

## REPRESENTATION OF KIDNAPPING AND ITS EFFECTS IN SELECTED YORÙBÁ HOME VIDEO FILMS

Abídèmi O. Bólárinwá, PhD (+2348067322423)  
Akinlabí Akinniyi Williams (+2348060263274)  
Department of Linguistics and African Languages  
University of Ibadàn, Nigeria

### Abstract

Kidnapping has emerged as a deeply entrenched social problem in contemporary Nigerian society, intensifying in scale and sophistication due to persistent unemployment, widespread poverty, the pursuit of sudden wealth, and porous national borders. Although Yorùbá literary scholarship has extensively examined social vices such as corruption, ritualism, and moral decline, critical attention to the representation of kidnapping and its effects in Yorùbá home video films remains limited. This study addresses this gap by interrogating both the effects of kidnapping and the mechanisms employed to mitigate these effects within selected Yorùbá video productions. Adopting a descriptive research design, the study purposively selected ten Yorùbá films whose narratives centre on kidnapping and its consequences: *Omó Àdámò*, *Omó Olè Mèta*, *The Kidnap*, *Omó Òkànrán*, *Lákátábú*, *Òrìṣà Ifẹ́*, *Omó*, *Òdájú Doctor*, *Kidnapper*, and *Kidnapped*. These films were subjected to literary and content analysis, guided by Routine Activity Theory as the theoretical framework. Findings indicate that kidnapping poses a significant threat to national development and social harmony. The films not only expose its adverse effects but also foreground preventive and corrective responses, including improved healthcare for victims, the creation of a conducive socio-economic environment, and compensation for victims' families. The study further advocates the strengthening of community-based security structures, particularly vigilante groups, to complement formal policing systems. It concludes that Yorùbá home video films, when strategically utilized as instruments of social advocacy and reorientation, can contribute meaningfully to anti-kidnapping efforts. Furthermore, the study calls on the Nigerian government to reassess and strengthen existing strategies to address the growing menace more effectively.

**Keywords:** Kidnapping, Victim, Yorùbá home video films, crime effect

### Introduction

Kidnapping has emerged as one of the most pressing security challenges confronting Nigeria in recent decades. Once perceived as an isolated criminal activity, it has evolved into a widespread and deeply troubling phenomenon affecting individuals, families, communities, and the nation at large. From the oil-rich creeks of the Niger Delta to the highways of the North and the urban centres of the Southwest, incidents of abduction for ransom have become alarmingly frequent. According to reports by organisations such as Amnesty International and data from the Nigeria Police Force, thousands of Nigerians have been kidnapped in recent years, including school children, farmers, religious leaders, and travellers. This growing crisis not only threatens public safety but also undermines national development and social stability (Jande, 2025).

The effects of kidnapping in Nigeria are multifaceted and far-reaching. Economically, the menace has disrupted agricultural activities, trade, and foreign investment. Farmers in rural communities often abandon their lands for fear of abduction, leading to food shortages and increased prices. Businesses spend heavily on private security or relocate to safer regions, reducing productivity and employment opportunities. In some cases, multinational companies have scaled down operations due to security concerns, thereby affecting government revenue and local livelihoods. The constant demand for ransom payments also drains family savings and deepens poverty, particularly among already vulnerable households (Garpiya, 2025).

Socially and psychologically, kidnapping leaves deep scars on victims and their families. Survivors frequently experience trauma, anxiety, depression, and long-term emotional distress. Families of victims endure fear, uncertainty, and financial strain while negotiating for release. Communities become engulfed in mistrust and suspicion, weakening social cohesion. The abduction of school children, in particular, has had devastating consequences for education. For instance, the 2014 Chibok school girls' kidnapping drew global attention and highlighted the vulnerability of students in conflict-prone regions. Such incidents discourage school attendance, especially for girls, thereby hindering educational progress and perpetuating inequality (Udechukwu and Ofoke, 2024 and Patrick, Yusuf, and Daniel, 2024).

Politically, the rise in kidnapping has eroded public confidence in government institutions. Citizens increasingly question the capacity of security agencies to protect lives and property. The situation has intensified calls for security reforms, improved intelligence gathering, and community policing strategies. In response, the government has introduced various measures, including military operations and anti-kidnapping laws, yet the persistence of the crime suggests that deeper structural issues—such as unemployment, poverty, corruption, and weak law enforcement—must also be addressed (Anyanwu, 2024).

Furthermore, kidnapping has contributed to internal displacement and migration. Many families relocate from high-risk areas to relatively safer cities, placing additional pressure on urban infrastructure and resources. The constant fear of abduction also restricts freedom of movement, disrupts cultural and religious gatherings, and alters daily life. Highways once busy with commercial activities are now avoided after dark, reflecting a society living under the shadow of insecurity (Anagba and Sokoajin, 2025).

Kidnapping in Nigeria is not merely a criminal act against individuals but a complex social problem with profound economic, psychological, political, and developmental consequences. Its impact extends beyond immediate victims to the broader society, affecting national unity and progress. Addressing this challenge requires a comprehensive approach that combines effective law enforcement, socio-economic development, community engagement, and sustained political will. Only through coordinated and strategic efforts can Nigeria hope to curb the menace of kidnapping and restore safety, trust, and stability across the nation.

