PERCEPTION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS ABOUT CHANGES IN THEIR HOUSEHOLDS' SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS IN SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
Human trafficking has been described as "modern day slavery" whereby people are coerced or deceived through promises of good jobs and career opportunities to move out of their communities to 'work' outside the country or in cities. This study was carried out to investigate the socioeconomic implications of human trafficking on the wellbeing of affected households. Multi stage sampling technique was used to select 250 out of 926 victims of trafficking identified working as domestic servants, plantation workers, food vendors, shop keepers and other forms of menial jobs in the study area. More than half (55.2%) of the respondents were females and mostly single (82.8%). Majority (90.8%) of the respondents earned a monthly income of less than ₦5000 before trafficking, which is an indication of their low level of income and poverty situation. Average family size of respondents was seven, 42.8% of them had only primary education while 31.2% went through adult literacy programmes. More than half (52.0%) of the respondents had low perception of their contribution to household socioeconomic status. There was a significant relationship between respondents' frequency of contact with households and change in household wellbeing ($r = 0.520$, $p = 0.000$). The result also shows a significant difference between Oyo, Ogun and Lagos states in perception of victims on change in the households' socioeconomic status ($F=3.00$, $P<0.05$).The study concluded that perception of trafficking victims about change in their households' socioeconomic status is low as a result of less frequent contact with households during the trafficking period.

Keywords: Human trafficking, socioeconomic status, trafficked victims

INTRODUCTION

According to the United Nations Palermo Protocol (2003); trafficking in human beings mean "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, deception, abuse of power a position of vulnerability and the giving or receiving of payments to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation". It is important to note that a major difference between smuggling of persons and trafficking in human beings is that the latter includes an element of coercion, deception and exploitation.

Human trafficking is presently one of the biggest problems afflicting virtually every state and region in the world. Its magnitude and dimensions have continued to pose tremendous moral, social and economic challenges to the civil society. This is more so in third world countries where the impact of this illegal underling is most visible and most felt.

Nigeria is equally highly vulnerable to the activities of human traffickers. Like in all other states and regions, the statistics on the number of Nigerians involved, mostly as victims, vary widely. Nigeria is a source, transit and destination country for women and children trafficking for the purposes of forced labour and commercial sexual exploitation. Within Nigeria, women and girls are primarily trafficked for domestic servitude and sexual exploitation while boys are trafficking for forced begging by religious teachers as well as forced labour in street vending, agriculture, mining, stone quarries and domestic servitude (USDS, 2008).

Various things motivate people in their decisions to move from their place of origin. Some people migrate so that they can provide better social, economic and educational opportunities for themselves or their families. Others move to escape from their families expectations particularly after arguments and conflicts, which may result in permanent separation (Thomas, 2004). Other individuals move for short periods to achieve individual goals such as saving money to build a house or start a business. Most rural migrants in Nigeria can be labelled as target migrants (Ekong, 2003). They move to other areas outside their native territories to make enough money to meet specific target after which they return home.

This study becomes important based on the fact that despite national and international efforts geared towards eradicating trafficking in persons, the scourge is still on the increase. The study is therefore designed to assess trafficked victims' perception of their contribution to the improvement of their household socioeconomic status in a bid to understand continuous involvement of people in human trafficking.

The general objective of the study is to assess trafficked victims' perception of change in their household socioeconomic status. The specific objectives are to:

1) identify the socioeconomic characteristics of trafficked victims in the study area,
2) determine the frequency of contact between victims and their households,
3) determine the perception of victims about the changes in the socioeconomic status of their households.

The following hypotheses were tested:

1. There is no significant relationship between trafficking victims' frequency of contact with households and change in their household wellbeing.
2. There is no significant difference in the perception of trafficking victims about change in their households' socioeconomic status across the three states.

METHODOLOGY

The study area for this research is all states in southwest Nigeria. These are; Oyo, Osun, Ogun, Ondo, Ekiti, and Lagos States. The southwest zone lies between latitudes 5^0N and 9^0N with an area of 114,271 square kilometres. The 2006 census put the population of the zone at 21,974,678 (National Population Commission, 2006).

