

GIRL'S ABDUCTION AND FORCED MARRIAGE IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS.

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Abstract

Today in Nigeria, the average good looking girl child is no longer safe. Young girls are being abducted at will and forced into marriage with their names and religion changed without any of their parents' consent. This paper examined some of the cases of girl's abduction and forced marriage in the recent history of Nigeria. The paper also highlighted the perceptions and positions of the family, the society, religion and the law on girl's abduction and forced marriage. The paper also looks at the implications and strategies to curb these immoral vices in our society. The study adopted the descriptive design. It drew upon primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include oral information and testimonies. Newspapers and magazines reports were also used in conjunction with official records in Government publications. Secondary sources include relevant books. The researcher also made use of direct observation method. All the information gathered were subjected to historical examination.

Keywords: Girl-child, Forced marriage, Challenges, Solutions, Nigeria.

Introduction

Girls abduction and forced marriage is an immoral vice which occurs when a man kidnaps and runs away with a young girl from the parent and forcefully marry her without her consent nor the consent of the parents. In this case, the abducted girl is seized, snatched and stolen away by her abductor, while the parents cannot lay hold of their daughter as the abductor carry her off to an unknown place of incarceration and imprisonment for forceful marriage. The genesis of girls abduction and forced marriage in Nigeria can be traced during the Pre-colonial period, when strong men or dictatorial kings with absolute, almighty, despotic, tyrannical and overbearing, imperious, totalitarian, oppressive power over their subjects and through their thugs and guard subdued beautiful girls for the authoritarian king to forcefully marry them. This was how some shameless kings during the Pre-colonial period cunningly, intriguingly, and with Machiavellian style took away people's daughters and married them by force. In like manner, during Nigerian-Biafran civil war of 1967 - 1970, some immoral Nigerian soldiers and civilians abducted young beautiful Biafran girls and forcefully married them. The then military Junta turned a blind eye to this immoral vice. After the civil war, the crime continued because war brings scars, and open hell which always introduces vices abhorred by family and the wider society.

Today, the civil war has come and gone, but the scars of girl's abduction and forceful marriage has since been assumed a life of its own and it is increasing in leaps and bounds. Especially with the introduction of insurgency and terrorism by Islamic fundamentalists'

activities of Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria, forceful marriage and conversion to Islam is spreading like wide harmmattan fire. The culture of abduction of girls and forced marriage is alien to many ethnic groups in Nigeria. More so, the issue of Christian girls abduction, forceful marriage and conversion to Islam is strictly a conflict between Islam and Christianity. It is clearly the Islamization of Christian girls by force. It is unfortunate that Christian girls in Nigeria are been used for terror practices. This practice brings fear and oppression to Christian girls. This paper examined some of the cases of girl's abduction and forced marriage in the recent history of Nigeria. The study also discussed the position of Islam, Christianity, the family, the wider society and the law on girl's abduction and forceful marriage in Nigeria. It as well highlighted its challenges and proffered solutions to curb these vices in Nigeria.

Some Cases of Girls Abduction and Forced Marriage in the Recent History of Nigeria

Some of the cases of young girls abducted, forced into marriage with their names and religion changed without any of their parents consent include the brutal abduction of 276 girls from Government Secondary School Chibok, Borno State on April 14, 2014, by the militant Islamic group, Boko Haram. It is unfortunate that both the Goodluck Jonathan and Buhari administrations have failed to totally rescue the Chibok girls. The initial bring back our girls campaign mounted by the former Minister of Education, Dr. Ekwesilieze Obi and other civil society groups has long died down with some prominent Nigerians coming out to say that the girls could no longer be completely rescued despite national and international pressure on the military and the government to rescue the Chibok girls. During the Goodluck Jonathan administration the notorious and widely known Boko Haram leader, Ibrahim Shekau, had told a bewildered world that the girls had all been converted to Islam and married off and there was nothing anyone could do about it. And to confirm everyone's fears, tens of girls abducted by the militants that have been freed by the Nigerian military had none of the Chibok girls in the number.

