

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: SLAVERY IN THE MODERN DAY AND ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION

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Abstract

Human trafficking in Nigeria has become a very concerning problem, especially with regard to women and children. Transatlantic, trans-Saharan, national, and/or local slavery were all forbidden in the early 1800s. Despite the ban, the slave trade still exists, albeit in crueller, more advanced, and more complicated forms. The examination is done from a globalist perspective. According to the study's findings, extreme poverty, unemployment, ignorance, and the inefficiency of Nigeria's judicial system in combating trafficking are to blame for both the core causes of human trafficking and the vulnerability of rural populations to it. The essay offers some solutions to this issue as well. According to international law, the term "human trafficking" encompasses all types of unconsensual exploitation. In other words, whether or not the victim is forced to travel or is lured into being exploited, human trafficking refers to any circumstance in which someone is utilized as a commodity. Consensual exploitation is mostly addressed by social and labor law, an area in which the World Bank has significant expertise, as opposed to nonconsensual exploitation, which is frequently handled by criminal law. These two types of exploitation stymie growth because they undermine equity and efficacy. The inquiry finds that contemporary slavery transcends international borders, is exceedingly intricate and offensive, promotes individuals' mobility as well as the spread of light and tiny arms endangers Nigeria's national security. As a result, combating the problem will require international cooperation as well as political will and commitment.

Keywords: National Security, Modern/Neo-Slavery, Human trafficking, exploitation, international law, labour markets.

Introduction

People of any age, gender, or nationality can become victims of modern slavery or human trafficking. It entails seizing individuals by coercion, intimidation, or fraud in order to take advantage of them. It describes a person's unauthorized entry into or departure from a nation. A modern type of slavery is human trafficking, in which traffickers coerce victims into performing forced labor or commercial sex acts against their choice by threats, coercion, or force.

Human trafficking is a heinous crime. It entails using force, compulsion, or any other method of enlisting, sending, transferring, harboring, or receiving someone with the intention of abusing them. Every year, trafficking occurs involving thousands of men, women, and children, both inside and across countries. Every nation on the planet is impacted by human trafficking, whether it be the victim's origin, route, or destination. The United Nations Office

for Drug Control (UNODC) assists States in implementing the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons. The UNODC is the curator of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its Protocols.

Although the exact numbers are unknown, even conservative estimates suggest that each year, at least 2.5 million men, women, and children are lured or coerced into crossing international borders—many more are trafficked within their own nations—and forced to work against their will, frequently in hazardous and appalling conditions, while being threatened physically, psychologically, or financially.

Human exploitation constituted a crime against humanity two hundred years ago, and it still does. In addition, remained so a worldwide problem, especially in areas active in conflict. Virtually every nation experiencing conflict forced labour or sexual exploitation of human beings affects people all over the world. Conflict has previously been linked to human trafficking, according to evidence. Cockbain and Sidebottom confirm this in their study when they affirm that conflict drives individuals out of they are away from their homes and surroundings, making them defenseless and easy target for human trafficking and exploitation (Cockbain & Sidebottom, 2022).

This study is to explore the dynamics of this contemporary slavery in the continent generally and Nigeria in particular. Trafficking is a slap on the face of Africans that so many centuries after the abolition of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, the US still talks of giving grants to facilitate the halting of human trafficking in the continent. It is quite sickening that the same Africans who are at the forefront of the agitation for reparation from Europe and America for the harm inflicted on the blacks in the era of slave trade should turn round to smuggle fellow blacks outside the continent for further dehumanization (Mezie-Okoye, 2005).

This report was intended to look at how the World Bank can support efforts to combat this modern-day slavery. But this survey made it quite evident that there is a much bigger issue with exploitation, of which human trafficking is but one ugly face. Although most civil society attention is focused on transnational human trafficking, exploitation affects far more people than just trafficking victims when it is viewed more broadly to include forced labor, child labor, bonded labor, forced prostitution, and other forms of exploitation. The International Labour Organization estimates that at least 12.3 million people are impacted by forced labor (ILO, 2005).

