

An Examination of the Extent and the Causes of Human Trafficking in Nigeria.

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Abstract

Human trafficking in Nigeria has created a serious concern in many people as a result of adverse effects it creates in our society. It is on this ground that the study is conducted to find out the extent and the causes of human trafficking in Nigeria. Two objectives, two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated for the study. The study adopted a survey design method. The population of the study comprised trafficked Nigerian citizens, NAPTIP staff, staff of all the NGOs working in the area of trafficking and other international collaborators in Nigeria such as staff of International Office of Migration (IOM), staff of United Nation Children Education Fund (UNICEF), staff of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and staff of International Labour organization (ILO). A sample of 1450 teachers participated in the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to draw the sample. The instrument used for the study was a structured questionnaire. From the findings it was observed that Nigerian Government has recorded very high extent of human trafficking in the country. Besides, there are various causes of human trafficking to include lack of employment, porous society, poor economic system, ineptitude of Nigerian government, lack of parental care and other weaknesses/ It was recommended that the government of Nigeria should provide facilities for setting up of enterprise, firms and companies to reduce the level of poverty and unemployment in the country and as well encourage innovators and low income earners into the world of business.

KEYWORDS: Human trafficking, causes and Nigeria

Introduction

Modern slavery is commonly referred to human trafficking, every year numbers of young girls, women and unsuspecting men are tricked into leaving their homes on a promise of better life elsewhere. They either end up dying along the way or subjected to dehumanizing treatments. In earlier times, persons were bought and sold as commodities and used as instruments of free labour in plantations in America and the Caribbean. Today there are more people being bought and sold than in the entire 300-year history of the Atlantic slave trade. These are ensnared into slavery and slavery like conditions under the guise of a better life across nation's borders and even locally. They are robbed of their freedom and human dignity.

The greatest value in human life as recognized by Ebegbulem (2012) is freedom and the greatest enemy of freedom is slavery and human exploitation. He claimed that slavery is man's inhumanity to man. Slavery makes disadvantaged people the property of people of greater advantage. The part of man's inhumanity to man under discussion in this work is human trafficking which has been described by many scholars as modern day slavery. It is a subtle path to slavery. The phenomenon of human trafficking is not particularly new in our society, with countries as either source, transit or destination. However, it is estimated that some 40,000 to 50,000 Nigerian women may already be caught up in such trafficking and that some 6 million Nigerian children may be at risk of being drawn into this movement Akinyoade, (2011). Perpetrators are not totally strangers but can be family members, peers, neighbours etc. with selfish ends for their own personal aggrandizement. Human trafficking

can take the form of internal or external trafficking. Internal trafficking involves movement of person within a country for exploitative purposes while external or international form involves movement across nations borders for same purpose. The motive for the deal is the financial benefits for the traffickers. Reasons for trafficking humans include: sexual exploitation, forced labor and/or slavery, domestic servitude, forced marriages, illegal adoptions, and even forced organ removal or human sacrifice.

The dramatic changes in African economic fortunes have undermined the abilities of families to meet the basic needs of its members. Driven by desperation, some fall prey to traffickers rackets in desperate search for survival. Irregular migration as well as trafficking in young boys and girls was stimulated and intensified by worsening youth unemployment and rapidly deteriorating socio-political and economic conditions and poverty. Most of these youths risk everything to fight their way hazardously to rich countries with the assistance of traffickers and bogus agencies, in search of the illusory green pastures. This traumatic development reflects the depth of the deterioration of SSA economies and poverty (ILO, 2003).

