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# **How Violence Shaped the Next Generation: Intergenerational Impacts of Abduction in Northern Uganda**

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## **Content Warning**

The following paper includes descriptions of sexual violence, abuse, kidnappings, and physical violence. Readers who may be sensitive to these topics, please take note.

## **Abstract**

Northern Uganda has long been a major conflict zone, home to countless atrocities at the hands of the terrorist group the Lord's Resistance Army. Widespread kidnappings occurred throughout the 1980s into the early 2000s, and today many of these individuals have been able to return to their homes. However, the scope of trauma does not end when an abductee returns home, it carries on in unpredictable ways and into the lives of family and community members. This brings to question, are the impacts of abduction intergenerational and can they impact the children of former abductees? This study utilizes survey data from Kitgum, Uganda to conduct linear regressions which find that children of former abductees have significantly higher rates of anxiety and hopelessness and lower rates of happiness than children of non-abductees.

## **1. Introduction**

Mass abductions are a tragic occurrence with long lasting psychological and economic impacts. While cases of abduction occur in virtually every country, the phenomena of mass abductions are confined to conflict zones in developing countries in particular. Although present literature captures the impact of abduction on the abductees themselves, it remains to be seen how abduction impacts the wellbeing of the children of abductees.

Perhaps the most sizable example of mass abductions occurred in Uganda between 1986-2006, when the notorious Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) kidnapped between 52,000 to 75,000 individuals (Pham, Stover, and Vink 2007). Militant groups primarily abduct young boys to build and support their reserves, while young girls are kidnapped and sold into trafficking or forced into becoming child brides. A generation of children grew up in the shadow of war, subject to periods of maternal and paternal separation or facing biases due to the abduction status of their parents.

This paper aims to understand the intergenerational impact of abduction on the wellbeing of the children of former abductees. To do so, this study will measure different psychological outcomes such as anxiety and depression, and utilize linear regressions to visualize how children of abductees are more adversely psychologically impacted than children of non-abductees. The regressions cluster at the level of the child's mother, and also have fixed effects at the village level.

The results show that children of abductees show significantly higher rates of anxiety and hopelessness, and lower rates of happiness than children of non-abductees. Additionally, mothers who show higher rates of stress in turn have children with higher rates of anxiety as well. Young girls in particular have more adverse wellness outcomes than their male counterparts.

Currently, responses to conflict and abduction widely focus on the individuals who themselves underwent this trauma. While this is definitely of high importance, it is also necessary to understand the wider impact that conflict has on communities in the years following. International aid efforts have largely focused on the individual victims rather than the community at large, which ignores the rippling effects that conflict can have. Developing a robust understanding of the secondary impacts of abduction is critical to improving the wellbeing of an entire generation of children.

Section 2 contains a literature review that covers the background of Northern Uganda and contextualizes the conflict and the impacted population. It also covers several groundbreaking studies done with this population to understand the scope of traumas that exist here. Section 3 is the methodology section and will review the empirical strategies employed in this approach. In Section 4 the analysis is presented along with its consequences. Finally, Section 5 summarizes and concludes the findings.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *Lord's Resistance Army*

During the 1980s, Northern Uganda was home to widespread armed conflict between multiple rebel groups after the National Resistance Army (NRA) seized control of the government and appointed Yoweri Museveni as president (Dunn, 2004). One of the primary and most ruthless instigators of this violence was the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The LRA, led by Joseph Kony, is a rebel group in Northern Uganda responsible for widespread atrocities including abductions, mutilations, killings, and lootings since 1986 (Dunn, 2004). This group began operating in response to the rise of the NRA, but quickly began committing large scale acts of violence throughout Northern Uganda and South Sudan. This area is home to the Acholi people, and during the conflict almost 1.5 million people, or 90% of the entire Acholi population, were forcibly displaced (Oosterom, 2011). This was the result of widespread mass kidnappings in the region, as the LRA would use the Acholi to build a base of soldiers and sex slaves.

In 2005, the International Criminal Court finally issued a warrant against Kony on 21 war crimes including rape, enslavement, and murder (Dunn, 2004). Peace talks began in 2006, but they were drawn out and ultimately failed in 2008 when Kony refused to sign the agreement. As peace talks fell apart, the Ugandan and Sudanese government launched Operation Lightning Thunder, an operation against LRA forces and bases. While Kony was not captured and the LRA was not operatively ended by this operation, it did push LRA forces out of Northern Uganda and towards other regions, leading the Acholi people to begin returning to their homes. It should be noted that although the LRA began to weaken in 2006, the group was still active and the threat of violence remained high in Northern Uganda (Dunn, 2004).

### *Abductee Trauma*

Upon returning from abduction, former abductees carry a multitude of traumas both mental and physical. Existing literature has assessed former abductees across a spectrum of traumas. Pham, Stover, and Vink (2009) took a novel approach to addressing abduction by conducting a cross sectional study to create a multivariate logistic regression measuring PTSD and depression in former abductees. Over two thirds of the sample's abductees showed strong signs of PTSD, with women being more susceptible than men. Furthermore, difficulty reintegrating into society following abduction led to higher rates of depression in the population as well. This case serves to show the long term psychological and social impact of abduction once former abductees are returned to society and must begin the daunting task of reintegration.

One of the most difficult areas of trauma experienced is sexual violence. While typically the literature focuses on female victims of sexual violence, studies in Uganda highlight the need to address boys and men who undergo this trauma as well. Northern Uganda is characterized by dominant patriarchal values that esteem masculinity, and as a result issues regarding male sexual violence are heavily stigmatized and silenced (Schulz, 2018). Jill Stauffer coined the term "ethical loneliness" in 2015 to capture the experience of first being wronged by society, and then not being given the space to acknowledge these wrongdoings. Philip Schulz (2018) took this one step further and applied this to male survivors of wartime sexual violence, when the stories of survivors are met with silence and they are denied the opportunity to seek justice. Also, these atrocities are not only known to have been committed by LRA members, but National Resistance Army (NRA) members as well, creating even more distrust since the NRA is made of Ugandan government members (Schulz, 2018). This also highlights the complicit nature that governments play in abduction and abuse.

Girls in early adolescence are particularly vulnerable to abduction because they are less likely to carry STIs than older women (Perrin and Wurtele, 2016). These girls are also at higher risk of tissue trauma, psychosomatic disorders, and PTSD as a result of being forced to be sex slaves to the rebels (Perrin and Wurtele, 2016). Meshkovska, Siegel, Stutterheim, and Bos (2015) find that trafficking young girls sharply drops a country's human capital potential and has poor generational impacts.

## *Reintegration*

Annan, Blattman, Mazurana, and Carlson (2011) provide a comprehensive look at reintegration efforts in Uganda with a particular focus on the role of gender. This paper was one of the first to develop causal relationships between ex-combatants and societal outcomes. It also contains the first quantitative dataset on women kidnapped by the LRA. Contrary to the fear mongering rhetoric of the times, this paper found that ex-combatants are not likely to commit acts of aggression or violence against society during reintegration. The Annan study used survey data from the same region in Northern Uganda as this study does.

Reintegration is daunting due to the biases and discrimination that these individuals face on account of their abduction status and the atrocities that they both witnessed and were forced to commit at the hands of the LRA (Annan et al., 2011). Of the boys and men who were abducted, those who were held for six months or longer reported the most difficulty in reintegrating into their communities (Pham, Stover, and Vink 2009). Boys in particular were vulnerable to abduction because the LRA specifically conscripted this demographic to build their base of child soldiers to carry out their goals. As part of the indoctrination into the LRA, new members would be asked to carry out crimes including beatings, looting, or even killing, in an effort to make the new recruits more submissive (Pham, Stover, and Vink 2007). When former LRA members would return to their home communities, they were marked by the crimes that they committed while members of the rebel group. This tainted them in the eyes of their communities and would lead to social alienation (Pham, Stover, and Vink 2007). The two components critical to a former abductee's social wellbeing are familial acceptance and support systems, yet these are often the most difficult to regain (Annan et al., 2011). While the literature identifies the areas that abductees need support in, it does not provide a framework for implementation or ideas for possible interventions to aid the process.