The study locates its central problematic in the inability of the Nigerian criminal code to fashion out a proper legislation to bring the perpetrators of this heinous act to justice. A analysis of the trafficking cases reveals that the penalties appear to be mild, especially when compared to drug traffickers' sentences, and do not appear to represent the plethora of human rights violations committed against children, men, and women.

Conceptual Structure

Marxist thought serves as the study's main theoretical focus. According to Marxian theory, there are rival social groups and classes with competing ideologies, ambitions, and values in every class society (Marx, 1844; 1964). Therefore, as a result of conflicting class interests and

disparities in values, there is because the system prevents the poor (unemployed men and women) from having access to the resources they need to escape poverty, poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, and unemployment (Marx, 1844; 1964). The theoretical framework of Marxian theory is chosen because it assumes that low pay, a lack of work prospects, and excessive living expenses are caused by incompetent leadership provide a safe harbor for human traffickers (Haralambos, Holborn, Chapman, and Moore, 2013). People migrate in search of better opportunities because they lack access to food, clothing, and housing. It is during this migration that young people become victims of unscrupulous individuals who entice luring them across the divide with false and impractical promises of a better life (Haralambos, Holborn, Chapman, and Moore, 2013).

Human trafficking is also examined by Marxian theory from the perspective of groups that abuse their economic and political power to take advantage of weaker members of society (Marx, 1844; 1964). Each country has its own dominant groups, which can include those that belong to the same religion, ethnicity, geography, or status in higher authority. As a result, vulnerable Nigerians, young people, adolescents, men, women, and other groups— are more prone to fall prey to human trafficking. Furthermore, due to their vulnerability, traffickers might use these people for forced labor, prostitution, and other forms of sexual exploitation, like making pornographic advertisements (Chai, 2018).

An overview of Trafficking in Humans

Human trafficking is a global problem that has an impact on people everywhere. It has an influence on all of the countries concerned; all stakeholders raised concerns in order to counteract these rapidly developing and unmanageable phenomena. Human trafficking has developed as a major worry for the world society during the last three decades (Pharaoh, 2006). Several investigations have been undertaken to gain a deeper comprehension of its characteristics and nature, which will aid in the development of methods and policies for combating human trafficking (ILO, 2013; Farrell et al., 2008; Baykotan, 2014; Adepoju, 2005).

The exploitative aspect of human trafficking has disturbed many stakeholders, despite it being a booming industry. In recent years, human trafficking has drawn more attention from around the globe. An estimated hundreds of thousands to millions of people are trafficked annually, bringing in billions of dollars in revenues for the traffickers. According to current research, men and boys make up a considerable proportion of trafficking victims, but women and girls make up the majority, these victims face Trafficking in Persons Report 2013; Marshall 2001; Hyland 2001; both sex and work trafficking.

The uncertainty and ongoing controversy surrounding human trafficking extends to the differences between smuggling and human trafficking. To be clear, a large amount of research has demonstrated that human trafficking and human smuggling are not the same thing, and they should not be mistaken or used interchangeably (Salt, 2001). The illegal entry of both the person being smuggled and the smuggler into a country is known as human smuggling. On the other hand, kidnapping or fraudulent activities involving a third party that result in the unlawful or lawful movement of a person or group of people inside or into another country is known as human trafficking. The smuggler and the smuggled no longer have a relationship after the smuggled has successfully entered the destination country. The relationship endures

in the instance of human trafficking. Additionally, human trafficking entails the forced placement of an individual in unknown exploitative conditions (Hosken, 2006; Pharoah, 2006; Campana & Varese, 2016).

Human trafficking is most commonly done for sexual exploitation with forced labor trafficking being recognized as an unreported crime, according to data from the European Commission's Eurostat in 2013. The report states that 25% of victims were trafficked for forced labor and 62% of the victims were involved in sexual exploitation trafficking. 58% of victims worldwide were drawn to sexual exploitation, according to a UNODC report from 2012 with Europe having the highest rate at 62%. Recent research indicates that despite constant efforts to stop it, human trafficking is still happening and becoming more common because traffickers utilize the internet and other advanced digital communication technologies to reach out to their victims (See Sykiotou 2007; Hughes, 2014). Consequently, Europe has become the main hub for human trafficking to be used for sexual exploitation.