Sadly, it was reported by *Daily Sun*, Wednesday, March 16, 2016 that some Christian religious leaders are keeping a harem of girls against their wishes and those of their immediate families, of note is the convicted General Overseer of Christian Praying Assembly (CPA), Chukwuemeka Ezeugo, a.k.a Rev King. The cleric is to die by hanging for the murder of Ann Uzor, one of the ladies in his service, whom he set ablaze, others who survived the ordeal had long fled the church. It has become noticed that efforts to retrieve girls abducted by false religious leaders and terrorists are at every occasion rebuffed by their army of bodyguards. For example, in February, 2013, a 25 year old Charity Uzoechina was allegedly abducted and converted to Islam in Suleja, Niger State and her parents were denied access to her, the lady was a student of Federal Polytechnic Bida, was the daughter of Pastor Raymond Uzoechina of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Kwankwashe, Suleja, Aisha, as she was later renamed, was allegedly taken into harem, allegedly to prevent her re-conversion and subsequent return to her parents. There was a high level scheming including the intervention of the Sharia Court, Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and other agencies to resolve her case. But even now, not many can tell how it all ended.

According to Cosmas Omegoh in an article entitled *"Ripples Over Girls Abductions, Forced Marriages"*, It examines how some parents have been given a taste of hell, following the abduction of their daughter, who was later forced into marriage, some young adult women too are said to be kept in some religious houses where they cannot free themselves. Efforts by their parents to retrieve them readily come to naught and there are no powerful voices to speak for them. But the case of the abduction of Ese Oruru, 14, in Bayelsa State,

Nigeria, and her subsequent marriage and conversion to Islam in Kano by her abductor Yunusa, aka Yellow, is different and serious case. The ripples so far generated by the Ese-Yunusa case subsist. However, the Ese-Oruru case is inspiring, unfolding and forcing more parents, who had their daughters taken away from them come out to tell their sad stories. One of them is Ndubuisi Nicodemus, this extremely trouble father alleged that his daughter Ifeoma, 16, was forcefully taken away from him in 2014. He claimed that 21 months after, he and his wife were yet to see their daughter.

Another case of girl abduction, forced marriage and conversion to Islam in Northern Nigeria was the sorrowful stories of Mr. Ndubuisi, who lives in Zaria, Kaduna State, he alleged that a neighbor, identified as Abdullahi lured and took his daughter to a certain Mallam Khalil. Both parent reported to *Daily Sun*, Wednesday March 16, 2016 that they were told that their daughter had since been married off and converted to Islam and now renamed Aisha. And so far, the troubled parents of the abducted girls are frequently going in and out of the police station and other relevant agencies fruitlessly fighting to get their daughter back home.

Daily Sun Report Wednesday, March 16, 2016 explain that the troubled parent had so far petitioned the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Zaria and the Commissioner of Police, Kaduna State and the Department of State Service (DSS) asking for the much needed help, which is yet to come. At the same time, the *Daily Sun* reported that another 14 year old girl, Lucy Ejeh, a Christian Igbo, had been allegedly abducted and possibly forcefully married in Zamfara State. Repot suggest that she might have been converted to Islam against her parent's wish. In the same vein, Paul Adaji (2016) recently came out to reveal how his daughter, Patience, was abducted in Sokoto State and allegedly converted to Islam. He claimed that the girl was missing on August 12, 2015, but now she was found. He thank the police, the Sultante and even the Governor of Sokoto State, Aminu Tambuwal for their assistance.

