

American Journal of Psychology (AJP)



**PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF KIDNAPPING ACTIVITIES AND
POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER IN CHIKUN LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AREA OF KADUNA STATE- NIGERIA**

*David Markus Shekwolo, PhD
Newton Rebecca Temitope
Sunday Gbande Aondoaver
Fenan Victor Nanlir*



PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF KIDNAPPING ACTIVITIES AND POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER IN CHIKUN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KADUNA STATE- NIGERIA

David Markus Shekwolo, PhD¹

Newton Rebecca Temitope¹

Sunday Gbande Aondoaver²

Fenan Victor Nanlir¹

¹Department of Psychology, Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna- Nigeria.

²Department of Languages, Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna- Nigeria.

Corresponding Author's Email: bekkytop@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The study examined public perception of kidnapping activities and posttraumatic stress disorder in Chikun LGA of Kaduna State- Nigeria.

Methodology: Survey research design was adopted with convenient sampling technique. Two hundred and thirty- two (232) participated in the study both male and female. Posttraumatic Stress Scale (PSS -1) and the Patient Health Questionnaire 9 (PQH-9) were used to collect data, PTSD Symptoms Scale (PSS -1). The data were further analyzed using inferential statistics for the test of Hypotheses. Chi-Square, One-Way ANOVA and Independent Sample-t-test were used. Hypothesis one tested the significant relationship between kidnapping and posttraumatic stress disorder in Chikun LGA of Kaduna State.

Findings: Further analysis revealed a no significant difference in the perceived association of news of kidnapping and PTSD in Chikun LGA of Kaduna State, $X^2(4) = 1.719$, $P > 0.05$. In other words, the hypothesis was not accepted in this study. Hypothesis two tested a significant difference in age and posttraumatic stress disorders in Chikun LGA. The results revealed that, there is no statistically significant difference; $F(3, 228) = 0.619$, $P > 0.05$. Therefore, the hypothesis was not accepted in the study.

Recommendation: Even though residents are aware of such activities of kidnapping, the level of PTSD experienced by them has been relatively mild. Family and community ties and togetherness should be strengthened since it promotes resilience which in turn act as a buffer or immunity against developing PTSD.

Key Words: *Public Perception, Kidnapping and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder.*

INTRODUCTION

Kidnapping is seen as the act of seizing and detaining and/or transporting a person by unlawful force or fraud, often with a demand for ransom (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2014). Kidnapping to obtain ransom has become a common practice by gangs and some insurgent political factions in Nigeria to finance their operations. In Nigeria, kidnapping is one of the most psychologically damaging crimes of all in the society today and has caused a lot of psychological problems on the population. Victims typically take many years to heal from the psychological wounds inflicted upon them and some never completely recover. Kidnapping can cause deep emotional and mental scars that leave victims to battle through issues of trust, independence, love, sex, respect, and a litany of others. The reality is that kidnappings occur in all communities and at all levels, and each case needs to have as much attention as any other. By only hearing reports of affluent or middle-class kidnappings, the public may tend to forget that in poorer neighbourhoods and low-income areas, adults and children are abducted on a regular basis (Abamara, & Dike, 2018). Kidnapped victims are abducted quite suddenly, often by armed and unarmed individuals, and are not released until the family pay some type of ransom. The role of the family in paying for ransom contributes to feelings of gratitude or being “saved,” as opposed to depressive feelings of loss, grief, sadness, or guilt. After being rescued or paying of ransom, victims experience intense fear of death or harm processes that are more specific to Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (Marmar, McCaslin, Metzler, Best, Weiss, Fagan, & Neylan, 2006).

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a pathological anxiety disorder resulting after exposure to a traumatic event. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is an Anxiety Disorder that can develop after exposure to one or more terrifying events in which grave physical harm occurred that involves actual or threatened death, or serious injury. Those living with PTSD may experience symptoms like panic attacks, depression, and insomnia; but the most common characteristics and debilitating symptoms of PTSD is flashbacks which is like walking nightmares, panic attacks and heightened awareness. Flashback is a severe and ongoing emotional reaction to an extreme psychological trauma (Pine, 2019).

