

THE SCOURGE OF WOMEN TRAFFICKING: IMPLICATIONS AND PREVENTION FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The data for this study was collected from some of the victims and staff of NAPTIP (National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Person) using the quantitative and qualitative techniques. A total of three hundred and ten (210) respondents were selected for the quantitative data using a simple random sampling technique. The analysis was done using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) for the quantitative data, while Nvivo was employed to analyze the qualitative data. Findings of the study showed that poverty; lack of job opportunities in the country and porous borders facilitate women trafficking. Recommendations were proffered: that it is pertinent for the government to rehabilitate the victims; provide jobs and ensure that people learn some skills. The securities mostly operating at the borders should be provided with the necessary and adequate equipment that would ensure effective monitoring of the activities of syndicates.

Keywords: Women trafficking, syndicates, victims, border security

Introduction

Women trafficking have been defined as the recruitment, transportation, harbouring or reception of women for the purpose of slavery, prostitution, forced labour (including bonded labour or debt bondage) and servitude (ILO-IPEC, 2002). Women trafficking have become one of the most challenging social problems confronting Nigeria today. The pace at which the scourge of women trafficking is going poses great danger to the future of our youths in the country. Although several agencies have been put in place to curb the menace yet records of women trafficking seem to be on the increase (Ngor, 2000). Young Nigerian girls of the average age of 14 years are recruited into this illegal business by syndicates and those referred to as the "big madams" operating in and outside Nigeria.

The increasing nature of women trafficking transcends national crime rather has become a transnational crime (Salt, 2000). However, the devastating trend of poverty in Nigeria has been attributed to one of the primary factors why women or girls become vulnerable in the hands of those refer as the intermediaries who mostly claimed they are capable of securing employment for victims outside the country (De Waal, 2013). Other factors that have been described as a contributing factors to the vulnerability of women in the hands of the perpetrators of the criminal act of trafficking include social and cultural prejudices; divorce and separation; cheap demand for manual

labour; political instability; prevailing insecurity; economic crisis and sometimes natural disasters such as earthquake, drought e.t.c (UNICEF 2002). This study therefore seeks to examine the nature of women trafficking and its implication in the Nigeria development. This study shall basically focus on Sokoto state which is from the Northern part of Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

The scourge of women trafficking seems to have attained the level at which the national development may be at stake. The implication of women trafficking may include the distortion of the future of young Nigerian women who are at their productive ages. In the process of trafficking women, they usually go through a lot of dehumanizing and excruciating pains in the hand of traffickers who often times engage them in various injurious acts such as an oath of secrecy or rituals, all in a bid to prevent the unveiling of their secrecy. The consequence of the trafficking includes but not only becoming HIV positive and thereby preventing them from contributing their positive quota towards national development. To this end, this study is therefore designed to examine the prevalence of women trafficking in Nigeria with a specific focus on Sokoto metropolis and its implications on national development.

The main aim of the study is to examine the incidence and implications of women trafficking for national development.

Literature review

Human trafficking generally has become a menace that actually affected not only a particular nation but also the entire world. It has also been observed that it has become a global business reaping huge profits for traffickers and syndicates (Dauvergne, 2017). The scourge has also been described as a menace that is prevalent amongst women who are majorly school dropouts and job hunters (Puod, 2003).

While identifying the consequences of women trafficking specifically, Ofuoku (2010) argued that, women trafficking come with devastating consequences. He highlighted that in Nigeria rural communities where agricultural practices mostly take place women; girls and children are the backbone of the agricultural sector. These classes of persons accounts for 70% of agricultural labour, 60% of agricultural production and 80% of food production. Thus, victims trafficked from rural and farming communities to less farming locations and abroad naturally reduce human capacity required to achieve sustainable agricultural practices and production in Nigeria. This will therefore result to food scarcity and production shrinkage (Ofuoku, 2010).

