

## Trafficking in Humans in Nigeria: A Major Socio-Cultural Problem

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### ABSTRACT

Trafficking in humans, especially in minors and young women, for the purpose of sexual exploitation is a worldwide problem. It plagues the United States as much as it does the underdeveloped nations of the world. The International Labor organization — the United Nations (UN) agency charged with addressing labor standards, employment, and social protection issues and United Nations' report of 2002, estimated that between 12 and 17 million people are held in human slavery - forced and bonded labor, forced child labor, sexual and involuntary servitude worldwide, figures more than any at any other time in world history (International Labor Organization, 2002; U.S Department of State, 2002). The study examined the relationship between social cultural factors such as age, tribe, family structure, sexual abuse, physical abuse and trafficking in humans for the purpose of prostitution in Nigeria. Utilizing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), the statistical analysis of the secondary data of 60 records of victims of human trafficking for the purpose of prostitution selected from Women and Children Center in Nigeria was conducted. In the study, 80% of the participants in the sample reported that they had been sexually abused while 66.7% indicated that they have been physically abused. And the probability that victim of human trafficking would be sexually abused increases by 201% (Odds Ratio: 2.010)

**Keywords:** Human Trafficking, Prostitution, Juvenile, Nigeria, sexual and physical abuse, Family structure.

## INTRODUCTION

The study examined the relationship between socio-cultural factors such as age, tribe, family structure, sexual abuse, physical abuse and trafficking in humans for the purpose of prostitution in Nigeria. Trafficking in humans, especially in women and children, for the purpose of sexual exploitation is a worldwide problem. It plagues the United States as much as it does the underdeveloped nations of the world. The International Labor organization — the United Nations (UN) agency charged with addressing labor standards, employment, and social protection issues and United Nations' report of 2002, estimated that between 12 and 17 million people are held in human slavery - forced and bonded labor, forced child labor, sexual and involuntary servitude worldwide, figures more than any at any other time in world history (International Labor Organization, 2002; U.S Department of State, 2002). The new estimates as presented in the organization's report of 2011-2012 indicate that 168 million children worldwide are in child labor, accounting for almost 11 per cent of the child population as a whole. According to the report, the largest absolute number of child laborers is found in the Asia and the Pacific region but Sub-Saharan Africa

continues to be the region with the highest incidence of child labor with more than one in five children in child labor (International Labor Organization, 2012). Although, the exact extent of human trafficking in the world is unknown consequent upon the fact that the illegal business is usually conducted in secrecy, the U.S. government estimates that 600,000 to 800,000 persons, primarily women and children, are trafficked within or across international borders annually for profit and gain (GAO, 2006; U.S. Department of State (2007). There is no gainsaying that the phenomenon has assumed such an unimaginable dimension. As the FBI (2011) exclaimed, human trafficking is the fastest growing business of organized crime and the third largest criminal enterprise in the world. The report further indicated that the multimillion dollar enterprise is absolutely a global problem. According to the Congressional Report (Senate, vol. 155, Pt 24: 2009; p.33061), Human trafficking is an increasing problem. ... Sex trafficking is one of the most lucrative areas of human trafficking. Criminal gangs members are increasingly involved in recruiting young women and girls into sex trafficking. Gang members regard working as an individual who solicit customers for a prostitute (commonly known as a pimp) to being as lucrative as trafficking in drugs with a

much lower chance of being criminally convicted. Human trafficking generates an estimated profit of \$32,000,000 per year worldwide.

Farr (2005) for example explained that the sales of human being is arguably one of the most lucrative transnational crimes today, ranking third after the sales of drugs and arms. Conservatively, human trafficking is believed to be a \$7 to \$12 billion business enterprise. An estimated 4 million people worldwide are believed to be victims of human trafficking annually (Farr, 2005). According to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), there are about 45,000 to 50,000 victims of sex slavery and trafficking in the U.S. alone. Suffices to state that the transnational trade in humans especially women and children has become one of the most rewarding illegal economic activities and can be put at the same level with drug trafficking and arms smuggling (Salt, 2000).

Although, evidence of human slavery predates written records and imaginations, history has reported that about two thousand years ago, the British Parliament outlawed the trans-Atlantic slave trade, culminating a decade-long struggle led by William Wilberforce (U.S. Department of State (2007). Although outlawed in nearly all countries of the world, including the United States with the passage of the Thirteen Amendment to the U.S.

constitution in 1865, the degrading institution of slavery continues to thrive throughout the world. Several estimates of the number of slaves in the world have been provided. Bales (2004; 1999) in his broad definition of slavery, noted that there were approximately 27 million people in slavery in 1999, spread all over the world (Bales, 2004; 1999). The International Labor Organization, in its global report, a follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, on the other, provided an estimate of 12.3 million people still working under coercion in forced and bonded labor, slavery or slavery-like practices world-wide (ILO, 2005).

Trafficking in humans for the sake of prostitution is a modern form of slavery, and it is the largest manifestation of slavery today (Violence against Women and Department of Justice Act of 2005 (2006)). According to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), prostitution is the most common type of trafficking in humans worldwide (UNODC, 2005). The perpetrators of human trafficking for the sake of prostitution prey on the most weak among us, primarily women and children who are disproportionately affected by poverty, the lack of access to education, chronic unemployment, discrimination, and the lack of economic opportunities in their

countries of origin, essentially for profit and gain (Victim of trafficking and violence protection act of 2000). The U.S. Department of States (2008) estimated that about 2 million children are forced into prostitution. According to the report, thousands of children in the United States are trafficked in and out the country annually.

