

Influence of Community Support Service Providers on Human Trafficking of Young People in Nigeria

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Abstract

Nigeria has been bedevilled with myriad of problem which has hampered the attainment of the development of our society. Community support service providers in Nigeria are multidisciplinary non-profitable organizations that were established to tackle mostly human trafficking. The paper examined the influence of community support service providers on human trafficking of young people. Descriptive survey design was used for the study while purposive random sampling technique was used to select 200 young people from the community support service providers. Multiple regression and Pearson product moment correlation statistical analysis were used to analyse the data at 0.05 level of significance. The study established that there was a significant contribution of the age, socio-cultural practice and economic status $F=(3.196)=985.856$, $P<0.001$ and community support service providers. The result revealed that there was significant relationship between socio-cultural practice ($r=0.622^{**}$, $N=200$, $P<0.001$) and community support service providers. The finding also showed that there was significant relationship between economic status of trafficked young people ($r=0.486^{**}$, $N=200$, $P<0.001$) and community support service providers. It was also established that there was significant relationship between age of human trafficking of young people ($r=0.967^{**}$, $N=200$, $P<0.001$) and community support service providers. The study, therefore, recommended that, community support service providers should increase the ways of boosting the economic status of human trafficking of young people and their parents since poverty was the main reasons why the young people fell to the hands of the traffickers. This can be done through the awareness of entrepreneurship programmes where the trafficked young people will learn different types of vocational skills.

Keywords: Influence; Community support service providers; Human trafficking

Introduction

Human trafficking is as old as humanity; it is an ugly fact of our society that is prevalent even today. It is a world-wide problematic issue because of its prevalence in almost everywhere of our society. It is crucial to note that the increasing cases of human trafficking in Nigeria is due to the undaunted efforts of the operators and profiteers of the business who are quick to cite unprecedented poverty and the near absence of the basic necessities of life as their driving force. Human trafficking is the trade of humans, most commonly for the purpose of sexual slavery, forced labour or commercial sexual exploitation for the traffickers or others. This may encompass providing a spouse in the context of forced marriage, or the extraction of organs or tissues, for surrogacy and ova removal. Human trafficking does occur within a country and it is also transnational.

Human trafficking is one of the most grievous crimes that can be committed against humans. It involves the illegal trading of human to make gains. A major role in Nigeria's trafficking is played by Benin City in Southern Nigeria, where there is a branching network of trafficking. There, traffickers of human commodity are working for girls who are attracted by bright perspectives of work or education abroad. The victims are offered forged documents and are told that they are supposed to pay only for transit after they get to the destination country. After this, young ladies are often coerced into

various voodoo rites to ensure their obedience. The Nigerian government has taken the issues of preventing human trafficking and the rescuing of trafficked victims very seriously [1]. However, when people who have been trafficked get rescued, the challenge that confronts them is how is they can be rehabilitated. This is a serious challenge because most of them are traumatized and they need community support service providers among others in order to get back to normal life.

Human trafficking is a trade that involves transporting human beings and using them as tools to make profit illegally. It is a modern way of slavery. Trafficked persons are of different age-groups. According to Dryjanska, [2], the international Labour Office, trafficked persons are children less than 18 years old. In terms of gender, most trafficked persons are women and girls. Out of every three child victims, two are girls. The concept of women refers to a person of female gender above the age of 18 and a girl refers to a female child under the age of 18.

Human trafficking is considered to be modern day slavery where many children and women are force fully or fraudulently recruited, transported and harboured for sexual or labour exploitation [3]. The victims of human trafficking are usually made to provide sex under threat and without consent. They are also used as labours to work in fields and fisheries, household chores or as domestic helps. It shows the growth rate of our economy; reducing lives of people and also brings poor reputation to the state. Homeless youths are vulnerable to human

trafficking. Many factors have contributed to the overall number of homeless youth, but common among them are family dysfunction.