Southwest Nigeria is predominantly an agrarian area with rainforest and derived savanna vegetation. Agriculture is the major source of livelihoods of the inhabitants of the zone. Common tree crops in the area include cocoa, oil palm and cashew while arable crops such as yam, cassava, maize and rice also thrive well in the zone.

The population for the study includes the victims of human trafficking identified in the study area working as house helps, shop keepers, labourers at construction sites and other menial jobs.

Multistage sampling technique was used to select 250 respondents for the study. The first stage is random selection of three states; Oyo, Ogun and Lagos out of the six states in southwestern Nigeria. . The second stage is Snowball sampling technique to obtain a list of trafficked people working as house helps, shop keepers and labourers in Oyo, Ogun and Lagos states. The third stage is the random selection of 250 victims out of the nine hundred and twenty- six victims identified in the study area. Data for the study were obtained through the use of structured questionnaire and analysed using frequency counts, percentages, means, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and ANOVA methods.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Socioeconomic characteristics of human trafficking victims:

Table 1 reveal that majority (67.2%) of the respondents were between ages 11-20years , 17.6% were between ages 21-25years, 10.0% were between ages 5-10years while (0.8% were 31years and above. Mean age of respondents was 17years which is an indication that majority of the trafficked victims are young children. This result shows that victims of human trafficking are young people in their productive years that should be actively involved in agricultural and community development activities in their various communities. Thus human trafficking leads to depletion of farm labour which can result in low agricultural production. This has a negative implication on farming as children that are supposed to help their parents have been trafficked from their farming communities.

The frequency distribution of trafficked victims by their sex as shown in Table 1 indicated that more than half of the respondents (55.2%) were female. This finding corroborates the statement by USDS (2006) that women constitute a large percentage of trafficked victims. Bohl, (2010) in a study in Nepal found that majority of trafficked persons were female who are in great demand in Indian brothels and circuses. According to US Department of State, recent estimates revealed that 80 percent of trafficked victims worldwide are female and 50 percent are children (USDS, 2004).

Frequency distribution of trafficked victims marital status as shown in Table 1 reveals that majority of the respondents were single (82.8%) which is an indication of their age and youthfulness. This is further corroborated by the assertion that gender and age appear significant in determining who participates in what type of regime of migration, or at what juncture migration becomes trafficking and for which types of work (IOM, 2010).

Table 1 further shows the distribution of respondents' educational status at the point of being trafficked. Over forty percent of the victims (42.8%) had only primary education while 31.2% had adult literacy. Insufficient and or inaccessible educational opportunities expose people to the risk of being trafficked. According to Rima Salah (2001), the motive for moving children from the protective envelope of the family is often the search for education rather than the search for work.

Table 1 also shows the income distribution of victims of trafficking. Majority (90.8%) of the respondents indicated an average monthly income of less than ₦5,000 which is an indication of their low level of income and poverty situation. Mean monthly income of respondents was ₦2,762.00. In a vast majority of trafficking cases, the victims are from_vulnerable population. Traffickers prey on those they deemed easier targets; those with little or no financial means who might easily be lured by promises of food, money and shelter (Abdulkadir, 2011).

Table 1: Socioeconomic characteristics of trafficking victims (n-250)

Variable	Frequency	Percent	Mean
Age before trafficking			
5-10 years	25	10.0	
11-15 years	91	36.4	
16-20 years	77	30.8	17 years
21-25 years	44	17.6	
26-30 years	11	4.4	
> 31 years	2	0.8	
Sex			
Male	112	44.8	
Female	138	55.2	
Marital status			
Single	207	82.8	
Married	43	17.2	
Educational status			
No formal education	5	2.0	
Adult literacy	78	31.2	
Primary education	107	42.8	
Secondary education	38	15.2	
Koranic school	22	8.8	
Income before trafficking (₦)			
Less than 5,000	227	90.8	
≥5,000-10,000	18	7.2	**₦2,762**
Above 10,000	5	2.0	

Source: Field survey 2014

Family characteristics of trafficked victims:

Table 2 describes the family characteristics of victims of human trafficking. More than half (55.2%) of the respondents have extended family background which is common in Nigeria and other African countries. It is believed that the education and upbringing of a child is the responsibility of the extended family. In farming communities, extended family members assist in clearing large farms and harvesting. It is not uncommon for children to grow up in the family of relatives, or third persons, if these persons are living in better circumstances and can thus provide the child with better educational and work opportunities (Veil 1998; Verbeet, 2000).

