**PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF MASS MEDIA AWARENESS ON CHILD TRAFFICKING**

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**Background To The Study**

Child trafficking or child abuse is one of the critical issues facing almost all societies of the world including the most civilised countries such as US, UK, France which has received several attentions locally and globally with the view to curb or eradicate all forms of abuse on children. The concept of child abuse is sometimes used interchangeably as child maltreatment but some researchers believe see child maltreatment as an umbrella term that covers neglect, exploitation, and trafficking of children. However, from the global efforts through the UNICEF policy enacted in the Millennium Development Goals declaration, it is obvious that six out of the eight agenda addresses child protection explicitly. A close look at the MDGs shows that no single Goal can be achieved unless the protection of children is an integral part of programming strategies and plans. Failing to protect children from such issues as violence in schools, child labour, harmful traditional practices, the absence of parental care or commercial sexual exploitation squanders the world’s most precious resource. reaching the most vulnerable and isolated populations helps ensure the health and well-being of all and is indispensable to achieve the MdGs.

The reason is not far fetch since the first goal is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger” which means that children who were victim of hunger are prone to so many dangers apart from poor health, it could lead them to street begging, street hawking etc, the same goes to the 2nd agenda which achieve universal primary education others are promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health and Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. The other two that are not children oriented directly is ensure environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership for development. Without doubt, it can be clearly established that children rights are seen global issue that every UN member states must not only strive to achieve but must be pursue with deliberate efforts towards ensuring child abuse free society.

No wonder, it became a global concern when over 200 Chibok school girls in Borno state were kidnapped by the Boko-Haram insurgency some two years ago in which local, foreign, individuals, experts, NGOs and International organisations launched various campaign tagged Bring Back Our Girls “BBOG” to usher the release of the children which is regarded as an abuse on those children right.

Today, there are numbers of ways children are abuse particularly in Nigeria and in sub-sahara Africa which include but not limited to any action or attempt by another person that causes significant harm to a child (usually under 18 years) which could be inform of bullying and cyberbullying, female genital mutilation (fgm), child sexual exploitation , domestic abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, online abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, child trafficking, girl looking downstairs grooming, harmful sexual behaviour and other forms of abuse such as street hawking, house help etc (Lindah, 2013).

The research therefore on the thrust to investigate the public perception of mass media awareness on child trafficking (case study of Minna metropolis).

**1.2 Statement of the Problem:**

The vantage position that children occupy in any society cannot be overemphasized. It is rightly expected that for there to be continuity in human existence in the society the presence of children is needed. This is because when the adults’ finally pass to the great beyond or when they get too old to carry on with life activities, today’s children are expected to take their positions.

Based on the foregoing, it is quite annoying therefore seeing these children undergo series of neglect, slave trade, abuse, dehumanisation and torture of some sorts in the name of child trafficking. Annually, thousands of children are reportedly smuggled across borders and sold as a mere commodities. As a result of this ugly trend, their survival and development are incessantly threatened, their right to life, jeopardised. However, as children constitute untapped resources to every nation, the incessant nature of neglect, abuse and torture meted out on them in form of trafficking requires an empirical examination. This therefore forms the problem this study sought to investigate.

**1.3 Significance of Study**

This study would be significant in many respects. Firstly, the problem and development of Nigeria children affect every home directly or indirectly. Therefore studying and analysing the perception of the public towards press coverage on issues of children is sine qua non to the over all development of Nigeria because it would serve as an insight into the conditions in which our children find themselves today and a guide for preparing them for meaningful contribution to development of the society. Secondly, it will advance the frontier of knowledge in the field of mass communication and serve as a repository of knowledge and also contribute to the available literature in the field of mass communication.

Thirdly, the issues of child trafficking in Nigeria have become a serious matter and demands adequate attention by all and sundry. It will help National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons and other related matters (NAPTIP), Government and other Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) to assess how far the press has covered issues bothering on child trafficking. Finally, it will serve as a reference material for future researchers.

**1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study include:

1. To find out the perception of the public concerning the role of mass media in child trafficking.
2. To find out if the mass media really create the right awareness on child trafficking.
3. To recommend ways to improve the mass media perception on child trafficking.

**1.5 Research Questions**

For the purpose of this study the following questions are posed to guide this research.

1. What is the perception of the public concerning the role of mass media in child trafficking?
2. Do the mass media really create the right awareness on child trafficking?
3. What are the various ways to improve the mass media perception on child trafficking?

**1.6 Theoretical Framework**

The study is anchored within the context of two vital theories namely: Social Responsibility Theory and the Agenda Setting Theory. These theories will be used to explain or interpret some phenomenon because its basic tenets are fundamental to the understanding of the subject under study. Okunna (2002:277) states that Social Responsibility Theory of the press is largely an extension of libertarian theory. In their word the theory places emphasis on the moral and social responsibility of person who, and institutions which operate the mass media, that is to say that the media suppose to be socially responsible to the society in all aspect.

Folarin (2002:31) explains further by saying that social responsibility theory owes its origin to Hutchins Commission on freedom of the press, set up in the United States of America in 1947 to re-examine the concept of press freedom as enunciated in libertarian of free theory. Based on the postulation, social responsibility theory of the press asserts that the media should accept and fulfil certain obligations to the society such as:

Provide the public with information and discussion on important social issues and the avoidance of the activities harmful to the public welfare and security of the state.

That through professional standard of in formativeness, truth, accuracy, objectivity and balance, these obligations can be met.

That the media should regulate itself within the frame work of law and established institutions to be able to carry out its responsibilities.

Based on the principle the society has the right to expect high standard of performance from the media.

That the media should reflect its society‘s plurality giving access to various points of view and grant all the right to reply.

Another theory that was adopted in the analysis in this study is Agenda Setting Theory. Baran (2007:108) maintains that the theory propose that the public agenda or what kind of thing people discuss, think and worry about is powerfully shaped and directed by what the news media chose to publicise. While Wimmer and Dominick (2005:408) argues that Agenda setting research examines the relationship between media priorities and audience priorities in the relative importance of news topics. This means that if the news media decide to give the most time and space to covering issues concerning children, child trafficking in the society will be reduced and it will become the most important item on the audience agenda. If the newspapers under study devote their time in reporting the issues concerning children as often as possible they will not only emphasize the importance but also will give the public what to think about the children as regards their well being as the future hopes of the nation. Nigeria will also rate children as the most important issue to them.,.

**1.7 Scope And Limitation**

This study is limited to the mass media and how the public perceive its role regarding child trafficking. The setting of this study is Minna metropolis, Niger state. The findings of this study is limited to the location and as such cannot be generalized to the whole state or nation. On the other hand, this limitation serves as a room for further studies.

**1.8 Definitions Of Terms**

To ensure absolute comprehensibility of the issue at stake, certain terms and concept especially more technical ones cannot but be defined or clearly explained. Wimmer and Dominick (2003:11) state that Operational definitions are indispensable in scientific research because they enable investigators to measure relevant variable.

Press: Journalist and photographers that work for newspapers and magazines.

Coverage: Reporting of news, stories, issues and event in the newspaper.

Children: This is the group of people under parental oversight that is within the age bracket of 1-18 years.

Child trafficking - Child trafficking is the act of recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation either within or outside a country.

Child abuse: It is the deliberate and wilful injury of a child by a guardian either by hitting, beating with belt, cord, or other implement.

Newspaper: It is unbound, printed publication issued at regular intervals, which presents information in words, often supplemented with picture.

**1.9 Limitations Of The Study**

In carrying out this research, a lot of problems were encountered. The first major constraint was the time within which the work is expected to be completed, coupled with the fact that the research had been done alongside normal academic work. Another major problem was finance due to the present inflationary trends to the country transportation problems and risk of being on the road to various libraries, for vital libraries, for vital information and materials.

The third major problem was inadequate literature as child trafficking is a current issue which has not been adequately and extensively researched on. In spite of the above set backs, the researcher was able to generate meaningful materials which seem relevant to the topic.

**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**2.0 Introduction**

This chapter is being devoted to a review of some related literature on press coverage of child trafficking and other related concepts. The review is categorized into three major aspects, conceptual frame work, empirical framework and theoretical framework.

**2.2 History of Child Trafficking**

Child trafficking which is a modern method of slavery has been with us from time immemorial. Thus from Roman times, children were sold, battered, mutilated, abandoned and maltreated at the pleasure of the father. Children were used as tools when necessary and at the pleasure of their parents and care takers.

Nigeria has a similar history. Children were sold depending on what society or the parents felt about them. Ojomo (2000:18) explains further that Nigerians, traditionally, farmers are known for their trade and travel in west and Central Africa. This propensity for travel encouraged easy migration across the borders. For many Nigerians, especially those from the Southeast, the civil war (Nigeria – Biafra) of 1966 – 70, created conditions that made migration to neighbouring countries very attractive. In addition, the oil boom of the 1970s saw many other West African nationalities migrating into Nigeria. In northern Nigeria, close ties with the Arab world have seen people move freely to and from the Middle East for trade and religious pilgrimages. This has created avenues for migration that have begun to be exploited for International trafficking in children for labour and prostitution.

However, it was the lack of appropriate legislation to punish offenders that constituted a major challenge in the fight against traffickers in the interim, the police and the court resorted to using portions of the country’s penal code. This was the situation until the anti – human trafficking law was enacted in 2003. The law is known as the trafficking in persons (prohibition) law enforcement and Administration Act. The Trafficking in persons

(prohibition) law enforcement and administration Act created the National Agency for the prohibition of Trafficking in persons and other related matters (NAPTIP). This government agency has been in the forefront of the fight against human trafficking. In fact, Nigeria became the first country in Africa to enact such law and establish a special agency to complement it. By November 2005, the High Court in Benin in the south of the country, handed down the first conviction under this law. NAPTIP also investigated a number of law enforcement officials suspected of complicity in trafficking. In 2006, NAPTIP, Nigeria police and the Immigration service formed a compact coalition pact’ to fight human trafficking in addition to involving other Non-governmental organizations like the India renaissance and WOTCLEF. Memorandum, of Understanding (MOUs), according to Idowu (2003:119) was also signed with destination and transit countries like Britain, Italy, Republic of Benin and Spain.

The agreement with Italy provided for a common legal platform under which law enforcement agents of both countries could fight human trafficking. The anti – trafficking law is quite comprehensive in its coverage of the various dimensions of human trafficking and stringent in its imposition of punishment.

