

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND NATIONAL SECURITY: A NIGERIAN PERSPECTIVE

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### Abstract

This paper examines human trafficking and its implication on and national security from a Nigerian perspective. Data are collected from secondary sources while the content is critically analyzed and human security approach adopted as a theoretical framework. It observes that a significant relationship exists between human trafficking and national security globally due mainly to the fact that human trafficking thrives on corruption on the part of the government, greed on the part of the traffickers because of the mouth-watering profit it attracts, and poverty, lack of freedom to live in dignity and without fear of want on the part of the victims. From a Nigerian perspective, the paper argues that since national security is undermined by the inhuman acts, illicit wealth and transnational organised crimes that go *pari passu* with human trafficking, the international community should raise above sentiment and sincerely collaborate to end it as it did to the transatlantic slave trade. It recommends that since Nigeria is one of the signatories to most international treaties against human trafficking, hence, it should try to beef up its national security, and collaborate effectively with the international community to end the illicit business.

**Keywords:** Human security, human trafficking, illicit domestic and international business, national security, Nigeria

### Introduction

Trafficking in humans is one of the fastest growing illicit activities and businesses in the contemporary world which although is different from the historic Trans Atlantic Slave Trade (TAST) has an aspect of it. "Traffickers' exploitative practices affect every country in the world,...by diminishing and destroying our communities, sense of security, and the global economy" (U.S. Department of State, 2022). Human trafficking is considered to be the third largest source of profit for organized crime apart from drugs and arms (UNI-ICR, 2000). Human trafficking, like money laundering, advanced fee fraud, cyber scams and illicit trade in arms and narcotics has elicited a great concern as a contemporary social problem worldwide (Poulin, 2004). The United Nations in 2008 estimated that nearly 2.5million people from 127 different countries were being trafficked into 137 countries around the world (UN 2008). Researchers and experts also concur that human trafficking is nothing but organized crime with the total market value estimated at about \$32 billion (South African Government Information, 2009).

International awareness of the scourge of human trafficking has over the years especially since after the Cold War when attention has shifted from state security to human security increased considerably following the fact that "Whether in the military or non military dimensions, human security is the most important strategic goal and the value of any responsible and responsive

government" (Akpuru-Aja, 2020, p. 35). Human trafficking is inimical to human security anywhere it takes place in the world in the sense that it is against the human persons security and that is why responsible governmental and non-governmental institutions, agencies and organisations the world over are against it. The illegal trade occupies a prominent position among the social ills that pervade the Nigerian Society (Ofuoku, 2010) as well as some countries in the world. While it may appear that the problem seems more endemic in the southern part of Nigeria, there are indications that no part of the country is completely immune to this social malaise that has ravaged many countries in the world (UNICRI, 2004).

Human trafficking for many people, observes the U.S. Department of State (2021), evokes images of women and children being forcibly taken and sold into slavery by strangers, or of people locked in rooms or vehicles far from home. In a wider sense, it includes so but can better be understood if it is also conceived largely as a form of modern slavery on account of its resemblance to the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade. This is largely behind the usage of terms such as "human trafficking," "trafficking in persons" and "modern slavery" often interchangeably in referring to "a crime whereby traffickers exploit and profit at the expense of adults and children by compelling them to perform labour or engage in commercial sex" (U.S. Department of State, April 26, 2022)." Slavery as an institution was abolished in the 19th century, and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights prohibiting slavery or servitude recognizes the rights of all human beings to live a life of freedom and dignity. Following the abolition of slave trade more than two centuries ago, about 300 international protocols and conventions prohibiting and criminalizing slavery and slave trade in any form have been signed and adopted by nation states (Goliath, 2008; Time Magazine, 2001) including Nigeria. But the recent global economic crunch, poverty, social and political conflicts, wars, natural disasters and the contemporary climate change have profoundly influenced the alarming dimension with which people are being pulled—up as clients for human traffickers (UNHCR, 2000). This alarming increase in human trafficking and the social, political and economic ills that it engenders have induced considerable attention of the international community such as the United Nations Organization (UNO), International Labour Organization (ILO), international Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Children and Education Fund (UNICEF), the United States among others. Thus, it is to contribute to the effort at addressing this protracting issue of concern to the world at large and Nigeria in particular that this article is written hence its title, human trafficking, human security and national security: a Nigerian perspective.

