

Modern Day slavery and child trafficking: Implications for Nigerian Education

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Article History	Abstract
Original Research Article	<i>This paper examines the concept of modern day slavery and child trafficking, implications for Nigerian educational issues. For some decades now, modern day slavery have taken a dangerous dimension with far reaching consequences for individuals, households, communities and the Nigerian society at large. Modern day slavery also regarded as human trafficking has become a serious concern for successive Nigerian governments, non-governmental organisations and religious bodies with children and women being the most vulnerable groups. It is an organized crime with global reach affecting individuals from diverse backgrounds with victims being exploited in informal or unregistered sector. Despite legislative frameworks and international cooperation, these issues persist, fueled by poverty, ignorance, and cultural norms. Education plays a critical role in preventing and combating human trafficking, yet the educational system in Nigeria face several challenges in addressing these issues effectively. This paper will analyse the intersection of education and modern day slavery in Nigeria, highlighting educational issues, challenges, and potential solutions. It explores the role of education in raising awareness, promoting critical thinking and empowering individuals to recognise and resist trafficking. This human rights issues emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach that integrates education with policy, community engagement, and social protection to combat the hydra-headed phenomenon of child trafficking. There should be concerted efforts to identify, prevent and support victims as well as prosecute perpetrators to serve as deterrents.</i> Keywords: Baby factory, child trafficking, educational issues, slavery.
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INTRODUCTION

Modern-day slavery and child trafficking have emerged as one of the most pervasive human rights and developmental challenges confronting contemporary societies. Although slavery was formally abolished in most parts of the world centuries ago, its modern manifestations continue to thrive through practices such as human trafficking, forced labour, debt bondage, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, child labour, organ trafficking, and the recruitment of children for criminal activities (ILO, 2015) Walk Free, & IOM, 2022). Unlike historical slavery, modern-day slavery often operates through deception, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, and organized criminal networks, making it difficult to detect and eradicate.

Nigeria remains one of the countries significantly affected by child trafficking and other forms of modern slavery due

to a combination of poverty, unemployment, weak institutional enforcement, cultural practices, armed conflicts, internal displacement, and the growing influence of transnational trafficking syndicates (UNODC, 2024). Children constitute one of the most vulnerable groups because they are frequently exploited for domestic servitude, forced labour, street hawking, commercial sexual exploitation, illegal adoption, forced begging, and other forms of abuse that deprive them of their fundamental rights and opportunities for healthy development (NAPTIP, 2024).

The Nigerian educational system is both a victim and a potential solution to the menace of modern-day slavery and child trafficking. Education provides children with knowledge, critical thinking skills, life skills, and

opportunities that reduce their vulnerability to exploitation. Conversely, children who are trafficked often experience interrupted schooling, chronic absenteeism, poor academic performance, psychological trauma, social exclusion, and permanent school dropout (UNESCO, 2023). These consequences undermine the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which seeks to ensure inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all.

Several studies have supported that socio-economic inequalities significantly contribute to child trafficking in Nigeria. According to Aderinto (2015), widespread poverty, family disintegration, and inadequate social welfare systems compel many families to expose children to risky migration and labour arrangements that often culminate in trafficking.

Similarly, Okoli and Umeakuana (2021) observed that unemployment, insecurity, poor governance, and community-level deprivation continue to create favourable conditions for traffickers to exploit vulnerable children across rural and urban communities.

Beyond its humanitarian implications, child trafficking poses serious educational challenges. Children who become victims frequently lose access to formal education, vocational training, emotional support, and social protection, thereby limiting their future productivity and national development. The psychological consequences including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, fear, and post-traumatic stress disorder further impair victims' ability to learn effectively even after they are rescued and reintegrated into schools (UNICEF, 2023). Scholars like Olagbegi and Akinola (2022), have also noted that trafficking perpetuates educational inequality by disproportionately affecting children from economically disadvantaged households and marginalized communities.