#### **Theoretical Framework: Routine Activity Theory (RAT)**

Routine Activity Theory is adopted in this study to provide insight into the construction of kidnapping in Yorùbá home video films. Marcus Felson and Lawrence Cohen's Routine Activity Theory (RAT) of crime explains the menace of kidnapping and its effects on a nation's socio-economic development. The theory was developed in 1979 (Yusuf, Gana and Aliyu, 2023). Felson and Cohen used the theory to explain changes in the crime rate in the United States over the past four decades. Since its development, the theory has been extensively applied to studies of crime and has become one of the most cited theories in criminology. Unlike criminological theories of criminality, RAT studies crime as an event; it closely relates crime to its environment and emphasises its ecological process, thereby diverting academic attention away from mere offenders.

Bottoms and Wiles (1997) agree that the theory is most applicable to predatory crimes, such as theft, burglary and kidnapping, where there is a clear convergence of offender, target, and absence of guardianship. It may be less effective in explaining other types of crime, such as white-collar crime, domestic violence, or cybercrime, which involve different dynamics and risk factors. Routine Activity Theory underpins many situational crime prevention strategies, which aim to reduce crime by altering the environment and making it less conducive to criminal activity. Strategies can include increasing the visibility of potential targets, enhancing physical security measures, and promoting community vigilance. Examples include improved street lighting, neighbourhood watch programmes and the installation of surveillance cameras

Yusuf, Gana and Aliyu (2023) opine that Routine Activity Theory is instrumental in analysing crime patterns and understanding how changes in societal routines can influence crime rates. For instance, during periods of economic downturn or social upheaval, changes in daily routines may lead to increased opportunities for crime. Conversely, during times of heightened security or community vigilance, crime rates may decrease. Cohen and Felson (1979) state basic assumptions of RAT., they maintain that crime is likely to occur when there is a spatial-temporal convergence of three essential elements of crime, namely, a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of capable guardianship. The factors that render a particular target attractive are situational and crime-specific. Crime can be perpetrated by anyone who has the opportunity, given the capability and availability of a vulnerable target. Victims have choices on whether to be victims, mainly by possibly avoiding situations where a crime can be committed against them.

The theory studies all patterns of criminal activity in society, and it is applicable to this research because it will help the paper identify the social ill (Kidnapping) in society, analyse kidnapping activities in the selected films, and relate them to the society. Also, the theory will help to investigate strategies employed by law enforcement agencies to capture their victims and the mode of operation. It looks into the roles of three essential elements of crime, that is, kidnapers, victims and law enforcement agencies. Routine Activity Theory has independent value and deep faithfulness to reality.

## Literature Review

### Effect of Kidnapping in Nigeria

Kidnapping in Nigeria causes profound and widespread devastation, ranging from severe psychological trauma and death for victims to economic ruin and the collapse of educational, agricultural, and commercial activities, driven largely by financial desperation and ransom demands, this crisis is eroding social stability, fostering widespread insecurity, and tarnishing the nation's image internationally.

The protection of life and property is a basic requirement for human survival. Yet, the rise and persistence of kidnapping directly threaten this fundamental need. Kidnapping, as a criminal act, has severe and far-reaching consequences across societies worldwide. Although it has become a pressing issue in contemporary Nigeria, it is neither a recent development nor a problem unique to the country. Historically, kidnapping occurred during the 18th and 19th centuries when individuals were abducted and sold into slavery (Ikime, 2006). Ene (2008) likewise argues that kidnapping is neither a recent phenomenon nor confined to a particular region, but rather an enduring criminal activity prevalent across various societies worldwide.

In Nigeria, kidnapping has existed for decades; however, its frequency and widespread nature became more evident from the 1990s and have continued largely unchecked (Osumah & Aghedo, 2011). Legally, kidnapping refers to the unlawful abduction or transportation of a person against their will, often involving detention without legal authority (Amaize, Dayo & Okutu, 2019). Akinwotu (2021) further defines it as the forceful seizure and confinement of individuals, usually with the intention of demanding ransom or settling disputes.

Globally, kidnapping remains a major concern. Okwuagbala (2020) notes its alarming rate in Europe, North America, and South America. In Mexico, where drug-related violence and corruption are prevalent, kidnapping is widespread. Reports from the United States Department of State indicate that Mexico recorded 105,682 kidnapping cases in 2012 and 131,946 in 2013, the highest figure on record (Anietie, 2021). In the United States and parts of Europe, cases involving abducted children frequently attract international media attention. According to the National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children, approximately 800,000 children are reported missing annually in the United States. In Southern Sudan, kidnapping is often used as a means of obtaining slaves or extorting ransom payments (Briggs, 2009).

Within Nigeria, kidnapping has emerged as one of the most serious security challenges in recent years (Ayuba, 2020). It is a grave criminal offence punishable under Nigerian law, with convicted offenders facing up to ten years' imprisonment without the option of a fine. The crime has become deeply entrenched in society, producing significant psychological, social, and economic consequences. On average, Nigeria records over 1,000 kidnapping incidents annually, with many additional cases going unreported (Fadipe, Uwadia & Kayode, 2021).