There are many factors that led to human trafficking and these include widespread and increasing level of poverty, unemployment and underemployment especially among women, greed, family and communal dislocation, economic transition, globalization, rural impoverishment, accelerate commoditization of sex, economic decline and uncertainties, opportunism, false and fake dream and dramatically deteriorating living standards, low pay, discriminatory labour practice, violence (particularly against women), lack of social and welfare support, lack of educational opportunities, tourism, false or imaginary marriage, declining border controls, governance, constant and increased demand for cheap labour, combined forces of organized crime and governmental corruption, and the receding capacity of the State to provide basic social services [2].

In many places and cultures in Nigeria, "going to prostitute" is part of the rites of passage into manhood. It is also common practice among adults away on business trip, working far from home or as a way of sealing a business deal. Prostitution and certain forms of slavery-like work may still be found within traditional caste systems, hierarchical social structures or communities constituted along ethnic lines. Act of violence committed by men against women and other social evils in the family are compelling factors in cases where women ask for a divorce or are forced to leave their homes and manage on their own. Many women are crushed and demoralized by the conditions they are compelled to live under and are thus more easily exploited by others [4]. Children and young people run away from home either because they have been assaulted or mistreated or because they can no longer bear to live in an atmosphere of violence and abuse.

A unique form of forced labour is the involuntary servitude of domestic workers, whose workplace is informal, connected to their off-duty living quarters and not often shared with other workers. Such an environment, which often socially isolates domestic workers, is conducive to non-consensual exploitation since authorities cannot inspect private property as easily as formal workplaces. The method adopted by human traffickers to attract victims include, business offers, training offer and kidnap. Most of these young people lured into human trafficking as a result of ignorance. Victims are usually lured and parents who are already under the heavy burden of economic hardships agree without a thought [5].

A support service is a help that members of the society volunteered to render individually or collectively as a group or an organization for the benefit of group of people in the society performed for the benefit of the general public. Community support services is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of children and adults with intellectual, developmental disabilities and their families [6]. A community support service fosters independence by helping those people recognize their own abilities and envision a brighter future. Community support service is based on affirm philosophy that values friendship, caring and personalized service, in order to enhance self-esteem and promote independence. Community support service assists adults with intellectual developmental disabilities and or mental health challenges to achieve their highest level of independence and whole health while enhancing their interpersonal skills and self-worth [7].

Service providers need to be mature men and women who have gone through various training and have been certified worthy to handle clients. The age of service providers is tantamount to the experience and expertise. This largely influences the response of clients

to treatment process. The way in which service providers relate and create relationship with the clients determines the result [4]. Therefore, service providers should be fully equipped following the process of practice in approaching their clients. Cultural aspects entail knowing your client. The service providers need to be conscious of the cultural inclinations of the clients so as to be able to understand the client better and to enhance acceptance of the service by the client. If the client does not accept the service provider, much success will not be recorded.

Community support service providers in Nigeria are multidisciplinary non-profitable organizations that were created to tackle mostly human trafficking. They adopt measures to increase the effectiveness of eradication of trafficking in young person's; establish proper communication channels, conduct research and work on ways to improve international cooperation in the suppression of traffic in young person's; by land, sea and air [8]. Community support services also fight human trafficking through investigation of cases, prosecution of criminals, rescue and rehabilitation of victims. They also coordinate law enforcement, protection and preventive initiatives of the various levels of government and non-governmental organizations working in this area. They enlighten and organize sanitation campaigns against human trafficking in local communities [9].

Community support services providers focus on life skills training for the young person's, girl's child empowerment and the development of a new youth culture of service encompassing the building of competence, confidence, character, connections and build relationship through peer mentoring, one on one support through safety planning, provision of basic needs like health, addiction counselling, housing and any other social assistance that makes life better for the society.

