

THE IMPLICATIONS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING ON YOUTHS IN OREDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, EDO STATE, NIGERIA

BY

¹S.O Osemwenkha Ph.D, ²Igbinovia Joy E.

¹*Institute of Public Administration and Extension Services, University of
Benin, Benin City, Nigeria*

²*University of Benin Teaching Hospital, Benin City.*

ABSTRACT

The research was carried out to examine the implication of human trafficking on youths with particular reference to Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The study revealed why people carryout human trafficking on women in the world today and Nigeria in particular. The study also revealed why victims of trafficking surrender themselves to the illicit trade and why parents encourage their children in this social disorder. The study examined the various roles played by all stakeholders in the trade of human trafficking as it relates to victims, traffickers, parents, non-governmental organizations and the law of the state and ways to arrest the menace. The new dimension of international prostitution by those trafficked was also examined. The result of the analysis shows that only one of the hypothesis was insignificant while the remaining two were significant. The study recommends that:

- *Government should be involved in greater awareness campaign*
- *There should be improvement in the economy which will facilitate job availability.*
- *Attention should be focused not on victims trafficked out of the country but also on those prostituting within the country.*
- *There is the need for infrastructural development in the community as long term measure to stem the tide of human trafficking.*
- *There should be regional, national and international laws that conform to human rights standard to reduce human trafficking.*

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this project is to highlight the civil practice of human trafficking. This practice has being with man since the dawn of history. Human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation especially in minors and young women has become great global concern because of its rapid growth in recent years. The research will examine the predisposing factors that compel women to take to local or international prostitution. The implication that human trafficking has on youths will also be examined.

Definitions of human trafficking vary considerably partly because the terms have been associated with prostitution. Most victims of trafficking are often forced into sexual and non sexual work.

Global Alliance Against Trafficking in women, a Thialand-based non-government organisation defines female trafficking as “All acts involved in the recruitment and transportation of women or children within or across national borders for work or services by means of violence, or threat of violence, deception or other coercion.” (Coremigha, 2003).

The United Nation Convention 1994 defines trafficking as “the illicit and clandestine movement of persons across national and international boarders, largely from developing countries and some countries with economies in transition with the end goal of forcing women and girls into sexual or economically oppressive and exploitative jobs thus profiting the recruiters, traffickers and crime syndicates. They are also compelled to engage in other illegal activities related to trafficking such as forced marriages, clandestine employment and forced adoption. (Cortemigha, 2003).

Afripide, a Nigeria-based Non Governmental Organisation defines trafficking as involving the following features.

1. The crossing of borders, internal and external
2. The participation of third parties for some reward
3. It takes place with or without the consent of the victim
4. It often employs the use of fraudulent means (for example false identities) to effect movement.

The International Organisation for Migration² says trafficking occurs when a migrant is illicitly engaged (recruited, kidnapped, sold etc) and moved either within national or across international borders or when intermediaries (traffickers) obtain economic or other profit by means of deception, coercion and other forms of exploitation under conditions that violate the fundamental rights of migrants.

Afripride further went on to identify different types of trafficking as follows:

Type I Trafficking:- The motive is primarily sexual work with or without non-sexual work.

Type II Trafficking: The motive is primarily non-sexual work but related to forced labour or employment.

Type III Trafficking:- The motive is non-sexual work related to false marriage or social or cultural bondage.

The central feature of these above definitions is the use of force and coercion to compel victims into activities they cannot refuse and other conditions they cannot control.

Women and children trafficking have become a modern phenomenon which refers to trade, transportation and passage for commercial purposes which are themselves illegal and illicit.

Women trafficking have been used to mean international prostitution. This is a nefarious act which is carried on not just within the country but across the country's geo-political borders.

Another term is "Pimp" which means a man who solicits clients for prostitution (the Oxford Dictionary 1995).

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (Third edition 1995)⁵ defines the term prostitute as, "Someone especially a woman who earns money by having sex with people who pay for it." The synonyms for prostitute are "whore," "slut," "harlot," "ashawo," "babetu," "agbile" and recently "Italos."

For the purpose of this paper, trafficking of persons entails such act as the procurement, recruitment, harbouring, movement or receipt of persons by inducement, frauds, or false representation or false coercion for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labour.