But not so lucky was the family of a 15 year old Rita Chinedu Ukeje, who was said to have also been abducted and forcefully married in Kaduna State. Rita was said to have been abducted by some Islamic fundamentalists and subsequently given to marriage to one of their colleagues, meanwhile, Madam Jessy Ukeje, was in a deep sorrow of pain and agony. The sad event happened in Damagaji area of Zaria. And now, the whereabouts of Rita, an SS3 student of a school in Zaria, remain unknown. And because of her abduction, she could not sit for her School Certificate Examination. *Daily Sun*, March 16, 2016, reported that the abducted girl family said they reliable gathered that the teenager was given out in marriage to a Muslim, called Usman, without their consent. They further alleged that a top official of the Zaria Local Government Area played a key role in the forced marriage. And so far, efforts made to bring Rita back had consistently been frustrated, blocked and hindered. In Northern Nigeria, efforts to retrieve abducted girls, forced into marriage and conversion to Islam are often difficult because they are kept intact and in exclusive helpless situation to rescue.

In the same wave of danger and agony, the *Authority Newspaper* reported on Thursday March, 17, 2016 that Mrs. Rachael Ani, mother of Ifesinachi, the teenage school girl was abducted in Abuja about six months ago and converted to Islam, she cried out that the lives of her family members were in danger. She disclosed that since *The Authority Newspaper* published the news about her missing daughter, who was abducted by a syndicate working for a controversial leade, she said, she was being threatened. The abducted girl was from Ani-Chime family in Umunachi Ngene village in Amechi Awkunanaw in Enugu South LGA of Enugu State. The trouble woman had reported the case to the Commissioner of Police in the

FCT, Abuja and the Inspector General of Police to come to their assistance and protect them. The woman was also pleading with her Governor, Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi of Enugu State, the Chairman of South East Governors forum, the Chairman of Enugu South Local Government Area, the Chairman of Ohaneze Ndigbo and all well meaning Igbo men and women to understand that it is the case of their daughter that is the issue. In this particular case, when the *Editorial Board of the Authority* called the abductors through one of the three telephone provided by Mrs. Ani, 08060598215, a female voice at the other end asked Mrs. Ani to stop bothering about her child's well being. The recipient of the call equally wondered why the reporter detailed to communicate with her, who bears an Islamic name, should be asking about the abducted Ifesinachi's well being "since as Muslim, you should understand that the reward for converting non-Muslims of other tribes". Midway into the discussion, she cut off the telephone call, querying if truly the caller is a Muslim, as claimed.

The Authority Newspaper has no technical facility to verify the actual location of the abductors but we can confirm that they have converted her to Islam. The abductors also posted her pictures on the internet and renamed her "Amatullahi". They also use telephone numbers 08081170324 and 07038310025. All these lines were still going through up till the time of filing this report. In Nigeria, many view pedophilia lightly and they defend the abduction of infants girls for the sole purpose of sexual gratification and enslavement and others will seek to defend it on religious and cultural ground, it is a national tragedy of monumental immorality. Some of this girls abducted are 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 years old, and not 18. They did not leave their home freely or of their own volition, choice and discretion. They were cruelly, immorally and wickedly carried away and stolen from their parents, family and loved ones and forcefully taken by strangers to distant lands that they had never seen before. These cases are stories of pedophilia, child abduction, kidnapping, human trafficking, slavery, rape, impunity, wickedness and ritual sex. Some of them are raped over and over again and they may well have AIDS, VVF and some other strange sexual diseases and some impregnated. The researcher sympathize with them because many may never be the same again in view of physical and mental torture and trauma that they have been subjected to by some of sick men in low and high places in our country who must be held accountable for their actions. Cases like this shows how many girls have been stolen from their parents and forced to join harems. It should be clear that child marriage and pedophilia are completely forbidden and strictly prohibited by law.

Is girls abduction and forced marriage Islamic or Christian?

It is important to note that the trend is not Islamic or Christian but an immoral vice. *Daily Sun*, Wednesday, March 16, 2016, reported how Professor Wole Soyinka, the noble laurel and Femi Falana, a human right advocate, had addressed a press conference condemning the dastardly incident of girls abduction, forced marriage and conversion to Islam as criminality that should be tackled and not linked to any religion. Professor Ishaq Akintola (2016), Director, Muslim Right Concern, had also warned that incidences of kidnapping and forceful marriage have no place in Islam, insisting that such practices are ungodly. The scholar warned that when teenagers come across themselves they should not do anything ungodly. Taking a girl away from her parent is simply elopement, a criminal tendency of running with a woman to marry her forcefully without the consent of the parent often driven by infatuation, sometimes, unfortunately, this can be taken too far. However, if truth must be told Islam has no tolerance for pregnancy outside marriage.

