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**TITLE: FACTORS THAT
CONTRIBUTE TO THE TRAFFICKING
OF NIGERIAN WOMEN AND
CHILDREN**

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Declaration

I, Mary Oluwabusayo Abiodun, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature.....

Date.....

To my
Dearest late
parents &
brother

Juliana
Abiodun
(1957-2010)

Gabriel
Abiodun
(1953-2016)

Theophilus Abiodun
(1985-2019)

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Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	6
ABSTRACT.....	9
CHAPTER ONE	10
Introduction	10
1.1 Research aims and Objectives	12
1.2. Research Question	12
1.3. Significance of the Study	13
1.4. Chapter Outline.....	14
CHAPTER TWO	15
LITERATURE REVIEW	15
2.1. The Concept of Human Trafficking	15
2.1.1. The act of acquisition	17
2.1.2. The method of movement	20
2.1.3. The purpose of acquisition or movement (exploitation)	21
2.2. Methods Used by Traffickers	22
2.2.1. “Diya” or “Blood Money”	23
2.2.2. Begging.....	24
2.3. Causes of Human Trafficking	24
2.4. The Trafficking of Women in Nigeria	26
2.5. Nigeria's Legal Framework for Human Trafficking.....	28
CHAPTER THREE	31
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	31
3.1. Push and Pull Theory of Migration.....	31
3.1.2. Push Factors	33
3.1.3. Pull Factors	40
3.2. Theoretical orientation of gender, feminism, and migration	41
3.3 Conclusion.....	42
CHAPTER FOUR	43
METHODOLOGY	43
4.1. Designing and Understanding of Research Methodology	43
4.3. Qualitative Methods for Data Collection	43

4.3.1. Document Analysis	44
4.3. 2. Case study method	44
4.5. Conclusion.....	45
CHAPTER FIVE	46
DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS	46
5.1. Introduction	46
5.1.1. Family size and constitution	46
5.1.2. Recruitment Practices in Nigeria	47
5.1.3. Areas of Recruitment	48
5.1.4. Exploitation	48
5.1.5. Criminals: Individual Traffickers and Criminal Networks	49
5.1.6. Arrest and Convictions	51
5.1.7. Real Life Witnesses and Experiences of Victims	51
5.1.8. Conclusions	55
CHAPTER SIX.....	57
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	57
6.1. Conclusion.....	57
6.2. Recommendations	58
6.3. Contribution to the Study	60
References	61

ABSTRACT

The exploitation of young girls and women has brought the problem of human trafficking to the attention of world leaders, academics, the media, advocacy groups, clergy, and people of good will from all over the world in recent years. This is due to the fact that the majority of victims of trafficking are female. The exploitation and trafficking of women and children can have negative effects on society, including those that are socioeconomic, health-related, and political.

There are several factors that have been connected to women's and children's susceptibility to being trafficked. Some of these factors include poverty, unemployment, ignorance, and having large families. Our best estimate, based on the data that is currently available, is that each year between the range of 100,000-250,000 women are trafficked into Europe, most notably Italy, for the intention of being held in sexual or domestic servitude. According to the United Nations, almost seventy percent of the African women that are trafficked are from Nigeria. This dissertation investigates the factors that contribute to the trafficking of Nigerian women and children into European labor markets.

The study explained some of the push and pull factors that motivates the trafficking of women from Nigeria and how the feminist theory of trafficking may help explaining human trafficking in Nigeria. Finally, this study offered a comprehensive set of ideas for overcoming the challenges that were experienced.

Keywords: Children and Women Trafficking, Nigeria, Human trafficking, Poverty, Prostitution, Traffickers, Gender.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Human trafficking for prostitution and slave labor, as well as migrant smuggling, has become one of the world's most important crises in recent years, with the number of victims increasing year after year (Okoli, & Idemudia, 2022). Human trafficking shows itself in a variety of forms around the world, with different contributing variables that have negative consequences for victims, their families, communities, and society as a whole. Slavery in the modern era is defined by forced labor, debt bondage, and a range of other crimes linked with the recruitment, movement, sale, and receipt of individuals (including body parts) into a wide variety of highly exploitative conditions throughout the world. Nigeria is a country where human trafficking of teenagers and young girls for sexual exploitation is a severe problem. Human trafficking encompasses a wide range of behaviors, including sexual exploitation, pornography, and prostitution, amongst others (Popoola, 2022). Every year, around 100,000-250,000 foreign women are transported to Europe for prostitution, a substantial proportion of which are trafficked from Nigeria (Lee, 2013). Italy, in particular, has become one of the hotspots for trafficking of Nigerian females. Italian prostitution was disrupted in the late 1980s when the fear of AIDS made drug-dependent Italian girls undesirable in the prostitution market, and Nigerian female prostitutes arrived on the streets. Because of this, Nigerian women became the country's first "forced prostitutes," and they can now be found all over the country.

In recent years, there has been an upsurge in the number of people who are being trafficked, particularly among Nigerian women (Knight, Xin, and Mengo, 2022). As reported in a paper published by the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP, 2022), the number of females trafficked during the last four years, with the exception of 2020,

due to Covid-19, has been more than twice the number of males trafficked. Female fatalities among the total trafficked group accounted for 80.57 percent of all deaths in 2016. While the proportion of women decreased in 2017, it rebounded in 2018 and 2019 to 80.54 percent (NAPTIP, 2022). The majority of those who fall victim to forced prostitution or forced labor are women and children.

The prevalence of human trafficking in women can be ascribed to two basic elements, which are referred to in the migration literature as 'push and pull' factors. The first of these factors is the lack of awareness of the problem. Several factors contribute to this phenomenon, according to Pearson (2012), including difficult living conditions in the countries of origin, which are characterized by a lack of socio-economic opportunity, poverty, and unemployment, and, secondly, the high demand for labor in wealthy Western countries. Pearson (2012) argues that the victims are exploited as cheap labor or as a component of the sex industry. Some exploited women took the decision to relocate to take part in the sex work after realizing the potential profits of the sex trade (Fitzgibbon, 2003).

In contrast, human trafficking, according to Scripraphai and Scripraphai (1997), is an extension of the global labor movement, in which individuals seek to temporarily relocate to work in wealthier countries to enhance their economic status in their own country. When compared to male migrants, who have a wider range of career options in Europe and North America according to the International Labor Organization (2021), female migrants who are less able to find work are more likely to turn to prostitution.

For the Nigerian government, the issue of human trafficking has become a major source of concern in recent years. Despite the fact that the country's municipal, state, and federal governments have made substantial efforts to prevent human trafficking, there is more work to be done in the fight against the problem. The city of Benin for example, located in the state of Edo, has established a reputation as one of Africa's most popular human trafficking sources

(UNDPI, 2021). While many actors, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as *Hope for Justice* and the *Women Consortium of Nigeria* (WOCON) as well as the Nigerian government, have made significant contributions to the fight against human trafficking, many of their efforts have been directed toward prevention rather than detection. The government has implemented a variety of public education campaigns to raise awareness of and educate the public about human trafficking to prevent new incidents from occurring. Despite this, Nigeria is home to a significant number of people who are being trafficked out of the country every year. To understand the underlying elements that lead to the trafficking of Nigerian women and children, the objective of this study is to identify such factors. Therefore, the outcomes of this study may assist in the identification of legislation and activities that the government could take to combat this practice.

1.1 Research aims and Objectives

The study's main objective is to investigate the factors that contribute to the trafficking of Nigerian women and children into European labor markets. Specifically, it is intended to

1. Identify the push and pull variables and potential other factors that may be responsible for the incidence of human trafficking in Nigeria, particularly among women and children.
2. Propose activities that could be used to educate and protect potential victims of human trafficking.

1.2. Research Question

The following research questions inform this dissertation:

1. To what extent can an analysis of the push and pull variables account for the incidence of human trafficking in Nigeria, particularly among women and children?
2. What policies should the Nigerian government put in place in tackling the issue of human trafficking that may follow from this analysis?

1.3. Significance of the Study

Government, law enforcement, and other officials will hopefully be better able to focus their efforts on the core causes of human trafficking as a result of this research, and their policies may be more appropriately tailored as a consequence of the results. The findings and recommendations of the study may be useful to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and, ideally, the Nigerian Federal Government in their efforts to combat human trafficking in the country.

Theoretically, the study will present a conceptual framework for explaining the reasons for the trafficking of young women and girls for prostitution. While the majority of trafficking of women and children is directed to Europe and a few other destinations, the illustrative focus of this study is on the trafficking of Nigerian women and children to Italy. The study focuses on Italy for its empirical relevance and for the purpose of gaining insights into some of the lived experiences of victims.

Human trafficking has been studied extensively in the past, but most studies have focused on the causes that lead to it, such as illogical decision-making, victim susceptibility, or push and pull factors such as poverty and a lack of education. Although this study will look at both push and pull variables, it also will investigate other factors, such as the country's porous borders, the operations of traffickers, and corrupt embassy officials who grant visas to both traffickers and their victims. Furthermore, the absence of specific legislation criminalizing the trafficking of women in Nigeria prior to 2003 had a direct impact on the number of incidents of trafficking that occurred in the country at that time. According to Lanier, Henry, and Desire'JM, (2018), when a crime is the consequence of a variety of disparate circumstances, an integrated framework or a conceptual approach is required to assess the sequence of events that transpired during the investigation (Lutya, 2012). Aiming to present an integration of probability from multiple theoretical viewpoints that could explain the elements that contribute to criminal behavior, Lanier, Henry, and Desire'JM, (2018) posited that integrating theories is an important

step in this scientific process. Finally, to tackle the issues of human trafficking in Nigeria, a proactive approach that governments might adopt to combat human trafficking will be highlighted in connection to the push and pull parts of the issue. As a result of this research, it is hoped that specific knowledge gaps will be filled while also making some contributions to the body of knowledge and the field of International Relations. It will identify further topics of interest that can be examined in greater depth in the future.