From the Nigerian perspective, the paper argues that since human and national security are in jeopardy in Nigeria and elsewhere, human trafficking being a contributing factor to this because of the threat to human lives, outright loss of human lives and the associated social and economic crimes that go with it, national governments, international governmental and non-governmental organizations should collaboratively fight the illicit business to a decisive end as was done during the historical Trans Atlantic Slave Trade (TAST), the benefits notwithstanding. Nigeria should strive to be part of this history when it will be made. Until this end is achieved, the issue of human trafficking will continue to be a subject of grave concern to the world and as such, a subject of research for scholars, policy makers, human security crusaders and the like. Obviously, we are talking and will continue to talk on human trafficking because it is a trendy issue. For the sake of comprehension, the paper is structured from here in the following order: methodology; theoretical framework; conceptual analysis; trends and patterns of human trafficking in Nigeria; effects of human trafficking on human and national security; conclusion and recommendation.

## **Methodology**

This research is qualitatively approached as it is observed that qualitative analysis in separate literature on the issues of human trafficking, human security and national security do exist. What is scarce though is extant literature on the nexus between human trafficking, human security and national security especially as they pertain to Nigeria. Data for the paper are dominantly from secondary sources. Against this backdrop, the *ex post facto* (after the fact) research design is considered suitable for the paper as critical content analysis is employed to provide an exploratory and descriptive analysis of the secondary data collected. This follows the steps adopted by some social scientists in their various studies which have been widely accepted and acknowledged as being authentic and reliable. For instance, Nnam, Ugwoke, Njemanze and Akwara (2020) have adopted the step in their study of the matters arising from the nexus between boko haram terrorism and human security in Nigeria citing some other scholars such as Haralambos, Holborn and Heald (2008). The relevance of citing these sources lies on the fact that when conducting a research of this nature according to Nnam, Ugwoke, Njemanze and Akwara (2020), the main focus is on content analysis, particularly thematic analysis, which Pawson as recorded by Haralambos, Holborn and Heald (2008, p. 842) described in the following words: The usual strategy is to pick on a specific area ... and subject it to a very detailed analysis in the hope of unearthing the underlying purposes and intentions of the authors of the communication (see Nnam, Ugwoke, Njemanze and Akwara, 2020, p. 8).

On this ground, the secondary data used in this work are those that are publicly and widely accepted as authentic and reliable sources of information which in no narrow ways, have been scrutinised and licensed by national and international authorities. In making this paper, these secondary data were further scrutinised and critically analysed by the authors before arriving at the point of presentation. The secondary sources through which the facts were collected include those from the print and electronic media such as books, journals, newspapers, government official publications such as those of the U.S. Department of States, international organisations publications such as those from the UNDP, UNHD Report, UNODC, UNESCO.

## **Theoretical Framework**

This paper is approached from the Koffi Annan's three pillars of human security as articulated by Akpuru-Aja (2020) namely; freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to live in dignity. Human security is a pre-21<sup>st</sup> century concept which according to Nnam, Ugwoke, Njemanze and Akwara (2020) was officially introduced in the early 1990s by peace and security advocates following the end of the Cold War. Since then, an increasingly large voices of people, students, scholars and diplomats have been calling for the placing of people, the human persons at the centre of domestic and international relations, a fact which is embedded in Koffi Annan's call that there is need for the entire international community to work together in order to better the lives of the people who are still left behind due to problems of war, poverty and their like. As a reminder to that call, many years after, this paper is calling on the Nigerian state and the international community to work together in order to better the lives of these vulnerable people who easily fall prey to the traffickers because of their conditions especially at this critical moment when the state of human insecurity (for example fear, poverty, hunger and want) in Nigeria is worsening and by so being, making many people to be desperate for survival, and the traffickers and their collaborators having a field day.

The shift from emphasis on traditional concept of security which entails the absence of threats, danger or crisis in a nation-state to human security whose goal is people centered is predicated on

the belief that without human security there cannot be stability within and outside the state. In essence, human security to a large degree determines the stability of the state. A deduction from this is that a human-centred security network within and outside the state has the potential of providing national security in Nigeria and by extension, internationally. The paper applies human security as a theoretical framework to its analysis due mainly to the fact that human trafficking as a subject and issue of concern to many has a disturbing relationship with human security framework which centres more directly on the protection of people, the scope of their freedom within society, their access to market and social opportunities (UNDP, 1994). Nigeria is indeed in a state of worsening national security and this consequently has generated human security issues that beg for urgent solutions, one of them being human trafficking. Based on this, the concept of human security attempts to provide an overarching framework through which the fundamentally interconnected and cumulative nature of the global processes and their impact on people's security on a world scale can easily be understood (Ahmed, 2004) and addressed.