The mix of prostitution and trafficking in persons is another part of global human trafficking complexity. The effectiveness of global efforts to combat human trafficking has been weakened as a result. Human trafficking and prostitution are two distinct problems that shouldn't be confused or combined because each of these is a serious problem occurrences will necessitate a unique approach to handle. According to Weitzer (2011), "prostitution is a business deal, but human trafficking is the process by which a third party encourages someone to engage in sexual commerce." Economists surmise that whereas voluntary prostitutes choose to sell sex because it is lucrative or because they feel "forced" to do so; involuntary prostitutes are forced into prostitution by traffickers who want their earnings due to financial difficulties (Lee & Persson 2015:3). Prostitution is readily distinguishable from human trafficking by the free act and consent involved.

For the sake of all human beings, developmental challenges like gender and human rights must be the foundation of any response to human trafficking (D'Cunha, 2002). In Europe and Central Asia, where women make up the majority of victims, the 2009 Social Development Notes state that the most prevalent form of human trafficking is sexual exploitation. Girls and adult women are the majority of victims of human trafficking in Latin America and the Caribbean; these victims are trafficked for the purposes of domestic slavery and sexual exploitation. According to the survey, the most common Although forced labor and trafficking for domestic servitude are also clearly visible, reports of trafficking for sexual exploitation are the most common type (Social Development Notes 2009).

Nigeria is a hotspot for human trafficking in West Africa

Internal trafficking is common in Nigeria; with criminals in town victims from rural areas, primarily in the south of the nation, are enlisted in cities such as Abeokuta, Calabar, Ibadan, Kaduna, Kano, Lagos, and Port Harcourt, as forced laborers in domestic work.

Nigeria remains the starting point, destination, and transit country for human trafficking. The US State Department's 2022 report on human trafficking can be accessed here. With 1.6 million slaves, Nigeria, which is still classified as a Tier 2 nation in the US State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report (2022), was ranked 38 out of 160 nations with the highest

number of slaves. According to the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) report (NAPTIP 2021 Report), women aged 18 and up make up the majority of trafficked individuals in Nigeria. According to NAPTIP data from 2019 to 2022, 39% of human trafficking in Nigeria takes place abroad, while 61% takes place domestically. It is the third most common crime in Nigeria, after drug trafficking and economic fraud (UNESCO, 2006). Extreme poverty (33% of the population, or 70 million people) in Nigeria, a lack of economic opportunities, corruption, conflict and insecurity, climate change and the resulting migration, and western consumerism are some of the factors that increase vulnerability to human trafficking.

Prior to 2020, however, Edo State was a key supplier of human trafficking victims. According to CNN, Edo State is Africa's most traveled through destination. (It should be noted that in terms of trafficking victims, Edo State is no longer among the top five states, according to the most recent data from NAPTIP, which was released in its 2021 Data Analysis Report.) In Libya, detention cells hold migrants for weeks or months before they are dumped into the Mediterranean Sea on unseaworthy dinghies or boats. As stated by the International Organization for Migration, there are roughly 159,996 internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and, as of April 2022, 649,788 migrants in Libya, the nation from which a substantial fraction of migrants depart for Europe. In Libya, the trafficking of organs is increasing. As per the IOM, approximately 32,000 Nigerians would remain in Libya as migrants by April 2022. According to NAPTIP's report, the majority of victims rescued outside of Nigeria are from Benue State, Akwa Ibom, Ogun, Sokoto, and Kano, as well as Mali (which was the UAE in 2020) most recent 2021 Data Analysis Report. The years 2020 and 2021 were the first in recent memory in which the majority of victims recovered by NAPTIP were not from Edo State.

