

## **ON THE FRINGE OF SOCIETY**

**AN INAUGURAL LECTURE BY PROFESSOR A.A. ADERINTO, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, IBADAN.**

### **ABSTRACT**

The inaugural lecture focuses on the many years of research in the area of Deviance/Social Problems at the University of Ibadan. It reports on the disadvantaged position of those vulnerable population, namely street children, the Girl-Child, women, domestic servants, Sex trafficking, kidnapping and its victims, and the consequences arising therefrom.

On street children and other children who are engaged in economic activities, I note that the children are often products of large family, broken homes, of parents with low education. In consequence, they suffer many health, mental and physical hazards and face a bleak future. I concluded that the children are continuously being ruined and denied a future by not only the hazards of the work they do, but also by the anti-social elements that they come in contact with while plying their trade. I advanced this argument further in my studies on the status of the Girl Child and Women in the Nigerian society, where I submitted that the patriarchal nature of the society has unfortunately relegated their statuses, and has placed a limit on the extent to which they can aspire, and are consequently oppressed by the social structure. Furthermore, the same dominant patriarchy has sustained the negative practices in widowhood and domestic violence. Our studies on sex trafficking are even more revealing. We concluded that parents and family members are the important factors on which most of the recruitments, trafficking, initiation into sex work is based. The practice of trafficking for sex work is not just motivated by poverty, but greed and ignorance. The recruitment, initiation pattern and process into sex trafficking are characterised with deception on the part of the traffickers. We also argued in our studies on kidnapping that its high wave in the country is fundamentally due to crass materialism and loss of societal values. As a thriving business venture with low risk and high returns, kidnappers in Nigeria have devised different strategies in trapping their victims and executing their operations. The variations in strategies depend on the social status of the target, its attractiveness and the presence or absence of capable guardianship. Our data also showed how a suitable environment can make kidnapping a possibility.

I concluded the lecture by submitting that many people are caught up in an anomic situation in Nigeria, and are living on the fringe of the society and are subjected to the vicissitudes of life. I therefore recommend, among others that government should intensify its effort towards alleviating poverty in the country, and needs to be more sincere about the policies that aim to create job opportunities for the citizens. They should also make efforts to reduce the overwhelming emphasis on wealth as a symbol of success in our country, and commit more funds to the funding of the nation's education sector.