According to Cosmas Omegoh (2016), a public affair analyst, “Islamic scholars are unhappy when some of these criminal acts are tied to Islam just to demonize the religion. But we often forget that there are also rampant incidences of kidnapping and abduction going on in the Niger Delta and the South East regions. In some countries like Central African Republic and Uganda, Christians terrorists group are wreaking havoc”. To put it more clearly, girls abduction, forceful marriage and conversion to Islam is a crime that must be addressed by its rightful name, “Evil or Immoral Vice” There should be no justification for such evil under an evil cover of religion.

Professor Ishaq Akintola (2016), outline four conditions in Islam, which he said must be fulfilled before a marriage could be considered valid.

1. There has to be Ijab (approach) and Qubul (consent), these means that the man has to approach the lady for her consent.
2. Their parents must accept the marriage proposals
3. A dowry must be paid, that depends on what the lady ask for, some might ask the man to pray for them.
4. There must be at least two male witnesses to the marriage.

Professor Akintola (2016) also pointed out that, “If you are a man and your girl friend comes to you and you keep her, you have simply abducted her”.

From Christian position and perspective, Rev. Ben Ogu, a cleric, reports in *Daily Sun*, Wednesday, March 16, 2016 that abduction and forceful marriage of a young girl is no marriage at all. A marriage is said to be validly contracted when two adults come together and consensually and voluntarily agree to go into a marriage relationship. This has to be agreed to by their parents. Any marriage that does not follow this process is no marriage at all. There might be a different agenda right behind a girl abduction, forceful marriage and conversion to Islam. Rev Fr. Ben Ogu (2016) aptly explains that it beats the imagination of everyone when a Muslim man abducts a Christian girl and forcefully marries her and convert her to Muslim and the federal government and even the ruling All Progressive Congress (APC) doesn't come out to condemn it. Is there any agenda of Islamization behind that? We need to know. Rev. Fr. Ogu (2016) further argued that to my mind, this growing trend of young girls being brutally taken away from their parents is sheer intimidation and nothing less. Nigerians need to arise to condemn it. The cleric also flayed allegation that some Christian clerics keep young women against their wish. Anyone who indulges in abduction and forceful marriage of a teenager should be duly prosecuted, castigated and lambasted. Girls abduction and forced marriage is part of Nigerian corrupt society, decadence, debased and immoral lifestyles.

The Position of the Nigerian Law over Girls Abduction and Forced Marriage

The ripples, annoyance and disturbance over girls abductions and forced marriage is a menace that terrorized and threatened the dignity of the Nigerian Child Girl Right of existence. Every land has its own law; hence the Nigerian law has a position to address the above immoral vice in our society. If we live by law, the report of *Daily Sun*, Wednesday, March 16, 2016, Barrister Pat Anyadubalu explain that the case of Ese Oruru and Yunusa and other cases of abduction and forceful marriages were very unfortunate and involves civil rights breach and crime against the Nigerian State. In this case, let us consider the age of Ese Oruru, for example, as that will help us in determining applicable, befitting, suitable, useful and valid law. Ese Oruru is not up to 18 years; therefore, she is a child under the Child Rights

Act. The law that shall regulate the actions and omission shall be Child Rights Act or Child Rights Law, assuming it has been localized and domesticated in Bayelsa State. The issues arising from the whole situation involve civil rights breaches and crime against the state. Firstly, from the media account of the Ese Oruru case, she did not know how she got to Kano State, that she just found herself in the midst of strangers, Yunusa being the only person she knew. Secondly, that she was forced to embrace Islam. The first account comes under the realm of breach of her fundamental human rights to freedom of movement and association, as guaranteed by the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended Child Rights Act and African Charter on Peoples Right. As a child, Ese's right is subject to necessary guidance and directions of her parents or guardians, it is obvious that the parents never approved her journey to Kano.

