisation; the more time they are exposed to street life, the greater their risk of becoming crime victims. Teenage males have an extremely high victimisation risk because their lifestyle places them at risk both at school and once they leave the school grounds. They spend a great deal of time hanging out with friends and pursuing recreational fun.

Conceptual Clarifications

Kidnapping: This is the act of taking someone or keeping someone or restricting the movement against his/her wishes. It could be for forcing him/her

to work involuntarily without pay or make ransom demands from the relatives of the victim (Chibuzor, 2017). Kidnapping according to (Abdulsalam, 2016) is a situation when a person is taking away to an unknown destination against his/her will or wish, usually, to hold the person for ransom or furtherance of another crime.

Ritual killings: These are relatively unusual, but sometimes bear some of the hallmarks of a serial killing, such as mutilation of the corpses or some kind of special positioning (Encyclopedia.com). The Mnemonic Dictionary simply conceptualize ritual killing as the act of killing (an animal or person) in order to propitiate a deity.

Evolution of Kidnapping in Nigeria

Kidnapping is not a new crime in some countries such as Columbia, the United States, Mexico, Philippines and South Africa. Akpan (2010:2) posits that kidnapping has grown over the years as an industry and motivated by many motives. In Nigeria, kidnapping has increased the number of other forms of crimes known to law such as armed robbery, assassination, arson and theft. Kidnapping incidents in Nigeria, however, attracted national and international attention in 2006, when members of the Movement for Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) claimed responsibility for the abduction of some foreign oil workers to press home their demands for a larger share of the oil resources found in the region. A record of incidents of kidnapping in the Niger-Delta alone between 2006 and 2010 indicate that Rivers had the highest number with 216 incidents, followed by Edo State 166 and Akwa-Ibom State 100. Others were Delta State 85, Abia State 68, Imo State 61 and Bayelsa State 42 (Owonikoko, 2010:2). Apparently disturbed with the menace of kidnapping in the region and neighbouring states, the offence became capital in 2007 in six Nigerian states of Abia, Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo (Cornell Law School, 2014).

Categories of Kidnapping in Nigeria

Given the different cases of kidnapping, the crime has been classified into arranged/self, criminal, political, and pathological/emotional.

Table 1: Broad categories of kidnapping

	Category	Instance/Description
1	Arranged/self	Kidnapping arranged by oneself with a view to taking money from ransom proceeds and thereafter take his or her own share from such accomplishments.
2	Criminal	Kidnapping motivated by the quest to obtain ransom from the victim's family, business or associates.

3	Political	Kidnapping motivated by the need to advance a political cause (e.g. militant/militia, terrorist movement).
4	Emotional/ pathological	Kidnapping committed by people who are emotionally or psychologically disturbed e.g. for rape, child abduction by estranged parents, etc.

Source: Adapted by the researchers 2022

Causes of Kidnapping in Nigeria

Many scholars have offered different causes/factors responsible for kidnapping. Some socioeconomic factors facilitating kidnapping in Nigeria are based on the following:

i. High rate of youth unemployment

Various explanations have been offered on factors responsible for the alarming rate of kidnapping in Nigeria, but high rate of unemployment of youths is identified as a major factor. Every year, Nigerian universities, polytechnics and colleges of education turn out students without creating job opportunities for the graduate youths. The increased cases of kidnapping across the country constitute security threat, to not only individuals but also communities and state.

ii. Influence of drugs and alcohol

The upsurge of kidnapping activities in Nigeria is linked with consumption of hard drugs such as cocaine, heroin, India hemp, tramadol, alcohol, and other hard substances. Actions of kidnappers are mostly influenced by the use of these mindbending devices, such that their reasoning faculty is temporarily suspended while they are perpetrating the criminal act.

iii. Payment of good ransom

Kidnapping syndicates are famous for ransom demand. Whenever a person is abducted, the primary concern and expectation of the perpetrators is that their relations, employers and associates would pay a good ransom to facilitate release of the victim. This is the case with some kidnap victim's family, who prefer to pay ransom and secure release of their relatives.

