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Victimology and Psychosocial Well-being of the Elderly in Iwaya Community

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Abstract

Victimology is an infrequently discussed social phenomenon in Nigeria despite its prevalence and grave social implications. Nigerian government does not provide social security for the elderly and the support from the family is fading out, leading to kidnap and abuse of elders. The study examined the relationship between Victimology and psycho-social wellbeing of elders in Iwaya community, Lagos State. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive and t-test at P value 0.5. The findings revealed that kidnapping and abuse of elders were more experienced outside Lagos State (14.7%) than other places such as within neighbourhood (8%), outside neighbourhood (6.7%), and outside the country (7.3%). The value of X^2 at the .05 level of significance with 1 degree of freedom was 3.841. The computed value of 2.227a was smaller and within the critical value range of 3.841. The null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between kidnapping of elders and their psychosocial wellbeing was accepted. The value of X^2 at 0.5 level of significance with 1-degree freedom was 3.841. Computed value of 4.313a was greater than the critical value of 3.841. The null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between mistreatment and their psychosocial wellbeing was rejected. Results suggest possible factors such as poor quality of education, high level of poverty, lack of value for hard-work and indiscipline are causes of crime, thus negatively affecting security of lives and properties. Government should address security lapses by providing the security agencies with necessary facilities and environment conducive to combating crime in Nigeria.

Keywords: Victimology, psychosocial well-being, elderly.

Introduction

Globally, Victimology is a social phenomenon that is infrequently discussed in Nigeria despite its alarming prevalence and grave social implications. In Africa, family remains one of the main sources of support for the elderly. Ageing is a progressive deterioration of physiological function, an intrinsic age-related process of loss of viability and increase in vulnerability. It is a process that is genetically determined and environmentally modulated (Adegoke, 2017). Ageing is among the largest known risk factors for human diseases. Ageing is a "global phenomenon" that is occurring faster in developing countries as well as those with large youth populations, and poses social and economic challenges. This situation can be overcome with "the right set of policies which will equip individuals, families and societies so as to address the challenges and to reap its benefits." Hence the sporadic crime and other existential problems confronting the elderly in society can be adequately addressed.

Several journals, newspapers and publications have revealed efforts made to harness information that will draw attention to the relationship between stressors resulting from aging, and likelihood of elderly citizens becoming victims of, or participants in crime. How we treat the elderly in our society seems to represent one of the obvious but often ignored social act. This may be because our reaction to the welfare of the older citizens seems to be greatly influenced by how we perceive age, aging and the aged. It also creates an indelible impression of the kind of society we are, and the type of image we wish to leave for posterity. Victimology is the scientific study of victimization and the relationships between victims and criminals. It also establishes relationship between victims and criminal justice system (Roccato, 2007). A Victimology study is basically conducted on people who have been victimized physically, psychologically, emotionally and financially. It also focuses on the impact of victimization in the increasing of fear of crime and effect on the psycho-social wellbeing of the elderly. Victimology perceives that the elderlys are victimized physically, psychologically, emotionally and financially in their family and society (Roccato, 2007).

In this context, the study focused more on elderly as victims of crimes and its effect on their psychosocial wellbeing in the contemporary

society. Elderly people have been recognized as weak citizens and less privileged in society as a result of old age. This situation has made them to be vulnerable to victims of crimes and abuse in the family and society at large. The cases of crime against the elderly are rising fast across the country. Today, the elders are facing different cases of crimes such as murder, kidnapping, rape, fraud, robbery, theft and so on, either as victims or as offenders. Also, cases of elders being abused and isolated by neighbours, community, family members and domestic servants are so rampant in our society. These cases have certainly affected the way of life and sense of psychosocial wellbeing of the elderly to a large extent in the family as well as in society.