In another related observation, ILO (2012) pointed that women trafficking are fundamental violation of human rights and a contemporary form of slavery which leads to devastating consequences on the development of any nation. The victims of the scourge of women trafficking usually suffer emotional, psychological, physical abuse and mistreatment (Hanley, Martinez, Lacroix & Gal, 2006). Victims are particularly exposed to sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS and continually experience fear and threats to themselves, their family and relatives or friends. Many victims of trafficking are bought and sold several times, thereby, over multiplying the forms of violence they suffer from one instances to another. Women suffering continue even when they have returned home since they are often stigmatized, especially if they have been trafficked for sexual purposes (Europol, 1999).

Human Rights Watch (2003) in a bid to provide measures to combat trafficking in human beings in Benin, Niger and Togo stated the reasons why women are susceptible to trafficking abroad than men. Firstly, there is a demand for their sexual services (which implied that they are marketable abroad). Some parents prefer to send their daughters abroad because

they could be relied upon to assist the family and help lift them out of poverty. In a reciprocating gesture, girls are also willing to sacrifice themselves for their families. The success stories of other women, who had been trafficked and had made some money abroad, also encouraged others to try their luck. High rates of unemployment among women due to relatively low level of female education because of some of the parent's unwillingness or lack of financial potentiality to send them to school provided a pool of women to be trafficked abroad (Sullivan, 2003). In another related observation Okojie (2004) pointed out that menace of women trafficking is a serious crime that is intertwined, clandestine and secretive in nature, hence the need for holistic approaches in interventions. To stem this tide of women trafficking, there must be an intensive enlightenment and educational programme on the dangers of trafficking which is linked to prostitution and slavery.

Theoretical framework

This study employed the Rational Choice Theory for the theoretical underpinning. The theory argued that criminals are rational beings that make decisions to commit crime basically on the costs and benefits that are involved in the process of the crime they intend to perpetrate. Deterministic in nature, criminal decision making process is based on free will, which necessitates observation of opportunities, circumstances and situations that could affect the successful perpetration of the planned crime, (Lanier & Henry, 2004). Brown, Esbensen and Geis, (2008) were of the view that rational decision making that has to do with crime also involves the choice of the victims determined by the type of crime ; the modus operandi, where and when to commit it and what to do afterwards. This implied that the criminals need to first observe the accessibility to potential victims; the location and the time at which they are vulnerable, the appropriate method that could provide entry with ease and how to safeguard their criminal active ties from criminal justice authorities and other capable guardians. Some other rational theorists argued differently that criminals are different in their choices. Basically as a result of their different perceptions, motives, skills and abilities (Lanier & Henry 2004). The fundamental assumption of the theory states that the process that human traffickers use in selecting their victims is based on the gains they may get from the crime and importantly the vulnerability of potential victims.

Methodology

The targeted populations of the study were 40 officials of NAPTIP; 50 victims selling food in some restaurants at “Unguwar Rogo Park”; 100 victims selling food in some beer parlors in “Mammy Market and Kwanawa area” and 20 victims who are selling food in some restaurants at “Unguwar Gayu area”. The total populations for the study are 210 respondents. The questionnaire for the study was designed on 4- point modified Likert scale of: Strongly Disagree; Disagree; Agree and Strongly Agree. The purpose is to compare various opinions of the respondents. The researcher confirmed the validity of the instrument before it was used. The reliability was also examined with Cronbach Alpha technique and it gives reliability coefficients of 0.85 which showed that the questionnaire was reliable.

The four departments comprises of: the investigation department; the legal department; the public enlightenment department and the counseling cum rehabilitation department. The qualitative data was done through the use of in-depth interview (IDI) and Key Informant Interview (KII). The researcher employed this in obtaining information from some selected NAPTIP officials and some selected victims. The victims were those who are in the custody of the agency and who are located in some areas in Sokoto Metropolis. The accessibility of the researcher to the victims was aided by NAPTIP officials. The selected NAPTIP officials were from the four departments mentioned above. The selected victims who were interviewed were victims selling food in some restaurants in “UnguwarRogo Park”; victims selling food in some beer parlors at “Mammy Market and Kwanawa area” and victims selling food in some restaurants at “Unguwar Gayu area”. The analysis for this study was done using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) for the quantitative data while NVIVO was employed for the qualitative data. The results of the analysis are presented as follows:

The study employed the use of both the quantitative and qualitative method of data collection. The quantitative data was sourced from some of the victims and the NAPTIP officials in four departments of the agency through the administering of

Table 1: Reasons for the high incidences of women trafficking in Sokoto metropolis

Responses	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
The prevalence women trafficking should be attributed to the high poverty rates?	110 (52.4%)	75 (35.7%)	15 (7.1%)	10 (4.8%)	210 (100%)
Women trafficking are also a result of lack of employment in the country?	102 (48.6%)	80 (38.1%)	17 (8.1%)	11 (5.2%)	210 (100%)
The high incidence of women trafficking may also be attributed to the porous border in Nigeria?	120 (57.1%)	55 (26.2%)	18 (8.6%)	17 (8.1%)	210 (100%)

Source: *Field Survey (2018)*

Table 1 shows respondents’ view on whether the prevalence whether women trafficking should be attributed to the high poverty rates 52.4% strongly agreed; 35.7% agreed; 7.1% disagreed and 4.8% strongly disagreed. This shows that the prevalence women trafficking can be attributed to the high poverty rates

On whether women trafficking are also a result of lack of employment in the country 48.6% strongly agreed; 38.1% agreed; 8.1% disagreed and 5.2% strongly disagreed. The data shows that majority are of the

view that Women trafficking are also a result of lack of employment in the country.

In terms of whether the high incidence of women trafficking may also be attributed to the porous border in Nigeria, 57.1% strongly agreed; 26.2% agreed; 8.6% disagreed and 8.1 strongly disagreed. The data implied that vast numbers of the respondents were of the view that high incidence of women trafficking may also be attributed to the porous border in Nigeria.

The data above revealed that that the high incidences of women trafficking in Sokoto metropolis can be largely attributed to the high poverty rates;

unemployment and porous borders. The response from the in depth interview also corroborate the data from the quantitative data. The KII information also complement to the above data.

The data from the qualitative data shows in complement with the quantitative data that the high incidences of women trafficking in Sokoto metropolis can be largely attributed to the high poverty rates; unemployment and porous borders.

Table 2: Why women are being trafficked in Sokoto metropolis

Responses	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Women are being trafficked because there are people who benefit financially from it?	90 (42.9%)	75 (35.7%)	25 (11.9%)	20 (9.5%)	210 (100%)
Women being trafficked because many of the security agencies manning the borders are not adequately equipped?	115 (54.8%)	65 (31.0%)	16 (7.6%)	14 (6.6%)	210 (100%)
Women are being trafficked because there are no necessary and adequate facilities that can monitored the syndicates and "big madams"?	110 (52.4%)	50 (23.8%)	29 (13.8%)	21 (10.0%)	210 (100%)

Source: Field Survey (2018)

Table 2 shows respondents' view on whether women are being trafficked because there are people who benefit financially from it; 42.9% strongly agreed; 35.7% agreed; 11.9% disagreed and 9.5% strongly disagreed. The implication of the response is that women are being trafficked because there are people who are benefiting financially from it.

On whether women being trafficked because many of the security agencies manning the borders are not adequately equipped 54.8% strongly agreed; 31.0% agreed; 7.6% disagreed and 6.6% strongly disagreed. The data shows that majority are of the view that women are being trafficked because many of the security agencies manning the borders are not adequately equipped.

In terms of whether women are being trafficked because there are no necessary and adequate facilities that can monitor the syndicates and "big madams", 52.4% strongly agreed; 23.8% agreed; 13.8% disagreed and 10.0 strongly disagreed. The data implied that many of the respondents were of the

view that women are being trafficked because there are no necessary and adequate facilities that can monitored the syndicates and "big madams"

The data above revealed that that some of the reason why there are women trafficking in Sokoto metropolis is because there are people who benefits financially from it; many of the security agencies manning the borders are not adequately equipped and there are no necessary and adequate facilities that can monitored the syndicates and "big madams"

The response from the in depth interview and KII also corroborate the data from the quantitative data.