The persistent rise in kidnapping has fostered widespread fear and insecurity, undermining national stability and sustainable development. Oyemwinmin & Osazuwa (2016) argue that both foreign investors and local entrepreneurs are reluctant to conduct business in an insecure environment, contributing to unemployment and economic decline. Socially, the phenomenon has weakened interpersonal trust. Uzorma & Nwanego (2014) note that traditional African hospitality toward strangers has diminished, while many individuals increasingly isolate themselves in their homes due to fear (Inyang & Ubong, 2013; Ibrahim & Jamilu, 2017), against this backdrop, this study examines the effect of kidnapping in Nigeria as represented in selected Yorùbá home video films and make recommendations that could reduce the incidence to the barest minimal.

### Representation of Kidnapping and Its Effects in Selected Yorùbá Home Video Films

The menace of kidnapping has affected Nigerian society in a very negative manner. The Nigerian society has been characterised by a general sense of insecurity, leading to loss of lives and properties. The result is that many youths are more interested in the kidnapping business. The urge to be part of a money-spinning racket thus emboldens many desperate youths to deny the risk and embrace kidnapping as a full-time job. The effects of kidnapping are discussed as follows:

**Health and psychological effects:** Adéniyi (2019) opines that kidnapping survivors face a lot of side effects after enduring physical, emotional and mental abuse. Effects of trauma vary widely from person to person due to individuals' responses to stress, age and severity of abuse. Victims of kidnapping suffer from an array of psychosomatic illnesses, eating disorders, insomnia, chronic pain and mental health problems like posttraumatic stress disorder. Many victims of kidnapping suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which is a mental health condition that is triggered by a terrifying event, either by experiencing or witnessing it. It causes the victim

to have recurrent memories or thoughts of the trauma, recurrent dreams depicting various aspects of the trauma, and dissociative symptoms such as flashbacks of the severe beatings or a feeling that they are outside of their body.

In the Yorùbá home video films selected for this paper, almost all the victims and their families pass through emotional trouble. In other words, it is not only the suitable targets that are psychologically troubled, but even their parents, friends, church members and communities are subjected to psycho-emotional trauma. In the film, *Òdájù Doctor*, the playwrights graphically represent the kind of trauma and brutality that the victims pass through. Dr. Kúnlé feels psychological stress. He displays this when one of the nurses comes to make an enquiry in his office. Dr Kúnlé shouts at her angrily thus:

**Dókítà Kúnlé:** Má pe fòònù mi mọ lónìí, ok! Get out of the phone  
**Dr. Kúnlé:** Don't dial my line again today. Ok! Get out of the phone

It is pertinent to note that traumatic experiences take many forms, including physical, mental, emotional, social and financial. According to Daniel, Wassell, and Gilligan (1999), experiences of life events and circumstances may merge to threaten or challenge healthy development. This shows that people's lives may be adversely changed as a result of physical abuse/assault, sexual abuse/assault, neglect, bullying, poverty and loss of a significant relationship. The human body and mind are capable of registering devastating event(s). The home video film *Ọmọ*, Móriyebá reveals the kind of health challenge that the kidnapping victim experiences:

**Móriyebá:** Bí wọn ẹ mọ hospital tí ọmọ mi wà, èmi ò mọ,  
wọn kàn pè mí láti hospital tí ọmọ mi wà ni pé,  
wọn ti san five million sí account wọn. Kí n bá  
àwọn gbé ọmọ àwọn, ìgbà ti mo máa dé ibi tí mo  
gbé ọmọ sí, ọmó ti subú lulẹ yakata  
**Móriyebá:** I don't know how they locate the hospital that my child is.  
I just got a call from the hospital that my child is that the  
bill of five million naira has been paid. They demand for  
their daughter. When I got to the place where I kept the child,  
I found her lifeless on the ground

The above excerpt is the confession of Móriyebá about Praise experiences in the kidnapper's den. In the film *The Kidnap (Ìjínigbé)*, both Dr Rose and her father pass through different stages of anxiety. Rose is threatened and psychologically troubled. This mental torture propels the kidnapped victim to cry and beg the kidnappers to release her. Also, Rose becomes incoherent because of the trauma and psychological problems she faces:

**Rose:** (Pèlú omijé lójú rẹ) Ẹ jò, Ẹ jò. Gbogbo nńkan tí ó precious si  
yín láyé ni mo fi bè yín  
**Abbey City:** Wò ó, Má bè mí mọ, láàrin gbogbo àwa tí a wà níbi èmi ló kéré  
jù láàrin wọn, kò sí iránlówọ kankan tí mo lè ẹ. Gbogbo ohun  
tí a fẹ ni owó itúsílẹ rẹ. Kí ló dé tí ò n sunkún? Ẹ a nà ẹ ni?  
**Rose:** Mo ní ọmọ nílẹ, Mo ti bímọ, Èmi nikan ni mò n dá tójú  
ọmọ mi. Ẹ jòwọ ẹ sàánú mi, ẹ sàánú mi, ẹ ràn mí lówọ  
**Abbey City:** O ti bímo, Baba ọmọ náà n kọ  
**Rose:** Èmi nikan ni ó n dá tójú ọmọ náà  
**Abbey City:** Kò sí nńkan tí mo lè ẹ  
**Rose:** (With tears in her face) Please, please. I beg you with  
everything that is precious to you in this world  
**Abbey City:** Look. Stop begging me. I have the lowest rank  
among everyone here. So, I can't be of assistance to you. All  
we need is the ransom. Why are you crying? Did we beat you?  
**Rose:** I have a baby, I am a single mother, I am the only one taking  
care of my baby, please have mercy on me, have mercy on me,  
please help me  
**Abbey City:** You have a baby, where is the father of the child  
**Rose:** I am the only one taking care of the child  
**Abbey City:** There is nothing I can do

