

# KIDNAPPING AND RANSOM PAYMENT: SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATION FOR THE FAMILY IN CALABAR MUNICIPAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

BY

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## ABSTRACT

*The study examined kidnapping and ransom payment: socioeconomic implication for the family in Calabar Municipal Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. One null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study. Data were elicited with the aid of a structured questionnaire from 230 randomly selected respondents. Data were analyzed using simple percentage and the hypothesis was tested using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient at 0.01 level of significance with SPSS software version 23.0. The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between ransom induced kidnapping and socioeconomic wellbeing of the family. Also, it was found that the common causes of kidnapping in the area are poverty, unemployment, quick-money syndrome and moral decadence, weak law enforcement and security system, and political economy of the Niger Delta. The result showed that there is a significant relationship between ransom induced kidnapping and socioeconomic wellbeing of the family. The study recommended amongst other things that poverty alleviation programmes should be directed towards addressing poverty among the poor and unemployed youths rather than politicians using the programmes as compensation for party faithful. The programmes should be pro-poor (that is for the poor is meant for). Also, traditional and religious leaders should encourage the inculcation of moral values, contentment, respect for the sanctity of life and hospitality, communities/traditional rulers should stop rewarding people with questionable characters with chieftaincy titles.*

**Keywords:** *Kidnapping, random payment, socioeconomic wellbeing of the family, Nigeria*

## INTRODUCTION

Kidnapping is a global problem that affects countries all over the world from the economically advanced nations of the West to the economically underdeveloped nations of Africa, Asia, and beyond. Like most West African countries, kidnapping of all manner of persons has gained ascendancy in Nigerian space. The term kidnapping has become

notorious, putrid, and nauseating in the ears of virtually everyone (Kwanga, Iormanger, Udoo & Shabu, 2022; Olofin, 2020; Ngwama, 2014; Nwagbara, Abia, Uyang, & Ejeje, 2012). The word 'kid' meaning child and 'nab' means to snatch (Bassey, Nkpoyen, & Uyang, 2014; Kwanga, Iormanger, Udoo & Shabu, 2022; Gongs, Famave, Maxwell & Annagu, 2021; Ishaya, James & Gadu, 2019). The word

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kidnapping has been in use since 1673 to mean the practice of stealing of children for use as servants or labourers in American colonies. Today, the act of kidnapping has completely gone beyond the abduction of kids. It tentatively could be seen as illegal capture or detention of a person or people against their will, regardless of age (Ayuk, Owan, & Uyang, 2013; Gongs, Famave, Maxwell & Annagu, 2021).

Asuquo (2009) cited in Inyang and Abraham (2013) noted that the term “kidnapping” is difficult to define with precision, because it varies from state to state and jurisdiction to jurisdiction. He noted further that kidnapping is 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. It is a restriction of someone else liberty which violates the provision of freedom of movement as enshrined in the constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria (Inyang & Abraham, 2013; Uyang, Nwagbara, Undelikwo, & Eneji, 2013). Abraham (2010) cited in Oketa (2018), argued that kidnapping is an act of seizing, taking away and keeping a person in custody either by force or fraud. It also includes snatching and seizing of a person in order to collect a ransom in return or settle some scores of disagreement among people (Uyang, Festus, & Bassey, 2016; Oketa, 2018). Kidnapping is the act of seizing and detaining or carrying away a person by unlawful force or by fraud, and often with a demand for ransom. For an act to be deemed kidnapping, it must involve coercive movement of a victim from one place to another, detention or seizure of person be it a child or an adult. Kidnapping has been described as abducting or capturing away of a person intentionally to deprive them of personal freedom. It comprises capturing and detaining an individual against his or her will, usually in an extension of other criminal intentions. Kidnapping equally involves illegal or unlawful taking away of a person or a group of persons, and keeping him or them as prisoner(s) for pecuniary or other selfish gains in return (Nkpoyen, Bassey, & Uyang, 2014; Olofin, 2020; Ibrahim & Ahmad, 2020; Ishaya, James &

Gadu, 2019).