Boys who were born in abduction faced even greater obstacles to reintegration. When these boys would return to their mother's communities, they were often viewed as threats because they could stand to inherit the already strained resources (Shanahan, 2016). This is threatening because it means that there will potentially be less for the "real children" who were not born out of abduction (Shanahan, 2016). Girls born out of abduction did not face the same biases because inheritance laws in Uganda favor the male child. This illustrates the long term

consequences of abduction and the long lasting impact that these crimes have on individuals and their ability to reintegrate in society (Blattman and Annan, 2010).

### *Children of Abductees*

While abundant research exists on the experiences of the abductees themselves, there is little to no information existing on how this trauma can be intergenerational and impact the next generation of children impacted by abductions. While the LRA began to lose power in 2006 and mass abduction became far less frequent, the next generation of children grew up in the shadow of these atrocities. A generation of children was born to parents who experienced abduction, or these children themselves were born out of abduction. Given the grueling nature of abduction and reintegration that their parents had to endure, it is likely that this generation of children is now feeling the intergenerational impact of abduction. Furthermore, depending on the age of the child, they may have been subject to a period of maternal or paternal separation if their parent was abducted during their lifetime.

Parental separation periods during early childhood can have major consequences on children's outcomes, yet these outcomes have not been measured in conflict zones. Atim (2017) specifically examines children born during abduction. The vast majority of these children have a mother that was abducted and a father that was part of the abducting rebel group. If the mother returns to her home after escaping abduction, these children likely never see their father again and are subject to discrimination from their mother's family as a result of being "rebel born" (Atim, 2017).

Another abduction status is maternal abduction. In this case, the child is not abducted but the mother was, and the child was potentially subject to a period of maternal separation if this was following the child's birth (Kaitz, 2009). Additionally, Northern Uganda experienced a unique phenomenon which was the emergence of polygamy in response to mass female abduction. More and more men began to take on an additional wife to undertake the responsibilities of their abducted partner (Pham, 2009). Polygamy became more prominent as large scale abductions altered the gender ratio, and it remains as a social practice post war because it has been adopted by the men as a norm. Therefore, when looking at the impact of maternal abduction on children, it is also necessary to evaluate the presence of polygamy in these

areas. The literature is missing an evaluation of the long term impacts of polygamy on children in these households.

Finally, the last abduction status is paternal abduction, in which a child's father is abducted and the child is potentially subject to paternal separation. This is the area least covered by the literature. In most such cases, the father was likely conscripted by a terrorist group and forced to fight. Male trauma in these areas is less covered, but the intergenerational impacts are still known to be present (Suomi, 1998).

### **3. Methodology**

#### *Data Sources*

The data sample for this paper was obtained in Kitgum, Uganda during June-July of 2022. In Kitgum, 33 workshops were held with 20 women per workshop from the Northern Uganda region. Efforts were made to include a representative sample of women that was equal parts former abductees and non-former abductees. All of the women who were sampled were Acholi women from the Kitgum region, and differed only by village. Each of the women was surveyed on her own experience as well as about her children. The sample was restricted to only include children between 4-15 and women between 19-54. After applying the restrictions there are 861 total observations of children. The survey that was administered to the mothers in regards to their children can be found in the appendix (A2).

#### *Hypothesis and Testing*

$H_0$ : Children of abductees and children of non-abductees have no significant differences in well being

$H_1$ : Children of abductees and children of non-abductees have significant differences in well being

This hypothesis is tested using linear regressions. The model clusters at the level of the mother and includes village level fixed effects. All of the dependent variables have been standardized and coded so that a higher coefficient indicates a greater level of that outcome. For example, a higher coefficient on anxiety indicates a higher presence of anxiety. The survey data has individual questions assessing numerous child outcomes, and the regressions will test each



component individually. Finally, the analysis tests an index of all seven wellness outcomes. The index was created by taking a mean of all the individual standardized outcomes. This index was tested in the regressions using the same specifications as the individual outcomes. It should be noted that these results are not diagnoses, but rather indications of the presence of these factors in the children's lives.

### *Regression Equation and Specifications*

Model Specifications:

$$Y_i = \alpha + \beta_1 M_i + \beta_2 X_i + \epsilon_i$$

$Y_i$  = Wellness Outcome (scaled according to variable)

$\beta_1 M_i$  = Abduction Status (abduction or no abduction)

$\beta_2 X_i$  = Covariates: child age, child gender, poverty index, mother's marital status, abduction/gender interaction

Each of the wellness outcomes is measured in a separate regression and takes the place of  $Y_i$ . The covariate "poverty index" is a scarcity measure that is reported by the mother. The mother's were asked how often their household goes without cash, food, or water, and this measure is an index of those three variables.

## **4. Results**

The regression tables and graphs can be found in the appendix (A1). The most significant results are found on the dependent variable "child anxiety". Children of former abductees are seen to have 0.3 standard deviations higher levels of anxiety than their non-abductee counterparts. This result holds significance across multiple different specifications of the regression that include various covariates, ensuring that abduction is the primary causal factor. Also, in this regression we see that girls report 0.14 standard deviations less anxiety than boys in the sample. The graph titled "Anxiety by Abduction Status and Gender" is interesting in that it shows that children who had both parents abducted report the highest rates of anxiety while children with no parents abducted report the lowest levels of anxiety. Furthermore, boys are consistently showing increased rates of anxiety than girls across all abduction statuses.

The regressions on child worry, hopelessness, and unhappiness show slight significance at the 10% level, while child insecurity, self-criticism, and lack of interest show no significance. All of these variables have been standardized so when interpreting the graphs the mean is at 0 and the difference in standard deviation is quite noticeable as either above or below the mean.

Finally, the index which includes all seven outcomes holds significance at the 5% level across all specifications. This is interesting to note given that not all seven variables were individually significant, but did show significance once condensed into an overall wellness index.

Appendix A.2 contains several robustness checks that were completed to verify the findings. In the field the mothers had to complete the Cohen's perceived stress scale. This measure is commonly used to assess stress levels and an individual's perception of what is most important in their lives and how they go about addressing it. A Cohen index was constructed for each mother and included with the same regression specifications as the original regressions in Appendix A.1. This allows us to measure if a more stressed mother is reporting higher stressors for her children as well. This robustness check was completed for children's anxiety, worry, and the cumulative index. This is because these results produced the most significant findings of all outcomes. Further analysis reveals that a mother's stress is not mediating the results. Across all of the results, adding the Cohen index to the regression did not detract from significance on the abduction variable. This finding is of importance because it reveals that the mothers are reporting results regarding their children that are not impacted by their own levels of stress and wellbeing.

## **5. Analysis**

These results have numerous consequences for discussion. Firstly, across multiple outcomes children of abductees consistently have more negative wellness outcomes than their non-abducted counterparts, indicating that the impacts of abduction are indeed intergenerational and have consequences in the lives of the next generation. Furthermore, the role of scarcity is a major indicator of a child's wellness. The results show that former abductees have greater scarcity than non-abductees. However, scarcity is not acting as a mediator because it is not detracting from significance on the abduction variable when it is included in the regression. As we see on child anxiety, even when the poverty index is included the significance of the

abduction variable holds. Therefore, poverty is an important mechanism but not the primary causal pathway contributing to worse wellbeing.