Abamara and Dike (2018), conducted a study and found a significant relationship between kidnapping and PTSD among the victims and to be anxious and mildly depressed, bodily pains and discomfort, irresistible thoughts and actions, discomfort in social situation, loss of vital energy and interest in usual activities, nervousness and highly tensed as well as suspicious of movements around them. The researchers went further to find that people who have survived kidnapping often go on to battle issues of trust for the rest of their lives, as being deprived of freedom and being held against people’s will erodes trust in humanity as a whole. Some victims may even become distrustful of family members, believing their families didn't do enough to get them back or to protect them from being abducted in the first place. This can begin a vicious cycle of disordered thinking within victims' lives, leading to difficulty in relationships both at personal and professional levels. Furthermore, kidnapping victims may have psychological disturbances in other aspects of their everyday lives. Trouble sleeping is one of the most common reported psychological impacts of kidnapping, as the victims are afraid to fall asleep and let their guard down, lest they be taken again. Sexual defects are also likely in cases of kidnappings that involved sexual abuse. Survivors may find it hard to trust their partners or to allow themselves to be vulnerable. Victims of abduction may need many years of therapy to overcome the sexual damage of kidnapping, and to form healthy

sexual relationships. Similarly, Wright, et al (2017) in their study on kidnapping and mental health among Iraqi refugees and the role of resilience, found that among those who had experienced kidnapping, more than one quarter (27%) were diagnosed with PTSD while those not kidnapped had (1.5%) PTSD diagnosis. Kobayashi, Sledjeski, and Delahanty (2019); Lunney, Schnurr, and Cook (2014) who found significant difference in age of their participants regarding PTSD. They found that PTSD is influenced by the age of the individual as younger adults between the ages of 18-24 are less likely to experience PTSD as compared to older adults within the ages of 55-65 years who are more likely to experience PTSD.

Statement of Research Problem

Kidnapping is a growing global epidemic with no realistic solution. Several factors have been identified as being associated with kidnapping. Some of these includes social and moral decadence, influence of peer group, culture of drug abuse, mass media, ethnic nationalism, ethnic militia, god-fatherism and elites, economy, population, family influence, among others (Wright, et al 2017). Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State is one of the places in Nigeria with continued and persistent cases of kidnapping. In August 2019, a pregnant woman and two minors were kidnapped in Juji; on the 16th September 2019, a pastor, his daughter and a church treasurer were kidnapped in Kankomi and in the same month a business man and his three sons were kidnapped in Sabon Tasha. On the 3rd October 2019, six female students and two teachers of Engravers College in Kakau Daji were kidnapped with ransom paid before they were released. On the 9th and 25th January 2020, four Seminarians from the Good Shepherd Major Seminary in Kakau Kaduna and a house wife in Juji with her two children were kidnapped respectively. On the 1st February, 2020 a KADGIS worker was kidnapped at Mararaban-Rido; all these in Chikun Local Government (Ezeobi, Ehigiator & Ozulumba, 2020).

Victims typically take many years to heal from the psychological wounds inflicted upon them, and some never completely recover. Several studies have been conducted on causes and consequences of kidnapping among victims and even among loved ones but non on the public perception of kidnapping and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in Chikun Local Government area of Kaduna State-Nigeria.

Research Questions

- i. What is the relationship between kidnapping and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State- Nigeria?
- ii. What is the age difference in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder among the populace in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State- Nigeria?

Objectives of the study

The study specifically intended to:

- i. Examine the relationship between kidnapping and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State- Nigeria.
- ii. To determine the age differences in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder among the populace in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State- Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design adopted for the study was. The choice for this is because it allows the researcher to collect data in the field without manipulating the variables and the information sought is reasonably specific and familiar to the respondents and the researcher has considerable prior knowledge of the problems under study

Participants

The participants in this study were two hundred and thirty- two (232) adult males and females, residing in various settlements in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State= Nigeria. Demographic characteristics of 232 participants (male = 116 and female = 116). Age: 18-23 years (N=78, 53.6%), 24-29 years (N= 66, 28.4%), 30-35 years (N=57, 24.6%) and 36 years above (N= 31, 13.4%). Marital status: single (N= 129, 55.6%), married (N= 72, 31%), widow (N= 13, 5.6%), widower (N= 12, 5.2%) and divorced (N= 6, 2.6%). Education: primary (N= 26, 11.2%) secondary (N= 101, 43.5%) and tertiary (N= 105, 45.3%). Occupation: business (N= 106, 45.7%), civil servant (N= 46, 19.8%), farming (N= 35, 15.1%) and others (N= 45, 19.4%).

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size was 232 and the sampling technique used for selecting the participants was convenient sampling. Convenient sampling technique allows for data or responses to be collected easily in a community based on individuals who were readily available and willing to participate in the study. Convenient sampling is cost effective and also effective for collecting data in a large community.