Table 2: Family characteristics of trafficked victims (n=250)

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Family type of victims		
Nuclear	112	44.8
Extended	138	55.2
Marriage type of parents		
Monogamy	107	42.8
Polygamy	129	51.6
Single parent	14	5.6
Position of victim in the family		
First born	90	36.0
Last born	44	17.6
Others	116	46.4
No of siblings		Mean = 7.0
1-5	120	48.0
6-10	101	40.4
11 and above	29	11.6
Parental status		
Both parents are alive	192	76.8
Father dead	39	15.6
Mother dead	14	5.6
Both parents are dead	5	2.0

Source: Field survey 2014

Results in Table 2 show that more than half (51.6%) of victims' parents are polygamous. This is a common feature of African families, large families (wives and children) are expected to work on the farm to feed the family and increase production for more income. Majority of trafficked children come from polygamous, large and poorly educated families where the children have limited (if any) opportunities for training and education. Children are often withdrawn from school and forced to help support the family. Parents, who may not even be able to feed their children, are often willing to give them to traffickers who promise to provide the child with a job, an education or training (ILO, 2001; UNICEF, 2002).

Table 2 also presents number of siblings in respondents' households, which is an indication of their family size. Mean household size of the respondents was seven. It can be observed that quite a number of the respondents are from large families. Over forty percent (40.4%) of the respondents had about 6-10 siblings. Due to bigger family size and lack of care and protection, abject poverty sometimes forces parents to release their children to traffickers (Sukhwinder, 2013).

Trafficked victims' frequency of contact with households

Results in table 3 indicate that the major common means of contact with victims' households were weekly phone calls (Mean=1.44), yearly visits (Mean=1.12) and co-workers (Mean=0.81). This is an indication that victims of trafficking do not have regular contact with their households and some may not even have any contact at all throughout their stay in the trafficking destination. This could affect their level of contribution to household welfare except for situations where their wages go directly to the parents. It will also have implications on their perception of changes in their household socioeconomic status.

Table 3: Distribution of trafficking victims' contact and means of contact with households (n=250)

Contact	Yes	No	Weekly	Monthly	Once in a year	Mean
Visits	152 (60.8)	98(39.3)	31 (20.4)	59 (38.8)	62 (40.8)	1.12
Phone calls	140 (56.0)	110 (44.0)	85 (60.7)	49 (35.0)	6 (4.3)	1.44
Letter writing	38 (15.2)	212 (84.8)	6 (15.8)	17 (44.7)	15 (39.5)	0.27
Oral messages	59 (23.6)	191 (76.4)	5 (8.5)	13 (22.0)	41 (69.5)	0.33
Friends	86 (34.4)	164 (65.6)	11 (12.8)	46 (53.5)	29 (33.7)	0.67
Relatives	124 (49.6)	126 (50.4)	7 (5.7)	22 (17.7)	95 (76.6)	0.64
Co-workers	89 (35.6)	161 (64.4)	31 (34.8)	51 (57.3)	7 (7.9)	0.81

Source: Field survey 2014 Percentages in parenthesis Overall mean=0.754

Victims' Average Income during Trafficking Period

The average income of victims during the trafficking period is as presented in Table 4. Almost half (46.8%) of the respondents indicated an average monthly income of between ₦5,000-₦7,000. Also, 4.8% received between ₦10,000-₦12,000 while 5.6% were paid above ₦12, 000. This result indicates that the respondents had better income than when they were in their respective communities. The initial income of majority (90.8%) was less than ₦5,000 while only 2% of them earned above ₦10,000 as reported in Table 1. This is an indication that the respondents' average income may be higher when compared with working in farms in their respective communities. This confirms that people who involved in trafficking are expecting a better life than what is available for them at home. The increased income status of the victims will enable them to contribute to the improvement of their households' socioeconomic status.