In Nigeria, those that are above 65 years make up about 4.3 per cent of the total population which was put at 140,431,790 million according to 2006 population exercise (Adegoke, 2017). However, population of the elderly (age 65+) in Nigeria is on the increase as the crude mortality rates are gradually reducing. Aging in Nigeria is occurring against the background of socio-economic, harsh wide spread poverty, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and the rapid transformation of the traditional extended family structure (NPC, 2006). The situation is made worse by the fact that African society does not seem to pay sufficient attention to the plight of its elderly citizens in the area of crime, criminalization and victimization.

Globally, the population of the elderly is increasing and their well-being is becoming a public health concern (Edirin, 2013). In Nigeria, poverty is widespread and elderly persons are at higher risk. Unfortunately, Nigerian government does not provide social security for the elderly and the supports from the family are fading out. Therefore, the psycho-social well-being of the elderly is compromised and this has constituted major problems in our societies. The material arrangement of the system is characterized by structural imbalance with manifestations of some features of inequality, unemployment, poverty, injustice, and inhumanity. The systemic arrangement could be responsible for the occurrences of social problems such as armed robbery, fraud and kidnapping.

The health care system spends a small fraction of the budget on treating illnesses relating to the elderly. This is because there is no policy that emphasizes the giving of the aged the necessary access to health facilities. The attitude of health care providers towards older people makes their situation to be even more difficult. Emotional distress as a result of crime is a recurring theme for all victims of crime. The most common problem affecting three quarters of victims are psychological problems, such as fear, anxiety, nervousness, self-blame, anger, shame, and difficulty in sleeping. These problems often result in the development of chronic Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Elders who experienced abuse, even modest abuse, had higher risk of death when compared to those who had not been abused. Research has also shown that elders who are victims of abuse have significantly higher levels of psychological distress and lower perceived self-efficacy than other adults who have not been victimized. In addition, some elders who are victims of violence have additional health care problems, such as increased bone or joint problems, digestive problems, depression or anxiety, chronic pain, high blood pressure, and heart problems than some others who have never been victims.

The following are objectives of the study:

- To investigate the relationship between kidnapping and the psychosocial wellbeing of the elderly
- To examine the relationship between those who experienced mistreatment and their levels of psychological well-being

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H1: There is no significant relationship between kidnapping and psychosocial wellbeing of the elderly.

H2: There is no significant relationship between mistreatment and psychosocial well-being of the elderly.

Methodology

The research design employed for the study was descriptive research design. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the respondents. The study area was clustered while purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants. One hundred and fifty

copies of (150) questionnaire were administered to 150 elderly people, both male and female, who reside in Iwaya. The questionnaire contains series of open and close ended related questions set mainly from the research objectives in order to get or collect the feedback information from the respondents' knowledge, opinion, views, and attitude on related questions from the topic in focus. The adopted sampling procedure gives room for representativeness and accuracy.

Data collected were analysed using frequency counts, percentages, cross-tabulation and the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using Chi-square analysis.

Results

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	94	62.7%
Female	56	37.3%
Total	150	100%

Table 1 indicates that ninety-four (94) respondents were males constituting 62.7% and fifty-six (56) respondents were females constituting 37.3%, totalling 150 participants.

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
65-74 years	72	48%
75-84 years	41	27.3%
85-94 years	37	24.7%
Total	150	100%

Table 2 shows that majority of the elderly were between the ages of 65 and 74 years. Participants between 65 and 74 years of age were seventy-two (72) constituting 48%; participants between 75 and 84 years of age

were forty-one (41) constituting 27.3% while participants between 85 and 94 years old were thirty-seven (37) constituting 24.7% of the sample.

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Education

Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No Formal Education	27	18%
Primary	22	14.7%
Secondary	28	18.7%
OND/NCE	25	16.7%
B.Sc/HND	35	23.3%
Post Graduate	13	8.7%
Total	150	100%

Table 3 indicates that majority of the participants were B.Sc./HND holders. Participants with no formal education were twenty-seven (27) constituting 18%; participants with primary education were twenty-two (22) constituting 14.7%; participants with secondary school education (WAEC/NECO) were twenty-eight (28) constituting 18.7%; participants with OND/NCE were twenty-five (25) constituting 16.7%; participants B.Sc/HND were thirty-five (35) constituting 23.3% and participants with postgraduate qualification were thirteen (13) constituting 8.7%.

Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Ethnic group

Ethnic group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Igbo	40	26.7%
Yoruba	84	56%
Hausa	26	17.3%
Total	150	100%

Table 4 shows that majority of the participants were Yoruba. Igbo were forty (40) constituting 26.7%; Yoruba were eighty-four (84) constituting 56% and Hausa were twenty-six (26) constituting 17.3% of the participants.

Table 5: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Marital status

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	10	6.7%
Married	57	38%
Separated	22	14.7%
Divorced	26	17.3%
Widowed	35	23.3%
Total	150	100%

Table 5 indicates that majority of the participants were married. Ten (10) out of the participants were single constituting 6.7%; participants who were married were fifty-seven (57) constituting 38%; participant who were separated were twenty-two (22) constituting 14.7%; participants who were divorced were twenty-six (26) constituting 17.3% and widowed were thirty-five (35) constituting 23.3% of the participants.

Table 6: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Religion

Religion	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Christianity	80	53.3%
Islam	36	24%
Traditional	34	22.7%
Total	150	100%

Table 6 shows that majority of the participants were Christians. Christians were eighty (80) constituting 53.3%; participants who are Islam were thirty-six (36) constituting 24% and traditionalists were thirty-four (34) constituting 22.7% of the participants.

Table 7: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Family type

Family type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Monogamy	93	62%
Polygamy	57	38%
Total	150	100%

Table 7 shows that majority of the participants were monogamy. Monogamy were ninety-three (93) constituting 62% while polygamy were fifty-seven (57) constituting 38% of the participants or 10% of the participants.

Table 8: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by form of action taken

When the occurred, what form of action did you take?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Inform a police	16	10.7%
Inform family members	15	10%
Inform community members	9	6%
Pleading with kidnapers	14	9.3%
Others (Church)	1	.7%
No Response	95	63.3%
Total	150	100%

Table 12 reveals that majority of the elderly did not respond to any form of action that was taken. Those that experienced the incidence and form of action taken to inform the police were sixteen (16) or 10.7%; Those that inform family members were fifteen (15) or 10%; Those that inform community members were nine (9) or 6%; Those that pleaded with kidnapers were fourteen (14) or 9.3%; Others (Church) were one (1) or 0.7% and there was no response from ninety-five (95) or 63.3% of the participants.

Kidnapping and Psychosocial Wellbeing of The Elderly

Table 9: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Victim of kidnapping

Have you ever been a victim of kidnapping or seen any elderly person been kidnapped?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	55	36.7%
No	95	63.3%
Total	150	100%

Table 8 1 indicates that majority of the participants had not been a victim of kidnapping or seen any elderly person who had been kidnapped. Those who had been kidnapped or seen an elderly person who had been kidnapped were fifty-five (55) constituting 36.7% while those who had not been victims of kidnapping or seen any elderly person who had been kidnapped were ninety-five (95) constituting 63.3% of the participants.

Table 10: Percentage Distribution of Respondents where the incident occurred

Where did the incident Occurred?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Within neighbourhood	12	8%
Outside neighbourhood	10	6.7%
Outside Lagos State	22	14.7%
Outside Country	11	7.3%
No Response	95	63.3%
Total	150	100%

Table 9 reveals that majority of the elderly did not respond to where the incident occurred. Those that experienced the incidence within neighbourhood were twelve (12) or 8%; Outside neighbourhood were

ten (10) or 6.7%; Outside Lagos State were twenty-two (22) or 14.7%; Outside the country were eleven (11) or 7.3%.

Hypothesis One

H01: There is no significant relationship between kidnapping and psychosocial wellbeing of the elderly.

Table 11: Relationship between kidnapping and psychosocial wellbeing of the elderly.