The urge to migrate by those who live in the world's poorer nations has increased the growing involvement of criminal organisation in human trafficking.⁴ Young girls trafficked abroad are tricked into believing that they will be given jobs as hair dressers or some other lucrative jobs but are often forced into prostitution or hard labour in some farms abroad.

Historically, human trafficking has been in vogue in the Asian, Taiwan and other European countries. So their main trade has been international prostitution and the children are merely adopted for domestic work or other menial jobs. The question therefore is why the illicit trade at all?

That Edo State ranks first in the International moral decadence is worth investigating. According to Eki Igbinedion, wife of former Edo Governor, the initiator of Idia Renaissance argues that prostitution is largely due to illiteracy where a woman will withdraw her daughter from school and raise N100,000 (one hundred thousand naira) to ferry her aboard. To her, many of these mothers are illiterate and appear to only be interested in the monetary gain. Breakdown in family values in Edo State has been attributed as a major factor to the menace. Women are custodians of culture and moral values which are passed on to the next generation. It is the dignity of womanhood that is being robbed through prostitution. Adults and society at large have become extremely apprehensive and perplexed by the fact that youths with many of the advantages of life are involved in this self inspiring and antisocial type of behaviour.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Trafficking is a world-wide phenomenon and because of the nature of the illicit trade, it is difficult to provide accurate figures of its magnitude. Some have estimated that about 80% of girls and women trafficked into Italy are from Edo State Nigeria. (UN, 2003). Traditionally, this ethnic group does not encourage prostitution (Aghatise 2002). Girls and women trafficked from Nigeria are often made to undergo some rites in order not to reveal the identity of their traffickers and madams to the police and to pay their debts without creating problems.

There is insufficient information on the traffickers and their modus operandi on which operational guideline for a national strategy can be based.

Trafficking occurs on large scale in Africa and Edo State having the largest number of trafficked females in Nigeria, (UN, 2003). Other West Africa regions, including Ghana, Sierra Leone also provide a supply line.

Such large scale migration in modern societies is not without supporting social structures. Large scale deception, a key paradigm of trafficking sufficiently explains mass migration of sexually trafficked females.

Absence of efficient mechanism to support local communities in prevention activities and for re-integration of trafficked minors and young women result in increased vulnerability of individuals.

Other related problems include poverty, large family size, lack of educational opportunities and lack of employment, ignorance of the risks involved in trafficking and absence of a judicial framework allowing perpetrators and accomplices of trafficking to be held responsible and punished for their crimes.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study of human trafficking has become necessary for various reasons. The objectives of the study are to:

1. identify the social factors and root causes associated with human trafficking in Edo State.
2. examine how and the extent the traffickers and the victims have benefited from the illicit trade.
3. find out the attitude and perception of community of human trafficking.
4. make recommendation for intervention to limit the incidence of trafficking in Edo State.

METHODOLOGY

The study is designed to find out the implication of Human trafficking on youths in Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State.

The description of this research methodology include the following: Target Population, Sample and Sampling Technique, Research Instruments, Limitations, Delimitation and Data Analysis.

TARGET POPULATION

The research was carried out in the Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State among adults between the ages of 15 and 31 years and most of the population used are illiterate.

SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Simple random sampling technique was adopted in the selection of respondents. This sample was selected from New Benin Market and Ogiso Markets.

One hundred (100) people constituted sample size.

RESEARCH TECHNIQUE

The instruments of data collection for this research are structured interview and oral interviews. The questionnaire was the major instrument. Questionnaire was the major instrument used because it is believed that it will ensure uniformity and it is consistent in the questions asked.

The questionnaires were divided into two main sections. Section "A" dealt with the biographic data of the respondents including sex, age, qualification, marital status, religion, occupation and residence.

Section "B" covered research questions on human trafficking as it affects Edo State image and its implication on youths and possible remedies to the problems.

LIMITATIONS

There are various limitations that faced this research as it is a very volatile phenomenon. Those who promised to participate in the study, frequently reneged on their promise due largely to the type of study.

Victims feel shy to reveal aspects of their experience in Italy and as such did not disclose their actual experiences. Some denied engaging in prostitution.