Furthermore, the persistence of insecurity, communal conflicts, terrorism, banditry, and internal displacement in several parts of Nigeria has increased children's vulnerability to trafficking and forced exploitation. The displacement of families disrupts educational continuity and exposes children to traffickers who often disguise exploitation as opportunities for education, employment, apprenticeship, or migration (UNODC, 2024). This situation threatens national efforts toward human capital development and educational transformation.

Education itself represents one of the most effective preventive strategies against modern-day slavery. Schools serve not only as centres for academic instruction but also as platforms for child protection, civic education, human rights awareness, digital literacy, and early identification of vulnerable children. Integrating anti-trafficking education into school curricula, strengthening school-community

partnerships, training teachers to recognize warning signs, and promoting child rights education can significantly reduce children's vulnerability to exploitation (FME, 2021; NAPTIP, 2024).

Against this background, this paper examines the phenomenon of modern-day slavery and child trafficking, with particular attention to their implications for Nigerian education. It explores the underlying causes, educational consequences, and policy responses while proposing practical strategies for strengthening educational institutions as instruments for preventing child trafficking and promoting sustainable national development.

Occurrence of Child Trafficking

People are trafficked both internationally and within countries, and they are exposed to a broad spectrum of physical, psychological, sexual and social ills. Over the past two decades, the incidence of human trafficking has increased significantly in Nigeria due to a combination of interconnected factors such as globalization, economic instability, widespread poverty, armed conflict, weak legal and institutional frameworks, inadequate legislation, and limited political commitment to combating the crime (Joshi, 2016). For many years human trafficking has been a substantial criminal activity, but it garnered relatively little state attention until there was more public activism. The campaign of Mrs. Titi Atiku, wife of the former Vice President of Nigeria, was a crucial milestone in raising national awareness and led to the founding of the Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation (WOTCLEF). The organization initiated ongoing initiatives to create awareness on the rising cases of human trafficking and need for institutional solutions to safeguard the vulnerable, notably women and children.

These lobbying efforts to rehabilitate the image of Nigeria in the world community and to protect the dignity and rights of women and children also saw the introduction of legislative efforts to form an agency to tackle human trafficking. The process led to the establishment of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and Other Related Matters (NAPTIP) with the statutory responsibility to prevent, investigate and prosecute human trafficking offences as well as provide protection, rehabilitation and reintegration services for survivors (Babandele, 2005; WOTCLEF, 2020). The NAPTIP, since its inception, has been the lead government institution charged with the coordination of the national anti-trafficking efforts through law enforcement, public awareness campaigns, inter-agency collaboration and victim support programmes aimed at reducing the occurrence and impact of human trafficking in Nigeria.

The security problems posed by human trafficking are particularly huge as it is inextricably tied to transnational organized crime networks involved in other illegal operations such as money laundering, arms trafficking, advance fee fraud and other criminal businesses (Ogwu, 2014). Trafficking in persons is not an isolated offence, but rather a complex criminal enterprise where diverse actors execute specialized duties in order to aid the recruitment, transportation, exploitation and concealment of victims. Recruiters are one of the most important aspects of these trafficking rings, often preying on economically poor communities by fooling families and vulnerable individuals with false promises of school, jobs, or a better life. These recruiters may be relatives, friends, in-laws, commercial drivers, business operators, law enforcement officers and other trusted members of the society who leverage existing social relationships to win the trust of potential victims and their families (Women's Health and Action Research Centre, 2015). Such misleading recruitment methods demonstrate the complexity of human trafficking and the necessity for holistic prevention strategies that address both its socioeconomic drivers and the organized criminal organizations that underpin it.