According to Ngwama (2014) cited in Kwanga, Iormanger, Udoo and Shabu (2022), the first act of kidnapping in Nigeria started in 2006 when the militants of the Niger Delta took hostages to protest the inequality in the region. According to the militants, Nigeria is built at the expense of the region which serves as the cash cow for the whole country. These kidnappings can either be for financial or political gain. Since then, kidnapping has spread to most parts of the country, especially South-Eastern and South-Southern regions of Nigeria (Uyang, Ejeje, & Aniah, 2016; Uyang, Ojong-Ejeh, & Ejeje, 2017). The targets are no longer oil worker or foreigners alone; but anyone whose family might pay a ransom can be targeted. The safety of persons in Nigeria and their property cannot be guaranteed due to the near daily incidence of kidnapping (Kwanga, Iormanger, Udoo & Shabu, 2022; Obarisiagbon & Aderinto, 2018; Ishaya, James & Gadu, 2019). Today, from the Niger Delta region, kidnapping has spread to all regions of Nigeria. kidnapping is a serious problem which is being faced in Nigeria every day. It has now become a regular thing to hear news about kidnapping of people in the country, one of the biggest case was the one which brought up the “Bring Back our Girls” campaign – it was the time when the whole world heard about the problem of kidnapping in Nigeria. It has become an alarming phenomenon of great concern in Nigeria that has qualified the entity Nigeria as a failing or failed state (Ugal, Nwagbara, & Uyang, 2011; Ishaya, James & Gadu, 2019).

In Kaduna and the wider North-West region of Nigeria, kidnapping for ransom has become increasingly rampant, particularly on the road to the capital, Abuja, where armed attacks have thrived. Four Western tourists, two Americans, and two Canadians were kidnapped in by gunmen in an ambush that left two of their police escorts dead (Emeka, Ayuk, Udiba, & Uyang, 2016; The Guardian, 2019 cited in Kwanga, Iormanger, Udoo & Shabu, 2022). In 2014, more than 270 school girls were kidnapped or abducted by Boko Haram from the town of Chibok, prompting the global

#BringBackOurGirls campaign# (The Guardian, 2019 cited in Kwanga, Iormanger, Udoo & Shabu, 2022). In December 2020, kidnapped school children from Katsina state were released after ransom was allegedly paid to the kidnapers before their release (Uyang, Akwaji, & Ezikeudu, 2015; Kwanga, Iormanger, Udoo & Shabu, 2022).

According to Efezomor (2017), cited in Olofin (2020), the recorded cases of kidnapping in Nigeria shows 1,353 cases occurred in 2016 while the Nigerian police records revealed that in 2017, kidnapers and hostage keepers got N955 million and about N2.4 billion between 2015 and 2017. The then Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Adamu stated that 685 Nigerians were kidnapped between January and April 2019. During the period, 1.91 billion naira was demanded by the kidnapers while 181.33 million was eventually paid as ransom by relatives to secure release of the victims (Akwaji, Uyang, & Abonor 2017; Olofin, 2020).

Adetuba (2016) cited in Oketa (2018), maintained that no fewer than seven people, including five foreign expatriates were reportedly kidnapped by militants in Calabar. They were said to be on their way to the Lafarge Holcim plant in Mfamosing to work. In the process of the kidnap, a local driver was fatally shot by the kidnapers. In October 2009, kidnapers in Niger-Delta region of Nigeria took six Russians hostage. The above scenarios have shown that kidnapping has now turned into a business venture and a daily affair in Nigeria generally and Southern Nigeria in particular including Calabar Municipal.

