

Effects of Kidnapping on Interstate Commercial Transportation Service, in North Central, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

In recent times, highway kidnapping has continued to disrupt the movement of people in the North-Central zone of Nigeria. These incessant kidnapping activities on the highways have further intensified the threats faced by commercial motorists. Against this backdrop, this study examines the effects of kidnapping on interstate commercial transportation services in North-Central Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Multi-stage sampling technique was utilized in selecting respondents. A sample size of 384 was determined using Cochran's formula. Out of the 384 questionnaires administered, 354 were retrieved and found valid for data analysis. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics with the aid of SPSS Version 21. Queer Ladder Theory was adopted as the theoretical framework. The core idea of the theory is that it explains the "instrumental essence of organized crime as a desperate means of economic empowerment and social climbing." Findings from the study revealed that kidnapping on North-Central highways is caused by myriad factors, with poor security structures and unemployment/poverty ranking highest among them. The study further revealed that highway kidnapping exposes road users to risks such as fear, panic, and financial loss as a result of ransom payments. It was also established that kidnapping leads to low patronage and a reduction in the income level of transport companies. The study concludes that kidnapping has greatly affected interstate transportation services, as passengers, out of intense fear of kidnapping, often resort to alternative means of transportation, resulting in low patronage. The study recommends that government should collaborate with communities and strengthen security on highways by installing modern surveillance devices such as CCTV cameras. There is also an urgent need to tackle poverty and address youth unemployment through the creation of employment opportunities for the teeming youth population.

Keywords: Kidnapping, Interstate Transportation, Commercial Transportation Services

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Kidnapping have remained pervasive in Nigeria and it is almost becoming uncontrollable, everyday a case of kidnapping is been reported either in the print media, electronic media and social media. Thus, the trends of kidnapping have left meaning Nigeria wondering, if it is still safe to travel by roads in Nigeria. The countless incidents of kidnapping in Nigeria have continue to put pressure on the citizen who now spend huge amount of money to journey using the airplane and avoiding the roads (Okwuwada, 2023).

Globally, United Nations have puts kidnapping activities at about 82% for adults and 16% for children who were kidnapped in Europe/Central Asia; while 73% adults and 27% children were also kidnapped in the America; 61% adults and 39% children were kidnapped in Southeast Asia/Pacific. This statistic indicated that, more adults were kidnapped in different regions. In Africa however, 32% kidnapping case were children while 68% were adults in 2016 (United Nations; cited in Odey, 2017)

In Nigeria, kidnapping has metamorphosed over the years, it has gradually become an industry that is involving every level of the society and studies have found that kidnapping is motivated by many reasons such as

political, ideological, financial, social and cultural purposes. Kidnapping for ransom is one of the most organized crimes in Nigeria, this possesses a great challenge on the national security. It has become a trade that is difficult for the operators to quit. In 2006 the volatile oil rich regions of Niger Delta witnessed a rise in kidnapping cases, with the kidnappers targeting the expatriates in the Nigeria oil business. Thus, kidnapping later spread to the North East as a result of Boko Haram insurgency with the agenda to recruit fighters, instill fear and gain more international recognition. It is also very important to note that kidnapping has become widespread throughout the 36 states with its hotbed in the North-West (NW) and North-Central (NC) region of Nigeria.

The trends of kidnapping are on the increase all over the world, as the Global Slavery Index (2014) reported that throughout 2014, men, women and children kidnapped in village raids are been held as slaves by militias in Eastern DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo). In April and May 2014, 267 women and girls suffered sexual violence by armed groups. In Nigeria, also, kidnapping is ongoing since the early 1990s (Hazen & Horner 2007). Kidnappings continue to contribute to a high rate of insecurity in the South East, the Niger Delta and the South-western region. Hostages have most recently also been taken in the states of Northern Nigeria. Between 2008 and 2010, the Nigeria Police Force recorded 887 cases across the country (Action on Armed Violence, 2013). Kidnapping is taking place everywhere in Nigeria; it is a national problem that has eaten so deep into the fabric of the country (Dodo, 2010). Findings have revealed that kidnapping occurs more in the context of terrorism, insurgency and other forms of political violence. The kidnapping of 250 girls in a girls' secondary school in Chibok, Borno State in 2014 and many more by Boko Haram represent the growing incidence of the kidnapping in Nigeria (Shuaibu, Salleh, & Shehu, 2015).

Kidnappings of western nationals for ransom have also been attributed to Boko Haram. Some cases include the kidnapping of a French priest, Georges Vandebeusch, in November 2013 as well as that of a seven-member French family, who gave the ransom of USD 3 million to kidnappers. Both of these kidnappings took place in Cameroon (Barna, 2014). It has also attacked schools and universities: the massacre of sleeping students in dormitories in February 2014 (Barna, 2014).

However, kidnappers continue to attack on the road transport have been more frequent due to its level of usage, the flexibility of the mode, high coverage and accessibility. Road transport users on transit are often stopped, robbed and sometime kidnapped at gun point for ransom and in some cases killed; vehicles are seized and motor parks filled with passengers are sometime bombed resulting to loss of lives and properties. Consequently, these attacks affect road transportation and also lead to undesirable outcome as it affects road users' expectation, satisfaction and even willingness to use road transport services. The critical nature of the insecurity in road transport has made it an important matter that needs to be studied in order to identify not only the impacts on the road freight transport system, but also on its users and operators so as to identify and proffer possible solutions which can lead to reduction in kidnapping on Nigeria highways and also save lives and properties in the country.

Statement of the Problem

Irrespective of the type of kidnapping and the motive for its perpetration, the psychological and financial impact of the problem can be quite devastating, it exacts unnecessary pressure on both the victims and their family members, sometime it leaves the populace in fear and panic (Kaylor, 2015).

A study conducted in Kenya and Zambia in 2004 finds Women who fall victims of kidnap, are likely to contract sexually transmitted disease as a result of rape and sexual abuse carried out by the kidnapper. Similar figures have been found in 29 countries across Africa and Latin America, where there is a high case of kidnapping have been recorded (Clark, 2004). Apart from psychological trauma on the victim of kidnap, the victim's family members go through serious physiological trauma when their relative is adopted, therefore, kidnapping is also accompanied with huge economic or financial implications. According to Catlin Group (2012) as cited in Ibrahim and Mukhtar (2017) reported that the globally ransom payments worth about US\$500 million annually, The vast majority of kidnaps go unreported for fear of reprisals or a lack of confidence in the police so the victims' family members secretly pay ransom without the knowledge or involvement of security operative, for fear of escalation.

The economic effects of kidnapping include direct and indirect costs. At the individual level, the costs include the economic value of money that may be lost to kidnappers, while the indirect economic cost of kidnapping include expenditures on preventive measures, such as the employment of private security personnel. At the governmental level, the economic effects of kidnapping involve the expenditure on security and security agencies. The federal government budget for 2009 for police formations and command was 195 billion. The Lagos State Government was also reported to have spent three billion naira in two years on security alone (Soyombo, 2009). Much money has been spent on ransom payments. The former Inspector General, Sir. Mike Okipo, disclosed that 15 billion have been paid as ransom to kidnappers between 2006 and 2009 (Kyrian, 2009). The large sum of money spent as ransom payment could affects the State economy drastically, as the money wasted on ramson can be channeled to meaningful economic development. Also, the nation loses a lot of revenue when expatriates working in the multinational oil companies are attacked. Out of fear, people tend to stay clear from the working environment and the adverse effect is always on the economy. Odoma (2019) noted that, in 2006, when kidnappers abducted six foreign expatriates from Shell Oil Company, the company was forced to closed down and this led to the loss of millions of standard cubic feet per day of gas production for the country.

Kidnapping affects the social life and social relations of many people who are held hostages 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 of poverty by not painting the external walls of their houses. Many people are afraid to buy or use new motor vehicles for the fear of kidnappers. It was reported that rich people in some States in Nigeria have resorted to riding in taxi cabs and commercial motorcycles popularly called okada to market, school and social outings as a means to check hostage takers (Soyombo, 2009) as cited in (Babaita, 2020).The prevalence of kidnapping in Nigeria have forced many people to abandon road transportation for flight, this development further put serious pressure on the aircraft leading to an asymmetric upshoot in flight fare. It is on this backdrop that this study investigates the effects of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation service, in Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What are the factors responsible for kidnapping in North central Nigeria highway
2. What are the patterns/trends of kidnapping in North central Nigeria highway
3. How does kidnapping affects inter-state commercial transportation service in North central Nigeria
4. How has kidnapping impacted the overall economic activities and supply of goods/services that depend on interstate commercial transportation

Objectives of the study

The broad objective of this study is to investigates the effects of kidnapping on inter-State commercial transportation service, in Nigeria. while the specific objective are to:

- i. find out the factors responsible for kidnapping in North central Nigeria highway
- ii. examine the patterns/trends of kidnapping in North central Nigeria highway
- iii. find out the effects of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation service in North central Nigeria
- iv. investigate the impact of kidnapping on overall economic activities and supply of goods/services that depend on interstate commercial transportation

Significance of the Study

the study is on effects of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation service in Nigeria, is significant in different perceptive, first, this study provides a wholistic information on the operation of kidnapping on the Nigeria high way. It is hoped that this study provide a solid theoretical base for studies in the future. In addition, this study is expected to provide a link in the existing gap in the literature by filling such gaps. While several studies have examined kidnapping in Nigeria from a general security perspective, few have specifically

focused on its effects on inter-state commercial transportation in the North Central states. By addressing this gap, the findings will contribute to the body of existing sociological and criminological literature and also inspire further research in related areas. The findings from this study will contribute to the body of existing sociological and criminological literatures and also inspire further research. The findings will serve as a reference point for researchers in criminology, sociology, transport studies, and security studies who wish to investigate kidnapping and its impact on mobility and commerce.

From the practical perspective, this study is therefore very timely and significant, as the government and the general public will find the study important because it will broaden knowledge and horizon to remove the veil of ignorance about the operations of kidnappers in Nigeria high ways. This study also will be relevant to individuals, families, groups and non-governmental agencies involved in related criminal justice activity all over Nigeria. That is, the religious leaders, law enforcement agents and other security and correctional agents interested in formulation, execution or reformation of the criminals among us. From the practical perspective, this study is timely and significant given the rising cases of kidnapping along Nigerian highways.

The findings will broaden the knowledge and horizon of government at federal, state, and local levels. It will help in policy formulation, security planning, and resource allocation for highway protection. It removes the veil of ignorance about the operations of kidnappers and provides evidence-based recommendations for agencies such as the Nigeria Police Force, NSCDC, and the Armed Forces.

The study will be relevant to law enforcement agents, correctional officers, intelligence units, and other security agencies involved in the prevention, detection, and prosecution of kidnapping. The data on patterns and hotspots will aid in strategic deployment and intelligence gathering. Transport companies, drivers' unions, and passengers will benefit from the study as it highlights risks and suggests safety measures. This can help transport operators to redesign routes, adopt technology, and protect lives and property. Study of this magnitude will be beneficial to families and NGOs: The general public, families, religious leaders, and non-governmental organizations involved in peace building, victim support, and advocacy will find the study useful. It will increase public awareness and encourage community participation in crime prevention.

Scope of the Study

the study is strictly restricted to effects of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation service, In Nigeria. geographically this study was limited to drivers, road transport workers and passengers in selected States in the North Central region of Nigeria, which are: Federal Capital Territory, Kogi State, Nasarawa State and Benue State, Niger State, plateau and Kaduna State. The study span from the period of 2019 to 2025

Geographically, the study is limited to four selected states in the North Central geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The North Central zone comprises six states and the Federal Capital Territory. However, due to time, financial constraints, and the high prevalence of kidnapping incidents along major highways, this study focused on: Benue State Federal Capital Territory, FCT, Abuja Kogi State Nasarawa State These four states were selected because they serve as major transit corridors linking the Northern, Southern, Eastern, and Western parts of Nigeria. Highways such as Abuja-Lokoja, Abuja-Keffi, Makurdi-Lafia, and Lokoja-Okene have recorded frequent cases of kidnapping, making them critical to interstate commercial transportation in the zone.

Content Scope

The study focuses specifically on the effects of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation services. It examines: The factors responsible for kidnapping on highways in the selected states The patterns and methods used by kidnappers on North Central highways, The effects of kidnapping on passengers, drivers, and transport companies Measures that can be adopted to curb kidnapping and improve safety on interstate routes. The study does not cover intra-city transportation, air transport, or railway services. It is also limited to reported kidnapping cases between 2019 and 2025. Unit of Analysis

The respondents for this study include commercial drivers, transport union officials, passengers, security personnel, and management staff of transport companies operating along major highways in Benue, FCT, Kogi, and Nasarawa States.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Conceptual Review

kidnapping

Kidnapping is defined by various scholars with varying degree of successes. Inyang and Abraham (2013) defined kidnapping as “the forcible seizure, taking away and unlawful detention of a person against his/her will. It is a common law offence and the key part is that it is unwanted act on the part of the victim”. Another definition is offered by Fage and Alabi (2017, p. 289) who conceived kidnapping as “forceful or fraudulent abduction of an individual or a group of individuals for reasons ranging from economic, political, and religious to [struggle for] self-determination”. However, kidnapping is any form of forcefully or fraudulently abducted individuals who are carried off as hostages for ransom purposes. This implies that while political and economic factors can instigate kidnapping, the economic reason is the most common predisposing factor of the phenomenon

Uzorma and Nwanegbo-Ben (2014) as cited in Ibrahim and Mukhtar (2017). also defined kidnapping as the “act of seizing and detaining or carrying away a person by unlawful force or by fraud, and often with a demand for ransom. It involves taking a person from their family forcefully without their consent with the motive of holding the person as a hostage and earning a profit from their family”. From the foregoing, the definition of kidnapping has no one best way to describe it, but it is clear that for an act to be deemed kidnapping, it shall involve coercive movement of a victim from one place to another, detention or seizure of that person be it a child or an adult. That is why Inyang and Abraham (2013) added that it is legally regarded as a restriction of someone else’s liberty which violates the provision of freedom of movement as enshrined in the constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria, where every other law takes its cue from. In addition, kidnapping is usually motivated by financial gain or political demand. Thus, opportunist or traditional criminals as well as political dissidents can resort to kidnapping in order to illegally obtain economic gains or have their demands granted.