## **Conceptual Analysis**

### **Human trafficking**

Human trafficking is the illegal trade in human beings for the purposes of commercial, sexual exploitation or forced labour. "The Trafficking Protocol defines human trafficking as:

The recruitment, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of (above) vulnerability, of the giving or receiving of payment or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery servitude or the removal of organs (United Nations Protocol to prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in persons especially Women and Children)

The crime of trafficking in persons is carried out by different types of traffickers, ranging from individuals exploiting their partner to organized criminal groups operating across national borders. Trafficking in persons is usually thought of as a transnational organized crime (United Nations Protocol to prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in persons especially Women and Children). And indeed, many trafficking outfits meet the criteria of transnational organized crime groups, as spelled out in the United Nations Convention against Transnational organized Crime (United Nations Protocol to prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in persons especially Women and Children). Aspects of the crime are often committed in different countries by criminals not necessarily from the same country where the crime was detected. These criminals organized themselves to a greater extent. In some cases the complexity of the crime requires a relatively high level of organization. In other cases, victims may have been trafficked by an individual or group of individuals operating in a local community.

Profits generated from human trafficking serves as the prime motive for criminals who exploit other people. In fact, as Profit potential is an important consideration for most legitimate business, so it is for traffickers, who have a strong financial incentive to operate where profits are high. Traffickers choose to carry out their exploitation in a location where there is more profit. They have taken into account costs and risk of detection, which tends to increase as more territory and international borders are traversed. In 2005, Patrick Beiser of international Labour Organization estimated a global annual profit of \$31.6 billion (Belser, 2005). For example, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) focuses on the criminal justice element of crimes that include human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants. In 1999, it proposed a "Global Program against

*Trafficking in Human Beings*” that would focus on the role of organized crime groups in smuggling and trafficking and on time development of criminal justice— related responses (UNODC, 1999). In May 2011 it issued a report on organized crime's role in smuggling West African migrants into the EU (UNODC 2011). The UN office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights states at the outset On its website that

At a time when some 214 million people are on the move globally, the UN Human Rights office has identified migration as a priority and is working to identify the protection gaps in law, policy and practice that leave migrants vulnerable to abuse at international borders (UNODC 2011:25).

The vulnerability of prospective victims is exploited in many respects; the victims most of whom are pre-teens, teenagers and mostly females are taken away from their homelands to cities within or their countries.

Many of them are engaged in cheap labour as domestic servants, hawkers, beggars, and commercial sex workers. A common narrative on human trafficking is one of organised criminal networks run by gangs of profiteering criminal often involved in other forms of organised border crime such as drug smuggling or gun running as the image from Dr Helga Konrad head of trafficking at the OSCE depicts:

*People are abused as commodities by a transnational criminal industry—the profits of which have been found to be so high that some of the criminals are moving away from drug trafficking into this modern form of slave trade or profit even further by using the trafficked persons as manpower for other criminal purposes such as trafficking or selling drugs or weapons' (Konrad, 2005:15).*

Organised criminal networks are well developed and play a role in many trafficking cases in Nigeria. There are three types of trafficker:

1. Professional Traffickers: Typically they approach victims or their family with offers of facilitating travelling abroad; in many cases they are strangers, unknown to the family and are able to link in with networks or exploiters in Europe. In this scenario when the victim or their family is approached by a stranger, there may be no direct social link. Rather than trafficking in an opportune way, preying on someone within their social network to exploit them for their own gain, there was evidence of people targeting vulnerable people for example orphaned girls, homeless shelter, on the streets or directly from prison. Sensing the desperation of the victim, they would then promise them the possibility of employment or education in Europe.
2. Personal Traffickers: Many people particularly those trafficked for domestic servitude were known by someone intimately known to them. These traffickers appeared not to be responsible for trafficking of multiple victims; rather they would be involved in the trafficking of one person. The mechanisms for this could vary: They have been account of an associate visiting the family household and promising to take the victim to a better life abroad. These traffickers were mainly involved in trafficking for domestic servitude.
3. Personal linking Traffickers: In a small number of cases personal traffickers would appear to be involved along with others. Friends or relatives would be involved at the stage of recruitment and migration; however, the exploiter would be unknown to the victim. Even in these cases the number of people involved appears to be small and the work of the trafficker to be opportune (taking the opportunity to exploit a relative's need for support rather systematic or a pattern of repeat behaviour.