### **Research hypothesis**

There is no significant relationship between ransom induced kidnapping and socioeconomic wellbeing of the family in Calabar Municipal Local Government Area of Cross River State

### **Causes of kidnapping**

The common causes of kidnapping in Nigeria are identified and discussed below:

- i) Poverty
- ii) Unemployment

- iii) Quick-money syndrome and moral decadence
- iv) Weak law enforcement and security system
- v) Political economy of the Niger Delta

### **Poverty**

Poverty is a multi-dimensional and complex phenomenon, encompassing not only material deprivation, but also other forms of deprivation, such as unemployment, ill-health and lack of education, vulnerability, powerlessness and social exclusion (Mukhtar, Mukhtar & Abdullahi, 2014 cited in John, 2020). This definition link the concept of poverty and unemployment as well as other aspects of poverty which have serious consequences on the living condition of the people and consequently on the socio-economic and political security of a nation which may prompt some of the youths into the activity of kidnapping (John, 2020).

### **Unemployment**

Inyang (2009) cited in Ibrahim and Ahmad (2020), argued that unemployment problem is one of the driving factors deteriorating kidnapping, as always the wise saying “an idle mind is the devil's workshop”. In Nigeria, many youths search for non-existing jobs out of frustration. Inyang (2009) cited in Ibrahim and Ahmed (2020), argued further that negative alternatives, often develop on the mind of the individuals affected with such threat, which also couple with mounting responsibilities to tackle, they are also poverty afflicted and usually find comfort in heinous crimes such as kidnapping in the sense that numerous non-disabled individuals, school drop-out and graduates roam around the streets both unemployed (Ugwuoke, 2011 cited in Ibrahim & Ahmed, 2020).

### **Quick-money syndrome and moral decadence**

The syndrome of “get-rich-quick and moral decadence” had been identified as a causative factor of kidnapping (Dodo, 2010 cited in Ibrahim & Ahmad, 2020). In Nigeria,

nobody investigates how people acquire their wealth, a poor person today might show up rich the next day, and unquestionably free in the society that was craving for quick-fortune. Boldly enough, such people get rewarded with chieftaincy titles in their communities, thereby instilling immoral decisions as transparent to the Nigerian youths, and such image triggered the youths to think that one can elevate respect from illegal earnings. Hence, they embark on heinous crimes such as kidnapping to portrayed and reflect the government officials that boldly looted the country's treasure (Inyang, 2009; cited in Ibrahim & Ahmad, 2020). They are also sometimes above the law and kidnap and secure ransom without fear, which had turn disastrous that foreigners, businessmen/women, and successful people shadowing under the government umbrella suffers the menace (Ering, Omono, & Uyang, 2014; Ene, 2018 cited in Ibrahim & Ahmad, 2020).

#### **Weak law enforcement and security system**

The Nigerian police personnel lack resources to cope with criminal activities. Also, corruption within the police and other law enforcement agencies equally affect crime prevention. Hence, kidnappers know their chances of them being caught is slim. Nigeria's security agencies is also largely incompetent and complicit in this regard (Nkpoyen, Uyang, Kenneth, Levi, & Udoh, 2021; Ishaya, James & Gadu, 2019).

#### **Political economy of the Niger Delta**

Lack of true federalism has contributed to the unequitable sharing of revenue in Nigeria, which has denied the people of Niger Delta the fair share of the national resources to finance community development projects. It is as a result of this inequity in resources allocation and systemic injustice (subjecting the people to economic hardship and misery) that resulted to the agitation for resource control and youth militancy with kidnapping. This has degenerated into a political and national security problem and could cripple the economy if the root causes of the agitation are not resolved. As the problem of kidnapping deepens and the key economic indicators worsen, foreign and local

investors would move their resources elsewhere (Nkpoyen, Bassey, & Uyang, 2015; Ishaya, James & Gadu, 2019).

#### **Features of kidnapping**

Ezemenaka (2018), cited in Gongs, Famave, Maxwell and Annagu (2021), identified the features of kidnapping to include but not limited to:

- i. Coercion and threat to inflict bodily harm and maiming, sometimes murder
- ii. Relocation of victims to some unknown location (hide outs or secret bush camps), for thorough isolation, where unsuspecting or accidental disclosure is not very easy: preferably deep forests or a completely isolated property in remote locality.
- iii. Victims are strip-out, restrained and restricted from access to basic social liberties, such as: accessing or participating in communicative activities.
- iv. Physical and mental torture: This causes traumatic depression, anxiety, fear and most times post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD), which may last a life time.
- v. Threat to the continued peaceful existence to abductee.