The above portrays the attribute of kidnappers as heartless, cruel, wicked and brutal. Abbey, one of the kidnappers says he cannot render any assistance to Dr Rose. All that matters to the kidnappers are the ransom. The effect of the kidnapping and subsequent trauma is telling on Dr Rose as she suffers post-traumatic stress disorder, which makes her to be incoherent. This is in accordance with Adeniyi's (2019: 239) submission that:

Many victims of kidnapping suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Post-traumatic stress disorder is a mental health condition that is triggered by a terrifying event, either by experiencing or witnessing it.

Ọlámílékun also faces trauma when he is eventually released as shown in *Ọmọ Ádámọ (Part 2)*. This is reflected in the excerpt below:

**Olóyè Majẹkódùnmí:** Lẹkan, Mo observed nẹkan láti three days ago kò yé mi, N kò mo kí ni problem tí o ní gangan exactly. Kò sí nẹkan tí mo bá ẹ sọ tí o ẹbí ẹni pé bàbá ẹ ló n bá ẹ sọrò níwájú ẹ, bí mo bi ẹ ní nẹkam miràn wà á kàn dáhùn gbùn-ún, Aunty ẹ ló n lọ yẹn, òun nàà n bá ẹ sọrò, o kàn dákẹ síbẹ, what is the problem?

**Chief Majẹkódùnmí:** Lekan I have been observing something for the past three days ago but I cannot understand. I don't know what is wrong with you exactly. There is nothing that I said to you that you act as if your father is the one talking to you, if I ask you about something, you answer absent-mindedly; your sister is the one going, she also talk to you, and you just remained silent, what is the problem?

**Social effects:** Uzormai and Nwanegbo-Ben (2014) posit that abduction has some social effects. It causes panic, tension and feelings of insecurity and weakens citizens' confidence in the government and the political leadership of the state. Many social gatherings cannot be held because of the activities of these notorious gangs. The activities of the kidnappers have had a significant impact on society. The prevalence of this crime has led to several negative consequences, affecting both the individual and the community. Kidnapping incidents have instilled fear and mistrust within communities. People may feel unsafe and become anxious about their security and that of their loved ones. The constant threat of kidnapping can lead to a breakdown in social cohesion, as individuals become wary of others and may avoid engaging in activities that were once considered routine. It is no news that kidnapping can disrupt the provision of essential social services. In the film titled *Kidnapper (Ajínigbé)*, the spatial setting is thrown into chaos. Thus, there is no peace of mind in the whole community; most travelers are in tension. Social activities stand still because of the growing menace of kidnapping. One of the citizens in the home video films displays the kind of unrest that kidnapping ignites in society thus:

**Jésùtófúnmi:** Níbo ni ilú yíi n lọ gan? Kí Ọlórún ẹ́áánú fún wa  
**Lukman:** Kí ló ẹlẹ?  
**Jésùtófúnmi:** Baby, Ọrọ lady kan ni mò n kà lóri internet nísinyii, Ó ní Ọlórún kó òun yọ lówọ àwọn ajínigbé, Ó ní irin àjò twenty-four minute dí twenty-four hours mọ òun lówọ, Ó ní Ọlórún ló kó òun yọ tí wọn kò fi rí nẹkankan ẹ fún òun

**Lukman:** Wáò, Wáò, Níbo wá niilú wa n lọ báyií, kò sí ibi kankan tí ó Safe mó, ajínigbé lótùn ún, ajínigbé lósi, àbí kí àwọn èyàn maa gun commercial vehicles mọ ni?, àbí commercial vehicle nísinyii tiwá di ogun?, àbí kí ni wọn fẹ kí àwọn tí kò ní private car, kí ni wọn fẹ kí wọn máa gùn?, kí ni wọn fẹ kí wọn fi máa rinirinàjò lọ sí ibi tí wọn fẹ lọ? Báwo ni wọn ẹ fẹ kí wọn máa rin?

**Jésùtófúnmi:** Anytime tí èmi bá tí n rí nẹkan báyií tàbí tí mo bá n kà á, nise lẹrù máa n bàmi. These things are almost getting scary. Our country is not even safe any longer

- Lukman:** Àdúrà tí àwà má máa gbà ni pé, kí ọlọrun máa fi isò rè sò wa,  
Kí á má bá wọn sí nilé lójò tí ibi bá n rìn
- Jésùtófúnmi:** Where is this country going to? May God have mercy on us.
- Lukman:** What Happen?
- Jésùtófúnmi:** I am reading a story of a lady from internet, she said God was the one that deliver her from the kidnappers, that a journey of twenty-four minutes became twenty-four hours. She said it was God that saved her that they are unable to do anything for her.
- Lukman:** Wow, where exactly are we going in this country? I don't know. Nowhere is safe. Kidnappers are left and right or should people stop boarding commercial vehicle? Has boarding commercial vehicle become a war? What do they want people without private cars to travel with? How will they be going out?
- Jésùtófúnmi:** Whenever I see things like this or read about them, I get really scared, like, this thing is getting more scary, our country is not even safe any longer
- Lukman:** Yeah, I know, our prayer would be that God should be protecting us that we should not be available whenever evil looms.