1.4. Chapter Outline

Following the opening chapter is a literature review of the current state of human trafficking in Nigeria. In order to accomplish this, background information is supplied to help the reader comprehend the concept and nature of human trafficking in Nigeria. It proceeds from a general definition of human trafficking through the many components of human trafficking, beginning with how and why victims are acquired. The chapter then investigates the reasons and legal environment of human trafficking. The subsequent chapter presents the theoretical framework of this dissertation. It examines the pull and push components of human trafficking as well as the theories that drive the investigation. This chapter will be followed by the research methodology. In accordance with the qualitative methodology, the study will rely on secondary sources such as journal articles, non-governmental organization publications, and reports from government agencies. While significant progress has been made in the field of combatting human trafficking, trustworthy statistics on the topic are limited, particularly in regard to female trafficking in Nigeria. According to Lipede (2017), this is primarily attributable to the covert nature of the trade. To this aim, secondary literature sources such as articles, reports, books, journals, newspapers, previous theses, and formal declarations from government bodies will be necessary to provide the research project's content. The fifth chapter analyzes the research's findings by examining the results for each research objectives. The concluding

chapter summarized the findings and proposes the researchers' recommendations based on the study's findings and academic expertise.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter examines the various definitions and concepts of human trafficking and the causes of human trafficking in Nigeria. The chapter will explore the various strategies and reasons for the trafficking of women and children from Nigeria to Europe. Finally, this chapter will also look at the politics of trafficking such as the state and non-state initiatives and legal elements.

2.1. The Concept of Human Trafficking

It is not a new occurrence that people are being trafficked into slavery, particularly women and young girls. Through history, it has taken on many different forms, but in the context of globalization, it has taken on frighteningly new dimensions. A global demand-driven business with a significant market for cheap labor and commercial sex workers, it typically operates in the absence of policy frameworks or educated employees to prevent it from flourishing (Okeshola & Adenugba, 2018). As a pioneer in both cross-border and intra-African human trafficking, Nigeria has earned a reputation as a country to watch. Human trafficking ranks third on the list of most serious crimes, trailing only commercial fraud and drugs trafficking (Okeshola & Adenugba, 2018). Military dictatorships have existed in Nigeria for decades, institutionalizing human rights violations and exacerbating the country's political, social, and economic difficulties. Despite the development of international organizations committed to the

battle against human trafficking, the issue of human trafficking in Nigeria has continued to grow in recent years. The oil boom of the 1970s generated considerable economic growth in the country, with the possibility for much greater success in the future. In contrast, according to UNICEF (2021), Nigeria's economic development had slowed significantly by the end of the decade because of the decline in the global oil price. The negative consequences of the downturn were exacerbated by the country's prolonged military dictatorship, which resulted in an economic disaster. FOS (1999) reports that military human rights violations resulted in international sanctions, which exacerbated societal tensions, inter-ethnic conflicts, juvenile delinquency and child and women's rights abuses, as well as joblessness, which was particularly severe. According to the FOS (1999), because rural areas were the hardest hit, mass migrations increased the population of urban cities as parents and families began to take greater risks to escape poverty and improve their living conditions. Routine procedures such as placing and fostering children in relatives' homes were transformed into money-making operations for parents, and the phenomenon of cheap labor through human trafficking grew in popularity, sending many young girls, women, and children into the streets to earn a living. Human trafficking, according to the United Nations (2021), is defined as

"The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of persons through the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, the abuse of power or a position of vulnerability, or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits in order to obtain the consent of a person exercising control over another person for the purpose of exploitation."

As stated in the preceding definition, human trafficking is comprised of three components, and these includes

1. the act of acquisition or movement (internal or international),
2. the method of acquisition or movement (coercion, whether through force, abuse of authority, or deception), and
3. the purpose of acquisition or movement (exploitation).

Even though sex labor is the most common form of human trafficking, it can also occur in conjunction with a variety of other exploitative activities such as domestic slavery, forced labor, and forced begging, as well as criminal activities such as pick-pocketing and the exploitation of children for the purpose of benefit or fraud (Akor, 2011). The nature of border crossing that is involved in the trafficking route, forced and degrading labor, and forced sexual exploitation have all resulted in the premature deaths of many people along the route.

Nigeria is a country that is involved in human trafficking on three levels: as a source of trafficking, as a transit country, and as a destination for trafficked individuals. Thousands of Nigerians are trafficked each year to different destinations, including neighboring West African countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Benin, Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, Gabon, and Guinea) and Europe (Okeshola & Adenugba, 2018). In addition to North African countries (such as Libya, Algeria, and Morocco) and Middle Eastern countries, additional destination countries that act as transit hubs for human traffickers include countries in the Middle East (such as Saudi Arabia) and Central and South America (such as Colombia) (Ikeora, 2017). Gesinde and Elegbeleye (2011) and Kigbu and Hassan (2015) stated that the primary drivers of human trafficking are poverty and unemployment, which drive vulnerable individuals into the hands of traffickers affiliated with small-scale, local organizations with extensive criminal networks as well as large-scale multi-commodity enterprises with extensive criminal networks (Kigbu and Hassan, 2015).

2.1.1. The act of acquisition

As long as there is a profit to be made from trafficking, as long as it is difficult to detect, and as long as it is tough to prosecute, traffickers will continue to devise new methods to exploit their victims (Kiss & Zimmerman, 2019). Farrell and Newman (2019) stated in their work that some forms of deceit such as seduction and romance, false employment advertisements, lies about educational or travel prospects, kidnapping, sale by family, and recruitment through

former slaves are common tactics that are used to traffic persons or acquire them for the purpose of trafficking. The use of a "Loverboy" or "Romeo Pimp," according to Aussems et al (2020), is the initial step in the process of recruiting or acquiring people for the purpose of human trafficking. This refers to a person — typically a young man — who seduces another person — typically a young woman — to coerce them into engaging in prostitution or some other form of unlawful labor (Aussems, et al, 2020). In the review of the work done by Aussems et al (2020), Van Buren et al (2021) stated that in most cases lover boys often develop romantic attachments to the people they victimize. However, this connection gradually evolves into one that is violent on both an emotional and psychic level. In another work carried out by Knight, Xin, and Mengo (2021), the authors stated that lover boys resort to extortion and physical abuse to get their victims to comply with their demands. One further strategy used by traffickers, as contained in the work of Serie et al (2018), is to construct a picture of a good life for the couple together outside of the country or in another part of the country. They intend to cut off the victim's connection to their family or community, and in some instances, they will coerce the victim into going to a country where they are unable to communicate in the native tongue. Knight, Xin, and Mengo (2021) further stated that lover boys are able to more easily transport their victims across international borders when they use romance as a tool because when their victims are deceived, they go willingly and often pay the associated transport fees. As soon as they arrive, they are handed over to people that traffic in human beings. It is only a matter of time before they learn the truth about their lover boy (Merodio, Duque, & Axt Peña, 2020).

False employment advertisements, as mentioned in the work of Koegler et al (2022), is another method that is frequently used for the purpose of recruiting or gaining new victims for trafficking. In this scenario, people who traffic vulnerable people use alluring offers such as employment or travel to entice their victims into the hands of those who will exploit them. These deals are never legitimate, despite their seemingly legitimate appearances (Koegler, et

al., 2022). Those who engage in trafficking will frequently publish job openings in respectable newspapers under the guise of a legitimate company. Countries that are going through an economic downturn, civil strife, and instability are frequently targeted because the people living in those countries are looking for ways to leave or make a life for themselves somewhere else (Cain & Rothe, 2022). As posited by Aussems et al (2020), most of the time, these openings are for positions in the hospitality and tourism industry, as well as for nannies and au pairs. These individuals will be responsible for paying for their own flights and will enter the country in a lawful manner with the required documentation. These are taken possession of as soon as they arrive, which begins the process of "breaking in." "Breaking in" entails being submitted to a string of emotional, physical, and psychological abuses such as raping, torturing, threatening, degrading, and being forced to consume drugs and alcohol. This is done in a cruel manner during the acquisition stage to break the will of the victims of human trafficking (Aussems, et al, 2020). Survivors have also reported that shortly after they arrived, they saw other victims being murdered in front of their eyes. Because of this, victims enter a compliant state in which they are trying to protect themselves.

The sale of victims by a member of the family is yet another method that can be used to acquire victims. Families in some parts of the world are forced to sell their children to traffickers because the levels of poverty, debt, desperation, and displacement are so extreme that they are unimaginable (Iyanda, 2016). And the pressure that some families are under to alleviate these hardships and bring some money into the family is what drives some families to sell their children into modern slavery. In extremely unusual circumstances, a child is sold by their parents for the purpose of receiving a regular income. These families frequently form relationships with those who engage in human trafficking and frequently lie about the nature of the work to persuade other families to sell their children (Iyanda, 2016).

2.1.2. The method of movement

The countries of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria, and Togo are included in well-defined trafficking routes, according to studies from (Iyanda, 2016; Okeshola & Adenugba, 2018; Idemudia, Okoli, Goitom, & Bawa, 2021). In cross-border trafficking, the primary countries of origin from which child domestic labour is exported to the main urban centres countries like Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, and Nigeria (Idemudia, et al., 2021). Despite these trends, it happens frequently for a country to act as both a transit country and a source country for children. Some evidence suggests a connection between the transmitting and receiving countries (Bello and Olutola, 2020). These connections are influenced by a number of variables, including the ease of crossing borders, the use of local customs by traffickers, important areas or gaps in border or migration control, or expatriate populations in the country of destination (Adesina, 2014). Other deciding elements include international ties that date back to colonialism or the existence and acceptance of a sizable sex industry (Kelly, Regan, and Willis, 2000).