It is also important to note that Ese's right to freedom of religion subject to necessary guidance and direction from the parents was breached as according to her, she was force to embrace a religion against her wish and not approved by the parents. Thirdly, Ese was denied the right to parental care. Child Right Act abhors separation of a child from the parents against the wish of the child except for education and welfare of the child, which is not applicable. Today in Nigeria, every child is entitled to respect for the dignity of his/her person, and accordingly, no child shall, for instance, be subjected to physical, mental or emotional injury, abuse, neglect or maltreatment, including sexual abuse and rape. The Child Rights Act prohibits any person under the age of 18 years from contracting any marriage and accordingly a marriage so contracted is null and void and of no effects whatsoever, therefore, the purported marriage to Ese is *void ab initio*.

The Child Rights Act provides that any person who marries a person under the age of 18 years has committed an offence and is liable to a fine of ₦500,000.00 or imprisonment for a term of five years. The Child Rights Act provides imprisonment for 10 years for any person who abducts a child or takes out of the protection or custody of the parents from one state to another. Having taken the child outside the Bayelsa State, Yunusa, if found guilty, is liable to 10 years imprisonment.

The Child Rights Act prohibits sexual intercourse with a child and any person who contravenes it commits an offence of rape and liable to imprisonment for life. And it is immaterial that the offender believed the person to be of or above the age of 18 years or that the sexual intercourse was with the consent of the child. Therefore, whoever impregnated Ese Oruru is guilty of having sexual intercourse with her and therefore, liable to imprisonment as provided above.

In *Daily Sun Newspaper* March 6, 2016, Femi Fani –Koyode warned that Child Marriage and pedophilia are completely forbidden and strictly prohibited by law in a multi-religious, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and supposedly secular Nigeria. Child sex, child marriage, and pedophilia are widespread and common and it appears that anything goes. Evidently we live in a strange country where evil is, at best, ignored and swept under the carpet and at worst, openly justified, we live in a country where those that expose such abominations such as, girl abduction, rape, forced marriage and forceful conversion to Islam are shunned, discredited, demonized, hated, despised and more often than not threatened with physical violence, persecution, intimidation, arrest, criminal investigation and civil litigation. Fani Kayode (2016) said that is the price we pay for speaking the truth and exposing evil in Nigeria. There is clearly a conspiracy of silence about perpetuation of wickedness and injustice in the country among the ruling elites. In Nigeria, some of the people that are involve in the case of girls abduction and forced marriage are the elites that can get away with anything provided

they belong to a particular circle and class and provided they have money and power. And it is because they have money and power and they have powerful friends in government and in political class that they feel that they can silence, crush, kill, abduct, cripple, ruin, sue and jail anybody that test their will and crosses them or that dares to expose the truth about their blood chilling and perverse ways. That is the reality of Nigeria and it is sad and sorry one. However, we thank God for the media houses, the Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), religious leaders and the television stations, individual progressive groups and lawyers who continued to cry out the sad cases of girls abduction, rapes and forced marriage in the recent history of Nigeria.

The Challenges of Girl's Abduction and Forced Marriage in Nigeria

The case of the Chibok girls' abduction and that of Ese's abduction, forced marriage and conversion to Islam by Yunusa is what some other beautiful teenage girls experience, especially in Muslim dominated places in Northern Nigeria affected by Boko Haram insurgency. The case of Ese incidence happened in 2015, but the crime was made known to the public in 2016. To force a Nigeria girl at gun point to be converted into Islam and to be forcefully married is a terror, oppressive and brutal to human psyche. That is not the bidding of the girl child rights and their parents. The Nigerian girl child need education and decent life for better living, after that she can make a choice of who to marry peacefully with the consent of her parents and the villagers. Not abduction, forceful marriage and conversion to Islam. This is child abuse to the highest order. Criminals who engage in this inhuman act and vice risk a long jail terms.