In 2004, Nigeria’s National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) reported that 46 percent of Nigerian victims of trans-national trafficking are children, with the majority of them being girls trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation. An increasing trend, reported on widely in the last year by the United Kingdom (U.K.) and the international press, is the trafficking of African boys and girls from Lagos to the United Kingdoms urban centres, including London, Birmingham and Manchester, for domestic servitude and forced labour in restaurants and shops. U.S. State Dept Trafficking in Persons Report, June, 2008 states that some of the victims are Nigerian, while others are trafficked from other African countries through Lagos.

In times past, slavery and slave trade existed in various forms: people became slaves as war captives; criminals were punished with enslavement, and in some cases individuals in impoverished circumstances sold their relatives. However, in whatever form it took, it was quickly realized by most civilizations that the practice was the basest of crimes against humanity. One would have thought that, with the immense improvements in the understanding of human nature and the environment, any form of exploitation that looks like slavery would be abhorred automatically. Alas! This is not the case, as human beings are today, prized as commodities and exchanged for money like any other article in the market.

The business of trafficking in humans is today organized loosely by groups that are also involved in weapons and narcotics, colluding with government officials in dozens of countries. There is very little doubt, that it is a lucrative business and may be one of the most difficult to combat. Its corrupting effects on governments and institutions are barely perceptible because they are a less visible than those caused by gunrunning and drug trafficking. Exploiting the poverty and the low status of children in the developing world, middlemen are able to bring together the supply and demand for cheap labour and sex in ways that would have simply been unthinkable not long ago. Evidently, globalization has not only stimulated the movement of capital, goods, and technology but also the movement of all categories of peoples from one end of the world to the other. This global development brought in its wake the loosening up of protective barriers and political boundaries which organized criminal gangs have capitalized on to perpetrate many heinous acts including child trafficking.

Though the fact of human trafficking is not difficult to understand on its own, its dimensions and categorization continue to multiply by the day. Broadly conceptualized, human trafficking include forced and child prostitution, domestic servitude, illegal and bonded labour, servile marriage, false adoption, sex tourism and entertainment, pornography, organized begging, organ harvesting, and other criminal activities. Organ harvesting, sometimes referred to as organ laundering, involves the trafficking of humans for the purpose of selling their organs for money. This shows the very barbaric dimension of this crime. A Protocol on Trafficking, attached to the UN Convention against Organized Crime, signed by 80 countries and the European Union in December 2000, formally defined trafficking as a modern form of slavery and indentured servitude, linked to organized criminal activity, money laundering, corruption and the obstruction of justice. Another very successful way that traffickers have been using is advertising attractive jobs and modelling opportunities in the local newspapers for individuals under the age of eighteen year.

The criminal nature of child trafficking and child prostitution makes any data and statistics on the cases of this illegal business inherently suspicious. There are no exact numbers of victims of child sexual exploitation within the state or across the border because there are no reliable ways of determining the victims. “The State Department website estimates that one to two million women and children are trafficked annually around the world” (IREX). The German Federal Department of Criminal Investigation estimates that 5% of the women trafficked from Eastern Europe are younger than eighteen. The reports that have been done on the issue of child trafficking and child prostitution are insignificant due to the lack of distinguishing between the ages of children, the gender of children, and between economic and sexual trafficking of persons. “It is far easier to estimate the number of sexually exploited children in a specific country, but even that is not without difficulties. In many cases, the lack of resources, both human and financial, means that sample sizes tend to be too small to provide accuracy” Since child trafficking is an issued of global concern, it is necessary to develop greater international cooperation with regard to mutual assistance in criminal matters. Trafficking of human beings for the purpose of sexual services is a form of “form of modern-day slavery (Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe).” Any human being, especially children, that are forced, fraud, or coercion into involuntary sexual exploitation are denied the fundamental human rights ensured in number of international human rights documents, “namely, their rights to liberty and security of person, their right not to be held in slavery or servitude, and their right to be free from cruel or inhumane treatment (Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe).”

There are 1.2 million child victims of human trafficking per year around the world, according to data given by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Children are used as an economic profit source by organized crime. Trafficking of minors is a prosperous business, which moves 40 billion dollars a year. For under age children alone, the profit reaches 23.5 million euros a year.

"Children are easier to recruit, convince and move and therefore, due to the low costs, they generate an enormous economic profit."

Under the leadership of Carol Ndaguba, its Executive Secretary, NAPTIP has successfully prosecuted 9 cases resulting in 11 convictions while 35 more cases are ongoing.

**2.2 Child Trafficking In Nigeria**

The trafficking of children for the purpose of domestic service, prostitution and other forms of exploitative labour is a widespread phenomenon in Nigeria. In view of the clandestine nature of trafficking, accurate and reliable figures are hard to get. Globally, child trafficking is one of the fastest growing organised crimes with an estimated 1.2 million victims per year, of which 32% are African. The National Child Labour Survey (2003) estimates that there are 15 million children engaged in child labour in Nigeria with 40% of them at the risk of being trafficked both internally and externally for domestic and forced labour, prostitution, entertainment, pornography, armed conflict, and sometimes ritual killings. According to Teriba (2001:154), Nigeria is a source, transit and destination country for child trafficking. Currently, external trafficking of children exists between Nigeria and Gabon, Cameroon, Niger, Italy, Spain, Benin Republic and Saudi Arabia. The National Agency for Prohibition of traffic in persons and other related materials (NAPTIP) and United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) Situation Assessment of child trafficking in Southern Nigerian State (2004) reported that 46% of repatriated victims of external trafficking in Nigeria are children, with a female to male ratio of 7:3. They are engaged mainly in prostitution (46%), domestic labour (21%), forced labour (15%) and entertainment (8%). Internal trafficking of children in Nigeria was also reported to be for the purpose of forced labour (32%), domestic labour (31%) and prostitution (30%). Boys are mostly trafficked from the south eastern states of Imo, Abia and Akwa-Ibom to Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Congo, while those from Kwara go to Togo and as far as Mali to work on plantations. Between October and December 2003, over 500 children from the Republic of Benin were rescued from granite quarries and repatriated back to their country of origin, through a joint effort of UNICEF in Nigeria and Benin. Similarly, Nigeria has recently seen an increased number of repatriation of trafficking victims from many foreign countries such as UK, Italy, Netherlands, USA, Belgium, Ireland, Saudi Arabia and South Africa.

Private transit camps have been reported to exist in Akwa-Ibom, Cross Rivers and Ondo States where children are transported from the south eastern states and forced into hard labour and prostitution. Likewise, immigration and investigation reports from NAPTIP have shown increasing number of cases in the northern part of the country. Girls trafficked from Nigeria en route to Europe come mainly from Edo State, Delta, Imo and other States in the South. The victims of trafficking are mainly females between the ages of 9-18 years. The education levels of the trafficked vary with respect to the destination countries and the source region as well as the type of perceived jobs available. Trafficking of women and children is also found to be most commonly associated with prostitution. Pearson (2001:90) paints the picture thus:

Victims of trafficking are often sold or placed in brothels and made to engage in the sex trade either willingly or against their will in order to recover the cost incurred in transporting them to the destination area.

These traffickers exercise great control over the incomes of the trafficked. Kwankye (2000) made a startling revelation of the plight of a young prostitute and a victim of human trafficking who was alleged to owe her traffickers an amount of sixty-five thousand US dollars (US$ 65,000). This amount apparently represents her travel expenses from Nigeria to Europe via Ghana. She was therefore asked to make a weekly part payment to cover the travelling expenses.

Notwithstanding the reproductive health risk that this young woman is exposed to in the face of the global threats of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, it also appears that this young girl is caught up in a perpetual bondage of dept servicing. Many of these young girls are abused or battered when they refuse to comply with the orders of their “lords” to undertake a particular type of job as prescribed by the traffickers. The travel documents of the trafficked are often taken away from them upon arrival at the destination thus, limiting their basic human right to freedom of movement. Trafficking of children in Nigeria by traffickers to be exploited for personal gain has internal and international manifestations.

In internal trafficking, according to Effah (1996:121) children are procured to work as domestic and agricultural workers, while external trafficking provides girls for prostitution rackets in Europe and the Middle East. The Nigerian Immigration Service has identified Edo, Delta, Akwa Ibom, Ondo, Rivers, Ebonyi, Imo Enugu, Lagos and Kano as source states. While a number of Children have migrated to their preset location through traditional fostering arrangements, some children have ended up on the streets as a result of trafficking by family members or after losing their way and being unable to trace their extended family. Many of these children have been arrested and imprisoned or put into remand homes by police.

A 1998 UNICEF study indicated that 4000 children were trafficked from Cross River State to various parts of Nigeria as well as to other countries within the region. Police authorities in Calabar reported that there were 13 cases of child stealing and 8 cases of kidnapping between 1997 and 1999. The traffickers involved in these cases were arrested and prosecuted. A workshop on trafficking in children held in Nigeria was informed that 500 Nigerian girls were working as commercial sex workers in Bamako, Mali, and a similar number in Burkina Faso. Analysis of responses gleaned from recent interviews conducted among 1400 school children and 700 children living in the streets in Port Harcourt, Owerri, Calabar, Lagos, Sokoto, Maiduguri and Kano showed that:

•19 percent school children were trafficked and 98 percent of them were Nigerians. This indicates that most trafficking in Nigeria is internal.

•92 percent were between 10 and 16 years of age and the boy to girl ratio was 2:3

•71 percent of the children claimed that they worked for people other than their parents for a fee after school hours.

•54 percent worked as street hawkers, a practice that has become popular among Nigerian market traders to increase income.

•29 percent of the school children stayed in more than one household.

•3.5 percent had been sexually abused.

•3.3 percent by their relatives, 67 percent by others.

International trafficking has significant regional and International dimensions. Tunde (2000:18) stressed that criminal rings are involved in the smuggling of children across the border to regional destinations as labourers and to Europe, particularly Italy, where 60 percent of girl trafficking victims (for commercial sex) are Nigerian. International media report that the trafficking of Nigerian girls to Italy and other parts of Europe has slave – like characteristics. Due to the tightening of controls on illegal Immigration into Europe, traffickers are resorting to more daring and dangerous forms for smuggling. Many Nigerian girls are obliged to take long overland routes across the Sahara to North Africa and the make the hazardous journey across the Mediterranean in small boats. Several of them never reach their destinations, either because they are abandoned or they drown… Those that reach their destination are sold off to prostitution rackets and or engage in other forms of commercial sex work. It is estimated that more than 20,000 Nigerian girls are from either Edo state or other states in the South-east and South-south zones of Nigeria. A few states such as Edo, Delta, Imo and Kano are more seriously affected by child trafficking than others. In the South-West, a greater number of boys who find themselves trafficked into agricultural, domestic, trading and apprenticeship jobs. In the North, the problem of trafficking is not immediately evident, but analysis and assessment of the social situation reveals that trafficking is ongoing in Kano, Maiduguri and other major cities.