Community support service providers realized that the challenges limiting their performance ranges from; lack of regular financial support because donors agencies and government have their own priority which are not always the same with the interest of victims [10]. Underfund and understaffed shelter care is not safe for the well-being of victims of trafficked because care of VoTs are long and time consuming with uncertain result, it makes it difficult to attract funding. Cases of human trafficking can be extremely complicated and this strains service provider's resources, some VoTs may also be difficult and uncooperative and these can frustrate the effort of the workers working with the service providers and put the staff at the risk of burn out. Cooperation of VoTs with the law enforcement agencies in the country of destination also may be criteria for them to access community support services [11].

Community service providers play an important role in helping victims of human trafficking restore their lives and rehabilitate them for better social functioning. The needs of trafficking victims tend to be complex, often involving interactions with multi-jurisdictional law enforcement personnel lawyers and an array of benefit providers. Also, service providers must consider the varying levels of trauma the victims have endured and the victims' cultural background when addressing his/her needs. Multidisciplinary teams help which helps to provide direct support and advocacy to victims and survivors, developing, protocol and policies for responding to cases, conducting case review to coordinate the response to case and educating the public about sexual violence and resources available to victims of trafficking [12]. Referrals for case by law enforcement, prosecutors' probation officials and social service organization that come into contact with these youths.

Reintegration is generally understood as the process following the end of the trafficking experience. It begins with the access to service from crisis counselling and accommodation to economic empowerment and ends when the survivor starts living a sustainable independent life free from violence and coercion. The term reintegration is not without its issue. It is often return of the survivors to his/her community/country of origin, which may not always be the best solution and might, in fact, work against their social inclusion in the long-term [13]. It is likely that the socio-economic factors, which caused the migration in the first place, such as poverty and unemployment, violence in the family or conflict, have not been resolved. Furthermore, the stigma associated with being a victim of human trafficking or having worked in the sex industry may obstruct the acceptance of survivors back to their community, it also implies that the person was integrated into society prior to being trafficked. However, in many cases, trafficked persons have never experienced social integration or inclusion as a result of their social, economic and cultural background or marginalization in their communities/countries of origin.

According to Surtees [13], careful consideration is needed as to how economic empowerment initiative can be best support the needs of trafficked children, youth and their families. The economic needs of trafficked children and youth differ quite substantially from those of adults as well as from case to case. Adequate time is needed to make an informed assessment of these needs, both from the perspective of the individual child and their parent or guardian. Exploring economic options will necessarily involve deciding when and how to work with the child's skills development and economic empowerment. This will necessarily involve comprehensive understanding of each child's situation and will depend on various factors including the child's age, education and stage of development. Dynamic within the family where the child will live as part of reintegration is another factor in such decisions, as is knowledge of the local labour market. The overarching factor, ultimately, is a determination of what is in the child's best interest. All programmes, whether employment programmes, micro businesses of social enterprises, must be market driven and appropriate to the capacity, context and culture of the individual child [12].

Traffickers are more likely and willing to take advantage of a community with low standard of living, poverty striven people gender inequality, discrimination, families entrenched in deep poverty many feel they have no other recourse but to sell a child or may be easily lured or manipulated with promises of money, better life and future. People who migrated willingly or forcefully are being in poor socio-cultural background where individual are influenced by the physical and cultural context in which they live in. A low standard of living has also been identified by trafficked persons themselves as one of the main reasons for falling into the hands of human traffickers in the first instance [1]. The poor economic condition of those that are trafficked had made them meat for the hungry traffic lords and making them vulnerable for better economic condition in another country with the aim of getting an improved life not knowing they have been manipulated.

There are various organizations responsible for the rescue and treatment of young trafficked persons; the organizations are governmental, non-governmental, voluntary and non-profit organizations and foundations. The main body responsible for the rescue of trafficked victims in Nigeria is NAPITIT (National Agency of Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons). NAPITIP law is to treat victims for a maximum period of six weeks after which the victims are taken

up by other organizations till the victim is fully recovered. The police and Social Workers are relevant and are also part of support service providers. They have a department which handles trafficking in persons [4].