Four trafficking routes were discovered in relation to the flow of people trafficked out of Nigeria, as reported by Kigbu and Hassan (2015). The Republic of Benin is the first stop for those departing from Kebi or Sokoto, followed by Niger, Ghana, and Senegal, before continuing to Libya, Algeria, or Morocco (Kara, 2011). These nations serve as stops on route to the Middle East or Europe. People are trafficked through Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Libya, and the exits at Zindel (Katsina State) and Megatel (Jigawa State) before continuing to Europe or the Middle East (Addo, 2006). People travel by road from the states of Yobe and Borno to Chad, Sudan, and other destinations. The transit camp for Nigerian human traffickers is located in Mayo, Sudan (Addo, 2006). Here, people may have to wait days or even weeks to get the necessary travel documents to get to Europe or the Middle East. The fourth transit route transports people from the most porous border states, Adamawa and Taraba, to Cameroon and

then to Gabon (Bello & Olutola, 2020). Women and young children are primarily trafficked out of Nigeria via this route.

People are trafficked across the southern axis from the states of Imo, Cross River, and Akwa Ibom to Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and Cameroon in search of cheap labour (Sowale, 2018). The "Hajj by land" route travels from Maiduguri (Borno State, Nigeria), via Gambaru, a border town, via Gala, via N'djamena, via Sudan, and finally, via Saudi Arabia (Sowale, 2018). Because Sudan has stronger immigration procedures than Nigeria, this path takes months to complete (Okojie, 2004).

The victims of Nigerian human trafficking are brought into the West African region through the land borders of the states of Lagos, Ogun, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Borno, and Yobe. Victims may be flown immediately into any European (Schengen) country from any of these African nations (Addo, 2006). If not, the victims take a sea crossing from Morocco to Spain before taking a train or an airplane to Europe. The route from Algeria or Libya to Europe or Morocco, and then from there via sea, is typically travelled by flight (Yaro, 2008). Women are reportedly sent to African nations like Senegal, South Africa, Ghana, Gambia, and Côte d'Ivoire to "learn the trade of prostitution" before being transferred on to Europe, according to The Nigerian Platform Netherlands (Nigerians Platform Nederland, 2001). While they wait for paperwork or travel arrangements to countries in Europe or other locations, the victims are coerced into prostitution to sustain themselves and their traffickers (Ezeilo, 2017).

2.1.3. The purpose of acquisition or movement (exploitation)

Human trafficking happens in Nigeria for the purposes of prostitution, domestic work, and peddling employment, among other things. Agricultural work, metal melting, stone extraction, and scavenging are some of the jobs available to them (United Nations 2017). Thousands of women and young girls have been trafficked into the sex industry, mostly in Europe, to the point where many Nigerians associate trafficking with prostitution alone, rather than with other

forms of hard labor, such as child labor (United States Department of State, 2015). Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery that involves the movement of victims who have been subjected to abuse, fraud, or coercion to exploit them sexually or through forced labor to profit from their exploitation. Each year, between 600,000 to 800,000 people are reportedly trafficked over international boundaries, with millions more being trafficked within their own countries, according to the United States Department of State (2021). According to the International Labor Organization (2010), between 700,000 and 1,000,000 girls and women are trafficked over national borders and sold into modern-day slavery each year.

To survive, victims of sexual trafficking must work in the commercial sex industry, which includes pornography, prostitution, stripping, live sex shows, underground massage parlors, and escort services, among other things (Forte, 2006). Clothing manufacturing, manufacturing, and agriculture are examples of industries where employees are trafficked (Bello & Olutola, 2020). On the subject of sex trafficking, the United States Department of State estimated that over 70% of all victims of international human trafficking are forced into the commercial sex industry by their captors by the year 2021, with children accounting for half of all victims. The practice of labor trafficking, according to Forte (2006), is meant to employ people who are in a position of forced and indentured servitude, such as maids, sweatshop factory employees, migrant agricultural workers, and construction site laborers, who are otherwise unable to find work.

2.2. Methods Used by Traffickers

There are different methods in which traffickers used in deceiving or moving children and women out. Trafficked women and their traffickers frequently have a symbiotic relationship, which is mutually beneficial, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2019). Those involved in human trafficking are typically young criminals who are attracted to the profession by the potential of generating quick money. As previously stated, Nigerian

women and girls who are trafficked into Italy are frequently recruited informally by friends and family members, as well as by organized and autonomous groups operating on a local level, before being transferred to Europe for prostitution and slavery.

2.2.1. "Diya" or "Blood Money"

Child trafficking is currently being investigated in the northern region of Nigeria. This type of trafficking entails luring young children to Saudi Arabia, where they are slain for "Diya" (religion) (blood money) (Nnebedum & Ogugua, 2022). For the uninitiated, the trafficker, who is often a woman, takes a child trafficked to Saudi Arabia on a shopping trip; when she notices a car driven by a wealthy Arab, she deliberately positions the youngster in the path of the vehicle, causing him or her to be run over and maybe killed. Having succeeded in getting the child killed, the unfortunate driver is given two options which involves the imposition of the death sentence or the giving of compensation to the relatives of the slain victim, provided that they approve ("Diya") (Nnebedum & Ogugua, 2022). This offers the trafficker the opportunity to get paid roughly Naira 3,550,000 (local money, which is around \$27,000) in exchange for his decision to close the case (Szablewska, 2022). If the trafficker decides to go back to Nigeria, it is his or her responsibility to inform the parents of the trafficking victim that their child has died as a result of a motor vehicle accident or natural causes. It is the trafficker who pays the parents the 100,000 naira or the equivalent (about \$200 USD) that is earned by the youngster in Saudi Arabia (Woo, 2022). Parent's refusal to contradict the trafficker's narrative is most often due to the belief that their child's death is "Allah's will." The predicted wage is simply accepted by many individuals. However, based on interviews as compiled by (UNICEF 2021), it appears that the majority of those recruited are women and children from low-income and rural families, despite the fact that little research has been done on the subject.

2.2.2. Begging

Another illicit activity prevalent in Northern Nigeria is the trafficking of beggars on a large scale (Woo, 2022). People who are physically handicapped or disadvantaged, such as the blind or those who are paralyzed, are recruited into the profession of begging in Nigeria's major cities, such as Lagos, Ibadan, Kano, and Kaduna. Recently, this sort of trafficking has moved to the Middle East, specifically to Saudi Arabia, and other countries (Chapdelaine, 2014). Adults of both sexes frequently work as contract beggars in their spare time. Physically challenged or disabled individuals are hired on a daily basis to perform begging duties for a small charge, which is sometimes as little as 500 naira (about \$1), in exchange for their services (Anti-Trafficking Alliance, 2017). The 'investor' will not release the victim until he has made a sizable profit from the transaction. Every day from dawn to nightfall, the physically disabled are routinely carried on their backs or pushed through the city in wheel carriages or wheelchairs, often in hazardous weather or traffic conditions (Chapdelaine, 2014). In addition, seasoned adult beggars are involved in the trafficking of children who are in their custody. Once this is accomplished, the youngsters are bullied into establishing a beggary for the handicapped (Anti-Trafficking Alliance, 2017). The fact that they are compelled to do so for little or no compensation, except from the daily meal they may acquire on the streets, is beyond comprehension. In addition to being denied a formal education and a normal upbringing, these kidnapped children serve as beggar guides across Nigeria's major towns (Rizzotti, 2022).

2.3. Causes of Human Trafficking

Farr (2005) describes push and pull factors as two types of pressures that are commonly used to justify human trafficking. "Push" factors not only encourage women to migrate but also help the human labor trade market thrive, poverty, gender inequality, and a lack of economic prospects in source nations are all considered important. Attraction considerations in destination countries include the promise of a better quality of life, the availability of

employment opportunities, and the desire for low-cost labor. National governments are urged to reduce the demand for trafficked labor under Article 9 of the United Nations Trafficking Protocol. According to Ezeibe, et al. (2021) and Latham-Sprinkle et al. (2019), people who work in the human trafficking industry frequently mention "demand" as the primary "pull" aspect in their work. For abolitionists, this is interpreted as an invitation to lower the need for sexual services. In their view, Ezeibe, et al. (2021) and Latham-Sprinkle et al. (2019) argue that the problem is not so much a desire for "trafficked sex" as it is a desire for commercial sex in general.

As a result, human trafficking, particularly of women, became an option for families to escape these economic troubles. A variety of circumstances, including poverty, ignorance, and the size of one's family, all contribute to the incidence of human trafficking (Mohammed, 2014). According to the World Bank (2018), it was discovered that more than 45 percent of the country's population lives in poverty; the situation has deteriorated since the turn of the century; as a result, the majority of families are vulnerable to being trafficked into prostitution.

Since many of the victims of human trafficking, particularly women and girls, have little or no formal education, they are readily misled by the sponsors' portrayal of a prosperous life in their destination country. Uzor (2001) and Hankivsky (2011) hypothesized that the size of a family is another factor contributing to human trafficking in Nigeria. A large proportion of adolescents, particularly those from polygamous families, who are in need of a better life, frequently relocate from their settlements in villages and slums where means of subsistence have become scarce and seek solace outside the family, making them vulnerable to the strategies of traffickers (Rotimi, 2001).

The extent to which Nigeria's bad leadership and corruption have contributed to the country's high level of unemployment as well as its involvement in people trafficking is worth noting (Olubukola, 2020). Labor and sex work will continue to increase as long as men and women

who come for these jobs or sex work continue to perceive that Europe and Western nations have a valuable currency to trade with (Eselebor, 2019). According to the inference, people in Nigeria will seek to work in wealthier countries to ameliorate their bleak economic circumstances at home. Unemployed female migrants in Europe and North America frequently resort to prostitution as a last alternative, whereas male migrants in same regions have plenty of economic opportunities (Latham-Sprinkle, et al, 2019). Human trafficking is also a result of armed conflict in some countries. According to World Bank statistics from 2021 (World Bank, 2022), more than 2.5 million people in Nigeria live in states where violence is endemic as a result of disturbance caused by militants, terrorist insurgency (Boko Haram), and other factors. Human trafficking, migration, and poverty are all exacerbated when there is a conflict. For example, the Boko Haram terrorist organization traffics youngsters and uses them as soldiers and militia members in Nigeria's conflict-ridden northeastern region, while the abducted young women are sold as slaves or married off to other men (Anti-trafficking Alliance 2017). Note that the frequent practice of sending children to wealthier relatives or friends may be a contributing factor to human trafficking in Nigeria, which should be taken into consideration (Nnamuchi, et al., 2022). It is customary in this culture to "give" children away, most often in exchange for money, to offer young people with greater opportunity to overcome chronic poverty and gain access to a better life, among other things. The use of these techniques for monetary benefit might make them a goldmine for human traffickers, who can profit handsomely from them (Nnamuchi, et al., 2022, Ukachi and Attoh, 2020).