iv. Low risk nature

Kidnapping is a low risk crime as compared to other crimes such as armed robbery, assassination and burglary. It takes two or three people to perpetrate abduction of a victim, thus considered less dangerous for criminals to practice. Victim can easily be lure through phone calls, or invited to a place where his or her abduction will take place without the knowledge of his/her relatives. It

is a reality that two or more persons can perpetrate kidnapping because of the division of labour involved (Siegel & Bunt, 2012).

v. Get-rich-quick syndrome

Kidnapping appears to be a quick means to get rich among some youths, with or without gainful employment. Kidnapping has become an avenue to generate quick money from ransom realised from victims' relations, friends or employers. The high quest for quick money, without consideration for its accompanied consequences is one of the major factors responsible for increased kidnapping incidents in Nigeria.

vi. Uncontrollable trend of illegal arms

The larger number of uncontrolled illegal arms in circulation through various illegitimate means accounts for increased kidnapping incidents in Nigeria. It serves as a ready tool for kidnappers. Ordinarily, some kidnappers cannot withstand their victims physically, but with sophisticated weapons, they overpower such victims. According to Davidson (2010 cited in Ngwama, 2014:133), a group of criminals armed with guns and cell phones apprehend unsuspecting victims and drag their victims into a scheduled spot and begs to make phone calls to whomever and demand for ransom.

vii. Non-ratification of antikidnapping treaty

Nigeria is yet to implement the treaty against kidnapping as advocated by the United Nations (UN) since 2006. The UN states that Nigeria is yet to ratify the treaty against kidnapping and advises Nigeria to domesticate the aspect of the obligations on anti- kidnapping strategies in the UN Operational Manual on Prevention of Kidnapping.

Negative Effects of Kidnapping

Kidnapping has had its effects on socioeconomic activities and international odium on Nigeria as a nation.

- i. The nation's economy was badly affected in the Niger-Delta region between 2006 and 2010. Major oil and gas installations were shutdown to the extent that foreign earnings from crude oil reduced drastically from 2006 to 2010. The trend impacted negatively on national economic growth and development by way of low production of oil and decline volume of investment and capital inflow.
- ii. Most potential development partners relocated to other countries considered safe. This created loss of jobs by the youths who were hitherto employed by construction, oil and gas industries operating in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria at the peak of kidnapping.

- iii. Militarisation approach by the state with the use of various Joint Task Forces (JTFs) in the Niger-Delta region led to loss of many lives and displacement of many communities.
- iv. The rising wave of kidnapping incidents has negatively affected the image of Nigeria at the international level such that some foreign countries like United States of America (USA), Britain and Italy often issue warning notices to their respective citizens' resident in Nigeria.
- v. Victims of kidnapping experience physical, emotional and psychological trauma from the point of abduction to the point of release, if not eventually killed.
- vi. Generally, the kidnapping phenomenon has created anxiety, apprehension and fear in the minds of Nigerians, because markets, churches, mosques, schools, highways and residential houses are common places of abduction.
- vii. Social life of most Nigerians has been negatively affected, such that night outings, social gatherings and night movements are minimised because of fear of the unknown.

Some High-Profile Kidnapping Incidents

- i. Nitabai Inengife, an uncle to the former President Jonathan was abducted at Otuoke in Bayelsa. April, 2014
- ii. The kidnapped of female students from Government Secondary School Chibok in Borno State. February 2015
- iii. A former Finance Minister, Chief Olu Falae was kidnapped. November, 2015
- iv. Madam Beauty Siasia, mother of Samson Siasia was kidnapped in Odoni, Shagbama " LG.A of Bayelsa State after a ransom of N32m
- v. Professor James Adichie, the father of the popular Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, was kidnapped on his way from Enugu State to Anambra State.
- vi. Sheikh Adam Idoko, the Chief Imam of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka Central mosque was kidnapped on September 10, 2015 at his home town, Ogrute Enugu Eze in Igbo Eze North Council Area of Enugu State where he was attending a meeting. July, 2016
- vii. A Lagos State Monarch, Oba Yishau Oseni was kidnapped September, 2016.
- viii. Wife of the Central Bank Governor, Godwin Emefra was kidnapped along Benin, Agbor Highway in Edo State. October 2017
- ix. Four British Nationals, including a couple were kidnapped in Burutu L.G.A., Delta State while on Free Medical treatment from a Christian Medical Charity.
- x. An Italian priest based in Nigeria for the past three years was kidnapped by armed gunmen near Benin City.