The Nigerian Penal Code (16 Feb, 2017), defined kidnapping as when someone is said to have been sported and held for whether ransom illegally or non-consensually. According to Davidson (2010) a group of human beings armed with guns and cell phones apprehend innocent and unsuspecting victims and drag them to whoever and whenever demanding ransom for different duration of time. The widening scale of insecurity in Kaduna State Nigeria is a cause for concern as all are affected by it. Everyone is worried, presently. Hardly can people pray in worship centres, or travel on highways or farm without being scared of being kidnapped. In fact, the abductees and their families are being traumatized by the ordeal of kidnapping.

Penalty for Kidnapping in Nigeria; Section 364 of the Criminal Code Act in Nigeria sees Kidnapping as Any person who Unlawfully imprison any person, and takes him out of Nigeria without his consent; or Unlawfully imprisons any person within Nigeria in such a manner as to prevent him from applying to a court for his release or from discovering to any other person the place where he is imprisoned, or in such a manner as to prevent any person entitled to have access to him from discovering the place where he is imprisoned, is guilty of a felony and is liable to imprisonment for ten years.

Interstate Transportation

Interstate commercial transportation is defined as the movement of goods or human being between different states for business or trade purposes. This includes activities like trucking cargo across state lines or transporting passengers on buses or trains that travel between states. It is distinct from intrastate transportation, which occurs within the borders of a single state.

Interstate transportation refers to the conveyance of cargo or passengers from one state to another. This definition is applicable across various transportation modes and contexts The concept is broad and encompasses various transportation methods, including but not limited to road, rail, and intermodal systems. Intermodal transportation utilizes at least two transportation modes to move freight from origin to destination, with transfers occurring at intermodal terminals.

Interstate transportation is vital for the national economy, facilitating the movement of goods and supporting trade between states. Efficient interstate transportation reduces transit risks and transaction costs, enhancing the overall transport and transit system. The transportation sector plays a crucial role in urban development and the formation of urban agglomerations. Proper planning and regulation of transportation volumes are essential for balanced urban development.

Commercial Transport

Commercial transport encompasses the movement of goods or passengers for business purposes, involving various modes such as road, rail, air, and maritime (Piecyk and Allen, 2023). It plays a vital role in urban economies, with motorized commercial goods vehicles handling a significant portion of goods and services. Studies show that in urban areas, a considerable percentage of commercial trips are made by light vehicles, indicating that commercial transport extends beyond just freight travel. Understanding the dynamics of commercial transport is crucial for effective urban planning and logistics management.

Empirical Review

The factors responsible for kidnapping

Perceived Flourishing Nature of the Abduction Industry: the kidnapping industries are well connected and linked up to the high-profile Nigerians and security agents; these are the elites and untouchable in the society that are above the law of the land. They can commit offence and go free because they have the ill-gotten money and influence of the corrupt. For example, as evidence by the daring actions of the Taraba state kidnap top dog, Hamisu Wadume. He showed Nigerians that he was untouchable because he had networks in high places that provided him security and intelligence. He also had ready supplies of weapons. In general, the kidnap masterminds pay attractive salaries or allowances to their infantry men. It reveals that the government and the security agents collide, albeit, collaborate, connive, conspire and plot to commit kidnapping and ridding innocent Nigerians lives and property (Obijiofor, 2019).

Failed leadership: This is as a result of failed government and societal institutions that denied its citizenry moral education, values and development. Democracy is misinterpreted as citizens have no right to demand anything from their leaders. Most intelligent youths have now become political dogs who depends on crumbs that fall from the table of their political leaders.

Poor security architecture: In Nigeria, the police and other security agencies have failed to match the resistance of kidnappers and their masters. These are the causes and reasons some victims are packed up like ants in the comfort of their homes, and on their way to or from work. Other victims are kidnapped in religious premises while serving and worshipping their God.

Unemployment: Kidnapping is rampant in Nigeria because the government has failed to address the challenge of unemployment. Unemployment is the propeller that fans poverty. And poverty drives people to kidnapping and other crimes (Obijiofor, 2019).

However, unemployed youths are forced to find ways to survive in the country's harsh economic condition. Since independence, the government of Nigeria failed to plan for the massive youth population; the system did not cater adequately for the needs of the unemployed youth, thus crime offers some therapy, indeed an option, cure, healing and treatment for survival. This is where the successive Nigerian government failed the future generation. And today the nation is ripping the whirlwind of kidnapping because of the rash, impetuous and faulty foundation and system the Nigerian elites offered their youths. Many Nigerian youths are into kidnapping because they are trapped in an endless cycle of poverty which the government did not provide a lee-way space and room of enabling environment to survive. They have plans they cannot fulfill; they have families they cannot assist. Many Nigerians have school fees and yearly rents they cannot afford to pay. They are desirous to buy basic cloths and shoes for family members. They have to pay the high cost of transportation every day. They have financial commitments that cannot be accomplished. These are the terrible and unpleasant economic harsh conditions that frighten and drive many people into kidnapping and other allied

crimes in contemporary Nigeria. There is a correlation between the failures of government and kidnapping that thrives in contemporary Nigeria. Hence the breakdown of law-and-order results to kidnapping and its allied crimes. Another issue that encourages kidnapping in Nigeria is the **lame judicial framework** and its attendant ineptitude in providing justice for the victims of kidnapping. These have contributed to its perpetration in large scale. Offenders are not prosecuted nor are they punished most of the time. (Ele, 2019).

Another factor that encourages kidnapping in Nigeria is its **long porous borders** with neighboring countries, especially in Northern Nigeria. These unchecked porous borders allow kidnappers from other countries to enter Nigeria to commit kidnapping of Nigerians for fat ransom claims. It is unfortunate to note that the huge expanse of land, ungoverned and undeveloped, like Sambisa Forest in Northern Nigeria provide a breeding den and ground for kidnapping, and Boko Haram insurgency and terrorism. More so, the land porous borders in the Northern Nigeria also encourage arms proliferation in the region that causes kidnapping business to thrive. It is also important to note that some Nigerian politicians also import arms through the country's porous borders to give their thugs to enable them win election for them. After the elections, some of the arms are not disarmed from the thugs; they used them to kidnapped opponents and enemies of their godfathers to forcefully collect ransom from them.

Politics in Nigeria is another cause of kidnapping. Kidnappers abduct their victims to settle politically motivated plan to frustrate opponent politicians who are threats to their plan to secure political power. Kidnapping is criminal, devilish and cruel, yet kidnappers see abduction as a business to make money through ransom claims. In the Niger Delta region, kidnappers also abduct oil workers and demand ransom worth millions of naira under severe threats to life from their loved ones, oil companies and government. In the oil rich region, kidnapping is also regarded as an instrument of the struggle for ethnic politics and resource control agitation from the government; they used it to speak their message of freedom to government and to power. In Nigeria, there are some kidnappers who abduct children and adults and sell them to ritual occultism dealers. Other kidnappers also abduct people is children to sell them to childless parents and to private and secrete orphanage homes. In some cases, the kidnapped children are sold to child traffickers abroad; some of them are used as child labour and prostitute to their dealers who used them to make ill-gotten money. These are some of the vices abhorred by society, where human beings are used to make blood money, in the name of business. (Ezinwa, 2015).

Victory et al (2020) examined the factors influencing kidnapping in Shendam Local Government Area, Plateau State. This study was conducted to identify the factors influencing the incessant and intermittent kidnapping. Cross-sectional quantitative survey design was employed in the study. Clustered random sampling technique was utilized to selected residents in Shendam. Questionnaire method was used as instrument for data collection. Whereby, out of 400 administered questionnaires, 374 were retrieved for data analysis. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics via Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) version 21 computer software. And the study established that kidnapping is influenced by unemployment. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative accepted which states that kidnapping is significantly influenced by unemployment at alpha level of 0.05. The study recommended that terrible incidence of kidnapping of individuals could be curbed by employing and empowering the teeming population of youths who are vulnerable to criminality because of strain.

Obarisiagbon (2017) confirmed to the fact that the police connive with kidnapping offenders to help them out of police custody after collecting money from them and their relations and subsequently closing the case file or writing a report in favour of the offender. Closely associated with the label of corruption that has been placed on the Nigeria police force is the poor perception the public has of it. The cankerworm of corruption has deeply affected the social image of the public as public opinion regarding the integrity of police officers is that of "dirty Harry" (Onyeozili, 2005).

Ugwulebo (2011) claimed that the police force has been criticized for aiding and abetting kidnappers, resulting in the public being unwilling to report incidence of the crime to the police. Rather, they prefer to pay the ransom to the kidnappers so that their relations or friends can regain their freedom. This very low public attitude towards the Nigeria police force is also a consequence of a historical legacy of using the police to

suppress Nigerians by the colonial and post-colonial governments (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2000). Regrettably, the public has therefore become unwilling to cooperate with the police in crime prevention and detection. Interestingly, without the needed information and cooperation of the public, the police cannot do much in the maintenance of security.

In a separate study, Protus and John (2014) investigated the challenges surrounding abduction and hostage-taking in southeastern Nigeria. Their study aimed to identify the causes of abductions and factors contributing to the growth of the kidnapping industry in the region. The findings revealed that moral decay, unemployment, unequal distribution of development projects, excessive wealth accumulation, corruption by public officials, abandonment of the masses, poverty, and unrealistic expectations placed on children by parents are major factors driving the rise of kidnapping in Nigeria. The study concluded that the inability of security agencies to locate kidnappers' hideouts hinders the Nigerian Police Force's efforts to eradicate the problem.

Chinwokwu and Michael (2019) explored the link between militancy, violence, and kidnapping in Nigeria, using frustration-aggression theory and greed and grievance theory. The study highlighted how social injustice, marginalization, and resource control issues contribute to militancy and kidnapping. It recommended re-evaluating government policies, promoting justice and the rule of law, and reforming the criminal justice system to address these issues. Chinwokwu and Michael's study focuses on the socio-political factors driving militancy and kidnapping, providing a theoretical analysis of the issue. The current study, however, investigate effects of kidnapping on interstate commercial transport services, offering a different perspective on how these incidents have. Both studies highlight the need for addressing underlying socio-political issues, but the current study adds value by examining the role of the media in shaping public discourse and policy responses.\

It has been observed in developed countries, kidnapping for ransom is often linked to organized criminal networks and financial objectives, Alonso-Borrego & Garoupa (2013) in a study of kidnapping in Western Europe found that criminal gangs target high-net-worth individuals and business executives because of the potential for large ransom payments. The study concluded that wealth disparity and the presence of liquid assets make certain individuals attractive targets. Likewise, Enders & Sandler (2012) analyzing kidnapping data from the U.S. and Europe noted that kidnapping is treated as a "rational crime" where perpetrators weigh costs, risks, and expected benefits. It was found that where law enforcement is strong, kidnappers shift to express kidnapping and short-term abductions to reduce risk of detection.

In North America and parts of Europe for instance, kidnapping is frequently tied to drug cartels and gang activities. Rosen & Zepeda (2016) in their study of Mexico and U.S. border cities found that competition among drug trafficking organizations is a major factor driving kidnapping. Victims are often rival dealers, informants, or family members used as leverage. Campbell (2014) also reported that in the United States, gang-related kidnapping is used for retaliation, debt collection, and territorial control. Poverty and unemployment in inner-city neighborhoods were identified as push factors that push youths into gang-related abductions.

More so, unlike in developing countries, domestic and custodial kidnapping was the forms of kidnapping that are carried out in developing countries, as the significant proportion of kidnapping in developed nations is non-stranger and family-related. Finkelhor, Hammer & Sedlak (2008) in a U.S. National Incidence Study found that parental kidnapping and custody disputes account for over 50% of child abduction cases. Factors identified include marital breakdown, lack of access to children after divorce, and weak enforcement of custody orders. Greer (2019) maintained that in UK domestic violence and coercive control are key precursors to adult kidnapping, especially among intimate partners.

Kidnapping was also tied to psychological and Ideological factors as it was observed that individual pathology and extremism were identified as the major drivers of kidnapping. Hamm (2013) in a study of terrorist kidnappings in Europe and the U.S. found that ideological radicalization, political grievances, and desire for media attention were major factors. On this note kidnapping is used by extremist groups as a tool for propaganda and prisoner exchange. Bartol & Bartol (2017) noted that in developed countries, some cases of stranger kidnapping are linked to mental illness, sexual deviance, and the need for power and control.

Compared to developed countries where kidnapping is largely linked to organized crime, domestic issues, and

terrorism, literature shows that in Nigeria and specifically the North Central zone, kidnapping is more driven by poverty, unemployment, and poor security structures (Okoli & Agada, 2014; Obijiofor, 2019) This contrast justifies the need for context-specific studies like the present one.

The effects of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation service

One of the most negative effects of kidnapping in Nigeria is the stoppage of foreign and local investment in the country. In the midst of economic hardship and mass unemployment, kidnapping increases the chance of more closure of factories and industries in Nigeria, due to lack of the safety of their workers. Kidnapping gives Nigerian people bad name and scares away foreign investors and tourist to Nigeria. Kidnapping of children makes parents to undergo psychological trauma or a brutal human psyche, for example, the abduction of the Chibok/Dapchi school girls in Northern Nigerian by Boko Haram frustrated the peace of many families in the region. Kidnapping makes children to be suspicious of strange adults within school and church premises.