The data from the qualitative data shows also corroborated the quantitative data that some of the reasons why there are women trafficking in Sokoto metropolis include the fact that there are people who are benefiting financially from it; many of the security agencies manning the borders are not adequately equipped and there are no necessary and adequate facilities that can monitored the syndicates and "big madams"

Table 3: To understand the implications of trafficking on women in Sokoto metropolis

Responses	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Women's trafficking exposes and makes victims who are mostly women to be prone to various dangerous hazards?	135 (64.3%)	55 (26.1%)	10 (4.8%)	10 (4.8%)	210 (100%)
Women's trafficking also exposes and makes women to be prone to various diseases ranging from STD, HIV and staphylococcus?	140 (66.7%)	50 (23.7%)	10 (4.8%)	10 (4.8%)	210 (100%)
Women's trafficking exposes and makes women to be prone to untimely death?	135 (64.4%)	45 (21.4%)	15 (7.1%)	15 (7.1%)	210 (100%)

Source: Field Survey (2018)

Table 3 shows respondents' view on whether women's trafficking exposes and makes victims who are mostly women to be prone to various dangerous hazards; 64.3% strongly agreed; 26.1% agreed; 4.8% disagreed and 4.8% strongly disagreed. This implied that Women's trafficking exposes and makes victims who are mostly women to be Prone to various dangerous hazards

On whether women's trafficking also exposes and makes women to be prone to various diseases ranging from STD, HIV and staphylococcus 66.7% strongly agreed; 23.7% agreed; 4.8% disagreed and 4.8% strongly disagreed. The data show that majority are of the view that women's trafficking also exposes and makes women to be prone to various diseases ranging from STD, HIV and staphylococcus.

In terms of whether women's trafficking exposes and makes women to be prone to untimely death", 64.4% strongly agreed; 21.4% agreed; 7.1% disagreed and

7.1% strongly disagreed. The data implied that many of the respondents were of the view that women's trafficking exposes and makes women to be prone to untimely death .

The above data is a revelation that implications of trafficking on women in Sokoto metropolis includes that it exposes and makes victims who are mostly women to be prone to various dangerous hazards; exposes and makes women to be prone to various diseases ranging from STD, HIV and staphylococcus and it exposes and makes women to be prone to untimely death.

The IDI interviews conducted with the victims also complement the data above.

The data from the qualitative data further corroborated the quantitative data that women's trafficking makes women to be prone to hazard, diseases and untimely death.

Table 4: To know how the scourge of women trafficking can be prevented in Sokoto metropolis

Responses	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Do you see enlightenment Programmes preventing women trafficking?	95 (45.4%)	55 (26.1%)	40 (19.0%)	20 (9.5%)	210 (100%)
Do you see provision of Jobs possible means to curb the menace of women trafficking?	105 (50.0%)	70 (33.4%)	20 (9.5%)	15 (7.1%)	210 (100%)
Do you see border control; and provisions of necessary equipment for the security agency are ways to curb the menace of women trafficking?	85 (40.5%)	65 (31.0%)	35 (16.6%)	25 (11.9%)	210 (100%)

Source: Field Survey (2018)

Table 4 shows respondents' view on whether enlightenment Programmes may prevent women trafficking; 45.4% strongly agreed; 26.1% agreed; 19.0% disagreed and 9.5% strongly disagreed. This implied that the respondents agreed that enlightenment Programmes may prevent women trafficking.

On whether provision of Jobs possible means to curb the menace of women trafficking 50.0% strongly agreed; 33.4% agreed; 9.5% disagreed and 7.1% strongly disagreed. The data show that majority are of the view that provision of Jobs possible means to curb the menace of women trafficking.