2.4. The Trafficking of Women in Nigeria

Nigerian girls and women are targeted for trafficking in Italy, with a female figure known as "Mama" or "Madam" who is believed to play a significant role in encouraging young women to escape their homes and migrate to Italy (Akor, 2011). According to the work of Carling (2005) and Attoh (2009), the human trafficking network can be divided into three levels: the

first level is centered on "Mama" in the place of origin; the second level is centered on the Nigerian "Mama" in Italy; and the third level is concentrated on "Messengers" (Osisiogu, Osarenren & Kalunta-Crumpton, 2019) who convey money between Italy and Nigeria. Thousands of Nigerian women are being recruited in the suburbs of major cities like Lagos and Benin City, as well as in rural parts in the country's south and east, according to the United Nations, as part of a statewide "recruitment" effort. A traditional migratory movement from Nigeria to Italy for agricultural interests has been occurring since the late 1980s, according to Pearson and Sweetman, (2019), and this movement has resulted in a considerable number of Nigerians residing in Italy and other European countries. It was mentioned in the work of Pearson and Sweetman, (2019) that the majority of traffickers/madams are well-established Nigerian women and married to European men. He believes that most trafficked women are unaware of the working conditions that await them (in Europe), which include document confiscation, forced work on the streets for long periods of time every day, forced service of a minimum number of clients per day, physical abuse and threats, and the imposition of debt bondage, among other things (Mbakogu, 2020). It is assumed that debts for travel will be paid off in six months, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM). However, the IOM reports that "the majority of cases" show that the girls are still unable to pay back the loan they owe after three or four years (IOM, 2019).

As reported by the Civil Liberties Organization (CLO, 2020), the cartels that are responsible for the exportation of young girls and women to engage in the sex trade have remained largely unknown throughout the course of their activities. Regardless of how many times the women were deported, it appeared that they were able to obtain travel documents that permitted them to return to the same or different foreign countries to continue their illicit trade activities (Mbakogu, 2020). Another group of women, on the other hand, appeared to have been drawn in by false promises of money to be made plaiting and weaving hair, working as maids, or

working as children's nannies (Parreñas, Hwang & Lee, 2012). While these promises were false, they appeared reasonable to young women desperate to contribute to the alleviation of their families' plight. The majority of those who entered the trade did so knowingly, often with their parents' knowledge, agreement, and/or cooperation (Ezeibe, et al., 2021); but others appeared to have been enticed in by false promises of money to be made plaiting and weaving hair, or working as hairdressers or barbers (CLO, 2020).

As a result of the increase in illicit trafficking of women in Europe and other parts of the world, over three hundred and eighty Nigerian girls and women have been returned home in year 2022 alone (Okoli & Idemudia, 2022), with devastating effects for both the victim's and the country's international reputation. A serious attempt by Nigeria's law enforcement and social service agencies to bring those responsible for trafficking women and girls to justice has not been very successful (Amadasun, 2022), because "the country appears to be in the process of becoming aware of the magnitude of the problem and documenting it." (Ikwuegbu, 2022:17).

2.5. Nigeria's Legal Framework for Human Trafficking

As the United Nations Children's Fund noted in 2019, the trafficking of Nigerian girls and women to Europe has the appearance of slavery, a development that it links to more stringent regulations on illegal immigration to the continent in recent years. According to the studies of Kigbu and Hassan (2015) and Lockyer, (2022) having ratified the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Particularly Women and Children in 2001, Nigeria has since enacted a national anti-trafficking law titled "Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act 2003" to combat the trafficking of women and children. Nigeria has also ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. A similar regulation has been introduced in Nigeria, which is one of only a handful of African countries to do so and is also the first in the region (Duru and Ogbonnaya, 2012). Adeshina and Yakubu, (2021), stated that the Nigerian legislature passed the Child Rights Act

of 2003, which addresses the issue of child trafficking in the country. Human trafficking has been addressed by the implementation of economic empowerment and reintegration programs; nevertheless, these initiatives have shown to be generally ineffectual at addressing the issue (Abiodun et al. 2017). Despite these efforts, human trafficking continues to be a big problem in Nigeria.

To effectively combat human trafficking, it is necessary to continue to adopt and implement international legislation, as well as to ensure that existing national legislative measures to combat the crime are properly executed and other factors that encourages trafficking combatted (Obikaeze, Inah & Efanodor-Obeten, 2021). Continued harm done to young women and children by harmful cultural customs the expansion of the reach of organized crime and corruption among immigration officers in Nigeria have all contributed to the exploitation of young women and children through coercion and forced labor (Adeshina & Yakubu, 2021).

The Economic Community of West African States Plan of Action, which was adopted in 2002, acts as the major network of collaboration for countries in Western Africa. Major ECOWAS and United Nations international treaties that improve laws against human trafficking and protect trafficked persons, particularly women and children, are proposed in this Plan, and governments are encouraged to ratify and fully implement them (UN Global Report, 2014).

According to Obikaeze, Inah, and Efanodor-Obeten, (2021), the following actions outlined below are included in this plan. Preventive and educational measures, as well as protection and help for trafficking persons, are among the goals outlined in the Subregional Plan of Action. A number of other priorities include data gathering, exchange, and analysis; specialisation and training; efficient travel and identification document delivery procedures; as well as monitoring and evaluation (Mbakogu, 2020). Nigeria has emerged as a prominent participant of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Interim Plan of Action to Combat Human Trafficking after ratifying it in 2002/03 (Ukachi and Attoh, 2020). Nigeria, on the other

hand, is committed to executing the Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons in West and Central Africa, which was agreed as part of the Libreville Common Platform Declaration in 2005 (Ukachi and Attoh, 2020).

Another important milestone occurred on November 28, 2002, when Nigeria signed the Ouagadougou Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking, Particularly of Women and Children, which was later ratified (UN Global Report, 2014). According to the agreements signed with the United Kingdom, other countries in the region have also pledged to collaborate. The governments of Nigeria and the Benin Republic have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under which they are committed to doing the following: developing effective human trafficking cooperation; identifying agents and traffickers; and protecting trafficked persons and ensuring that they are returned to their countries of origin in the shortest time possible (Ige, 2021).

In conclusion, this chapter highlighted some of the dimensions of the concept of human trafficking in Nigeria. Also, it examined some of the methods of acquisition and the purpose of acquisition or movement (exploitation). More so, the study examined state and non-state initiatives, as well as legal elements that had been implemented in the fight against human trafficking in Nigeria and across the globe.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The push and pull theories of migration serve as the foundation for this investigation in this chapter. In addition to being timely, these topics and themes provide opportunity for examining and researching the factors that contribute to migration and human trafficking. They also have an impact on the methodology used for the study.

3.1. Push and Pull Theory of Migration

The Push and Pull Theory of Migration (Lee, 1975) is widely regarded as Everett Lee's major contribution to the field of migration research. A *Theory of Migration*, his major paper published in the journal *Demography* in 1966, is probably his most important contribution to the field. Founded on sociological concepts, the theory seeks to formalize a theory of migration by identifying the components that contribute to the quantity of movement between origin and destination nations within the same geographical area of the two countries concerned. When it comes to determining whether or not to relocate, Lee divides factors that influence the decision to relocate and the migration process into four categories: (1) factors affecting the region of origin; (2) factors affecting the area of destination; (3) intervening impediments; and (4) personal considerations. Lee argues that each of these four categories has a unique collection of characteristics that serve to repel people from the site, keep people in the location, or attract people to the location. The economic development of the areas of origin and destination varied significantly in this regard, with major disparities between the factors affecting the areas of origin and the factors affecting the areas of destination (Thadani and Todaro, 2019). Once both of them have been properly weighed, it is possible that they will move. Researchers discovered (Khalid & Urbański, 2021) that a person's understanding of his or her origin is, on average, more accurate and realistic than his or her understanding of the future, which is more superficial and imprecise. Any obstacles that are in the way of migration must be removed first for it to

take place (Parkins, 2010). The length of the travel and the manner of transportation are among the factors to consider. They have lost a large amount of their worth in recent years as a result of technological advancement. According to the work of Khalid and Urbański (2021), personal considerations rather than the actual components defining the place of origin and/or destination is critical in migration decisions of most individuals. Urbański (2022) further stated that it is the individual's perception of these elements that decides the actual act of immigration.

Both push and pull variables have an impact on the relationship between the point of origin and the point of destination. Many push variables exist at the point of origin that act to stimulate people to migrate out from the area (a lack of economic opportunities, education, etc., which are mentioned earlier) (Krishnakumar & Indumathi, 2014). On the other hand, Shrestha (2017) stated that there are pull factors present at the destination that entice migrants to settle there permanently (employment prospects and job availability, appropriate educational facilities, religious or political freedom). De Haas (2021) argues that the push and pull variables have a mutually reinforcing relationship; migration can take place if the motive for emigration (the push) is met by the destination (the pull). Push factors, which are defined as a lack of employment opportunities in sending areas or countries, are frequently cited in the context of labor migration, whereas pull factors, which are defined as economic opportunities in receiving areas or countries, are also frequently cited in the context of labor immigration (Kanayo, Anjofui, & Stiegler, 2019). As noted by De Haas (2021), migration is seen more as a temporary movement while immigration is seen as an individual that voluntarily move to another country with the intention to permanently resettle, thus qualifying them to work without restriction. Intervening barriers in the migratory flow between two points—the point of origin and the point of destination—are a condition of the flow as well as an effect of the flow. Among the contributing factors are remote regions, a scarcity of public transportation options, geographic inaccessibility due to terrain (rugged mountains and physical barriers), and restrictive

immigration regulations. In the presence of such intervening barriers, it is probable that the flow will be hindered. The number of migrants is directly related to the quantity of available opportunities (pull factors) at the destination and inversely proportional to the number of impediments that prevent migrants from making their way to their destination. It is possible that the potential migrant will view them as intervening opportunities rather than intervening issues, i.e., the possibility of alternate spots between the origin and destination sites to which one could travel. In the study of O'Reilly (2015) on the critical overview of immigration and refugee, he stated that migration of people means that not only does the volume of movement between two locations rely on the distance between them and the number of people who live in each, but it also depends on the number of opportunities and obstacles that exist between them. A number of push and pull factors that contribute to the vulnerability of women and girls are a result of systemic gender discrimination (Bales, 2007). When considering explanatory factors, it is important to realize that distinct factors can reinforce one another and that certain causes might also be the result of other causes.