The above is a true picture of the security situation in Nigeria. In *Òrìsà Ìfẹ́* produced by Yétúndé Barnabas Ọláyínká, it is demonstrated that kidnapping disturbs the academic community and social life of the students. Students on campus are engulfed in fear. The issue of missing students becomes the order of the day which discourages students from attending classes because they are afraid of been kidnapped. Mr. Hassan (lecturer) represents one of the offenders involved in kidnapping the innocent students. It can be inferred that Yorùbá home video films are social commentary and documentary of the happening in society. In *Òrìsà Ìfẹ́*, the missing student (Moyò) stands in the position of suitable target. The producer depicts unrest in academic environment especially in University environment where students are being kidnapped. One of the students portrays the unrest and says:

**Akẹkọọ Kiíní:** (Pèlú omijé lójú) *My Sister*

**Akẹkọọ Keji:** Kí ló seḽè?

**Akẹkọọ Kiíní:** *My Sister*

**Akẹkọọ Keji:** Sebí morí èyin méjèèjì papò lánàá

**Akẹkọọ Kiíní:** Ìròlé àná la ríra *last*

**Akẹkọọ Keji:** Ìyẹn lágbára o

**AkẹkọọKiíní:** *My Sister* (Ó n sunkún bí ó se n lo)

**Student I:** (With tears in her eyes) *My Sister*

**Student II:** What happened?

**Student I:** *My Sister*

**Student II:** But I saw both of you together yesterday

**Student I:** The last time we saw each other was yesterday evening.

The excerpt above reveals unrest within the University environment, which negatively affects students' social lives. Due to the ongoing kidnappings on campus, most students are unable to maintain their normal social activities, let alone attend lectures. Moving around the campus has become a serious challenge, as students live in constant fear of being kidnapped.

**Loss of lives and properties:** Agbájé (2022) emphasizes the preponderance of deaths or loss of lives occasioned by kidnapping as a result of victims' resistance or health-related issues experienced in captivity. Agbájé (2022) states that, a significant number of victims do lose their lives, either during kidnapping or while held captive. The circumstances surrounding each kidnapping vary greatly, impacting the survival rate. Some victims are held for ransom, and in those cases, if the ransom is not paid or if other conditions are not met, the victim may be killed. Additionally, some kidnappings are inherently violent, and the victim may be killed during the initial abduction for certain types of kidnapping, such as those involving human trafficking or child abduction, especially if the child is held for an extended period or subjected to abuse or while in captivity. It is also worth noting that the risk of death can be higher. While many lose their lives, some lose their properties. In some cases, family members of victims will sell their car, gold, houses and landed properties in order to pay for ransom. *Ọmọ Ádámò* film depicts how one of the notorious boys (Moronto) who oppresses female students on campus is kidnapped and later killed due to his stubbornness in their den.

Moreover, in *Òdájú Doctor*, Dr. Kúnlé loses his property in order to raise ransom for the kidnapers. When the ransom is paid, instead of releasing (Tóyòsí and Fúnkẹ́), they also kidnap Kunle's wife and demands for another ransom. Kunle's friend lament thus:

**Òrẹ́ Kúnlé:**       Şe wọn túnfẹ́ kí o ta hospital tí ó wà nilẹ́ yí ni?

**Kunle's Friend:** Do they want you to sell your hospital?

Similarly, in *Lakatabu*, one of the victims attests that he loses all his properties:

**Ajínigbé:**       Tí o bá ti di four o'clock kí ẹ pa àwọn méjèjèjì  
**Èni tí wọn jígbé:** Ẹ má jẹ́ kí wọn pa mí. Gbogbo ohun tí mo ní láyé  
lórun ni mo ní kí wọn fi ránşẹ́. Millionaire inú ilé wa  
nìyí, àbùrò mi ni. Gbogbo ohun tí ẹ bá fẹ́ àbùrò mi á  
kó o lẹ́. Ẹ má jẹ́ kí n kú, mo sì kéré  
**Kidnapper:**     Once it's four O'clock, you should kill the two of them.  
**Victim:**         Don't let them kill me. All that I have I asked them to  
send already. This is my junior sister; she is the only  
millionaire in our family. Whatever you want us to give,  
my sister will give you. Don't let me die, I am still  
young.