Instrument

The instrument used for collection of data was Post Traumatic Symptomatic Scale (PSS-1). Post Traumatic Symptomatic Scale (PSS-1) was developed by Foa, (2005) to assess posttraumatic stress disorder in participants. It is a 17 items questionnaire with four response options The PSS-1 has psychometric properties. Inter-rater reliability for PTSD diagnosis ($k=0.91$) (Foa, etal. 1993) and overall severity ($r=.97$). The validity of the scale for this study revealed $K=0.94$ (Foa, 2005). The instrument was validated in Kaduna State- Nigeria by conducting a pilot study with 50 participants who were not part of the main study using a convenient sampling technique to obtain the reliability of the instrument: Posttraumatic Stress Scale PSS-I) which consists of 17 items with 4-point responses options. A Split-Half reliability method was adopted. The results revealed a Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for the two-half as 0.723 and 0.647 respectively with a Guttman Split-Half Reliability Coefficient of 0.751. Therefore, the instrument was found reliable and valid for this study.

Procedure

The process involves the identification of Chikun Local Government Area as the research area because of the high prevalence of kidnapping in the area, non-existence of prior research on the subject matter of this research and the enthusiasm of the researcher on kidnapped victim's mental health. The researchers located the house of the head of the area and the office local government chairman for introduction and permission to conduct research in the LGA. The researcher in

company of one of the locals in that area (research assistant) on the said day of data collection went to Juji a settlement in Sabo where kidnapping activities have been on the increase in recent months. While there, the researcher walked around and administered the instruments to adults who were available. Their consent was however sought before they were given the questionnaires to fill. They were also encouraged to ask questions if they were not clear with any of the item. No specific time was allotted for answering the question. After they finished responding to the questionnaires, the researchers collected and thanked them for agreeing to participate in the research before moving to other settlements in Gonin-Gora and Mararaban-Rido.

Statistical Technique Used

The data collected using questionnaires was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). While the demographic variables were analysed using frequency and percentages. The data were further analysed using inferential statistics for the test of Hypotheses. Chi-Square test was used to test the perceived association between kidnapping and posttraumatic stress in Chikun, Kaduna. One-Way ANOVA and Independent Sample-t-test was used to test for mean difference. Finally, the results were presented in tables for easy comprehension.

Ethical Considerations

As required of any psychological research, ethics considered and used in this study included the following: Participants were briefed on the nature and purpose of the study prior to administering the questionnaire. Participants consents to participate in the study were sought before there were administered with the questionnaire after which were informed that they were free to discontinue from participating in the study at any time or stage they so desire to. Finally, participants were informed that the study was meant for educational purpose only, hence their response were kept confidential and used only for the purpose it was meant for. They were asked not to include their names or phone numbers.

RESULTS

Table 1: Frequency and Percentages of the Characteristics of Participants

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Gender	Male	116	50
	Female	116	50
	Total	232	100%
Age	18-23 Years	78	33.6
	24-29 Years	66	28.4
	30-35 Years	57	24.6
	36 Above	31	13.4
	Total	232	100%
Marital Status	Single	129	55.6
	Married	72	31.0
	Widow	13	5.6
	Widower	12	5.2
	Divorced	6	2.6
	Total	232	100%
Education	Primary	26	11.2
	Secondary	101	43.5
	Tertiary	105	45.3
	Total	232	100%
Occupation	Business	106	45.7
	Civil Servant	46	19.8
	Farming	35	15.1
	Others	45	19.4
	Total	232	100%

Table 1 presents the frequencies and percentages of the characteristics of 232 participants (male = 116 and female = 116). Age: 18-23 years (N=78, 53.6%), 24-29 years (N= 66, 28.4%), 30-35 years (N=57, 24.6%) and 36 years above (N= 31, 13.4%). Marital status: single (N= 129, 55.6%), married (N= 72, 31%), widow (N= 13, 5.6%), widower (N= 12, 5.2%) and divorced (N= 6, 2.6%). Education: primary (N= 26, 11.2%) secondary (N= 101, 43.5%) and tertiary (N= 105, 45.3%). Occupation: business (N= 106, 45.7%), civil servant (N= 46, 19.8%), farming (N= 35, 15.1%) and others (N= 45, 19.4%).

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between kidnapping and posttraumatic stress disorder in Chikun Local Government of Kaduna State. This hypothesis was tested using Chi-Square test in table 2.