Kidnapping has literally made Nigeria to become an insecure country. As an organized crime, the following are some other effects of kidnapping:

Loss of Life: Kidnapping as violent crime, leads to loss of lives of victims, especially those who are not cooperating with kidnappers or who resists the kidnapper's order. According to SB Intelligence (2021), over 100 people lost their lives to kidnappers in the first half of 2021. The kidnapers do not spare the lives of security personnel, as a substantial number of security operatives have lost their lives to kidnap incidents. My very good customer and family friend, Mr. Ernest Ohibime was as at around 18th – 20th December, 2023, murdered and buried in a shallow grave few days after he was kidnapped and ransom paid according to local reports. A successful police officer, who just concluded his P.hd on the 12th December, 2023 from the University of Abuja, lost his life to hands of kidnappers leaving behind his two tender kids. He was kidnapped at Giri on his way home from work.

Loss of Property: In an attempt to achieve dangerous objectives, kidnappers perpetrate arson, vandalism and theft to gain access to victims. In the process of kidnappers' attack on villages in North-East Nigeria, several houses were burn, farmland destroyed and cattle were rustled.

Low Level of Educational Development: As established by SB Intelligence (2021), and supported by Akasike and Adelekan (2010) more than 500 students were kidnapped from their dormitories in the first half of 2021, however, the teachers were, not left out of the kidnapping tragic scenarios. The persistent kidnapping forced Niger State Governor to close down some boarding-secondary schools early this year to prevent kidnapping of students.

Dwindling Investment: Investment does not thrive where there is lack of peace and harmony. Kidnapping discourages investment in hotspot areas. The small and medium scale business enterprises are affected, because of their inability to provide the necessary security.

Warped and Negative National Image: The national image has been traumatized by high incidence of kidnapping in Nigeria. The nation is put into a state of disrepute at regional and international level. The citizens of Nigeria are subjected to thorough security checks at entry points at international borders. Some are humiliated in the process.

National Disintegration. As opined by Aghedo (2013), the incessant kidnapping by a particular clan in a country threatens national unity and harmony. The perceived government inability to curb kidnapping and encouraging windows for negotiation with kidnappers do not go well with particular ethnic nationalities. This warranted the re-emergence of separatist groups like Yoruba Nation Agitation. The Independent State of Biafra and the Ijaw Nations. The agitation for independent states is responsible for series of clashes with security personnel, which heightens national insecurity.

Threats to Democracy. The major responsibility of any government is provision of security of lives and properties. One of the reasons for past military incursion in politics was inability of the then civilian

administration to provide dividends of democracy in terms of critical infrastructural development, friendly economy and security.

Adegbe (2022) examined the global menace of kidnapping but with a focus on Kogi State in Nigeria. The study finds that the drivers and social and economic implications of kidnapping in Kogi State are substance abuse, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, security lapses, and the complication of security personnel in ransom payment. It was determined that the socio-economic implications are these are discouragement of investors and expatriates, social effect/dearth of social life, adverse effects on budget planning, obstruction of business activities, work place insecurity among others. It was thus recommended that government should enact a law that would prevent an individual to pay ransom intelligence security agency, bad eggs in the security agencies be fished out through intelligence gathering and face the consequence of the law among others. It was also recommended that citizens have a role to play in terms of security of the state as well as the government.

Okorie (2018) examined the phenomenon of kidnapping and hostage taking in Southern Nigeria and its socioeconomic implications. The study posits that kidnapping and hostage taking has become ubiquitous in Nigeria, however more prevalent in the South-South and South-East part of the country. Inefficient and ineffective strategy being adopted by the security agents and policy inconsistencies of the government has led to a security gap which the culprits are taking advantage of in perfecting their crime. This has resulted to a security challenge to the country and has caused the economy to dwindle. The study utilized secondary data anchored on functionalist theory. Amongst other factors the study argues that the issue of kidnapping and hostage taking has been on the increase due to leadership failure, unemployment, poverty and corruption among security agencies. The study therefore recommends that government at all levels should make policies that will attract both local and foreign investors which will create employment opportunities for the youths especially the vulnerable individual, also there is need to review the current strategy of dealing with the issue of kidnapping and hostage taking in Nigeria. In particular, there is the need to explore the extant laws and the extent to which they are being enforced with a view to establishing the efficacy.

Ohida (2025) investigates the impact of crime on interstate transport operations in northcentral Nigeria, the study relies on descriptive statistics to describe the features of the populations. 200 questionnaires were purposefully administered to the four major interstate motor parks in the capital of some north-central states (i.e., Minna, Lokoja, Benue, and Lafia) using random sampling techniques. The gathered data was analyzed using percentages and charts, while the T-test statistics were used to test the study hypothesis. The result shows that there is a statistically significant influence of crimes on interstate transport operations in north-central Nigeria. The study concluded that improving the safety of the road transport network will motivate transport operators to operate more efficiently on the routes.

Purokayo and James (2020) studied transport safety concerns in Nigeria's six geopolitical zones, revealing significant differences in risk exposure. The North-West, North Central, and South-West zones exhibited higher risks due to factors such as poor roads, road obstructions, kidnapping, poorly maintained vehicles, overloading, speeding, and other reckless driving practices. The effects of terrorism, banditry, and kidnapping include longer waiting times at transport terminals for vehicles to fill up and extended travel times due to military checkpoints, which are inconvenient for travelers (Juergen et al as cited in Ohida, 2025). Longer waiting times delay vehicle departures, and passengers who endure extended wait periods may become dissatisfied with the transport system. Fear instilled in passengers also discourages travel to certain regions, contributing to these delays. Additionally, prolonged wait periods result in inefficiency for transport providers, many of whom may go days without scheduling trips due to low demand.

The patterns/trends of kidnapping

Basic Kidnapping

By far the most common form of kidnapping that can be accomplished in most part of the world with minimal preparation, with a relatively low risk of failure. Kidnappers will generally target local businessmen or their families: those regarded as being well-off without having sufficient resources to spend a great deal of money

on security precautions. The kidnappers' goal is a fast, easy payoff. Generally, the ransom requested are relatively easy for the victim's family or company to obtain.

High Net Worth Individual Kidnapping:

Generally, the intended target is studied for some time prior to the actual kidnapping, allowing the perpetrators to gather intelligence on security procedures and personal habits. After the victim has been taken, his/her family or employer is contacted with the ransom demand. Also, a negotiation process occurs. As most of these incidents are perpetrated by experienced kidnapping gangs. The victim is generally released if ransom is paid. As high-net-worth individuals become increasingly security-conscious, this type of kidnapping has been on the decline in recent years in favor of less involved kidnappings with smaller but easier to obtain payoffs.

Tiger Kidnapping

A crime involving hostage taking in order to force the victim to commit or assist in a theft. The hostage or hostages is/are held until the victim has met the demands of the criminals. All of the victims work in a location where cash is being handled, such as banks, post office currency exchange firms etc.

Express Kidnapping

The victim is abducted, then forced to withdraw their own ransom from a bank or ATM. If all goes well, the victim is released afterwards, generally after having been relieved of all valuables or their person (and occasionally in their residence). This type of kidnapping is popular in urban areas, due to the prolific ATMs. In some cases, this will develop into a standard kidnapping, with further ransom demanded of the family or employer. In other cases, the victim held overnight, to get around a one-day withdrawal limit

Virtual Kidnapping

A Virtual Kidnapping is more a scam than an actual kidnapping. The perpetrator-s will wait until the target is unreachable (visiting an area with no cellular coverage, for example), then will contact the target's family or company, claiming they have kidnapped the target and demanding an immediate ransom. The target eventually returns, unaware that anything untoward has occurred. Due to the need for haste, the ransom demanded are generally relatively modest. Another common technique is to call the target pretending to be a cellular phone company representative, and ask them to turn off their phone for a short while for a technical problem, during which the virtual kidnapping is conducted. Thus far, virtual kidnappings are most common in Latin America. Specifically, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Mexico.

Political Kidnapping: A kidnapping conducted to extort political concessions from governments or security forces. As monetary ransom is no longer enough, it is more difficult to negotiate kidnap victims' freedom as in many cases, the political concessions or demands cannot be met by the involved governments, putting the victim's life at greater risk.

Bride Kidnapping

A form of forced marriage in which the groom to be kidnaps his bride in many cases the "would be couple" has never met until the day of the kidnapping. This way of marriage is practiced in Caucasus region, central Asia, and some nations in Africa. In many cases bride is raped in order to convince her to stay with her husband, as in many traditional cultures the loss of virginity is harshly judged. In some cultures, a bride price is customary, so the kidnapper may contact his victim family to demand compensation.

The Real Issues of Kidnapping in Nigeria

When it comes to the security of Nigerians, the Nigerian government seems to be playing betting games about it.

On the 20th of January, 2024, Dare Olawayin of Punch newspaper (online) reported that over 200 violent attacks have been recorded across all six area councils of the Federal Capital Territory since President Bola Tinubu assumed office on May 29, 2023. The incidents led to the death of no fewer than 87 residents of the FCT, while 176 were kidnapped within the period. The figures were sourced from Beacon Consulting, a local firm monitoring security issues in the country, and several media reports on violent attacks, including kidnapping and killings in the FCT. The FCT is facing alarming surge in kidnapping, prompting concerns among residents and the authorities. The capital city, once considered relatively immune to the prevalent security challenges in other parts of the country, is now grappling with an escalating wave of criminal activities, particularly kidnapping. According to a 2020 report by SB Morgen, Abuja was ranked 11th among locations with frequent abductions, a stark revelation of the evolving security landscape in the region. Over the last three years, more than 50 kidnap cases have been recorded in Abuja, involving over 200 persons. The severity of the issue becomes more apparent when examining the data from January 2021 to June 2023, revealing approximately 40 recorded cases with 236 victims. Between October and December 2023 alone, there were 13 recorded kidnap incidents, impacting 80 victims. These incidents are not isolated to specific areas but have occurred in various locations within Abuja, including Gwagwalada, Kuje, Lugbe, Pegi, Abaji, Ketu, and Kwali. What is particularly concerning is that these incidents seem to occur unchallenged by security agencies, allowing criminal elements to operate with impunity.

The economic toll of the rising insecurity is substantial, with confirmed ransom payments **totaling N753.7m** between 2021 and 2022. Residents and businesses in the affected areas are bearing the brunt of the security challenges, and the impact on daily life and economic activities is becoming increasingly pronounced. The most notorious among the incidents over the past seven months includes the abduction of seven persons, including six girls of the same family kidnapped on January 5, 2024, in the Bwari Area Council. One of the sisters was killed and their ransom increased from 60 million to 65 million. Latest amongst the incidents was the abduction of the wife and one of the in-laws of a lawyer, Cyril Adikwu, on Thursday, January 18, at the Nigerian Army Post Housing Scheme in the Kurudu area of Abuja. The incident, according to a neighbour of the victims, occurred around 10pm in the Phase 2 area of the estate. Also, on January 7, 2024, armed men abducted 12 persons from an estate in the Bwari area of Abuja. On December 12, 2023, a total of 23 residents of the Dei-Dei community in the Bwari area of the FCT were also abducted. A nursing mother and three children were kidnapped in Abuja on December 12, 2023. An Abuja-based musician and his band members were kidnapped on December 18, 2023, while two persons were kidnapped in the Mpape area of the FCT on July 16, 2023. Following a rise in the incidents, Nigerians have called on the Federal Government and the security agencies to find a lasting solution to the problem.

On the 17th of January, 2024, the popular expensive of WAZOBIA FM on a 7:00pm programme “chook mouth” called a nephew of Nabeejah, the girl killed by her abductors recently; he confirmed that the kidnappers have been using a single phone number to make demands for the ransom even after NCC continuously blocked lines of innocent Nigerians who couldn’t link their NIN to their phone numbers. The big question is, what is the use of linking your NIN if it can’t be used to track activities like this? Recall that the Nigerian government promised to jail those crowd-funding to pay ransom to kidnappers (Olajumoke Olatunji, TVC Journalist Hangout), it was gathered from the call put across to the cousin of Nabeejah, that an ex-minister gave them N50 million naira to support the ransom payment and this is because the system have failed Nigerians, to the extent that those who make the law, first break the law.

International center for investigative reporting (ICIR) 2023, discovered a high influx of “repentant” terrorist, bandits, kidnappers into the security system. In Kano state, these set of people are now part of the constabulary, a local police force, and they share identical uniform with the police. How solid is their repentance? To what extent are we sure that a leopard really changed its skin?

Also, the absence of arrest without warrant as an accepted norm in the country has made these kidnappers have upper edge in using security uniforms to waylay law abiding citizens. Military personnel are allowed to sew their uniforms by themselves instead of having the Federal Government issue them through a single institution or body for that purpose, with a special seal to curtail the spread of these uniforms on the streets and in the hands of kidnappers.

At this point, we can only hope that papers like this be taken seriously to help tackle kidnap situation in Nigeria.

Ogbuehi's (2018) study delves into the escalating trend of kidnapping incidents in Nigeria, attributing this rise to multiple criminal entities such as Boko Haram, Niger Delta militants, Fulani herders, and armed bandits. Employing Strain Theory and Rational Choice Theory, the research analyses the underlying motivations behind kidnapping, identifying factors like governance failures, unemployment, greed, poverty, intolerance, and retribution as primary drivers. The study advocates for holistic poverty alleviation programmes, the exposure and removal of corrupt security officials, and the implementation of collaborative security measures as potential solutions.