#### **Ransom induced kidnapping and socioeconomic wellbeing of the family**

Kidnapping for ransom happens when a kidnapper abducts or kidnaps a person or persons take them hostage in order to receive payment from family, employer or the state in exchange for victim(s) release. This type of kidnapping is the most highlighted in the media, and occurs very often in highbrow areas and suburbs. It has become one of the most, lucrative and sinister enterprises in Nigeria and spontaneously escalating with time (Gongs, Famave, Maxwell & Annagu, 2021). According to Okenyi (2009), cited in Diara (2010), the ugly incident of kidnapping for ransom in Nigeria took its root from the activities of the militate

youths in the Niger Delta region within the present decade arising from the controversial issue of resource control. The activities of the restive youths is to kidnap employee of oil companies, especially the foreigners, and then establish contacts with their employers to demand for mouth warming ransom before the release of their helpless victim(s).

One of the contemporary social problems in Nigeria today is the series of kidnapping for ransom that have assumed an unprecedented dimension with no end in sight despite the existence of the criminal justice system which ought to checkmate it with resultant effect on the family since they have to source for money for ransom (Obarisiagbon & Aderinto, 2018; Ayuk, Tangban, Omang, Uyang, Omono, & Nsor, 2021). Zannoni (2003), cited in Ibrahim and Mukhtar (2017), argued that kidnapping is a business involving a demand for ransom which may vary considerably, depending on the type of criminal involved and the victim's personnel status. He argued further that in every kidnapping, a form of economics is involved and that the status of the victim is of significance in the payment of ransom. Uzorma and Nwanegbo-Ben (2014), cited in Ibrahim and Mukhtar (2017), noted that kidnapping for ransom 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 with negative effect on their income.

Kidnapping has assumed a business status for criminals who kidnap for ransom. This has remained one of the greatest drawbacks to investment in Nigeria. kidnapping and abduction have assumed a frightening proportion, thus, hindering productivity with significant effect in family income. Due to kidnapping for ransom in Nigeria, factories are closing up, people no longer visit their villages, and socioeconomic activities are grinding to a halt with seriously negative effect on the family (Ishaya, James & Gadu, 2019; Uyang, Omono, & Aboh, 2021). Kidnappers have various detention camps in different states across the country, kidnap human beings principally to extract ransom from their helpless relatives.

Sometimes, they take in millions of naira from their wealthy victims and hundreds of thousands naira from the middle class (Oketa, 2018; Nkpoyen, Uyang, Ekaluo, & Kenneth, 2020). Many people kidnapped paid a lot of money as ransom. This situation affects both state and household economy. Some people usually went as far as borrowing to pay for ransom for their relatives kidnapped (Oketa, 2018). Inyang and Ubong (2013), cited in Oketa (2018), pointed out that in many cases, it is often the breadwinners of families that are usually targeted, the implication is always felt particularly within the family, whereby members of such families will have to feed themselves and adjust to their normal daily activities, until they secure the release of the victim. If the victim is a businessman or woman the business will suffer, if he or she is a civil servant or an artisan, his or her place of work be affected adversely (Inyang & Ubong, 2013; cited in Oketa, 2018).

Sometimes, kidnappers collect money and still kill their victims especially if the victim(s) recognized them thereby impoverishing the family (Udoh, 2012). This has negatively affected socioeconomic wellbeing and also increased other social vices among family members in particular and society generally (Okorie-Ajah, Nwokeoma & Okpan, 2018). According to Inyang and Abraham (2013), the nation loses a lot of revenue when expatriates working in the multinational oil companies are kidnapped for ransom. Out of fear, people tend to stay clear from the working environment and the adverse effect is always on the economic and socioeconomic wellbeing among family members.