Socio-Religious Overview of Child Trafficking as Modern-Day Slavery

Slavery has also been regulated, supported or opposed on religious grounds in history. In Judaism slaves were granted a range of treatments and safeguards. They were to be considered as extended family members with certain protections and could be emancipated. Religion has been called a technique of enslaving and deceiving one's fellow man. This was the foundation of the conceptions of religion of Auguste Comte and Karl Marx (Odudele, 2017). However, child trafficking is generally condemned since it violates the sanctity of human life and the moral duty to protect children. Christianity holds that each child is made in the image of God and deserves love, care, justice and protection (Genesis 1:27; Matthew 19:14).

Similarly, Islam upholds the dignity of every human being and prohibits oppression, exploitation, and injustice against vulnerable persons, including children (Qur'an 17:70). The African religions also emphasise communal responsibility, respect for human life, and the collective upbringing of children, making child exploitation morally unacceptable. Despite these religious teachings, child trafficking persists in many communities mainly due to the misuse of religious beliefs, poverty, greed, and moral decline. Human trafficking is an unlawful business and social problem. It is a social problem because it affects many people, the magnitude, trends and patterns it has taken over the years remains a sour taste in the mouth.

The company has brought enormous hardship to the victims who are mainly women and children (Foundation of forum, 2014). "Most crimes require a giver and a taker to be successful" To make trafficking work, there must be persons who help or assist the victims to move and be transported to a specific place.

The habit of placing disadvantaged children with better-off friends or family can be a source of risk. Some parents sell their children not only for money but also with the hope that their children will escape from the circumstances of chronic poverty and migrate to a place where they will have a better life and greater opportunities (Adepelumi, 2015).

Factors Encouraging Child Trafficking in Contemporary Nigerian

It is necessary to cast a cursory glance at four major factors that motivate child trafficking in contemporary Nigeria. They are: Poverty, Conflict, Weak Legal System, Lack of Adequate Legislation and Political Will;

Poverty: Poverty is one of the major core reasons of child trafficking in current Nigeria society and it is prevalent. It is the key driver of this trade, pushing vulnerable people into the hands of traffickers Nigeria is an impoverished country with most of her people living in abject penury, despite her vast resources. Many families cannot meet their basic necessities, rendering them vulnerable to traffickers who tempt them with financial incentives. Some parents expose their children to traffickers inadvertently while looking for better prospects (Akor, 2022). (Osiruemu 2017) states that poverty breeds poverty. This is because poor people are likely to stay poor as they deny their children educational chances and hence inherit poverty from their parents.

Conflict: Another important element. The World Bank research shows more than 1.5 billion people in violent conflict-affected nations. Conflict is a driver of trafficking, migration and poverty. Today in Nigeria, there are some prone zones, Boko Haram kidnapped school students trafficked them and employed them as troops and fighters. They kidnapped young girls, sold them into slavery and forced them into marriage (Adesina, 2015).

Weak enforcement system: The porous borders, corrupt government officials, the involvement of organized criminal groups or networks and inadequate capacity of our immigration and law enforcement agents to manage borders are factors that contribute to human trafficking in Nigeria (Kara, 2015) Most of our law enforcement agents do compromise and coordinate with traffickers in exchange for money. Bribery and corruption.

Lack of Adequate Legislation and Political Will: Other factors facilitating child trafficking include lack of adequate

legislation and political will and commitment to execute existing legislation or regulations. Good enforcement of anti-trafficking laws continued by the Government of Nigeria. The Trafficking in Persons Law Enforcement and Administration Act of 2003, revised in 2005 to tighten punishments for trafficking offenders, outlaws all kinds of human trafficking. The law provides a sentence of 10 to 15 years imprisonment for an offence of sex trafficking or a Fine equivalent to about \$1,250 or both (Nnadi, 2014). But the implementation has been problematic.

Baby Factory and Health Effects of Child Trafficking in Nigeria

The term baby factory gained prominence in Nigeria during the early 2000s, following several police raids on illegal maternity homes. Many young women housed in these centres are victims of deception, sexual abuse or economic hardship. Some operators of this homes lure teenage girls with shelter, employment, education or even marriage opportunities but after delivery, their babies are sold to interested buyers, often without proper legal adoption procedures (Eze- Anaba & Isah, 2020).