Sub-Saharan Africa have maintained a dynamic kidnapping environment, with multiple countries like (Congo (DRC), Nigeria, South Africa, the Sahel, Mozambique) underpinning its high rates. This region has also seen the highest number of Islamist extremist kidnaps, given activity levels of groups there (Forest, 2012).

Mexico maintained its high rates in 2021, while several other countries (Brazil, Colombia, Haiti, Venezuela) saw significant rises in incident of kidnapping, and this is predicted to continue. Asia Pacific may see a decrease in its proportion of recorded kidnaps in 2022 amid increased opacity in reporting in Afghanistan following the Taliban takeover in August 2021. However, we expect incidents to continue apace there and in India, Pakistan and the Philippines, where gambling-related kidnaps dominate the environment. The MENA region have also seen high numbers of kidnaps across Iraq, Libya, Syria and Yemen, but reporting will remain stifled, making the region appear safer than the reality when looking solely at absolute numbers of recorded incidents. Isolated incidents will occur in Europe and the CIS, but the region is unlikely to account for more than 1% of global incidents of kidnapping (Messari, 2024).

Adediran, Ogundele, Bodunde and et al (2025). examines the dynamics of abduction in Oyo State, Nigeria, with particular emphasis on its patterns, trends, and security implications. A mixed-method research design was adopted, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. Primary data were obtained through structured questionnaires administered to 340 respondents across three selected local government areas. Additionally, key informant interviews were conducted with 60 participants, including security personnel, vigilante members, community leaders, and residents. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, and mean scores, while qualitative responses were examined through thematic analysis. The study reveal that abduction incidents have increased in recent years and are more prevalent in rural and semi-rural communities, particularly along poorly monitored highways and forest corridors. Ransom demands were identified as the primary motive for most abduction cases, with victims often selected based on perceived economic status. The study also established that local information gathering by community actors plays a critical role in detecting suspicious activities and supporting security operations. However, challenges such as fear of retaliation, weak coordination between communities and security agencies, and limited surveillance infrastructure reduce the effectiveness of intelligence sharing. The study recommends strengthening community-based intelligence networks, improving inter-agency collaboration, and enhancing security presence in high-risk areas, this finding provides valuable data in the understanding of the pattern of kidnapping on the highway by blaming poor security monitoring on the Nigeria Highway, scenario which have further exacerbate kidnapping on the highways in the country.

Impact of kidnapping on the overall economic activities of interstate commercial transportation

Hsieh and Wang (2018) stated the world is becoming more dangerous, where crimes; such as robbery and murder occur on a daily basis. A crime that threatens not only our properties and lives, but even our identity. This scenario arises as a result of the unsecured nature of human world; security is thus essential to man in order for him to be able to provide and protect his life, properties and environment. In fact, peace and security of life and property is a necessary pre-condition for development as a conducive atmosphere is necessary for the state's economy to thrive. According to Callen et al (2018) no society can have any meaningful development without adequate security. It encompasses several factors ranging across different needs of a people viz shelters, food, health and good living conditions. The fundamental rational of a State is about providing for the need of the citizenry. In fact, the legitimacy and authority of the State derive from its ability to guarantee security of life and property of the citizens.

Ifatimehin and Aliyu (2024). This study assessed kidnapping as an insecurity Challenge to Economic Development in Kogi State. The study made use of content analysis. Data were sourced through secondary means by relying on existing documented materials and internet sources related to the subjected matter under review. Existing materials on the concept of kidnapping, kidnapping as a threat to national security, types of kidnapping, kidnapping and disruption of business enterprises in Kogi State, factors facilitating kidnapping in Kogi State and effects of kidnapping in Kogi State were reviewed. The study found among others that kidnapping is a significant problem affecting businesses and enterprises in Kogi State, Nigeria. Kidnapping incidents have caused disruptions in various sectors, leading to hindered economic growth and contributing to the state's reputation as having a high rate of kidnapping and other criminal activities. The study therefore recommended amongst others that the Kogi State government should implement robust economic development initiatives aimed at alleviating poverty and unemployment, focusing on creating employment opportunities and fostering industrial growth within the region. This includes revitalizing abandoned industries like iron and steel, Odagbo coal mining, and capital-intensive agricultural practices, providing resources and support for large scale ventures in Kogi State

Ohida, Isa, Ajiboye and Yusuf (2025) investigated the impact of crime on interstate road transport operations in north-central Nigeria. The study relies on descriptive statistics to describe the features of the populations. 200 questionnaires were purposefully administered to the four major interstate motor parks in the capital of some north-central states (i.e., Minna, Lokoja, Benue, and Lafia) using random sampling techniques. The gathered data was analysed using percentages and charts, while the T-test statistics were used to test the study hypothesis. They found that there is a statistically significant influence of crimes on interstate transport operations in north-central Nigeria which affect the patronage of the road transportation and interrupt swift movement of goods/service across within interstate. The study concluded that improving the safety of the road transport network will motivate transport operators to operate more efficiently on the routes. Effective surveillance, installation of CCTV cameras and high patrol was recommended among others as measures that could make the highway safer for motorists. This finding underscores the need for overhauling of the highway security in order to boost the swift movement of goods/service across the state, the study also emphasizes on how incessant kidnapping on the highway negatively aggravates crime on the highway and creates fear as such reduces passenger patronage.

Onota, Ogbonna and Alfred-Igbokwe, (2024) examined the relationship between cross-border migration and banditry and how they hinder Nigeria's growth. They explored textbooks, journal articles, published dissertations, online resources, official statistical documents, international organizations' reports, newspapers and periodicals to achieve the objective of the study. The data was analysed using content analysis by extracting relevant information pertaining to the study from the above-mentioned secondary sources. This study employed the opportunity structure theory. This theoretical framework states that a group of people, regardless of their amount of discontent or grievances, will not resort to violence unless opportunity structures that enable and inspire violence are present. The study found that permeability of Nigeria's borders has facilitated unrestricted entry for bandits who engage in various forms of violent activities, including cattle rustling, kidnapping and homicides. Information about the victims, the settings, and the nature of the assaults were also submitted as part of the investigation. The majority of businesses in Nigeria's North Eastern region have shut down due to security concerns brought on by armed bandits, according to the study's findings. There has been an increase in youth unemployment and illiteracy, and people's living situations have worsened. The research recommends that Nigeria should invest in human resources to improve security. Security agencies should also receive modern technologies to identify and deter unlawful entry into Nigeria. While Onota et al (2024) provided useful insight into how banditry affects businesses and the general economy, the study did not isolate the specific impact of kidnapping on interstate commercial transportation operators, passengers, and the supply chain of goods. Most of their data focused on the North East and general business closure. There is a need for more empirical data focusing on transport unions, route diversion, increased transport fares, and revenue loss specifically tied to kidnapping on interstate highways such as Abuja-Lokoja, Kaduna-Abuja,

The study supports the position that kidnapping, as a product of banditry and porous borders, negatively affects overall economic activities by shutting down businesses, increasing unemployment, and disrupting supply. This directly extends to interstate commercial transportation, which serves as the link for moving goods and people between states.

Abdulrahman (2022) undertook a study titled “Assessing Border Crimes and Challenges on Nigeria’s Economic Development” in 2021 in response to Nigeria’s rising trans-border crime. Illegal smuggling is perpetuated by porous borders and poor security and border police. 292 Abuja-based border agency staff members (NCS, NIS, NDLEA, and DSS) were selected to examine Nigeria’s border agency. This study collected data using a questionnaire and examined the replies (n =292) using a frequency table and simple percentages. The study found that Nigeria’s porous borders, corruption, governance, unemployment, poverty, and lack of manpower and logistical support all contribute to border crimes. According to the study, security services should train and retrain agents. It also stresses the importance of raising public awareness about how trans-border crime, particularly smuggling, affects Nigeria’s economy. The author agreed that cross-border migration promotes banditry, other attacks and Nigeria’s economic progress. The findings align with Onoto, Ogbonna and Alfred-Igbokwe (2024) who also attributed banditry and kidnapping to porous borders. Both studies show that internal economic activities, including interstate trade, cannot thrive when border security is weak. While Abdulrahman (2022) provided valuable data on border crimes and economic development, the study did not specifically measure the impact of kidnapping on interstate commercial transport operators, route closures, increase in transport fare, or supply chain delays. The focus was more on smuggling and general economic progress. Future studies need to quantify revenue loss and operational challenges faced by transport unions due to kidnapping. The study reinforces the position that weak border security and trans-border crimes create an enabling environment for kidnapping. This in turn disrupts the overall economic activities of interstate commercial transportation by increasing cost, reducing trade volume, and creating fear among transporters and commuters.

Abdussalam et al. (2022) examined how banditry affects rural development in Kaduna state. This study examines the causes of banditry in Kaduna state. It also seeks to determine how this phenomenon affects the rural economy. Primary and secondary data were used in the hybrid study. Simple percentage tables and linear regression were used for primary analysis. Content analysis was done for primary and secondary sources. The study found that banditry in Nigeria, particularly in Kaduna State, is at a crisis point. Banditry clearly hinders rural development. Chikun and Igabi LGAs have seen major farming and commerce impacts. Kidnapping fears have caused a large influx of people from rural to metropolitan areas. Continuous attacks have reduced access to crucial social services, and the stoppage of weekly markets has aggravated rural economic problems. The report stressed the need to confront banditry and kidnapping in Kaduna State. Farmers and local communities need better security and social services. Unemployment should be addressed holistically. The main goal of this study was to evaluate how banditry affects development. The study did not examine the particular entry point to Nigeria, a major gap in our research

Ajiboye et al. (2023) maintained that increased travel time and reduced patronage are direct consequences of highway kidnapping crimes on interstate transport networks. Previous literature highlights other impacts on transport operator performance, such as fear of travel, vehicle damage from attacks, decreased revenue due to fewer patrons, longer travel times, psychological distress, and time lost due to longer queue at security checkpoints. This study did not quantify the monetary value of revenue loss per operator or per route. Also, the study did not examine the differential impact on goods transportation vs passenger transportation. More route-specific data is needed, especially for high-risk corridors like Abuja-Kaduna, Abuja-Lokoja, and Kaduna-Birnin Gwari.

The study provides strong empirical evidence that kidnapping on highways directly undermines interstate commercial transportation. Through increased travel time, reduced patronage, vehicle damage, psychological distress, and checkpoint delays, kidnapping raises operational costs, reduces profitability, and disrupts the movement of goods and people. This confirms that insecurity is a major constraint to Nigeria’s interstate trade and economic integration.

Abdullahi (2019) also studied rural banditry in West Africa using an analytical approach, focusing on its socio-economic, political, and environmental drivers, along with its cross-border dimensions. The study revealed that rural banditry, driven by resource scarcity, poor governance, and elite complicity, has escalated into a regional conflict, with negative consequences such as youth unemployment, illegal migration, the spread of small arms, and the disruption of agricultural activities.

Measure in place to curtail kidnapping in the society

Badmus (2025) carried out a study on the impact of community-focused security measures on reducing kidnapping incidents in Oke-Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria. A descriptive quantitative research design was employed in the study, a sample of 126 participants chosen through stratified random sampling from various towns within Oke-Ogun. The study adopted the Social Capital Theory as the theoretical framework underpinning the study, the theory underscores the significance of social networks, trust, and collaboration in promoting collective action within communities. Data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire to gauge local perceptions regarding community-based security initiatives, including vigilante groups, neighborhood watch programs, and partnerships with formal security agencies. The data was analyzed utilizing descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, and mean values. The study identified the primary factors contributing to kidnapping in Oke-Ogun as weak law enforcement, insufficient security, unemployment, and poverty. Furthermore, it highlighted challenges such as inadequate funding, insufficient training, and poor collaboration with formal security entities. The results indicate that community-based security, when adequately supported and coordinated, has the capacity to significantly decrease the occurrence of kidnappings in Oke-Ogun. The study recommended strengthening of law enforcement, enhancing community engagement initiatives, addressing socioeconomic issues like unemployment and poverty, and increasing public awareness regarding security practices as the panacea to high rate of kidnapping in the study area.

Otu and Apeh (2022) evaluate the influence of regional policing on crime prevention, specifically examining the efforts of Amotekun in the Oke Ogun and Ibarapa communities of Oyo State. The research employed a descriptive survey approach, collecting data from 139 participants selected randomly from a population of 1,602,979 using Taro Yamane's statistical formula. The results indicated that criminal activities, including kidnappings, significantly impeded socio-economic progress in these areas, leading to issues such as restricted movement, decreased investments, and social instability. Although Amotekun contributed to crime prevention, the study identified challenges such as community distrust, lack of funding, and inadequate modern equipment. The study suggested increasing funding, acquiring advanced security technologies, and enhancing public awareness of Amotekun's successes to improve its crime-fighting effectiveness. Adewale (2023) investigated the impacts of insecurity on agricultural activities, community mobility, and social cohesion in the Ibarapa North Local Government Area of Oyo State. The study utilized a descriptive survey design, sampling 1,000 residents from a targeted population of 3,000 through random and stratified sampling methods. Findings revealed that insecurity, including kidnapping, had a profound effect on agricultural activities, disrupted community mobility, and contributed to disunity among citizens. The study concluded that insecurity significantly affects community development and recommended collaborative efforts by stakeholders, including government officials and community leaders, through town hall dialogues to tackle security issues and promote unity.

Ojedokun et al. (2023) examined the counter-banditry strategies implemented by communities affected by banditry in Oyo State. The research utilized an exploratory and cross-sectional approach, guided by situational crime prevention theory, and data collection involved in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions. Findings revealed that although communities had executed various internal and external measures to combat banditry, these actions had only partially alleviated the frequency of kidnappings and related crimes. Despite some degree of success, the study revealed that the challenges persisted, as individuals continued to fall victim to kidnappers, emphasizing the ongoing vulnerability of these communities.