In 2021, NAPTIP recovered 1,450 victims of human trafficking, 1,266 of whom were females. While "foreign travel that promotes prostitution" used to be the most prevalent reason why Nigerian women trafficked for international travel, child abuse (312 total instances in 2021, of which 215 were girls) has now surpassed it. Purchasing tickets for foreign travel that encourages prostitution is currently the second most common type of procurement most common type of trafficking victim (288, all of whom were women). In 2021, 150 A total of 250 women (100%) were victims of "external procurement for sexual exploitation," while 98% of the victims were women who had been the victims of "internal procurement" (NAPTIP Report 2021.). Following that, it was stated that youngsters were hired as domestic servants, as well as internal and exterior forced labor, and that sexual assault occurred. According to the same study, the majority of the great majority of victims in Nigeria are women. who have been identified) and the majority of reported male victims are between the ages of 0 and 11 are between the ages of 0 and 11 are above the age of 18. According to NAPTIP's 2021 Report, Benue State had the most rescued victims Kano (87, 6.1%), Sokoto (89, 6.3%), Ogun (91, 6.4%), Akwa Ibom (95, 6.7%), and 175, 12.3%) came next. Though most of the rescued victims in 2020 were spared from "procurement for overseas travel which promotes prostitution," it is noteworthy It is possible to determine whether Edo State leads the nation in cases of prostitution and sexual exploitation even though NAPTIP does not provide data by state for each category. It was found that Edo State was not among the top five states in terms of saved NAPTIP victims. This fact seems to have remained true in 2021. It is going to happen interesting to observe whether this continues over the following few years as NAPTIP focuses

more intentionally on other types of trafficking (<https://pathfindersji.org/nigeria-human-trafficking-factsheet/>).

Human Economic Exploitation and Modern-Day Slavery

The book "trafficking in human beings as modern-day slavery" examines various forms of human trafficking and considers them to be grave breaches of human rights, a substantial form of international organized crime, and a danger to both personal and national security. Recent research and case studies from various OSCE member nations shed light on the problem. The OSCE region and beyond are seeing an increase in the serious crime of human trafficking. Millions of individuals are tricked, abused, threatened, and pressured into working in numerous labor sectors every day, including housekeeping services, building, farming, mining, sweatshops, fishing, food processing, textiles, and hospitality. Forced begging, small-time criminal activity, pick pocketing, and the acquisition, transportation, and sale of stolen goods and narcotics are all examples of labour exploitation (Mezie-Okoye, 2005).

Globally, human trafficking doesn't appear to be stopping. Well, it is consequently critical to shift public opinion of human trafficking, which is frequently regarded as a minor phenomena involving only specific victim profiles or restricted to the exploitation of sex. Conversely, it seems that human trafficking for the purpose of labor exploitation is growing tied to concerning globalization trends, particularly in light of the global economic downturn.

When people are simply forced into exploitative occupations or are forced to make risky decisions in order to support their families, they are particularly vulnerable to modern slavery. Although anyone can be made to work against their will, people who are in precarious situations—like debt or not having a passport—are particularly susceptible. The Covid-19 pandemic and climate change, for example, may make people even more susceptible to exploitation.

Nigerian Poverty and Human Trafficking

While it happens on every continent, child trafficking is most common in Africa, particularly in Nigeria, where the victims are more vulnerable due to deprivation, starvation, unemployment, and instability.

Poverty connotes an undesirable state. It implies that poor individuals or groups require assistance in order to transform their circumstances (Haralambos & Holborn, 2000). Nigeria's poverty status is both shocking and disgraceful. Nigeria produces approximately every day; 2 million barrels of crude oil are produced. It has 2.4 billion tons of crude oil reserves, or approximately 17.9 billion barrels, or 1.8% of global reserves, are available. 3.4 trillion cubic meters are also present of space of liquefied natural gas, which accounts for 24% of the world's total gas reserves.

Nigeria's increase in the population and unfavorable economic conditions worsen insecurity, underemployment, and unemployment and drive people to look for better opportunities abroad—are the main causes of human trafficking in the country. These opportunities include better pay, respectable work, and education. A large number of the impoverished reside in areas of extreme poverty with few resources and work opportunities. Criminals take

advantage of these vulnerable people by giving them a way out of the harsh reality of their circumstances.