There are close linkages between poverty and widespread illiteracy as well as unsafe and uniformed migration. Due to the high rate of poverty, many Nigerians of school age are not in school because they cannot afford it, thus those with minimal education and who lack the skills

required to secure good jobs often fall easy prey to traffickers who deceive them with tales of good jobs in the cities in case of internal trafficking and greener pastures abroad for trafficking across borders. The triggers that make people more susceptible to trafficking arise from broad social issues. However, poverty provides some explanation. It does not necessarily capture the complex dimensions that has contributed to making certain groups more susceptible to trafficking (Sesay, 2004). Wider exclusion is also significant particularly gender inequality. Most victims are either women or children, and many time both (Okojie, 2009). Traditional gender roles, gender inequality (UNDP, 2011) and Customs such as polygamy and child fostering increase these groups vulnerability (Caning, 2006). These not only provide the factors that drive irregular migration in general, hut also the added dimensions of coercion and exploitation that distinguish trafficking. Even when many of these young people have some education hut are not able to get jobs, they feel that they could find jobs elsewhere and of course and this makes them very vulnerable to the manipulation of the traffickers who capitalize on their desperation. However, unemployment has been identified as another causative factor of human trafficking. Citizens from other Africa countries who have intra-state conflicts in their countries end up as refugees and some of them ending up doing menial jobs or fall prey to traffickers. No doubt the political and economic situations in various African countries contribute to rendering African people vulnerable to human traffickers (Aghu, 2003).

Gender is one of the primary dimensions of vulnerability to trafficking. Unemployment is especially high among women, with labour markets tightly structured and gender hierarchies (Truong, 2006). Gender discrimination is wide spread (UNDP, 2011) and this results in many women being highly dependent on others, in particular men, and sometimes entering into sexual relationships with them (Carling, 2006). It also leads to objectification, domestic violence and the lower status of girls within a family, generally the first to be removed from education if money is tight (UNESCO 2006, Okojie, 2009, Attoh, 2009). Well established patterns of violence can permeate women's lives from early childhood and extend well into their adult lives. Children, like women are also high vulnerable to trafficking. The practice of polygamy as well as lack of information and access to family planning can result in multinucleated families with large numbers of children that the woman remain responsible for if the families break down (Okojie,2009,Attoh,2009). The death of a parent or carer is also a frequent trigger of childhood vulnerability particularly as Nigeria has a markedly low life expectancy of 52 years of men and 53 years for women (United Nations Statistic Division). Children who are orphaned, especially those with HI V/AIDS are particularly susceptible to trafficking (UNESCO, 2006).

Human trafficking is a crime against all known laws. It contravenes both natural and sacred laws. Because of the cross- border nature of the crime of trafficking and in order to suppress these p:actices and bring perpetrators to justice, the response at national and international levels have put in place a number of laws, treaties, conventions and protocols dealing with human trafficking (Goliath, 2008). It is true that some of these legal instruments may not specifically address or mention trafficking, however, it is useful to observe that certain elements of these legal instruments revealed that trafficking has always been seen as not different from slavery, being primarily for sexual exploitation or forced labour (Goliath, 2008).

At the international level, there are a number of treaties, laws, protocols and conventions that Nigeria is signatory to. Prominent among these are the United Nations Convention on the Declaration of Human Rights (1948); the United Nations Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979); the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989); the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention on Forced Labour and Minimum Wage (1999); the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, especially on the Sales of a Child, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (2002); and the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (2000). Others include the African Charter on Human Rights (1980); the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (1981);

Africa Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990), and the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) Declaration and of Action against Trafficking in Persons (2001). At the national level, the 1999 constitution provides for the respect and dignity of human persons. It provides in section 34(1) that no person shall be subjected to torture, in human or degrading treatment or held in slavery or required to perform compulsory labour.

The rights of the citizens to the dignity of the human person against slavery, servitude, forced labour, prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation is also enshrined in the criminal Code of the Southern Nigeria (Cap 42, 1990) and the Penal Code of the Northern Nigeria (Cap 89, 1963); Labour Act (Cap 198, 1990); and the Trafficking in Persons Law Enforcement and Administration Act (2003). The anti-human trafficking act is the most recent and crucial because it specifically addresses human trafficking. This anti-human trafficking law was a laudable move that culminated in the establishment of the National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP). There are several provisions (Sections 11 to 29, 32 and 46) of the antihuman trafficking act of NAPTIP prescribing different punishment ranging from one year to life imprisonment for serious offences such as exportation or importation of girls under the age of 18 years for prostitution, forced labour, servitude or removal of organ by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud or deception. The seriousness of this law is underscored by its section 61(1) which provides for: where an offence under the act is committed by any citizen or person granted permanent residence in Nigeria, she/he maybe prosecuted in respect of such offence as if it was committed in any place within Nigeria. This law also vests the power to arrest, search and seize on police, immigration, custom and National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) officials. Similarly, the federal and state high courts have concurrent jurisdiction to try any of the offences under the law.