Adesola (2019) explore the influence of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in the management of crime and security in the Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State. The research utilized field surveying techniques, incorporating Hi-target differential GPS and GIS software to identify crime hotspots and evaluate how close police stations were to these locations. The findings indicated that GIS could greatly improve crime management by recognizing patterns and enhancing response times. Nevertheless, even with the efficacy of GIS in security management, the study highlighted the need for further initiatives and more attention from governmental and law enforcement entities to sufficiently tackle crime, including kidnapping, in the area.

Theoretical framework

Routine Activity Theory

Marcus Felson and James Cohen to explain the relationship between crimes and situational factors propounded this theory. According to Cohen and Felson, cited in Rossmo & Summers, (2015), deviance or criminal activity is a function of changing lifestyles and population behaviour. Invariably, crimes depend on time and place. As proposed by Cohen and Marcus, the three factors that are responsible for deviance are availability of motivated offenders, presence of targets and availability and non-availability of guardianship.

The motivated offenders: These are those who want to steal or commit other deviance. This could be individual or group of people. However, for organized crime such as kidnapping, ransom payable is predominant. There are many factors that motivate one to engage in deviance. These factors are poverty, unemployment, peer pressure, harsh economic environment and other unpalatable social objectivity.

Availability of Target: When motivated offenders are on the ground, other social determinant of deviance is availability of targets. The targets in this sense are the people that motivated offenders want to abduct. The market value or the inherent gain of the targets determines desperation of the motivated offenders to commit deviance at a particular period. For instance, armed robbers are desperate to be successful by getting rid of anybody that obstructs their bank robbery operations.

Non-Availability of Guardianship: The type of security provided for properties or persons encourages or discourages motivated offenders from meeting the targets. When the security around a particular object or person is tight, it would be very difficult or impossible for motivated offenders to succeed. The guardianship around targets could be security personnel, security alarm system, biometric access control, closed circuit television camera, (CCTV) invader alarm system and other security mechanisms. The availability of guardianship may translate to security of lives and properties. When the available security structures are not well equipped to provide the necessary protection, the properties or persons may be in serious danger.

The three assumptions of routine activity theory are; motivated offenders, suitable targets and lack of guidance or protection. The motivated offenders are the kidnap syndicates that are bent on abducting unsuspected member of public for money or other dangerous motives. The lack of protection around their targets enhances the success of the motivated offenders. In the first instance, proper motivation of unemployed youths and other vulnerable members of society will discourage them from engaging in kidnapping. Aside motivation of disgruntled members of societies, another method of checking kidnapping is provision adequate security for individuals. This security method could be formal and inform security mechanisms like community policing. The flashy areas could be provided with enough security in order to foil attack on them. And the security could be beef-up in states with high incidences of kidnapping. This will among other things gives the people enough protection and rest of mind to go about their normal activities

Queer Ladder Theory

The "Queer Ladder Theory" is primarily attributed to the American sociologist Daniel Bell (1919-2011). It describes how organized crime can emerge as a means of social and economic advancement when legitimate opportunities are scarce and societal structures are weak.

The "queer ladder theory," as influenced by Daniel Bell, explores the intersections of identity, social structure, and economic opportunity within marginalized communities, particularly in the context of organized crime. Although Bell is primarily for his work on post-industrial society and role of culture in social change, the queer ladder concept expands on these ideas to illustrate how individuals navigate societal hierarch (Potter, 2015).

The basic assumptions of QLT are as follows:

- a) **Social Mobility:** The queer ladder represents the varying degrees of social and economic mobility available to individuals on their sexual orientation and identity. It highlights the challenges faced by queer individuals in traditional economic systems.

- b) Economic Empowerment; For some, organized crime may present an alternative route to economic empowerment, especially when mainstream opportunities are limited due to discrimination or stigmatization.
- c) Visibility and Identity: The theory emphasizes how visibility in society can impact one's position on the ladder. Those who are more visible as part of the queer community may face different challenges and opportunities compared to those who are less visible.
- d) Community and Support Networks: The ladder also underscores the importance of community solidarity among marginalized groups. These networks provide support and resources that facilitate upward mobility.

Intersectionality: The queer ladder acknowledges the intersection of various identities (race, gender, class, etc.) that influence an individual's experience and positioning within the social hierarchy

Closely attached to the Queer Ladder Theory is the impression that criminal activity that are organized flourishes when government is incapacitated to deal with these criminals. This is fueled where corruption in the public sector is autochthonous and when it is difficult for people to prosper through legitimate means (Nwoye, 2000; Lyman, 2007). Upon these conditions the tendency to wallow in crime is very high. What this means is that people believe that the reward of crime far outweighs the risks that are involved. This scenario leads to a mindset of impunity in the criminals and an impetus to commit crime (Okoli & Orinya, 2013). QLT enables us to understand that economic factor is a primary cause of organized crime in most parts of Nigeria. What this means is that crime the nation is driven by economic frustrations, the quest to make money, become rich and climb the social ladder of society

Okoli (2019) observe that in most of Nigeria's rural communities, there are many opportunities for criminal activity. Some of these opportunities are vulnerable to banditry because they are located in remote areas where there is little or no government presence and their households are separated by and interspersed with forest areas. The situation is made worse due to the absence of effective community policing mechanisms capable of addressing the hinterlands' peculiar security challenges, lack of political will on the part of government, the prevailing socio-existential conditions, proliferation of arms, illicit artisanal mining, poorly regulated rural pastoral sector and geography that is grossly under-policed. All these have given impetus to the kidnapping intermittent and incessant attacks and other criminal syndicates.

Critics of Queer ladder theory

According Thurmond, (2015). Oversimplification of Identities: Reductionist View: Critics argue that the queer ladder model simplifies the complexity of individual experiences and identities by placing them in a hierarchy. This reductionism can obscure the nuances of personal and cultural contexts.

Static Representation: Fluidity of Identity: Queer identities are fluid and can change over time. The ladder suggests a static position, which may not accurately represent how individuals experience their gender and sexuality throughout their lives.

Exclusivity and Privilege: Exclusion of Marginalized Voices: The ladder often prioritizes certain identities (e.g., white, cisgender, middle-class) over others, potentially marginalizing those who do not fit into this narrow framework. This can lead to a lack of representation for voices from queer communities of color, disabled queer individuals, and others.

Application of queer ladder theory to understanding of kidnapping

The queer ladder theory is a perception that view crimes of kidnapping, which is prevalent in Nigeria as organized crime, organize crime in broad sense often provides a socially acceptable means for social participation to persons otherwise excluded from community functions. Existing as a massive social network, organized crime is interconnected with numerous segments of a community and provides opportunities for political, social, and economic participation. It services a complementary function to upperworld agencies with important forms of support. Thus, it often serves a cohesive function by strengthening social interaction patterns within some families

and other social groupings within a community.

It is a manifestation of an attempt to explain the “instrumental essence of organised crime as a desperate means of economic empowerment and social climbing” (Okoli & Agada, 2014, p.137). According to Okoli and Agada (2014), the basic assumption of Queer Ladder theory states that organized crime is an instrumental behaviour and a means to an end; an instrument of social climbing and/or socio-economic advancement; and a means to accumulate wealth and build power. Succinctly put, the organized criminal gangs engage in criminal activities in order to attain their objectives of power, popularity and monetary gains

- a) However, the prevalence of kidnapping in Nigeria’s interstate transportation services in North central region demonstrates the dwindling capabilities of the Nigerian government to guarantee security of lives and properties for its citizenry and equally ensure sustainable development. Thus, the rising insecurity in the country, which manifest in banditry, kidnapping, Niger-delta agitation, Biafra separatist and boko haram in the North-east are all forms of organized crime, which some dubious individual miscreants engage in for economic gain. It is on this milieu that the assumptions of queer ladder fit in explaining the crime of kidnapping, by viewing it as an organized crime which presents an alternative route to economic empowerment, especially when mainstream opportunities are limited due to discrimination or stigmatization. Regardless of the limitations of the queer ladder theory it explicitly explains why some individuals engage in kidnapping in the society, on the same vein the queer ladder theory is adopted as the theoretical framework underpinning the study.

Gaps in Literature

This study focuses on the effects of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation service, in Northcentral region of Nigeria. However, it was observed that most of the empirical studies carried out on kidnapping focus on kidnapping on a broad term, but the present study focusses more on effects of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation service in North central region of Nigeria.

The present study fills the deficiency in the work Ohida (2025) which is on the impact of crime on interstate transport operations in northcentral Nigeria, this study failed to point out the kind of crime that are most prevalent on the Nigeria roads, the study also blamed crime in Nigeria roads on the poor condition of road, it was observed that the correlation between bad roads and crime is weak. The present study looks specifically on how kidnapping affects interstate transportation service by providing a theoretical explanation on why kidnapping has continued on Nigeria high ways, and then recommendations were made on how to curb kidnapping on highways in North central region and possibly the entire roads in Nigeria.

Zonal-Specific Gap

Most of the available studies such as Okoli & Agada (2014), Obijiofor (2019), and Otu & Apeh (2022) have discussed kidnapping in Nigeria from a general or national perspective. There is limited empirical research that specifically focuses on the North Central Zone and how kidnapping affects inter-state commercial transportation within that corridor. The North Central serves as a major transit hub linking the North, South, and West, yet it remains under-researched. This study fills that gap by providing zonal-specific data.

2. Sectoral Gap: Focus on Transport Industry

While studies by Adegbe (2022), Okorie (2018) and Ohida (2025) have examined the general socio-economic effects of kidnapping, few have directly linked kidnapping to the performance and viability of interstate commercial transportation companies. There is inadequate literature on how kidnapping leads to low patronage, revenue loss, and operational risks for transport operators. This study contributes by examining the direct impact on transport businesses.

3. Methodological Gap

Many existing studies relied on secondary data and general discourse. There is a paucity of field-based

empirical studies that document the specific methods and patterns of kidnapping on North Central highways such as forced abduction, tyre shooting, and masquerading as stranded persons. This study provides primary data on the modus operandi of kidnappers in the zone.

4. Policy and Solution-Oriented Gap

Most literature has focused on describing the problem of kidnapping with little attention to context-specific solutions for highways. Recommendations such as job creation, drone surveillance, and CCTV installation for highway security have not been sufficiently explored in relation to the North Central transport corridor. This study addresses that gap by proposing practical, corridor-specific measures.

5. Economic

Motivation Gap

While Okoli & Agada (2014) mentioned economic factors, there is limited literature that frames kidnapping in the North Central zone as an "instrumental means of economic empowerment and social climbing" driven by unemployment and poverty. This study extends knowledge by linking the motive of "easy wealth" to youth participation in kidnapping syndicates.

RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter provides an overview of the research design and methodology adopted in the study. It discusses the study area, the study population and highlight the procedures adopted. It further describes the sources/methods of data collection for the study and the problems the researcher encountered during the field work.

Research design

The present study adopts descriptive survey research design to describe the features of the study populations. The study utilizes questionnaire methods for data collection at each of the major interstate motor parks (Lokoja Mega Terminal, Benue Links, and Central Garage in Nasarawa, WAZOBIA park in Gwagwalada area council) in the aforementioned state. The use of descriptive survey design becomes relevant for this study because it allowed the collection of data from sample to generalize the findings to a larger population using questionnaires, interviews, key informant discussions and observations. Therefore, descriptive survey design was found to be the best strategy to investigate the objectives of this study.

Area of Study

The North Central is one of the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria representing the majority of the country's Middle Belt. It comprises of six states – Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau in and Federal Capital Territory. The North Central stretches across the whole width of the country, from the border with Cameroon to that with Benin. In terms of the environment, the zone is dominated by the Guinean forest–savanna mosaic, with the western portion falling into the West Sudanian savanna ecoregion. Plateau State is also named for the Jos Plateau, which lies in the east-central portion of the zone. The North central region has a population of about 20 million people, around 11% of the total population of the country. The country's capital of Abuja, which is in the Federal Capital Territory, as well as Ilorin and Jos, are the most populous cities in the North Central, as well as the sixth, seventh, and eighth most populous cities in Nigeria (Wada, 2025).

The economic activities in North Central Nigeria is predominantly agriculture, with inhabitants cultivating crops like yam, millet, and maize, and also rearing livestock. Solid mineral extraction is another key sector, with minerals such as coal, tin, limestone, and gold being found in the region. Fishing is common due to the extensive river systems, and the region also holds potential for tourism due to its cultural heritage and natural sites. The region features a large low plateau and a diversity of landscapes. The presence of the confluence of the Niger and Benue rivers is a defining geographic feature. The North-Central zone has a transitional environment, with the Guinean forest–savanna mosaic in its eastern part and the West Sudanian savanna in the west. This region is the location of Nigeria's capital city, Abuja, and is known for its diverse natural features and importance as an agrarian zone

Population and Sample of the Study

The study employed interstate commercial road transport operators in selected States in North-central Nigeria (i.e., FCT Nasarawa, Kogi State and Benue State). Both educated and none educated commercial drivers fall among the category of population of the study. The researcher carefully selects it population sample from motor parks within the four North central States. The North Central region of Nigeria had an estimated population of over 20 million in 2016, with official sources placing it at around 25.4 million by 2017. More recent unofficial estimates suggest a 2024 population of approximately 33 million people for the region. 2016 Population. 2024 Estimate. A 2024 unofficial estimate by StatiSense placed the population of the North Central region at 33 million people.