Statement of problem

It is a common knowledge that many Nigerian women and girls are enslaved as prostitutes in Europe with hundreds of them entrapped mostly against their will in forced prostitution, although it is not easy to provide exact statistics because of the clandestine nature of the trade. Prevalent source areas in Nigeria include Edo, Akwa Ibom, Delta, Cross River, Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo states. The most common transit states identified are Lagos, Kano, Sokoto, Borno and cross River. Human trafficking in these states had both domestic and international dimensions. Attractive internal destination are Lagos Kastina, Ogun, Kano state and Abuja. This situation has several factors that constitute to its prevalence nature which among others include: Poverty, lack of access to education, unemployment, family disintegration as a result of death or divorce, and neglected AIDS-orphaned children, and make young person's vulnerable to traffickers (ILO, 2003; Moore, 1994). It was against this backdrop that notable women like her excellencies, Titi Atiku Abubakar and Eki Igbinedion set out to redeem the image of Nigeria and that of the Nigerian woman. They sponsored bills against prostitution at various levels of government. These efforts had been applauded though the menace is not totally eradicated. It is on this premise that this study is conducted to determine the causes and effects of human trafficking in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to find out the extent of human trafficking and the causes in Nigeria, while the specific objectives are as follows:

1. To find out the extent of human trafficking in Nigeria.
2. To determine the possible causes of human trafficking in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be answered:

1. What is the extent of human trafficking in Nigeria?
2. What are the possible causes of human trafficking in Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in the extent of people's perception of human trafficking in Nigeria.

2. There is no significant difference in people's perception of the causes of human trafficking in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Theoretical review

This paper adopts theoretical explanation of the push of poverty and the pull demand to describe the human trafficking which is a wide spread proliferation of modern form of slavery. Demand has recently gained more prominence in initiatives to end human trafficking, especially sex trafficking (Smith, L. & Colomac, 2009). However, the demand is a key factor in all forms of human trafficking. Various factors such as poverty, an abuse or neglectful home environment, or political instability in ones country or region are considered "push" factors in that they compel people to enter situation with a high risk of human trafficking.

Whereas demand for slave labour is considered a pull factor in that it is demand that create a market in which traffickers operate and profit (Bale & Soodalter 2009). It is important to note that there is no "push without pull". "Pull factors exploit those in poverty because the push factor of meeting basic need of food and shelter for oneself or one's family is compelling. The more "push" factors that one experiences, the stronger the effect of the "pull" factor of demand. To stop the cycle of trafficking, the factors of "push and pull" including poverty must be addressed.

Concept of Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is ranked the world's third largest crime (Keefer, 2006). Perhaps the nefarious activities of human traffickers in Nigeria would have remained hidden and uninhibited despite general concern but for the intervention of the office of the wife of the Vice-President of Nigeria with the collaboration of the wife of the Edo state governor in 1999. The suffering and indignity meted out to trafficked victims in the process of transporting them and at the various destinations, especially those abroad, had become a huge source of embarrassment to Nigeria's integrity as a nation with responsibility to safeguard the interest of its nationals. The various forms of manifestation of these indignities are prostitution, child labor and under aged domestic servitude.

On the other hand internal trafficking of women and children is not also a new phenomenon. It has been going on with the trafficking of people from rural communities to major cities in the South-South region and other part of the country predominantly for exploitative domestic work, scavenging, begging, hawking and prostitution. The incidence is a little more precarious in Lagos, the commercial nerve center of Nigeria with a surging population of about 9.1 million. The busy schedules of families who are mainly working class, makes high demand for domestic servants imperative. Trafficking can be compared to modern day form of slavery because it involves the exploitation of people through force, coercion, threat and deception. It also has consequences not only for the victims but also for their families and the nations involved. Victims of human trafficking require assistance in order to regain their confidence because of the physical and psychological trauma they experience in the hands of traffickers and this involves medical help, psychological support, legal assistance, shelter and everyday care. It is against this backdrop that International Labor Organization (ILO) worked with the National Agency for Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP) and other relevant actors to establish a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) that caters for the needs of victims of human trafficking and forced labor (Kano & Ibrahim, 2011). According to Akee, Bedi, Basu, and Chau (2010), victims of human trafficking require complex assistance in order to regain their confidence and reintegrate into the society. This

involves medical help, psychological support, legal assistance, shelter and everyday care. It is impossible for one organization or agency to meet all these needs, hence there are many actors working to support victims of human trafficking. She further lamented that forced and child labour were flourishing in Nigeria and other African countries as a result of high rate of unemployment and poverty noting that this had led to abuse, rape and sexual exploitation of victims.