Every stage of trafficking process can involve physical, sexual and psychological abuse and violence, deprivation and torture, the forced use of substance, manipulation, economic exploitation and abusive working and living conditions. The trauma experienced by victims of trafficking usually includes post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, alienation, disorientation, aggression and difficulty concentrating. The behaviour of trafficking young people can be difficult to comprehend what has happened to them, or to discuss it with or explain it to others [14].

Human trafficking has brought poor reputation in to Nigeria. Nigeria has been bedevilled by myriad of problem most of the problems can be attributed to some of the ills that hamper the attainment of the development of the society [15]. This social ill deprives Nigeria of her resources in form of talents, human resources and it leads to self-inflicted poverty and under employment which feeds crime and violence. This hampered the development of the country; human trafficking has become widespread and now occupied a preeminent position among the position among the ills that pervade the Nigeria society [16].

The trauma traffic victims suffer has scared them for life. From the moment they were separated from their families, to how they were treated in captivity till the day they regained their freedom will leave indelible in their memories. It is a crime against the person because of the violation of the victim's rights of movement through threatened force. It is against this background that the study intended to examine influence of community support service providers on human trafficking of young people. The main objective of this study is to examine the influence of community support service providers on human trafficking of young people and the study also contribute to the socio-cultural practice and economic status of the human trafficked young people.

Research questions

- What is the joint contribution of economic status having on human trafficking of young people and community support service providers?
- What is the relative contribution of economic status of human trafficking of young people and community support service providers?

Hypotheses

HO₁: There is no significant difference between socio-cultural practice and community support service providers.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between the economic status and community support service providers.

HO₃: There is no significant relationship between socio-cultural practice and community support service providers.

Methodology

Research design

The study adopted descriptive research design. This design was used because the researcher does not manipulate any variable in the study.

Population of the study

The target population for the study are both male and female in Community support service providers, and survivors of human trafficking of young people in Abeokuta, Ogun State.

Sample and sampling technique

Purposive random sampling technique was used to select respondents from the community support service providers. The population for the study comprised five community support service providers in Abeokuta, Ogun State namely; National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), Women Consortium of Nigeria (WOCON), Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation (WOTCLEF), United Nations Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and Justice For Youth (JFY). Forty respondents were randomly selected from each of the community support service providers which making a total of (200) two hundred respondents.

Research instrument

The study used self-structured questionnaire designed by the researcher tagged Influence of Community Support Service Providers

on Human Trafficking of Young People Questionnaire (ICSSPHTYPQ). It contains statements, which was used in eliciting responses from both gender community support service providers and human trafficked youths. The respondents were to choose from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree” depending on the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statements in the questionnaire. The 4-point likert scale was used to give a range of responses from which the respondent can choose and in order to assign numerical values or scores to the responses.

Validity and reliability of the study

The reliability of the instrument was determined through a pilot study. A pilot study outside the study area was conducted on 30 respondents from Women Consortium of Nigeria (WOCON) in Oyo State. The questionnaire was administered to some selected human trafficked young people that met the criteria listed under the validity of the instrument. This gave the researcher the measure ability to use consistence result each time the instrument is applied. After the initial test, the instrument was scrutinized and necessary modification made before they were finally administered so as to abstain reliability coefficient which was obtain at alpha 0.63.

Data analysis

Data collected were analysed using multiple regression and Pearson product moment correlation analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

Testing of Hypotheses

R=0.968 R Square= 0.938 Adjusted R Square=0.937 Std. Error of Estimate=1.53242					
Analysis of Variance					
Model	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	6945.309	3	2315.103	985.856	0.000
Residual	460.271	196	2.348		
Total	7405.508	199			
Dependent variable: Trafficked Young People; Predictors: (Constant) Community support service providers					

Table 1: Summary of regression for joint contribution of independent variables to the prediction of human trafficking of young people.