Lastly, it is interesting to see that boys are showing worse levels of wellbeing than girls. This finding is significant in child anxiety and child unhappiness, and there are negative but insignificant “child female” variables in the regressions on child hopelessness, lack of interest, and in the constructed index. As previously mentioned, boys in this region stand to inherit and often face increased scrutiny due to their potential to pull resources away from a family. Furthermore, boys in this area have greater economic opportunities than girls, and from a young age this impacts their scope of potential. A child who sees greater opportunities for his peers yet is not realizing those opportunities himself will see a decrease in self esteem which in turn can impact his wellbeing. There are multiple potential reasons to explain the difference between boys and girls in this region and this is an area to examine further in future research.

## **6. Conclusion**

Abductions are a cruel crime of war that have proven to have devastating effects not only on the abductees themselves, but on their communities and specifically their children as well. Children of abductees are far more likely to have worse wellness outcomes than children of non-abductees, and are often overlooked in policy and aid discussions. The scope of research, aid, and reintegration efforts must be expanded to integrate the needs of these children and address the psychological consequences of abduction. War and conflict zones are home to numerous atrocities with long lasting impacts, and understanding these consequences is critical to rebuilding these areas and providing assistance to victims. This means having an intergenerational and long term approach to addressing conflict that is holistic and mindful of the community at large.

The setting of this study is unique in that the conflict in Uganda was instigated and perpetuated by fellow Ugandans. Most conflicts are perpetuated by an outside group seeking dominance in a new setting, yet that was not the case in Northern Uganda. Conflicts such as civil war where individuals are tormented by their own kin have numerous consequences in regards to prosociality and trusting behaviors. Therefore, a potential limitation of this study is that it can only be applied to similar conflict zones that experienced internal conflict as well.

Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) efforts are a critical component to building long term security and development. Since the end of the conflict, the World Bank has led a DDR initiative that 28,800 former rebels and provided secondary benefits to their families (World Bank Group, 2013). However, this program began to wind down in 2011, approximately three years following the end of conflict. If the scope of conflict has intergenerational consequences, then policymakers must extend the scope of aid efforts to ensure widespread stability. Furthermore, a community wide approach must be adopted that sets guidelines for continuous evaluation of these people over a longer time period than currently implemented. If the impacts of war extend for decades and trickle into new generations, then the DDR policies that follow war must account for this in their efforts.

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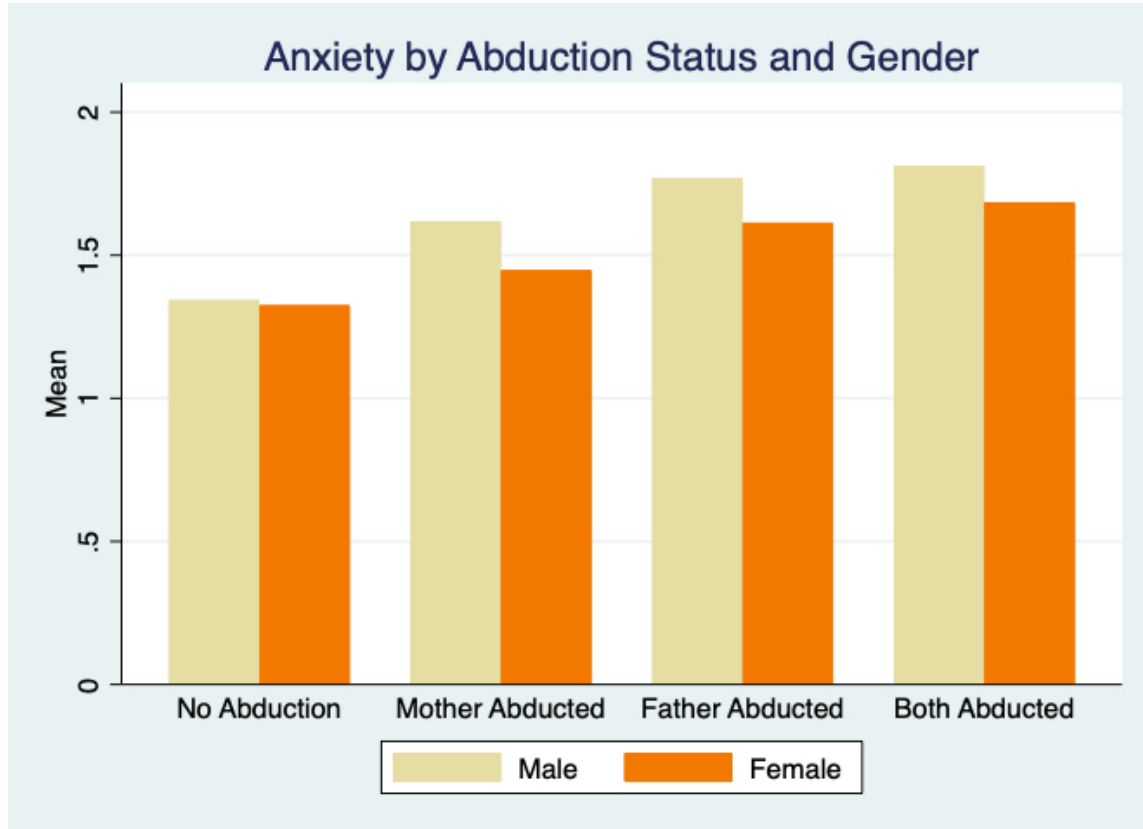
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## Appendix

### A.1: Regression Tables and Graphs

#### Child Anxiety

Over the last two weeks, how often has X (name) felt nervous, anxious, or on edge?



| VARIABLES               | (1)<br>Child Anxiety | (2)<br>Child Anxiety | (3)<br>Child Anxiety | (4)<br>Child Anxiety | (5)<br>Child Anxiety | (6)<br>Child Anxiety |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Abduction               | 0.30***<br>(0.10)    | 0.29***<br>(0.10)    | 0.32**<br>(0.14)     | 0.29**<br>(0.14)     | 0.30**<br>(0.13)     | 0.30**<br>(0.13)     |
| Child Female            |                      | -0.14*<br>(0.07)     | -0.10<br>(0.11)      | -0.11<br>(0.11)      | -0.07<br>(0.11)      | -0.07<br>(0.11)      |
| Abduction Gender (int.) |                      |                      | -0.06<br>(0.15)      | -0.05<br>(0.15)      | -0.11<br>(0.14)      | -0.11<br>(0.14)      |
| Child Age               |                      |                      |                      | 0.03***<br>(0.01)    | 0.02**<br>(0.01)     | 0.02**<br>(0.01)     |
| Poverty Index           |                      |                      |                      |                      | 0.22***<br>(0.06)    | 0.23***<br>(0.06)    |
| Mother Married          |                      |                      |                      |                      |                      | 0.03<br>(0.11)       |
| Constant                | -0.19**<br>(0.07)    | -0.11<br>(0.09)      | -0.13<br>(0.10)      | -0.34***<br>(0.13)   | -0.94***<br>(0.18)   | -0.97***<br>(0.22)   |
| Observations            | 832                  | 826                  | 826                  | 824                  | 824                  | 824                  |
| R-squared               | 0.102                | 0.108                | 0.108                | 0.115                | 0.146                | 0.146                |