Trafficking in humans is one of the fastest growing criminal activities in the world. Human trafficking “targets the trafficked person as an object of criminal exploitation” To be considered trafficking, the act must contain an element of coercion, fraud or force unless the victim is under eighteen and is involved in commercial sex acts. The purpose of the trafficking enterprises is to profit from the exploitation of the victim. It is estimated that human trafficking yields between seven and ten billion dollars a year falling behind only weapons and drug trafficking. In 2005, Patrick Belser of international Labour Organization estimated a global annual profit of \$31.6 billion (Belser 2005). For example, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) focuses on the criminal justice element of crimes that include human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants. In 1999, it proposed a “Global Program against Trafficking in Human Beings” that would focus on the role of organized crime groups in smuggling and trafficking and a new development of criminal justice—related responses (UNODC 1999). In May 2011 it issued a report on organized crime's role in smuggling West African migrants into the EU (UNODC 2011). The UN office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights states at the outset on its website that “At a time when some 214 million people are on the move globally, the UN Human Rights office has identified migration as a priority and is working to identify the protection gaps in law, policy and practice that leave migrants vulnerable to abuse at international borders” (UNODC 2011). The vulnerability of prospective victims is exploited in many respects; the victims most of whom are pre-teens, teenagers and mostly females are taken away from their homelands to cities within their countries. Many of them are engaged in cheap labour such as domestic servants, hawkers, beggars, and prostitute.

### **National Security**

National security literature and definitions of national security is copious and is still growing (Oche 2005; Okodolor, 2004; Imobighe 1998; Buzan; 1983 Matthew, 1989; Brown, 1977; and McNamara 1968). The proliferation of definitions of national security is essentially because the process of discursively 'securitising vulnerable referent objects (i.e. individual, nation- state or the

global system) and defining particular risks, is therefore a political one (Weaver, 1995), which usually depends on who is grappling with the subject. It is therefore common to see reference being made to human security, national security, international security, state security, regime security, corporate security, among others. The conception of national security in this paper identifies with the revisionist thinking on the subject matter (Gambo, 2008; Onuoha, 2007), which sees national security<sup>1</sup> from the point of view of human security. According to Onuoha (2007:4), human security entails: Freedom from actual and potential threats to human life, safety and survival which may arise as a result of human actions or inactions, or from natural disaster such as flood, earthquake, famine, drought, disease and other non-man-made calamitous events resulting in death, human suffering and material damage.

National security is therefore understood in the context of this writing to mean the ability of the state to protect its citizenry from hunger, poverty, ignorance, disease, and all forms of defenselessness (Okoli, 2012). This entails protecting the citizens from all forms of social, political, ecological, territorial, as well as cosmic vulnerabilities. This conception of national security marks a radical departure from the orthodox perspective which conceives of national security merely from defence/military centric point of view (Alkali, 2003). As relevant and fundamental as the concept of security is to human societies, it has not only defied any consensus but has created a "battleground of ideological contention". No matter the conception of security, an important point is that it underpins human existence. Thus, states define security within the context of their core values, interests, culture, prestige and socio-economic order. Transformations in the global arena have produced certain mutations in the conceptualisation of national security: the focus has moved from an emphasis on protecting and maintaining the state to a focus on the well-being of the people, that is, human security. Within this context, therefore, national security is equated with, and denotes, physical safety of individuals and groups and freedom from threats, anxiety or danger. This people-centric focus of contemporary national security presupposes that the state must facilitate unfettered access to, and enjoyment of, fundamental human rights by citizens. In other words, actions that tend to abbreviate or abridge fundamental human rights constitute insecurity.

The task of maintaining national security is as much the responsibility of the government as it is of the citizens. For the state to play its role as an impartial restraining force and thus maintain the delicate balance that could trigger insecurity, it ought to be aloof and non-aligned in the resolution of recurrent conflicts of interest within the polity. What has happened in Nigeria is that the state immersed itself in the class struggle instead of rising above it, and thus became a target of aggression arising from feelings of deprivation. 70.82% of the total population in Nigeria live under extreme poverty (less than \$1 a day) and Nigeria is the of 8.03% of the world's poor; the death rate is 13.48 deaths/1000 population; 51% of girls are out of school; the average life expectancy is less than 1000 live birth; under-five mortality rate of 138/1000 live births; maternal mortality rate of 840 deaths/100,000 live births; insignificant drugs; human development index is one the lowest in the world? This is in spite of the fact that Nigeria is a wealthy nation, earning over \$400 billion of oil revenue alone over the years of our existence. In fact according to a New York Times report "Nigeria is the World's 6th Most Populous and expected to hit 300 million in 25 years at the rate of 2.553% growth.