Extent of human trafficking in Nigeria

There is high incidence of human trafficking in Nigeria. For instance, on daily basis there are issues of large number of human being missing in Nigeria. This is done in order to traffic them out of the country for monetary purposes and this violets the human right greatly. December 2 is the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery. To effectively address this very contemporary crime while marking the day, the United Nations Office On Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Walk Free Foundation (founded by Australian philanthropists Andrew and Nicola Forrest in 2012) announced the signing of an agreement that will enable both organizations to work together to estimate the number of victims of human trafficking. The agreement entails using a common, innovative methodology and to develop estimates of human trafficking for an initial four European countries. This will provide much needed prevalence data on human trafficking at the national level and will also build relevant knowledge about how to measure this serious crime. While many think such crimes are relics of the past, trafficking and slavery still happen nowadays, and criminals continue to find new ways to exploit the vulnerable ones and extract their labor or services by force. Whether this takes the form of the sexual enslavement of women in conflict areas, exploitation through forced labor, trafficking for begging or any of the other forms countries have reported around the world, these crimes are far from being eliminated. The focus of the day is on eradicating contemporary forms of slavery, such as trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation, the worst forms of child labor, forced marriage, and the forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.

Causes of human trafficking

A variety of factors, including deepening poverty, deteriorating living conditions, persistent unemployment, conflicts, human deprivation, and hopelessness fostered the environment for human trafficking to flourish in the region (Salah, 2004). Many parents interviewed in a study in Togo had never been to school, were in polygamous unions, and had many children (Human Rights Watch, 2003). In such traditional settings parents often prefer to send girls into domestic service and use the income to finance the education of boys. In an African cultural setting, children are regarded as economic assets, and from around age 6, they are gradually integrated into the family productive process, performing various services. In a subsistence economy, labour is a critical production asset and children are enlisted into the family labour pool, a situation dubbed child labour in the literature.

Despite acceding to the various conventions designed to eliminate child labour, the practice is widespread in some areas as a result of generalized poverty and economic crisis. In many cases, the assistance that children provide in child caring, herding and fetching water or fuel wood releases the adults, especially women, to undertake more urgent and major tasks. Investment in family members is made based on who is perceived to be most likely to bring the highest returns. In most cases this boosts the biased family investment in education in favour of boys. Moreover, domestic work for children not enrolled in school or who have dropped out is an integral part of family upbringing strategies and survival mechanism. Poor parents, especially in rural areas, facing difficult resource constraints enlist their children in domestic work, hoping thereby to diversify family income (Veil, 1998). But in the process,

fostered children and domestic workers, mostly young girls, may be unable to learn a trade or attend school even when they want to because of the exploitative heavy work schedule. The inability of parents to pay the fees for their ward education is exploited by traffickers who lure young girls with offers of education and employment opportunities elsewhere.

Child trafficking in the region is a demand-driven phenomenon; the existence of an international market for children in the labour and sex trade, coupled with an abundant supply of children from poor families with limited or no means for education in a cultural context that favours child fostering (ILO, 2002). Child trafficking has also increased as a result of a growing network of intermediaries, an absence of clear legal framework, a scarcity of trained police to investigate cases of trafficking, ignorance and complicity by parents, corruption of border officials, and the open borders that make transnational movement intractable (Salah, 2004). Child trafficking networks are secretive, informal, and involve rituals and cults. However, normal cross-border migration is equally infiltrated by child trafficking.