Sample Size and sampling techniques

Sampling is taking any portion of a population as representative of that population (Osuala, 2005). In other words, it is the thoughtful choice of a number of people (the sample), who are to provide the data necessary to draw conclusion about a larger group, the population whom these people represent. Agburu, (2001) sees sample as the portion or part of the population that the researcher chooses to study. It is a small sub-set of a population. It is a representative of a particular population of which a study is carried out upon. It is a selected part of a demographic for the purpose of investigation.

According to the 2024 population estimate the population of North Central Nigeria, which comprises six states (Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau) and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), is estimated at roughly 33 million people.

formula for an infinite (large) population is:
$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 p(1-p)}{e^2}$$

a was used to determine the sample size from the sample frame as demonstrated below-

sample size. The formula for Cochran's sample size determinant is as follows:

Where: n represents the required sample size;

Z signifies the confidence level (set at 95% or 1.96);

p denotes the proportion of male and female adults in the selected States from North central District of Nigeria aged 18 years and above

(given in this study as 50%, or 0.5); q represents the complement of p (set at 50%, i.e., 1 - 50%, or 0.5); e stands for the

level of accuracy or margin of error (set at 0.05). Applying this formula by Cochran (1953) we get:

$$n = ((1.96)^2$$

$$(0.5)(0.5)) / (0.05)^2$$

= 385. n = (3.8416 * 0.25) / 0.0025; n = 0.9604 / 0.0025; n = 384.16. states that, where the population is heterogenous and large sample can be drawn to represent the entire population and 384 is considered adequate to represent the entire population in which the finding can be generalizable

The multi -Stage sampling was employed in the study, it involves the application of purposive sampling and simple random sampling which is both probability and non-probability techniques, the researcher applied purposive sampling technique select particular category within the study area. Thus, the purposive sampling was applied to carefully select Motor Park and commercial transport operator within the four selected state in the North central, which involve (Kogi, Benue, Nasarawa and Abuja) Therefore, the quota sampling technique

was further applied to select 100 sample each from 3 motor parks in the State and 84 respondents was selected from Kogi State, this unequal selection was done based on the researcher's discretion with no special reason attached (WAZOBIA Motor Park, Gwagwalada Abuja, Nasarawa Motor Park Lafia, Kogi State Motor Park and Benue Links Motor Park). The population under study were divided into strata or groups, whereby, and the simple random sampling was applied to select the respondents, and the three categories of individuals selected are commercial road transportation drivers, the passengers and road transport workers. The population of the study was purposively drawn from the North Central

Sample frame

States Selected	Motor Park	Respondents
Benue State	Benue Links Park	100
Nasarawa State	Lafia Park	100
FCT Abuja	WAZOBIA Park	100
Kogi State	Kogi State Park Lokoja	84
Total		384

Methods of Data Collection

The two main sources of data used in this research are: Primary data and Secondary data. Primary Data: these data were generated by the researcher for the purpose of the research. Primary data has the main advantage of ensuring that the exact information wanted is obtained. It enables the researcher to achieve the actual data required. Thus, it avoids possible misunderstanding. A good number of questionnaire were designed and distributed to the targeted operators of commercial transport services in selected motor parks in four States in the North Central regions of Nigeria.

Secondary Data: the secondary data for this study were elicited from different institutions. The secondary data used for this research was generated from news daily, newspaper and social media outlet. The secondary data consulted include both quantitative and qualitative data. The sources of secondary data were ascertained through literature review, informal discussions with experts, colleagues, seminars and conferences as well as published guides. The secondary data are information that already exists in a useable form and these include relevant textbooks, journals, newspapers, articles and reports of studies carried out in the various areas of study. Data on the internet were located using search tools.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected through the use of qualitative and quantitative techniques which were processed and analyzed using simple frequency, inferential statistics and simple percentage table. The data resulting from the study was both quantitative and qualitative and as such, need processing and analysis. The essence is to put the data in contextual form to enable the researcher answer the research questions as well as address the research objectives. Consequently, quantitative analysis using simple tables, and percentage distributions, computations analysis was carried out. The data obtained from the questionnaire was coded and analyzed using (SPSS) statistical package for the social science.

However, the analysis of qualitative data was carried out using thematic narratives and direct quotation of participants. It involves a thorough translation and transcription of all the information gathered from key informant interview (KII). The thematic analysis is also sometimes known as conceptual analysis, but this term is favored among qualitative researchers. The results and information gathered from KII was used to create a synergy between the techniques adopted and to buttress and add strength to the results of the quantitative data analyzed.

Ethical Consideration

In an attempt to solicit information from respondents, the researcher was guided by research ethics. Therefore, the researcher carefully ensured that the rights of participants are not infringed upon. Consents were duly sought and no participant was forced to respond to questions. Also, because of the sensitivity of the issue under study and for security reasons, anonymity of participants was guaranteed in this study.

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents, analyzes and interprets the study findings arising from the survey data collected from respondents on the effects of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation service in Nigeria. It is organized into sections, starting with introduction, presentation of the response rate, demographic characteristics of the respondents, followed by presentation of the quantitative and qualitative data on the effects of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation service, testing of hypotheses, while the last part discusses the major findings of the study.

Response rate

A total of 384 questionnaires were distributed but 364 were and returned representing a response rate of 93%; and of the questionnaires returned, 354 were usable for analysis and 10 questionnaires were excluded from the analysis as they were not completely filled; While all the nine (6) in-depth interviews scheduled took place representing a response rate of 100% Table 4.1 contained the summary of response rate analysis.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	248	70.1
Female	106	29.9
Total	354	100
Age		
18-26	150	42.4
27-33	91	25.7
35-43	76	21.5
44-52	11	3.1
53 and above	26	7.3
Total	354	100
Marital Status		
Single	131	37.0
Married	154	43.5
Divorced/Separated	38	10.7
Widow/Widower	31	8.8
Total	354	100
Education		
Non-formal education	48	13.6
Primary	139	39.3
Secondary	111	31.4
Tertiary	56	15.8
Total	354	100
Occupation		
Civil Service	40	11.3
Driving/Motor Park worker	175	49.4
Business	84	23.7
Artisan	14	4.0
Student	41	11.6
Total	354	100

Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents were based on gender, age, marital status, religion, level of education and occupation. Table 4.2: Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Source: field survey, 2024

Data in table 4.2 is shows the socio demographic characteristics of respondents, it indicates that the male respondents (70.1%) were employed in the study, while the female respondents were (29.9%), this report indicates that more male were employed in the study because they showed more interest and were readily available.

The data further indicate that (42.4%) of the respondents employed in the study falls between the age of (18-26) while (25.7%) of the respondents were between the (27-33), and (21.5%) of the respondents are between the ages of (35-43), (3.1%) are between the age of 44-53 and the respondents who were 53 and above were (7.3%). The statistical inference deduced from this study is that more youth were employed, this report is so, because more youth finds their livelihood in the transport company.

Data on marital status of respondents indicates that (37.0%) of the respondents claimed they are unmarried, while (43.5%) of the respondents claimed they were married, (10.7%) had broken marriage and (8.8%) claimed their spouse are deceased, this study implies that there is no significant difference between the married and unmarried respondents.

Data on the educational attainment of respondents indicate that (13.6%) claimed they had no formal education, while (39.3%) had primary education, and (31.4%) had secondary school certificate (15.8%) claimed they had higher certificate, the finding from this report implies that majority of respondents employed in the study had a minimum qualification that allow them to read and write which made it possible for them to fill the questionnaire with little or no guidance

Data on occupational disposition of respondents indicates that (11.3%) of the respondents work as public servant, while (49.4%) which represent almost the half of respondents work in the motor park or are into driving as major occupation, and (23.7%) reported that business is their major occupation, (4.0%) are artist (11.6%) are students. This report implies that significant number of the respondents were drawn from individual who are into commercial transport occupation, in other for the researcher to generate firsthand information kidnapping activities on the highways.

Effects of kidnapping on inter-State commercial transportation Service, in North Central, Nigeria

This section presents main data on the effects of kidnapping on inter-State commercial transportation Service, in North Central, Nigeria

Table 4.3: Responses on the factors responsible for kidnapping on highway

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Poor security	171	48.3
Unemployment and poverty	105	29.7
Infiltration of arms	29	8.2
Lack of surveillance cameras on highway	33	9.3
Bad road	16	4.5
Total	354	100

Source: field survey, 2026

Data in table 4.3 indicates that (48.3%) of the of total number of respondents says poor security remained the major causes of kidnaping on the highway, while (29.7%) affiliate kidnapping on the highway to poverty and unemployment, (8.2%) say the infiltration of arms and light weapons is the leading cause of kidnapping on the highways, (9.3%) blamed incessant kidnapping on lack of surveillance cameras on the highway, the last segment of the population blame kidnapping on bad poor state of Nigerian federal roads. In the course of KII, a Bus driver interviewed has this to say:

Driving on the highway is gradually turning into a night mere, due to the prevalence of kidnapping, the security operatives most at times claim they don't have what it takes to confront coordinated attack of kidnappers on the

highways, this security lapses makes it easy for kidnappers to attack without anyone intercepting them (KII,2026)

Another Participant interviewed (a passenger) has this to say:

One could blame high rate of kidnapping on lack of surveillance camera on the highways; this makes it easy for the kidnappers to launch attack with since they are aware that nobody is watching them.

This finding is dissimilar with the finding of Ukoji (2016) which posits that the crime of kidnapping is easily motivated by the availability of arms in the hands of illegal users, particularly civilians in most parts of Nigeria. In same vein finding was further amplified by Obijiofor (2019) who highlighted that kidnapping is rampant in Nigeria because the government has failed to address the challenge of unemployment, he also views unemployment as the propeller that heighten poverty. And poverty drives people to kidnapping and other crimes.

However, this finding correlates with the assumption of Queer Ladder theory which states that organized crime such as kidnapping is an instrumental behaviour and a means to an end; an instrument of social climbing and/or socio-economic advancement; and a means to accumulate wealth and build power. Succinctly put, the organized criminal gangs engage in criminal activities in order to attain their objectives of power, popularity and monetary gains, therefore, the prevalence of kidnaping in Nigeria's interstate transportation services in North central region validates the dwindling capabilities of the Nigerian government to guarantee security of lives and properties for its citizenry and equally ensure sustainable development. Thus, the rising insecurity in the country, which manifest inform of kidnapping, could be blamed on poor security and rise in youth unemployment in the country.

Table 4.4: Responses on reasons people engage in kidnapping crime in Nigeria

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Quest for easy wealth	202	57.1
High rate of unemployment	87	24.6
For ritual purpose	27	7.6
Security failure	27	7.6
Quest for easy wealth	38	10.7
Total	354	100

Source: field survey, 2026

Data in table 4.4 indicates that the majority of the respondents (57.1%) reported that people engage in kidnapping to get easy wealth, while (24.6%) of the sampled population blamed kidnapping on the increase rate of unemployment, and (7.6%) of the respondents says people engage in kidnapping for ritual, the remaining (10.7%) of the respondents says kidnapping is being sustained by security lapses in the country. In the course of the KII, a victim of kidnap has this to say;

Kidnapping is carried out for several reasons, but first and foremost, most kidnappers do it for ransom (money) purpose, also some do it for ritual purpose, as they have clients who are ready to buy human parts, in one occasion I was kidnapped and taken to the forest in Port Harcourt, River State to precise, it was an ugly and sad scenario, to cut the long story short, during this episode, it happened that I met I young girl in the kidnapper's custody, she begged the kidnappers to release her because she was an orphan and has nobody to pay the ransom, in my very eyes the girl was butchered and her body parts sold to prospective buyers which were contacted on phone, in my case, ransom was later paid by my family members and I gained my freedom but the incident remain fresh in my heart (KII, 2026).

This finding correlate with Atoh, (2012) which posits that in some Nigerian cities, ritual kidnapping became more widespread from 1999, especially during election periods, in the Southwest and Southeast were reported

cases of money-making rituals contributed to the kidnapping of innocent people to acquire spiritual power, or the social menace of child theft.

Table 4.5 Responses on whether kidnapping has reduced the number passenger using the road transportation

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	205	57.9
Not sure	120	33.9
Not true	29	8.2
Total	354	100

Source: field survey, 2026

Data in table 4.5 indicate that the majority of the sampled (57.9%) population are of the view that kidnapping have reduce the patronage of road transport, while (33.9%) said they are unsure of the assertions and (8.2%) of the respondents refute the claims. In the course of (KII) with a driver that always uses the road has this to say.

There is drastic reduction on the rate of passenger traveling through the road, as a result of the incessant case of kidnapping on the highway, most travelers have resort to the use of airplane as they believe it is cheaper than paying huge ransom to kidnappers if they are being abducted

Table 4.6 Responses on dangers passenger are exposed to on the highway as a result of high rate of kidnapping on the Nigeria highway

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Constant fear and panic	78	22.0
Paying of ramson if been kidnapped	126	35.6
Death and Injury	67	18.9
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):	38	10.7
Sexual Abuse and Rape	45	12.7
Total	354	100

Source: field survey, 2026

Data in table 4.6 shows that (35.6%) of the respondents says road users are exposed to paying of ransom if being kidnapped, while (22.0%) of the respondents says passengers are constantly exposed to fear and panic, and (18.9%) reported that death and injury is prevalence on the highway as a result of kidnapping, (10.7%) of the respondents says some individual surfer post-traumatic stress disorder, (12.7%) of the respondents says some kidnapped victims surfers rape and sexual abuse. The statistical implication deduced from this finding is that, the individuals that use the road transport are susceptible myriads of dangers in which paying of ransom rate highest amongst orders. In the cause of the key informant interview (KII) with a driver in Benue State, has this to say;

The roads in north central zone used to be very safe until recently, when kidnapping, herdsmen attack and banditry became prevalence in the zone, this issue leaves many travelers in fear of being kidnapped, in the last quarter of 2025 several kidnapping incidents were recorded on the road between Makurdi and Otukpo LGA, this incident has left many of the passengers the user this rout in fear and panic.

