

Community Policing a Veritable Security Strategy for Curbing Kidnapping in Kwara State, Nigeria: Islamic Perspectives

^{*1}Adisa Issa Usman, ²Sayuti Hassan Abdullahi, ³I. S. Owoyale-AbdulGaniy, & ⁴Olaniyi Jibril Ayuba

^{*1, 3 & 4}Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education, Faculty of Education, Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin Nigeria. **Email:** imamabujemilat@gmail.com^{*1} abuumar363@gmail.com², abukamilu@gmail.com⁴

⁴Department of Religion, Faculty of Humanity, Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin Nigeria. **Email:** ayubaolaniyijibril38@gmail.com⁴

Abstract

Unlawful imprisoning someone and keeping him somewhere for the sake of taking ransom from the family is a threat highly discouraged in Islam while security of lives and properties is among the fundamental rights emphasized in Islam. In having high quality of security, community where people live must contribute larger percentage and otherwise the people of such community will be having security challenges. It against this background, that this study examined community policing a veritable security strategy for curbing kidnapping in Kwara State, Nigeria. The historical, analytical and phenomenological methods of research were adopted to discuss all issues that have to do with the study. The historical method was used to discuss the historical background of kidnapping in Nigeria. The analytical method was used to analysis the trends of kidnapping and modes of kidnappers' operations while phenomenological approach was used to discuss the impact of kidnapping on peoples' lives and properties in Kwara State and the use of community policing to curb the perpetrators in relation to Islamic perspectives. The findings of this study revealed that kidnapping has caused serious havoc and put unprecedented fear in the mind of people living in Kwara State. The study concluded that community policing possesses ability to reduce kidnapping operations in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study suggested that Kwara State Security Agency should intensify their efforts by providing effective and standby security officers that will be monitoring affected local government areas in the state.

Keywords: Community Policing, Security, Kidnapping, Islamic Perspectives, Curbing

Introduction

Islam is a religion that encourages any operation that can aid security of lives and properties irrespective of peoples' religion, language, tribe, colour and nation, and discourages attitudes that can threaten peoples' lives and tamper

with their properties. Numerous portions of Quran and Hadith emphasized on the needs to have effective security in the community: Allah says: *“Those who believe, and do not obscure their faith with wrongdoing, those will have security, and they are guided”* (6:82). This verse is addressing the connection between faith and security. This means that only faithful ones will promote community security. In Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that: *“He who grants safety to a fearful person, Allah will grant him safety from the torment of the Day of Judgment”* (Musnad Ahmad, 12657). The Hadith is encouraging rendering safety to the people living in any given community where there is no peace regardless of religion, colour, language and tribe and Kwara State is a community on her own.

Kwara State is among the states categorized under North Central Geo-political Zone in Nigeria. In term of peace, safety and security, Kwara State is one of the peaceful states in Nigeria to the extent that the state is named state of harmony. The name was given due to high level of peace, safety and security recorded in the state since its establishment. Ilorin which is the capital of the state is globally known as home of peace. This implies that issue of insecurity is so foreign among the people of Kwara State because they have not been experiencing any dreadful and fearful situations before now. The state has diverse ethnic groups that formed from Hausa, Fulani, Yoruba, Nupe, Baruba, Baruten and others. The state is a multi-religious state that allows peaceful co-existence to reign and the people of the state are peaceful, tolerant and accommodating.

Kidnapping is a security threat designed to scatter the peaceful co-existence in all states in Nigeria including Kwara State. According to Ibrahim and Mukhtar (2017), kidnapping refers to illegal abduction of individual in order to collect unlawful ransom from the victims’ family. Soluade et al. (2025) delineated it as the process of keeping peoples in an unknown place purposely to harm the victims or collect money from their family. This is done for different purposes which include politics, religion, tribe and racism, although this merciless act is attributed to Fulani tribe in Nigeria. Maydawa (2023) explained that the communities where Nigerians live have become terrible abodes due to the high increase of insecurity in the country. Ibekwe and Alabi (2021) added that Nigeria policy force and other security agency that is expected to be a beacon of peace, safety and harmony had become unreliable people in the community due to series of injustice, corruption and impartiality attributed to them. However, citizens are encouraged to prepare themselves to rescue their people

from artificial threats of insecurity posed by unknown people who called kidnappers.