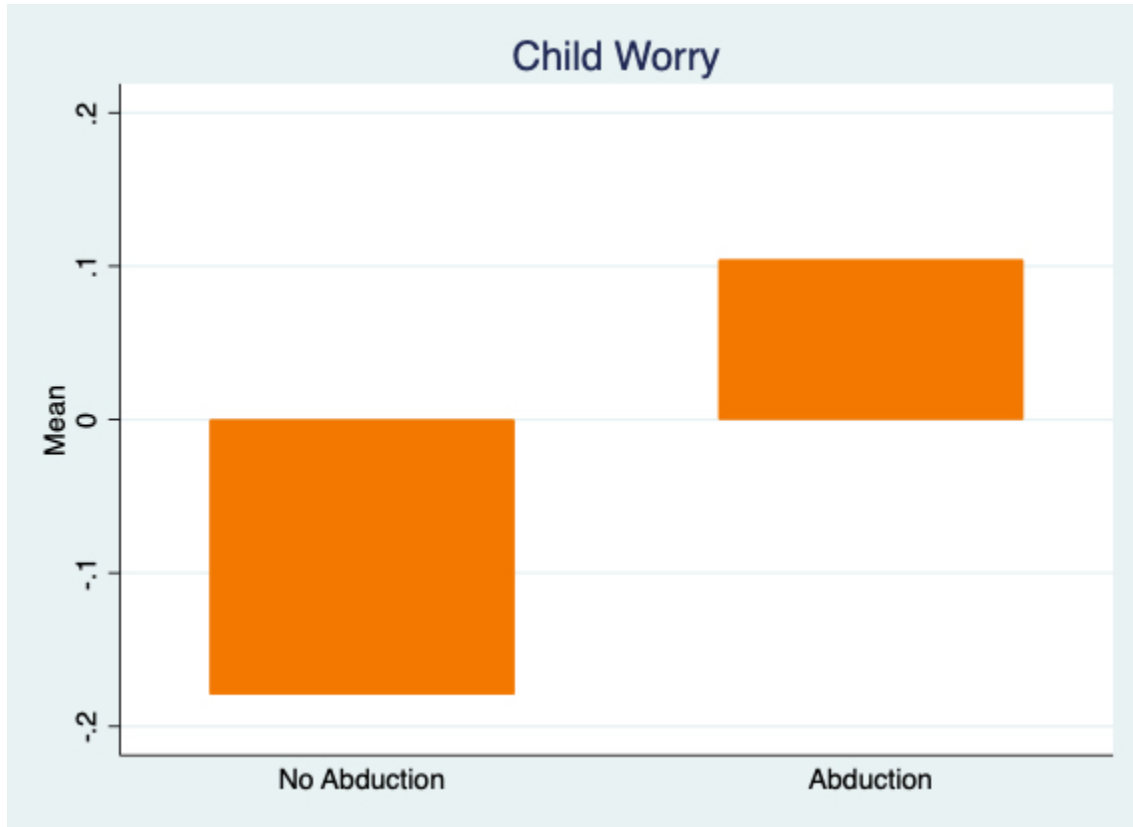
Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1



### Child Worry

Over the last two weeks how often has X(name) worried too much about different things?



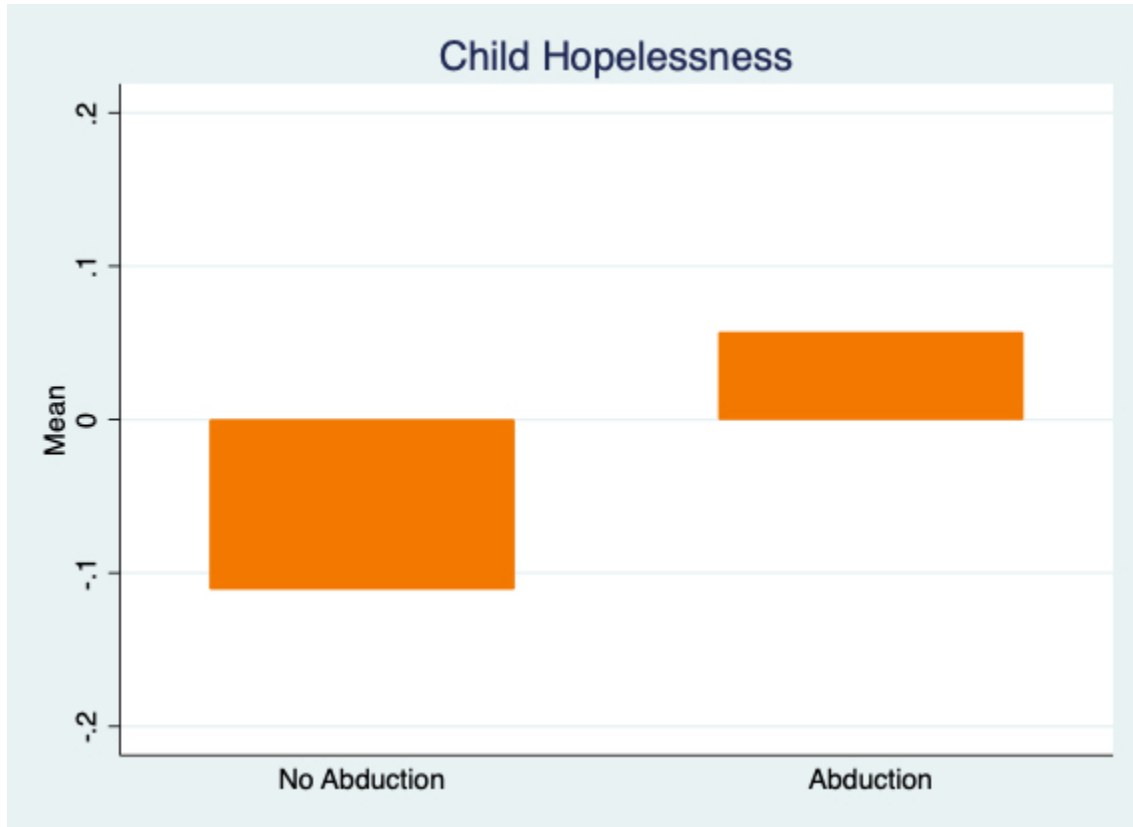
| VARIABLES               | (1)<br>Child<br>Worry | (2)<br>Child<br>Worry | (3)<br>Child<br>Worry | (4)<br>Child<br>Worry | (5)<br>Child<br>Worry | (6)<br>Child<br>Worry |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Abduction               | 0.19*<br>(0.11)       | 0.19*<br>(0.11)       | 0.26*<br>(0.14)       | 0.22<br>(0.14)        | 0.23*<br>(0.13)       | 0.24*<br>(0.14)       |
| Child Female            |                       | 0.01<br>(0.07)        | 0.10<br>(0.11)        | 0.09<br>(0.11)        | 0.12<br>(0.11)        | 0.11<br>(0.11)        |
| Abduction Gender (int.) |                       |                       | -0.13<br>(0.15)       | -0.12<br>(0.15)       | -0.17<br>(0.14)       | -0.17<br>(0.14)       |
| Child Age               |                       |                       |                       | 0.04***<br>(0.01)     | 0.04***<br>(0.01)     | 0.04***<br>(0.01)     |
| Poverty Index           |                       |                       |                       |                       | 0.20***<br>(0.06)     | 0.18***<br>(0.07)     |
| Mother Married          |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       | -0.11<br>(0.11)       |
| Constant                | -0.12<br>(0.08)       | -0.13<br>(0.09)       | -0.18*<br>(0.10)      | -0.48***<br>(0.12)    | -1.01***<br>(0.19)    | -0.91***<br>(0.23)    |
| Observations            | 831                   | 825                   | 825                   | 823                   | 823                   | 823                   |
| R-squared               | 0.079                 | 0.077                 | 0.078                 | 0.093                 | 0.116                 | 0.119                 |

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

## Child Hopelessness

Over the last two weeks how often has X (name) felt down, depressed or hopeless?