With regard to trafficking in women, the literature also indicates that women often fall prey to traffickers as a result of poverty, rural-urban migration, unemployment, broken homes, displacement, and peer influence. Trafficked women in the sex trade often work without the use of condoms and may lower their prices for sexual services to pay back their debt bondage. Some may be raped, tortured, and subjected to other forms of inhumane physical abuse by clients and traffickers. Repatriated women arriving back in Nigeria through Lagos are forced to undergo medical tests including tests for HIV/AIDS as part of the screening process (Pearson, 2002).

Below are some other analyzed causes of human trafficking, they include:

1. **Lack of employment opportunity:** The economic system of some countries have left many people jobless. Those that are desperate thereby get lured and deceived by traffickers because they want to get out of the country by all means.
2. **Extreme greed for wealth:** Some people want to amass great wealth or get rich quick. They end up in the hands of traffickers.
3. **Poor economic system:** This may cause citizens to want to travel abroad for better standard of living.
4. **Unwholesome business gains:** Trafficking has somehow become a massive business industry in the world, thereby luring individuals with criminal minds to join.
5. **Low self esteem:** Some people do not have self esteem, it is either they are not educated (illiterates) or want to have a better life or they may end up leaving the country by all means possible.
6. **The search for greener pasture:** Some people believe that traveling abroad is the only way one can make ends meet in all aspects of life.
7. **Poverty:** Some families with large number of children maybe poor and might not be able to cater for all the needs of their children. They end up giving out some of their children to people as maids and this way some of their children may fall into the hands of traffickers.

METHODS

Research Design

The research design adopted for the study was a descriptive survey type.

Area of the study

The area used for the study was Nigeria.

Population of the study

The population of this study was drawn from Six (6) Geopolitical Regions in the country. Specifically, the study will consist of all the trafficked victims, NAPTIP staff, staff of all the NGOs working in the area of trafficking and other international collaborators in Nigeria such as staff of International Office of Migration (IOM), staff of United Nation Children Education Fund (UNICEF), staff of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and staff of International Labour organization (ILO).

Sample and Sampling Technique

One Thousand (1,000) subjects were used for this study. Both male and female respondents were considered for the research. Simple random sampling was used with the hat and draw method.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation used for this study was structured questionnaire developed by researcher.

Validation of the Instrument

The validity of the instrument was established by the test developer with a test-retest reliability of 64 and significant at 0.05 levels. The instrument used for the study was made to pass through face and content validity to ascertain its usage.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was tested by carrying out a pilot test on 50 persons outside the study area. The aim was to check for clarity and appropriateness of the test. Data collected were analyzed item by item. The result obtained indicated that the instrument was reliable for the intended purpose.

Procedure for Collecting Data

The researcher used a letter of introduction to the respondents for acceptance and assistance.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were subject to appropriate statistical analysis. For the purpose of this study, inferential statistics were employed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research Question one: The research question sought to find out what is the extent of human trafficking in Nigeria?

Table 1: Extent of Human Trafficking in Nigeria.

Responses	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	720	72%
Agreed	110	11%
Disagreed	80	8%
Strongly Disagreed	90	9%
TOTAL	1,000	100%

Table 1 shows that 720 respondents representing 72% of the total respondents strongly agreed with the fact that Nigerian Government has recorded very high extent of human trafficking in the country. 110 respondents representing 11% agreed with the statement, 80

persons representing 8% disagreed while 90 respondents representing 9% strongly disagreed with the researcher.

Research Question Two: This research question sought to find out what are the possible causes of human trafficking in Nigeria with such variables as: lack of employment, porous society, poor economic system, ineptitude of Nigerian government, lack of parental care and other weaknesses.

Table 2: Respondents’ Perception of the Possible Causes of Human Trafficking in Nigeria

Responses	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	550	55%
Agree	160	16%
Disagreed	205	20.1%
Strongly Disagreed	85	8.9%
TOTAL	1,000	100%

It could be seen in Table 2 that 550 persons representing 55% of the respondents strongly agreed that the causes of human trafficking include lack of employment, porous society, poor economic system, ineptitude of Nigerian government, lack of parental care and other weaknesses. 160 persons representing 16% agreed with the proposition, 205 persons representing 20.1% disagreed while 85 persons representing 8.9% strongly disagreed.

