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# HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE GIRL-CHILD THROUGH HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION

BY

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## **Abstract**

*The paper was a review of the dangers of human trafficking as it affects the girl-child who constitutes the highest proportion of victims. It highlighted the strategies and reasons for trafficking as well as some possible consequences of the scourge. The paper noted that endowment of the girl-child with appropriate skills and aptitudes would reduce the tendency to succumb to the evil of child trafficking. Various aspects of Home Economics Education for the creation of wealth, as well as value re-orientation for the girl-child, were also highlighted as means of building the capacity of the girl-child, for self-reliance and contribution to national development.*

**Key words:** *Human trafficking, girl-child, capacity building.*

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## **Introduction**

The potential of the girl towards developing her immediate environment and the nation at large cannot be quantified. In order to attain their innate potentials, it is essential that female children are provided the enabling environment to acquire the right formal education. According to Oboniye (2015), a cursory look at the pattern of women involvement in education in Nigeria reveals abysmal low levels. It was reported that despite the laudable goals and objectives of education, the girl-child still suffers a lot of set back and inhibitions which that checkmate their attainment of personal development and contribution to national development.

According to the protocol adopted by

United Nations in Palermo, Italy in 2000, human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipts of persons by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion or adoption of fraud or deception or the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or of giving or receiving of payment or benefit to achieve the consent of person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation.

According to Adunola (2011), human trafficking is the third criminal activity in the world so far, after arm and drug trafficking. It was observed that the phenomenon of human trafficking has considerably increased throughout the world and most especially in Nigeria.

According to Uchem (2014), the problem of human trafficking has both global and local dimensions, suggesting that there is both internal trafficking as well as cross border trafficking. UNESCO (2006,) noted that:

*Approximately 80% of trafficked victims are women and up to 50% are minors. The vast majority of those trafficked under 18 years of age are girls. Male minors account for only 2% of trafficked cases. Men, women and children are trafficked for many purposes, including sexual exploitation, begging, underpaid and exploited forced labour in the agricultural, manufacturing and construction industries, domestic service and organ harvesting.*

**Source:** UNESCO (2006). Policy paper. Poverty series 14, 2 (E). Paris. Trafficking in persons is a very serious crime and a grave violation of human rights. It is modern day slavery which involves the control of victims for engagement in commercial sex or labour against his/her wish. Every year thousands of men, women and children fall into the hands of traffickers in their own countries and abroad. Virtually all countries of the world is affected by the ravaging scourge of human trafficking. According to a UNODC (2017) report, human trafficking has three constituent elements:-

**1. The Act (What is done):** This comprises of recruitment transportation, transfer, abduction, harbouring or

receipt of persons.

**2. The Means (How to do it):** Human trafficking involves the use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, use of power or vulnerability, or giving payments or benefits to a person in control of the victim.

**3. The Purpose (Why it is done):** For the purpose of exploitation, which includes the prostitution of others, sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery or similar practices as well as the removal of organs.

Uchem (2014), further reported that Nigeria has been classified as a source, transit and destination country for human trafficking. She asserted that Nigerian women and children are trafficked to Europe, Middle East and other African countries for the purpose of sexual exploitation, forced labour and involuntary domestic services. In addition, Nigeria receives young women and men from Benin Republic, Togo, Cameroon and Gabon to work in plantations as domestic hands and in the sex industry.

### **Engineering the trafficking process**

According to the National Human Trafficking Resource Centre, (2016), human trafficking is a market-driven criminal industry which is based on the principles of supply and demand. Many children and adults are vulnerable to human trafficking due to the demand for cheap labour, services and for commercial sex. The traffickers believe that the risk involved is minimal and punishment mild to deter them from further criminal activities. Some traffickers believe that the high profit margin is worth the risk of

detection.

Other reasons for the continued trafficking in persons may be due to lack of adequate community awareness, ineffective or unused laws, ineffective law investigation and corruption among the rank and file of agencies responsible for arresting and prosecuting traffickers.

Furthermore, the high demands for commercial sex create a profitable market for traffickers to sexually exploit children and adults. Also, when people are willing to buy goods and services from industries that rely on cheap forced labour, they create a profit incentive for labour traffickers to maximize profit.

#### **Strategies for recruiting victims of human trafficking**

Across the globe an estimated 27 million people are trafficked into slavery (USD, 2016). The methods used to engage potential victims vary, some of which are highlighted below:-

- i. **Misleading "friendship"**:- Some recruiters befriend teens and adults for the sake of trafficking them. After they develop trust and seemly solid friendship, the recruiters initiate a weekend vacation or gig, only to deceive them into trafficking.
- ii. **False job advertisement**:- Traffickers will advertise paid jobs (nanny, waitress etc). The applicants arrive and are picked up by the supposed boss, the paper work is often taken and they are forced into work conditions quite different from what they had been made to believe.
- iii. **Family arrangement**:- In some cases, a family becomes seriously

impoverished and is willing to sell a child for money. The parents are usually promised that their child will be adequately taken care of and given a proper education. Sadly, the end buyer scarcely lives up to his/ her part of the bargain, and the unsuspecting children or adolescents are resold into the trafficking industry.

- iv. **Abduction**:- Many trafficked victims are kidnapped on their way to school, work or home and later sold into slavery.
- v. **Cham lovers**:- Some women unknowingly marry a recruiter and are then sold by their husbands. Other women are pimped out by their boyfriends and forced or manipulated into commercial sex.