			Psychosocial Wellbeing		Total
			Good	Poor	
Have you been a victim of kidnapping or seen any elderly person been kidnapped?	Yes	Count	33	22	55
		Expected	28.6	26.4	55.0
		Count	22%	14.7%	36.7%
	No	Count	45	50	95
		Expected	49.4	45.6	95.0
		Count	30%	33.3%	63.3%
Total	Count	78	72	150	
	Expected	78.0	72.0	150.0	
	Count	52%	48%	100%	
X ² = 2.227a; df = 1; P-value = .136					

Table 10 shows the test between elders kidnapping and their psychosocial wellbeing. The value of X² at the .05 level of significance with 1 degree of freedom was 3.841. Our computed value of 2.227a was smaller and within the range of the critical value of 3.841. This led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between elders kidnapping and their psychosocial wellbeing.

H02: There is no significant relationship between mistreatment and levels of psychosocial well-being of the elderly

Table 12: Relationship between mistreatment and psychological well-being of the elderly

			Psycho-Social Wellbeing		Total
			Good	Poor	
Mistreatment	Yes	Count	55	61	116
		Expected	17.7	16.3	34.0
	No	Count	23	11	34
		Expected	15.3%	7.3%	22.7%
Total		Count	78	72	150
		Expected	78.0	72.0	150.0
		Count	52%	48%	100%
X ² = 4.313a; df = 1; P-value = .038					

Table 11 reveals the test about the relationship between those who experienced mistreatment and those who experienced low level of psychosocial wellbeing. The value of X² at 0.5 level of significance with 1-degree freedom was 4.313. The computed value of 4.313a was greater and above the range of the critical value of 3.841. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between mistreatment and their psychosocial wellbeing.

Discussion of Findings

The result derived from the test of hypothesis one shows that there was no relationship between the kidnapping of elders and their psychosocial wellbeing. This finding negates that of Acierno (2003) who revealed that victims of kidnapping usually suffers from psychological damage which significantly incapacitates him/her from having the right relationship with people in everyday activities at work, family or social level.

Hypothesis two shows the level of the relationship between those who experience mistreatment experienced lower levels of psychosocial wellbeing. This finding is supported by Petersen (2008) who found out

that whether the motivation of the kidnappers are due to ideological, economic or personal reasons, kidnappings have negative effects on the victim, his or her family and friendship. The author explained that the elderly that are being tormented and often cramped in appalling conditions may be opened to the elements of health hazards, or subjected to threats or beatings that can lead to injury and even death.

On the part of the victim, the experience is tormenting, often cramped in appalling conditions, the captive may be opened to the elements of health hazards, or subjected to threats or beatings that can lead to injury and even death. All the same, the psychological of kidnapping on the wellbeing of the victims and significant others such as relatives and friends can be quite devastating.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Kidnapping has been a serious threat to human security in Nigeria. The implications have far reaching repercussions not only on the victims but also on the moral fabric of the society. This menace negatively affects foreign investments, infrastructural development and security of lives and properties. This situation will continue to abound in a situation where effective security frameworks are not put in place and citizens are denied of structural conditions required for the right to a decent standard of living.

Fundamentally, the study has been able to establish the causality between crime, insecurity and economic challenges in Nigeria. The understanding of the aforementioned will facilitates the use of research and appropriate policy in stamping out the menace of kidnapping, armed robbery and fraudulent practices in Nigeria and in other developing countries.

Hence, this paper recommends the following measures to curb the menace of crime in Nigeria. Since crime is directly linked to lack of education or poor quality of education, government must provide accessible and affordable education to all. Government at all levels should make it a matter of urgency to embark on provision of job opportunities and character reformation and reorientation programmes towards the acquisition of nationalistic and traditional value of hard

work, discipline, self-respect, perseverance, etc. Government should address the security lapses in Nigeria by equipping the societal agencies with necessary facilities and environment conducive to squarely facing the incidence of crime in the country.

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