The Human Development Report emphasizes the interconnectedness of corruption and poverty. It believes that government corruption contributes to poverty in a variety of ways. Most directly, it diverts resources away from the poor and toward the wealthier, who can afford to pay bribes. Nigeria recently took the unapologetically #1 place as the world's most corrupt country. In a same vein, I respectfully assert that Nigeria stands to be challenged by any other country for the way her women and children are flagrantly abused globally. Nigeria is a wealthy country with a destitute populace, the poorest and most impoverished in OPEC. Political crises and instability are important causes of poverty. When this is combined with a catastrophic financial crisis, irresponsible spending, and widespread corruption, the situation is optimal for rapid population pauperization (The Guardian, Tuesday, December 17, 2002). Poverty also contributes to an increase in crime and other vices in Nigeria. The number of commercial sex workers has also increased.

Human trafficking: Its effects on Nigeria's socioeconomic system

Phrases like "human trafficking," "person trafficking," and modern slavery" refer to a criminal activity whereby traffickers coerce to coerce adults or children into engaging in commercial sex or labor in order to profit from their exploitation. It is against the law to use a minor under the age of eighteen to perform a commercial sex act, regardless of the use of coercion, fraud, or force. Human trafficking in the United States is classified into two categories: forced labor and sex trafficking. The following sections give basic descriptions of various forms of human trafficking, along with some characteristics that set each type apart. A number of fundamental concepts and tenets that apply to all types of human trafficking come after these.

Human trafficking and slavery date back to antiquity. Human trafficking and slavery history demonstrates that past exploitative strategies are still in use today, and in order to end trafficking and slavery in all of its forms, we need to look into these practices. The recruitment, transfer, harboring, or receiving of individuals through threats, actual or threatened use of force or other forms of coercion, kidnapping, fraud or deception, abuse of authority or vulnerability, or the payment or receipt of benefits in exchange for permission from someone in a position of control over another person so they can be exploited are all considered forms of human trafficking.

At the very least, exploitation of exploitation includes things like other people's forced labor or services, their prostitution or other sexual exploitation, slavery or acts that resemble slavery, servitude, and the removal of organs. Human dignity and worth are incompatible with the ethics of prostitution and the related crime of prostitution trafficking, putting an individual's, families, and community's well-being at risk.

Trafficked individuals may be forced or convinced to labor in a variety of situations, both obvious and covert. Street corners, factories, sweatshops, fields, massage parlors and brothels, online escort services, child soldiers, and private residences are a few examples. The most frequently involved industries in human trafficking are those in the sex, construction,

catering, restaurant and apparel manufacturing, domestic work, agriculture, and entertainment.

While human trafficking has an impact on all demographics, those who are trafficked are most typically in vulnerable circumstances. People may have they may be in foster care; they may have experienced natural disasters, armed conflicts, or political unrest; they may be homeless or have fled their home; they may be immigrants looking for a better life or opportunity; they may have a history of sexual abuse, rape, or domestic violence; or they may have worked in the sex industry in the past.

Human trafficking is an international crime that affects people all over the world. In order to stop it, every country needs to acknowledge that human trafficking is a serious crime and bring its perpetrators to justice. All governments and law enforcement personnel must emphasize the examination and prosecution of crimes involving human trafficking, as well as the punishment of those found guilty and the protection of victims of such offenses. To prevent, investigate, and prosecute human trafficking incidents and offenses, all transit, receiving, and supplier countries must collaborate. The United States has a special responsibility to address the problem and set an example for other nations to follow because it is a major destination country for victims of human trafficking.

Conclusion

The new President Biden signed the National Action Plan to combat human trafficking today. The National Action Plan outlines a three-year comprehensive strategy to combat human trafficking. It also includes actions to enhance victim protection, raise the conviction rate of traffickers, and put an end to the crime both inside and outside of our borders.