Most kidnap cases are never reported to the police authority for the fear of murder of the victims hence most families prefer to pay ransom than losing one of its own. For instance, in Kano, N80 million was allegedly paid to kidnappers for the release of Kano-base multi-millionaire businessman, without a recourse to the police authorities, an industrialists in Nnewi paid N70 million to regain his freedom from his captors, another multi-millionaire businessman was kidnapped and after he

allegedly paid a ransom without recourse from the police (Umejei, 2010; cited in Ngwama, 2014). The Associated press in its report of August 27, 2008 stated that “more than 200 foreigners have been kidnapped in two years of heightened violence across Nigeria restive South, the victims are normally released unharmed after a ransom is paid (Ngwama, 2014). The families and associates of victims are knocked by intractable trauma and financial involvement for ransom and the attendant effect on socioeconomic wellbeing of the family is devastating (Kupoluyi, 2009 cited in Ngwama, 2014).

On 21<sup>st</sup> September 2015, Chief Olu Falea, former secretary to the government of the federation and presidential candidate was kidnapped on his 77<sup>th</sup> birthday. Falea was kidnapped on his farm in Ilado, along Igbatoro road, in Akure, the capital city of Ondo state and was only freed 72 hours later after his family paid 5 million naira for ransom. In May 2019, Professor Olayinka Adegbehingbe, an orthopaedic surgeon at the Obafemi Awolwo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, was kidnapped around Ikoyi/Apomu junction on the Ibadan-Ife expressway, while returning from Lagos. A ransom of 5.04 million naira was paid by his family before he was released. Also, a 60 year old traditional chief in Ibokun, the headquarters of Obokun Local Government Area of Osun State, Dunsin Amusa, was kidnapped along the Ilare/Esá Odo road with a woman simply identified as Tayo. Their abductors collected N1 million ransom contributed by groups and individuals families in Ibokun before the victims regain their freedom. Religious leaders are not spared in the nefarious act either. In June 2018, some armed kidnappers kidnapped a Methodist presbyter in Osun State, Very Rev. Kayode Akande, and two other church leaders along the Iwo-Osogbo road. They also paid an unspecified ransom before they were released (Olofin, 2020).

According to Efizomor (2017) cited in Okorie-Ajah, Nwokeoma and Okpan (2018), kidnappers kidnapped a catholic priest in-charge of St. Patrick Catholic Church, Eku in Ethiope East Local Government Area of Delta State,

Rev. Fr. Joseph Oghenekevwe Ojakorotu and demanded for a ransom of N10million. The mother of an African Independent Television (AIT) editor, Steve Ayua was kidnapped and released after a ransom was paid (Daily Trust, 2019 Sept. 23, cited in Kwanga, Iormanger, Udoo & Shabu, 2022). In addition to many other reported cases causing a whole lot of damages not only to their victims but also to the socioeconomic activities of the region as residents and traders alike no longer feel secure in what used to be a conducive environment for businessmen, farming and other socioeconomic activities (Kwanga, Iormanger, Udoo & Shabu, 2022). The campaign for Democracy (CD) cited in Nnamani (2015) was told that a very rich man who was kidnapped in Nnewi after paying a ransom of N20 million to buy freedom for himself went into partnership with the kidnappers to catch other wealthy men into their trap. He was said to be collecting a share of the proceeds. His deal was revealed when his group kidnapped and killed Chinese men working under Innoson Motors group company (Kwanga, Iormanger, Udoo & Shabu, 2022).

The economic implication 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 government level, the economic effects of kidnapping involve the expenditure on security and security agencies (Ishaya, James & Gadu, 2019). Much money has been spent on ransom payments. The former Inspector General of Police, Sir Mike Okiro, disclosed that 15 billion naira have been paid as ransom to kidnappers between 2006 and 2009 (Inyang & Abraham, 2013; Nnamani, 2015; Ishaya, James & Gadu, 2019). The large sum of money spent as ransom payment could affect the family and the state economy positively, as it could have been use for investment and socioeconomic developments (Ishaya, James & Gadu, 2019).

