



# **RETHINKING THE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM IN NIGERIA**

*Edited by:* **O.A. Bamisaye (Ph.D)**  
**M.K.O. Alimi (Ph.D)**

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*Preface*

This book of reading addresses various issues, problems, challenges and hopes of ethically sacrosanct leadership patterns and governance system in the polity of Nigeria's 21<sup>st</sup> century political system. Proper care was taken to ensure the breakdown of the subject matter into easily internalisable categories. The exemplifications are apt to keep the general readership at convenience with the concepts and ideas articulated in the book. Authors opined that unless Nigeria presents and practices corrupt free, strong and accountable leadership with impeccable governance system, Nigerian power blocs may not be able to achieve globally competitive nation building projects capable of providing employment, wealth, equality and good governance.

Chapter one appraises State-Local Relations in Nigeria using a theoretical perspective. The authors are of the opinion that the super-ordinate subordinate state-Local relations accounted for ineffectiveness and inefficiency of Local government in service delivery at the grassroots. Chapter two examines the efficacy of Public-Private-Partnership in promoting rural development in Nigeria. The contributors established intellectual lacuna, the aspects that have little been explored and largely uncharted viz: PPP as a strategy for the promotion of good governance that supports transparency, probity, rule of law, responsiveness and accountability as well as PPP as a catalyst to rapid rural development. They concluded that for Nigeria to regain the commanding heights of the Nigeria's economy, we must synergies. Chapter three deals with the nexus between Local government and service delivery and the authors found out that the Local governments that are supposed to be nearest in service delivery are only so in physical existence but farer to the people in the provision of infrastructure, employment, wealth and security at the grassroots; ostensibly due to unethical behaviours and practices. While chapter four explores rural deprivation as the bane of national development.

Chapter five appraises democracy and national development with the authors' opinions that democracy has become antithetical to development in Nigeria, and unless we change our attitudes and orientation, our leaders and societies shall continue to be sagging and sapping economically. In chapter six, the role of the state in de-bureaucratizing the public sector was

examined. Chapter seven discusses state symmetry as a viable option against Federal dominance in Nigeria. Authors noted that the numerical supremacy of the states is enough to liberate the latter from the former's discretionary powers on viable sources of taxable areas of income. Chapter eight looks at public sector performance in Nigeria, using Osun State as a case for analyses, but found out that the performance is far below expectation owing largely to visionless leaders and insensitive followers. Worse still, chapter nine appraises one of the malaise in Nigeria's attempt at building a virile nation, that is kidnapping as a variant of terrorism in Nigeria. While chapter ten attempts a comparative study of Local government systems in Nigeria and United States of America (USA), authors noted that Local governments in Nigeria, ours constitute liabilities while that of USA are development oriented because they evolved naturally from various communities and are autonomous in resources.

Chapter eleven looks at Leadership styles in Nigerian Universities that need overhauling and surgicalization. Again, chapter twelve discusses national resources as the major source of Border dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon, in which contributors noted that resource dependent nations will have their political landscape inundated, suffused with and deeply immersed in spectrum of recurring complex conflicts ranging from political, sociological, economic, military, administrative, ecological, global, psychological and legal generating factors. Whereas, the less resource-reliant nations will be peaceful and ensure sustainable development. Chapter thirteen deals with Labour unrest in Nigerian Universities: Challenges and way forward. Also, chapter fourteen harps on Small Businesses as inevitable option for job creation and self-reliance in Nigeria. Authors are of the view that, unless micro, small and medium scale enterprises are genuinely promoted, unemployment, poverty, insecurity, infrastructure decay and deficit will continue unabated. Chapter fifteen examines the impact of electricity distribution on economic growth in Nigeria while chapter sixteen looks at resource management practices in Nigerian Universities. Chapter seventeen deals with Conflict management in organizations, analyzing various strategies to stem the tide of rat race for political opportunism.

*List of Contributors***Bamisaye, O.A. Ph.D**

Bamisaye is a Professor of Political Science. He teaches political science courses in the Department of Political Science, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, a onetime Head of Department of Political Science, OAU and currently the Adjunct Provost, College of Postgraduate Studies, Oduduwa University, Ipetumodu, Ile-Ife.

**Ezeanyika, S.E. Ph.D**

Dr. Ezeanyika is a Professor of Political and Social Economy, Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Imo State University, Owerri, Imo State; Nigeria. He teaches political science and social economy.