Table 2: Perceived Association between Kidnapping and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in Chikun Local Government of Kaduna State

VARIABLES	PTSD					TOTAL	X ²	SIG.
	NS	MS	MDS	HS	SS			
Heard of Kidnapping	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)		
YES	8(3.4)	75(32.3)	48(20.7)	27(11.6)	2(0.9)	160(69)		
NO	4(1.7)	29(12.5)	21(9.1)	17(7.3)	1(0.4)	72(31)	1.719	0.787
Total	12(5.2)	104(44.8)	69(29.7)	44(19)	3(1.3)	232(100)		

Sig. Level: $P > .05$, $df=4$

Table 2 shows the summary of Chi-Square test of the perceived association of kidnapping and PTSD. The result revealed that 160(69%) of the participants have heard of kidnapping, of which 75(32.3%) indicate mild symptom, 48(20.7%) indicate moderate symptom, 27(11.6%) indicate high symptom while 8(3.4%) indicate no symptom and 2(0.9%) indicate severe symptom situation. Also, the result revealed that 72(31%) of the participants have not heard of kidnapping, of which 29(12.5%) indicate mild symptom, 21(9.1%) indicate moderate symptom, 17(7.3%) indicate high symptom while 4(1.7%) indicate no symptom and 1(0.4%) indicate severe symptom situation. Generally, the result revealed that 44.8% were mildly symptomatic, 29.7% were moderately symptomatic and 19% highly symptomatic. Further analysis revealed that there is no significant difference in the perceived association of news of kidnapping and PTSD $X^2(4) = 1.719$, $P > 0.05$ in Chikun LGA of Kaduna State. In other words, the hypothesis was not confirmed in this study.

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant difference in age and posttraumatic stress disorders in Chikun Local Government of Kaduna State- Nigeria. This hypothesis was tested using Independent Sample t-test in tables 3 and 4.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Perceived Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Chikun Local Government of Kaduna State- Nigeria.

Age Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
18-23 years	78	18.81	6.063
24-29 years	66	20.39	7.903
30-35 years	57	20.07	7.211
36 years above	31	19.29	10.329
Total	232	19.63	7.533

Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviation scores of perceived PTSD in Chikun, Kaduna. The results revealed that, there is no significant difference in the mean scores of participants across age group in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna Stat as indicated in table 4, participants between age 24-35 years have their mean scores above 19.63 for perceived depression among Chikun residence meanwhile the difference was insignificant.

Table 4: Summary of ANOVA Results on Age and Depression

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	105.878	3	35.293		
Within Groups	13001.979	228	57.026	.619	.603
Total	13107.858	231			

Table 4 shows the summary results of the analysis of variance where it revealed that, there is no statistically significant; $F(3, 228) = 0.619, P > 0.05$ mean difference. Also, indicating that the mean difference among the participants reveal insignificant difference in the perceived depression across the age of participants. Therefore, the hypothesis was not confirmed in the study.

Discussion

The first hypothesis states that, there is a significance relationship between kidnapping and post-traumatic stress disorder in Chikun Local Government of Kaduna State. This hypothesis was tested using Chi-Square statistics. Result from the analysis carried out showed that there was no significant relationship between kidnapping and PTSD in Chikun Local Government of Kaduna.

This result does not support early findings on the significant relationship between kidnapping and PTSD. For instance, Wright, Talia, Broad-Bridge, Jamil, Lumley, Pole, Arnetz and Arnetz (2017) in their study on kidnapping and mental health among Iraqi refugees and the role of resilience, found that among those who had experienced kidnapping, more than one quarter were diagnosed with PTSD while those not kidnapped had less PTSD diagnosis. Similarly, Abamara and Dike (2018) found a significant relationship between kidnapping and PTSD.

No doubt, the nature and activities of kidnapping is likely to be a risk factor to people developing PTSD. However, the likely reason for this disparity in the outcome from the hypothesis tested and not supported by earlier findings may be the role of resilience in the lives of Africans and Nigerians in particular. Resilience simply refers to ability to bounce back, cope or adapt in the midst of adversity. Resilient people are quick to overcome experiences and news of kidnapping thus avoiding PTSD especially when they have personal and or environmental factors such as understanding family, positive community as well as healthy social and religious support network in the community. For others, the experience of kidnapping activities may expose to PTSD if they are not resilient or when mutual and positive family and community interactions and cooperation is lacking.

The second hypothesis in this study states that, "There is a significant difference in age and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in Chikun Local Government of Kaduna State- Nigeria. Independent sample T-test was used to test the hypothesis. Result from the test revealed there was no significant difference in age and posttraumatic stress disorders in Chikun Local Government of Kaduna State. The result outcome from the test is not supported by earlier findings of Kobayashi, Sledjeski, and Delahanty (2019); Lunney, Schnurr, and Cook (2014) who all found significant difference in age of their participants regarding PTSD. They found that PTSD is influenced by the age of the individual as younger adults between the ages of 18-24 are less likely to experience PTSD as compared to older adults within the ages of 55-65 years who are more likely to experience PTSD.