The 'anti human trafficking piracy special Investigation unit' of the FCT police command has so far rescued 105 teenagers between the ages of five to thirteen years from human traffickers, in different places in Abuja. He said the children were trafficked from Nassarawa, Lagos, Kano, Kwara and some villages within the FCT to be used as sex slaves and child labourers within the Motor Parks, Markets and restaurants in Abuja, which contravenes section 19 of the 'Trafficking Act in Persons'.

He disclosed further that one of the suspects, Amina Adamu actually confessed that she kidnapped the victims to the FCT for prostitution as well as to be used as slaves, for her to get money.

Clara, 13, was picked up by her aunty having agreed with her parents that she will work as a house help somewhere in Lagos on a salary of N7, 000 and this money is to be sent to her parents in the village. Unknown to Clara and her relatives, the aunt, who is involved in human trafficking, will hand her over to a syndicate. By the arrangement of her aunt, whose plans were not disclosed to her relatives, Clara will continue her voyage to an undisclosed destination as soon as she arrives. As agreed, Clara was handed over in exchange for money, part of which was sent to her parents as salary for two years. Soon after the deal was sealed, Clara began her journey to Italy where she was forced into prostitution.

Eight child traffickers are already serving jail terms ranging from three to seven years in different prisons across the country for child trafficking offences. Head, Investigation and Monitoring Unit of the National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), Mallam Mohammed Babandede, said this in his paper at a one-day workshop on Public Awareness Campaigns and Advocacy on Trafficking in Women and Children, organised for Journalists in Osun, Kano and Cross River by WOTCLEF.

Babandede said women and children trafficking are now serious offences since 2003, when NAPTIP was established. He said 20 people are now behind bars, while 25 cases are still on-going in various courts. State leads in child trafficking and prostitution. Akwa Ibom State is now leading in human trafficking and child labour, beating Edo State to the second place. Executive Secretary, National. Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons and Other Related Matters (NAPTIP), Barrister Carol Ndaguba, identified the type of trafficking in AkwaIbom State to include, internal trafficking for sexual exploitation, child trafficking for labour exploitation and child abuse.

However, Effah (1996:11) states that efforts are underway to pass three Bills in the state House of assembly namely: the Anti House-help Bill (Domestic Child Labour), the child trafficking Bill and the female circumcision Bill. These Bills should provide the needed Legal framework to prosecute offenders. Meanwhile, previous data, according to Osakwe and Olateru (1998:40) states that the Edo State Government has no specific data on trafficking. However, given the fact that most of the Nigerian girls repatriated from Italy are from Edo, the State Assembly enacted the criminal code (Amendment) law (2000) against trafficking and specifically against International trafficking.

Moreover, Ambrose (2001:89) contends that the UNICEF supported study on the socio-cultural practices and policies related to children’s rights in the North –West Zone of Nigeria indicated that some Almajeri children, child beggars, child house helps and child refugees in Kano were being trafficked from rural areas and the middle belt of Nigeria. In several instances, the children were brought in from the neighbouring countries of Niger, Chad, and Burkina Faso. In the case of Almajeri children known networks in Kano collected children from their parents in the rural areas under the pretext that the children will be trained and given hope for a better future. However, when the children arrive in the cities, they are frequently put to work, begging and hawking.

There are diverse reasons why many Nigerian children are vulnerable to trafficking, including widespread poverty, large family size, and rapid urbanization with deteriorating public services, low literacy levels and high school-drop out rates. The demand for cheap commercial sex workers in countries of destination strongly contributes to the growth of this phenomenon and the success of this criminal network. Parents with a large family, often overburdened with the care of too many children, are prone to the traffickers’ deceit in giving away some of their children to city residents or even strangers promising a better life for them.

Traffickers exploit the trust of people rooted in a widespread, culturally accepted common practice in West Africa of placement and fostering as part of the extended family safety net. In some instances, desperately poor and uninformed parents willingly co-operate with the traffickers, giving away their children in exchange for a small fee. In the hands of unscrupulous guardians, these children are increasingly trafficked and exploited for money.

In Nigeria society, according to Adidu (2005:56), physical discipline of children is accepted and is widely practised by individual parents in their homes, in schools and in various children’s institutions. It is not also unusual to see children begging on the streets for their quranic teachers. The problem of child trafficking in Nigeria is really serious and symptomatic of increasing family and social disorganisation.

Ebigbo (1997:11) states that the family system is breaking down and our standard of living has deteriorated in both urban and rural areas. According to him, when a society has trouble, particularly economic trouble, the family is the first to feel the shock and the children suffer most. Many people are out of work and the children are showing it. The rate of crime is high both in the urban and rural areas. Unemployed parents are having a hard time caring for their families. Being out of job has certain emotional consequences. It affects the mood of the entire household. It leads to anger and despair which could be displayed in forms of trafficking of children.

Therefore, in Nigeria, child trafficking is due to poverty, ignorance, political and religious turbulence, but the most common cause of child trafficking is poverty. If, we are serious about protecting the children we will have to take a look at our culture and re-examine our attitudes towards the young and the physical violence used in disciplining our children. Chase (1976) cited in Adidu (2005:58) states that Experiments have shown that under stress, rats among others will neglect and abandon their young. Monkeys removed from their natural habitat and placed in unfamiliar surrounding will bite and even eat their own litters. Lion satisfy their own hunger first often by cannibalizing their own cubs. When prey is scarce, the adults will take food there is, leaving their cubs to starve.

To prevent child trafficking, the government must first address the issue of poverty. It is high time we started re-orienting public policy in Nigeria towards the support of the family, the health of the children and the success of the whole society rather than the wealth and comfort of a few. Peahrsson (2001:229), posited that factors contributing to trafficking are varied and complex, differing from country to country. She identified limited access to education and income generation, gender and other forms of discrimination, strict laws and policies on migration and migrant labour, negative cultural, decline in values, Family disintegration and the less positive side of globalisation involving massive movement of people clandestinely as factors contributing to child trafficking.

The reasons for the increase in trafficking are many. In general, the criminal business feeds on poverty, despair, war, crisis and ignorance. Odocha (2004:41) agrees that globalisation of the world economy has increased the movement of people across borders, legally and illegally especially from poorer to wealthier countries. The lack of opportunity and the eagerness for a better life abroad have made girls especially vulnerable to entrapment by traffickers.

The inadequacy of laws and law enforcement in most origin, transit, and destination countries, hampers efforts to fight trafficking humans for sexual exploitation humans for sexual exploitation are often relatively minor compared with those for other criminal activities like drug and gun trafficking. The priority placed on stemming illegal immigration in many countries, including the United States has resulted in treatment of trafficking cases as problem of illegal immigration, thus treating victims as criminals.

Few steps have been taken to provide support, health care and access to justice. Few victims dare testify against the traffickers or those who hold them, fearing retribution for themselves and their families. Since most governments do not offer stays of deportation or adequate protection for witnesses. The disinterest and in some cases even complicity of government is another problem.

According to Oloruntimehin (2002:18), many law enforcement agencies and governments ignore the plight of trafficking victims and downplay the scope of the trafficking problem. In some cases, Nigerian police and other governmental authorities accept bribes and collude with traffickers by selling fake documentation. Sometimes, police fear reprisals from criminal gangs so they find it easier to deny knowledge of trafficking.

The minister of women affairs and social development, Hajiya Saudatu Bungudu added that the only way to stop child trafficking in Nigeria is by a concrete policy to ensure that children are properly educated to contribute to national development.

Trafficking in people especially children, for prostitution and forced labour is one of the fastest growing areas of international criminal activity and one that is of increasing concern to the U.S Administration, congress and the international community. Although boys are also victimized, the overwhelming majority of those trafficked are children. According to U.S Government estimates, at least 700,000 people are trafficked each year world wide for forced labour, domestic servitude or sexual exploitation. Citing international organisation on migration data U.S officials say the actual figure could be as high as 4 million. An estimated 50,000 people are trafficked every year to the United States. Trafficking is now considered the third largest source of profits for organised crime behind only drugs and guns, generating billions of naira and dollars annually. Trafficking is a problem that affects virtually every country in the world.

Generally, the flow of trafficking is from less developed countries to industrialised nations, including the United States. Since trafficking is an underground criminal enterprise there are no precise statistics on the extent of the problem and estimates are unreliable. Trafficking is a global problem affecting large numbers of children every year. Children and their families are often lured by the promise of better employment and a more prosperous life far from their homes. Child trafficking is lucrative and linked with criminal activity and corruption. It is often hidden and hard.

Abebe (2001:252) states that trafficking violates a child right to grow up in family environment. In addition, children who have been trafficked face a range of dangers, including violence and social abuse. They are even arrested and detained as illegal aliens – often with little or no access to their parents or other supported services. In most cases, these children are powerless, isolated and at great risk of violence. Abubakar (2001:74) added that large numbers of children are being trafficked for domestic work and also for sexual exploitation to work in shops or on farms. Nearly 90 percent of these trafficked domestic workers are girls. Vanguard newspaper of September 26, 2008 reported that Nigeria’s police, Chief Tafa Balogun, handed over 116 Benin children aged between 8 and 13 years rescued from slave masters inside Nigeria to the Benin authority border town. The report states that the children all males and malnourished were part of the inmates of about seven child – slave camps discovered in the western Nigerian States of Ogun, Oyo, and Osun in a major breakthrough by security operative fighting cross- border crimes, especially child trafficking. The traffickers confessed that the children were smuggled into Nigeria in sacks which they pass for goods from Benin at the border. Most of the children are said to be in the list of missing persons compiled by the Benin authorities. Preliminary police report showed that at least 13 such trafficked children died in the last three months. The children were camped in the bush without any shelter and were made to sleep on bare floor in the open. They used as slave to cut granites and stones at quarry sites in the camp for peanuts. The six Benin traffickers among the nine persons arrested for the trafficking offence were handed over to the Benin authorities along with the rescued children. Three of the arrested traffickers were Nigeria who will face the law in Nigeria.

Moreover, Nigeria’s human trafficking law signed recently by President Olusegun Obasanjo, prescribes life jail for persons who traffic in human being or forces such a person into prostitution within the country or elsewhere in the world. As part of efforts to check trans-border crimes especially armed robbery, drug trafficking as well as human trafficking across the Nigeria –Benin border, the two countries in August signed a memorandum of understanding following Nigeria’s closure of their common border to force Benin authorities to cooperate in the fight. Under the accord, both countries agreed that criminals identified in future shall be returned immediately to the appropriate authorities in the requesting country. They also agreed to identify, investigate and prosecute agents and traffickers as well as protect victims of human trafficking and return them promptly to their countries of origin.