What plans do we have for education, healthcare, food, employment, drinking water, housing, electricity, etc? Meanwhile a reporter from the NY Times made an observation of the living condition she saw somewhere in Lagos in which:

*...a typical apartment block known as "face me, face you"...whole families squeeze into a 7-by-11-foot rooms along a narrow corridor Up to 50 people share a kitchen, toilet and sink though the pipes in the neighbourhood often no longer carry water... At... primary school, more than 100 students cram in most classrooms, two to a desk.. As graduates pour out of high schools and universities, Nigeria's unemployment rate is nearly 50 percent for people in*



*urban areas ages 15 to 24 driving crime and discontent...(The New York Times, 2012).*

Governments all over the world, particularly those of developing countries, are increasingly recognizing that threats to national interests/security are more likely to stem from internal than external sources. Such threats can assume different forms in different countries at different times. Against this background the question is how does one evaluate the implications of human trafficking for national security in Nigeria? One must begin by acknowledging the fact that it is the sole responsibility of a government to guarantee the security of its citizens, and as a matter of fact, it is this responsibility that gives any government its legitimacy. In the case of Nigeria, the responsibility to protect and guarantee security is clearly spelt out in Sec 14(2) (b) of the 1999 Constitution which states that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government (Federal Government 1999 Nigerian constitution)." This is the basis for the social contract in which we as citizens of Nigeria surrender some of our freedoms in addition to submitting ourselves to the authority relating to governance in order for us to enjoy the full protection of our remaining rights. These rights which include those of life; dignity of human persons; personal liberty; fair hearing; private and family life; freedom of thought, conscience and religion; freedom of expression; peaceful assembly and association; freedom of movement; and freedom from discrimination, are enshrined in sections 33 to 43 of Nigeria's Constitution.

### **Trends and Patterns of Human Trafficking in Nigeria**

Nigeria is the most populous country with an estimated population of 150 million and over 250 ethnic groups. Since the last decade Nigeria has emerged as one of the fastest growing economies in sub-Saharan Africa. Between 2001 and 2008, Nigeria sustained an average annual growth rate of six per cent (UNDP, 2011). Nigeria is recognised in countries both within Africa and Europe as a vibrant centre for art, music and culture. In respect of significant progress, the country still faces ongoing challenges. Wider measures of human development have not kept pace with improvements in growth. As at 2011, 61 per cent of Nigerians or 112.519 million people live in absolute poverty (National Bureau of Statistics 2011). The country also faces many other challenges in its transition to democracy. Corruption is reported as a problem across many governments (Transparency International 2011). The country is ranked in the bottom quartile across many of the World Bank Governance indicator, including rule of law, control of corruption and political stability (Kaufman et al 2010). Insecurity, poverty and free movement around the ECOWAS area in West Africa have all contributed to a range of long term migration challenges in Nigeria. Millions have been internally displaced, particularly in cities across the north, due to religious and ethnic conflicts. This insecurity also accounts for the many Nigeria people seeking refuge and asylum each year.

According to UNHCR, Nigeria was the seventh highest country of origin in the world for refugees just below Iraq and Afghanistan (UNHCR 2009). This well established history of migration, combined with other facilitating factors such as inequality and instability has led to concerns around the instances of trafficking in persons from Nigeria. Due in part to the large size of Nigeria's population, the country has been named by the United Nations Organized Drug and Crime (UNODC) as one of the top eight countries of origin for human trafficking alongside Thailand, China, Albania, Bulgaria, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine. It is a global demand driven business, with a huge market for cheap labour and commercial sex. It involves exploiting vulnerable people like needy women, children and young men with offers of employment and better life abroad. The suffering and indignity meted out to trafficked victims in the process of transporting them and at the various destinations, especially those abroad, had become a huge source of embarrassment to Nigeria's integrity as a nation with responsibility to safeguard the interest of her nationals. There are forms of manifestation of these indignities prostitution, child labour and under aged domestic services. According to the Swedish Institute, estimate 40,000-50,000 women were trafficked from Nigeria between 1990 and 2005 (Swedish Institute 2010).