Makinde (2018) states that baby factory is a system that facilitates child trafficking and the exploitation of young girls through undesired pregnancy. What is worthy to remark is that this nasty tendency is on the upswing despite the extensively promoted awareness campaigns U.S. Department of state (2019). The ILO (2014) explains that baby factories are carried out in buildings, hospitals or orphanages that house young girls and women to give birth to infants for sale on the illicit market, generally to infertile couples, or into trafficking rings. This new form of abuse operates in a shadow simply because of the stigma attached to undesirable conception by teenagers and poor economic status exposes them to offer themselves for little financial gain and societal expectation on couples to have children (Omerie, Iheriohanma Osita Njokwu, & Omerie, 2015).

The commercialization of babies has transformed childbirth into a criminal enterprise, as children are treated like commodities rather than human beings with rights and dignity. In fact, a dangerous dimension has been added to this business as some young women deliberately get pregnant and registers in this centres with a definite price for boys and girls on delivery.

In many Nigerian communities, teenage pregnancy is associated with shame and social rejection, fear of stigmatization drives pregnant teenagers to seek refuge in unregistered maternity homes, where they are vulnerable to exploitation (Nwankwo, 2021).

Sociological Implications of Child Trafficking in Contemporary Nigeria

The sociological implications of child trafficking in contemporary Nigeria goes beyond the exploitation of individual children to affect families, communities, educational institutions, and national development. It reflects deep- rooted structural inequality such as poverty, unemployment, weak social institutions, family disintegration, gender, inequality, and poor governance. The phenomenon is not merely a criminal act but a manifestation of social dysfunction arising from the failure of societal institutions to adequately protect vulnerable children and ensure equitable access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities(Akor, 2011; Aderinto,2015)

It has been observed that the victims of human trafficking are not permitted to leave upon arrival at their destination. They are held against their will through acts of coercion and forced to work or provide services to the traffickers. It is important to note the following sociological implication of child trafficking in contemporary Nigeria: Child labour, Domestic Slavery, Trafficked victims and Sex Trafficking.

Child Labour: Child labour consists of children carrying out domestic activities, hawking and farm work whether paid or unpaid. Child labour is hazardous to the physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development of children in Nigeria (Terkura, 2019). It refers to occupying and employing children at regular and sustained labour.

Domestic Slavery: This is when someone is being treated as a slave engaged in several domestic and other jobs of his/her owner or master. It is the least known form of labour trafficking today, and yet it is the most widely used method of enslaving people. Domestic slave can be identified through bondage, lack of freedom, complete submission of oneself to the master and lack of self-liberty (Egbefo, 2019)

Trafficked Victims: Trafficked victims from Nigeria are exposed to psychological problems such as; social alienation both in home and host countries, and intolerance to make reintegration into their local communities difficult, stigmatization, social exclusion.

Sexual Exploitation: Sexual exploitation is a type of domestic violence perpetrated on women or children that take place in diverse settings and usually involves many different actors. It is an aspect of human trafficking that is becoming a pandemic in society and possibly, the fastest growing human rights violation in the world today. Sex trafficking in female resembles the ancient dehumanizing slave trade.

Consequences of Child Trafficking

1. Physical and Psychological Harm: Children who are trafficked often suffer physical abuse,

malnutrition, illness and lack of medical care. They experience physical and emotional trauma, depression, anxiety, and post-trauma stress disorder which can affect them for life.