3.1.2. Push Factors

Women and girls are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking for a variety of reasons, and this includes:

- **Poverty**

Even though Nigeria has abundant natural and human resources (it is Africa's largest and the world's eighth largest oil producer), the country is one of the world's poorest. It has an estimated GDP per capita of approximately \$1,000 and a population of more than 200 million people, placing it among the world's poorest countries. A general lack of chances for economic activities, as well as low living standards, depreciated local currencies, and a failure to meet

the people's health, food, shelter, and safety needs, are all prevalent in the country (Temitope, 2018).

Those who live in areas defined by political and economic volatility are more likely to seek employment in more favorable environments elsewhere. The final destination of most migrations is usually one of the largest cities in the country (O'Reilly, 2015). The majority of Nigeria's population lives in rural areas, which are not industrialized in the traditional sense. There are little educational and job opportunities available. For this reason, even though the children receive some education at secondary school level, they are unable to find employment or enroll in further educational institutions following completion of their studies (Kanayo, Anjofui & Stiegler, 2019). Because of the current economic circumstances, most parents are unable to adequately care for and feed their children. Parents subject their children to a variety of forms of labor, including human trafficking to make monetary gains.

The massive influx of people from rural to urban areas has had a negative influence on society because of the massive migration of people. In metropolitan regions, this has resulted in a massive surplus of human capital, particularly in the informal labor market (domestic labor in particular), which far outstrips the demand. A direct effect of this has been a constant decrease in labor expenses. A vast number of peasants migrate from the north to the south during the dry season, known as "cin rani," and newcomers to this annual migration are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking (Perpetua, Chimaobi & Jackson, 2019). A common claim made by human traffickers is that any location outside of Nigeria is a goldmine of rich employment prospects. It is male unskilled migrants that account for most migrants who fall prey to human traffickers during the dry season (Akpimeru, 2009). They migrate frequently to the African countries of Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, and Gabon to work on plantations and harvest crops (Perpetua, Chimaobi & Jackson, 2019). In urban regions, most unskilled migrants find work as security guards or watchmen for wealthy businesses and households, where they may earn a

living. These migrants frequently become slaves for life as a result of low earnings and onerous contracts, rendering them unable to return home.

Other historical ties have been damaged because of the economic downturn; Edo State is an example of such a circumstance. The exchange of major economic transactions between citizens of Edo State and Italians occurred during a period when the Nigerian economy was growing (Perpetua, Chimaobi & Jackson, 2019). These Nigerians flew to Italy to purchase gold, footwear, and clothing for resale back in their home country of Nigeria. A number of these businessmen and ladies stayed longer to pick tomatoes as the Nigerian economy began to collapse, in the aim of making a quick profit before returning home (Kari Malasowe & Collins, 2018). Nigerian women began to make more money in the sex industry as the economy declined and Eastern European immigrants took over the tomato harvesting business as the economy declined (Abiodun, et al., 2017). It was considered that it would be safer to recruit from within one's own family, friends, and community so people in Edo State began recruiting from inside their own families, friends, and communities.

- **Religious Ritual Manipulation**

Due to the fact that they are not considered human trafficking, numerous types of trafficking remain undetected. Human trafficking is frequently disguised as organized travel, such as "peripatetic scholarship" or "Almajirci" in northern Nigeria, or as religious pilgrimage, such as "hajj" or "Umra" in other parts of the country. In northern Nigeria, human trafficking is disguised as "peripatetic scholarship" or "Almajirci," and in other parts of the country, it is disguised as religious pilgrimage (a lesser form of pilgrimage). It is not considered human trafficking when performed in a student's hometown under the supervision of his or her parents and does not fall within the criteria of human trafficking when performed in a foreign country (Ukachi and Attoh, 2020).

The practice of transporting large groups of students, usually teenage boys, from their hometown to a faraway location during the dry season, often without the knowledge of their parents, is not uncommon in Islamic countries. As they go from city to city, the scholars teach the students what they have learned. In most cases, they are ill-prepared for such an adventure. Financial constraints usually hinder the Malam from providing for his family or the students who have been committed to his care on a regular basis. As a result, the Malam and his students frequently rely on the generosity of the people in the host town (Osumah and Enaburene, 2012). In northern Nigeria, the Malam is mostly supported by his students, who beg or perform menial labor for food vendors and shops in public places and parking lots to help pay for his expenses. The motivation for journeying to the city, the pursuit of Islamic knowledge, is commonly abandoned after hunger and neglect have taken their toll on the journey. Due to the fact that it involves slavery and exploitation, both the donors and the students are frequently ignorant that this is a breach of international standards: thus "Almajirci" is comparable to human trafficking in that it involves both servitude and exploitation.

Even though not all Koran teachers in northern Nigeria adhere to this tradition, which is rapidly becoming outdated and unpopular, it is still widely practiced among rural professors. Children and young women are enticed into exploitative migration and sex exploitation because of their desire to travel to Saudi Arabia on religious pilgrimage.

Contrary to popular opinion, sexual exploitation for economic gain is not limited to Nigeria's southern regions. It occurs throughout the country. Young women from nearly every northern state are at risk of being sexually assaulted (Abiodun et al, 2017). As in the south, religion is utilized to fool the innocent in the north, where the majority of trafficked individuals are Christians, as well as in the south. Religion is frequently used by traffickers

and sponsors to ensure that trafficked individuals adhere to their agreements and carry out their responsibilities as promised. Traditional shrines frequently impose confidentiality oaths on recruited girls and women in front of voodoo priests to maintain the secrecy of the shrine. The use of this manner of giving oaths has significantly hampered the investigation into instances of human trafficking from Nigeria to Europe.

- **Cultural and Social Factors**

A considerable number of women in Nigerian society could be categorized as culturally submissive, according to certain estimates. Although urbanization has increased in recent years, many archaic societal conventions still exist, and well-educated women may find themselves alienated as a result of this. Women are unable to inherit property, even if they are the only heirs. As a result, women are limited to a rigid hierarchical structure in which the will of men must be respected at all costs (Oyebanji, 2017). Consequently, they are more susceptible to the deception and control of people traffickers. Another area that warrants further investigation is the impact of broken homes on children's susceptibility to human trafficking. As revealed by the profiles of trafficked individuals who were interrogated, the majority of trafficked children were from shattered families or were orphaned (UN, 2018). According to the 2003 census, there were 7,000,000 orphans in Nigeria, accounting for 10% of all children aged 0 to 17 years. In contrast to previous generations, when parents cared for their children regardless of their marital status, many parents today forsake their children after they divorce.

More so, the Ibo tribe and the people of Edo and Delta State in Nigeria are a considerable proportion of people transported to Europe for prostitution (Aghatise, 2004). There is no conclusive evidence as to why women from these states are more likely to travel, according to

Pearson (2012:9), who quotes the Lagos Task Force on Human Trafficking as saying, "Some Nigerians believe it is because the Ibo are exceedingly hardworking and have a history of traveling." As previously stated, Pearson (2012) blamed poverty for the increase in the proportion of women from Edo and Delta States who become victimized by human trafficking; however, in his later work, he stressed that these States are not among Nigeria's poorest regions.

- **A scarcity of information**

It is not uncommon for vulnerable persons to be recruited with the promise of better working conditions in another location. When it comes to work opportunities, the traditional bait is a position with a larger wage than those accessible in the surrounding area. Most trafficked individuals are completely unaware of the many types of forced labor to which they would be subjected during their captivity (Oyebanji, 2017). The majority of persons who were taken to Europe for prostitution had no intention of working in the sex industry in the first place. According to a study conducted by Akor (2011) on the impact of TAMPEP's ALNIMA project's reintegration program in Nigeria, most women and girls who had been trafficked to Europe were taken aback by the nature of the labor they were obliged to undertake while on the run from the authorities.

- **Legal Framework is Inadequate**

Trafficking has grown in recent years as a result of a haphazard approach taken by law enforcement and a legislative framework that focuses mostly on human trafficking for sexual exploitation (Maiangwa & Ani, 2014). Most law enforcement officers lack the necessary tools, technical expertise, and gender sensitivity to effectively combat crime. People who have been trafficked regularly claim that Nigerian officials assist traffickers by

providing them with forged passports and facilitating their travel across borders and through ports of entry and exit (Otoide, 2019). Law enforcement agents are sometimes hesitant to investigate violent crimes, particularly those committed against women and children who cannot afford the fees associated with the investigation or who do not have the means to bribe the police (Haker, 2011). Raped women and girls, sexual assault victims, domestic violence victims, and victims of human trafficking go unpunished in Nigeria as a result of this. Victims of international human trafficking are frequently mislabeled as illegal aliens and deported before a thorough inquiry into their circumstances has been completed (Parkins, 2010). Several researchers have suggested that a combination of corrupt politicians, complicit institutions, and insufficient legislation ensures the impunity of traffickers while deteriorating the fate of trafficked individuals. Badejo, Gordon, and Mayes (2021) made this claim. There have been a number of non-governmental organizations and women's rights organizations that have continued to challenge the government's reluctance to prosecute well-known traffickers. Traffickers have a poor record of conviction, and even when they are convicted, they are frequently released before they have completed their sentence.