According to a report from the United States State Department of Trafficking in persons, Nigeria is a source, transit and destination country for women and children trafficked for the purposes of forced labour are commercial sexual exploitation. Within Nigeria, women and girls are trafficked primarily for domestic servitude and commercial exploitation (US Department of State Trafficking in persoll Report 2012).

From Lagos in South West Nigeria to Enugu, Anambra, Akwa-Ihom and Kano States, there have been reports of the National Agency for Prohibition and Trafficking in persons and other Related Matters (NAPTIP), arresting or detaining suspects over human trafficking. According to UNESCO (2006) in its research report entitled, "Human Trafficking in Nigeria: Roots causes and Recommendations" by a team of researchers, it gav a figure of 1,800,000 orphans living in Nigeria. The report said these children are vulnerable to trafficking. The report mentioned domestic help 'Diya' or blood money, begging and baby harvesting as purposes people engage in human trafficking while it said various factors are responsible for it.

Kuta lamented that Nigeria's notoriety as a veritable source of the human commodity was such that baby factories were springing up in illegal hospitals and maternity homes where expectant teenagers were harbored with a view to selling off their new horn. In fact, UNICEF has estimated that at least 10 children are sold daily in Nigeria and will ultimately he subjected to inhuman treatments and other forms of involuntary servitude in Europe and other parts of the world, he said (Kuta, 2011). He adds that "the mode of operation of the human trafficking cartel entails deception, forgery, bribery, and other despicable acts of illegalities in carrying out the recruitment, transportation, smuggling, transfer, incarceration, harboring or receipt of human beings for the purpose of exploitation" (Kuta,2011).

Nigeria trafficking is also part of a well developed globalised market with a wide international reach. However Europe is a major destination region of people trafficked from Nigeria. The majority of people trafficked to Nigeria are trafficked to other West Africa Countries such as Ghana. Incidences of people being trafficked from Nigeria to North Africa including Morocco (MSF 2011), the Middle East (including Gulf States such as Dubai) and Central Asia have also been reported. Trafficking methods and routes continuously evolve in response to immigration controls and anti-trafficking initiatives. The scale and volume of human trafficking originating from Nigeria should not he understood simply as a 'national' phenomenon. The incidence of human trafficking varies considerably across different regions and the nature of the trafficking and destination country is strongly determined by the specific context. In particular the paper identified that trafficking victims who come to Europe originate from the state of Edo in the South Central part of the country and the Niger Delta (Buker, 2007, Attoh, 2009). Benin City, the capital of Edo State is widely regarded as the central hub of Nigeria's trafficking particularly to Europe. There is also evidence to suggest that women are trafficked from some big cities in Nigeria such as Lagos, Ibadan Sapele and Warn (Buker, 2007). Trafficking from the northern largely Muslim part of the country is carried out particularly between Nigeria and Gulf Countries such as Saudi Arabia under the cover of pilgrimage (UNESCO 2006). This has been used to traffic girls for sexual exploitation, men for labour exploitation and children for a range of reasons. People living in border regions such as Sokoto are also overrepresented in incidences of trafficking. Furthermore, trafficked victims are more likely to he recruited from rural rather urban areas where residents have greater access to education and employment and where traditionalist structures are less determinist. The targeting of rural areas is felt to have increased as awareness has risen in urban areas (Caning, 2006; Okojie, 2009).

The driving force for human trafficking in Nigeria is multifaceted, poverty though identified as the major cause cannot fully explain it. As mentioned earlier on unemployment, ignorance, collapse of protective environment are contributory factors. However, the worst form of motivation for human trafficking is greed and quest for quick wealth on the part of the traffickers who go to any extent

to deceive victims. They are the ones who flaunt their life styles of unexplained wealth and use it to lure their victims.

### **Effects of Human Trafficking on National Security in a Globalized World**

It is argued that on some levels, most, if not all, crimes have a negative effect on a people's way of life. However, there are a few crimes that are so caustic to a society that they can bring down the collective rather than just individuals. One of the major drawbacks of globalization is that it could adversely affect national security by contributing to the causes of terrorism. Perl (2000) stated that "the globalization of the international economy, the internationalization of market and the integration of organized criminal activities into this changing market structure have transformed largely domestic criminal issues to issues with broader implications." The traditional barriers of time, distance, space are broken down in this connected world of open borders, deregulation and free movement of people, money and services. This connected world allowed criminal organizations, terrorists, drug traffickers, and human traffickers to operate in environments that are not highly regulated. In addition, globalization and modern communication systems have opened the door for smaller groups and private individuals to accumulate wealth at levels that were generally attainable only by nation states.