Historical Development of Kidnapping in Nigeria

Generally speaking kidnapping is not a new operation in the world. It is an operation that its existence had been confirmed in the Glorious Quran when Allah says: *“The punishment for those fight Allah and His messenger, and strive to spread corruption on earth, is that they be killed, or crucified, or have their hands and feet cut off on opposite sides, or be banished from the land. That is to disgrace them in this life, and in the Hereafter they will have a terrible punishment”* (5:33). The verse is a testimony to the existence of deviants and corruption perpetrators like kidnappers, terrorists, insurgents, and others in the history of man on the earth. However, the history of kidnapping in Nigeria could be traced back to 2006 when petroleum oil company employees were kidnapped in Delta State for the purpose of collecting money from their families. The success of the kidnappers at that time exposed notorious people in Nigeria to another source of becoming millionaire unjustly (Osolafia & Ameh, 2022). Since that period the case of kidnapping continues to gain popularity among unscrupulous citizens and non-citizens in the country to the extent that they kidnap indiscriminately. The gangs who kidnapped Salihu Tanko, and Commissioner for Information and Strategy in Niger State demanded for 100 and 1.2m Dollars respectively (Ibekwe & Alabi, 2021).

In addition, the phenomenon of kidnapping emerged from abducting government officials, religious leaders, and innocent children of prominent politicians among others in the country like joke around 2006 in Delta State (Ngwama, 2014). Furthermore, Reuter (2009) explained that the statistics of kidnapping cases in Nigeria skyrocketed to 865 cases between 2006 and 2008. This report astonished every Nigerian by them but now the phenomenon has escalated to all four corners of the country including Kwara State. There are different varieties of information spread about kidnapping phenomenon in the some local government areas in the state. A report says that the operation of kidnapping in Kwara State was centered at some local government areas like Isin, Oke-Ero, Edu, Baruten, Ifelodun and Ekiti local government areas and these local government areas are categorized under Kwara South and North parts of the state (AbdulKareem, 2025).

For instance, on the 11th February 2025 Felicia Adesina’s son was kidnapped in Omu-Aran, the headquarter of Irepodun local government area of Kwara

State. The situation was horrible and terrible with Mrs Adesina when she was called on phone to ascertain the abduction of her son. Another one was reported on June 22nd 2025 when Alhaji Dauda Ismaila was kidnapped in his residence in Edu local government area of Kwara State. The operation was carried out by heavily gunmen who sporadically releasing shouts in to the air in order to scare people away and to create fear in that community. The entire neighborhood was in serious panic and trauma since that day. (Akinyemi, 2025).

Similarly, on the June 29th 2025 the head of local vigilantes in Ifelodun local government area of Kwara State was mercilessly killed by a group of unknown gunmen (Abidoeye, 2025). Recently, on the 8th July 2025 a report showed that the operation of kidnapping got increase to the extent that in Lafiagi, the headquarter of Edu local government area of Kwara State three women were kidnapped in Kokodo and two men in Lafiagi (AbdulKareem, 2025).

From the foregoing, it is clear that kidnapping is real in Kwara State and the residents in local government areas in Kwara South and Kwara North Senatorial Districts are now in serious fear, panic and trauma.

Islamic Perspectives on Kidnapping

Islam is a religion that does not leave a single issue untouched in fact it centers much discussion on security, safety and peace. There are numerous portions of Quran and Hadith where insecurity, kidnapping, insurgency, militancy and others are expatiated for all Muslims. Among the verses where Allah discusses kidnapping are:

“Because of what We ordained for the Children of Israel: that whoever kills a person, unless it is murder or corruption on earth, it is as if he killed the whole mankind , and whoever saves it, it is as if he saved the whole mankind. Our messengers came to them with clarifications, but even after that many of them continue to commit corruption on the land” (5:32). This verse encourages peace keeping and discouraging peace breaking because it is condemning the introduction of bad practices on the earth in order to threaten members of a certain community or a group of people. Similarly, the verse stated that many people are corruption promoters as it is seen in kidnapers, militants and insurgents in Nigeria today.