However, the problem of child trafficking and forced labour is not just a problem between Benin and Nigeria but it also cuts across international boundaries.

Daily Sun of Tuesday, May 18, 2004, (page 4) reported that an undisclosed number of Nigeria children are into sex slavery in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The discovery was made by the Nigerian consulate general in Saudi Arabia noted that the consulate can not do anything to rescue the victims because Nigeria and the kingdom of Saudi Arabia have no bilateral consular agreement. In the report, the consulate general said that the affected Nigerians came to Saudi Arabia with Umrah (Haji) visas under the guise of going for religious duty.

Children migrants trafficked to Western Europe and other continents come from different parts of the world. The poor economic situation in Nigeria has led to unemployment and high rates of school drop-out. These circumstances have created a large pool of inactive and unengaged children and adolescents who are much more vulnerable to trafficking than their peers who go to school. The motivation, especially of teenagers, to find work away from home is often driven by the increasing taste for material things. For many others it is a question of bare survival.

Agbu (2003:1) noted that most of the people being trafficked are women and children. These are estimated at 3.5 percent and are mostly under the age of eighteen. Benzi (2001:177) also noted that the majority of these people attended secondary schools and speak good English. A considerable percentage of these people, Benzi noted are forced to undergo a ‘juju’ rite (voodoo). The rites mandate them to pay back the expenses incurred in the course of their travel to Italy. The rite is carried out by witch doctors or herbalists in their home-shrine. Thus, the more helpless the child is, the more he or she is liable to trafficking and exploitation.

Trafficking in human beings, especially, children has become one of the most rewarding illegal economic activities and can be put at par with drug trafficking and arms smuggling. As a result, some criminals in recent times have identified trafficking in human beings as one of the easy sources of income and have transferred the knowledge and network they were using for their drug businesses to the trafficking business where the risk of being caught is low. UNICEF report states that trafficking like illegal drugs has assumed an international dimension with huge amounts of money changing hands with an international network of hidden collaborators. The increasing concern with trafficking in women and children is precisely because of the traffickers’ indifference to and gross violation of the basic human rights of their victims, the increasing infiltration of drug criminals and their international network of drug traffickers into the human trafficking business, the threat their criminal activities pose to national and international security and political and social irritation that they are creating in international relations. Traffickers earn between 5 and 8 billion US Dollars annually transporting within and outside national borders an estimated four million irregular migrants many of whom are children.

Benzi (2001:178) noted that traffickers are Nigerian men, women, fathers, mothers, grand parents, brothers, and sisters, neighbours, house helps, children of employing families, drivers, gardeners, armed robbers, teachers, uncle, aunties, employers etc. in other words anybody could be a perpetrators and indeed studies have shown that people from all walks of life as mentioned above have been found to be perpetrators. This is attested to by the many outrageous incidents published by the media in Nigeria and abroad. Oloruntimehin (2001:169) support the above views thus:

The unprecedented high level of poverty which started to manifest in Nigeria since the implementation of structural adjustment programme(SAP) in 1986 has led to the shrinking of the formal economy in form of retrenchment of workers, freezing of position e.t.c, which have resulted in the preponderance of informal economy.

According to him, informal economy tends to accommodate various practices, including underworld practices such as trafficking in persons while modernisation and individualism and self assertiveness, which accompanied it, have damaged societal norms and values has been lessened paving way for all types of deviant behaviour, child trafficking inclusive. Oloruntemehin (2001:171) citing Losarue and Olateru (1998) say that other factors include a strong desire to migrate in search of economic and social well being as well as a high demand for trafficked persons in Asia and Europe. Adebayo (2001:188-192) identified street hawking, house helping business, bus conducting touting, unemployment bad national economy, high bride wealth on girls, lack of awareness, illiteracy and divorce as contributing factors to trafficking. He argued that most of the victims were deceived by various overseas vacancy advertisement in thee national dallies and international magazines. The advertisers entice them with free visa, free ticket, free accommodation but their major aim is not to give them good work but to use them as prostitutes to make money overseas. The focus has shifted to the rural areas where many uneducated and semi –educated unemployed young girls are lured with the promise of lucrative job offers abroad.

Boone (2001:238) strengthens this view when he states thus:

The increased involvement of organised crime in trafficking in human beings is not only as a result of available markets and available victims. Other contributing factors according to him include.

a.Lack of adequate legislation and lack of compatibility among legislative and related measures, which in turn acts as impediment to international cooperation.

b.Lack of co-ordination among domestic agencies as well as among regional and international agencies.

c.Lack of capacity for enforcement, information exchange and analysis border control and fighting corruption.

d.Lack of co-ordinate information awareness, training and financial incentives and activities targeted towards potential trafficking victims and towards potential

beneficiaries in destination and transit markets as well as to the social welfare and criminal justice administrators in origin, transit and destinations jurisdictions.

The traffickers use different means including land and air to transport their victims to their destinations. Unlike male victims of trafficking who exhibit resilience and usually travel by land, Children usually travel by air except where the destination is within the sub-region or there is the need to transit neighbouring countries to reach their destinations in Europe. Routing options available to the traffickers and their victims are many and the above-mentioned are just a few.

**2.3 Protection of the Rights of Child Victims of Trafficking**

Child victims according to Mmaduagu (2002:80) have the right to receive immediate care and protection including security, food, and accommodation in a safe place, access to social and health services, psychological support, legal assistance and education. Care and assistance shall respect the child cultural identity and origin, gender and age. Appropriate assistance shall be provided to children with special needs particularly in the cases of psychological distress, illness and pregnancies.

Social service authorities with qualified personnel shall provide care for child victims by establishing appropriate services, if necessary in co-operation with competent international organisations and non governmental organisations.

Guardians in cooperation with social service authorities and non governmental organisation shall conduct an individual needs assessment for each child victim.

Child victims of trafficking shall be placed in safe and suitable accommodation immediately after their identification. Social service authorities, in cooperation with non governmental organisations shall develop minimum standards for the care of child victims.

Under no circumstances shall a child be placed in a law enforcement detention facility such as a detention centre, a police cell a person or in any other special detention centre for children.

Dunu (2007:211) emphasizes that in view of the enormous importance of child’s rights and continued child trafficking, there is need to move from merely recognising children’s rights to translating it to concrete actions. The promotion of and respect for children’s rights is a fight the whole society need to engage in, but especially which the press can champion to reduce child trafficking among children in Nigeria. The press need to raise awareness, to sensitize and mobilize civil society into the effect of child trafficking. Failure to do this will have dire consequences as UNICEF (2003) again warns:

If children’s’ well being and right are not addressed and if millennium development goals (MDGS) are not met, child trafficking will surely persist because of poverty and democracy withers

It is true that the media is trying but their effort is not good enough. The press need to improve on their effort and understand basically the important of these children within and outside Nigeria. Therefore to achieve this, there is need for the press to increase the amount of attention space and time given to issues concerning children. Lorapuu and Bamidele (2005) explained that child’s rights are now broadly recognised and accepted but implementing and putting it into practice still remains a major challenge thereby boosting child trafficking. As they pointed out, in most countries these rights still remain a visionary document. Every where, evidence abounds of the continued trafficking and neglect of children in Nigeria.

For instance, majority of children serving as house helps is a serious indication of continued child trafficking. Moreover, most streets in Nigeria are littered with children hawking in the streets despite all warnings to the contrary thereby making trafficking easy by the perpetrators of child trafficking. The poverty level in the country, one would assume is a contributing factor to this ugly situation. Yet this situation could be arrested if the media devote their time in creating awareness of child trafficking. Stating the fact that more than 60% of children under school age in this country are being trafficked daily which hamper their development and survival will be only begging the issue. All actions undertaken in relation to child victims shall be guided by and based on the principles of protection and respect for human rights as set out in the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child (1989) and the African charter on the rights and welfare of the child (1990). It was in this light that Akinboyo (1998:60) stated that child victims are entitled to special protection measures, both as victims and as children in accordance with their special rights and needs.

**2.4 The Implications on the Child Victims of Trafficking**

Lotte (2001:197) submitted that child trafficking has been known to carry detrimental physical and psychological consequences. These include medical and neurotically defects, defective intellectual and cognitive functioning, behaviour disorders and psychopathology. They have been known to experience social competence skills. That is they are often seen as more difficult to deal with in social interaction. In addition to these they have a poor self esteem; feelings of isolation and stigma may tend toward drug and alcohol or may be sexually maladjusted among other things. It leads to stubbornness, aggressive and away from home. He further noted that it sometimes leads to death at the hands of traffickers or during transportation.

In other words those children who are victims of abuse and neglect suffer untold harm that often live with them into adulthood, deprive them of opportunities, thwart their potentials and stifle their ambitions. The activity of child victims of trafficking, especially, those who go

into prostitution either on their own or are forced to do so, has implications for their reproductive health and health in general. In view of the global threat of HIV/AIDS, the demand for young girls is on the increase and more and more of these are being abducted, bought, sold and trafficked across borders to serve as prostitutes. Notwithstanding the socio-economic consequences of prostitution, the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate for some of these destination countries, notably La Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso are well above the threshold level of 5%, thus, exposing them to higher risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) that has serious repercussions on their reproductive health. It is estimated that, to date, about two-thirds of the reported AIDS cases have been females who incidentally also form part of the segment of the population who often migrate or are trafficked. It is possible that the increase in the trafficking of children from Nigeria to other countries, to a large extent, has contributed to the increase in the HIV prevalence rate of 4.0% in 1998 to 4.6% in 2000 in Nigeria due to mobility of infected young girls’ victims of trafficking. At the moment, a new approach is being adopted in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Nigeria following the development of a draft HIV/AIDS and STI Policy and the establishment of a National HIV/AIDS Commission.

Trafficking of humans particularly children has negative cost implications on the economies of home countries of the trafficked. Victims of trafficking are normally of low employable skills on account of their relatively lower education levels. Most of them are also trafficked on fake travel documents and hence occasionally get apprehended by the law enforcement agencies of the destination countries leading to their forced repatriation, the cost of which is borne by their home government. Most often, the evacuated migrants are left on their own upon arrival in their home country. The migrants are not well oriented and rehabilitated to properly integrate them into society. As a result, some returned migrants see their perceived new environment as an opportunity to put into practice some of the negative socio-cultural practices learnt abroad that are diametrically opposed to the socio cultural settings of the Nigerian society.