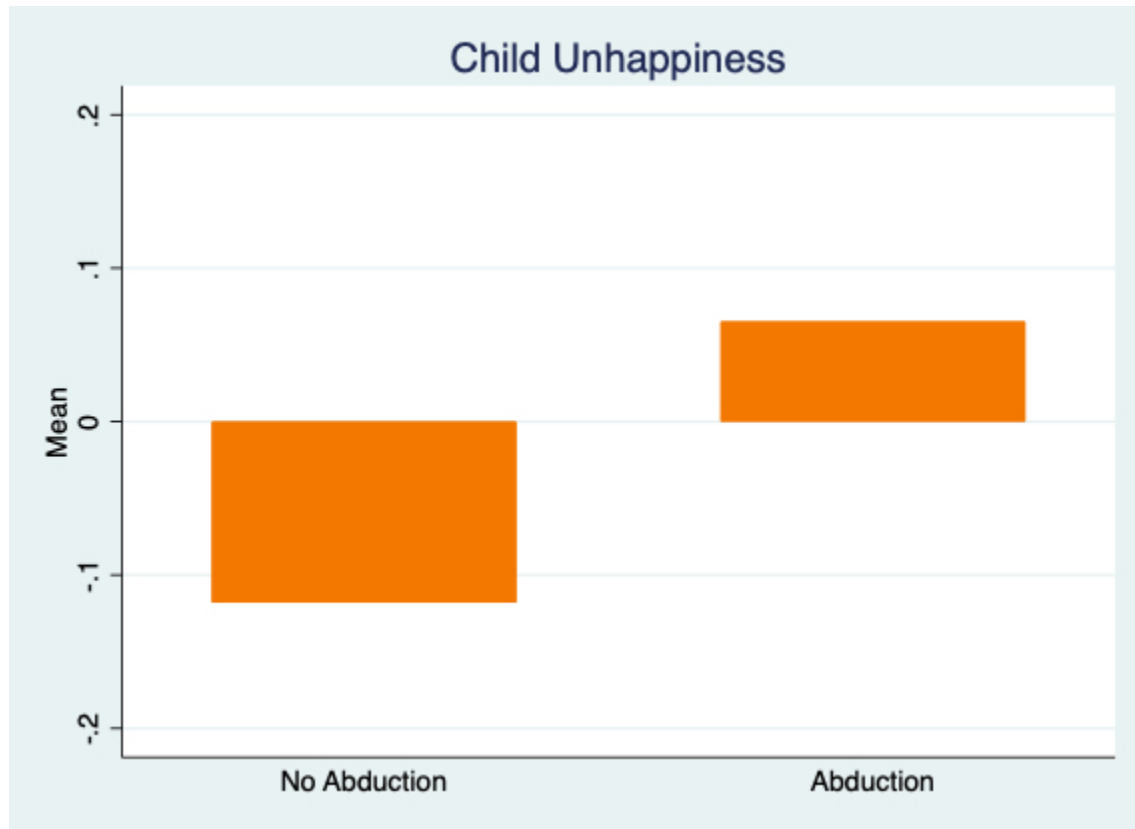
| VARIABLES               | (1)<br>Child<br>Hopelessness | (2)<br>Child<br>Hopelessness | (3)<br>Child<br>Hopelessness | (4)<br>Child<br>Hopelessness | (5)<br>Child<br>Hopelessness | (6)<br>Child<br>Hopelessness |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Abduction               | 0.10<br>(0.10)               | 0.10<br>(0.10)               | 0.24*<br>(0.12)              | 0.22*<br>(0.12)              | 0.22*<br>(0.12)              | 0.22*<br>(0.12)              |
| Child Female            |                              | -0.00<br>(0.07)              | 0.16<br>(0.11)               | 0.15<br>(0.11)               | 0.17<br>(0.11)               | 0.17<br>(0.11)               |
| Abduction Gender (int.) |                              |                              | -0.26*<br>(0.15)             | -0.25*<br>(0.15)             | -0.28*<br>(0.14)             | -0.28*<br>(0.14)             |
| Child Age               |                              |                              |                              | 0.02<br>(0.01)               | 0.02<br>(0.01)               | 0.02<br>(0.01)               |
| Poverty Index           |                              |                              |                              |                              | 0.09*<br>(0.05)              | 0.09*<br>(0.06)              |
| Mother Married          |                              |                              |                              |                              |                              | -0.01<br>(0.11)              |
| Constant                | -0.07<br>(0.07)              | -0.06<br>(0.08)              | -0.16*<br>(0.09)             | -0.30**<br>(0.13)            | -0.55***<br>(0.19)           | -0.54**<br>(0.21)            |
| Observations            | 827                          | 823                          | 823                          | 821                          | 821                          | 821                          |
| R-squared               | 0.058                        | 0.058                        | 0.062                        | 0.065                        | 0.071                        | 0.071                        |

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

### Child Unhappiness

On a scale of 1-10, one being the least happy and ten being the most happy, how would you assess the happiness of your child (reversed)



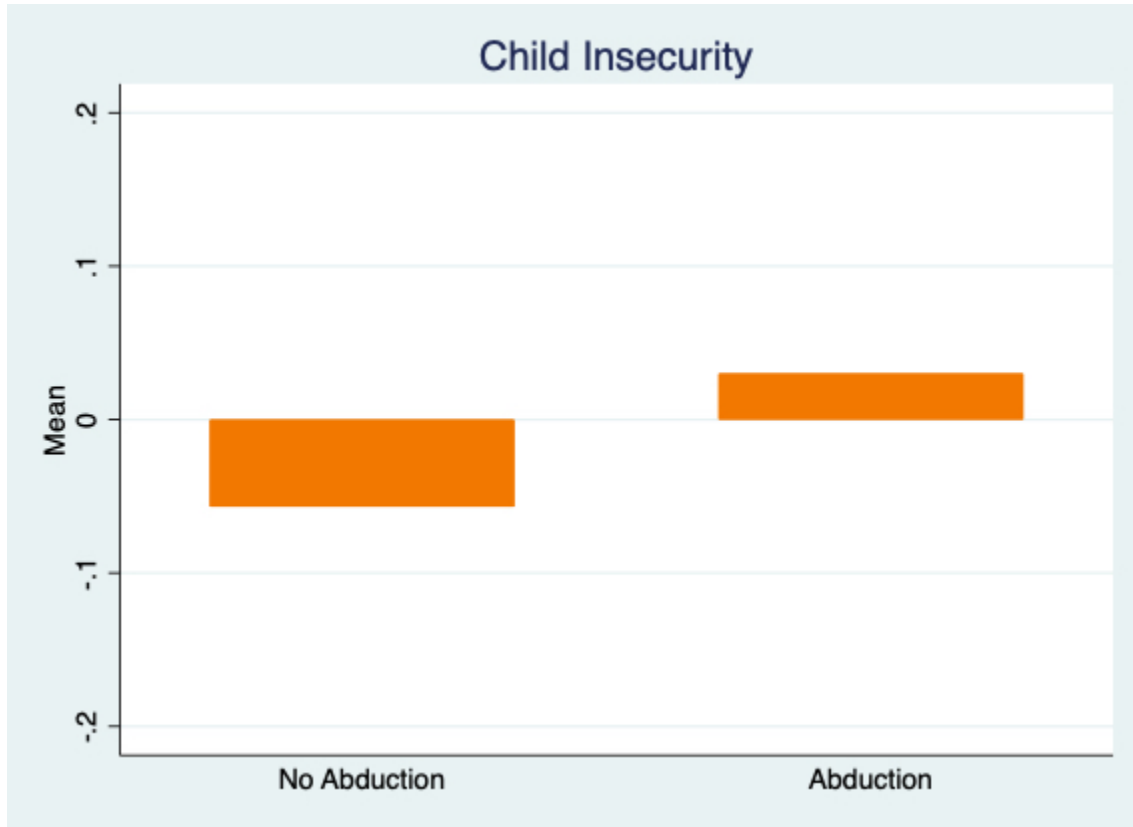
| VARIABLES               | (1)<br>Child<br>Unhappiness | (2)<br>Child<br>Unhappiness | (3)<br>Child<br>Unhappiness | (4)<br>Child<br>Unhappiness | (5)<br>Child<br>Unhappiness | (6)<br>Child<br>Unhappiness |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Abduction               | 0.13<br>(0.09)              | 0.12<br>(0.08)              | 0.21*<br>(0.12)             | 0.19<br>(0.13)              | 0.19<br>(0.12)              | 0.18<br>(0.12)              |
| Child Female            |                             | -0.17**<br>(0.07)           | -0.07<br>(0.11)             | -0.07<br>(0.11)             | -0.04<br>(0.10)             | -0.04<br>(0.10)             |
| Abduction Gender (int.) |                             |                             | -0.16<br>(0.14)             | -0.17<br>(0.14)             | -0.21<br>(0.14)             | -0.20<br>(0.14)             |
| Child Age               |                             |                             |                             | 0.02*<br>(0.01)             | 0.02*<br>(0.01)             | 0.02*<br>(0.01)             |
| Poverty Index           |                             |                             |                             |                             | 0.18***<br>(0.05)           | 0.19***<br>(0.05)           |
| Mother Married          |                             |                             |                             |                             |                             | 0.15<br>(0.10)              |
| Constant                | -0.08<br>(0.07)             | 0.01<br>(0.08)              | -0.05<br>(0.09)             | -0.21*<br>(0.13)            | -0.69***<br>(0.18)          | -0.83***<br>(0.20)          |
| Observations            | 831                         | 827                         | 827                         | 825                         | 825                         | 825                         |
| R-squared               | 0.028                       | 0.034                       | 0.035                       | 0.040                       | 0.059                       | 0.064                       |