In another verse, Quran says: *“And Lot, when he said to his people, “you are committing an obscenity not perpetrated before you by anyone in the whole world. You approach men, and cut off their way and commit lewdness in your gatherings...” (29:28-29).* It shows from the verse that issue of kidnapping is not a new thing in the history of man on the earth it was even introduced by the people of Lot because they by then used to block peoples’ way and prevent them from performing their daily activities.

Islam has designed punishment for practicing kidnapping, militancy and the like and the nature of punishment was spread out in the Quran as reads thus:

“The punishment for those fight Allah and His messenger, and strive to spread corruption on earth, is that they be killed, or crucified, or have their hands and feet cut off on opposite sides, or be banished from the land. That is to disgrace them in this life, and in the Hereafter they will have a terrible punishment” (5:33). From this verse, it is explicitly mentioned the offences and the nature of punishment. Muslim scholars categorized the punishment based on the gravity and grade. They enumerated the types of punishment mentioned in the verse as, killing, crucifying, cutting of hand and feet, and expel from the country. They therefore attributed killing to kidnapping operation that contains killing of people unjustly, crucifying is attached to operation the involves killing, creating fear in the mind of people and stealing, cutting off the hand and feet in opposite sides is aligned with operation that involves stealing while banishment is for breaking the peace of the community. The operation of kidnappers normally goes along with all afore mentioned categories of unscrupulous activities mentioned in the Quran therefore punishment should be pronounced base on Judiciary Decision in the country.

Islamic Perspectives on Peace Building

Building peace and spreading it among the people is a fundamental responsibility of all Muslims as it is appeared in the meaning of Islam (*salam*) which means peace. This implies that Muslims are expected to build peace, give safety and construct security wherever they find themselves. In many portions of Hadith Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was reported to have encouraged building peace and discouraged distorting it. Among the Hadith where Prophet encouraged peace building are: *“He who grants safety to a fearful person, Allah will grant him safety from the torment of the Day of Judgment” (Musnad Ahmad 12657).* This Hadith is pointing to the

significance of restoring peace and security to any community that is not safe. Building peace is a sign of true believer, on this note Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was reported to have said: *“The Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hand the Muslims are safe, and the believer is the one whom people trust with their lives and wealth” (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 10; Sahih Muslim, 40).*

In showing sacredness of peace building, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was reported to have said: *“your blood, your wealth, and your honour are sacred to one another, as sacred as this Day of yours, in the month of yours, in the city of yours...” (Sahih al-Bukhari, 1739; Sahih Muslim, 1679).* It is understood from this Hadith that secure other peoples’ lives, wealth and properties is a compulsory assignment on every righteous Muslim and he/she should not tamper with others’ peace, safety and security.

Community Policing for Curbing Kidnapping

Community is a place where people living together to promote peace, safety and security among themselves. In Islam community is seen as an abode where people of different culture, religion, race and tribe live together as brothers and sisters. The typical example of this is the community established by Prophet Muhammad in Madinah which is based on pure faith and strong brotherhood. On this note Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was reported to have said: *“The Muslim is the brother of the Muslim; he does not wrong him nor abandons him” (Sahih al-Bukhari 2442; Sahih Muslim, 2580).* The meaning of this Hadith is that Muslim community needs to promote real brotherhood in justice, cooperation, support, and protection. This is also confirmed from Quran where Allah says: *“You are the best community that ever emerged for humanity: you advocate what is moral and forbid what is immoral, and believe in Allah ...” (3:110).* This verse is describing the characteristics of Muslim community, how does it look like and what the people therein value much. According to the verse, Muslim community is the best community because of high level of cooperation, love, support, and compassion and all this will result to total safety, love and peace in the community.