In terms of whether border control; and provisions of necessary equipment for the security agency are ways to curb the menace of women trafficking, 40.5% strongly agreed; 31.0% agreed; 16.6% disagreed and 11.9% strongly disagreed. The data implied that many of the respondents were of the view that border control; and provisions of necessary equipment for the security agency are ways to curb the menace of women trafficking

The above data revealed that the scourge of women trafficking can be prevented in Sokoto metropolis by providing necessary enlightenment Programmes; provision of Jobs for people; control and provisions of necessary equipment for the security agency.

The IDI interviews conducted with the victims also complement the data above. The KII interview also attested to the In-depth interview.

The data from the qualitative data also corroborated the quantitative data the scourge of women trafficking can be prevented in Sokoto metropolis by providing necessary enlightenment Programmes; provision of Jobs for people; control and provisions of necessary equipment for the security agency.

Discussion of the findings

The findings of the study revealed that the high incidences of women trafficking in Sokoto metropolis can be largely attributed to the high poverty rates; unemployment and porous borders. This is similar to the findings of Puod (2003) who attributed the scourge of human trafficking to the prevalent poverty amongst women who are majorly school dropouts and job hunters. The data showed that there is high incidence of trafficking in Sokoto metropolis especially for women which is usually facilitated by porous border. This usually affects the socio-economic activity and general development of a country. This business of trafficking is usually facilitated by big madams who take advantage of the poverty status of the victims by generating a lot of resources from them. This is further supported by Bale's (2009) who found in his empirical study that poverty is a prevailing factor that pushes women to resort to trafficking.

The above data is a revelation that implications of trafficking on women in Sokoto metropolis includes that it exposes and makes victims who are mostly women to be prone to various dangerous hazards; exposes and makes women to be prone to various diseases ranging from STD, HIV and staphylococcus and it exposes and makes women to be prone to untimely death.

The findings of the study indicated that trafficking in women brings about negative consequences on the life of the individual victim such as terminal diseases like AIDS which leads to death. This is also similar to the view of Europol (1999) which proffered explanations on how women go through a lot of dehumanizing and excruciating pains and hazards in the hands of syndicates or traffickers which sometimes result to the death of the victim.

The study also revealed that the scourge of women trafficking can be prevented in Sokoto metropolis by providing necessary enlightenment Programmes; provision of Jobs for people; control and provisions of necessary equipment for the security agency.

The data also showed that the scourge of women trafficking can be prevented through the provision of skills, jobs and enlightenment programmes so that both victims and syndicates will be able to know the inherent dangers involved in this illicit business. To buttress this fact, Aronowitz and Peruffo (2004) argued that the scourge of Women trafficking is usually precipitated by lack of job opportunities in the rural areas.

Conclusion

It is worthwhile therefore to conclude the study that women's trafficking is a serious social problem. The menace has been largely attributed to the high rate of unemployment or lack of job opportunities which is very pervasive in the country. The scourge of Women trafficking has also been attributed to the porous borders which facilitate the movement of victims and their traffickers to the destination country.

Recommendations

In view of these findings, the following recommendations are proffered:

1. Job opportunities and skill acquisition programmes should be created for the victims so that they can have a sense of belonging instead of resorting to trafficking.

2. Parents should be encouraged to send their daughters to school so that they can be educated to become responsible citizens of the society.
3. In order to prevent the prevalence of the scourge of Women trafficking, the government on its part should endeavor to strengthen its security at the borders.
4. The government via NAPTIP and other non-governmental organization (NGOs) should also improve on their enlightenment programmes so that the populace especially Women will be able to know the implications of getting involved in this illicit business.
5. Serious attention should be given to areas like Illela and Kamba borders with high incidence of trafficking so that the activities of syndicates and Big Madams can be controlled.
6. Parents should endeavor to monitor the company their daughters are keeping so that they don't fall into wrong relationships.
7. The government should also endeavor to rehabilitate victims so that they can be reintegrated back into the society.
8. Religious and traditional leaders should be made to get involved in the fight against Women trafficking by educating their members and subjects on the inherent dangers involved in this illicit business.

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