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

## Child Insecurity

When someone mistreats X (name), he/she thinks that they must have done something to deserve it

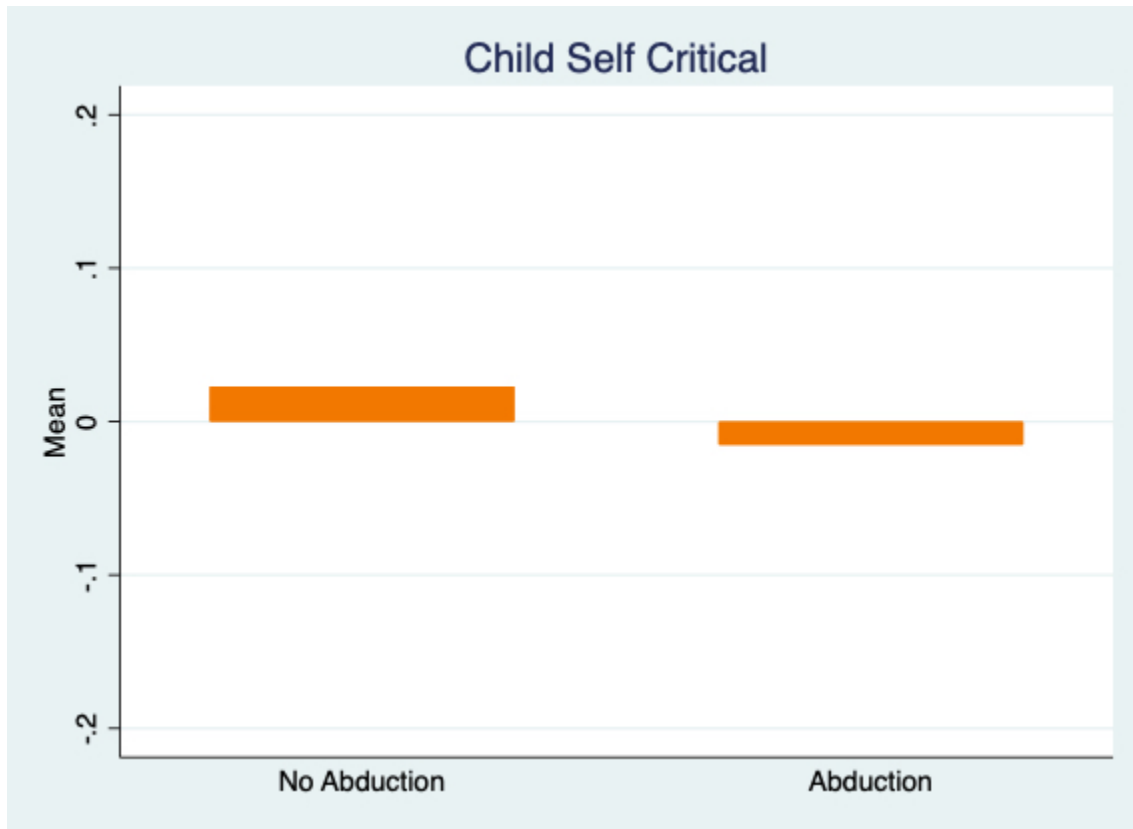


| VARIABLES               | (1)<br>Child Insecurity | (2)<br>Child Insecurity | (3)<br>Child Insecurity | (4)<br>Child Insecurity | (5)<br>Child Insecurity | (6)<br>Child Insecurity |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Abduction               | 0.11<br>(0.11)          | 0.10<br>(0.11)          | 0.20<br>(0.13)          | 0.21<br>(0.14)          | 0.20<br>(0.13)          | 0.21<br>(0.13)          |
| Child Female            |                         | 0.07<br>(0.07)          | 0.18<br>(0.11)          | 0.19*<br>(0.11)         | 0.16<br>(0.11)          | 0.16<br>(0.11)          |
| Abduction Gender (int.) |                         |                         | -0.19<br>(0.14)         | -0.20<br>(0.14)         | -0.15<br>(0.13)         | -0.16<br>(0.13)         |
| Child Age               |                         |                         |                         | -0.00<br>(0.01)         | -0.00<br>(0.01)         | -0.00<br>(0.01)         |
| Poverty Index           |                         |                         |                         |                         | -0.18***<br>(0.07)      | -0.19***<br>(0.07)      |
| Mother Married          |                         |                         |                         |                         |                         | -0.07<br>(0.11)         |
| Constant                | -0.07<br>(0.08)         | -0.10<br>(0.09)         | -0.16<br>(0.10)         | -0.15<br>(0.12)         | 0.34<br>(0.22)          | 0.41<br>(0.25)          |
| Observations            | 825                     | 819                     | 819                     | 817                     | 817                     | 817                     |
| R-squared               | 0.090                   | 0.090                   | 0.092                   | 0.093                   | 0.113                   | 0.114                   |

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Child Self Critical  
Your child X (name) is very self critical (Agree Disagree)