2. **Loss of Education:** Trafficked Children are usually derived access to education. This limits their skills and knowledge, reducing future employment opportunities and trapping them into poverty and dependence.
3. **Breakdown of Family Life:** Child trafficking separates children from their families, causing emotional pain and long-term distress for both the child and their relatives. Families may also face social stigma from the community.
4. **Social Isolation and Stigmatization:** Survivors of child trafficking often face discrimination and rejection when they return to society. Stigma makes it difficult for them to reintegrate and build relationships.
5. **Reinforcement of Poverty and Inequality:** Child trafficking mainly affects poor and marginalized communities. It deepens existing social and economic inequalities by exploiting vulnerable children and denying them opportunities for social mobility.
6. **Damage to Moral and Social Values:** The existence of child trafficking weakens social norms that protect children. It normalizes exploitation and violence, reducing society's sensitivity to human rights abuses.
7. **Long-term Impact on Society:** At a societal level, child trafficking reduces human capital, weakens social cohesion and slows national development. A society that fails to protect its children risks long term instability.

Implications for Nigerian Educational Issues

Modern-day slavery and child trafficking have profound and far-reaching consequences for Nigeria's educational system. Beyond being criminal and human rights violations, these practices deeply undermine children's access to schooling, educational quality, psychological well-being, and long-term national development. In Nigeria, where trafficking occurs internally and across borders, the educational repercussions are both immediate and generational. According to a 2025 report by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), indicate that about 75% of traffic victims in Nigeria are of school age, showing a direct link between trafficking and educational vulnerability (Daily Post 2025).

1. Denial of Access to Education

One of the most direct implication of child trafficking is the outright denial of educational opportunities. Children who

are trafficked for domestic servitude, street hawking, agricultural labour, sexual exploitation or forced marriage are removed from school environments (ILO, 2022). Many of these children come from rural communities with already fragile educational systems, and when trafficked, their schooling is abruptly interrupted.

In Nigeria, trafficking networks frequently target vulnerable families in economically disadvantaged regions, particularly in parts of northern and southern Nigeria. Victims may be promised access to better schooling or job opportunities in urban centers such as Lagos, Abuja or Port Harcourt but instead end up in exploitative conditions. This deception erodes trust in legitimate educational migration and discourages parents from supporting future schooling opportunities for their children.

1Increased School Dropout Rates

Modern slavery contributes significantly to Nigeria's high school dropout rates. When children are trafficked or forced into labour to supplement family income, education becomes secondary survival (UNODC, 2023). Girls are most vulnerable, as trafficking often intersects with forced marriage and domestic servitude. The long-term implication is increased population of out-of-school children-estimated to be among the highest globally. As dropout rate grows, educational attainment levels decline, weakening the nation's human capital development.

2. Psychological Trauma and Learning Barrier

Furthermore, the psychological trauma experienced by rescued victims equally makes reintegration into school challenging, often leading to repeated dropout cycles. Trafficked children frequently endure physical abuse, emotional manipulation, and sexual violence. These experiences result in trauma related disorders such as anxiety, depression and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Even when rescued and re-enrolled in school, survivors, often struggle with concentration, trust-building and classroom participation (ILO, 2022). Nigerian schools especially public schools are not equipped with trauma-informed support systems such as counselling services or specialized educators. The absence of psycho-social infrastructure hinder the educational recovery of survivors and perpetuates academic under performance.

3. Gender Inequality in Education

Child trafficking exacerbates gender disparities in Nigerian education. Girls are disproportionately trafficked for domestic work and sexual exploitation, reinforcing harmful gender norms that devalue girls' education (UNODC, 2023). Families in poverty may prioritize boys' schooling while girls are sent away under false promises of work or apprenticeship. This undermines national efforts to achieve gender parity in education and weakens the broader goals aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development

and Goals (SDGS), especially SDG4 (Quality Education) and SDG5 (Gender Equality). The educational system thus reflects and reproduces broader societal inequalities fueled by trafficking practices.

4. Strain on Educational Policy and Resources

Modern-day slavery creates policy challenges for Nigerian educational authorities. Bodies such as the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) work to rescue and rehabilitate victims, but reintegration of survivors into formal schooling requires coordinated educational planning. Schools must address age-grade mismatches, literacy gaps and vocational redirection for older survivors. Limited funding, overcrowded classrooms and teacher shortages make individualized support difficult. Consequently, the educational system struggle to provide inclusive learning environments that can adequately support trafficking survivors.

