



RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FEAR OF ABDUCTION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF SECONDARY SCHOOL GIRLS IN BORNO AND YOBE STATES, NORTH-EAST NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study examined relationships between fear of abduction and the psychological well-being of Secondary School Girls in Borno and Yobe states, north-east Nigeria. The target Population of the study was 23528 students from 24 Government Girls Secondary Schools in Borno and Yobe states. The sample of the study was 378 students. The study adopted a correlational design. Two instruments were used for data collection: the Fear of Abduction Scale and Psychological Well-Being Scale. Multiple correlations and Regression analysis were used to test the null hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed a significant negative relationship exists between fear of abduction and psychological wellbeing among secondary school girls students in Borno and Yobe States, ($F(1, 377) = 75.904, R = .190, p < 0.05$), the study concluded that negative relationship exists between fear of Abduction and psychological well-being among secondary school girls students in Borno and Yobe States, Based on the findings, it was recommended among others, that the results of this study should be used to design initiatives that will increase the general perception of psychological well-being, reduce fear of abduction and stress in educational setting that will lead to proper academic adjustment, excellence performance and improved well-being especially for the vulnerable girls students in Borno and Yobe States.

Keywords: Fear Abduction, Psychological Well-being, Secondary School Girls

Introduction

Secondary school education in north-east Nigeria has been devastated by nearly twelve years of armed conflict of Boko Haram insurgency. Targeted attacks on secondary school students and teachers, multiple forced displacements, and a protracted food security crisis have further weakened the secondary school education system in Borno and Yobe states, which was already struggling to attain significant school attendance before the onset of insurgency. The impression of fear of abduction is not limited to a specific aspect of life. Abduction has a widespread impact on the entire society that disrupts the normal routine of a functional society by spreading fear and terror threats among its inhabitants, particularly in Borno and Yobe states, which have a history of being vulnerable to different attacks (Akorede et al., 2022). Zannoni (2003) reported that Abduction is becoming everyone's nightmare in Nigeria. Daily, we read frightening stories of people being abducted as they go about their daily business, it is a criminal act, which first attracted national attention on 26 February 2006 when Niger Delta militants abducted foreign oil workers to press home their demand, abduction has since become ever-present and commercialized, it has spread from the Niger Delta to virtually everywhere in Nigeria, with some states being hotspots. Similarly, victims have changed from being principally foreign oil workers to Nigerians, including parents, grandparents, students and toddlers and about anyone who has a relative that could be blackmailed into coughing out a ransom.

Civil unrest, terror threats by insurgents and the ongoing abductions of Nigerians, including the well-publicised abduction of school-girls by an insurgent group, underscore the continuing challenges of combating modern slavery in Nigeria (The Global Slavery Index, 2014). The abduction of 250 girls in a girls' secondary school in Chibok, Borno State, in 2014 and many more by insurgents, represents the growing incidence of abductions in Nigeria. Dodo (2010), the abduction of some hapless and unsuspecting girls from Government Girls Secondary School in Chibok, Borno State, was the most incredible onslaught of insurgency. It added another dimension to the hue of the nefarious activities. This dastardly act of the insurgents elicited huge

public outcry from Nigerians, corporate bodies, international organisations, countries and reputable citizens of the world.

The effrontery of insurgents to abduct the young secondary school girls in Chibok and Dapchi generated national and global outrage, evident seen in wide public protests beyond the shores of Nigeria over the liberation of the abducted students. Perhaps, many women construe the abduction of the girls as one of the injustices meted out to women in Africa. As such, reputable women committed their time to champion the cause of liberating the girls. The killings and abduction of school children by the Boko Haram sect have forced the closure of schools indefinitely and the withdrawal of children and wards by the parents from the school still operating, therefore denying them access to education. North-east is the epicentre of the insurgency, but its effects reverberate through the entire country. According to Sanni (2015), the north-east region has been greatly affected by suicide bombing, abduction and attacks by militant groups, particularly the boko haram group, and this is responsible for the north-east part of Nigeria recording the highest levels of girl child illiteracy in the country.

According to Buba (2015), the children who are abducted are subjected to emotional trauma such as rape, child marriage, slavery and torture. Sanni (2015), the children are also used as human shields and suicide bombers. Ovuorie (2015), the frequent abduction of school girls has seen the attendance in schools across the country drop as a result of fear of such events. According to Olugbode (2015), Children now live in perpetual fear. The menace caused by the fear of abduction, more especially to secondary school girls in north east Nigeria, leads to school dropout, poor concentration, absenteeism, poor adjustment and a worthless view of self by the students because their ambition and aspirations are hampered by the act of abduction. There is every tendency that fear of abduction may affect students' level of self-evaluation, perception, thoughts, beliefs, feelings, which may negatively affect self-worth and self-knowledge. Adolescent girls generally fall within a very vulnerable group at a transition period with high levels of traumatic exposure and antisocial behaviours that affect their Psychological well-being,