## **Theoretical framework**

### **Social disorganization theory**

Social disorganization theory is associated with Chicago school of sociology specifically, Thomas and Znaniecki (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003). The theory explained that a person's thinking processes and attitudes are constructed by the interactive situations and behaviour. Social disorganization takes place in an area where social institutions, norms and values are no longer functioning. It presents an absence of normative constraint, a state of anything goes and hence crime like kidnapping flourishes. On the other hand, order exists when there is a high degree of internal binding of individuals as members of society and institution in a conventional society. This cohesion consists hugely of agreement about goals that are worth striving for and how to behave and how not behave in the society (Oriola, 2004).

The implication of the theory for the study is that criminal behaviour such as kidnapping thrives well in a disorganized society. The theory argued that certain environment or geographical area especially cities or towns are prone to criminal behaviour including kidnapping. This could be as a result of an influx of moment of people to the environment, cities or towns due to the

economic and social potentials of the area. Social change induced by colonialism, industrialization, globalization and even urbanization, have precipitated criminal activities such as kidnapping for ransom in the cities and towns, Calabar municipal is not exception.

### **Methodology**

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire administered to respondents in Calabar Municipal Local Government Area, Cross River State. The selection of the sample for the study was done through simple random sampling technique. To ensure randomization, balloting method was employed. The five areas selected were: University of Calabar, Marian market, State Housing Estate, Federal Housing Estate, House of Assembly quarter. These were the clusters of the study, out of the five clusters of the study, a total of 230 respondents participated in the study. Fifty (50) respondents were selected from each cluster except for House of Assembly quarter where thirty (30) respondents were selected due to the readily availability of respondents for the study which formed the total of two hundred and thirty (230) in all.

Analysis and discussion of findings  
General description of data

**Table 1**  
**Distribution of respondents' socio-demographic data**

Variables	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	125	54.35
Female	105	45.65
Total	230	100
<b>Age</b>		
Under 20 years	39	16.96
20-30	65	28.26
31-40	74	32.17
41-above	52	22.61
Total	230	100
<b>Educational level</b>		
Tertiary	67	29.13
Secondary	98	42.61
Primary	40	17.39
No education	25	10.87
Total	230	100
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	75	32.61
Married	102	44.35
Divorce	30	13.04
Widow	23	10.00
Total	230	100
<b>Occupation</b>		
Civil servant	70	30.43
Politician	40	17.40
Trader	45	19.56
Self employed	45	19.57
Unemployed	10	4.34
Religious leader	20	8.70
Total	230	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic data of respondents. In terms of sex, 54.35 % (N = 125) were male, while 45.65 % (N = 105) were female. This implies that male were more in the sample than female. Respondents below 20

years were 16.96 % (N = 39), 20-30 were 28.26 % (N = 65), 31-40 were 32.17 % (N = 74), while 41 and above were 22.61 % (N = 52). This implies that highest number of respondents who participated in the

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study belong to age bracket 31-40. For educational level, 29.13 % (N = 67) had acquired tertiary education, 42.61 % (N = 98) has secondary education, 17.39 % (N = 40) had primary education, while 10.87 % (N = 25) had no primary education. The implication is that the respondents with secondary education were the majority in the sample and readily available to fill the questionnaire. In terms of marital status, 32.61 % (N = 75) were single, 44.35 % (N = 102) were married, 13.04 % (N = 30) were divorce, while 10 % (N = 23) were widow. This shows that greatest number of respondents were married men and women. In the area of occupation, 30.43 % (N= 70) were civil servant, 17.40 % (N = 40) were politician, 19.56 % (N =

45) were traders, 19.57 % (N = 45) were self employed, while 8.70 % (N = 20) were religious leaders. This means that majority of the respondents were civil servants. The reason could also be that Cross River State in general and Calabar Municipal Local Government Area in particular is dominated by civil servant.