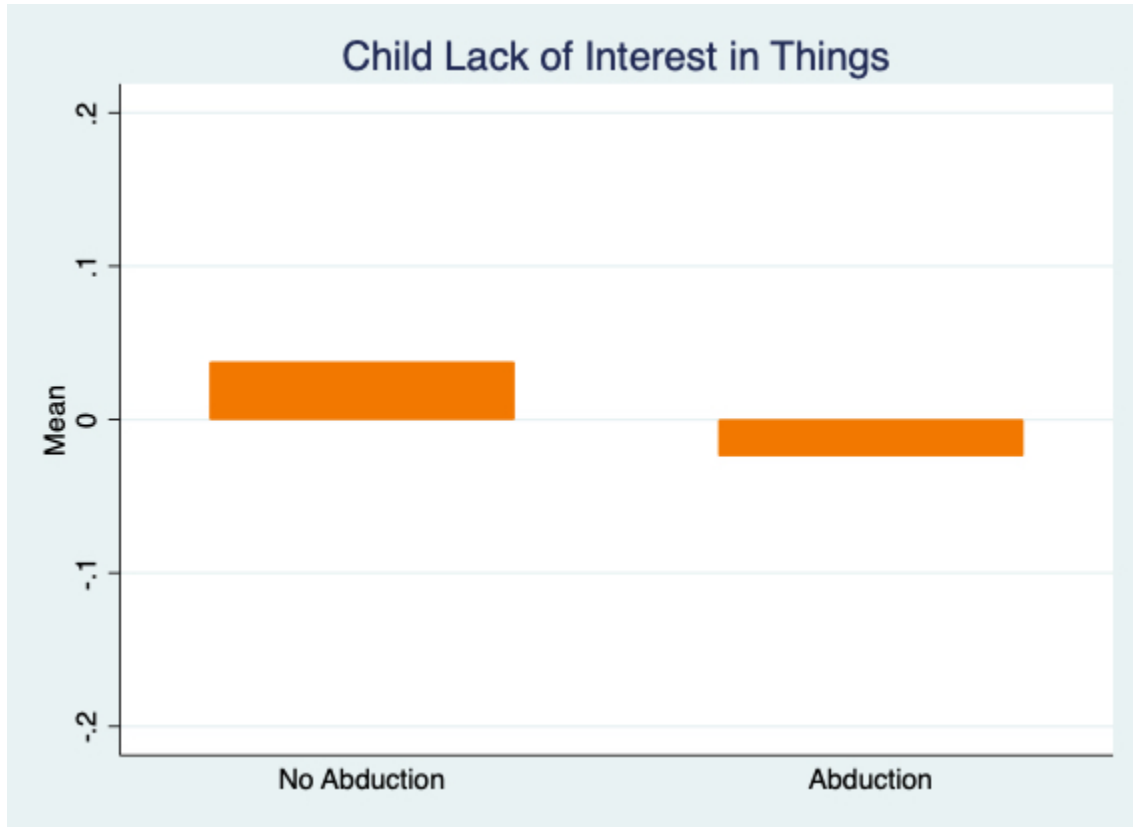
| VARIABLES               | (1)<br>Child Critical | (2)<br>Child Critical | (3)<br>Child Critical | (4)<br>Child Critical | (5)<br>Child Critical | (6)<br>Child Critical |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Abduction               | 0.02<br>(0.10)        | 0.00<br>(0.10)        | 0.04<br>(0.13)        | 0.05<br>(0.13)        | 0.05<br>(0.13)        | 0.04<br>(0.12)        |
| Child Female            |                       | 0.05<br>(0.07)        | 0.09<br>(0.12)        | 0.09<br>(0.12)        | 0.07<br>(0.11)        | 0.07<br>(0.11)        |
| Abduction Gender (int.) |                       |                       | -0.07<br>(0.15)       | -0.08<br>(0.15)       | -0.04<br>(0.14)       | -0.04<br>(0.14)       |
| Child Age               |                       |                       |                       | 0.00<br>(0.01)        | 0.00<br>(0.01)        | 0.00<br>(0.01)        |
| Poverty Index           |                       |                       |                       |                       | -0.16***<br>(0.05)    | -0.16***<br>(0.06)    |
| Mother Married          |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       | 0.03<br>(0.11)        |
| Constant                | -0.01<br>(0.08)       | -0.03<br>(0.09)       | -0.05<br>(0.10)       | -0.06<br>(0.13)       | 0.38**<br>(0.19)      | 0.36<br>(0.22)        |
| Observations            | 813                   | 807                   | 807                   | 805                   | 805                   | 805                   |
| R-squared               | 0.067                 | 0.068                 | 0.068                 | 0.068                 | 0.085                 | 0.085                 |

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

## Child Lack of Interest

Over the last two weeks how often has X (name) had little interest or pleasure in doing things



| VARIABLES               | (1)<br>Child Lack of<br>Interest | (2)<br>Child Lack of<br>Interest | (3)<br>Child Lack of<br>Interest | (4)<br>Child Lack of<br>Interest | (5)<br>Child Lack of<br>Interest | (6)<br>Child Lack of<br>Interest |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Abduction               | -0.03<br>(0.10)                  | -0.03<br>(0.10)                  | -0.13<br>(0.14)                  | -0.14<br>(0.14)                  | -0.13<br>(0.14)                  | -0.14<br>(0.13)                  |
| Child Female            |                                  | -0.03<br>(0.08)                  | -0.14<br>(0.12)                  | -0.15<br>(0.12)                  | -0.13<br>(0.12)                  | -0.13<br>(0.12)                  |
| Abduction Gender (int.) |                                  |                                  | 0.18<br>(0.16)                   | 0.19<br>(0.16)                   | 0.16<br>(0.15)                   | 0.17<br>(0.15)                   |
| Child Age               |                                  |                                  |                                  | 0.00<br>(0.01)                   | -0.00<br>(0.01)                  | -0.00<br>(0.01)                  |
| Poverty Index           |                                  |                                  |                                  |                                  | 0.10*<br>(0.06)                  | 0.12*<br>(0.06)                  |
| Mother Married          |                                  |                                  |                                  |                                  |                                  | 0.13<br>(0.11)                   |
| Constant                | 0.02<br>(0.08)                   | 0.04<br>(0.09)                   | 0.10<br>(0.11)                   | 0.10<br>(0.14)                   | -0.17<br>(0.21)                  | -0.29<br>(0.23)                  |
| Observations            | 834                              | 830                              | 830                              | 828                              | 828                              | 828                              |
| R-squared               | 0.055                            | 0.055                            | 0.056                            | 0.056                            | 0.063                            | 0.066                            |

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Index Analysis  
 Constructed using index of all seven individual wellness outcomes

| VARIABLES               | (1)<br>Index     | (2)<br>Index     | (3)<br>Index     | (4)<br>Index       | (5)<br>Index       | (6)<br>Index       |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Abduction               | 0.12**<br>(0.05) | 0.11**<br>(0.05) | 0.17**<br>(0.07) | 0.16**<br>(0.07)   | 0.16**<br>(0.07)   | 0.16**<br>(0.07)   |
| Child Female            |                  | -0.04<br>(0.04)  | 0.03<br>(0.06)   | 0.03<br>(0.06)     | 0.04<br>(0.06)     | 0.04<br>(0.06)     |
| Abduction Gender (int.) |                  |                  | -0.11<br>(0.08)  | -0.10<br>(0.08)    | -0.12<br>(0.08)    | -0.12<br>(0.08)    |
| Child Age               |                  |                  |                  | 0.01**<br>(0.01)   | 0.01**<br>(0.01)   | 0.01**<br>(0.01)   |
| Poverty Index           |                  |                  |                  |                    | 0.06**<br>(0.03)   | 0.06**<br>(0.03)   |
| Mother Marries          |                  |                  |                  |                    |                    | 0.03<br>(0.06)     |
| Constant                | -0.07*<br>(0.04) | -0.05<br>(0.04)  | -0.09<br>(0.05)  | -0.20***<br>(0.07) | -0.37***<br>(0.09) | -0.39***<br>(0.11) |
| Observations            | 845              | 839              | 839              | 837                | 837                | 837                |
| R-squared               | 0.072            | 0.071            | 0.073            | 0.081              | 0.089              | 0.090              |