Table 1 revealed that significant joint contribution of age, socio-cultural practice and economic status human trafficked young people. The result yielded a coefficient of multiple regressions R=0.968 and multiple R square=0.937. The ANOVA result from the regression analysis shows that there was a significant contribution of the age, socio-cultural practice and economic status of human trafficked young people $F(3,196)=985.856, P < 0.001$.

Table 2 shows that three predictors (economic status, age and socio-cultural practice are potent predictors of trafficked young people. The

most potent predictors was economic status (Beta=0.823, $t=0.11.369, P < 0.001$); age (Beta=0.009, $t=0.330, P < 0.001$) and (Beta=0.146, $t=0.1.811, P < 0.001$). This implies that economic status predicted the dependent variable.

Table 3 established that there was significant relationship between age $r=0.967^{**}, N=200, P < 0.001$ and community support service providers hence the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that age of trafficked young people had high effect on community support service providers.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig
	B	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.991	0.623		3.195	0.002
Economic status	0.758	0.067	0.823	11.369	0.000
Age	0.010	0.030	0.009	0.330	0.742
Socio-cultural practice	0.118	0.65	0.146	1.811	0.072

Dependent Variable: Human Trafficked young people

Table 2: Relative contribution of community support service providers on the age, economic socio-cultural practice of human trafficking of young people.

Variables	N	Mean	Std	Df	R	P
Age of trafficked young people	200	24.6050	6.10033	196	0.967**	<0.001
Community support service providers		26.8301	6.62180			

Table 3: Pearson product moment correlation showing the significant relationship between age and community support service providers.

Variables	N	Mean	Std	Df	R	P
Socio-cultural practice of trafficked young people	200	24.3900	6.10033	196	0.622**	<0.001
Community support service providers		29.3500	7.54334			

Table 4: Pearson product moment correlation showing the significant relationship between socio-cultural practice and community support service providers.

Table 4 revealed that there was significant relationship between socio-cultural practice $r=0.622^{**}$, $N=200$, $P<0.001$ and community support service providers hence the null hypothesis is rejected. This

implies that community support service providers have positive influence on socio-cultural practice of human trafficked young people.

Variables	N	Mean	Std	Df	R	P
Economic status of trafficked young people	200	24.3900	6.10033	196	0.486**	<0.001
Community support service providers		27.7200	5.30399			

Table 5: Pearson product moment correlation showing the significant relationship between economic status and community support service providers.

Table 5 showed that there was significant relationship between economic status $r=0.486^{**}$, $N=200$, $P<0.001$ and community support service providers hence the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that community support service providers have positive influence on economic status of trafficked young people.

homes. Young people often flee abuse and violence at home, but are exposed to further sexual victimization and human trafficking once they are on street.

Discussion of Findings

It was established in this study that there that significant joint contribution of age, socio-cultural practice and community support service providers. The finding was supported by which asserted that homeless youths are vulnerable to human trafficking. Many factors have contributed to the overall number of homeless youth each year, but common reasons are family dysfunction, exiting the child welfare or juvenile justice systems, and sexual abused before they left their

The study revealed socio-cultural practice of trafficked young people and community support service providers. The result support the findings of Duru [16] which stated that social ill deprives Nigeria of her resources in form of talents, human resources and it leads to self-inflicted poverty and under employment which feeds crime and violence. This hampered the development of the country; human trafficking has become widespread and now occupied a preeminent position among the position among the ills that pervade the Nigeria society [17-20].

It was discovered in this study that there was significant relationship between economic status of trafficked young people and community

support service providers. The findings corroborate the study of Kara [5], which stated that the method adopted by human traffickers to attract victims include, business offers, training offer and kidnap. Ignorance is easily the biggest tool traffickers use to get their victims with promises of good job and prosperity. Victims are usually lured and parents who are already under the heavy burden of economic hardships agree without a thought [21-23].

It was observed on this study that there was significant relationship between age of trafficked young people and community support service providers. This study is in line with the findings of UNODC [3], which opined that human trafficking is considered to be modern day slavery where many children and women are force fully or fraudulently recruited, transported and harboured for sexual or labour exploitation.