Some refused to answer the questions asked as they were of the opinion that the study was to enhance Idia Renaissance, a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) which was established by the former first Lady of Edo State, Eki Igbiniedion, wife of the Ex-Governor. The stance of the first Lady on female trafficking is well known.

The people who are involved in the trade are very rich and well connected globally so they are difficult to identify and talked to.

Poor record keeping made it difficult to have enough material for literature review.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

After the successful completion of the questionnaire by the researcher the data were collected and tabulated. The data were grouped according to hypotheses and objectives. Simple percentage along side with chi-square (X^2) statistical test were used.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This section deals with the presentation and analysis of the data collected. The analysis and interpretation are based on the hypotheses that were formulated at the beginning of this study.

TEST OF HYPOTHESES

According to T. Lucey (1998) hypothesis is some testable belief or opinion and hypothesis testing is the process by which the belief is tested by statistical means. In this study, the researcher formulated some hypotheses. These have to be tested to verify or other wise of such proposition.

These hypotheses include:

1. H_1 : The socio-economic condition in the country positively influences human trafficking in Edo State.

Ho: There is no relationship between the socio-economic condition in the country and human trafficking in Edo State.

2. Hi: People engage in human trafficking as a survival strategy in Nigeria.

Ho: People do not engage in human trafficking as a survival strategy in Nigeria.

3. Hi: Human trafficking is an illicit trade that has negative impact on youth and should be eradicated.

Ho: Human trafficking is not an illicit trade and it does not have any negative impact on youth and should not be eradicated.

HYPOTHESIS ONE

Hi: The socio-economic condition in the country positively influences human trafficking in Edo State.

Ho: There is no relationship between the socio-economic condition in the country and human trafficking in Edo State.

Hi: Alternative hypothesis.

Ho: Null hypothesis

Using the information in item 9 which states that going abroad will help families from abject poverty.

By Chi-Square

$$X^2 = \frac{(fo-fe)^2}{fe}$$

fo = Observed Frequency = Given

fe = Expected Frequency = Calculated thus

RESEARCH RESULT

Calculated $X^2 > \text{Critical } X^2 @ \alpha 0.05$

An association exists between the variable. This means we should reject H_0 and accept H_1 .

There is an association between socio-economic condition in the country and human trafficking in Edo State.

$$df = (r-1)(c-1) = (2-1)(8-1) = 1 \times 7 = 7$$

Research Decision

Calculated $X^2 = 14.07$

$$\alpha = 0.05$$

RESEARCH RESULT

Calculated $X^2 > \text{Critical } X^2 @ \alpha 0.05$

Therefore Data are statistically significant @ 5% sampling error. An association exists between the variables. This means we should reject H_0 and accept H_1 .

There is an association between socio-economic condition in the country and human trafficking in Edo State.

HYPOTHESIS TWO

H_1 : People engage in Human trafficking as a survival strategy in Nigeria.

H_0 : People do not engage in human trafficking as a survival strategy in Nigeria.

In order to test this assertion, table 13 was used which states that people go abroad to survive the hardship in Nigeria.

X^2 statistics was used

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(fo-fe)^2}{fe}$$

fo = Observed Frequency

fe = Expected frequency thus:

$$df = (r-1) (c-1) = (2-1) (8-1) = 1 \times 7 = 7$$

Research Decision

$$Df = 7$$

$$\alpha = 0.5$$

$$\text{Calculated } X^2 = 0.62$$

$$\text{Critical } X^2 = 14.07$$

$$\alpha = 0.5$$

Research Result

Calculated $X^2 < \text{Critical } X^2$ therefore we reject H_i and accept H_o .

Research Interpretation: People do not engage in human trafficking as a survival strategy in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Three

H_i : Human Trafficking is an illicit trade that has negative impact on youth and should be eradicated.

H_o : Human Trafficking is not an illicit trade and it does not have any negative impact on youth and should not be eradicated.

Table 21 was used to test this assertion which states that the present legislation on human trafficking is enough to curb the illicit trade.

$$X^2 = \frac{(fo-fe)^2}{fe}$$

fo = Observed frequency

fe = Expected frequency thus:

$$df = (r-1) (c-1) = (2-1) (8-1) = 1 \times 7 = 7$$

Research Decision

$$\text{Calculated } X^2 = 24.25$$

Critical $X^2 = 14.07$

$\alpha = 0.05$

Research Result

Calculated $X^2 > \text{Critical } X^2 @ \alpha = 0.05$

Therefore Data are statistically significant at 5% sampling error.