The excerpt above shows that the target has lost all his properties because he has to transfer and sell all what he has as extortionate demands. Akeem Balógun and Amarachi Igwe, the co-producers of *Omọ olè Mèta*, also display loss of lives in the film. One of the suitable targets is killed when he is asked by the Boss how his boys kidnapped him. He narrates thus:

**Ògá àwọn Ajínigbé:**     Ẹran méjì le rí mú lóníí  
**Ajínigbé Kìíní:**         Bẹ̀ni sà  
**Ògá àwọn Ajínigbé:**     Ẹ tú ojú wọn  
**Ògá àwọn Ajínigbé:**     Ìwọ ní tí ẹ níbo ni wọn tí rí ẹ?  
**Èni tí wọn jígbé:**       Ẹ seun, Ọlórun á tún ti yín nàà şe. Onímọ̀ ẹ̀rọ ni mí  
sà, Engineer tí ó gbajúmọ̀, tí wọn mò lórùn ún lósi.  
Ní àdúgbò mi tí mo bá n lọ, jẹ́jẹ́ ni mo máa n lọ,  
wọn á máa ní Armani Money, Armani money, bí  
wọn şe máa n pè mí niyẹn. N kò í tójà, n n bá èyàn jà.  
Sà déédéé ni mo dé sí site mi, àwọn omọ́ tí ó n bá mi  
şişé sọ wí pé, a kò ní slate mó. Işẹ́ tí à n şe lówó, a tí  
fẹ́ parí rẹ́. A tí parí *roof* rẹ́, ó kàn ku bí *slate* mēfà,  
mo ní kí ló n şe man tó máa n *supply slate* yii, *slate*  
tó kó wá kò pé, mo bá ní kí n dé ibẹ́ kí n şàlàyẹ́ fú un,  
kí n kó slate kí n padà, ká mọ́ pé ati parí ilé. Bí mo şe  
wọ one chance ni yẹn. Ẹ sàánú mi

**Ògá àwọn Ajínigbé:**     A jẹ́ pé orí tí ẹ ló gba àbòdè lóníí  
**Ajínigbé kejì:**         Bàbá ẹ máa dá wèrè lóhùn, ó *struggle* ká tó gbé e ,  
Ọpẹ̀lopẹ́ Ọlórun , ọpẹ̀lopẹ́ orí yin.  
**Ajínigbé kẹta:**         *This guy just they cabash*, ó n pògèdè, bẹ̀è ló n pọ̀fọ̀,  
mo lérò pé ó máa *disappear* ni  
**Ajínigbé kìní:**         Ó *try* láti lo egbé  
**Ògá àwọn Ajínigbé:**     O gbọ́? Ó n pọ̀fọ̀

**Èni wọn jígbé:**         N ò pọ̀fọ̀, ohun ẹnu ifẹ́ lásán ni. Ìyá mi ló sọ fún mi pé,  
ẹnikan kíí fi kónídó pa alábahun, ẹni kan kíí fi idà pa  
ìgbín  
**Ògá àwọn Ajínigbé:**     (Gbá ẹni tí wọn jígbé létí). Ẹ pa wọn  
(Ọkan lára àwọn Ajínigbé yin ibon, ó sì pa ẹni tí wọn  
jí gbé)  
**Boss:**                 You only caught two victims today?

**Kidnapper 1:** Yes, sir  
**Boss:** Take off their blindfold. You, where were you found?  
**Victim:** Thank you, and God bless you, sir. I am a very famous engineer and a gentleman to the core. Everyone calls me Armani money, Armani's money and I never pick fights with anyone. Everyone calls me Armani money. I got to my site, and workers there told us we didn't have slate again. The house is almost finished, in fact, it has been roofed, and all that's left to be done is about six slats to finish covering it, so I intend to go there and ask the supplier why the slats weren't complete, get the remaining and return to finish the house. That was how I got into one chance. Please show me mercy  
**Boss:** Well, that means your luck ran out today  
**Kidnapper II:** Don't mind the idiot. He gave us a tough time before we could get him in, it was God's doing and your luck that helped us get him.  
**Kidnapper III:** He was saying all sorts of incantations when we grabbed him and we thought he was going to disappear  
**Boss:** Really  
**Kidnapper III:** He tried to pull a disappearing act, but it didn't work  
**Boss:** Is it true you chat incantation  
**Victim:** It is not incantation. It was just a stream of interesting Yorùbá statement. It was my mother who told me that no one uses a club to kill a tortoise, and no one uses a sword to kill a snail  
**Boss:** (Slapped the victim) Kill them.

(One of the offenders shot and killed the victims)

In the same vein, it is shown that it is not only the victims who are often exterminated by kidnapper. Many Nigerians have lost their loved ones to the hands of kidnappers. This establishes the commonplace inhumanity and heartlessness that characterise the contemporary Nigerian society where kidnappers operate without any serious check.

**Loss of virginity:** Losing virginity is a significant life event with physical, emotional and social effects. The stretching or tearing of the hymen characterises loss of virginity, i.e a thin membrane partially covering the vaginal opening. The emotional impact of losing virginity varies greatly. Some individuals find it a positive milestone, while others may experience a range of emotion, including anxiety, fear and confusion. Rajah (2025) identifies many ways that can make a lady lose her virginity, such as sexual intercourse, cycling, horseback riding, doing sports and using objects to pound the private part (e.g finger, sex toy or menstrual cups). Many teenagers have lost their virginity through sexual intercourse with a notorious group and contracted sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in the process. In real life, kidnappers always take advantage of their victims; sometimes they beat the victims to gain access to molest them. In Yorùbá home video film titled *Kidnapped*, teenagers (suitable targets) are brutalised; they are not allowed to speak to their parents, subjected to malnutrition and rendered unconscious by being forced to use chloroform. Besides, they are beaten before they are sexually exploited by their abductors (Kinsley). In the selected film (*Kidnapped*), Aisha lost her virginity.