Outcome from this tested hypothesis showed that there was no significant difference in age and PTSD. However, age difference does influence or has a significant difference in PTSD as explained in the previous paragraph. The reason for the present finding therefore could be attributed to the reason that the bulk of participants who participated in the study were all young adults hence responded to the questionnaire in similar pattern, hence there was no significant age difference regarding PTSD.

Conclusion

The study examined the perception of public on kidnapping with the relation to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. A major reason for people having to experience of PTSD due to kidnapping activities could be as result of horrible experiences and information they may have heard as shared by victims who were abducted and later released. More so, depression may increase as a result of the perceived fear, worry and anxiety on where and how to get money to pay for ransom in the event on kidnapping. News about kidnapping no doubt leave a lasting negative impression on some individuals which in turn may expose them to PTSD. Nigerians go through a lot of psycho-social trauma and shock. Physical pains are being inflicted on victims by the abductors in most cases. Victims are depressed and they more often than not develop psychological problem if intervention is not brought to bear quickly. Both the victim and the family of the victim are financially stressed

out because of the huge amount of money which runs in millions that are usually demanded by abductors. Traumatic experiences leave an everlasting impact on an individual. Disastrous situations can change an individual, and mould them into a whole new person. A devastating event such as kidnapping impact on the individual in many ways thus the behaviour of a kidnapped victim differs greatly before and after the trauma. With the kidnapping there are many obstacles, and after the release there are even more difficulties to be faced. How an individual [victim] handles those effects and challenges all depends on their mind and effort to overcome them.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from the present study, below are the recommendations made by the researcher:

- i. **To the Family and Community:** Family and community ties and togetherness should be strengthened since it promotes resilience which in turn act as a buffer or immune to developing PTSD or depression. With resilience factors in the environment such the family and community support, people are more likely to overcome or cope in times of adversity and kidnapping in particularly rather than developing mental issues.
- ii. **To the Family:** Children whether males or females should be raised in similar way such that females like their male counterparts can stand the test of time even in the midst of adversity rather than developing symptoms of PTSD and depression in any little adverse situation.
- iii. **Community and Professionals:** People should talk to others or seek help from professionals like psychologists whenever they experience less or mild symptoms of psychological health issues rather than remaining in silence from where they might end up having PTSD, depression or other anxiety related disorders.

Implication of Findings

These findings have several implications for the public, the mental health professionals and the research community.

To the general public, the findings is a confirmation that people are most likely to develop psychological problems such as depression as result of kidnapping and other adverse activities going in the environment. However, with a strong family or community support as well as psychological services provided on time, they are likely to cope, adapt or overcome such psychological health problems.

REFERENCES

- Abamara, N. C., & Dike A. A., (2018). *Psychological impact of kidnapping: A case study of a victim in Anambra State Nigeria*.
- Ezeobi, G., Ehigiator, C., & Ozulumba, J. (2020). *This- day Newspaper*. 24th Feb. page 10, vol 25.
- Foa, E.B. (2005). The validation of a self-report measure of posttraumatic stress disorder: Posttraumatic Diagnostic Scale. *Psychological Assessment*, 9(4): 445-451.
- Foa, E.B., Riggs, D.S., Dancu, C.V., & Rothbaum, B.O. (1993). Reliability and validity of a brief instrument for assessing post-traumatic stress disorder. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 6, 459-473.
- Kobayashi, I., Sledjeski, E. M., & Delahanty, D. L. (2019). Gender and age interact to predict the development of posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms following a motor vehicle accident. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 11(3), 328–336.
- Lunney, C.A., Schnurr, P.P., & Cook, J.M. (2014). Comparison of clinician- and self- assessments of posttraumatic stress symptoms in older versus younger veterans *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 24, 144-151.
- Marmar, C.R., McCaslin, S. E., Metzler, T. J., Best, S., Weiss, D. S., Fagan, J., & Neylan, T. (2006). Predictors of posttraumatic stress in Police and Other First Responders. *Annual New York Academic Science*, 1071:1–18.
- Merriam-Webster Dictionary. (2014). *Kidnap*. Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/kidnap>.
- Pine, N. (2019). Trauma, Proximity and Developmental Psychopathology; The Effects of War and Terrorism on Children. *Neuro-psychopharmacology*; official publication of the *American College of Neuro- psychopharmacology*. 30.1781-92.
- Wright, A. M., Talia, Y. R., Aldhalimi, A., Broadbridge, C.L., Jamil, H., Lumley, M. A., Pole, N., Arnetz, B. B., & Arnetz J. E. (2017). Kidnapping and mental health in Iraqi Refugees: The role of resilience. *Journal of Immigration and Minor Health*. 19(1): 98–107.