Psychological well-being has been described as the cornerstone of mental health. According to the World Health Organization (2011), mental health is "a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, copes with the normal stresses of life, works productively and fruitfully able to contribute to his or her community". While traditionally, psychological well-being has been defined by lack of symptom distress (lack of depression, anxiety, and other symptoms of mental disorders), over time, the term has taken on a more changes in definition to accommodate some other aspect of mental health (Keyes & Magyar-Moe, 2003). Psychological well-being has become increasingly recognised as more than just an absence of distressful symptoms, but now includes positive qualities individuals possess that can lead to mental health. Psychological well-being is important for secondary school students in order to successfully adapt to school life (Bowman, 2010). The basic structure of well-being has almost always revolved around the balance between positive and negative affect and life satisfaction. Psychological well-being will be more effectively adapted to those who overcome challenges and navigate through their life; these people will most likely be adjusting to the new academic demands effectively, making friends, managing their finances, academic activities and their time effectively (Bowman, 2010). Psychological well-being is linked with the ability to adopt adaptive coping strategies in academic contexts (Freire et al., 2016). But the shocking threats of insurgency may not only influence the daily well-being of Borno and Yobe states' girls' secondary school students but also undermine their psychological functioning in adapting to overcome challenges and navigate through their academic activities and life in general. The development of balance between positive and negative affect and life satisfaction is extremely important for good and proper academic success in school and society at large. However, girls' secondary school students in Borno and Yobe states are overwhelmed with insurgency attacks and abductions.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research is to ascertain the correlation between fear of abduction and the psychological well-being of secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe states, north-east Nigeria. In specific terms, the study sought to determine the relationship between:

1. Dimension of fear of abduction (Rumination) and psychological well-being dimensions among secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe states.
2. Dimension of fear of abduction (Magnification) and psychological well-being dimensions among secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe states.
3. Dimension of fear of abduction (Helplessness) and psychological well-being dimensions among secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe states.
4. Fear of abduction and of psychological well-being among secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe states.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between the dimension of fear of abduction (Rumination) and psychological well-being dimensions among secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe states.
2. There is no significant relationship between the dimension of fear of abduction (Magnification) and psychological well-being dimensions among secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe states.
3. There is no significant relationship between the dimension of fear of abduction (Helplessness) and psychological well-being dimensions among secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe states.
4. There is no significant relationship between fear of abduction and psychological well-being among secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe states.

Methodology

The research was carried out using a correlational design to determine the degree of linear relatedness between variables and to show the strength of relatedness. Correlational studies investigate the possibility of relationships between two or more variables. A correlational study describes the degree to which two or more quantitative variables are related, and it does so by using a correlation coefficient. This design is considered appropriate because the study identified fear of abduction and psychological well-being of students, to determine a possible relationship between the variables among secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe States.

The target population of the study was twenty-three thousand five hundred and twenty-eight (23528) students in twenty-four (24) Government Girls' Secondary Schools of Borno and Yobe states, with 16050 and 7478 Secondary Schools Girls in Borno and Yobe states, respectively. Government girls' secondary schools were used because they were primary targets of the Boko Haram violence, threat and abduction. Experience showed that they were also vulnerable to insurgent abduction attacks.

The sample of the study was three hundred and seventy-eight (378) students. This was based on the Research advisors' sampling determination table (2006), which indicated that for a population of ten thousand (10,000) to twenty-five thousand (25,000), at a 95% confidence interval and 0.05 level of significance. A multistage sampling technique was used to select the sample. The first stage of sampling was clustering the schools into zones, and then purposive sampling was used to select secondary schools from each zone in each state. SS1-3 students were selected to participate in the study because they were in junior classes when the Chibok and Dapchi incidents happened, considering their experience of abduction and threat by Boko Haram insurgents. The third stage was proportionate sampling used in selecting the number of participants from each sampled schools. The last stage was the use of a simple random technique to select the participants from each school, as it ensures that everybody has an equal chance of becoming part of the selection.

Fear of Abduction Scale (FAS)

The Fear of Abduction Scale was adapted from the Fear of Future Terrorism Scale, developed by Sinclair and Locicero (2006), was used to measure the impact of fear of abduction on secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe States. The scale had 21 Self-Reported items, rated on four (4) likert scale measuring three construct as follows: Rumination (items 1- 6), Magnification (items 7-13) and Helplessness (items 14- 21) The researcher however modified the Scale from Fearing Future Terrorism Scale to Fear of Abduction Scale and all the word "terrorism" was replaced with the word "abduction" with the following s revised scored items: 1,3,6,16,19 and 20.

Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWS)

The Psychological Well-Being Scale was adapted from Ryff (1995), which had forty-two (42) items that assess the psychological component of well-being. The scale consisted of a series of statements reflecting six areas of psychological well-being: autonomy (items 1-7), environmental mastery (items 8-14), personal growth (items 15-21), positive relations with others (items 22-28), purpose in life (items 29-35) and self-acceptance (items 36-42). Respondent's rate statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Responses are totalled for each of the subscales. The higher score indicates that the respondent has a mastery of that component in his or her life. Conversely, a low score shows that the respondent struggles to feel comfortable with that particular concept. The following are revised scored items: 3,4,6,10,12,13,15,17,19,21,23, 24, 27,29,31,32,35,38,40 and 41. The data collected for the study were analysed using multiple correlations and regression analysis to test the null hypothesis. The decision rule for the null hypothesis was that if p – calculated was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis would be rejected; otherwise, it would be retained.

Hypothesis Testing

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between fear of abduction and psychological well-being among secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe States.

Multiple Correlation Matrix of indices of Fear of Abduction (Rumination) and indices of Psychological Wellbeing among Secondary School girls in Borno and Yobe States.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Rumination (1)	1.000						
Autonomy (2)	-.175**	1.000					
Environmental mastery (3)	-.217**	.067	1.000				
Personal growth (4)	-.175**	.077	.222**	1.000			
Positive relations with others (5)	-.172**	.134**	.162**	.271**	1.000		
Purpose in life (6)	-.255**	.135**	.094**	.139**	.362**	1.000	
Self-acceptance (7)	-.261**	.122**	.245**	.246**	.216**	.159**	1.000

** Correlation is significant at $p < .05$

The table above revealed the extent to which fear of abduction related to psychological well-being, multiple correlation analysis. The correlations among variables are reported above, revealing that all the subscales of psychological well-being were found to be significantly related to rumination. Autonomy correlated negatively with rumination ($r = -.175$, $p < .05$). That is, students with higher levels of autonomy tend to score lower in rumination and vice versa. Negative relationship was also established between environmental mastery and rumination ($r = -.217$, $p < .05$). At the same time, the results show a negative relationship between personal growth and rumination ($r = -.175$, $p < .05$), also negative relationship exist between an indices of Positive relations with others and rumination ($r = -.175$, $p < .05$), purpose in life and rumination ($r = -.255$, $p < .05$) and Self – acceptance with rumination ($r = -.261$, $p < .05$).

Multiple Correlation Matrix of indices of Fear of Abduction (Magnification) and indices of Psychological Wellbeing among Secondary School Girls in Borno and Yobe States

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Magnification (1)	1.000						
Autonomy (2)	-.171**	1.000					
Environmental mastery (3)	-.109**	.067	1.000				
Personal growth (4)	-.125**	.077	.222**	1.000			
Positive relations with others (5)	-.186**	.134**	.162**	.271	1.000		
Purpose in life (6)	-.104**	.135**	.094**	.139	.362**	1.000	
Self-acceptance (7)	-.176**	.122**	.245**	.246**	.216**	.159**	1.000

** Correlation is significant at $p < .05$

The extent to which fear of abduction relates to psychological well-being and whether the relationship is significant is analysed using multiple correlation analysis. The correlations among variables are reported in the above table revealed that all the subscales of psychological well-being were found to be significantly related to magnification. Negative relationship exists between autonomy and magnification ($r = -.171$, $p < .05$),

environmental mastery and magnification ($r = -.109$, $p < .05$), personal growth and magnification ($r = -.125$, $p < .05$), indices of positive relations with others and magnification ($r = -.186$, $p < .05$), Purpose in life and magnification ($r = -.104$, $p < .05$) and self-acceptance with magnification ($r = -.176$, $p < .05$).

Multiple Correlation Matrix of indices of Fear of Abduction (Helplessness) and indices of Psychological Wellbeing among Secondary School Girls in Borno and Yobe States

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Helplessness (1)	1.000						
Autonomy (2)	-.190**	1.000					
Environmental mastery (3)	-.272**	.067**	1.000				
Personal growth (4)	-.333**	.077**	.222**	1.000			
Positive relations with others (5)	-.390**	.134**	.162**	.271**	1.000		
Purpose in life (6)	-.083**	.135**	.094**	.139**	.362**	1.000	
Self-acceptance (7)	-.398**	.122**	.245**	.246**	.216**	.159**	1.000

** Correlation is significant at $p < .05$

The correlations among variables are reported in the table shows that all the subscales of psychological well-being were found to be significantly related to helplessness. Negative relationship exists between autonomy and helplessness ($r = -.190$, $p < .05$) and purpose in life and helplessness ($r = -.083$, $p < .05$). The results of the analysis also revealed negative relationship between environmental mastery and helplessness ($r = -.272$, $p < .05$), personal growth and helplessness ($r = -.333$, $p < .05$), an indices of positive relations with others and helplessness ($r = -.390$, $p < .05$) and self – acceptance with helplessness ($r = -.398$, $p < .05$).