xi. Suspected militants kidnapped four “British nationals in Bornu. December, 2017xii. The late Taraba House of Assembly, who represented Talcum I Constituency, Hosea Ibi was kidnapped. He was however found dead despite the payment of an undisclosed amount of money as ransom by his family. This Day, January 1, 2018.

February, 2018 xiii. In February 19, 2018, over 100 female students of Government Girls’ Secondary School, Dapchi in Yobe State were kidnapped.

April, 2018:

xiv. Twin children of a high chief in Ibadan, Oyo State were kidnapped and later released after payment of an undisclosed amount of ransom. (Vanguard Sept 19, 2017; Premium Times September 7, 2017; Daily Trust, October 1, 2016; The Sun Newspaper October, 25, 2016).

xv. An herbalist, son and one other were remanded by magistrate court in Ado-Ekiti over the kidnapp and murder of an 82-year-old man. Police in Jos rescued kidnapped victims. The police command in Zamfara dislodged a bandits’ camp and rescued 14 kidnapped victims in the state who had spent 68 days in captivity (The Guardian online, 2023).

Causes of Ritual Killings

Despite the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights that provides that an individual be entitled to respect for his life and integrity of his person, ritual killings continue unabated in some parts of Nigeria. Some of the causes identified are:

i. Superstition

Some Nigerians believe in ghosts, charms and witchcraft. They hold the belief that magical portions with human parts for medicinal purposes possess supernatural power that brings prosperity and protection. In fact, ritual killing is perceived as an act of spiritual fortification (Leo, 2004).

ii. Get-rich-quick syndrome

The tendency to get-rich-quick among some Nigerian youths is a factor responsible for ritual killings. There is a popular belief among the youths that special rituals performed by herbalists with human parts such as heart, eyes, tongue, breast, private organs and intestines can bring quick money or wealth. This belief, of course, lacks scientific proof or common sense.

iii. Laziness

Most Nigerian school graduates who are not yet opportune to secure government jobs, have the wrong notion that, the only way to make money without work is to cut short financial opulence by engaging in rituals. To them, it is the fastest means to huge success, far better than others who have secured government employment. **iv. Lack of trust in security agencies**

Information sharing between the members of the public and security agencies is critical to crime prevention such as ritual killings. Most Nigerians have lost trust on the security agencies, especially the Nigeria Police Force in providing timely and useful information for quick response. Public trust in the security agencies has continued to erode because in most instances, complaints should be treated as an accused person and lack of proper investigation of some cases often lead to frivolous bail grants.

v. Weakness of the state security apparatus

Perpetrators of kidnappings and ritual killings often go undetected after the commission of these barbaric and inhuman acts, because of the institutional weaknesses of the state security apparatus. For instance, the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) and the Department of State Security Service (DSS) who are the major instruments of internal security lack the capacities to deal with this menace. This manifested in the absence of criminal profiling mechanism, lack of modern Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to detect, track individuals aid syndicates who perpetrate this heinous crime.

Some Cases of Ritual Killings in Nigeria

- i. On August 17, 2017, the lifeless body of a four-year old girl was found close to a shrine at 28 Ogbe Close in Iwaya area of Lagos State, with her throat slit.
- ii. August 20, 2017, another lifeless body of an eight-year old girl, Chikamso Victory was found in the apartment of one Ifeanyi Chukwu Dike (2) at Messiah Street, Elioza area of Port-Harcourt, Rivers State. As at the time her lifeless body was recovered, some parts, such as vagina, eyes, tongue and breasts had been removed.
- iii. March 30, 2017, one Tunde Jimoh was arrested by the Police when he abducted one Akintoye Oyeyemi who was taken to a forest and killed. The victim's wrists, heart and legs were cut off.
- iv. In December, 2016, at the Lower Usuman Dam Junction, along Dutse-Bwari Road, Abuja, the body of an unidentified lady was recovered. One of her breasts was cut off, while the rest of the body was cut into two from abdomen, an indication that the killing was for ritual.
- v. Sometimes in 2017 in Soka village, Oluyole Local Government Area, Oyo State, a den was discovered where about 20 corpses were found, while 18 victims were rescued. Source: Vanguard Sept, 2017.
- vi. In September, 2017 the Ondo State Police Command arrested three men, John Adenitire a.k.a Emio, Fisayo Fasanu a.k.a Above and AbdulRafiu Tijani for abduction and killing of 3 students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo in Ondo State. The victims' body parts were sold for