- **Migratory Policies That Are Too Restrictive**

The global economic imbalance between the northern and southern hemispheres is also a significant element in human trafficking. Those from the north can migrate with relative ease because of their relative riches, whereas those from the south, who are coming from a position of relative poverty, face higher migratory hurdles. During the 1970s, while Nigeria's economy was expanding, Nigerians had easy access to a number of northern countries. Visas for Italy, for instance, were not difficult to obtain for businessmen and

ladies from Edo State who had spent significant sums of money in the country. According to Anene, Njoku and Iyala (2019), Nigerians are finding it substantially more difficult to migrate nowadays. Individuals living in poverty desire to see an improvement in their overall situation. This provides a chance for people traffickers to profit from the suffering of the victims. Human trafficking in Nigeria is aggravated by strict migratory regulations, as migrants are more likely to rely on traffickers who offer illusory future benefits (Mohammed, 2014). Furthermore, the tightening of border controls in wealthier countries raises the likelihood of illegal migration, raising the demand for the alleged expertise of people traffickers. As a result, the bigger the number of hurdles to migration, the greater the demand for and expense of traffickers' services, and the greater the profitability of the sector (Mohammed, 2014).

3.1.3. Pull Factors

The pull factor is what causes something to be an appealing choice. It determines the destinations that the travelers reach. A difficult economic climate, a hazardous environment, conflict, starvation, and political violence are all examples of push factors. In contrast to the push factors, the pull factors work in the opposite direction. The rate of human trafficking is directly correlated to the combination of these many elements. Additional variables that operate as "pull" factors include an increasing demand for low-cost labor and/or exploitative labor practices, as well as the promise of money and what is depicted as, or perceived to be, a better life. The anonymity of the internet creates conditions that allow for the online luring and trafficking of girls and women for the purposes of forced prostitution. This is another way that the internet contributes to the proliferation of human trafficking.

- **Need for Low-Skilled Labor**

Human trafficking is referred to as "the underbelly of globalization" because of its worldwide extent and scope of impact. There is a significant demand for low-skilled labor in a variety of industries as a result of globalization. These industries include agricultural labor and food processing; construction; domestic service; labor-intensive manufacturing; home health care; sexual labor; and, more broadly, service sector labor (circuses, begging, camel jockeying). This is a desire that exists in both developed and underdeveloped countries. Job opportunities that employ trafficking laborers are typically located in industries where it is easier to maintain highly exploitative working circumstances that violate human rights and labor standards, as well as in difficult-to-monitor environments (Brewer, 2009).

- **Profitability**

Modern slavery is flourishing as a result of its financial viability. Hynes et al. (2018) estimate that human trafficking earns between \$7 billion and \$10 billion in revenue yearly in the United Kingdom, placing it third in terms of revenue generation after arms and narcotics trafficking. Furthermore, human cargo is less difficult to transport across international borders than illicit chemicals or weapons, which are confiscated upon finding and cannot be transported.

3.2. Theoretical orientation of gender, feminism, and migration

The most recent stage in the development of the body of literature on gender and migration makes substantial use of the theory of gender relations (O'Connell, 2011), in particular the body of work that focuses on how gender relations shift as a consequence of migration and settlement. Although this theory incorporates aspects of culture and discourse, it is predicated primarily on structuralism, which enables it to be a good fit for the kind of modernist epistemology within which the majority of research in the sociology of migration is positioned. Furthermore, since it theorizes gender as something that is socially constructed within the bounds of larger social institutions and structures, it offers feminist migration scholars a way

to understand the fluidity of gender power relations and how they change under the influence of macro-structures such as global labor markets and state-supra-state regimes (Süleymanoğlu-Kürüm, and Rumelili, 2022). This is because the theory views gender as something that is socially constructed within the confines of larger social institutions and structures. Even though not all research on gender and migration that is conducted by sociologists explicitly utilizes gender relations theory, a significant portion of this research does incorporate the fundamental components of Connell's model of how gendered practices are either maintained or challenged and reconstructed (Hoskin, 2019). Studies that incorporated analysis of employer recruitment and state-employer cooperation to increase certain labor flows have illustrated how shifting gender relations within families has opened up new opportunities for women to migrate and contributed to new female migration flows.

3.3 Conclusion

The chapter concluded that different factors push or pull people to seek to migrate from their country to another country. With this, traffickers then exploit the victims' need for migration by either deceiving or exploiting them into different countries for hard labour or prostitution. The next chapter will look at the methods that was used in getting the needed data and information for the study.

CHAPTER FOUR METHODOLOGY

4.1. Designing and Understanding of Research Methodology

The purpose of this study is to examine the elements that contribute to the trafficking of Nigerian women and children into European labour markets. Specifically, it aims to identify the Push and Pull variables that may be directly responsible for the prevalence of human trafficking in Nigeria, especially among women and children, and to suggest activities that could be utilised to educate and protect potential victims of human trafficking. Case-study study of Nigeria was conducted utilising qualitative research designs. The researcher also used document analysis as complementary methods. In addition, document analysis was valuable for investigating prior documents and other records on human trafficking in Nigeria maintained by non-governmental organisations and law enforcement agencies.

4.3. Qualitative Methods for Data Collection

For the purpose of this study the archival/document research and the case-study method—are suitable and applicable. It is vital to note that the research generally adheres to the qualitative tradition. According to Wimmer and Dominic (2003), they define qualitative research as an interpretative study that permits each observer to create their own reality as a necessary component of the research process. Qualitative research upholds the idea that people are fundamentally different from one another and aspires to the depth and breadth of the study that is dependent on the study.

4.3.1. Document Analysis

In the document analysis methodology, a type of qualitative research, documents were used as secondary data. These documents came from the internet and reports from NGOs and other organisations with an interest in the problem of human trafficking of women. The documents are crucial for cross-referencing or verification as well as for data interpretation and analysis. According to O'Leary (2014), one of the main categories of documents as used in this study is the secondary documents. The secondary materials for this study came from online sources from law enforcement, NGOs, and various institutions. Additionally, earlier testimonials of previously trafficked girls were examined. The use of these sources of information is justified by the fact that secondary document analysis will allow the researcher to review earlier data collected by prior researchers and earlier accounts from those females who have first-hand experience of this circumstance.

4.3. 2. Case study method

Additionally, a case study methodology was employed as a research strategy for this study.

A case study-based method entails a comprehensive examination of a particular event, group of individuals, or scenario. Case studies have a tight emphasis, resulting in specific, detailed descriptions of the case(s) investigated (Shun, James and Mara, 2008). It will be advantageous for this study because the researcher will be able to examine the chosen nations (Nigeria and Italy).

For the purpose of this research, there is a focus on the experiences of some of the women that were trafficked to Italy. However, the study is not overall all about Italy. The mini case study of Italy is used as an illustrative lens to highlight the experiences of these women by using secondary reports and quoting their experiences. By doing this, the researcher aims to contribute to giving women a voice, and to provide a better understanding of how it is to be trafficked to Italy

4.5. Conclusion

This part of the research investigated some of the methods that were utilised in obtaining the information in order to assist the research in coming to an informed conclusion and offering some recommendations. This study looked at trafficking from Nigeria at first from a more global perspective, before moving into specific practices in chapter five. More so, due to the political sensitivity of the topic, the current research adheres to the ethical guidelines. The identities of all participants and formerly trafficked girls were protected by anonymizing their names. In addition, all works utilised for this dissertation were cited appropriately. In the following chapter, we will discuss the experiences of victims of human trafficking in Nigeria, as well as the actions taken by the Nigerian government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to assist victims.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a synopsis of the material covered in the preceding chapters' discussions. It will shed light on the nature of human trafficking in Nigeria, including push and pull variables such as family size and composition, recruitment locations and techniques, exploitation of victims, characteristics of traffickers, and some victims' life experiences from previous studies.

These push and pull variables include family size and composition, recruitment locations and techniques, exploitation of victims, and more. In this section of the study, we looked at how the aforementioned factors affect the practice of trafficking of women and children as well as the implications of this phenomenon.

5.1.1. Family size and constitution

According to the research carried out by Okeshola and Adenugba (2018) and Manbe (2016), the majority of children who are trafficked come from large households. According to Manbe (2016), divorce or the loss of a parent can also plunge a family into abject poverty. In his work, reviewed, Njoku (2015) asserted that the majority of child victims came from homes with five to twenty-five members. Okeshola and Adenugba (2018) further suggested that trafficked children frequently originated from impoverished, agricultural families and had minimal formal education prior to becoming trafficked. After the loss of at least one parent, a significant number of children from poor homes were trafficked as seen from the findings of Duru &

Ogbonnaya (2012). Others had parents who were divorced or at least one of whom lived and worked away from home.

5.1.2. Recruitment Practices in Nigeria

According to Adepoju (2005), recruitment promises range from educational or training opportunities for the victims to well-compensated jobs for both children (and payment to their parents) and adult victims. As Ezeibe et al. (2021) noted, children recruited without parental agreement are frequently given tangible objects like bicycles or radios. Victims, whether children or adults, are recruited usually by deception, and they voluntarily travel with their traffickers. In the study carried out by Okeshola and Adenugba (2018), it was found that 62% of the victims left with a labour contract while 38% did not. To get why parents may be so willing or trusting in letting their children to leave the family and village, it may be vital to comprehend the recruitment process and the extent to which the family is involved in the recruitment process. In a study of 400 trafficked children in Nigeria conducted by Okunade and Shulika, (2021), 37% of the children were recruited by a family member, while 8% of the victims were recruited by a family friend. Moreover, according to Azorundu et al (2020)'s research, family members of the victim are frequently the ones who introduce the traffickers to the child's parents. According to Osumah and Enaburene (2012), ju-ju or voodoo methods are used to bind victims to their traffickers in Nigeria (and notably in Benin City, Edo State), preventing them from cooperating with the police. As described in the preceding chapter, girls and women may be recruited by an older lady or "madam" who fosters communication between the girls and the organisation organising the move. The women enter into a contract to recoup their trip expenses. This agreement ranges from \$35,000 to \$55,000 USD (Obikaeze, Inah, & Efanodor-Obeten, 2021). "When human traffickers draught a contract, they frequently consult a traditional priest for approval. This is typically carried out in a traditional "shrine." The priest removes a profoundly personal item from the girl. It could be head hair, pubic hair, a nail

clipping, or underpants. The priest leaves little question that this item will be utilised to exert remote control over the victim. This use of voodoo is a method for keeping the girl in servitude since it exploits her most profound superstitions" (Agazue, 2021).