Conclusion

The study established that strategic stakeholders such as traditional and community leaders, women, children, transporters, hotel workers and youths should be mobilized on the ways to curb and prevent human trafficking and protect trafficked young people. There is need to incorporate human rights and development perspectives into the campaign against human trafficking. State or private funded awareness programmes should be shifted from urban centres to the rural areas. Victims who have managed to escape and have returned to the rural centres will be ably catered for and reintegrated into the society.

Human trafficking is a form of modern day slavery, an ill wind that blows no body any good. It is a violation of the fundamental human rights of the victim and affects higher normal functioning in the society. It is a global issue that must be addressed by all. Individual, society and communities need to fight and eliminate this evil in our society and world. The government needs to put more effort to curb human trafficking of the young ones and the community service providers need the help of the government to help the victims of human trafficking. Despite Nigeria's efforts at eradicating human trafficking within the borders, there is much more that can and should be done. Although many factors combine ripe for human trafficking, the overriding factors are poverty, corruption, systemic gender discrimination and violence against women.

Human trafficking will only be reduced if the Nigerian government wages a war on poverty and corruption. Once traffickers discover that law enforcement officials are less likely to accept pay-off to protect their illegal activities, they will be forced to move their operations elsewhere. Additionally, by combating corruption, funds that are currently going into the pocket of government officials can be added to the public coffers and used to invest in education and economic development within Nigeria. This will lead to increased opportunities for economic advancement within the country, reducing the need for women to seek employment and educational opportunities outside of their communities or countries. Furthermore, women are not second class citizens and should not be treated as such by their own government. The Nigerian government must implement educational and social programmes aimed at increasing the status of women in society. Lastly, Nigeria must step up efforts aimed at decreasing demand for commercial sexual exploitation by enacting laws with greater penalties for 'John' who solicit prostitutes as well as education initiatives to increase awareness among potential victims and would-be-'Johns' about the harms of prostitution. By taking an aggressive

stance, Nigerian can be a leader in the fight against human trafficking and as an example to all Africa.

Recommendations

The study revealed that there should be enough awareness programmes on sexual exploitation, human trafficking, sex trafficking. Those initiatives could be expanded for encompass these crimes. Overcoming this challenges and making it a constitutes "good practice" in the future should ensure that anti-trafficking initiatives become more effective and that money allocated to stopping trafficking in persons is used more effectively. There is a need for NGOs to develop formal links with government agencies to provide services, which will also require training government workers in how to sensitively and professionally handle cases and increase the knowledge about what services are available to trafficked persons.

- Government and stakeholders should fund and encouraged after-care services for victims with basic needs such as safe shelter, physical health care, mental health care and substance abuse services.
- There is need for the public, especially trafficked young people from rural areas to be mobilized so that their needs can be met by community support service providers to overcome their physical injury and emotional shock.
- The community support service providers should increase the ways of boosting the economic status of trafficked young people and their parents since poverty was the main reasons why the young people fell to the hands of the traffickers. This can be done through the awareness of entrepreneurship programmes where the trafficked young people will learn different types of vocational skills.
- Community education programme should be established for the prevention of young people abuse and trafficking, with young people as the main actors of the programme. The initiative should consist of awareness-building in schools and elsewhere through drama, song, dance, sports, speeches and debates on harmful practices using young people.
- All support service providers should provide the best suitable to the victim of trafficking without discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, colour, social class, race, religion, language, political beliefs or any other status.
- To develop awareness raising and educational courses about HIV and AIDs and human trafficking to better inform the public about the mutually reinforcing effects of these two phenomena.
- Community leaders should be trained regarding manipulation of religious practice in human trafficking.
- Recipient-communities of repatriated trafficked persons should also be educated so that they will accept the trafficked persons without unnecessary and unfair stigmatization. This would prevent the re-trafficking of the repatriated persons.

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