Robust standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

## A.2 Robustness Checks

### Child Anxiety

| VARIABLES               | (1)<br>Anxiety    | (2)<br>Anxiety    | (3)<br>Anxiety   | (4)<br>Anxiety     | (5)<br>Anxiety    | (6)<br>Anxiety    |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Abduction               | 0.30***<br>(0.10) | 0.29***<br>(0.10) | 0.32**<br>(0.14) | 0.29**<br>(0.14)   | 0.30**<br>(0.14)  | 0.30**<br>(0.14)  |
| Child Gender            |                   | -0.14*<br>(0.07)  | -0.10<br>(0.11)  | -0.11<br>(0.11)    | -0.11<br>(0.11)   | -0.10<br>(0.11)   |
| Abduction Gender (int.) |                   |                   | -0.06<br>(0.15)  | -0.05<br>(0.15)    | -0.06<br>(0.15)   | -0.06<br>(0.15)   |
| Child Age               |                   |                   |                  | 0.03***<br>(0.01)  | 0.03***<br>(0.01) | 0.03***<br>(0.01) |
| Mother Married          |                   |                   |                  |                    | -0.04<br>(0.11)   | -0.05<br>(0.11)   |
| Cohen Index             |                   |                   |                  |                    |                   | -0.01<br>(0.01)   |
| Constant                | -0.19**<br>(0.07) | -0.11<br>(0.09)   | -0.13<br>(0.10)  | -0.34***<br>(0.13) | -0.31**<br>(0.15) | -0.17<br>(0.26)   |
| Observations            | 832               | 826               | 826              | 824                | 824               | 824               |
| R-squared               | 0.102             | 0.108             | 0.108            | 0.115              | 0.115             | 0.117             |

Robust standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

### Child Worry

| VARIABLES               | (1)<br>Child<br>Worry | (2)<br>Child<br>Worry | (3)<br>Child<br>Worry | (4)<br>Child<br>Worry | (5)<br>Child<br>Worry | (6)<br>Child<br>Worry |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Abduction               | 0.19*<br>(0.11)       | 0.19*<br>(0.11)       | 0.26*<br>(0.14)       | 0.22<br>(0.14)        | 0.23*<br>(0.14)       | 0.24*<br>(0.14)       |
| Child Gender            |                       | 0.01<br>(0.07)        | 0.10<br>(0.11)        | 0.09<br>(0.11)        | 0.09<br>(0.12)        | 0.09<br>(0.11)        |
| Abduction Gender (int.) |                       |                       | -0.13<br>(0.15)       | -0.12<br>(0.15)       | -0.14<br>(0.15)       | -0.14<br>(0.15)       |
| Child Age               |                       |                       |                       | 0.04***<br>(0.01)     | 0.04***<br>(0.01)     | 0.04***<br>(0.01)     |
| Mother Married          |                       |                       |                       |                       | -0.17<br>(0.11)       | -0.17<br>(0.11)       |
| Cohen Index             |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       | -0.00<br>(0.01)       |
| Constant                | -0.12<br>(0.08)       | -0.13<br>(0.09)       | -0.18*<br>(0.10)      | -0.48***<br>(0.12)    | -0.37**<br>(0.14)     | -0.30<br>(0.26)       |
| Observations            | 831                   | 825                   | 825                   | 823                   | 823                   | 823                   |
| R-squared               | 0.079                 | 0.077                 | 0.078                 | 0.093                 | 0.098                 | 0.099                 |

Robust standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1



## Cumulative Index

| VARIABLES               | (1)<br>Index     | (2)<br>Index     | (3)<br>Index     | (4)<br>Index       | (5)<br>Index       | (6)<br>Index       | (7)<br>Index     |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Abduction               | 0.12**<br>(0.05) | 0.11**<br>(0.05) | 0.17**<br>(0.07) | 0.16**<br>(0.07)   | 0.16**<br>(0.07)   | 0.16**<br>(0.07)   | 0.16**<br>(0.07) |
| Child Gender            |                  | -0.04<br>(0.04)  | 0.03<br>(0.06)   | 0.03<br>(0.06)     | 0.04<br>(0.06)     | 0.04<br>(0.06)     | 0.04<br>(0.06)   |
| Abduction Gender (int.) |                  |                  | -0.11<br>(0.08)  | -0.10<br>(0.08)    | -0.12<br>(0.08)    | -0.12<br>(0.08)    | -0.12<br>(0.08)  |
| Child Age               |                  |                  |                  | 0.01**<br>(0.01)   | 0.01**<br>(0.01)   | 0.01**<br>(0.01)   | 0.01**<br>(0.01) |
| Poverty Index           |                  |                  |                  |                    | 0.06**<br>(0.03)   | 0.06**<br>(0.03)   | 0.07**<br>(0.03) |
| Mother Married          |                  |                  |                  |                    |                    | 0.03<br>(0.06)     | 0.03<br>(0.06)   |
| Cohen Index             |                  |                  |                  |                    |                    |                    | -0.00<br>(0.01)  |
| Constant                | -0.07*<br>(0.04) | -0.05<br>(0.04)  | -0.09<br>(0.05)  | -0.20***<br>(0.07) | -0.37***<br>(0.09) | -0.39***<br>(0.11) | -0.30*<br>(0.15) |
| Observations            | 845              | 839              | 839              | 837                | 837                | 837                | 837              |
| R-squared               | 0.072            | 0.071            | 0.073            | 0.081              | 0.089              | 0.090              | 0.092            |

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

### A.3 Children's Questionnaire Survey

Children's Questionnaire (to be completed by enumerator)

| Question   |  | Stata Variable Name |
|--|--|---------------------|
| Name   |  | childname           |
| ID   |  | childID             |
| Age  |  | childage            |
| Gender   | 1. Female 0.Male   | childgender         |
| Did you have the child while you were abducted   | 1. Yes 0. No 2. I was never abducted   | outofabduct         |
| Was the child abducted   | 1. Yes 0. No   | childabduct         |
| Was the child's father abducted  | 1. Yes 0. No   | fatherabduct        |
| Are you currently living with the child's father   | 1. Yes 0. No   | livewithfather      |
| Did these children participate in reintegration programs after returning home (check all that applies) | 1. Yes: a traditional cleansing ceremony<br>2. Yes: stepping on the egg<br>3. Yes: mato oput<br>4. Yes: received an amnesty certificate<br>5. Yes: lodging at a reception center<br>6. Yes: received a reintegration package<br>7. Yes: other (specify)<br>8. No | childreint          |
| How easy or difficult was it for your child/children born of abduction to be accepted by your family   | 1. Very difficult 2. Mostly difficult 3. Sometimes easy and sometimes difficult 4. Mostly easy 5. Very easy  | childaccept         |
| What has been the biggest obstacle your child faces (check all that applies)                           | 1. They are not allowed to interact with people outside my family  | childobstacle       |

|  |  |                 |
|--|--|-----------------|
|  | <p>2. They are afraid to interact with people outside my family</p> <p>3. They do not want to interact with people outside my family</p> <p>4. People in the village do not want to interact with them</p> <p>5. People look at them differently</p> <p>6. People in the village say bad things about them</p> <p>7. Other (specify)</p> |                 |
| What has been the biggest obstacle your child faces (text)   |  | childobstaclext |
| When someone mistreats X (name), he/she thinks that they must have done something to deserve it                              | 1. Disagree 2. Agree   | childinsecurity |
| Your child X (name) is very self critical  | 1. Disagree 2. Agree   | childcritical   |
| Over the last two weeks, how often has X (name) felt nervous, anxious, or on edge?   | 1. Not at all 2. More than half the days 3. Everyday   | childanxiety    |
| Over the last two weeks how often has X(name) worried too much about different things  | 1. Not at all 2. More than half the days 3. Everyday   | childworry      |
| Over the last two weeks how often has X (name) had little interest or pleasure in doing things                               | 1. Not at all 2. More than half the days 3. Everyday   | childdepress    |
| Over the last two weeks how often has X (name) felt down, depressed or hopeless  | 1. Not at all 2. More than half the days 3. Everyday   | childhopeless   |
| On a scale of 1-10, one being the least happy and ten being the most happy, how would you assess the happiness of your child | (1-10)   | childhappy      |