Table 4: Trafficking victims monthly income (n=250)

Monthly income during trafficking period (₦)	Frequency	Percentage (₦)
Below 5,000	99	39.6
>5,000-7,000	117	46.8
>7,000-10,000	8	3.2 Mean = 6,000.00
>10,000 -12,000	12	4.8
Above 12,000	14	5.6

Source: Field survey 2014

Who keeps trafficking victims' wages?

As seen in Figure 1, 39.2% said their wages were collected by the mistress, 31.6% indicated that the contractor collects their wages while 29.2% of respondents indicated that their wages are being collected by their parents. Since majority (70.8%) of victims' wages were collected and kept by either the mistress or the contractor, it

indicates that their wages may not get to their households as expected. In cases where the household get the victims' wages, some of the money might have been deducted by the contractors/mistresses. This will have an impact on their level of contribution to household wellbeing.

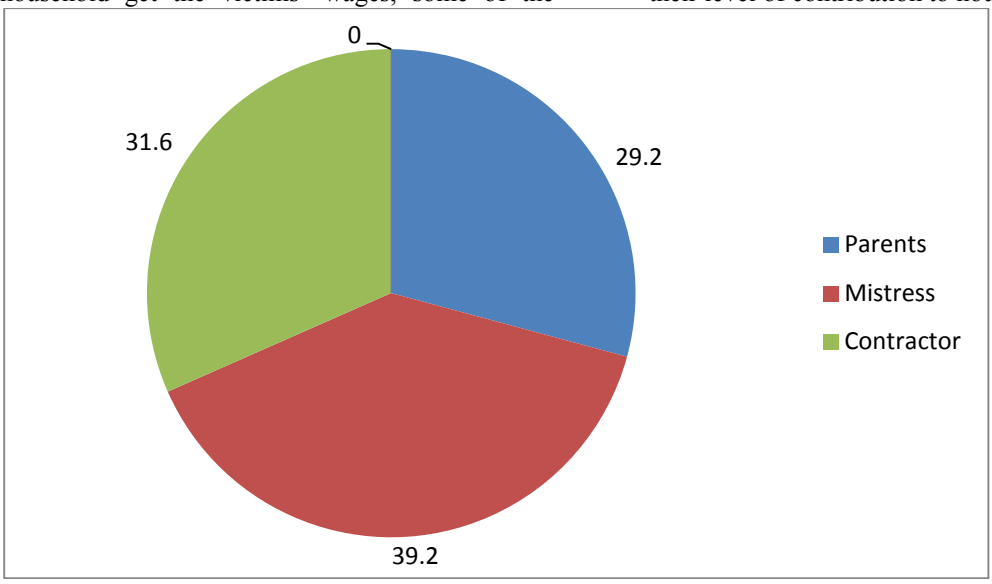


Figure 1: Keeping of trafficking victims' wages

Types and Regularity of Respondents' Remittance

Remittances can be in form of cash (money), materials (clothing, shoes and jewelry) or both (cash and kind). Figure 2 shows that victims remitted both kind and cash on regular basis to their households. This is commonly done once in a year (90.4%) though, 4.8% indicated twice in a year and 4.8% reported monthly remittances. Based on the findings of this research, regularity of remittance could be a function of victims' contact with households that is; monthly, twice a year or once in a year. Visiting households once a year was the commonest means of contact with households as indicated by respondents (Table 3). This means that if victims have the opportunity to visit/contact their family more often their remittance level could be higher. They will also have better/higher perception of change in their households' socioeconomic status.