President George W. Bush explained that “trafficking in persons is nothing less than a modern form of slavery, an unspeakable and unforgivable crime against the most vulnerable members of the global society. Trafficking in persons is a heinous international crime and human rights abuse. ...The global magnitude is staggering” (U.S. Department of Justice [USDOJ], 2003, p. 1). Hillary Clinton (1997) declares that “It is a violation of human rights when women are trafficked, bought and sold as prostitutes” (Clinton, 1997). The U.S. Department of State (2008) noted that trafficking in human for the sake of sexual exploitation invariably turns individuals into commodities, dehumanizing them and creating an enabling environment for the crime to take place

There is the general assumption that human trafficking is a worldwide form of exploitation in which men, women, and children are bought, sold, and held against

their will in involuntary servitude or slave-like conditions. According to “the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (The Palermo Convention and Protocol), trafficking in humans, is by definition, the “recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation (UNODC, 2006). It further explained that exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs (p.1).

The U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report of 2007 declared that human trafficking is a multi-dimensional threat. It deprives people of their human rights and freedom, it increases global health risks, and it fuels the growth of organized crime. The report added that at the individual level, human trafficking has a devastating impact on the individual victims, who often suffer physical and

emotional abuse, rape, threats against self and family, document theft, disease, and even death.

Nigeria has been identified as a centre for the illicit trade in human beings, acting as a provider (origin), receiver (destination) and transit point. Evidence shows that a large proportion of women trafficked to Europe, especially Italy, are from Nigeria (UNODC/UNICRI, 2003). The U.S Department of State (2001) declared that “There is also evidence of trafficking in women and children within Nigeria”. Although, the exact number of sex workers trafficked into Italy from Nigeria is unknown as a result of illegal nature, and conducted in utmost secrecy, many scholars believe that figures out there, greatly underestimate the extent and magnitude of the problem in these countries. It is estimated that Nigerian and Albanian citizens make up a sizeable proportion of the approximately 20,000 immigrant women brought to Italy for the purposes of prostitution (Eurispes, 2001). The Nigerian Embassy in Rome reported that in 2001, there were approximately 10,000 Nigerian women working in the commercial sex industry living in Italy. A more recent estimate puts the number of Nigerian women working in prostitution living in Italy at 20,000 (Agbu, 2003). Some studies have reported that although

Ugandan women trafficked to Europe and other countries for prostitution are often recruited through brokers posing as employment agencies and deceived about the nature of work, some women migrate voluntarily for prostitution to the Gulf and Middle East through informal networks.

### **Theoretical Orientation**

This study draws from several different theoretical perspectives, for example, rational choice theory, social disorganization theory, anomie theory, social learning theory, to empirically examine the relationship between socio-cultural factors such as family structure, sexual abuse, tribe and physical abuse as predictor variables and trafficking in humans for the sake of prostitution as the outcome variable using a macro-socioeconomic perspective.

Human Trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation is prostitution. Moreover, as a crime, it is a complex, multi dimensional, multi faceted, socio-legal problem. No one theory of offending has been able to adequately explain it. Burt (1938) claims that “Crime is assignable to no single universal source, nor yet two or three. It springs from a wide variety and usually from a multiplicity, of alternative and converging influences. Consequently, those who

examine and analyze criminal cases are studying individual cases, where one crime result from one interaction of certain factors and another crime resulting from another combination of the same or other factors (Burt, 1938).

Historically, trafficking in persons for sexual purposes can be equated with prostitution. The theories and motivational factors explaining the existence of female prostitution can also be applied to trafficking in human for the purpose of sexual exploitation since most of the victims- perpetrators of human trafficking end up as prostitutes.

Flowers (1998) explained that many social scientists and other researchers have developed theories explaining the existence of female prostitution. Others have focused largely on the motivations for females to become prostitutes as well as stay in the business. ... Virtually, all theories and motivational factors can be put into eight categories: 1. Biological, 2. Psychological, 3. Sociological, 4. Economic, 5. Drug related, 6. Physical and sexual abuse, 7. Sexual adventure and promiscuity, 8. Mental illness. She added that "women are motivated to sell their bodies on the street for a variety of reasons including financial needs, such as food, clothing, drugs, alcohol, sex, adventure,

freedom, rebellion, and abusive homes (Flowers, 2001).

Traditionally, most definitions of prostitution have been informed by several opposing feminists' perspectives and theoretical framework. The abolitionist approach for example postulated that most children are forced into prostitution and as such trafficking in humans for the sake of prostitution violates human rights, analogous to sexual slavery (Bindman & Doezema, 1997) and an extreme expression of sexual violence (Outshoorn, 2005). Andrea Dworkin (1987), an ex-prostitute in her book *Intercourse*, for example, noted that commercial sex is a form of rape perpetrated by poverty and characterized by frequent unconcealed violence, usually by pimps. Such commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery (U.S Department of State, 2002). Moreover, no person can truly consent to prostitution and no woman would choose to prostitute herself by free will. A woman who engages in prostitution is a victim who requires help to escape sexual slavery (Outshoorn, 2005).

The Radical feminism opposes prostitution on the grounds that it exploits and

degrades women; and furthers the power politics of the male gender. It assumes that the practice of prostitution in society reinforces the stereotype that females are usually socialized to be passive and subordinate to males; portrays the negative image of femininity - which women only exist for the purpose of reproduction and slavery; dehumanizes and puts womanhood in the categories of toys, to be played with at will by their male counterpart. Moreover, that it paints a picture of male dominance and re-emphasizes the fallacious conjecture that the female is biological and mentally inferior to male. The case in point, some well acclaimed biological or neurological cum physiological positivists have postulated in the past that the brain is the organ of the mind and the locus of personality (Hippocrates, 460 B.C.; Schmallegger, 2009). They claimed that basic determinants of human behavior, to a considerable degree are constitutionally or genetically based, and as such, women are inferior to men because they exhibit far less anatomical variation than men (Lombroso, 1911). Lombroso, (1911), for example expressed that the quintessential female offender is a prostitute. And the prostitute is the typical representative of criminality among women, she acts out her atavistic yearning and, in doing so, return to a form of behavior characteristic of

humankind's primitive past (Lombroso, 1911; Schmallegger, 2009).