5.1.3. Areas of Recruitment

According to studies reviewed such as those carried out by Obikaeze et al. (2021), Edegbe and Imafidon (2021) and Umukoro (2021), victims of human trafficking were recruited primarily from rural villages and smaller towns. Numerous victims were from Akwa Ibom State's rural communities and villages. In Akwa Ibom, Ekorì is recognised as the capital of state-level trafficking (Umukoro, 2021). Cross River and Abia states were also origin states. According to Olayiwola, (2021), the majority of juvenile victims were recruited in Akwa Ibom State and trafficked to coca plantations in Togo and Cameroon, whereas the majority of adult victims came from larger cities or towns. Olayiwola (2021) further suggested that adult victims were recruited from major cities or towns, including Benin City (Edo State), Asaba (Delta State), Yola (Adamawa State), and Kano (Kano State) - all state capitals. Many of the adult victims were women who had been trafficked from the state of Edo to cities in West Africa and Europe, including Italy. Some adult victims were transported to the Middle East via Kano International Airport under the premise of going on a religious pilgrimage (The Hajj) according to Obikaeze, Inah, and Efanodor-Obeten (2021). Women of advanced age, primarily widows and divorcees, travelled to Saudi Arabia.

5.1.4. Exploitation

According to Olayiwola, (2021), victims reported varied degrees of hardship and exploitation during their trips and upon arrival at their destination. During the travel phase, victims of human trafficking are sometimes exposed to uncomfortable and dangerous situations. The victims recounted incidents of physical and mental violence that occurred during the travel.

They endured severe harassment and intimidation (Kiss, et al., 2022). According to the results of Inyang (2022), these victims, who are predominantly youngsters, are frequently taken over national borders without documentation and made to walk long distances. Children transferred by boat have stated that other children have died of dehydration or drowned. In the study conducted by Njoku, Akintayo, and Mohammed (2022), adult women reported being forced into prostitution while travelling over the Sahara on their way to Northern Africa. The duration of this exploitation and the scenario in which the victims find themselves can vary greatly. In an interview carried out by Manbe (2016), child victims reported that they spent between one and six years overseas. According to the work of Manbe (2016), the adult victim who lived abroad the longest remained in Italy for a period of four years.

5.1.5. Criminals: Individual Traffickers and Criminal Networks

Organizations that engage in human trafficking can take many forms, ranging from a single person who is responsible for the recruitment, transportation, and exploitation of a single victim to networks that provide isolated services and link together to expand coverage to large groups of individuals who are responsible for providing the full spectrum of services through highly sophisticated and structured networks (Olanrewaju, 2022). There is a paucity of data pertaining to the degree of organisation that is driving the trafficking of women and children from Nigeria to Italy and other European nations, as well as through Nigeria to other countries. According to the findings of the research conducted by Ikwuegbu (2022), however, police interrogations of the traffickers revealed that they collaborate with Nigerians as well as nationals from Ghana, Benin, Niger, and Libya, as well as Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Mali, Italy, and Israel. This information was gleaned from the conversations between the police and the traffickers. These people who are not from the country are in the minority. Most of the time, these non-citizens are employed as temporary guides or "trolleys," which are slang terms for people who illegally

transport others over borders (Ikwuegbu, 2022). A few of them offer refuge in the form of safe houses and shelters located along the routes for people who are travelling by land.

Every single one of the tasks that are completed in Nigeria is carried out by Nigerians. This includes travel document touts and agents, as well as recruiting agents, native doctors (voodoo priests) who perform ceremonies, lawyers who draught the debt bondage agreements, estate agents who help launder proceeds of trafficking through real estate transactions, and estate agents who help launder proceeds of trafficking through real estate transactions. Smugglers can be found all along the routes leading from Nigeria to France, Spain, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon. These routes pass through Ghana, Togo, Benin, Gabon, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Morocco, Senegal, Algeria, and Libya (Okojie, 2004).

According to Olanrewaju (2022), there is evidence of highly sophisticated international networks involved in the recruitment, provision of travel documents, transportation, accommodation, and exploitation of women in the receiving countries when women are trafficked for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation. These networks also exploit the women in the receiving countries. As stated in the work of Mbakogu (2022), there is evidence to support the hypothesis that the industry is well organised and controlled by syndicates. Officials are of the opinion that the networks are more informal. This is especially true when considering the fact that women are frequently recruited by people they already know, such as family members, neighbours, or acquaintances. The degree of organisation that is present in an enterprise may be determined by a number of factors, including the size of the operation, the number of women that the organisation is "moving and managing," the extent to which fraudulent documents must be obtained, and the degree to which government officials (in the country of origin, in the country of transit, and in the country of destination) must be bribed (Olanrewaju, 2022).

5.1.6. Arrest and Convictions

According to Ikwuegbu (2022), just two cases of traffickers were convicted in Nigeria in 2013 out of a total of fifteen cases in which traffickers were caught. In September 2013, in the Nigerian state of Ogun, seven Beninese and two Nigerians were arrested in connection with the exploitation of 116 Beninese children. The Beninese traffickers have been extradited, while the two Nigerian accused await prosecution. In the remaining 13 cases, police had no information, and traffickers or suspects were released owing to a lack of proof, according to Mbakogu's analysis (2022). Regarding more recent incidents, however, the Task Force on Human Trafficking, Criminal Investigation Division (CID) reported an increase in the number of investigations and court charges (Mbakogu, 2022). According to Vanderhurst's (2022) findings, the Nigerian government looks to be making headway in prosecuting human trafficking cases. The number of cases reported, under investigation, and charged in court has more than doubled between 2021 and 2022, despite the fact that the figures are still very low (Vanderhurst, 2022).

5.1.7. Real Life Witnesses and Experiences of Victims

Some Nigerian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as WOTCLEF, which is dedicated to the eradication of human trafficking, child labour, education, and mobilisation of women, and COSUDOW, which is responsible for combating trafficking in women and children, among others, have compiled the following accounts of actual victims. The stories of these actual victims illustrate the exploitative methods employed by Nigerian traffickers. Some of the rescued victims indicated in their report that they were unaware of the jobs they were to perform abroad or that the travel would be perilous (Vanderhurst, 2022). During the recruitment process, sponsors were polite and offered good chances, according to the victim. Some of the females were offered employment as housekeepers, factory employees, and in other capacities. Other girls were offered careers on farms, as hairdressers, and as fashion

designers, among others. The career opportunities were shown to the victim's family, and only one mother objected to her daughter's desire to study in Italy.

According to her as stated in the work of Tessitore et al., (2022):

"After high school, I studied fashion design and started a boutique where I employed two apprentices due to a lack of funds, My aunt, who is also the sister of my mother, encouraged me to work in the fashion sector in Spain. She desired to build a fashion house in Spain for those in need of original African design and clothes, as well as for those motivated by financial gain. The following day, she returned to ask me the same thing. I instructed my aunt to discuss the matter with my mother. Because she had heard awful things about Italy, my mother conveyed her fear by stating, "I hope it's not Italy." "No, according to my aunt, it's Spain,"

Because her aunt had "sold" her to a madam in Italy, the young woman found herself in Italy and was asked to do prostitution.

In addition, the following information is revealed by the victims' descriptions of their interactions with the recruiter and the means of communication:

As reported by the victims,

"Typically, our first point of contact is with the recruiter. Some recruiters even assist us with acquiring travel passports."

After this initial interaction, additional employees may be brought in to aid recruiters in accelerating the process. After that, they are typically accompanied by someone known as a trolley or "dago." The majority of trolley drivers are young men (Tessitore et al, 2022). Typically, a sponsor has paid for the appropriate paperwork and travel expenses. The sponsor is considered to "own" the victim. As is the case with certain sponsors, the last employment of the victims in Italy is occasionally for the sponsor as well as the madam. On occasion, sponsors are known to sell victims to madams. Those that traverse the desert are accompanied by Arabs,

who are primarily truck drivers familiar with the terrain. Some individuals also receive victims in safe locations prior to their final destinations (Tessitore et al., 2022).

None of the victims claimed that they had been kidnapped, but they all maintained that they had consented to travel voluntarily but were deceived about the nature of the employment. One victim stated she was initially sceptical, but eventually came around.

According to the testimony of a victim:

"My aunt (the sister of my mother) offered to send me abroad to pursue my studies, but I had no idea I would be asked to engage in prostitution."

Another victim reported as contained in the work of Tessitore et al., (2022):

"A man who frequently travels overseas and was formerly our neighbour (they had moved out) approached me to notify me of his plans to travel abroad. I was initially uninterested, but he promised me I would have plenty works to do."

One of the victims stated that *"she was forced to vow that she would go nuts if she did not comply with the agreement"* (Tessitore et al., 2022). A victim was also taken to a Pentecostal church to sign a contract committing to follow the madam's directions. In addition to a traditional priest, sometimes known as a native doctor, who administered an oath, one victim was led to a lawyer for the purpose of drafting a contract. Some victims were taken outside the city in order to take the oath; one victim was sent to the neighbouring state of Ondo State for this specific purpose. According to reports, a number of the shrines are terrifying and threatening. In contrast, victims who were trafficked by their known relatives were not forced to swear an oath before departing Nigeria but were required to do so upon arrival in Italy.