#### **Reasons for human trafficking**

The reasons for trafficking in our society is variable but some of them are adapted from Odedele and Egotanwa (2010) as follows:-

- i. **Greed**: Some people want to make money without minding the means. Consequently, they trade in their fellow human beings without minding that humans are not commodities for sale.
- ii. **Poverty**:- Most victims of trafficking are usually people who are impoverished and find it absolutely difficult to meet their basic needs for sustainable living. They easily fall prey to the antics of traffickers.
- iii. **Ignorance**:- Human traffickers easily deceive parents who are gullible or illiterates, by promising better life and job opportunities for their children overseas.

- iv. **Peer pressure:** - Peer groups exert so much influence on their contemporaries. Adolescents greatly influence one another and paint a beautiful picture of the gains of working and living abroad and consequently cause them to fall victims of human trafficking.
- v. **Moral decadence:** - The level of moral decadence in our society today is alarming. The fear of God is no longer the beginning of wisdom, hence some women, even as mothers, move abroad to establish a child trafficking network.
- vi. **Unemployment:** - The scourge of unemployment in Nigeria has generated so much desire among youths to migrate to foreign countries in search of the golden fleece. Most of them, especially girls, fall victims to human traffickers and end up being used in pornographic acts, as prostitutes in night clubs or drug peddlers for their boss. Some of them end up being killed and their body parts removed and sold by the traffickers for rituals.

#### **Consequences of human trafficking**

According to the Human Trafficking Search (2016), given the obscure nature of trafficking, its consequences are hidden and often difficult to see. The report asserted that trafficked persons often have limited access to basic necessities such as safety, food, sleep, hygiene and medical care. It was further noted that as trafficking is based on exploitation of people, all victims may become physically, psychologically and socially distressed. They may equally

experience harsh impacts due to excessive work or the use of force by traffickers. Victims who have been sexually exploited or assaulted may be exposed to serious health risk such as HIV/AIDS and other types of sexually transmitted diseases. Furthermore, human trafficking produces anxiety, insecurity, fear and trauma in the victims. In extreme cases, it could predispose the victims to memory loss, depression or even suicide attempts.

On the other hand, trafficked minors are more vulnerable due to their age. Trafficking may seriously impair children's emotional, physical and overall psychological development.

Trafficked persons usually become socially ostracized, often isolated from their social circles, to become surrounded by individuals unable to interact with socially or reach out for help. Victims trafficked internationally are unable to interact due to linguistic barriers, geographical disorientation and cultural differences.

Individuals that were specifically trafficked for sexual exploitation have often become stigmatized by friends and family members after their trafficking experience.

#### **Capacity building for the girl-child through home economics education**

Human resource development, a component of capacity building, as used in this paper, is the process of equipping individuals with the understanding, skills and access to information, knowledge and training that enables them to perform effectively. Specifically, capacity building encompasses the country's human, scientific, technological, organizational and resource capabilities. A fundamental goal of

capacity building is to enhance the ability to evaluate and address the crucial questions related to policy choices and modes of implementation among development options, based on an understanding of environmental potentials and limits and of needs perceived by the people of the country concerned (UNCED, 1992).

Educating the girl-child has immediate and long term benefits. If you educate a boy, you educate an individual but when you educate a girl you educate a nation. Therefore, for any nation to thoroughly harness the potentials of its citizenry it should provide equal educational opportunities for its males and females. Home economics education for the girl-child can conveniently endow her for capacity building by focusing on the strategies below:-

- ❖ **Creation of wealth:** Home economics develops practical skills among students. The students are taught to use both their hands and brains to create articles of various kinds such as cakes and snacks, dresses, articles for decorations and skills for management of the hospitality industry. This opportunity can package the girl-child for poverty eradication, self-reliance and they can become employers of labour.
- ❖ **Value re-orientation:** A lot of female children believe that they use what they have to achieve their goals. Hence they engage in social vices such as robbery, prostitution, indecent dressing and baby selling. Training the girl-child to acquire skills which abound in home economics will assist

them to develop healthy attitudes which would enable them to become responsible and fulfilled citizens.

### **Conclusion**

The desire to attain sustainable development in any country should be matched with appropriate provision of opportunities for the citizenry to possess competent skills and aptitudes. Although human trafficking is a crime against humanity, some people subscribe to being trafficked as a means of eradicating poverty and squalor. In other for the girl-child to possess competent skill for self and national development, her education should not be subjected to lip service. Girls are very vulnerable for recruitment to perpetuate criminal activities therefore all hands must be on board to direct their energies towards the acquisition of viable skills and competences to enhance self-reliance and national development.

### **Recommendations**

In order to attain the lofty attributes for capacity building of the girl-child, the learning environment should be structured for goal attainment.

There should be adequate funding for the girl-child education.

- ✓ Trainers of the girl-child should be motivated through on-the-job training for better skill acquisition and subsequent delivery to learners.
- ✓ Also, the teaching laboratories should be properly equipped to engender the acquisition of competent skills and aptitudes.
- ✓ The National Human Trafficking Resource Centre, (2016), suggested that communities can help reduce sex

trafficking in their localities by not buying sex and by abstaining from the commercial sex industry. Also, community members should device means of identifying consumable products and services produced by industries that engage cheap and forced labour and shun purchases of the products.

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