On the other hand, some scholars essentially believe that prostitution or trafficking in humans is an act, a conduct or a form of human behavior; and that prostitutes are humans like everybody else. On the basis of this assumption, some classicists believe that prostitution like any other forms of human behavior is a matter of choice. The prostitute, like every other human being has the freewill to choose to do whatever pleases him. (Beccaria, 1963). As a human being, the prostitute is a hedonistic rational calculator weighing up the costs and benefits of the consequences of each action (Bentham 1780). Outshoorn, (2004) wrote, "the pro-right or sex worker perspective is supported by the belief that women have the right to sexual determination, the right to work in safe labor conditions and the right to migrate for sex work wherever they choose (Outshoorn, 2004).

Ditmore (2011) claimed that sex work is an industry where workers can control their bodies and make a living wage; an occupation that provides income to workers in the sex industries and their families. It is not the sale and purchase of a person but rather of a person's services and time, more like the emotions of nurses

and flight attendants. She stressed that rather than declaring sex work in itself an abuse, degrading and a violation of woman's human rights, sex work should be afforded the same standards other workers in other industries seek. Ditmore suggested that "addressing sex work as labor, as recommended by ILO enables application of minimum standards for employment and attendant requirements for occupational safety and health" (p.88)

Okojie and Okojie (2003) explained that Nigeria is a multi cultural country with diverse ethnic and religious identity with an estimated population of over 120 million people. Available records show that over 60% of the population lives below the poverty level; and women and children, especially those in rural areas, form a large part of the poor. They further explained that most families, unable to cope with exorbitant costs of education are forced to withdraw their female children from school (Okojie et al, 2003). As Nadon, Koverola, and Schludermann (1998) noted, age, limited education, and lack of work experience result in few opportunities for legitimate employment for street youth (Kufeldt & Nimmo, 1987). Williamson (2000) declared that street prostitution (or sex worker) is largely representative of the poor, single, and less educated. With very few skills, a limited

education, and minimal, if any, work experience, these women see prostitution as a way to succeed in otherwise blocked entrances to conventional opportunities (Williamson, 2000; Williamson & Baker, 2009).

In a study conducted by the Women's Health and Action Research Center (WHARC 2002) where 1,456 randomly selected women between the ages of 15 to 30 were interviewed, most of the respondents, about 60% claimed that lack of economic means of survival is a major contributing factor to women leaving Nigeria to prostitute overseas (WHARC 2002; (Okojie et al, 2003). The Nigeria culture, heavily dictated by the western style capitalistic economy is characterized by a strong emphasis on the goal of monetary success and a weak emphasis on the importance of the legitimate means for the pursuit of success (Messner & Rosenfeld 2001). The typical Nigerian, like his or her American counter-part, regardless of social origin or social location, is encouraged to embrace the tenets of the dominant cultural ethos – the imperative to succeed, or at least to keep on trying to succeed, respects no social boundaries (Messner & Rosenfeld 2001).

Historically, such cultural ethos has been observed to encourage and generate



considerable crime and deviance. The disjunction between the cultural and social structure places many citizens, but particularly the disadvantaged, in the position of desiring unreachable goals. The cultural emphasis on success, moreover, diminishes the power of institutional norms to regulate behavior. As anomie becomes prevalent, people are free to pursue success goals with whatever means are available, legitimate, or illegitimate (Merton 1938; Lilly, Cullen & Ball, 1995). Accordingly, adolescents often turn to prostitution as a means of survival (Mathews, 1987) and as means of meeting societal expectations and acceptance.

Campagna and Poffenberger (1988) stressed that survival is the most predictable explanation as to why minors engage in prostitution (Campagna & Poffenberger, 1988) or agree to be trafficked for sexual purposes. The cities do not provide sufficient resources to aid runaways or cast-off juveniles contribute to their delinquent status. They added that the demands of survival, of seeking shelter, food, and clothing, limit the options of the chronically unskilled minors on the streets. Prostitution offers a means for satisfying basic needs (Campagna & Poffenberger, 1988). In a capitalistic economy as in the United States and

Nigeria, money becomes the determining factor of success.

Studies have shown that there is a significant relationship between money and prostitution, more specifically teenage prostitution. Johnson (1992) in her story of teen prostitutes reports that money becomes a symbol for love among prostituted youths, so much so that they become addicted to the money made from prostitution. Just as they could never get enough love as children, prostitutes can never seem to get enough money as teenagers. Money makes these youths feel good about themselves as they are flabbergasted that “people will pay for their bodies (p. 103)”. Johnson quoting a female prostitute wrote, “My first day, I made \$100. *One hundred dollars!* I could not believe it. After a while, you are not thinking about sex. There’s no intimacy. ... If he dropped dead, fine. Just leave your wallet behind” (p.103). This hunger and the desperation for money help to explain why some adolescents begin turning tricks while they are still living at home (Johnson 1992; Flowers 2001). Johnson further noted that children raised in emotionally and physically deprived homes where love and nurturing are conspicuously absent end up as adults attaching undue importance and status to money and material things. To such children, money

becomes an end on and unto itself, a way to obtain necessities such as food, clothes and shelter; and luxuries such as cars, and jewelry that in turn earn them the respect and acceptance of friends and others in the community. Winick and Kinsie (1971) posit that a person's decision to become a prostitute is based largely on few work opportunities and the recognition of the income potential (Winick & Kinsie 1971). According to Flower, irrespective of the type of prostitute or prostitution, the primary motive for becoming a prostitute is the money that it provides for the females and often others, such as pimp or boyfriend (Flowers, 1998). The cultural significance of wealth and material items leads some women to desire advantages that are normally not afforded by their socioeconomic position in society. No other occupation available to unskilled or low-skilled women provides an income comparable to that of prostitution (James, 1976).