This finding accentuates the study of Oyemwinmina and Osazuwa (2016), which states that another notable danger of kidnapping is the negative impact on foreign direct investment, additionally, high rate of kidnapping makes it unease for free movement of persons, goods and services within the zone.

Table 4.7 Responses on the effect of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation service, in Nigeria

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Low patronage	183	51.7
Loss of Income and Opportunities	48	13.6
Disruption of Freight Delivery	46	13.0
Increased in cost of transportation	41	11.6
Vulnerability of public transportation	36	10.2
Total	354	100

Source: field survey, 2026

Data in in table 4.7 indicate that (51.7%) of the respondents says kidnapping usually distort passenger patronage, while (13.6%) says it leads to loss of income and opportunities in the transport industry, and (13.0%) emphasized that kidnapping disruption of delivery of goods, (11.6%) of the sampled population say kidnapping leads increase in transportation, the last segment of the respondents (10.2%) were of the opinion that kidnapping makes public transportation vulnerable to attack on the highway. This finding implies that the transport industries are experiencing low patronage as result of incessant case of kidnapping on the highway. In the course of KII with a transport workers, he has this to say;

business, in the past we normal load 3-4 vehicle every day, but it's unfortunate that most people prefer to use waybill in the transportation of their goods and also travel only when it unavoidable to embark on the journey,

This finding is amplified by Ohida (2025) which holds that there is a statistically significant influence of crimes on interstate transport operations in north-central Nigeria. It further added that improving the safety of the road transport network will motivate transport operators to operate more efficiently on the routes

Table 4.8 Responses on whether kidnapping on Nigeria high way put pressure on the aircraft transportation in the country

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agreed	226	63.8
strongly Agreed	85	24.0
Disagreed	22	6.2
Strongly disagreed	21	5.9
Total	354	100

Source: field survey, 2026

Data in table 4.8 indicates that significant majority (63.8%) of the respondents are of the views that kidnapping exact pressure on the aircraft transportation service and (24.0%) strongly accepted that increase case of kidnapping causes overcrowding of the airport which in turn put pressure on air transportation in the zone. Only (12.1%) of the total number of respondents gave a counter view. This implies that most travelers have resort to the use of airplane as result of fear of being kidnapped on the road.

Responses on the nature of kidnapping on the highway in North Central

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Forced Abductions	103	29.1
Targeting Vulnerable Travelers	111	31.4
Blocking the highway and attacking travelers	75	21.2
Kidnapper disguising to need help	32	9.0
Shooting vehicle tyres	33	9.3
Total	354	100

Source: field survey, 2026

Data in table 4.9 indicates that (29.1%) of the respondents highlighted that forced abductions is more prevalence in North Central Highway, while (31.4%) cited targeting of vulnerable travelers as one of the methods used by kidnappers on the highway, and (21.2%) of the respondents says kidnappers block the highway and then launch attack on their victims, kidnappers disguising to need and shooting of vehicles tyres was mentioned as methods adopted by kidnappers during their operation on the highway. A passenger interviewed in has this to say;

Kidnappers use different methods during kidnapping activities; the one am most conversant with is forces abduction in which the kidnappers are well equipped with weapons, the enters the road and shoot sporadically then capture their victims and carry them to the forest.

This finding is expressed by Taylor (2016) who observed that kidnapper usually analysed the target's routes and the best locations are identified especially congested area (places where a vehicle must slow down) or isolated areas where the police cannot easily intervene although this does not always apply in all cases of kidnapping.

Table 4.10 Responses on whether kidnapping is high on the North central zone of Nigeria highway

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agreed	107	30.2
Strongly agreed	212	59.9
Disagreed	18	5.1
Strongly disagreed	17	4.8
Total	354	100

Source: field survey, 2026

Data in table 4.10 indicates that the majority of the respondents (59.9%) confirmed that kidnapping in the North central zone, in same vein, (30.2%) also attested to the fact, and less than 10% of the total number of respondents disagreed with the assertions, this implies that kidnapping is high in the North central zone of the country, this could be blamed on regular crisis between farmer and herdsmen and the possession of weapons by the locals.

Table 4.11 Responses on the occurrence of kidnapping on highways in Nigeria

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Always	87	24.6
Sometimes	211	59.6
Rarely occur	25	7.1
Does not occur at all	31	8.8
Total	354	100

Source: field survey, 2026

Data in table 4.11 indicates that (59.6%) of the respondents says occurs occasionally, while (24.6%) says kidnapping occur constantly, and (7.1%) says kidnapping is prevalent in the area, 8.8% says there is no kidnapping cases at all.

Table 4.12 Responses on the rate of kidnapping on the highway in Nigeria

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
High	72	20.3
Medium	218	61.6
Low	49	13.8

I don't know	15	4.2
Total	354	100

Source: field survey, 2026

Data in table 4.12 indicates that (61.6%) of the respondents says that the rate of kidnapping is till at the medium levels, while (20.3%) says the rate of kidnapping is high, only (13.8%) say the rate kidnapping is low, (4.2%) says they has no idea. The statistical inference deduced from this study is that there are cases of kidnapping in the zone, but at an average level.

Table 4.13 Suggestions on measures that could be put in place to curb kidnapping on the highway in North Central

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Intensify highway patrol	143	40.4
Installation of CCTV camera on the highway	64	18.1
Using of drone to track kidnappers	97	27.4
Arrest and persecution of anyone involved in kidnapping activities	19	5.4
Creation of Job employment For the teeming youth	31	8.8
Total	354	100

Source: field survey, 2026

Data in table indicates 4.13 that (40.4%) of the respondents suggested increase in highway patrol as measures that could control kidnapping on the highway, (27.4%) mentioned the use of drone in tracking kidnappers on the highways, and (18.1%) highlighted the installation of CCTV camera to monitor kidnapping on the highway, (5.4%) emphasized on the arrest of individuals involved in kidnapping, while the remaining (8.8%) advised on the need for creation of job for youth. This finding implies that the security operatives need to employ modern technology in the control of incessant kidnapping on the highway.

Table 4.14 Responses on the mechanism employed by security operatives in the control of incessant kidnapping on the highways in North Central Region

Responses	Percentage	Frequency
Enhanced surveillance and technology	45	12.7
Specialized units and patrol	49	13.8
Intelligence-driven operations	27	7.6
Community policing and vigilante	233	65.8
Total	354	100

Source: field survey, 2026

Data in table 4.14 indicate that (65.8%) of the respondents admitted that the community police and vigilante groups have fought kidnapping through combine efforts in the north central region, while (13.8%) of the respondents attested that the specialized units and patrol have been deployed in the fight against kidnapping, and (12.7%) says the security operatives have used enhance surveillance and technology to combat kidnapping on the highway, (7.6%) of the respondents says the security operatives have also mobilized intelligence-driven operations in fighting kidnapping on the highway. The statistics inference deduced from this finding is that most state have employed the services of community police and vigilante in the attempt to control incessant kidnapping on the highway. In the course of KII a vigilante interviewed has this to say;

We have risked our lives several times in an attempt to rescue victims of kidnapping, most times when the kidnappers attack, the go into their hide out in the forest the police and other security operatives, do not know the routes very well so the often depend on us (Vigilante) to show them the way, and some other times in the areas where there is no police, we go after the kidnappers and recue the victims.

This finding correlate with the version of Badmus (2025) which founds that community-based security, when adequately supported and coordinated, has the capacity to significantly decrease the occurrence of kidnappings.

Table 4.15 Responses on whether the strategies employed by security operatives to combat kidnapping in the country is effective

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Very effective	53	15.0
Effective	49	13.8
Very ineffective	151	42.7
Ineffective	101	28.5
Total	354	

Source: field survey, 2026

Data in table 4.15 indicates that (15.0%) of the respondents believed that the strategies employed by security operatives to combat kidnapping on the highway is very effective, also (13.8%) of the respondents maintained that strategies used by security operative is effective, while (42.7%) of the respondents gave a counter view on the assertion, as they say the strategies employed by the security operatives in combating kidnapping is very ineffective, also (28.5%) of the sampled population confirmed that the strategies remain ineffective. This implies that the strategies employed by the security operatives in combating kidnapping on the highway, have not really address incessant case of kidnapping in the study area.

Table 4.16 Responses on why strategies deployed by the security operatives to address kidnapping failed to yield the desire result

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
High level of Corruption among the security personnel	35	9.9
Ethnic division	23	6.5
Kidnapping is an organized crime	61	17.2
Aiding and abetting of crime by security operatives	124	35.0
failure to deploy modern technology in controlling kidnapping	111	31.4
Total	354	100

Source: field Survey 2026

Data in table 4.16 have shown that (35.0%) of the sampled population confirmed that the effort of security operative failed to yield result because they are aiding and abetting kidnapping activities, while (17.2%) reported that kidnapping is difficulty fight because it is an organized crime with several criminal syndicate working in synergy, and (31.4%) of the respondents were of the view that the security operatives failed to employ modern technology in controlling kidnapping, and (9.9%) of the respondents blamed the failure of the strategies on high rate of corruptions amongst security operatives in the country, (23.7%) of the respondents believed that ethnic division and organize nature of kidnappers underplayed the strategies in place address kidnapping in North central zone of Nigeria, this study implies that the strategies in place to address kidnapping have failed to yield the desire result as the rate of kidnapping has continue to rise. In course of the KII community leader has this to say:

I think one of the major factors militating against the strategies employed by security operatives in forestalling kidnapping is that some of the security operatives share important information with criminal elements and sometimes they outrightly confess that they lack equipment to confront kidnappers, the numerous excuses often made by security operatives, makes the kidnappers to operate at will.

This finding accentuates Otu and Apeh (2022) who identified challenges such as community distrust, lack of funding, and inadequate modern equipment as the measure issues restraining the security operatives from

effective discharging of their duties.

Discussion of findings

From the study on the effects of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation service, in north central zone of Nigeria, findings of this study revealed that kidnapping on North central highway is caused by myriads of factors, of which poor security structure and unemployment/poverty scored the highest point amongst others. Also, the study further revealed that most people engage in the illicit business of kidnapping for the purpose of achieving easy wealth, The findings are consistent with other existing literature that emphasizes on the factors responsible for kidnapping such Okoli & Agada, (2014) and Obijiofor (2019). This underscores the “instrumental essence of organised crime as a desperate means of economic empowerment and social climbing

Study also, revealed that forced Abductions, targeting of vulnerable travelers, blocking the of highway/attacking travelers, kidnappers masquerading to need help and shooting of vehicle tyres were identified as the major forms of kidnapping on the highways in North central Zone of Nigeria, this pattern of kidnapping is usually adopted by syndicates on the highway, they calmly wait for vulnerable victims and then launch attack on them, then later ask family or relative ransom

Again, the study revealed that highway kidnapping expose road users to risk ranging from fear, panic and losing of money as result of paying of ramson fees, it further affects the transport company as kidnapping could lead to low patronage and also reduce the income level of the transport company. This finding is in line with other existing study that highlights the effects of kidnapping Adegbe (2022), Okorie (2018) and Ohida (2025) this emphasizes on the effects of kidnapping on drivers and also its socio-economic implications on passengers and the transport company.

On the measure to ameliorate kidnapping in the North Central zone of Nigeria highway, study suggested intensification of high way patrol, Installation of CCTV camera on the highway, the use of drone to track kidnappers, arrest and persecution of anyone involved in kidnapping activities and creation of job employment for the teeming youth, this finding is slightly in line with Otu and Apeh (2022) which suggested increase funding, acquiring advanced security technologies, and enhancing public awareness successes to improve its crime-fighting effectiveness.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. Also, contribution to knowledge and suggestions for further studies are presented in this chapter.

Summary of major findings

The study analysed the effects of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation service, in North central, Nigeria. The study reveals that 48.3% of respondents confirmed that the increase in highway kidnapping is fueled by unemployment, also 29.7% of the respondent’s mentioned poverty as a major causative factor aggravating kidnapping on the highway, from this report it is clear that kidnapping on the highway is caused by numerous factors which are poor security, unemployment, poverty, infiltration of arms, Lack of surveillance cameras on highway and bad road.

Again, the major finding reveals 57.1% of the sampled population reported that individuals engage in kidnapping to acquire easy wealth, also 24.6% of the sampled population confirmed that most young people go into kidnapping because they lack meaningful employment, kidnapping for ritual purpose fall amongst the reasons people engaged in the activities.

The study reveals that 29.1% of the sampled population reported that the nature of kidnapping includes forced abductions, 31.4% of the respondents voted targeting of vulnerable travelers as the dominate forms of the kidnapping on the highway, 21.2% of the respondents highlighted blocking of the highway and attacking traveler as the major forms of kidnapping on the highway. From this major finding it is clear that there are

numerous forms of kidnapping on the highway which are forced abduction, targeting vulnerable travelers, blocking of the highway/attacking travelers, kidnapper disguising to need help and Shooting vehicle tyres

On the measure to curb the incessant kidnapping on the highway the study suggested intensifying of highway patrol, installation of CCTV camera on the highway, using of drone to track kidnappers, arrest and persecution of anyone involved in kidnapping activities, Creation of Job employment for the teeming youths in the North central zone.

Conclusion

The study concludes that kidnapping is strongly aggravated by myriads of factors which are poor security, unemployment/poverty, infiltration of arms, Lack of surveillance cameras on highway and bad road.

In addition, the study concludes that kidnapping has greatly affected interstate transportation service, as passengers for fear of kidnapping device alternative means of transportation causing poor patronage to transport company who complained that they normally record poor patronage.