One could observe that efforts to support globalization and efforts to protect national security are at odds. As aptly stated by a migration expert," where as globalization demands and fosters the expansion of international travel, extending across all social strata and poor as well as affluent countries. National security calls for the imposition of restrictive controls that will impede movement" (Helton 2002). Trafficking in humans can become a threat to national security due to the relative ease of travel and communication in both the domestic and foreign realm. This paper does not argue that Nigeria should move from globalization to isolationism; our argument is that small world created by globalization allows the crime of trafficking in humans to thrive, and for players in unstable nations to infiltrate the borders of Nigeria and affect the country's national security.

Anytime there is a motive to illegally penetrate the borders of a country, national security questions are raised. One noticeable threat comes from common criminals who enter Nigeria illegally and may view Nigeria as fertile ground for violence. To a minor degree, the very nature of these criminals represents a national security threat because they hurt the way of life for thousands of Nigerians. The second obvious threat is from terrorists and spies. Indeed, if terrorists and spies seek to gain access to Nigeria they may do so by using human traffickers. Those who traffic humans will often traffic drugs and weapons which have long been recognized as national security threats. Once the structure is established, including the formation of professional contacts and routes, the manner in which traffickers move drugs, weapons into Nigeria becomes identical. Most crimes, on some level, depress a community and break down the fabric of society. Trafficking of humans is a crime that, by its very nature, breeds more crime. Every time a trafficked person is brought into Nigeria, a crime has been committed. Every time a sex slave is forced to have sex or a trafficked worker is forced to work, another crime is committed. When a trafficked individual is beaten to comply with his handler's demand, a crime is committed. Indeed, every second an individual is being held against his or her will, a crime is being committed. These criminal acts against the people and state and the latter's inability to put a halt to them have generated calls for the international community to work collaboratively (see Annan, 2000) in order to end human trafficking that they are associated with.

### **Conclusion**

From the facts presented it is indeed obvious that there exists a significant relationship between human trafficking, human security and national security. In Nigeria, human trafficking is fast becoming an organized international crime. It stimulates and continues to thrive because of poverty; ignorance, selfishness, greed, corruption and lack of state policy capacity to translate

policy into action, in fact, worsening human security. The result of the harsh economic realities in Nigeria such as limited job opportunities for both skilled and unskilled labour, lack of welfare package to cater for the needs of the unemployed, get-rich-quick syndrome and ignorance have contributed to its sustenance.

The causes of trafficking in Nigeria are complex. Many people are involved, not all of whom fit the persona of an evil trafficker. Trafficking networks involve people from multiple countries. However, the nature of these connections is often different due to the complex, corporate structure of organized criminal networks. Trafficking from Nigeria is carried out at household level. Trafficker and exploiter are habitually friends. Relatives are also connected to some degree with the victims. The role of organised criminal networks should not be underplayed, particularly with respect to sexual exploitation. Considering the implication of this foregoing nexus between domestic and international trafficking in humans (in whole and in parts) to human and national security which needs to be tackled headlong, the paper agrees with Antony Blinken, the U.S. Secretary of State, that we should "stand together and press for accountability from those leaders who condone and support human trafficking, create conditions ripe for mass exploitation, and perpetuate this fundamental insult to human dignity" (U.S. Department of State, 2022). Nigeria is not an exception to this and so should not be left behind.

### **Recommendations**

To achieve this, there is the need to reduce worsening human threats associated with human trafficking; the crime must be clearly recognized as a human and national security threat by all. The following would need to be adopted:

Firstly, there is the need for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) to strengthen cooperation among member states in efforts aimed at combating human trafficking in the continent.

Secondly, there is the need to enhance human development such as investment in basic social services, education campaigns in schools, vocational training and offering alternatives to parents with large families in form of micro credits schemes in order to reduce unemployment and quick urge to travel outside the country.

Thirdly, it is important for National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) to facilitate the work of Non Governmental Bodies and other governmental agencies to ensure that the response to trafficking addresses the fundamental drivers of trafficking namely, greed, corruption and get-rich-quick syndrome prevalent in the country.

"Far more illuminating is that human security...should be an all-inclusive threshold" which should in reality underscore the three pillars identified by Koffi Annan namely, "i) freedom from want; ii) freedom from fear and; iii) the freedom to live in dignity" (Akpuru-Aja, 2020, p.61).

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