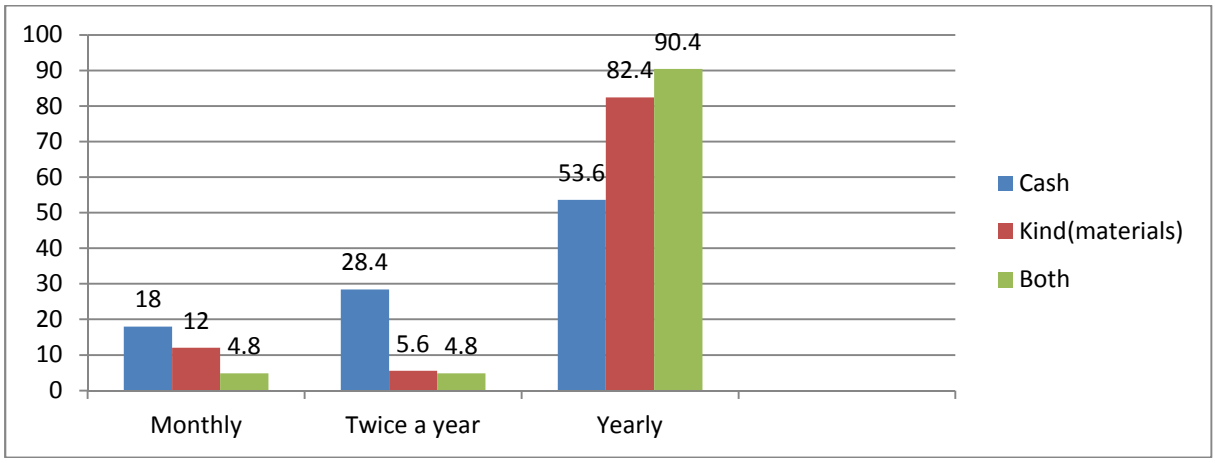


Figure 2: Regularity of trafficking victims' remittance

Trafficked Victims' average Monthly Remittance

Result of analysis on Table 5 shows that almost half (46.4%) of the respondents sent an average monthly remittance of ₦4,000--₦6,000 to their households. 31.6% remit ₦1,000 -₦3,000, 11.6% remit ₦7,000, ₦9,000 while 4.4% remit above ₦10,000. Remittance being a means of victims' contribution to household wellbeing is a very important issue in considering trafficking

activities. This is also a function of victims' income at trafficking destination. People engage in trafficking with the hope of better income than what is available in their communities so that they will be able to send remittances to their households for improved wellbeing. This corroborates the finding of Osezua, (2011) that women who have been successful in trans-border sexual transaction, despite their sex or age in the family, are now the centre of authority and pivot of important family decisions. This is as a result of the huge sum of money they remit to their families.

Table 5: Distribution of Trafficked Victims' average Monthly Remittance (n=250)

Average Monthly Remittance (₦)	Frequency	Percentage
1,000-3,000	79	31.6
4,000-6,000	116	46.4
7,000-9,000	29	11.6
9,000-10,000	15	6.0
Above 10,000	11	4.4

Source: Field survey 2014

Household items acquired from respondents' remittance

Household items acquired through victims' remittances are presented in Table 6; Radio (50.8%), handset (mobile phone) (55.6%), wall clock (50.4%), television (38.0%), video (33.6%) and motorcycle (32.4%) were among the commonest items that households usually acquire from victims' remittances. These are items considered necessary for the wellbeing of the family particularly at the community level. Households that possess these items are rated as high in socioeconomic status.

Table 6: Household items acquired from Trafficking victims' income

Household items	Yes	No
Television	95(38.0)	155(62.0)
Video/VCD	84 (33.6)	166 (66.4)
Refrigerator	44 (17.6)	206 (82.4)
Ceiling/table fan	81 (32.4)	169 (67.6)
Satellite	10 (4.0)	240 (96.0)
Bicycle	40 (16.0)	210 (84.0)
Generator	65 (26.0)	185 (74.0)
Motorcycle	81 (32.4)	169 (67.6)
Hand set	139 (55.6)	111 (44.4)
Furniture	64 (25.6)	186 (74.4)
Wall clock	126 (50.4)	124 (49.6)
Washing machine	17 (6.8)	233 (93.2)
Stabilizer	32 (12.8)	218 (87.2)
Deep freezer	22 (8.8)	228 (91.2)
Gas cooker	4 (1.6)	246 (98.4)
Electric stove	20 (8.0)	230 (92.0)
Electric iron	52 (20.8)	198 (79.2)
Electric kettle	29 (11.6)	221 (88.4)
Computer	34 (13.6)	216 (86.4)
Radio	127 (50.8)	123 (49.2)