payment of N15m. vii. Eleven State residents lost their lives and their body parts sold by ritualists to human parts merchants in the last 13 months. Specifically, the state recorded 15 cases of ritual killings between January 2022 and January 2023. (Vanguard Sept, 2011, 2017; Premium Times Sept. 7, 2017; Punch online, 2023)

State's Response to Kidnapping and Ritual Killings in Nigeria

The primary role of government in the world over is the provision of adequate security for life and property of the citizenry. The widening scale of insecurity and uncontrollable trend in perpetration of kidnapping and ritual killings has become a subject of concern. The first and major priority of any responsive and responsible government is to provide security for her citizenry such that freedom of movement at any period of the day would be guaranteed. The security and law enforcement agencies are known for their reactive measures, rather than being proactive, after the commission of heinous crime like kidnapping, cultism and ritual killings. Panel and committee approach by the state to investigate crimes of this nature always adopted by the state rather than provide necessary logistic support to the security and law enforcement agencies.

Recommended Policy Options

The most essential function of any government is to provide enabling environment for peace and security that will guaranty economic and sociopolitical development for the citizenry. Thus, peace and adequate security is a pre-condition for corporate existence and development. It is against this backdrop that the following policy options are recommended to curtail the chronic incidence of kidnapping and ritual killings in Nigeria.

1. Evolvement of human capacity building: Kidnapping is a direct negation of Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1976, which guarantees the liberty, integrity and security of everyone and which prohibits arbitrary and criminal detention, given the upsurge in the incidence of kidnapping and ritual killings. There is need for sophistication of law enforcement agencies that can stand to their responsibilities and promote counter-force against these crimes. Therefore, human capacity building for selected personnel of the State Security apparatus on anti-kidnapping and ritual killings trainings is germane. The Nigerian security operational environment has since changed and the only way to meet the emerging challenges is through constant training and capacity building (Achumba, Ighomereho & Akpor-Robero, 2013).
2. Intensification of human intelligence operation: The most effective intelligence gathering mechanism has been human resource operation. Human

Resource Device Operation System allows for information dissemination at the appropriate time and to appropriate quarters under absolute confidentiality. Time information could be obtained from sources among agents and informants in the hamlet, village, ward, local government for collation, evaluation, analysis interpretation and follow-up actions. The security and law enforcement agencies should intensify human resource operation, for the fact that perpetrators of kidnapping and ritual killings do not live in the moon, but among the local populace in Nigeria. What this requires is motivation of selected persons to provide accurate information of identified potential kidnappers and ritual killing syndicate members, their locations and other useful information.

3. Need for integration of criminal profiling technique: Criminal profiling is a behavioural and investigation tool that is intended to help investigations to accurately predict and profile the characteristics of unknown criminal subjects or offenders. Criminal profiling characterizes the behaviour of an unknown suspect by looking for common patterns within the crimes that reflect the behavioral characteristics of the offenders. The first central feature of criminal profiling is the modus operandi (MO), which refers to the particular methods employed by a given criminal, which may change as the crime becomes more practiced such as kidnapping, cultism and ritual killings in Nigeria.
4. Evolvement of ICT advancement—As a matter of priority, the state security apparatus should key into the technology advancement like other developed countries in the world, given the sophistication of the modus operandi of the aforementioned crimes. They should consider bulk purchase and use of various affordable tracking devices such as CCTV at strategic positions and in-built machines and cameras. This will enable them determine locations of perpetrators and victims, which will reduce these incidences.
5. Consideration for integration of community policing system: Community policing is a strategy or philosophy based on the notion that community interaction and support can help control crime and reduce fear. Community can help to identify suspects. The state security apparatus should draw up strategies and structures at the 774 local government levels on how the local vigilance groups can be integrated into the security management of Nigeria.
6. Need for interagency cooperation and intelligence sharing: Cooperation among the intelligence community for the purpose of intelligence sharing is critical to effectiveness of the security and law enforcement agencies in dealing with the menace of kidnapping, cultism and ritual killings in Nigeria. The state, as a matter of priority, through the office of the National Security Adviser, should look into the age-long rivalry between the security agencies and ensure they discharge their statutory responsibilities with optimal professionalism.
7. Allocation of funds: The security and law enforcement agencies should be allocated adequate fund by the state to enable them purchase the required