**Ajagun, S.O. Ph.D**

Dr. Ajagun was once the Head of Department of Public Administration, an Associate Professor/Reader of Public Administration, once a postgraduate seminar coordinator, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State. He teaches public administration

**Aiya, Fidelis Ph.D**

Dr Aiya is the current Head, Department of Public Administration, an Associate Professor/Reader of Public Administration, he teaches Public Administration.

**Oboh, Joseph. Ph.D**

Dr. Oboh is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Public Administration, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State. He teaches Public Administration.

**Alimi, M.K.O. Ph.D**

Dr. Alimi is the current Dean of Student Affairs and Head of Department of Public Administration at Oduduwa University, Ipetumodu,

Ile-Ife. He teaches Research Methodology, Politics and Problems of the African Union and Technology in Public Administration..

**Isiramen, I.E. Ph.D**

Dr. Isiramen is the current Deputy Registrar, School of Postgraduate Studies, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State.

**Raji Shittu. Ph.D**

Dr. Raji is a Lecturer at the Centre for Peace and Strategic Studies, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. He teaches government policies, peace and conflict studies as well as strategic studies.

**Uche, C.I.N. Ph.D**

Dr. Uche is the current acting Provost, College of Management and Social Sciences, Oduduwa University Ipetumodu, Ile-Ife, He teaches Local Government administration, Public Personnel Management and Industrial and Labour Relations.

**Erigbe, Patience A.**

Dr. Erigbe is currently the Head, Department of Business Administration where she teaches Business Management and Office Management.

**Nofiu, S.O.A. Ph.D**

Dr. Nofiu is a Lecturer in the Department of Public Administration, where he teaches Local Government Administration, Public Administration and Inter-governmental relations.

**Hanafi, D.I.**

Dr. Hanafi is a Lecturer in the Department of Economics, Oduduwa University where he teaches Statistics and Economics.

**Akintunde Patrick A. Ph.D**

Dr. Akintunde teaches Marketing of Financial Services, Ethics of

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## *Chapter Nine*

### **Kidnapping as a Variant of Terrorism in Nigeria**

*Erigbe, Patience. A.*

#### **Introduction**

One of the primary responsibilities of every government is protection of lives and property in any sovereign state. This is a constitutional stipulation that has been acknowledged worldwide through the ages. This ascription is further entrenched in the fundamental right to freedom. In several societies, irrespective of their socio-economic status and stage of political development, the government puts in place statutory provisions for the protection, defence and safety of citizens. This is the major reason for the engagement of the armed forces and police. Despite these provisions, the level of criminality has not abated.

With increase in population, advancement of technology and explosion of information, new variants of crime have emerged as a threat to security. The Nigerian society in particular is confronted with a series of hitherto unfamiliar security threats. One of such threat is kidnapping. This chapter examines this unusual phenomenon, its emergence and spread from the sociological perspective.

#### **Kidnapping as a Criminal Phenomenon**

In Europe during the early 1980s and 1990s, kidnapping was politically motivated. Kidnappers had specific objectives either against the government or an identified group. In order to secure the freedom of victims, negotiations were initiated by an intermediary as jointly agreed. Kidnapping was never a feature of the socio-cultural tradition of the Nigerian society. Kidnapping was only then a foreign news item as it had been entrenched in Europe, the Middle East and elsewhere.

A major rampant social problem that threatened the security of

lives in Nigeria between 1970 and the early 2000s was armed robbery. The government embarked on several measures one of which was the establishment of the Anti-Robbery Unit of the Nigeria Police. Another measure was the public execution of convicted armed robbers by firing squad. Overtime, other life-threatening social problems evolved among which are suicide bombing, militancy, arson, terrorism and kidnapping (Adelekan, 2015). These devastating acts were alien to Nigeria between 1960 and 1999. What is currently assuming a new dimension in the Nigerian society is kidnapping, which is a rapidly growing phenomenon. The extent to which school children have become victims of kidnapping has made it a security threat to schools and parents in particular.