The Administration's primary goals for addressing the needs of marginalized people, families, and communities are reflected in the revised National Action Plan. These goals include improving racial and gender parity, labor rights, the abolition of forced labor in global supply chains, and the assurance of humane, safe, and orderly migration. 2020 saw the initial introduction of the National Action Plan. The four primary pillars of US and foreign anti-trafficking operations—partnership, prevention, protection, and prosecution—are the focus of the changes.

The National Action Plan of the State Department lists several important strategies for preventing human trafficking. It motivates the Department's Diplomatic Security Service to pursue human trafficking cases and promptly link victims to assistance, collaborating with other federal and local law enforcement agencies. The statement highlights the Department's ongoing efforts to work with nations—especially those under our own interagency—and business to stop and eliminate forced labor in global supply chains and public procurement.

Most importantly, the National Action Plan highlights the need to improve our capacity to guarantee that our work against human trafficking is trauma and survivor-informed. The Department is dedicated to achieving this through its support of the Human Trafficking Expert Consultant Network and participation in the US Advisory Council on Human Trafficking (<https://www.state.gov/release-of-the-national-action-plan-to-combat-human-trafficking/>).

Also we need stiffer penalties in opposition to human trafficking within and outside Nigeria. Some experts recommend that trafficking should carry sentences of fifteen years imprisonment and above. Additionally, upon convicted, traffickers shall lose whatever property they have obtained through human trafficking. Courts also should be directed by the Federal Government to impose reparations on the defendants in addition to any other civil or criminal punishments permissible by law. If such hard line is not taken, human trafficking will prevail in Nigeria.

Finally, apart from depopulating the African continent, international trafficking of children, women, and men degrade our people thus portraying the black race as one under siege. I call upon both the public and private sectors to take steps to alleviate poverty that creates room for this inhumanity to mankind. If human trafficking is not controlled, the HIV/AIDS problem will persist.

Recommendations

- i.** Under international law, states have a responsibility to stop trafficking, look into and convict those who do it, and offer support and protection those who have been trafficked victims.
- ii.** Anti-trafficking laws must not infringe upon the dignity and rights of every person, including those who have been trafficked. Examples of migrants include refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people, and migrants themselves.
- iii.** States and international organizations must guarantee that the root causes of human trafficking—poverty, inequality, and all forms of discrimination—are addressed by their initiatives.
- iv.** States must be vigilant in detecting and ending participation or cooperation from the public sector in human trafficking. Investigating, trying, and convicting any public servants who are suspected of trafficking in persons appropriately punished if found guilty.
- v.** People who have been trafficked cannot be held, accused, or prosecuted for entering or staying in countries that are not their legal places of residence, or for engaging in illegal activity that is a direct result of their status as trafficked people.
- vi.** States are required to give victims of human trafficking the necessary medical and mental attention in addition to shielding them from further abuse and exploitation. The ability or willingness of the victim of human trafficking to participate in legal proceedings cannot be a condition for receiving such protection and treatment.
- vii.** Human trafficking victims' children must be identified. Their best interests must always be first. Children who are victims of human trafficking need to be protected and helped right away. Their particular vulnerabilities, rights, and requirements must be adequately considered.
- viii.** Both the receiving and sending states must ensure the safe (and, to the greatest degree possible, voluntary) return of trafficking victims. When it is reasonable to assume that going back would put their families' safety and/or security at serious risk, trafficked individuals must be offered legitimate alternatives to repatriation.
- ix.** Whether conducted by governmental or non-governmental actors, states are required to look into, try, and rule on cases pertaining to trafficking, including its component actions and associated activities. If found guilty of trafficking, any of its

- components, or connected offenses, both individuals and legal entities shall be subject to appropriate and effective punishment.
- x. States shall, if necessary, seize and freeze the possessions of people and groups engaged in human trafficking. The maximum amount of assets deemed guilty must be utilized to provide for and reimburse victims of human trafficking.
 - xi. States are required to guarantee that victims of human trafficking have access to suitable and efficient legal remedies.

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