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Trafficking in humans is big business, the world over. It is a money spinning machine unlikely to be ignored in any political or social structure. Jeffrey's (1999) wrote that the sex industry has become immensely profitable, providing considerable resources, not just to

individuals and net works involved in trafficking women but to governments who have come to depend on sex industry revenue. One aspect of the industry in particular that government has come to depend upon for revenue is sex tourism (Bishop & Robinson 1998; Jeffrey's, 1999). In Nepal for example, human trafficking attracts annual profits of between roughly \$5bn and \$7bn and is the third-biggest illegal trade after drug smuggling and gun-running. The ILO is also wary of statistics on trafficking. It suggests that approximately 12,000 women and children are trafficked every year from Nepal but accepts that the figure could be higher (Gunnell 2004).

Let us try this. Gunnell (2004) explained that everyone wants to stop human trafficking. People prefer not to look too closely at the despair that drives people to be insulted and exploited in foreign lands, nor at the dehumanizing poverty that pushes women and children into the dangers of prostitution. But in impoverished Nepal, the earnings of exiled workers, including prostitutes, are the biggest single source of foreign exchange.

Gunnell (2004) reports that:

Around the world, remittances from migrant workers - both men and women, and certainly including earnings from

prostitution - are the mainstay of economies that have been pauperized and abandoned by the rich world. Nepal's central bank reports receipts of \$1bn a year from expatriate earnings, though official estimates necessarily do not include informal ways of repatriating money. Some Nepalese economists claim that the repatriation of earnings from non-resident Nepalis now contributes more foreign exchange to the economy than development aid, which itself contributes more than any local industry, including tourism.

Distor and Hunt (Ed) 1996) wrote that

The sex tourism industry matters. It is big, it is wealthy, and it is damaging. It thrives on the poverty of the Philippines, and on the racism and sexism that exists in Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines. It exposes women and girls to violence and humiliation, and leaves them in it, day after day, year after year until it has no further use for them. It paints a picture of the Philippines as a nation of available, submissive women, who can be fucked, beaten, married, discarded, divorced, (and) killed (Distor & Hunt (ed) 1996; Jeffreys, 1999).

Trafficking in persons, a form of human slavery has been practiced for hundreds of years. Conceptually, the phenomenon is

considered relatively recent, pinned to the late 1900s to be precise, as not much has been written or done about it for a long time. In the words of David Guinn (2008), In 1928, the League of Nations identified that trafficking of women and children for purposes of commercial sexual exploitation as a significant problem within Latin America (Harris, 1928), yet only since the beginning of the 1990s has the issue recaptured the imagination of the public and risen to the forefront of the international human rights agenda (UN, 1999; TVPA, 2000, 2003, 2005). United States efforts, in particular, have proven extraordinarily successful in promoting discussion and governmental activity regarding trafficking. Yet problems remain in our understanding of the fundamental nature of the problems and our assessment of its reach.

To think of it, no one really knows the actual number of victims involved in human trafficking or the magnitude of the problem. Godzdiak and Collett (2005) revealed that victims of human trafficking range from the hundreds of thousands to millions per year. While all agreed that the problem involves a significant number of individuals, all also acknowledged that the current assessment are, at best, rough guesstimates (Godzdiak & Collett 2005). Langberg (2005) explains that some

commentators have offered a number of explanations for the problems. Paramount among such explanations is that human trafficking is an illegal enterprise and that scarce resources limit the capacity of law-enforcement to assess the problem (Langberg, 2005). Tydlum and Brunovskis (2005) revealed that one of the most challenging problems facing researchers of human trafficking is the fact that most of the populations relevant to the study of human trafficking, such as victims/survivors of trafficking for sexual exploitation, traffickers, or illegal migrants are part of a hidden population. Invariably, it is impossible to establish a sampling frame and draw a representative sample of the population. Weiner and Hala (2008) in their study "Measuring Human Trafficking: Lessons from New York City" echoed that reliable data about the scale and character of trafficking in the U.S. is still hard to find nearly a decade later. This is largely because no standardized measurement tools or procedures for systematic data collection, retention, and sharing have been developed (Weiner and Hala, 2008). They argued that the main obstacle to measuring human trafficking is that victims, the primary information source, comprise what researchers call a hard to reach or hidden population. That typically involved in illegal or stigmatized behavior, members of such populations are

generally reluctant to participate in research studies or other activities that may require their identification (Weiner and Hala, 2008).

Although numerous small studies have been done on various aspects of trafficking, much of the research doesn't distinguish between illegal migration and people smuggling and trafficking a person against her will. Research that does focus specifically on trafficking often doesn't distinguish between individuals trafficked for sexual exploitation and those trafficked for forced agricultural work or other types of labor (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/slaves/etc/stats.html>). The UNESCO's Trafficking Statistics Project summarizes the problem like this:

When it comes to statistics, trafficking of girls and women is one of several highly emotive issues which seem to overwhelm critical faculties. Numbers take on a life of their own, gaining acceptance through repetition, often with little inquiry into their derivations. Journalists, bowing to the pressures of editors, demand numbers, any number. Organizations feel compelled to supply them, lending false precisions and spurious authority too many reports

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontlin>

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE - METHOD

It has become a common place to detect some methodological flaws in many of the studies and literature relating to teen prostitution and trafficking in humans. This study meticulously reviews studies and literature on the various research methods adopted by scholars of prostitution and trafficking in humans in recent times with the view of soughting out some of these flaws. The finding depicts parochialism in the proper use of research techniques and approaches by renowned scholars who undoubtedly should have known better.