### The portrayal of a victim that loss her virginity in Yorùbá home video film

**Economic effects:** The menace of kidnapping has affected the economy of individuals and the nation at large. Revenue accruable from the companies/businesses has continued to diminish drastically. The government continues to spend a huge sum of money to provide security, making other sectors of the economy suffer. The Abia state government is reported to have decried the loss of billions of naira to the fight against kidnapping and the reduction of the presence of companies in the state (Akpan, 2010).

Chigoziri and Emmanuel (2016) maintain that kidnapping brings about a downturn in any economy where it manifests freely and untamed. When people, particularly government functionaries and foreign multinationals, are arbitrarily kidnapped and tortured, oil facilities vandalised, confusion rages in the power zones, and uncertainty looms everywhere, the economy will become and remain unstably backward, and poverty and unemployment will become the order of the day. These and many more become the fate of any government and economy where kidnapping is rampant, and there remains no considerable hope in sight. In effect, the rising trend of kidnapping in Nigeria has, more than anything else, created security and economic climates that impede sustainable national development (Adibe, 2012). If the livelihood of one is affected, it will definitely affect the economic sector of any country.

In *Omọ Ọkànràn*, produced by Adẹṣọlá Ọládòkun, a group of kidnappers invades a village called Alubàtá to kidnap the villagers to sell them to ritualists. It is, however, disheartening that top government officials are involved in promoting this scourge to create fear in the people; the kidnappers shoot sporadically. In the process, the kidnappers kill Ọjẹkọlápò and his wife, leaving their only son as an orphan. Many villagers lose their spouses, while children are reduced to orphans. Economic activities of Alubàtá are adversely affected due to the invasion. Ọjẹkọlápò cannot go out again to market his ware (Antidote). Iyìọlá cannot engage in her farming activities again because she lost her life in the attack that ensued. This representation foregrounds Adibe's (2012), Madu's (2019), and Shettima's (2016) submission that Kidnapping has also affected agriculture and food supply, as many farmers have had to abandon their farms for fear of being kidnapped in big and small farms that are usually located in the hinterlands and outskirts of the city.

In other words, kidnapping disrupts agricultural production, reduces output and thereby threatens food security. The fear of kidnapping can make farmers abandon their farming activities, leading to decreased harvest and higher food prices. This also discourages investment in agriculture and can displace rural populations, and perpetuate poverty. The film mirrors realities in the Nigerian context, where most of the farmers across the country are beginning to abandon farming activities due to the barbaric activities of kidnappers. Indeed, this menace has reduced the output of agriculture drastically and caused inflation.

### Conclusion

The escalation of criminal activities in contemporary society remains a serious concern for Nigerians. This study has demonstrated that kidnapping is not only a persistent social reality but also a recurring theme in Yorùbá home video films, reflecting its prevalence within both Yorùbá society and the wider Nigerian context. The analysis affirms that kidnapping undermines social stability, disrupts communal harmony, and often results in tragic consequences, including loss of life, destruction of property, and heightened insecurity.

The findings further establish that Yorùbá film producers are socially responsive artists who engage critically with the realities of their environment. Through the application of Routine Activity Theory to the selected films, the study demonstrates how filmmakers depict the effects of kidnapping on individuals and society at large. These productions function not merely as entertainment but also as platforms for social critique and moral intervention, offering corrective perspectives on a problem that affects both Nigeria and the global community.

By examining ten selected Yorùbá home video films, the study highlights the multidimensional effects of kidnapping, including psychological and health-related impacts, economic disruption, social dislocation, loss of life and property, and sexual violence. The films consistently portray kidnapping as a major impediment to national development and peaceful coexistence.

In conclusion, the study calls on the Nigerian government to reassess and strengthen its anti-kidnapping policies through more proactive, coordinated, and intelligence-driven strategies, including collaboration with international partners. Such comprehensive interventions are essential for curbing the growing threat of kidnapping and fostering a safer society. This includes the enhanced use of information and communication technology (ICT), improved surveillance systems (such as drones and tracking technologies), strengthened intelligence gathering by law enforcement agencies, and continuous training and retraining of security personnel.

Furthermore, the government should establish comprehensive victim support services, including counseling and rehabilitation, to help victims cope with the psychological and social consequences of kidnapping. Yorùbá film producers should continue to engage with pressing social issues and play a significant role in shaping public awareness, influencing perceptions, and promoting preventive measures against kidnapping.