Policing is the process of developing innovative and comprehensive approach to the maintenance of community in order to protect or prevent the people from internal or external attack like kidnapping, killing, and bombing (Abati, 2010). Community policing is a new innovation in the history of Nigeria security defense established to strengthen the enforcement of laws and

operation of Security Defense in the country. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had encouraged such in Madinah as part of implementing Allah's rule of security. This is evident in the Quran where Allah says: *"And beware of discord which does not afflict the wrongdoers among you exclusively, and know that Allah is severe in retribution"* (8:25). This verse is a strong warning from Allah against fearing not to defend the community and Allah let them know that repercussion of that will not affect only the weak. In another verse, Allah says: *"So fight in the cause of Allah, you are responsible only for yourself. And rouse the believers. Perhaps Allah will restrain the might of those who disbelieve. Allah is Stronger in Might, More Punishing"* (4:84). The verse is making waging war against the terrorist like kidnappers, militants and others compulsory on community heads that need to strategise for effective means to curb kidnapping activities within the community.

From foregoing, it is now understood that community policing is an alternative defensive strategy designed to reduce corruption in the community but managed by the members of such community in collaboration with Security Agency in the state. According to Bureau of Justice Assistance (2013), community policing is a security operation that involves the active participation of local government, civic and business leaders, public and private agencies, residents, Mosques, Churches, schools and hospitals in carrying out collective exercise to ameliorate the perpetrators of evils in any given community. In the same vein, Acha, et al. (2023) explained that establishing community policing needs all forms of collaborative efforts and plans to exploit the power of crimes promoters in the community and it requires substantive planning like identification of kidnappers' channels, methods used in getting communication and their hidden abodes. On this note Allah says: *"Those who perpetrated the slander are a band of you..."* (24:11). This is a confirmation from the Quran that kidnappers who are threatening peoples in Kwara State are getting information from a group of people who are part and parcel of those communities. And with the application of effective community policing wrong members will be identified and dealt with accordingly.

Soluade, et al. (2025) worked on community based security and curbing of kidnapping in Oke-Ogun Oyo State, Nigeria. The study reported that the primary factors that contributed to the increase of kidnapping operation in the state are among others weak law enforcement, insufficient security, unemployment and poverty. In Acha, et al. (2023), it is stated that community

participation, collaboration between community policing and law enforcement agency and establishment of quasi-judicial security outfits will reduce kidnapping operation in any given community in the country. Ochiagha et al. (2023) suggested that recruitment of more vigilantes and training of community members how to track and suspect crime promoters in the community will ameliorate the operation of kidnappers in the community. Therefore, collaborative efforts of all members of the community with sincerity and honesty are among the vital solutions to the threat and trauma of kidnapping in the state. Akeem and Shitu (2025) reported that community policing has been effectively adopted in many countries in the world to curb crimes and atrocities in the society but Nigeria is facing increase in crimes like kidnapping, militancy, and insurgency due to factors including religious and political influences, corruption, lack of trust in law enforcement, inadequate funding, and polluted socio-cultural practices.

Conclusion

Islamic perspectives in using community policing to reduce the operation of kidnappers in Kwara State was systematically discussed in this study and therefore injunctions from al-Quran and Hadith were adopted to justify the position and contributions of Islam to the curbing strategy against crimes and the perpetrators like kidnappers, militant, insurgent and others. The study mentioned the significant contributions of community members in ameliorating the operation in the state and what previous researchers had mentioned regarding planning to succeed like community participation, collaboration between community policing and law enforcement agency, establishment of quasi-judicial security outfits, recruitment of more vigilantes and training of community members how to track and suspect crime promoters in the community among others.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study, the following were the suggestions raised: that

1. Kwara State Security Agency should intensify their efforts by providing effective and standby security officers that will be monitoring affected local government areas in the state.

2. Community leaders in collaboration with state security agency should establish local armed vigilantes that will be working day and night with in the community and its environ.
3. Members of the community should be trained on how to spy sincerely and honestly in order to fish out the informants and bad heads among the members.
4. Religious leaders should be encouraged to pray for peace and preach peace building in the community. This will allow members to understand the importance of having peace in the community.

Reference

Quran.com. Qur'an 3:110. <https://quran.com/al-Imrān/3-110>.

Quran.com. Qur'an 4:84. <https://quran.com/al-Nisāi/4-84>.

Quran.com. Qur'an 5:32. <https://quran.com/al-Māidah/5-32>.

Quran.com. Qur'an 5:33. <https://quran.com/al-Māidah/5-33>.

Quran.com. Qur'an 6:82. <https://quran.com/al-An'am/6-82>.