In Nigeria and Africa at large, girl abduction and forced marriage is against our cultural and religious value. Girls see their abduction and forceful marriage as a religious doctrine that contradicts their existence, culture, religion and everything they are.

Criminal's that abduct teenage girls and forcefully marry them commits the offence of pedophilia; the crime and culture of sexual attraction to children, which is a sin, taboo, sacred and social prohibition. It is obvious that the many ethnic groups in Nigeria, Igbo, Yoruba, Ijaw etc. do not cherish pedophilia, their practice and existence is contradictory to everything their culture welcome. When Ese, was converted into Islam by Yunusa, she was renamed Aisha and made to be a Muslim, but Ese used to be a preacher of the Word of God and a leading scripture union member, but today everything is gone, her essence and purity of virginity is altered.

Girl's abduction and force marriage is satanic, accursed, devilish, diabolic, evil, inhuman, malevolent, and wicked to a Nigerian girl child. It does not express true love and pity to humanity and respect for girl child, her mother, father and her ethnic group. The abductor is unholy, ungodly and more concerned about his selfish sexual pleasure. It only ensures the killing of a girl child destiny for an immoral man's pleasure.

After Ese's case of abduction and forced marriage, many cases of similar issues arose up. This shows the fear and how girl child are languishing. There is need for government and civil society groups to stand up in solidarity with girl child or before sunset we shall have no virtue girl child again.

Abduction of girl child and forced marriage makes parents to undergo psychological trauma or brutal human psyche. It makes girl child to be suspicious and mistrust of strange adults within school, church, and the family home. It is a vice that causes death, suffering and frustration in many families. It disrupts social and economic activities and scare away foreign tourists and investors in Nigeria. It is terror, oppressive and grief. It makes criminal to exploit

the virginity of virtuous beautiful young girls in our society. It brutalized society and distorted the value of a girl child in Nigeria. It is a criminal activity that brings shame and curse to many families in Nigeria.

Girl's abduction, forced marriage and defilement of a girl child create problems of mutual misunderstanding and communication gap between the different ethnic groups, thus hindering national integration and development. It always keeps the girl child and their parents frightened and fearful of the unknown to happen. It is an incendiary epidemic that confronts the Nigerian people. It is devilish, criminal and cruel to girls and women. It may create revolts, revolution in Nigeria that can lead to breakup of the country. It is devil's incarnate as it incapacitates and makes girls and women unable to live and work normally. It makes girls and women to be imprisoned and impotent to be unable to achieve their aims in life. Girl's abduction is an impolite, uncivilized, unkind, and unpleasant culture to confront virtuous girls and women. It creates scandals that give Nigerian people bad name and disrepute. It cripples the peace of girls and women. Any government and people that support, protects or harbours girls abduction, forced marriage, and rape is guilty of abduction and kidnapping. These crimes enslave and threaten girls, women and decent families and ethnic groups in Nigeria.

Solutions to Curb Girl's Abduction and Forced Marriage in Nigeria

This paper has the following solutions to curb girl's abduction, and forced marriage in Nigeria:

1. The time has come when the Nigerian state must live up to its responsibility and confront the brazenness of girls abduction and forced marriage. We should not wait until a governor or president daughter is kidnapped before we know that we are confronted with a danger. This is not a future danger, but a vice that is challenging us in the face. It is time the security forces live up to their responsibilities and upholds the Nigerian Child Rights to life and liberty. The government should plan to monitor girls abduction locations to arrest the syndicates and prosecute offenders of girls kidnapping and allied criminal vices.
2. Girl's abduction, forced marriage and forced conversion to a religion should be seen as a criminal act and not regarded as a child play.
3. The Nigerian Police, Emirs, Obas, Onis, kings and traditional rulers, religious leaders and other combine teams of law enforcement agencies should work together to arrest the vice of girls abduction and forced marriage in Nigeria.
4. School authorities should have phone numbers of police and parents of children to locate suspected girls abductors for possible arrest.
5. Child girls should refuse to collect gift and food items from strangers, who might be possible abductors and kidnappers.
6. Neighborhood watch should also assist the police to arrest girls abductors.
7. Churches should mobilize security network to fish out girls abductors as services is going on.
8. Churches and Mosque should preach against girls abduction, forced marriage and forceful conversion to Islam as an ungodly act abhorred by society and humanity.
9. Media houses in Nigeria should condemn and criticize girl abductors with all seriousness.