As the society develops and its population grows, a number of socio-economic ills suddenly begin to emerge. For developing countries, such socio-economic problems are the products of poverty, ignorance, government insensitivity, unemployment and depression (Todaro and Smith, 2011). Nigeria has recorded an increasing spate of kidnapping cases in less than 5 years. Indeed, the spread of kidnapping to several states across the country has made it a national socio-economic concern to both the government and law-abiding members of the populace. Several states in Nigeria, including Anambra, Enugu, Abia, Rivers, Delta, Kaduna, Bauchi, Ogun and Lagos have had cases of kidnapping recorded. In Delta State, expatriate workers were the target of kidnappers. Some economic inadequacies must have compelled some Nigerians to think of engagement and active participation in kidnapping as an economic option for survival. Kidnapping is not only a crime because of the brutality applied in the process, but among others, it involves tormenting the victims into a state of psychological trauma. In some other cases, victims lose their lives.

Kidnapping is a forceful abduction of an individual, violating the individual's right to freedom and privacy. It is a despicable act, viewed as an act of wickedness and a crime against humanity. Kidnappers are labeled as criminals who threaten the peaceful co-existence of members of the society. Consequently, kidnapping creates a situation of insurgency. The gravity of kidnapping tends to have redefined its modern classification as terrorism. In

times, terrorism was restricted to violence directed at making government concede to a political aim or objective of a group (Odita, and 2017). It was hitherto a tactical political weapon used by a group in relation to government's policy, plan, clout or stance.

In the same sense, it had been used in the past to compel government to release rebels, war prisoners and arrested members of a dissident group, seen as fighting a cause, contrary to government's stance. However, changes in the socio-political environment and the dynamics of international relations have infused extended meaning(s) into terrorism (Raphael, 2016). In modern times, terrorism is being pursued for economic gains or to achieve certain objects by an identified group. It implies that elements of terrorism are acts that oppose peace, infuse fear and extort gains from unsuspecting individuals.

Kidnapping is programmed to precision by kidnappers, having gathered sufficient information and made provisions for its execution. It is meticulously planned and executed. It entails prior surveillance and gathering of information about the routine of the target victim, victim's location and movement. Indeed, timing of kidnapping is a critical factor that can either jeopardize or facilitate the kidnapping operation. Kidnappers are also wary of security forces. Consequently, they are armed and ready both to defend themselves and to kill.

#### **Demographic Frame of Kidnappers**

Who are the kidnappers? Kidnapping requires courage, agility, physical fitness, mental alertness, swiftness and ability to handle dangerous life-threatening weapons. These attributes can only help to trace the category of people involved in kidnapping. Consideration is thus given to only two physically active groups in this instance. These are the youth and adults of the age range between 27 years and 40 years. Perhaps individuals up to the age of 45 years may be included by reason of physical fitness and inclination towards criminality. Adults, who are 50 years old and above, are excluded. They may not have the physical fitness, agility, swiftness and ability to handle dangerous weapons for such a willful and obnoxious act as

kidnapping.

Women are also excluded from the category of kidnappers by virtue of their vulnerability. Their physical weakness is a strong argument in their favour. As such, they may not be able to absorb the rigorous process of the kidnapping operation. In terms of physical strength, the male gender is a plausible participant. From the several arrests made by the police in Nigeria, all the culprits were male, although in about two other separate cases, two female suspects were paraded.

### Theory of Deviance

Considering the criminal nature of kidnapping, the theory of deviance suffices. Any individual who commits a crime behaves contrary to the laws and expectations of society. Consequently, such individuals are labeled as deviants. The concept of deviance is reference to those activities and forms of behavior which violate the cultural norms on any particular social group or society. Robert K. Merton argued that deviance is not based on the personality of an individual but conditioned by culture and societal structure (Allison, 2016). Inference from Merton's contribution to the theory of deviance reveals that where much emphasis is placed on financial success and relatively less importance is attached to the institutional means of achieving success, individuals who are unable to adapt to the ethical means of attaining success may be compelled to take recourse to unconventional channels.

Reasons for adopting unorthodox methods are not far from lack of sound (quality) education, restricted opportunities, unemployment, psychological frustration, occupation of the lower stratum of society, poverty and absence of good behavior conditioning model. Non conformity to the ethical standards lures individuals to turn to crime in order to meet their personal goals and objectives (Ugbo, 2014). Such a desire only gives credence to the principle of the survival of the fittest. Individuals who are gainfully employed, deriving satisfaction from such employment will, and should, have no obligation being engaged in kidnapping. The plausible

reason for rampant kidnapping in Nigeria is to secure ransoms. This theory only argues that kidnappers are unemployed, frustrated and in need of economic means of survival. Nigeria has a high rate of unemployment.