Weitzer (2005) exclaimed that many studies of prostitution can be faulted on methodological grounds. According to him, in no area of the social sciences has ideology contaminated knowledge more pervasively than in writings on the sex industry. Too often in this area, he noted, the canons of scientific inquiry are suspended and research deliberately skewed to serve a particular political agenda (Weitzer 2005). He exclaimed that even in cases where scientific inquiries are employed, some authors fail to describe how and where they contacted research subjects. Others fail to include comparison

<e/slaves/etc/stats.html>).

groups (non-prostitutes matched on demographic characteristics; e.g., age, social class), without which it is impossible to know if the findings reported for a prostitute sample differ significantly from those of non-prostitutes. He further explains that those few studies that do include appropriate control groups yield mixed results. More-over, reliance on unrepresentative samples is widespread. Although random sampling of sex workers and customers is impossible, too often the findings and conclusions drawn from convenience and snowball samples are not properly qualified as nongeneralizable (Weitzer 2005). Some find significant differences between prostitutes and controls on, for instance, history of childhood victimization, whereas others find no significant differences (Earls & David, 1989; Nadon, Koverola, & Schludermann, 1998).

Vanwesenbeeck, (2001) wrote that, when it comes to victimization in prostitution, studies are “often methodologically flawed and, moreover, contradictory” (Vanwesenbeeck, 2001, p. 259). Nadon, Koverola, and Schludermann (1998) echoed that previous research suffers from serious methodological flaws. These flaws include the use of measures without established psychometric properties, the

use of exclusively incarcerated or institutionalized subjects, and retrospective reporting by older, adult prostitutes. In addition, studies of prostitutes have either failed to include a comparison group (James & Meyerding, 1977; Silbert, 1980) or had comparison groups that significantly differed from the prostitute samples with respect to age (Badgley, 1984) or socioeconomic status (Earls & David, 1990; Nadon, Koverola, and Schludermann 1998).

Raymond's (2004) article discusses her two previous studies of sex trafficking—one on trafficking to the United States and the other on trafficking between Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Venezuela, and the United States. Remarkably, nothing is said about the procedures used in either study. All we are told is that interviews were conducted with social service providers, law enforcement officials, and 186 female "victims of sexual exploitation" and trafficking (Raymond, 2004, p. 1167). Raymond provides no information on where she located the women, how she gained access to them, how diverse or representative they are, and whether they saw themselves as victims or offenders. Moreover, none of the interview questions was revealed to the reader. Note also that she did not interview even one customer. All of the information about

"prostitute users" comes from the "prostituted women." And despite the fact that there is a growing body of academic research on customers (e.g., Monto, 2000, 2004), Raymond cites not one academic study published in a scholarly journal. Her findings are instead presented *de novo*, as if no one else has studied johns (Weitzer 2005).

Another good example of such flaws in the scientific inquiries carried out in this area of study is in Weiner's (1994) work on "Understanding the Social Needs of Streetwalking Prostitutes" in which the author tries to describe some of the social and medical dynamics that render prostitutes unable to meet basic human needs, vulnerable to violence and at risk for sexually transmitted diseases. In the study, Weiner (1994) fails to identify its source of secondary data. More-over, the study fails to adequately apply the said data to address the much exaggerated sought-after problems. Shirk and Webber wrote that there has been increasing public attention and concern about the issues of human trafficking, a modern form of slavery in recent times. According to them, most attention to the movement of people between Mexico and the United States has traditionally focused on illegal immigration and people smuggling. That unlike people smuggling, human

trafficking involves the deception and/ or coercion of another for the purpose of labor, sexual or other forms of debasement. In most cases, victims are often physically and emotionally abused into submission through horrific beatings, gang rapes, starvation, violent threats, forced drug use, and /or confinement. They claimed that women from Latin America are often deceived into becoming victims of trafficking by individuals-even acquaintances- promising jobs in

## **METHOD**

Not much work has been done in the area of literature and empirical studies to understand the demographic and social characteristics of women and children in Nigeria involved in the transnational trade of human trafficking or prostitution. Official statistical data on crime and delinquency in Nigeria are either corrupted, not available, or grossly inaccurate. The study examined the relationship between socio-cultural characteristics (such as gender, age, tribe, family structure, socioeconomic factors, sexual abuse, physical abuse) and trafficking in humans for the purpose of prostitution, basing its analysis on the 2006 data collected by a Women and Children Center in Nigeria– a state supported rehabilitation and recovery center in Nigeria for victims in transit of

restaurants and bars, modeling, domestic services, etc (Shirk & Webber, 2004). Shirk et al (2004) argued that, with over 40% of its population in poverty, Mexico's economic under-development creates conditions that make poor people, especially women and children, susceptible to traffickers. That some estimates suggest that as many as 16,000 children are subject to commercial sexual exploitation domestically in Mexico.

human trafficking. The center provides rehabilitation and vocational training for victims of human trafficking caught on transit en-route to Europe by law enforcement officers of other West African countries and then repatriated back to Nigeria. The data form part of the initial admissions and processing records into the institution in 2006. The data was originally collected and used by the center to provide relevant demographic and other information about human trafficking victims for onward transmission to the respective state government for logistic matters.

Trafficking in humans for the purpose of prostitution inside and outside the state has been a complex issue confrontating the state for some time and for which the state

is determined to do something about. Utilizing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), the statistical analysis of the secondary data of 60 records of victims of human trafficking selected from the center was conducted. It examines the relationship between socio-cultural factors such as age, tribe, family structure, sexual abuse, physical abuse and trafficking in humans for the purpose of prostitution. The data from the center was homogenous in that they contain information on only females. Only children between the ages of 11 and 17 were randomly selected from the population as the study's primary focus is on teen victims of human trafficking. In order to correct some of the methodological flaws in most studies of human trafficking and teen prostitution as observed by some scholars, this study included in its sample an equal number of a comparison group of victims of human trafficking admitted in the center for other purposes apart from for the purpose of prostitution. The comparison group was matched on demographic characteristics; e.g., age, tribe etc. Glueck and Glueck (1950) had remarked that "comparison is the fundamental method of science, and the true value of any phenomenon disclosed by exploration of human behavior cannot be reliably determined without comparing its incidence in an

experimental group with that in control group". According to them, the method of comparison should result not only in isolating the factors which most markedly differentiate offending from non offending but in casting light on the causal efficacy on a number of factors generally accepted as criminogenic (Glueck and Glueck, 1950). Matching demographics such as age is fundamental in the sense that it is often asserted that tendencies to maladjustment and misbehavior vary with age (especially puberty and adolescence). Moreover, it has been observed that morphologic and psychologic factors are more or less affected by age (Glueck and Glueck, 1950). Therefore, all the 60 participants in the study were randomly selected from the pool of victims of human trafficking in the data set consisting of both victims of human trafficking for the purpose of prostitution and for other purposes. Essentially, all the participants in the study were victims of human trafficking.