10. Religious and moral education should be included in school curriculum as well as guidance and counseling teachers to reduce the evil of girl kidnapping and other criminal vices in Nigeria.
11. School children should be mobilized by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to demonstrate before the National Assembly, the Presidency and the Judiciary to protest the rising child abuse and girls kidnapping in Nigeria. So that new laws should be put in place to protect the rights of women and children in Nigeria.
12. Severe punishment and imprisonment should be given to any girl abductor found guilty of the offence to discourage others from the crime.
13. Islamic and church leaders should expel any of their members found guilty of the offence of girls abduction, forced marriage and conversion to Islam or Christianity by force.
14. The government should form dreaded Anti Girls Abduction Squad of the Nigerian Police to fight girls abduction, force marriage and forceful conversion to Islam.
15. Parents should invest in the spiritual virtues of their children and family to build the moral character of their children to curb the vice of girl abduction in our society.
16. Youths participation in sports and talent hunt competitions would reduce girls abduction and its allied criminal vices in Nigeria.
17. The Nigeria government should advocate a new Nigerian youths built on love, justice, fairness, gender equality, patriotism across tribes, religious and political affiliations, such that the youths collective vision will evolved a more egalitarian nation so that no ethnic group would feel marginalized to attack, abduct and bomb blast the other.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The new band of enemies that poses a great danger to the development of Nigeria in the name of girls' abductions, rape and forced marriage should be checked with all seriousness. This is an attack against vulnerable, impressionable and the weak girls below the age of 18 years old. It is clear that those that engage in this immoral and illegal act are adults; they specialize in defiling innocent girls. Many of these girls have either become pregnant or infected with deadly sexually transmitted diseases. Girl's abduction and forced marriage have left many parents heart completely agonize, they wonder how could such a strange, ridiculous, bizarre and bestial thing happened to their children. This also makes many parents and right thinking Nigerians to be ashamed belonging to such a depraved and barbaric society where life has become brutal and brutish to teenage girls.

In any case, the looseness of our statutes on crimes such as girl's abduction, rape, forced marriage and defilement is responsible for the escalation of these crimes. This calls for an immediate amendment of the extant laws to prescribe stiffer penalties to serve as a deterrent to others.

As the laws stand now, it is not easy to deal effectively and speedily with such cases. There is, however, hope that the right thing will be done soon, given the awareness around the matter. Some Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have taken up the struggle to ensure that the unholy acts are not committed with reckless abandon by men with uncontrolled libido. In decent societies, one would expect convicted offenders of girls abduction and force marriage to serve long jail sentence. This is the only language criminally minded Nigerians understand. The case between Ese and Yunusa has further accentuated pressure on the security agencies to curtail this menace before it gets to an embarrassing shock and disgrace. The menace of girl's abduction, forced marriage and conversion to Islam

is an alien culture in Nigeria that is anti people and society. It is a cultural and religious practice that needs to be eliminated in our modern day society. In Nigeria, we should recall our memory back to the twin killing culture and the exclusion of their mothers during the pre-colonial period. But with the advent of Christian missionaries the culture of twin killing stopped. Of note was the effort of Mary Slessor to stop the killing of twin in the Calabar area. As society advances in civilization and enlightenment practices the likes of girl's abduction and forced marriage should stop. It is not in line with our cultural heritage and tradition. If the selfish and uncivilized practice continues, it makes every girl-child walk on a tight rope of frustration and bondage.

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