Multiple Correlation Matrix of Fear of Abduction and Psychological Well-being among Secondary School Girls in Borno and Yobe States

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Fear of Abduction (1)	1.000							
Autonomy (2)	-.096**	1.000						
Environmental mastery (3)	-.273**	.067**	1.000					
Personal growth (4)	-.271**	.077**	.222**	1.000				
Positive relation with others (5)	-.298**	.134**	.162**	.271**	1.000			
Purpose in life (6)	-.055	.135**	.094**	.139**	.362**	1.000		
Self-acceptance (7)	-.257**	.122**	.245**	.246**	.216**	.159**	1.000	
Psychological Wellbeing (8)	-.409**	.337**	.556**	.597**	.654**	.562**	.598**	1.000

** Correlation is significant at $p < .05$

The table above shows correlations among variables. The analyses revealed that fear of abduction was significantly related to all the subscales of psychological variables, with the exception of purpose in life. The results show that a negative correlation exists between fear of abduction and purpose in life ($r = -.055$, $p > .05$). Negative relationship exists between fear of abduction and autonomy ($r = -.096$, $p < .05$). The results of the analysis also revealed negative relationship between environmental mastery and fear of abduction ($r = -.273$, $p < .05$), fear of abduction and personal growth ($r = -.271$, $p < .05$), an indices positive relations with others and fear of abduction ($r = -.298$, $p < .05$) fear of abduction with self – acceptance ($r = -.257$, $p < .05$) and fear of abduction and Psychological well-being ($r = -.409$, $P < .05$).

Summary of Regression Analysis of Fear of Abduction and Psychological Well-being among Secondary School Girls in Borno and Yobe States

Model	N	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	R	Sig.
1 Regression	378	3858.307	1	3858.307	75.904	.190	.000 ^b
Residual		19112.555	376	50.831			
Total	378	22970.862	377				

a. Dependent Variable: Psychological well-being

b. Predictors: (Constant), Fear of Abduction

The analysis in the table above shows the summary of multiple correlation analysis results between fear of abduction and psychological well-being among secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe States. The results

showed that there is a significant negative relationship between fear of abduction and psychological well-being among secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe States ($F(1, 377) = 75.904$, $R = .190$, $p < 0.05$) with 19% contribution of the predictor variable. Therefore, the null hypothesis stated that no significant relationship exists between fear of abduction and psychological well-being, is rejected.

Summary of the Findings

An overall significant relationship existed between psychological well-being and fear of abduction among secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe States, ($F(6, 377) = 14.504$, $R = .190$, $p < 0.05$). The detailed showed that negative relationship existed between autonomy and fear of abduction ($r = -.096$, $p < .05$). The results of the analysis also revealed negative and significant relationship between environmental mastery and fear of abduction ($r = -.273$, $p < .05$), personal growth and fear of abduction ($r = -.271$, $p < .05$), positive relations with others indices and fear of abduction ($r = -.298$, $p < .05$) and self – acceptance and fear of abduction ($r = -.257$, $p < .05$) and Psychological wellbeing and fear of abduction ($r = -.409$, $p < .05$)

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between psychological well-being and fear of Abduction among secondary school girls in Borno and Yobe states. Autonomy was found to be significantly related to rumination, which means that students with higher levels of autonomy tend to score lower in rumination and vice versa. The finding of this study agrees with those of Halim and Arslan (2013), who found that there was a significant, positive correlation between all subscales of psychological well-being and self-compassion. The study also reveals that all the remaining indices of psychological well-being were significantly related to rumination. In the same vein, the finding of this study reveals that all the subscales of psychological well-being were significantly related to magnification. This, by implication, means that, as the psychological well-being of the students increases, the magnification will decrease because an improvement in their state of psychological well-being would significantly reduce the threat of insurgency.

The study revealed that all the indices of psychological well-being were negatively related to helplessness. This agrees with the findings of Bano (2014) and Halim and Arslan (2013), who reported that all subscales of psychological well-being were significantly related to stress. In general, the finding reveals that there is a significant relationship between psychological well-being and fear of abduction. This is consistent with the findings of Asad, Muhammad-Shah and Jamal (2018), whose findings revealed that fear of terrorism had a significant negative relationship with the psychological well-being of adolescents reasons been as both studies used adolescents who are residing in terrorist/insurgency-affected areas. The result of this study didn't differ significantly from the findings of other researchers' theory and practice.

Conclusion

Based on the analyses and findings of the study, it was concluded negative relationship existed between Fear of Abduction and Psychological well-being of secondary school girls' students in Borno and Yobe States.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

Government and school management should intensify security across all girls' Secondary Schools in Borno and Yobe States to reduce the level of fear of abduction to improve state psychological well-being of girls.

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