When the girls first arrived in Italy, a number of them reported that the madams originally treated them hospitably, but that their attitudes eventually changed. They were taken shopping, and as a result, new clothing was acquired for them (Tessitore et al, 2022). Some of the victims began to wonder why the attire that was usually purchased for them was so exposing.

During this initial shopping trip, one of the victims observed her mistress purchasing condoms, she alleged.

“When they first arrived, a bunch of other young women greeted them. The majority of victims were astonished by the nature of their work on their first day in Italy.”

One victim stated that her mistress revealed the nature of the work to her on the train ride to the house, but she refused:

“When I refused to engage in prostitution, I was abandoned at the railway station.”

When other victims refused to leave their houses in the middle of the night, they were subjected to physical harassment. Then, they were reminded of the oaths they had signed and the debts they had incurred.

“The victim claims she was offered three days of relaxation.”

The woman, a divorced mother of four children, accepted the post after being assured she would be working in a *“fabrique,”* which she translated as *“factory.”* On the third day, when she was sleeping at night, the madam awoke her and instructed her to dress for work. She had received new clothing.

She pondered, *“What kind of work will I be doing tonight?”* Then, the lady elaborated on the nature of the work. She claimed that she and Madam fought all night over it. The subsequent day, she fled.

On her first night of labour, another victim recruited by her sister was confronted with the nature of the profession. The amount of money spent on her was brought to her attention when she refused to work on the streets with other girls employed by her sister. Additionally, the sister reminded her of all the support she had offered to them back home, and she mentioned that she earned her money through prostitution, which the woman appreciated. She was frequently at odds with her sister, who made the rest of her life miserable. Then, she was compelled to walk down the street. She, however, refused to recruit clients, and upon her return,

she was unable to contribute any income for her sister's benefit. The other female employees of her sister grew increasingly irritated by her attitude and accused her sister of being excessively lenient with her. Therefore, she was forced to labour on the streets to augment her money.

Even more so, some victims expressed displeasure that they were compelled to wear skimpy clothing throughout the winter months. In addition to being attacked by Italian teens, the victims reported being pelted with vulgar things by a group of adolescents.

In the end, it was necessary to endure the living conditions. They were forced to share small, overcrowded apartments with other females and, at times, with the madam (with four or five persons to a room, sharing beds). Aside from the forced labour they were subjected to, the majority of victims opted to reside abroad. They appreciated the weather and enjoyed their meals if they could afford it. If they had been able to find employment outside of prostitution, they would have wanted to remain in Italy.

5.1.8. Conclusions

However, while there is the violence and the different factors that keep these women in poverty and the trafficking situation, it is worthy to note that the women attempted to break out of the situation as reported in their experiences in the work of Tessitore et al., (2022) .Their Inability to break free could be because of the cultural and social mechanisms that relates to the push factors earlier discussed. In the sense that, the rigid hierarchical structure of the agency must be respected at all costs. Also, the religious and ritual manipulation of swearing an oath compels them to stick to the agreement made by them and the parties involved.

Information about victims and perpetrators differed among writers and reports obtained for the purpose of this study. According to the works of Tessitore et al., (2022), the vast majority of recruiting occurs in rural villages. During the recruitment phase, parents and children are frequently misled. To secure the release of children, promises of education, training, or gainful

employment are made. When the children themselves are approached, it is frequently with the promise of a radio or bicycle. In around half of the cases documented by several studies (Szablewska, 2022), a family member, close relative, or close acquaintance of the family recruited minor victims. This may explain why parents and children are so trusting and the release of a child is so simple. Perhaps, if there are no scarcity of information about what trafficking entails, the mode of recruitment would not be so easy to initiate in these rural areas. In Nigeria, the number of reported cases resulting in arrests and court charges has more than doubled between 2018 and 2022, according to an examination of case files based on the findings of prior research, such as the work of Vanderhurst, (2022).

The majority of the findings in this study shows the relationship between the push and pull factors and also the cultural, social, and gender relations. However, it may be difficult to conclude that one factor or mechanism is more prevalent than the other because of the difference in trends in numbers and data provided by NGOs and earlier studies. However, there is a tendency and pattern that sticks out in this study. Some of the patterns shows that, majority of those trafficked are from poverty stricken large families. Poverty in this regard is a push factor. When a society lacks basic socio-economic amenities that makes living easy, it is possible that people easily fall victims to the prowess of deception and false promises of a better life in a different country.

There is also a pattern of physical harassment, violence, psychological pressure, and intimidation whenever victims resist or refuse to be forced to work as prostitutes. The traffickers acted cordial in the beginning to lure victims and then changed their behaviors at the destinations. This also tends to be a pattern. The religious ritual manipulation process is also another pattern. We could of course argue that it is unrealistic to believe that majority of these victims are easily susceptible to being manipulated, we could also reflect on why some of the traffickers use religious rites as a tool to manipulate. This could be because the traffickers

probably perceive that some of these Nigerian women were born and raised in religious zealotry societies that has conditioned them into believing that “the devil” or “gods” as the case may be will strike them dead or bedridden if they do not agree to the terms and conditions. It is probably then easy to be manipulated when there are perceived notions that there are powerful supernatural beings somewhere watching them.

Poverty (unemployment, lack of basic needs, hunger, low living standards, lack of shelter) seems to be the overarching problem that contributes to the problem of Human trafficking of Nigerian women and children to Italy. It also appears to be the common denominator that contribute to the trafficking of Nigerian women and children. However, the cultural, and religious factors, and all mechanisms highlighted in this study also play different roles.

CHAPTER SIX CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Conclusion

This study aimed to identify the mechanisms that are pulling and pushing modern-day enslavement of women from Nigeria to Europe, with a particular focus on Italy. The study examined some of the factors that contribute to human trafficking in Nigeria, as well as some of the preventative measures that might be used to combat the problem. In addition, the study investigated why women's trafficking has continued despite legislation making the illegal trade a crime. One of the most important findings of the study was that poverty is a leading cause of Nigerian girls' and women's sexual migration abroad. According to the study, there is little

hope that Nigeria would soon be free of the plague of female sex trafficking if poverty, unemployment, and other factors like these are not addressed. In contrast to the beautiful picture painted by the traffickers, the inquiry revealed that victims of human trafficking were forced to work as prostitutes in Europe and America. The findings of the study also indicate Nigeria's porous borders, the operations of traffickers, and corrupt officials at the country's embassies who issue visas to traffickers and their victims. In addition, according to available data on human trafficking in Nigeria, the trafficking of women and minors to Italy has been on the rise since the late 1990s. However, there is no concrete data on the total number of female victims of human trafficking. According to statistics from Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and even Africa, the majority of women trafficked out of Nigeria for prostitution come from Edo State. Minors, or those under 18 years of age, are a part of the victims.

6.2. Recommendations

The following recommendations can be made to help Nigerian women prevent being trafficked.

1. The literature that is currently accessible indicates that the main factors influencing the prevalence of cases of women trafficking in Nigeria are poverty, protracted unemployment, and growing inequality. As a result, to aid in the eradication of human trafficking, deliberate measures must be made to address its primary causes, which include unemployment and poverty. Girls and women are particularly susceptible to the deceptive claims of human traffickers when they are disadvantaged and have few options for escaping their circumstances.
2. In addition, a social security policy must be put in place to promote the educational chances of female victims and kids who are vulnerable to human trafficking by providing grants. Additionally, this contributes to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals of protecting girls' rights and passing child education legislation.

Additionally, the plan should work to improve the low status of women, especially in terms of removing their financial disadvantages.

3. To better inform the public about the mutually reinforcing consequences of these two occurrences, it is also essential to build public awareness and educational programmes addressing HIV/AIDS and human trafficking.
4. To support such initiatives, both urban and rural educational institutions, billboards, the media, neighbourhood meetings and seminars, youth-oriented recreation centres, and other venues should be utilised. In such initiatives, parents should be specifically targeted, especially mothers who pressure their daughters to become trafficked. Campaign materials could include movies and documentaries that show the terrible effects of prostitution trafficking in other nations.
5. The report also suggests that the National Orientation Agency and the Ministries of Information play crucial responsibilities in reaching all communities. They should start statewide and federal campaigns to spread the word about the risks of human trafficking. All communities, especially rural ones, ought to be represented.
6. The study also suggests depoliticizing the Federal government's anti-trafficking strategy. The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons should be comprised of personnel from all law enforcement stakeholders, including Justice, Police, Immigration, Security Services, Customs, Interpol, and Prisons, as well as representatives from NGOs, State Liaison Offices, and all other pertinent persons or groups. Political affinities shouldn't be a requirement for participation. Women also should be involved in all of these steps. Both in the planning, implementing, and evaluating of the aforementioned policies. It may be of help if the women who have been through the ordeal are also involved in the governmental and NGO levels because they have the first-hand experience of what trafficking entails.

7. Accordingly, the study suggested that the government start strong anti-trafficking campaigns that emphasise the detrimental effects of the practise, such as the risks that victims of trafficking face while travelling, while working as street prostitutes, and when they are exposed to HIV/AIDS and other health issues.
8. As a last step, the Nigerian government should create rehabilitation centres (one at the federal level and one in each of the source states) where victims of repatriation will be warmly received. Victims will be accommodated in these facilities, which will also offer skill training and remedial schooling. Victims and their families should also receive counselling. Victims may remain in these facilities for some time before they are prepared to leave for Nigeria and begin a new life.

6.3. Contribution to the Study

Human trafficking of women and children has been the subject of numerous studies across Africa, but from Nigeria to Italy, this issue has received almost no attention. The study also sheds insight on the actual circumstances under which victims of trafficking found themselves, the many trafficking routes taken, and the most common modes of transit used by traffickers to carry victims from Nigeria to Italy. Therefore, this study was conducted to fill the gaps and add to the body of knowledge about women and children being trafficked between Nigeria and Italy.

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