Quran.com. Qur'an 8:25. <https://quran.com/al-Anfāl/8-25>.

Quran.com. Qur'an 24:11. <https://quran.com/al-Nūr/24-11>.

Quran.com. Qur'an 29:28-29. <https://quran.com/al-Ankabūt/29-28-29>.

Acha, J. O., Chukwuemeka, O., Ubana, M. U., & Ogechi, N. (2023). Community policing as a security strategy for curbing kidnapping in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria. *Prestige Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 6 (1), 77-87. <https://openaccessglobal.com>

Akeem, A. K., & Shitu, S. U. (2025). Localizing security: the benefits of community policing in enhancing safety in Nigeria. *Journal of Public Administration & Social Welfare*, 10 (3), 84-102. jpaswrwww.iiardjournals.org

Usman, A. I., Abdullahi, S. H., Owoyale-AbdulGaniy, I. S., & Ayuba, O. J. (2025) Community Policing a Veritable Security Strategy for Curbing Kidnapping in Kwara State, Nigeria: Islamic Perspectives. *Rima International Journal of Education*, 4(5), 1-11.

Bureau of Justice Assistance (2013). Understanding community policing a framework for action. A Monograph from the US Department of Justice. Office of Justice Programme.

Mumini A. (8th July, 2025). "Residents flee as kidnappers lay siege on Kwara" 8th July, 2025. <https://www.dailytrust.com>

Ibekwe, N. & Alabi, M. (October 2, 2021). SPECIAL REPORT: Inside Nigeria's worsening kidnap-for-ransom scourge. Available on <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/487509-special-report-inside-nigerias-worsening-kidnap-for-ransom-scourge.html>.

Ibrahim, B. and Mukhtar, J.I. (2017). An Analysis of the Causes and Consequences of Kidnapping in Nigeria. *African Research Review*, 11(4), p.134. <https://doi.org/10.4314/afrrrev.v11i4.11>.

Maidawa, B. (2023). The role of community participating in crime prevention and control: Evidence from Bauchi metropolis. *Journal of Policy and Development Studies*, [online] 14(1),127–142.

Musnad Imam Ahmad Hadith 12657. <https://www.prophetmuhammad.com/imamahamd/12657>.

Ngwama, J. C. (2014). Kidnapping in Nigeria: An emerging social crime and the implication for the labour market. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 4 (1), 133-145. www.ijhssnet.com

Ochiagha, C. D., Chuke, N. U., & Ugunabo, C. T. (2023). The extent of the use of community policing in curbing kidnapping in Anambra State. *International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews*, 4 (6), 2589-2593. www.ijrpr.com

Osolafia, M. E., & Ameh, E. U. (2022). Intelligence-led policing and kidnapping crimes prevention and control in Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria. *European Journal of Science, Innovation and Technology*, 2 (4), 79-89. www.ejsit-journal.com

Sahih Al-Bukhari Hadith 10. <https://www.prophetmuhammad.com/bukhari/10>.

Sahih Al-Bukhari Hadith 1739. <https://www.prophetmuhammad.com/bukhari/1739>.

Sahih Al-Bukhari Hadith 2442.
<https://www.prophetmuhammad.com/bukhari/2442>.

Sahih Muslim Hadith 40. <https://www.prophetmuhammad.com/muslim/40>.

Sahih Muslim Hadith 1679.
<https://www.prophetmuhammad.com/muslim/1679>.

Sahih Muslim Hadith 2580.
<https://www.prophetmuhammad.com/muslim/2580>.

Soluade, Z. O., Adebayo, O. S., & Taiwo, B. B. (2025). Community based security and curbing of kidnapping in Oke-Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria. Rima international Journal of Education (RIJE), 4 (1), 370-384. <https://rijessu.com/volume-4-issue-1>

Abidoye, B. (29th June, 2025). “Farmers fleeing the brunt as kidnappers lay siege to Kwara” 29th June 2025. www.premiumtimes.ng.com

Akinyemi, D. (24th June, 2025). “Fresh kidnap attempt claims three lives in Kwara State” 24th June, 2025. www.vanguardngr.com/2025/06