Hypothesis One

The workings of the hypothesis are presented thus:

Ho: Nigerian Government has not recorded high extent of human trafficking in the country.

Table 3: Chi-Square Contingent Table on the extent of human trafficking in Nigeria

Fo	Fe	Fo-Fe	(Fo-Fe) ²	$\left[\frac{Fo-Fe}{Fe}\right]^2$
720	25	695	483,025	19,321
110	25	85	7,225	289
80	25	55	3,025	121
90	25	65	4030	161.2
1,000	100			19,892.2

The result of the analysis in Table 3 presents at three degree of freedom with 0.05 significance level, the table value of chi-square as (7.81). The calculated Chi-Square as seen in table 3 is 19,892.2. Since the calculated value is greater than the tabulated value, it therefore follows that the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative accepted. This means that the Nigerian Government has recorded high extent of human trafficking in the country.

From the results in tables 1 and 3 it could be concluded that the Nigerian Government has recorded very high extent of human trafficking in the country. The findings of this hypothesis are in line with the action of United Nations Office On Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Walk Free Foundation (founded by Australian philanthropists Andrew and Nicola Forrest in 2012) when both met to sign agreement on how “to effectively address this very contemporary crime” while marking the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, they “announced the signing of an agreement that will enable both organizations to work together to estimate the number of victims of human trafficking. The agreement entails using a

common, innovative methodology and to develop estimates of human trafficking for an initial four European countries. This will provide much needed prevalence data on human trafficking at the national level and will also build relevant knowledge about how to measure this serious crime”.

Hypothesis Two

Ho: There are no causes of human trafficking in Nigeria.

Table 4:Chi-Square Contingent Table for causes of human trafficking in Nigaria

Fo	Fe	Fo-Fe	(Fo-Fe) ²	$\left[\frac{F_o - F_e}{F_e} \right]^2$
550	25	525	275,625	11,025
160	25	135	18,225	729
205	25	180	32,400	1,296
85	25	60	3,600	144
1,000	100			13,194

The result of the analysis in Table 4 presents at three degree of freedom with 0.05 significance level, the table value of chi-square as (7.81). The calculated Chi-Square as seen in table 3 is 13,194. Since the calculated value is greater than the tabulated value, it therefore follows that the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative accepted. This means that there are causes of human trafficking to include lack of employment, porous society, poor economic system, ineptitude of Nigerian government, lack of parental care and other weaknesses

The result of the analysis in tables 2 and 4 showed the causes of human trafficking to include lack of employment, porous society, poor economic system, ineptitude of Nigerian government, lack of parental care and other weaknesses. The findings of this hypothesis is in line with International Labour Organization (ILO, 2003: Moore, 2016) position which states that “Poverty, lack of access to education, unemployment, family disintegration as a result of death or divorce, and neglected AIDS-orphaned children, make young person’s vulnerable to traffickers”.

CONCLUSIONS

From the results it could be concluded that the Nigerian Government has recorded very high extent of human trafficking in the country. Besides, there are various causes of human trafficking to include lack of employment, porous society, poor economic system, ineptitude of Nigerian government, lack of parental care and other weaknesses.

Recommendations

The study recommends that:

1. It was recommended that the government of Nigeria should provide facilities for setting up of enterprise, firms and companies to reduce the level of poverty and unemployment in the country and as well encourage innovators and low income earners into the world of business.

2. The federal government should enforce more policies on human rights that would reduce trafficking to the barest minimum if not total eradication and also prosecute offenders.
3. Moreover, leaders of the various social groups should encourage creativity, entrepreneurship and discourage continuously any form of slavery.

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