Victims of trafficking sometimes resort to desperate behaviours when they fail to reach their destination. There are unconfirmed reports that Nigeria is a recipient and a supplier of trafficked migrants. Victims of trafficking in some situations become stranded and despondent and resort to all sorts of socio-economic activities including prostitution, illegal drug peddling and burglary. In some instances, traffickers use their victims as carriers of illegal drugs across boarders. Upon sensing danger they often desert their innocent and defenceless victims to their fate. Thus, some victims of human trafficking are sentenced to serve various terms in prison on charges of drug trafficking that they have little or no knowledge of. Trafficking in children has also negative socio-political implications for both origin and host countries especially where many of the children are let lose to practice prostitution in the open in the host country. The temperature in the relationship between Nigeria and some of its bilateral destination countries has risen in recent times and, indeed, continues to rise because of the belief of the Governments of some of the destination countries that the Government of Nigeria is not doing enough to reduce the flow of irregular Nigerian migrants to their countries. They also allege that the Government of Nigeria has, in addition, spurned every effort to accept the return of its nationals that must be removed from the destination countries because of breach of immigration laws.

There are serious information and knowledge gaps about human trafficking especially in children in Nigeria. The result is this conjectural and anecdotal presentation. The need for improvement through research and implementation of counter-trafficking programmes cannot be over-emphasised. Efforts that are being made to reduce our ignorance about the problem of human trafficking through data collection focus on counter-trafficking activities in South-East Asia and East European countries. Information gathering about trafficking in Africa particularly in Nigeria only about beginning, thanks to the role of the media in Nigeria.

**2.5 Empirical Studies on Child Trafficking**

The international labour of organisation classifies child trafficking as one of the worst forms of child labour, under convention 182. Due to the outrageous nature of this phenomenon, an international consensus has developed on its elimination, often prompting policy actions, which unfortunately, preceded research by many years. Dessy and Pallage (2002) are the first papers to attempt a theoretical exploration of the economics of child trafficking. Using a model of parental investment in child’s education, Dessy ang Pallage (2002), show that when a country is very poor, in order for a ban on the worst forms of child labour to bring a parent – improvement, appropriate mechanisms must be designed to mitigate the decline in child labour wages caused by a ban – induced reduction in employment options for children.

Ume-Ezeoke (2003:17) who carried a survey studies on child trafficking reported that many children are trafficked in the country from Togo, Benin, Mali, Burkina Faso and Ghana for the purpose of forced or cheap labour in Nigeria and the trafficking of children into Nigeria is a real problem. According to 2004 UNICEF study, one third of the trafficked of children from within Nigeria end up in forced labour and another third in domestic work. In 2003, several child slaves’ camps were discovered in the western states of Nigeria (Ogun, Oyo and Osun). Many of them are used as slaves to crush granites and stores at Quarry sites. In the Ondo and Ogun States child slaves are used on rubber plantations cocoa. Nnadi (2007:11) in Daily Sun Newspaper reported that the police at the zone 9 headquarters in Umuahia, Abia State arrested two suspected human traffickers and their accomplices. According to him, one of them was caught with two day old twin babies, with their umbilical cords still intact. The other suspect was nabbed with thirty-seven children whom the police suspect were sold for rituals. The reality of combating trafficking is often messy: the government, law enforcement, and criminal justice system all have the potential to be corrupting, uninformed, or lack the motivation/pressure from the public, the media, or the international spotlight to make any real impact. There are certainly many skilled, well-intentioned individuals working within bogged-down government and law enforcement agencies (and also non-governmental organizations of course) that do want to make a difference, but may not know. But the situation is far from being all fire and brimstone.

Around 592 cases of human trafficking were registered in the five states last year. "In 104 operations, 933 victims were rescued of which 136 were minors. Around 1,295 traffickers along with 419 customers were arrested in all," he informed.

Their research seeks to explain why poorer countries are more likely to be source – countries for child trafficking, since building a protective environment for children involves household investment, poverty may make household too dependent upon government officials for the protection of their children. In other words, poorer families may substitute public for private barriers against child trafficking. As a result, higher public funds are required in poorer than in richer countries in order to curb the supply of trafficked children. With economic development, in contrast, house holds become richer; this enables them to become more effective as protective units for their children, thus lessening their dependence upon the government to build barriers against child trafficking. In that case, the critical level of government effort is lower; this therefore reduces the level of public funds necessary to curb the supply.

Give its legislation and policy (shown by a commitment to developing National Plans of Action), compared to most West African countries, Nigeria appears proactive in its approach to prevention of child trafficking and protection of victims both within Nigeria and those who have been repatriated. Nigeria instituted an Anti – Trafficking Law in 2003, which led to the creation of a National Agency for the prohibition of Traffic in persons and other related matters (NAPTIP), which effectively coordinates efforts to combat trafficking of children, though it is particularly focused on investigation and prosecution of the perpetrators. NAPTIP promotes international cooperation through collaboration with such organisations as UNICEF, and ILO who have matured experience through regular assistance in planning and intervention against child trafficking in Nigeria.

Nigeria is part of regional anti – trafficking efforts through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Libreville platform of Action. In particular, through ECOWAS’ regular action plans, and its recent Joint Action Plan against trafficking in Persons with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Nigeria is committed to improving its own adherence to the Palermo Protocol (ratified in 2001) and further regional cooperation. In fact, Nigeria has bilateral agreements with Benin and Niger to assist child victims, and has more immigration – related agreements with European countries, such as Italy, Spain and the UK, the latter, however, being the only Memorandum of Understanding which refers to the protection of victims being repatriated. A national Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons (NPA) was developed in 2006 on the impetus of NAPTIP who instituted a joint taskforce with government departments and NGOs. It refers to children as a vulnerable category requiring particular attention under the ‘clusters’: Research and Assessment, Legislative Advocacy, Prevention and International Cooperation and Coordination. A notable exception is the lack of mention of children in Return and Reintegration Assistance.

It does however prioritise the application of the specific Guidelines for the protection of the rights of child victims of trafficking and the Model of Child Trafficking Monitoring systems for West and Central Africa, as well as many prevention activities linked to awareness rising particularly in schools and through the school curriculum. From a national government perspective, prevention is linked to the underlying causes of child trafficking in Nigeria, being poverty and lack of access to education, though the policies developed on these issues, in particular for Universal Basic Education (UBE) in 2003, have not been adequately budgeted for nor implemented. ‘Public Enlightenment’ campaigns are the main prevention activity of NAPTIP as well as many local and international NGO’s such as the Committee for the support of the Dignity of Women (COSUDOW), the International Reproductive Rights Research Action Group (IRRRAG), the African Women Empowerment Guild (AWEG), the National Council of Women Societies (NCWS), India Renaissance, Girls Power Initiative (GPI), Stepping Stones Nigeria (SSN), Women’s Consortium of Nigeria (WOCON) and UNICEF. They range from airing jingles on radio and television, to sensitisation tours by NAPTIP and NGOs to communities and schools throughout the various states. UNICEF, however, have opened Youth Resource Centres in 9 states. Though there is no significant programme for the reintegration of child victims of internal or international trafficking, there are small interventions by NAPTIP and other local NGOs, often in conjunction with established international partners such as ILO, UNICEF and Terre des Hommes (TDH), for example, operates mainly to support the rescue and repatriation of child victims of trafficking from Benin subject to labour exploitation in quarries in the Eastern states of Nigeria, together with the local community organisation, and NAPTIP.

The intervention is mainly based on educational or vocational training and incentives for parents not to re –traffick their children. International Labour Organisation (ILO) has also assisted child victims of labour exploitation through economic empowerment with Women’s Consortium of Nigeria (WOCON) and other local NGOs. The African Women Empowerment Guild (AWEG) has a similar initiative which focuses on the empowerment of women. COSUDOW, however, seek to trace families of victims and prepare for their return, including counselling for both the child and their parents. UNICEF counted 757 victims rescued and counselled between February 2004 and December 2006. Though a National Monitoring Centre (NMC) to maintain and analyse trafficking data exists within NAPTIP, donated by the Italian Ministry of Justice, it is not yet operational for lack of usable digital information and training. On a regional level, as part of ECOWAS and its adherence to the Peer Review on the situation of children as part of the Decade of a Culture of Rights of the Child in West Africa (2001- 2010), Nigeria is committed to mutual self – assessment and joint monitoring for a better understanding of the situation and progress related to children. This has been acknowledged in Nigeria’s NPA which includes Monitoring and Evaluation of all ‘clusters’ of the NPA. To that end, UNICEF has been active in creating reporting matrices to facilitate the creation of a data base and establish a standardised monitoring mechanism for child trafficking in endemic states in the country. Thousands of children are still being trafficked from rural areas and neighbouring countries to cities in Nigeria for exploitative labour. Similarly, Nigerian children are on their way through hazardous journeys by road, sea and on foot through the desert to various destinations in North Africa, Europe and the Middle East as chattels in the hands of unscrupulous traffickers who will exploit them

It was against this backdrop that the women’s consortium of Nigeria (WOCON) support from the United States consulate public Affairs section (PAS) and the media recently held a consultative forum on Awareness creation for the prevention of child trafficking in source and receiving communities in Nigeria in Lagos.

The forum, which was a follow-up on a media campaign against child trafficking held in Benin and Uromi Local Government Area of Edo State comprised stakeholders, decision makers and community members and targeted Edo and Lagos States as source and receiving communities respectively.

According to the Executive Director of Women’s consortium of Nigeria (WOCON), Mrs Bisi Olateru-Okgbegi, Edo State has since the mid Dos, been very fertile for the recruitment of children who are trafficked to Europe especially for sexual exploitation, while Lagos State has remained the citadel for receiving mostly children, especially from rural areas, who are trafficked into Lagos and are exploited for various forms of Labour such as domestic servitude, prostitution, begging, bus conducting, hawking and so on. Mrs Olateru expressed the need for all to fight human trafficking saying, Nigeria has been acknowledge and described by the US report on trafficking in 2007 as a source, transit and destination country for children trafficked for the purposes of forced labour and commercial sexual exploitation.

Also, a 2003 study by the international Labour organization (ILO) and the government estimated the number of working children at 15 million of which up to 40 percent are at risk of being trafficked for forced Labour, prostitution, entertainment, pornography and armed conflict. She further stated that among the working children that sic million do not attend school and two million works more than 15 hours per day”. This indeed, according to her is a grim picture to find millions of Nigerian children who are the future of the country being denied education as a result of human trafficking.

Child trafficking was in a serious rise was at 1995, because there were no laws against it, except for the laws on kidnapping, prostitution, etcetera It is different from human trafficking which involves people above the age of eighteen.

Vanguard newspaper of Wednesday September 24, 2008, (page 47) reported that the Lagos Zonal Head of NAPTIP, Mr. Godwin Morka said that their was a case where a girl, whose mother has been looking for her for three years was discovered in Libya the girl was captured from her native town to Lagos and from Lagos to Libya. He further stated that a minimum of twenty-five Nigerian girls die every day in Libya.