Source: Field survey 2014
Percentages in parenthesis

Level of Change in Household socioeconomic Status

Result in Table 7 shows that, 64.0% of victims indicated a high level of change in household socioeconomic status. This means that there is an improvement in the wellbeing of the victims' household as a result of their involvement in human trafficking. Most people get involved in trafficking with the view of a better life for themselves and their households. The families expect remittances from their wards to assist in improving their standard of living. This result is an indication that involvement in human trafficking has led to changes in the socioeconomic status of victims' households. Improvement in household socioeconomic status and standard of living will further result in improvement of the community leading to community development.

Table 7: Level of change in household socioeconomic status

Levels of change	Frequency	Percent
Low	90	36.0
High	160	64.0

Source: Field survey 2014
Mean=71.09; SD=9.41; Min=37.00; Max=106.00

Victims Perception of the Contribution of Human Trafficking to Household Wellbeing

Level of victims' perception of the contribution of involvement in human trafficking to their household wellbeing is presented in Table 8 . It could be observed that more than half (52.0%) of the respondents had low perception of their contribution to household wellbeing. This could be as a result of inadequate contact with their households during the trafficking period. It could also be due to the fact that a high percentage of victims' income were being collected and kept by contractors and mistresses.

Table 8: Level of victims' perception of contribution of human trafficking to their household wellbeing

Levels of Perception	Frequency	Percent
Low	130	52.0
high	120	48.0

Source: Field survey 2014
Mean=36.70; SD=24.62; Min=0.00; Max=130.00

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between trafficked victims' frequency of contact with household and change in their household wellbeing.

The result shows a significant relationship between victims' frequency of contact with parents and change in household wellbeing. This could mean that victims that have opportunity to visit their household more frequently will likely bring more remittance to their household, thereby leading to improved household wellbeing.

Table 9: PPMC table showing analysis of relationship between victims' frequency of contact with parents and change in household wellbeing

Variable	r-value	p-value	Decision
Frequency of contact	0.520	0.000*	S

*Significant at p<0.05

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in perception of trafficked victims about change in their households' socioeconomic status across Oyo, Ogun and Lagos States.

Table 10 reveals that the calculated F-value (4.565) is higher than the critical F-value (3.00) at 0.05 alpha level. This implies there is significant difference between Oyo, Ogun and Lagos states in perception of victims on change in their households' socioeconomic status. The difference in victims' perception across the states could be as a result of differences in victims' contact with households. It could also be due to difference in level of victims' remittances across the states.

Table 10: Analysis of variance of respondents across Oyo, Ogun and Lagos states on perception of victims about change in the households' socioeconomic status

Socioeconomic status Perception	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	Calculated F-value	Critical F-value	p-value 2-tailed	Decision
Between Groups	817.948	2		408.974	4.565	3.00*	Reject
Within Groups	22130.676		247	89.598			
Total	22948.624		249				

*Significant, P<0.05

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of this research the following conclusions can be made:

1. Victims of human trafficking are mostly from poor educational and financial backgrounds
2. They help improve the wellbeing of their households by sending all or a percentage of their income (wages) for their families' upkeep

3. Perception of trafficking victims about change in their households' socioeconomic status is low
4. This could result from less frequent contact with households or level of victims' remittance during the trafficking period.

Based on the above conclusions the following recommendations are hereby suggested:

1. A social assistance/security system should be established to cater for vulnerable members of the society particularly women.
2. Advocay and awareness aimed at stressing the illegality of human trafficking must be combined with efforts that promote economic stability and offer solutions for families mostly 'at-risk' or vulnerable groups (women and girls in particular)
3. There should also be increased efforts towards the arrest and prosecution of human traffickers.

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