equipment and other logistic support such as functional vehicles, including speed boats to take care of the difficult topography of the Niger-Delta where kidnapping activities remain pervasive.

8. Consideration for creation of state police: Given the rising wave and unabated occurrences of incidents arising from kidnapping and ritual killings, there is the need for the federal government to give consideration for creation of state police. One advantage of this is that state indigenes who know the terrain of their respective localities will understand the terrain better than non-indigenes. Secondly, state executive governments will be able to use their security votes on security management and have absolute control.
9. Appraisal of public awareness programme with relevant agencies: Going by the spate of kidnapping and ritual killings in Nigeria and to reverse the trend, the security and law enforcement agencies should appraise the strategies of collaboration with relevant agencies in raising awareness on potential threats in Nigeria. The management of each security and law enforcement agencies should synergize with some civil society organizations (CSO), nongovernmental Organizations (NOOs) and National Orientation Agency (NOA) to organize programmes on public awareness against kidnapping and ritual killings. This will reduce level of vulnerability and such programmes should include:
 - i. Know your tenants: Landlords on neighbourhood should be educated on the need to know their tenants. Critical information concerning place of birth, parental background, means of livelihood, friends and associates, etc. should be obtained from potential tenants.
 - ii. Know your neighbourhood: Members of a neighbourhood should understand the degree of security sensitivity of their neighbourhood. This will enable them observe when the unusual is being perpetuated. Knowledge of neighbourhood will enable residents of a given community determine suspicious movements of persons of questionnaire characters, or vehicles park around the vicinity and for what mission and for how long.
 - iii. Resident security: Maintaining good interpersonal relationship with neighbours and co-workers, with simple lifestyle will most likely assist to save potential victims from being kidnapped, or killed or attacked by cultists. This is because distress calls can be made to neighbours who can render rescue effort.
 - iv. Social outings: Most kidnapping incidents occur at social events, therefore, citizens in Nigeria should be educated to be conscious in an unfamiliar environment and be advised to leave the location if feeling uncomfortable. Above all, late outings should be avoided.
 - v. Travel security: In Nigeria travel security awareness is another focal point. People should be educated to travel by road with registered and well-known transportation companies and discourage them against night

journeys. If driving alone, it is safer to look-out for other vehicles that may be trailing.

vi. Hotel security: Potential lodgers should take cognizance of level of security before checking in. They should ensure that such hotel has high perimeter fencing, good lighting, security guards, strong metal doors with intercommunication in the hotel rooms, and above all, the location of the hotel that should not be isolated.

10. Regular federal, state and local government security council/committee meetings: This is with a view to discussing security related problems for the purpose of reviewing of security situation at regular intervals for the purpose of correction and improvement.

Conclusion

Since 1999 when Nigeria returned to democratic rule, the security environment of Nigeria has witnessed unprecedented alarming rate of all forms of crimes, particularly kidnapping, and ritual killings. These crimes have constituted to endemic problems of our time and have generally accounted for lack of peace, security and development. In reality, government have major role to play. However, security management is no longer a state affair but collaboration from other stakeholders such as members of the political class, religious leaders, academics, civil societies and non-governmental organisations. Therefore, curtailing kidnapping and ritual killings is a collective responsibility that will bring about collective benefits.

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