The media has the potential to bring the issue of child trafficking into the public debate and play a positive role in raising awareness about the issue, sensitizing high-risk groups to the dangers of it, generating new information through investigative journalism, lowering public tolerance for criminality, exploitation of children, gender discrimination and human rights violations and challenging a moral complacency which may tacitly accept using children for purposes of exploitation and profit. On the other hand, trafficking, according to Ogwu (2002:2) is a complicated issue that is at times misrepresented in the media. The UNODC has undertaken 54 sessions in Maharashtra and trained 1,772 policemen till date.

Costa also noted that some states — such as Moldova, Belarus and Nigeria — were becoming very "militant" in their efforts to stop trafficking. All three were ranked as recruiting countries in a report by the drugs and crime office released in April 2006. The report showed that most victims of human trafficking are women and children who are abducted or recruited in their homelands, transported through other countries and exploited in destination countries.

The report also found that the trafficking of people for sexual exploitation or forced labour affects virtually every region of the world and called on governments to do more to reduce demand, protect victims and bring perpetrators to justice.

The media reported that Turkish authorities intercepted some 246 victims of human trafficking in 2006, an overwhelming majority of whom came from former Soviet Union countries, official data announced yesterday revealed.

One hundred ninety-one of the victims have been safely sent back to their home countries. The data, announced in a 55-page report prepared jointly by officials from the Interior Ministry, the Justice Ministry, the police department and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), show that the number of people falling victim to child trafficking has remained steady in past years: In 2004, authorities identified 239 victims and in 2005, the number stood at 256.

Japan is one of the largest destinations for international trafficking of women and children for sex and forced labour, according to the South China Morning Post. Due to international pressure the Japanese police set up a department to combat the problem. In 2005 the new unit made 81 arrests

In Togo, for example the phenomenon of cross-border child trafficking is extremely widespread. 313 000 Togolese children between 5 and 15 years old work in urban zones in Togo or in foreign countries and are treated as almost slaves. 74% of these children are girls. 66% of children between 15 and 18 years old are victims of forced labour. The girls are destined to work as maids or in the markets, mainly abroad (Gabon, Benin, Niger, Nigeria), and the boys are sent to Nigeria, Côte d’Ivoire or Benin to work in agricultural plantations. Many young girls in Togo are persuaded to go and work in Nigeria in order to be able to buy everything they’ve ever dreamed of. There, they are, in fact exploited by adults and only experience unhappiness.

**2.6 Child-trafficking and Media**

In many cities, towns and other semi-urban and rural centres in Nigeria, it is not uncommon to see children on the streets begging fro money. Some hawk wares on the highway and busy roads thereby exposing them to trafficking.

Godoy (2002) in his research on child trafficking and media reported that of the 110 children sampled in El Salvador working in domestic service most of were underage between 12 and 17 years of age. The media reported cases of battered children and others saved from the clutches of child traffickers.

Hodges (2001) in his findings opined that street hawkers’ children who worked throughout the day or late in the evening or who traded on major highways were found to be more likely than others to experiences trafficking.

To curtail the incidence (child trafficking) Sanders and Godoy (2002) suggest that there is the need to increases societal awareness of issues that may affect children. They further opined that prevention of child trafficking involves changing those individual and community attitude, belief and circumstances which allows trafficking to occur. A well focused print media (Newspapers) has the potential to contribute to successfully to community education and prevention of child trafficking and neglect. This is in realization of the fact that media play significant role in informing people’s attitude and behaviour.

Lindsay (1994) argued that the media has a central role in mediating information and forming public opinion. The media casts an eye on events that feel of us directly experience and render remote happenings observable and meaningful. Understanding the media influences and how to use mass media channels constructively may be an essential tool for fighting social problems like child trafficking. Wellings and Macdowell (2000) affirmed the strength of mass media lies in helping to put issues on the public, in reinforcing local efforts in raising consciousness about issues and in conveying simple information.

This is Sequel to Adeseye and Ibagere (1999) position that agenda setting implies that the media predetermine what issues are regarded as important at a given time in a given society. The point here is that the media help to priorities societal issues. Newspapers like other media of mass communication such as radio are a veritable means to inform, educate, entertain project culture and perhaps it is permanent in to investigate the extent Newspaper has helped in creating awareness on the evils of child trafficking in the society (Nigeria) it also went to find out whether Newspaper has helped to place child trafficking on the agenda of government.

For Nigeria, the situation was so bad that the first Lady, Titi Abubakar through her Non-Governmental Organization-Women Trafficking and Child Eradication Foundation (WOTCLEF) took it upon herself to spear head what would eventually become a serious fight against human trafficking in Nigeria. Agbu (2003:25) stated the utilizing all advantages derivable from her position, political, legal and social she was able to kick start a serious challenge to human trafficking and its support base in the country.

A regional project launched in 2002 by UNICEF found in a Nigerian Cast study that those involved include recruiting agents (usually close family) native doctors (Voodoo Priests) who often perform rituals to control the victims, Lawyers who draw up dept bondage agreements, estate agents who help to launder trafficking proceeds through real estate transactions and travel touts and agents who provide the necessary travel documents and arrangement.

Generally, Ladejobi (2006) asserts foreign nationals work as temporary guides across borders or provide shelters and safe houses a long the routes the harbour victims travelling by road. In Nigeria, the police used to worsen the already dire situation of repatriated victims by subjecting them to persecution and extortion while they are in holding cells. Instead of showing empathy, counselling them and enhancing their rehabilitation. For example in section

AIof the law, individuals accused of exportation/Importation of persons out/in Nigeria on conviction are liable to imprisonment for life. Section 12 states that procurement of any person. For illicit intercourse with another person on conviction attracts imprisonment for 10 years without an option of the fine, in section 13, causing or encouraging the seduction or prostitution of any person less than eighteen years on conviction attracts 10 years imprisonment without an option of fine (NAPTIP Act, 2003).

Generally, the Agency’s activities involve prosecuting Traffickers, rehabilitating victims, collaborating with other bodies, local and international and creating public of the crime. Human trafficking units (Task forces have also been created in the Nigeria police and immigration services. According to him, in terms of convictions more than 150 traffickers have been arrested, about convicted are in Jail, while 50 cases are pending in court. NAPTIP operations are conducted through the support of four main units – the investigation unit, public enlightenment unit and the counselling and Rehabilitation unit. Also provided for in the enabling act are such other units as the agency may establish with the approval of the Board. In addition, there are at present six Zonal offices within the country located at Benin, Lagos, Sokoto, Kano, Enugu and Abuja while plans are under way to create NAPTIP state offices. Nigeria has 36 states and a federal capital Territory at Abuja.

A 2003 Federal office of statistics (FOS) and International Labour Organization (ILO) study estimated that there are about 15 million children engaged in child labour activities in Nigeria. These children could easily be forced into child trafficking eternally. According to NAPTIP, almost every state has a variant of child trafficking. In the largely Muslim northern states, traffickers move children to locations where they could be used as beggars under the guise of religious mentoring, again, these children could be trafficked to Saudi Arabic. In the south, children are constantly moved around by traffickers as domestic help under very in human arrangements. Odocha (2004: 41) in his review on child trafficking found out that between 2004 and 2006, NAPTIP repatriated 757 child victims. In 2007 and 2008, 2,475 children, 80 percent of who were girls were rescued according to UNICEF annual report.

In Nigeria, as in many parts of Africa, the tradition of fostering has made it easy to manipulate parents into allowing their children to be used as commodities of trade. The fact, however, remains that child trafficking as different from child work are socially constructed, and need to be conceptually de-constructed and addressed in themselves as evils and crime against humanity. Italy still remains the key destination for trafficked young girls working as prostitutes. It is instructive that in October 2007, the Dutch police arrested 24 people for allegedly trafficking, 140 Nigerian children to Europe. So the fight still rages

**2.7 Case study on Media and Child trafficking in other countries**

The media handled child trafficking in India by producing a well researched documentary titled the day my God died. The title of the documentary was taken from a Quote by one of the girls kidnapped at a village fair in NEPAL, drugged and trafficked across the border to brothels in the largest red light district in the world, Bombay, India. The girl says, “The day that I was sold was the day that my God died” there are on average fifteen Nepalese girls trafficked daily. Their average age is 14, but some are seven – eight years olds. They are sold into sexual slavery for 50,000 rupes and brutalized into submission.

Child trafficking is growing rapidly in India; there is no reliable data available on the issue in India. According to figures provided by the National crime records Bureau in 2004, as many as 2,265 cases of Kidnapping and abduction of children qualified as forms of trafficking and were reported to the police. Of these, 1,593 cases were of kidnapping for marriage 1,414 were for illicit sex, 92 for unlawful activity, 101 for prostitution and the test for various other things like slavery, beggary and even selling body parts. According to Agbaegbu (2008), most of these children (72 percent) were between sixteen and eighteen years of age. Twenty-five percent were children aged eleven to fifteen years. Trafficking of children from the North – Eastern states of India and the bordering countries in the north east is a serious issue but has so far not drawn public attention. Children are trafficked for several reasons including sexual exploitation, adoption, entertainment, drug peddling and smuggling.

Malawi, like other developing countries, faces a growing problem of child trafficking. The full extent of child trafficking in Malawi is not widely known, but in recent years increasing awareness has resulted in better reporting and understanding of the problem.

Reports of child trafficking by the media, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and government departments such as the Police, Social Welfare and Labour have been increasing in recent years.

In 2007, the Government of Malawi through the Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs, with funding from ILO, UNICEF and the Human Rights Resource Centre, commissioned the Millennium Centre for Research and Development (MCRD) to conduct a study in order to assess the nature and magnitude of child trafficking and to review the current legal and policy frameworks on child trafficking in Malawi, before making preliminary recommendations.

This study employed several methods in order to establish the nature and scale of child trafficking in Malawi, including the use of key informant interviews, case studies and literature review. The research team also collected and collated information and data using a structured questionnaire from 12 police stations, 12 district labour offices, 12 district social welfare offices, 6 border and immigration offices and 32 non-governmental organisations.

The study found that although Malawi is a party to various Conventions and International Instruments that provide against child trafficking, current domestic law aimed at addressing child trafficking is lacking in many respects. The Government of Malawi currently prohibits all forms of trafficking through existing laws, including sections 135 to 147 and 257 to 269 of the penal code, Chapter 7:01. However, a lack of specific anti-trafficking legislation makes prosecution more challenging and allows a limited range of punishments to be meted out to convicted traffickers.