Human trafficking has negative impact on youth and should be eradicated.

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study suggest that migration is perceived by community members both male and female as a means of economic advancement. It is their view that personal, family and community poverty can be overcome through migration. This belief is often reinforced by reference to the success achieved by previous migrants. Support from migrated relatives tends to make the community members respect migrants without thinking of the possible risk inherent in the migratory process. From the study, these factors have helped in creating a spiral growth of migration in community.

Economic advancement is the main cause of migration while sexual trafficking is a secondary factor. The women involved in migration are usually of lower economic class, have little or not formal education so migration from commercial sex work is often the only means of achieving their desired goals.

Legal intervention may be very difficult due to active involvement of family members because there is knowledge and awareness of the trade among community members.

There is need for programme actions in the community that would protect the rights of these vulnerable groups. There is need for counseling, services, social support and legal protection. Females are more vulnerable because they drop out of school when there is any economic set back in the family.

There is the need to target programme intervention at the risk population rather than women already in the trade since the majority of those deported expressed their desire to return.

In summary, this study confirms the close association between female trafficking and the economic needs in the community.

CONCLUSION

At the commencement of this study, it was stated that the main objective was to identify the social factors and root causes associated with human trafficking in Edo State. Attention has been forced on violation of rights of trafficked women. Women trafficked suffer mental and physical violation as well as violation of self. All women trafficked are vulnerable to all forms of abuse.

The effects of trafficking affect both the individual and society at large.

There is the social stigma that they may have been infected by the dreaded HIV/AIDS disease.

The negative impact on the nation is that it ascribes to the exporting country like Nigeria a poor national image.

The act of trafficking tends to scare off potential investors.

There is the danger posed to the health of the nation.

The implication of human trafficking on youths is numerous.

- It can lead to depletion of labour force for the nation.
- Skilled manpower may reduce because some of these victims actually drop out of school to migrate.
- Most women that prostitute enter when they are below 30 years of age which is the prime reproductive years. Some are in their teens and they have little knowledge of sexual and reproductive matters and are unable to protect their sexual health.

- There is unwanted pregnancies and they are forced to undergo repeated abortions which may lead to infertility vesico-vaginal fistula.
- They may contract Sexually Transmitted Diseases such as Gonorrhea, Syphilis and the dreaded HIV/AIDS.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Trafficking is too complex to yield to one single solution. Prevention requires long term strategy for poverty reduction, provision of education, family planning and employment generation. These can only reduce trafficking; it can never completely eradicate it because it is already deep rooted. Shelters and psychological support services can also help in its reduction.

The following recommendations are therefore made based on the findings of this work.

- The government should be involved in greater awareness campaign. For instance the National Orientation Agency which has nation wide coverage should be involved in awareness campaign to discourage trafficking.
- There should be an improvement in economy which will facilitate job availability. Furthermore, vocational training centers for women should be set up at local, state and National levels in order to create gainful employment for the women.
- The establishment of IDIA RENAISSANCE, the Non-Governmental Organisation which was founded by the former first lady of Edo State, Mrs. Eki Igbinedion is a good example of such a training centre.
- Attention should focused not only on victims trafficked out of the country but also on those prostituting within the Nation.

- There is the need for infrastructural development in the community as a long term measure to stem the tide of human trafficking.
- Government should assist children of the less privileged like farmers and artisan by way of scholarship and financial aids to farmers and artisans should be given soft loans.
- There should be regional, national and international laws that conform to human rights standard to reduce trafficking.
- Finally, offender should be made to pay compensation to victims especially those victims who have contacted HIV/AIDS or any Sexually Transmitted Diseases which are harmful to the health of the victims

REFERENCES

1. Press Conference on Trafficking in Human Beings Held to Coincide with the Operation of the Twelfth Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justices, 13 May, 2003.
2. Luda di Cortemigha, V., Desk Review-Programme of action against Trafficking in Minors and Young Women from Nigerian into Italy for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation UNICRI. 2003.
3. United Nation Convention, 1994 Oxford Dictionary
4. The International Organisation for Migration, 2004
5. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (Third Edition 1995).