The study also concludes that individuals engaged in kidnapping to acquire easy wealth, for lack of meaningful employment and kidnapping for ritual. The study conclude that the forms of kidnapping include kidnapping forced abduction, targeting vulnerable travelers, blocking of the highway/attacking travelers, kidnapper disguising to need help and Shooting vehicle tyres.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations were made

Government should collaborate with the community and beef up security on the highway, by installing modern surveillance device like CCTV cameras, then address poverty and youth unemployment, through the creation of employment for the teeming youth.

There is need for government to deploy more security operatives to intensify highway patrol in order to track the activities of kidnappers on the highway.

There is need for the transport companies across the North central zone to collaborate with the security operatives and ensure that they move with security personnel, so the live of passengers are well protected on the highway.

There is need for the government to establish community police across the country in order to oversee the affairs of motorist and passengers on the highway

Contribution to knowledge

This study has contributed to the knowledge in the aspect of effects of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation service, in North central, Nigeria It's imperative to note that kidnapping has disrupted commercial activities on the highways. This study establish that more proactive measure is needed to curtail the incessant case of kidnapping on the highway in order that the high will be safer for motorist and passengers.

Empirical Contribution: Context-Specific Factors and Patterns of Highway Kidnapping

The study establishes that kidnapping on North Central highways is driven by a combination of structural and socio-economic factors. Poor security structure and unemployment/poverty scored the highest as causal factors. This finding reinforces and expands the work of Okoli & Agada (2014) and Obijiofor (2019) by situating the "instrumental essence of organized crime" specifically within the North Central transport corridor. The study further reveals that the primary motive for engagement in kidnapping is the pursuit of "easy wealth", framing kidnapping as a rational-choice economic activity rather than purely ideological crime.

This study contributes to knowledge by showing that kidnapping syndicates in the North Central zone operate through premeditated ambush tactics — waiting for vulnerable victims and subsequently demanding ransom from families. This fills a gap in literature which often generalizes kidnapping tactics without zonal specificity.

Theoretical Contribution: Linking Kidnapping to Transport Service Performance

The study contributes to theory by demonstrating the direct transmission mechanism through which kidnapping affects inter-state commercial transportation. Findings reveal that highway kidnapping exposes road users to psychological risks: fear, panic, and financial loss through ransom payment. At the organizational level, it leads to low patronage and reduced income levels for transport companies. This aligns with and extends Adegbe (2022), Okorie (2018) and Ohida (2025) by providing empirical evidence from the North Central zone that kidnapping has both socio-psychological implications for passengers/drivers and direct economic implications for transport operators. The study therefore positions highway kidnapping as not just a security issue, but as a threat to the viability and sustainability of the interstate transport industry

Policy/ Practical Contribution: Zonal-Specific Security and Socio-Economic Measures

The study proposes a set of context-driven measures to ameliorate kidnapping in the North Central highways. These include: intensification of highway patrol, installation of CCTV cameras, use of drones for tracking, arrest and prosecution of offenders, and youth employment creation. This recommendation slightly converges with but also advances Otu and Apeh (2022), who suggested increased funding, advanced security technologies, and public awareness. The present study adds employment creation as a critical preventive measure and emphasizes technology-driven surveillance specifically for highways rather than general policing. This provides policymakers and transport unions in the North Central zone with actionable, corridor-specific strategies

This study also has contributed to knowledge by: Documenting North Central-specific causes and methods of highway kidnapping. Establishing the dual impact of kidnapping on both passengers' wellbeing and transport company performance. Proposing integrated security + economic solutions tailored to the North Central highway context. The findings therefore add to the growing body of literature on insecurity and transport in Nigeria, and serve as a reference base for future studies, security agencies, and transport stakeholders operating in the North Central geopolitical zone.

Suggestion for further research

This study covered the effects of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation service, in North central, Nigeria. Thus, further studies on this problem is recommended to cover the entire northern states in Nigeria.

Based on the findings, limitations, and gaps identified in this study on “The Effects of Kidnapping on Inter-State Commercial Transportation Service in the North Central Zone of Nigeria”, the following areas are recommended for further research:

1. Comparative Study Across Geopolitical Zones

This study was limited to the North Central Zone. Further research should be conducted to compare the causes, patterns, and effects of highway kidnapping across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. Such a study will help to determine whether kidnapping dynamics differ by region and will assist security agencies in developing zonal-specific intervention strategies.

2. Quantitative Assessment of Economic Losses

Future studies should adopt a cost-benefit and econometric approach to quantify the financial losses incurred by transport companies, passengers, and the government as a result of kidnapping. This will include estimation of revenue loss, ransom paid, vehicle damage, insurance costs, and the cost of alternative routes. The findings will be useful for policy and budgetary planning.

3. Role of Technology and Intelligence in Curbing Highway Kidnapping

Further research is needed to examine the effectiveness of modern security technologies such as CCTV surveillance, drones, GPS vehicle tracking, and AI-powered crime mapping in preventing and responding to kidnapping on Nigerian highways. This will provide empirical data to guide government investment in security infrastructure.

4. Psychological and Social Impact on Victims and Transport Workers

This study focused mainly on economic and operational effects. Subsequent studies should investigate the long-term psychological, emotional, and social consequences of kidnapping on victims, their families, drivers, and conductors. Understanding trauma, fear, and stigma will help in designing psychosocial support programs.

5. Evaluation of Government Security Policies and Operations

A policy evaluation study should be carried out to assess the effectiveness of existing government security initiatives such as Operation Whirl Stroke, highway patrols, and community policing in reducing kidnapping in the North Central Zone. This will identify gaps and recommend improvements.

6. Link Between Unemployment, Poverty and Participation in Kidnapping

Given that unemployment and poverty were identified as major drivers, further research should explore the socio-economic profiles of convicted kidnappers and the recruitment process of kidnapping syndicates. This will provide deeper insight into prevention through job creation and social intervention programs. Therefore, addressing these areas in future research will broaden knowledge, provide more robust data, and support evidence-based policies to secure Nigeria's highways and sustain interstate commercial transportation.

Problem encountered

The researcher encountered numerous problems at course of the study. Research of this magnitude requires time, logistics, resources and technicality because of the wide spectrum to be covered. Lots of finance was budgeted for this study, however, it was obvious that we still ran into financial crisis. This was due to the facts that research has become increasable difficult because of the attitude of respondents who most at time intentionally refused to give information and some of the respondents employed in the study demand for financial incentive before they agree to supply the researcher with important information. Some of the problem highlighted above can be overcome if the people change their attitude towards research in Nigeria. However, it is obvious that Nigeria lacks good culture of information keeping this factor was very disturbing as some major information could not be fetched the police database. The financial constraints encountered by researchers in Nigeria can only be addressed if the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND), e.t.c., offer to sponsor research in the higher institutions in Nigeria.

DECLARATION

I declare that this research is a product of an original work conducted by me and has not been presented for the award of any degree in any university. The ideas, observations, comments, suggestions and expressions herein represent my own conviction, except quotations which have been acknowledged in accordance with conventional academic tradition.

ANGEL EJIERO OMAMIE

31/July/2026

SignatureDate

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the dissertation on **“EFFECTS OF KIDNAPPING ON INTERSTATE COMMERCIAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICE, IN NORTH CENTRAL, NIGERIA”** was independently conducted and has been read and approved for internal defense at the Department of Sociology,

University of Abuja.

Prof. Ayuba D Mgbegah

31/July/2026

Supervisor

Date

31/July/2026

Dr. Egwu Grace

Date

Head of Department

31/July/2026

Prof. Mutiullahi. A.Olasupo

Date

Dean, Faculty of Social Science

Prof.

31/July/2026

Dean, Postgraduate School

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this Dissertation to Almighty God who gave me the Strength and Grace to undergo this process successfully and to my family.

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QUESTIONNAIRE PERMIT

Department of Sociology

Faculty of Social Science,

University of Abuja,

Abuja.

Date:

Dear Respondents,

I am a Postgraduate Student of the University of Abuja conducting research on **“EFFECTS OF KIDNAPPING ON INTER-STATE COMMERCIAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICE, IN NORTH CENTRAL, NIGERIA”** “The research is in partial fulfillment for the award of M.Sc., Sociology (Criminology) and be assured that whatever information you give shall be treated confidentiality for the purpose of this research only

APPENDIX I

INTRODUCTION

This questionnaire is designed to gather information on **“EFFECTS OF KIDNAPPING ON INTER-STATE COMMERCIAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICE, IN NORTH CENTRAL, NIGERIA.”** by ticking (✓) the appropriate response as applicable to you. Further, the questionnaire consists of two sections, section A contains the respondent’s personal data and section B is question on the subject of the study.

Section A

Socio-Demographic Attributes of Respondents

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. | Gender | |
| | a) Male | ☐ |
| | b) b) Female | ☐ |
| 2. | Age | ☐ |
| | a) 18-24 | ☐ |
| | b) 25-31 | ☐ |
| | c) 32-38 | ☐ |
| | d) 39-45 | ☐ |
| | e) 46 and above | ☐ |
| | f) Others specified | ☐ |
| 3. | Marital Status | |
| | a) Single | ☐ |
| | b) Married | ☐ |
| | c) Widowed | ☐ |
| | d) Divorced | ☐ |
| | a. Separated | ☐ |
| 4. | Educational Level | |
| | a) Primary | ☐ |
| | b) Secondary | ☐ |
| | c) NCE/ND | ☐ |
| | d) Beachelor Degree/ HND | ☐ |
| | e) Postgraduate | ☐ |

5. Occupations

- a) Commercial Driver
- b) Civil servant
- c) Business
- d) Artisan
- e) Road transport worker
- f) Others specified

SECTION B: EFFECTS OF KIDNAPPING ON INTER-STATE COMMERCIAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICE, IN NORTH CENTRAL, NIGERIA”

Section B Questions find out the factors responsible for kidnapping in Nigeria highway

1. What factor do you think is responsible kidnapping on highways in Nigeria?
 - a. Poor security
 - b. Bad road
 - c. Infiltration of arms
 - d. Lack of surveillance cameras on highway
 - e. Lack deterrence
2. In your opinion why do people engage in kidnapping crime in Nigeria
 - a. Quest for money
 - b. High rete of unemployment
 - c. For ritual purpose
 - d. Security failure
 - e. Easy wealth
3. Have you witness or heard of kidnapping activities in area before?
 - a. Rare
 - b. Often
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Never
4. Would you say some persons have stopped travelling by road as a result of high rate of Kidnapping
 - a. Yes
 - b. Not sure
 - c. Not true

SECTION C. Questions on the effects of kidnapping on inter-state commercial transportation service, in Nigeria

5. Can you tell us the dangers road transporters are exposed to, on the highway as a result of high rate of kidnapping on the Nigeria highway
 - a. Constant fear and panic
 - b. Paying of ramson if been kidnapped
 - c. Death and Injury
 - d. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):
 - e. Sexual Violence
6. What effects does kidnapping have on inter-state commercial transportation service, in Nigeria
 - a. Low patronage
 - b. Loss of Income and Opportunities
 - c. Disruption of Freight Delivery
 - d. Increased in cost of transportation
 - e. Vulnerability of Public Transport
7. Kidnapping on Nigeria high way exact pressure on the aircraft transportation in the country
 - a. Agreed

- b. Strongly agreed
- c. Disagreed
- d. Strongly disagreed

SECTION D. Question on the patterns/trends of kidnapping in Nigeria highway

8. In your opinion tell us the nature of kidnapping you are aware of on the highway

- a. Forced Abductions
- b. Targeting Vulnerable Travelers
- c. Blocking the highway and attacking travelers
- d. Shooting vehicle tyres
- e. Kidnapper disguising to need help

9. Kidnapping is relatively high on the Nigeria high ways

- e. Agreed
- f. Strongly agreed
- g. Disagreed
- h. Strongly disagreed

10. How often does kidnapping occurs on the highways in your Area

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Rarely occur
- d. Does not occur at all

11. In your opinion rate kidnapping on the highway in Nigeria

- a. High
- b. Medium
- c. Low
- d. I don't know

12. **Section D;** what measures do think can be put in place to curtail kidnapping in Nigeria highways

.....

13. What crime fighting mechanism have the government and security operatives put in place to curb incessant kidnapping on the highways in North Central Region

.....

14. Are the strategies in place by the security operatives to combat kidnapping country effective

- a. Very effective
- b. Effective
- c. Very ineffective
- d. Ineffective

15. Why have the strategies deployed by the security operatives in Nigeria to address kidnapping failed to yield the desired result

- a. High level of Corruption among the security personnel
- b. Ethnic division
- c. Kidnapping is an organized crime
- d. Aiding and abetting of crime by security operative

Appendix II

Key informant Interview (KII)

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this study. This exercise is a discussion that will provide a better understanding of **EFFECTS OF KIDNAPPING ON INTER-STATE COMMERCIAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICE, IN NORTH CENTRAL, NIGERIA**. This interview will add value to the quantitative study by providing greater explanations and significance for information generated by the study and guide in achieving the aims and objectives of the research as well as in developing policy directions. This interview will take between 30 minutes - 1 hour for each.

- i. As commercial driver, tell the factor you think is responsible for kidnapping in Nigeria highway

.....
.....
.....

- ii. How has kidnapping affected inter-state commercial transportation service, in Nigeria

.....
.....
.....

- iii. Tell us the patterns of kidnapping in Nigeria highway

.....
.....
.....

- iv. In your opinion tell us whether kidnapping activities on highway is increasing or not

.....
.....
.....

- v. suggest measure that think can be put in place to reduce kidnapping in Nigeria highways

.....
.....
.....

Appendix III

Map showing the 6 states in North Central region where the study was conducted, it is also showing the 4 selected states the 6 North central states marked in yellow colour