Further, there is no law or policy aimed at providing legal assistance or information to presumed victims of child trafficking. Indeed, there is no law or policy specifically relating to the status or treatment of victims of trafficking. The Malawi Law Commission is currently in the process of drafting a bill on Human Trafficking in general. According to the existing draft, provision has been made for an internationally accepted definition of trafficking, which includes all induced transit of children for labour, regardless of apparent consent.

The study also found that there is need for better identification of trafficked children in order to better recognize and more deeply understand the problem. There is a need for greater awareness of child trafficking, both in theory and in practical terms. The study also highlights the lack of unified data collection and storage systems among the different stakeholders working in the area of child protection.

There is thus a need to periodically update all the relevant information and data collection on child trafficking using the National Statistical Office and other stakeholders. A national child trafficking database with a standardized entry system for all stakeholders would be desirable. There is a great need to improve awareness and coordination among the different organisations involved. The National Committee on Child Protection could play a crucial role in coordinating between different agencies at national, regional, district and local levels.

Although the magnitude of child trafficking cannot be accurately verified, because of the hidden nature of the problem, ignorance about child trafficking among law enforcement officers and communities actually worsens the situation. The study found at least 77 cases of child trafficking that have been handled by the different NGOs and government departments in the 12 districts visited in this study.

The study established that there is a seasonal element to child trafficking, especially with regard to children trafficked to work in tobacco estates and girls employed as commercial sex workers and in restaurants. Most of the male children trafficked internally are intended for livestock herding or agricultural labour; female children are mainly trafficked for domestic service or to work in restaurants and bars, particularly during the crop marketing season.

Child trafficking in Malawi – particularly internal trafficking for exploitative labour – is fuelled by poverty, illiteracy, lack of awareness, lack of resources and weak policies. Children as young as 10 – mostly school drop outs and orphans – are trafficked in particular from Thyolo, Mulanje, Dedza, Ntcheu, Salima and Nsanje districts. The main destinations include major cities, district headquarters and estates in Mchinji, Kasungu and Mzimba.

Trafficked children are subjected to intolerable and inhuman activities including being forced to walk long distances without food and sleep in appalling conditions. The conditions are exceptionally bad during the rainy season. This study revealed that this was also the period that most victims decide to run away and seek to be returned to their homes. Apart from those working within the domestic sector, most trafficked children are not paid regularly or in cash. The majority only have verbal annual contracts that are rarely honoured.

The study also established that cross border trafficking occurs, with Zambia the most frequent destination, followed by Mozambique. Porous borders with these two neighbouring countries make it difficult to address this problem in the absence of meaningful international collaboration. However, this study did not find evidence of long distance external trafficking, although there is a perception that some children are trafficked to Europe.

Parents, children and local leaders are almost ignorant about child trafficking and its risks. In Dedza for instance, young girls are trafficked for prostitution. In some cases communities know the traffickers, but regard them as philanthropic society members, thus hindering attempts to stop or prosecute perpetrators.

Government departments in some districts provide vital services like community support, child counseling, rehabilitation and repatriation and training to the victims of trafficking. Non-governmental organisations undertake similar activities and are often more active, as they are better resourced than government departments. The major handicap of NGOs, especially small ones, is that they usually have limited impact areas. They therefore usually refer cases or liaise with government departments in other districts. This could be the basis for good practice, but needs government coordination and clear, consistent guidelines. Some of the Recommendations in the study are:

Malawi needs new legislation specifically to tackle child trafficking. This needs to adopt all the provisions of international agreements to which Malawi is a signatory and, in particular, must be based on a clear and internationally-accepted definition of child trafficking, which makes no allowances for claimed “consent” by children. Clear, severe penalties need to be prescribed for a range of offences covering all aspects of child trafficking and forced child labour. The Government of Malawi needs to demonstrate greater commitment to tackling the problem. This can be done in the short-to-medium term in three ways:

1)By allocating significant human and financial resources to all departments and agencies involved in combating child trafficking, in all districts, in order to build their knowledge and capacity.

2)By opening meaningful dialogue with its neighbours with a view to developing collaborative legal and administrative systems to prevent cross-border trafficking.

3)By launching a large-scale awareness-raising campaign throughout the country. This should not only seek to bring the problem to the attention of rural communities, but also emphasize its importance to public servants. For example, the immigration service should be encouraged to see the identification of possible trafficking cases as part of their normal duties.

The criminal nature of child trafficking makes any data and statistics on the cases of this illegal business inherently suspicious. There are no exact numbers of victims of child sexual exploitation within the state or across the border because there are no reliable ways of determining the victims. The State Department website estimates that one to two million children are trafficked annually around the world.

The United Nations Report in their research stated that they lack adequate data because of the unwillingness of governmental officers to publicly report their findings. For example, ministry of labour and social Affairs denied having statistics on the issue, but referred the special Rapporteur to the ministry of justice, however, social workers gave the special Rapporteur some comprehensive statistics, which they claimed had be supplied them by the ministry of labour and social Affairs. Thousand of children are being smuggled across the border every year, but only a minority of cases is reported and convictions of traffickers are very rare. In sun, there is little accurate and reliable statistics available because of the illegal activities involved satisfying research on the spread of child trafficking is missing. The reports that have been done on the issue of child trafficking are insignificant due to the lack of distinguishing between the ages of children, the gender of children and between economic and sexual trafficking of persons. The main reason why traffickers are not adequately punished is because many legal policies often restrain victims from testifying against their traffickers. In addition, the victims of trafficking might be punished more than the traffickers for their illegal immigration status and lack of appropriate documents.

The International Labour Organization estimates that some 600,000 children were victims of trafficking in Cameroon in 2005. According to official figures, Cameroon has close to 17 million inhabitants of which about 56 percent are younger than eighteen. The exploitation of children takes various forms. Boys are typically put towards on cocoa, coffee and rubber plantations, while girls serve as cleaners and waitresses. They are often sexually exploited and may later be drawn into prostitution. Once a transit country for child traffickers, Cameroon has become for some years, a supplier of child slaves to neighbouring countries, “said Leon Noah Manga, president of the consultative committee for a project to fight against the trade and exploitation of children in west and central Africa. He further stated that about 200 children of Cameroonian origin and about 60 others of Beninese and Nigeria origin destined for employers in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea were rescued at the borders of Cameroon and returned to their families.

Russian according to United Nations office on Drugs and crime (UNODC) is the primary destination country for trafficking from central / Asia and serves as a transit country of trafficking in drugs and human beings into Europe. In Moscow, the ministry of interior reports that at any one time, there are over 50, 000 children who have been trafficked from central Asia by criminal gongs for prostitution and sex tourism in the Russian capital/children are sold into slavery in western countries transiting through Poland, Germany and the Balkans. Human trafficking has been closely linked to the smuggling of narcotics. Trafficked children are often used as drug carriers.

The growing problem of child trafficking through prostitution is raising concerns in Ukrainian media. The Epoch Times, in an article based on UN report, states that children aged from thirteen to eighteen make ten percent of trafficking victims in Ukraine. Top police officers have shed light on recent regional media reports on child trafficking, especially on one particular case linked to a Rwandan national. In November last year, Scovia Mbabazi, a Ugandan of Rwandan origin is reported to have kidnapped a fifteen year old boy from Rwanda with the intention of selling him in Uganda before one was apprehended in a press briefing at police Head Quarters, Thursday, Mary Gahonzire, the Acting Commissioner General of Police and Tony Kulamba, in-charge of Interpol, country office, acknowledged and explained the horrifying child trafficking incident. They also dispelled fears that things could be running out of hand, according to him, we are very strict when it comes to the movement of minors; adults moving with children have to first produce authorization from their village proving that the child’s father or both parents have approved.

The United Nations Educational, scientific and cultural organization (UNESCO) recommended that child trafficking can be control if the countries involved act together and give more priority to the fight against child trafficking than before. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) threw his weight behind this but stated that the families at risk must be warned and informed. Most of these families live in extreme poverty or under very difficult conditions and have no idea of what awaits them-Coercion, rape and unpaid labour. These make parents susceptible to the promises of money or education for their children given by the traffickers.

Similarly, Philippe Duamelle, UNICEF Representative in Benin, stated that this new era of strengthened co-operation between the Republic of Benin and Nigeria to fight trafficking in persons must rapidly lead to concrete action. According to him, “Everyday, we face the dramatic consequences of this scourge for the victims and for the development of both countries. This agreement will enable a stronger mobilization to eradicate trafficking, especially child trafficking.

**2.8 Related Studies on Print Media Coverage of Children issues**

A study presented to the world young reader conference held in Helsinki from 7th to 9th September 2003 stipulated that newspapers often present children as victims.

Similarly, student researchers under the supervision of communication professors at Stanford University and the University of California – Santa Barbara conducted a research in which it was discovered that news coverage of children focuses on crime and violence made up 40% of the child related coverage across newspapers and television stations, children were described as ‘problem people’ which means they either cause problems or have problems.

Meanwhile, a UNICEF sponsored 2002 research paper tagged “print media coverage on children’s issues’ brought out four categories of stories pertaining to children. They are development; projection, survival and participation. The role of the media in the life of a child can not be underestimated. Sanchar (2002: 40) stated that the media plays a very important role in generating awareness among the general public and in creating pressure on pertinent issues for the development of the child. He further notes that the media can also be very effective for the overall development of children through the advocacy for children’s rights.

**2.8.1 The National Response to Child Trafficking In Nigeria**

In July 2003, the Trafficking in Persons Prohibition and Administration Act was passed in Nigeria, a legislative framework that prohibits all forms of trafficking in persons and protects children and adults against criminal networks. As a result of the law, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and Other Related matters (NAPTIP) was established to fight human trafficking through investigation of cases, prosecution of criminals, rescue and rehabilitation of victims. NAPTIP has opened shelters to host rescued/repatriated children while investigations are being carried out and the families identified. NAPTIP working closely with Police, Immigration and Civil Society Organizations has achieved the following results:

•Investigation and Arrest

– Investigation of over 64 cases in 2006.

– Since 2005, prosecution and conviction of 12 traffickers who are presently imprisoned.

– 32 cases currently at different stages of prosecution in the law courts.

•Rescue and Rehabilitation:

A total of 757 victims have been rescued between February 2004 and December 2006, including 6 babies.

– 73 victims rescued and counselled in 2004.

– 337 victims were rescued and counselled in 2005.

– 348 victims rescued and counselled in 2006.

Most of these victims are Nigerian females, while a smaller number are Beninese, Togolese and Ghanaian. However, the capacity of law enforcement agencies including the immigration and the police officials in monitoring and reporting cases, as well as patrolling borders, still needs to be enhanced.