### **Codification of Variables**

The data in the study were coded in numerical form accordingly, to account for the outcome and predictors' variables in order to be accommodated in SPSS. The outcome variable in the study was "trafficking in human for the purpose of prostitution". The variable "trafficking in humans for the purpose of prostitution"



was coded as “1” while others in the sample were coded as “0”. The coding implied that all participants in the sample that were coded as “0” were women and children referred to the center for trafficking in humans for the sake of other reasons except prostitution. They were victims of human trafficking but were not referred to the center for the purpose of prostitution. Accordingly, code “1” represents all those that were referred to the center solely for purpose of prostitution.

The predictor variables in the study included the demographic and social characteristics (such as gender, age, tribe, family structure, sexual abuse, and physical abuse) of the victims of human trafficking. The predictor variable, “family structure in the study included extended family, polygamous family, both parents – father and mother only, and single relation. In the study, in order to be able to effectively predict the effect of family structure on human trafficking for the purpose of prostitution, using the logistic regression, this variable was dichotomized

## PROCEDURE AND FINDINGS

The study was purely quantitative. Using the SPSS (The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), a descriptive statistical analysis of the social and economic

and coded as follows: “1” for polygamous or extended family structure while “0” represented all others. The reason for this type of arrangement is simple – to examine the effect family living arrangement, support and control have on victims of human trafficking for the purpose of prostitution. Glueck and Glueck had contended that family process variables such as family disruption, economic dependency, etc have been used to explain structural factors that could affect family social control mechanisms and supervisory function of parents over their children (Glueck & Glueck, 1950, Irabor, 2013). The other variables were also dichotomized and coded as follows: The predictor variable, sexual abuse was categorized as follows: sexual abuse and suspected sexual abused was coded as “1” while no sexual abuse or unknown was coded as “0”. Physical abuse: The “Yes” and the suspected abuse was coded “0” while No or unknown was coded “1”. The same values were assigned to the variable “physical abuse – Yes and suspected as “1” and no abuse and unknown as “0” characteristics of the victims of human trafficking as the outcome variable, using age, tribe, family structure, socio-economic status, sexual abuse as predictor variables was conducted in order to ascertain the level of the frequency of

occurrence of the independent variables as the predictors of the dependent variables.

Descriptive statistics involves the statistical computations of data that describe the numerical or pictorial characteristics of a sample or the relationships that exist among variables in the sample. They are essentially used to describe either the characteristics of a sample or the relationship among variables in a sample. These include procedures that help researchers or scholars organize and describe data collected from either a

sample or a population. To be more precise, descriptive statistical techniques such as frequency distributions, percentage distributions, ratios and rates were used in this study to describe, summarize and highlight the relationships within the data that were congregated. The use of these descriptive statistical tools became necessary for the study because it helped in describing, organizing and grouping collected data into each category of the variables being analyzed; and with each category showing the number of observations.

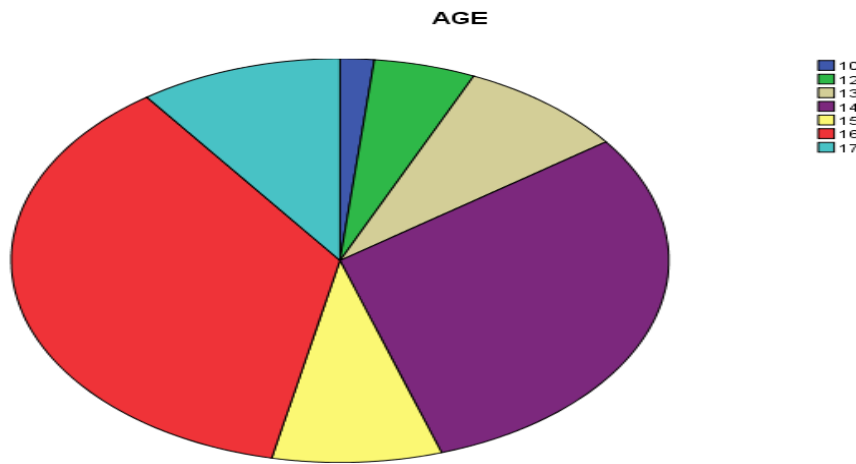
**Table 1: Frequency Distribution of the Outcome Variable - Prostitution and predictor variables. Sample (N=60).**

Variables	%	Frequency
Tribe		
Edo	70.0	42
Non-Edo (Minority)	30.0	18
Family Structure		
Polygamous/Extended	65.00	39
Other	35.00	21
Socio-economic background		
Low	60	36
Others	40	24
Sexual Abuse		
Reported Sexual Abuse	80.00	48
No Reported Sexual Abuse	20.00	12
Physical Abuse		
No Reported Sexual Abuse	66.7	40
Reported Sexual Abuse	33.3	20
Human Traffic victims		
Yes	76.67	46
No Human Traffic victims	23.33	14

Mean= 14.87; Std. Dev= 1.51

As table 1 reveals, approximately 76.67% of the participants in the study had been involved as victims of human trafficking for sexual purposes while 23.33% of the participants in the study had been involved as victims of human trafficking for the sake of other reasons (non-sexual purposes). This was obvious as these participants were randomly selected to serve as the comparison group in the study. As also illustrated in the same table, the Edo tribe variable comprising of the Binis and Ishans constituted a larger percentage of trafficked victims in the entire sample with approximately 70% while the remaining 30% of the sample predominantly belonged to the other tribes as they are represented in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, resident in state. The mean age of the entire sample of 60 comprising of only females as indicated in Fig 1, stood at 14.87 years with a standard deviation of 1.51

The study also used correlation matrix and logistic regression in its analysis. The Pearson's correlation matrix had a one tailed test of significance in order to ascertain the direction and strength of the relationship existing between the outcome variable and the predictor variables and, more specifically, whether there are significant relationships between the variables using the p value against the alpha. Most importantly, utilizing the SPSS, a logistic regression was conducted to provide for the prediction of the probability of occurrence and odds of occurrence of events by fitting the available data to a logistic curve. The choice of a logistic regression is dictated by the fact they study utilized several predictor variables that may be numerical, dichotomous, or categorical and an outcome variable that is dichotomous and categorical.