#### References

- Adeníyì, A.O. (2019). The menace of kidnapping in Nigeria: an examination of the constitutional implications. *Benson Idahosa University Law Journal* 5: 226-242.
- Adibe, J. (2012). Pervasive kidnapping in Nigeria: symptom of a failing state. Retrieved August 20, 2024, from <http://www.hollerafrica.com/showarticle.php?artId=304&catId=1>.
- Agbájé, F.I. (2022). Toward querying the national peril of kidnapping in Nigeria. *Insights into Regional Development*. 4(4), 155-165.
- Akinwotu, E. (2021). Kidnappers abduct 317 schoolgirls in Nigeria in armed night-time raid Retrieved on March 3, 2026. *The Guardian*: from <https://www.theguardian.com>.
- Akpan, N. S. (2010). Kidnapping in Nigeria's Niger Delta: An exploratory study. *Journal of Social Science*.24(1), 33-42.
- Amaize, E., Dayo J and Okutu, P. (2019). Kidnapping, banditry, killings: 133 Highways of terror. Retrieved on March 3, 2026. *The Vanguard*. From <https://www.vanguard.com>.
- Anagba J.O and Sokoajin M.A (2025). The challenge of kidnapping in Nigeria: A conflict-security analysis of causes, consequences, and strategic responses. *University of Jos Journal of Political Science* 2(1), 1-19
- Anietie, E. (2021). More school children abducted in Nigeria. *Human Rights Watch*. Retrieved on March 3, 2026, from <https://www.hrw.org>.
- Anyanwu, U.S. (2024). Kidnapping and security challenge in South-East Nigeria. *International Journal of Research* 11(8), 1-14
- Ayuba, M. R. (2020). Trajectories, Typology and implications of kidnapping in Nigeria. *International Journal of Management, Social Sciences, Peace and Conflict Studies*, 3(2), 768, 789
- Bottoms, A E. and Wiles, P. (1997). Environmental criminology. *The oxford handbook of criminology*. Eds. M. Maguire, R. Moran, and R. Reiner. Oxford: Clarendon Press 620-656
- Briggs R (2009). The kidnapping business: Guide of security controllers' newsletter. Retrieved on March 3, 2026, from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/kidnapping>.
- Chigoziri U. J, and Emmanuel, N. C. (2016). Creating deviance: The issue of kidnapping in Nigeria *International Journal of Research in Arts & Social Science*. 1(1), 34-46.
- Cohen, L.E., and Felson, M. (1979). *Social change and crime rate trend: a routine activity approach*. Online EBook, eBook ISBN: 9780429245879
- Daniel, B, Wassell, S. and Gilligan, R. (1999). *Child development for child Care and protection workers*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

- Eneh, O. C. (2008). Cultism in the Nigerian educational institutions: incidence, causes, effects and solutions. *Knowledge Review*, 17(4),126-135.
- Fadipe, R. A., Uwadia, J. C., and Kayode, O. C. (2021). Causes and the remedies for curbing the menace of kidnapping in Nigeria. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary and Current Research*, 9: 25-34.
- Garpiya, U. (2025). The Impact of banditry, kidnapping and the cost of fuel on food security in Nigeria, *Kashere: Journal of Politics and International Relations*.3(3),399–407
- Ibrahim, B. and Jamilu. M. I. (2017). An analysis of the causes and consequences of kidnapping in Nigeria. *African Research Review*, 11(4), 134-143.
- Ikime, O. (2006). *History, the historian and the nation: the voice of a Nigerian historian*. Ibadan, HEBN Publishers.
- Inyang, J. D., and Ubong, A.E. (2013). The social problem of kidnapping and its implications on the socio-economic development of Nigeria: A study of Uyo Metropolis. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(6), 531.
- Jande, J.T. (2025). The activities of banditry, kidnapping and Nigeria’s emerging economy: putting the giant of Africa to shame. *International Journal of Business & Entrepreneurship Research* 14(12), 149 – 158.
- Madu, O.U. (2019). Introduction: Whither Africa Africa-Whither social sciences. *Topical issues in the social sciences*. Ed. Nnadozie, O.U. Nsukka: Liou Chumez Printing Enter (Nig)
- Okwuagbala, U. M. P. (2020). Kidnapping: overview, causes, effects, and solutions. From Retrieved on March 3, 2026. <https://owlcation.com/social-sciences/Kidnapping-Overview-causes-effects-and-solutions>.
- Osumah, O., and Aghedo, I. (2011). Who wants to be a millionaire? Nigerian youths and the commodification of kidnapping. *Review of African Political Economy*, 38(128), 277-287.
- Oyemwinmin, C., and Osazuwa, A. J. (2016). The Social-Economic Impediments to Kidnapping Eradication in Southern Nigeria. *International Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 5(4), 202-213.
- Patrick, J. M, Yusuf, A. U., and Daniel, L. I (2024). Effects of kidnapping on victims’ educational Activities in Chikun local government area of Kaduna State, Nigeria. *Gusau Journal of Sociology* 4(3), 384-396.
- Rajah, B. (2025). History and principles of physical education and exercise. Unpublished Text. Department of Physical and Health Education. Federal College of Education Yola.
- Shettima, L.J. (2016). *Criminology: theories, patterns and typology* Belmont: Wadsworth
- Udechukwu, D.C and Ofoke S.M. (2024). Kidnapping for ransom: the psychosocial implications on the families and victims, *Nigeria Journal of Social Psychology*. 7(2), 1-15.
- Uzormai, P.N. and Nwanegbo-Ben, J. (2014). Challenges of hostage-taking and kidnapping in South Eastern Nigeria. *International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature*. 2(6), 131-142.
- Yusuf, A., Gana, I.M, and Aliyu, M. (2023). Kidnapping for ransom and its socio-economic effects in Nigeria’s North-west (2010-2023): Evidence from Kastina State. *Zamfara Journal of Politics and Development* 4(1), 267-278.