There are currently over 10 million unemployed people. The figure is not inclusive of school drop-outs and those who were retrenched for some reasons. There is also considerable disguised unemployment. This is evident in most of the developing African countries. In Nigeria, graduate unemployment has become a social problem. Nigeria produces thousands of graduates from the country's tertiary institutions annually, but less than 15 per cent of them have any chance of employment security (Akintoye and Awosika, 2000). Many graduates have become social miscreants with perceptibly an uncertain future.

### **Components of Crime**

From the sociological perspective, crime is any act or behavior that violates constituted norms and it attracts widespread societal disapproval. Crime is therefore a form of deviance from societal norms and values. However, what constitutes crime in one society may not be viewed as criminal in another society. Crime against individuals involves violence or threat of violence. Such acts include murder, manslaughter, assault, rape, burglary and armed robbery. Property crime is also inclusive (Zimako, 2010). This is theft of property belonging to other people. In times past, property theft used to be a common phenomenon in Nigeria.

Emphasis has often been placed by moralist on social vices which they deem as criminal in nature. These are criminal activities for which offenders suffer to prevent future occurrence. These include also drug peddling, drug addiction, gambling, forgery and prostitution among others. The Nigerian government already has measures against each of these crimes. But, the extent of effectiveness of the measures is another issue for discussion. The issue of organized crime should be mentioned. Some members of the society, with knowledge of the what constitutes a crime with its attendant punishment, still fall into circumstances that tend to compel them to commit crimes. The process, means and methods of

committing crimes are becoming more sophisticated in modern times. For instance, reference is made to organized crimes. Organized crimes can be traced to a network of unlawful activities in which a group of criminals is involved. They gather some intelligence that will aptly aid their mission. Indeed, the penal code and Nigeria's legal system specify the classification of crimes and their respective punishments.

### Intelligence Gathering

Information is required about the whereabouts and syndicated operations of kidnappers. Aerial and land surveillance by security agencies, particularly the police is imperative. But inability of security agencies to apprehend kidnappers who succeed in obtaining the ransom and disappearing is suggestive of failure of intelligence. The need to identify critical and vulnerable areas of attack has become necessary. There are suggestions that security agencies and government should devise new scientific means of combating kidnapping.

Reappraisal of intelligence operatives and their counter insurgency approach is needful in the current disposition. The rise in sudden kidnapping cases is only indicative of inadequate information communication infrastructure required for tactical and strategic surveillance operations at all times. According to Prof. Isaac Albert:

*"The situation is now very disturbing. While kidnapping is now mass-based as the perpetrators are no longer interested in taking one person, but two or more, Boko Haram is now showing more interest in killing senior officers since it is a well-known strategy in terrorism that when you kill commanders, the fighting forces become less committed. The government is trying its best, but we must approach the situation more scientifically. Why are kidnappers taking groups and not individuals?..." (The Guardian, January 19, 2017)*

Intelligence gathering operations involve systematic monitoring of telephone calls between the group of kidnappers and the families of the victims involved. However, this operational mode would require the cooperation of telephone network service providers across the country. Institutional support from network service providers would strengthen the intelligence base of security agencies as well expose kidnappers data profile.

### **Conclusion**

While rampant kidnapping deters foreign investors from investing in Nigeria, it denies the country of earnings from tourism. Indeed, international tourists are compelled to develop a negative image of the country. Security is of importance to both government and society. It is critical for the attainment of economic objectives, entry of investors, unity of the country and national development. In an attempt to stem kidnapping, the Lagos State Government signed a bill into law. The new law prescribes death penalty for kidnappers whose victims die in their custody and life imprisonment for those who kidnap for a ransom (Odita, and Salau, 2017).

The Lagos State Government seems to recognize the dangerous dimension that kidnapping has assumed in Nigeria. Kidnappers must be punished within the ambit of the law as a deterrent to other intending kidnappers. Furthermore, concerted political will is needed to track kidnappers and their sponsors as well as inflict on them deserving punishment. The Nigeria Police have recorded some success in tracking down and arresting some kidnappers. They rightly deserve commendation for such efforts, but the incessant occurrence of kidnapping is an indication that the battle against the crime is still going on.

The formation and training of a special anti-kidnapping squad should be embarked upon. The squad should be provided with necessary modern equipment to enable it function effectively. This is strongly recommended for the battle against kidnapping. While Nigerians have to be watchful of unusual loitering of strange individuals within any community, kidnapping currently poses a tactical challenge to the Nigeria police which should be scientifically approached.

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