**Table 2: Variable Correlations Analysis**

Variables	PHYABU	TRIBE	FAMILYSTR	SOCEC O	SEXABU
HUMANTR	-.141	<b>-.073</b>	.035	<b>-.136</b>	<b>.333**</b>
TRIBE	.077		.023	<b>.059</b>	<b>-.236</b>
FAMILYSTR	-.148			<b>.043</b>	<b>.070</b>
SOCECO	-.072				-.068
SEXABU	.000				

**\*\*p-value<.05 \*\***

*Family Structure:* Empirical studies suggest that youth living in two two-parent biological families fare better on a range of developmental outcomes than those in single-parent or alternative structures (Amato and Keith, 1991). An analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, using a large national probability sample of adolescents (Manning and Lamb, 2003) indicate that youth in two-parent biological families had

more favorable adolescent outcomes than youth with other family structures, including lower levels of reported delinquency involvement. Youth living in families in which the mother was cohabiting with an unmarried partner had worse outcomes than those in stepparent families. (Zahn, Agnew, Fishbein, Miller, Winn, & Dakoff, 2010). Nadon et al (1998) wrote that research suggests that dysfunctional family environments may

lead to both children leaving home and to subsequent prostitution activity. Family backgrounds of prostitutes are typically marked by chaos and defective parenting (MacVicar & Dillon, 1980; Newman & Caplan, 1982). Ebigbo (2003) wrote that

The traditional culture of the people of Nigeria has been greatly affected and a major source of the maintenance of this culture, namely the extended family system (which promoted a philosophy of "I am my brother's keeper"), is disintegrating. Consumerism, an attitude of "getrich-quick," and westernization has led to rural-urban migration and the emergence of the urban poor. These migrants take on menial jobs and form the bulk of the traders in the streets and markets'' (Ebigbo, 2003).

Consistent with previous research, this study found that 65% of the participants in the sample reported that they came from polygamous, extended family homes and other types of family structure other than those where both parents – mother and father lived (Table 1). Only 35% lived in both parents family structure. In order to determine the direction and strength of relationship and association between the teen prostitution (dependent variable) and the predictor variable, family structure, SPSS was used to conduct the correlation matrix (see table 2). As dictated by the

data, the study found that there is significant relation between family structure and trafficking in humans for the purpose of juvenile prostitution since the p-value at .035 is less than the alpha at .05

*Sexual and Physical Abuse:* Previous studies have revealed that there is relationship between sexual abuse and human trafficking and teen prostitution. Silbert and Pines (1980) for example documented high level of sexual and physical victimization of teen prostitutes before and following their entrance into prostitution. According to them, 60% of the subjects in their study were sexually abused as juvenile by an average of two males each. Over an average of twenty months, each abuser sexually assaulted the child an average of two or three times. Precisely, 59% of the subjects reported that there was vaginal penetration with the penis; 6%, vaginal penetration with an object; 10%, anal penetration with the penis and 5%, anal penetration with an object. In the survey, 73% of the respondents reported experiencing childhood physical abuse. The rates of childhood physical abuse in their studies of undergraduates ranged from 16% to 29% (Cole, 1986; Runtz, 1987, 1991).

In this study, the rate of sexual and physical abuse against the participants as indicated in table 2 is consistent with those found in previous related investigations.

80% of the participants in the sample reported that they had been sexually while 66.7% indicated that they have been physically abused. As illustrated in Table 2, the correlation analysis did indicate that at 0.05 level (2 tailed) alpha, there is a

positive significant relationships between sexual abuse (at .333\*\*) and human trafficking for the purpose of prostitution; and a negative significant relationship between physical abuse (at -.141).

**Table 3: Logistic Regression for the Determinant of Trafficking in Humans**

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	FAMILYSTRUCTURE	-.021	.598	.001	1	.972	.979
	SOCIOECONOMIC	-.591	.578	1.044	1	.307	.554
	SEXUALABUSE	2.010	.865	5.398	1	.020	7.467
	PHYSICALABUSE	-.761	.618	1.514	1	.219	.467
	TRIBE	.124	.614	.041	1	.840	1.132
	Constant	-.870	1.131	.591	1	.442	.419

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: FAMILYSTRUCTURE, SOCIOECONOMIC, SEXUALABUSE, PHYSICALABUSE, TRIBE.

As indicated earlier, the study, utilizing the SPSS, conducted a logistic regression analysis to provide for the prediction of the probability of occurrence and odds of occurrence of the outcome variable. As illustrated in Table 3, the probability that victim of human trafficking would be sexually abused increases by 201% (Odds Ratio: 2.010) while the probability that the victim of human trafficking would be physically abused decrease by 76% (Odds Ratio). As also indicated in the table, the likelihood of the victim of trafficking in humans would come from low socio-

economic background decreases by almost 60%

**CONCLUSION**

Trafficking in humans, which by definition, according to "the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (The Palermo Convention and Protocol) is the "recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of

vulnerability, or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. It has become an issue of major concern globally because of its rapid growth in recent years. President George W. Bush declared that “trafficking in persons is nothing less than a modern form of slavery, an unspeakable and unforgivable crime against the most vulnerable members of the global society” (U.S. Department of Justice [USDOJ], 2003, p. 1).