One major development was the signing of cooperation agreement to fight child trafficking, between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Republic of Benin in June 2005. The document provides notably for a joint security surveillance team that will patrol the borders of both countries. The Nigerian Government is currently discussing new bilateral agreements with Niger and Cameroon.

In July 2006, a regional conference was jointly organized by Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in Abuja, with active participation of NAPTIP. Supported by UNICEF, ILO, and the Office of the Special Adviser to the President on Trafficking in Persons, the conference was designed to share country experiences and to develop a common platform of action against trafficking in persons in West and Central Africa. To this end, a ‘Multilateral Cooperation Agreement on Combating Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children’ was signed by 15 member States from both Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

UNICEF’s support to the prevention of child trafficking in Nigeria includes:

•Enhancing knowledge and research on the phenomenon of trafficking by supporting an efficient surveillance system to document the incidence and nature of rights violation.

•Raising public awareness through involvement of the media and addressing attitudes, behaviours and practices trough an appropriate communication strategy.

•Advocating to national / State leaders to effectively combat trafficking by adopting adequate policies and programmes and by implementing legislation.

•Improving the co-ordination framework and strengthening collaboration at national, regional and international levels.

•Development and improvement of appropriate institutional responses and care for child victims of trafficking and exploitation.

•Enhancing the knowledge of the children themselves and adopting a preventive approach

Apart from direct interventions to address child trafficking, UNICEF’s priority is to build a protective environment to prevent the abuse, violence and exploitation of children throughout the country.

Right from the national Agency’s inception, UNICEF supported the institutional capacity building of NAPTIP and helped in establishing an anti-trafficking network in 22 Southern and Northern States. UNICEF also gives assistance to NAPTIP shelters and trains their staff in psycho-social rehabilitation skills so that they can give an adequate support to children.

The continued capacity building and sensitization of police, immigration and prison officers is gradually bringing results, such as the rescue of 100 children at the border with Benin Republic in March 2005 and the recent handing over of 19 teenagers to the Benin Republic authorities by NAPTIP officials in Lagos State. To prevent young people from being trafficked, UNICEF has facilitated the establishment of Youth Resource centres with the support of Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the UK National Committee. These centres provide health promotion, skills training, recreational services, legal support and information to young people.

-Two model Youth Resource Centres were established in Edo and Delta State in 2004 and 2005.

-Seven replicated Youth Resource Centres have been established in Kano, Akwa Ibom, Sokoto, Ebonyi, Bauchi, Ogun and Imo States.

-Four transit shelters established in Kano, Edo, Akwa Ibom and Lagos States.

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**3.0 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the research design and methods of collection of data through determination of questionnaire administration from the target population.

**3.1 Research Design**

For the purpose of this study, the research design of concern is mainly descriptive in nature employing the field dimension. Research design is mainly defined as the grand plan structure or strategy designed to ensure the collection of data from sample respondents with a given population. We used the survey research method in the work.

**3.2 Population of Study**

Our population of study is limited to Minna Metropolis, Niger state.

Minna is a city (estimated population 304,113 in 2007) in Middle Belt Nigeria. It is the capital of Niger State, one of Nigeria's 36 federal states. It consists of 2 major ethnic groups: the Nupe and the Gbagyi. Minna is connected to neighboring cities by road. Abuja, the capital of the country, is only 150 km away. Minna is also connected by railroad to both Kano in the north and Ibadan and Lagos in the south. The city is served by Minna Airport.

**3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique**

The sampling techniques used in the study are questionnaires and personal interview.

Questionnaires

The questionnaires was constructed and administered in person by the researcher. The field work recorded almost 100% success in questionnaire return as the respondents were not widely dispersed. All the respondents were enrolled in Minna metropolis.

Personal Interview

This did not follow any standard schedule unstructured verbal interviews were held as questionnaire was being answered.

**3.5 Determination of Sample Size**

Using judgmental sampling, a total of 40 respondents were enrolled for this study.

**3.6 Research Instrument**

The research for this study was the questionnaire approach. Specifically, close-ended questionnaires type was adopted in preference to open-ended questionnaire type. The choice of the former was influenced based on the following facts:

- It helps the researcher to overcome the problem of decoding

- It overcomes the problem of low percentage response on the part of the respondents

- It is self-administered requiring no assistance from the researcher.

**3.7 Method of Data Collection**

The data collection method is the survey method through the administration of questionnaires. Thus the data collected are primary data. The researcher administered questionnaires personally.

**3.8 Validity and Reliability of Instrument**

In order to ascertain the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was designed by the researcher and given to experts in the field and the project supervisor in the final modification of the instrument.

**3.9 Method of Data Analysis**

The method of data analysis entails the use of simple ratios and percentage.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

**4.0 Introduction**

This chapter deals with research questions and treatment.

Research Question One: [What is the perception of the public concerning the role of mass media in child trafficking?]

Table 4.1

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Alternate | Frequency | Percentage |
| Positive  Negative  Neutral | 12  23  5 | 30  58  12 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey.

The above table shows that the public have a ngative perception towards the media regarding child trafficking. From the responses obatined, twelve (30%) respondents opined a positive perception, 58% perceive the mass media negatively while 12% were neutral. From the percentage responses, we can conclude that in Minna metropolis, the mass media are perceived negatively in terms of child trafficking.

**Research Question Two**: [Do the mass media really create the right awareness on child trafficking?]

Table 4.2: the mass media create the right awareness on child trafficking

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Alternate | Frequency | Percentage |
| Agreed  Strongly agreed  Strongly Disagreed  Disagreed  Uncertain | 3  7  10  10  10 | 10  1.5  25  25  25 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey.

The above table shows the respondents opinions to the awareness level of child trafficking by the mass media. A total of 11.5% agree that the mass media crates the right awareness, 50% disagreed to this claim, while 25% were uncertain.

From the responses obtained and the percentages recorded, we conclude that the mass media do not create the right awareness for child trafficking in Minna metropolis.

**Research Question Three:** [What are the various ways to improve the mass media perception on child trafficking?]

Table 4.3

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Alternate | Frequency | Percentage |
| Timeliness  Fairness  Objectivity  Accuracy  Uncertain | 5  15  10  10  - | 12.5  37.5  25  25  - |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey.

The above table shows that what the respondents believe would enhance mass media awareness. The first is timeliness (12.5%), fairness (37.5), objectivity (25%), accuracy (25%).

From the responses obtained, the most desired element for enhanced mass media awareness is fairness. This implies that the information disseminated through the mass media are perceived bias by the public.

Hence, fairness is highly encouraged for enhanced awareness.

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

**CONCLUSION**

The media are known to be a strong, efficacious & veritable instrument in shaping and ordering social dynamics. It is expected to inform both the public and the government, create a particular view in the minds of the people, educate, sensitize and mobilize the people for actions and campaign against child trafficking.

It is more tragic when our children, the future of our nation, end up being destroyed in this immoral business and criminal activities. We need to do all we can to sustain the fight. Charity begins at home. All of us must put our hands and heads together with the media to create awareness of the evils of child trafficking because it is an issue the country as a whole needs to do something seriously about.

These evil has created a highly dysfunctional society and are acts of offences, not only against humanity, but also against God. Government has however began the battle against Human Trafficking by enacting the Anti-Trafficking in person law in 2003 by setting up a special law enforcement agency known as the National Agency for the prohibition of traffic in persons and other related matters (NAPTIP). However, it must be said that in spite of these efforts, child trafficking incidences in Nigeria seem not to be abating. The likely reason for this may be as result of improper implementation of these programmes by these agencies and the biting level of poverty in the land.

**Recommendation**

Based on the findings in this study the following recommendations were made:

The mass media should have a specialized reporter that will give a wider coverage on the evils of trafficking on children on their newspapers daily. The press should draw more attention to the dangers of child trafficking on children’s day (May 27) and Christmas day (December 25) by given greater percentage on children in their editorials, features, public opinion and news in their various media.

The media should also undertake more investigate reporting in order to unearth all the hidden issues that could assist in apprehending and punishing those behind this child trafficking. The security agents should also be more alive to their duties of protecting lives and property. Anybody found guilty of child trafficking should be made to face the full wrath of the law to serve as deterrent to others.

In today’s global village concept, it is expected that the media should rise to the challenge of meeting with the idea of covering or reporting issues concerning children which include evils of child trafficking, in fact report what happens to children in Africa, Asia America, and all over the world.

Governments should invest in education and provide alternative economic opportunities for children. This will greatly reduce the number of those that will be available for trafficking. Countries should be encouraged to take action against this crime at the national level first, supported by international bodies. There should be severe penalty for traffickers at home and at the destination countries. Basic rights of the victims of trafficking must be respected bearing in mind their special needs and predicament. The press should raise awareness about migration related risks and monitoring migration trends within and between countries.

There should be a renewed campaign on the importance of the family, good family name and de-emphasis on materialism. Religious institutions should join United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF), National Agency for Prohibition and Trafficking in Persons and Other Related Matters (NAPTIP), Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the media to condemn the inhumane crime on child trafficking within and outside Nigeria.

Government (political will, legislation and funding) United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), National Agency for Prohibition and Trafficking in Persons and Other Related Matters (NAPTIP), Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), International Labour Organization (ILO) and Publics should put more force in the fight against child trafficking, that is, showing a strong commitment to combat trafficking. However, the awareness of child trafficking should be translated into action especially by the media at the grassroots level.

The media should put more attention in the fight against trafficking because many families and children will be dependent on the media to inform and educate them about the danger of child trafficking. Open discussion on child protection issue by civil society and media engagement can change attitudes that condone child trafficking, also raising awareness on the effect of child trafficking on health and education of the child will help alleviate children’s vulnerability to trafficking.

To curtail the incidence of child trafficking, there is the need to increase societal awareness of issues that may affect children. Prevention of child trafficking can be done by changing those individual and community attitude, belief and circumstances which allows trafficking to occur. A well focused mass media campaign or educational programme has the potential to contribute successfully to community education and prevention of child trafficking and neglect. This is in realization of the fact that the media play significant role in informing people’s attitude and behaviour

Secondly, child trafficking is one important subject that affects the generality of individuals, families, organizations, government and even a nation. Its subject matter and as it relate with or affects the country cannot be exhausted in just one research study. So I hereby recommend that, further research can be done using survey method which will include administering questionnaire to the publics.

Subsequent studies should be replicated on a wider dimension, taking cognizance of rapid growth and proliferation of newspaper industries in Nigeria.

More so, this current study, Featured only privately owned Newspaper establishments in Nigeria, it will also be good for further studies to reflect its coverage by government owned press or even a comparison of the degree of reportage accorded to it by the privately owned and government owned press.

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