**Result**  
**Hypothesis**

There is no significant relationship between ransom induced kidnapping and socioeconomic wellbeing of the family in Calabar Municipal Local Government Area of Cross River State.

Table 2

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient of the relationship between ransom - induced kidnapping and socioeconomic well being of the family

		Ransom - induced	
		Kidnapping (X)	Socioeconomic well being of the family (Y)
Ransom - induced kidnapping(X)	Pearson Correlation	1	.971**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	230	230
Socioeconomic well-being of the family (Y)	Pearson Correlation	.971**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	230	230

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 shows strong positive correlation coefficient value of (r = 0.971 and p < 0.000) between ransom induced kidnapping and socioeconomic well being of the family. The p-value or significant value of 0.000 is less than the critical value of 0.01 at 0.01 level of significance. With this result, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between ransom - induced kidnapping and socioeconomic well being of the family is therefore rejected and the alternative hypothesis is retained. Hence, there is a significant relationship between ransom - induced kidnapping and socioeconomic well

being of the family in Calabar Municipal Local Government Area of Cross River State.

**Discussion**

From the study, the results in Table 2 shows that ransom induced kidnapping has a significant relationship with socioeconomic wellbeing of the family. This view is supported by Obarisiagbon and Aderinto (2018), they observed that one of the contemporary social problems in Nigeria today is the series of kidnapping for ransom that have assumed an unprecedented dimension with no end in sight despite the existence of the criminal justice

system which ought to checkmate it with resultant effect on the family since they have to source for money for ransom. The findings are in line with Oketa (2018), who averred that many people kidnapped paid a lot of money as ransom. He averred further that this situation affects both state and household economy. He maintained that some people usually went as far as borrowing to pay for ransom for their relatives kidnapped.

The result is consistent with Udoh (2012), he argued that sometimes, kidnappers collect money and still kill their victims especially if the victim(s) recognized them. The findings are also in agreement with Kupoluyi (2009) cited in Ngwama (2014), he noted that families and associates of victims are knocked by intraceable trauma and financial involvement for ransom and the attendant effect on socioeconomic wellbeing of the family is devastating.

### Conclusion and recommendations

Kidnapping generally and for ransom payment in particular is endemic in the Nigerian society and it has adverse effect on the socioeconomic wellbeing of the family as well as on the socioeconomic development of the country. There are various causes of kidnapping, but this study has identified poverty, unemployment, quick-money syndrome and moral decadence, weak law enforcement and security system, and political economy of the Niger Delta.

From the foregoing, the following recommendations are made;

- i) Poverty alleviation programmes should be directed towards addressing poverty among the poor and unemployed youths rather than politicians using the programmes as compensation for party faithful. The programmes should be pro-poor (that is for the poor is meant for).
- ii) Government and other wealthy individuals in the country should as a matter of urgency build industries for the teeming unemployed youths.

- iii) Traditional and religious leaders should encourage the inculcation of moral values, contentment, respect for the sanctity of life and hospitality. Also communities/traditional rulers should stop rewarding people with questionable characters with chieftaincy titles.
- iv) The government should recruit more personnel into the law enforcement agencies and equipped them adequately. Also, Nigerian navy should be properly equipped with good firing power and communication gadgets. All the law enforcement agencies should retrain their intelligence unit, empower with efficient hardware to ensure effective security system.
- v) Government should adequately and promptly resolve the problem in the Niger Delta. A harsh environment will produce a harsh way of thought and doing things (Ishaya, James & Gadu, 2019).
- vi) Kidnapped victim(s) family(ies) should delay a little longer or quite the ransom payment to the kidnappers because it often serves as motivation for the kidnappers. Effective and well equipped anti-hostage/kidnapping agencies should be set up by the government in order give stiff resistance to the kidnapped (Inyang & Abraham, 2013).

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