The International Labor organization and United Nations’ report of 2002, estimated that between 12 to 17 million people are held in slavery worldwide, figures more than any at any other time in world history (International Labor Organization and United Nations, 2002). Experts estimate that over 100,000 children in the U.S alone are at risk for prostitution. The Nigerian situation is not quite different. In this study, approximately 76.67% of the participants in the study had been involved as victims of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation while 23.33% of the participants in the study had been involved as victims of human trafficking for the sake of other reasons (non-sexual purposes). This is consistent with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reports and several other reports

that claim that the most common form of human trafficking is for sexual exploitation. Studies have shown that the vast majority of children involved in human trafficking for the sake of prostitution have suffered previous sexual or physical abuse, lived in poverty, have no stable home or family life. As indicated in the study, 80% of the participants in the sample reported that they had been sexually abused while 66.7% indicated that they have been physically abused. And the probability that victim of human trafficking would be sexually abused increases by 201% (Odds Ratio: 2.010).

Experts have indicated that the transnational trade in humans for the sake of prostitution is typically driven by varieties of reasons such as political and economic instability in certain parts of the world, massive worldwide dehumanizing poverty, the disenfranchisement of groups of individuals, and as well as the effect of globalization (Bales, 2005; Farr, 2005; Miguel, 2009; Scully, 2001; Shelley, 2005). In Nepal for example, human trafficking attracts annual profits of between roughly \$5bn and \$7bn and is the third-biggest illegal trade after drug smuggling and gun-running. In the Nepalese economy, the repatriation of earnings from non-resident Nepalis now contributes more foreign exchange to the

economy than development aid (Gunnell, 2004).

Let's try this. The welfare, safety and security of women and children should be the primary responsibility of a good and effective government. After all, the legendary English doctrine of *parens patriae* for which Nigerian government subscribed to when it joined the Commonwealth of nations in 1961 dictates that the state had the obligation to act *in loco parentis* (in place of a parent) in the best interest of the child when the natural parent was not capable or worthy of the task. The United Nations Commission on Human Rights in its preamble to its 1948 "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" wrote: "Whereas, recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family (regardless of age) is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world" (Ciulla, 2003, p. 257).

According to the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child, a child has a variety of rights which include: the right to life, the right to a name and to acquire a nationality, the right to freedom of expression, the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, the right not to be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy, family, home or correspondence and the right to the

enjoyment of the highest actionable standard of health (Echono & Karuri, 2013).

In 2003, the Nigerian Government in collaboration with the International Labor Organization adopted and launched the Federal Child Rights Act of 2003, which codifies the rights of all children in Nigeria. Consequently, governments of Nigeria should put in place effective mechanism for proper coordination and enforcement of appropriate laws and policies relative to Child Labor and Child Rights Acts. Children and women need to be protected by government against would-be perpetrators. To think of it, those who perpetrate trading in humans for the sake of prostitution are usually motivated by personal needs, greed, survival, hatred, and thrill seeking. They rationally calculate weighing up the costs and benefits of the consequences of each action. In this case, that the huge profits derivable from the lucrative trade of human trafficking would provide for them more benefit or reward than pain they may suffer if caught by the law. They envisage most times that they would not be caught or that if caught, they could always buy their ways through the corrupt Nigerian criminal justice system. The human trafficker, like every other human possesses the freewill capability to choose



to do whatever pleases him or her to do (Beccaria, 1764, 1990; Irabor, 2013). The concept of rational choice pre-supposes that behavior is a personal choice made after weighing costs and benefits of available alternatives. The assumption here is that they engage in certain behaviors because of the pleasure or gain derivable from such behaviors, especially when such pleasure or gain outweighs the cost or pain in engaging in such behavior.

The utilitarian concept assumes that the basis of society as well as punishments and the right to punish is social contract. As a result, if society must eliminate, reduce or control human trafficking or sex crimes, it must condemn or view such criminal activities as troublesome, disappointing and unrewarding. The study recommends that the government must make appropriate laws that must protect the women and children against human trafficking for the purpose of sex exploitation and other abuses; must also ensure that the punishments for the perpetrators of the clandestine crime of human trafficking must be severe enough to deter would-be perpetrators and traffickers of humans for socio-economic reasons. The government of Nigeria at all level should not just make the laws but must also see to it that the laws are enforced. Human trafficking is an

inherently evil (*mala in se*) act that requires very drastic and punitive measures to conquer or reduce. One wonders when such evil will end in Nigeria. If Nigeria had an efficient criminal justice system that would arrest based on probable cause, prosecute, emphasizing due process principles and punish those convicted severely using the concept of *lex talionis*, which means in literal sense, an eye for an eye, translating into long term incarceration with hard labor in modern terms; maybe, the end or reduction in the rate of human trafficking could be envisaged. This triangulatory mixture of retribution, deterrence and incapacitation can only work if the punishment of the convicted is certain and swift. The Nigerian criminal justice system as it is today is too corrupt and debased to handle its ultimate goal; which is justice. It is a criminal justice system that is so fundamentally dysfunctional, so much so that a man can kill a whole village and get away with it if he has the money to spend with the police, the courts and corrections in Nigeria. In Nigeria, when big men are jailed, they still eat dinner and sleep with their wives in their homes at night while the poor languish in their prison cells with or without food. Why then will people not do as they like since money is everything in Nigeria, even justice. That is what happens to a culture or society that

emphasizes materialism. Conscience is off the window. The study further suggests that government must develop multi-purpose facilities where victims of human trafficking could be sheltered, fed, rehabilitated and trained in the use of their hands and brains and on how to live, survive and become productive members

of their societies. UNICEF (2006) explained that education is a fundamental human right. Every child in every country of the world is entitled to it. Invariably, education helps to lay concrete foundation to a child's successful and productive future.

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