5. Intergeneration Cycles of Poverty and Illiteracy

The educational implication of trafficking extend beyond individual victims. When children are denied schooling, their future employment prospects diminish, increasing the likelihood that they or their future children will remain trapped in poverty. This perpetuates a cycle in which limited educational attainment fuels vulnerability to further exploitation (ILO, 2022). Communities with high trafficking prevalence mostly experience lower literacy rates and weaker educational infrastructures. Overtime, this undermines national literacy targets and compromises Nigeria's socio-economic development. Education, which should serve as a pathway out of poverty, instead becomes another casualty of systematic exploitation.

Potential Solutions to Modern Day Slavery in Contemporary Nigeria.

Addressing these problems requires coordinated efforts from all stakeholders, government, communities, civil society organisations, International agencies and parents. Some possible solutions that if adopted and practiced could, to a great extent reduce the incidences of modern slavery and trafficking.

Awareness Campaigns: Conduct nationwide awareness campaigns to educate communities about human trafficking. Awareness campaigns help education the public about the dangers, causes, and consequences of child trafficking and modern day slavery. This can be done through radio, television, social media, community meeting and school programmes, people become more informed of the tactics and the rights of children. Increased awareness encourages early reporting of suspicious activities and help reduce vulnerability among at-risk population (UNODC, 2021).

Education and Training: Integrate human trafficking topics into school curricula and provide training for teachers, law enforcement, and other stakeholders. Education equips children and young people with knowledge that reduces their vulnerability to exploitation. Training programs for teachers, parents, community leaders, and law enforcement personnel improve their capacity to identify trafficking cases and respond appropriately. Educational opportunities also provide alternatives to risky migration and exploitative labour practices (UNICEF, 2023.)

Community Engagement: Engage with local communities, traditional leaders, and religious institutions to promote awareness and prevention. Community engagement involves mobilizing local leaders, religious organizations, youth groups and traditional institutions to participate actively in anti-trafficking efforts. Communities that are vigilant and informed can detect suspicious activities, report offenders, and support victims more effectively (ILO, 2022.)

Strengthen Law and Polices: Enact and enforce laws that protect victims and hold traffickers accountable. Governments should enact and regularly review laws that criminalize all forms of trafficking and modern slavery. Strong legal frameworks establish clear penalties for offenders, protect victims' rights, and provide guidelines for prevention and rehabilitation efforts. Effective policies ensure coordinated responses among relevant agencies (NAPTIP, 2024).

Support Services: Provide access to counselling, healthcare, and rehabilitation services for victims. Victims of trafficking often suffer, emotional, and psychological trauma. Support services such as counselling, healthcare, legal assistance, family unification and educational support help survivors recover and reintegrate into society. These services are entail for preventing re-trafficking (UNICEF, 2023).

Safe Shelters: Establish safe shelters for victims, particularly for women and children. Safe shelters provide temporary accommodation and protection for rescued victims. Such facilities offer food, medical care, counselling, education and vocational training while victims recover from their traumatic experiences. Shelters also shed survivors from attackers who may attend to re-exploit them (UNODC, 2024).

Strengthen Law Enforcement: Enhance law enforcement capacity to investigate and prosecute trafficking cases. Law enforcement agencies require adequate funding, modern equipment, and specialized training to investigate trafficking networks effectively. Strong law enforcements increases the likelihood of arresting traffickers, dismantling

criminal networks and protecting vulnerable populations (ILO, 2022).

Judicial Training: Provide training for judges and prosecutors to handle trafficking cases effectively. Judges, prosecutors, and court officials need specialized training on trafficking laws and victim sensitive approaches. Judicial training enhances understanding of trafficking cases, improves prosecution outcomes and ensures that victims receive justice while offenders are appropriately punished (UNODC, 2024).

Collaboration: Foster collaboration between law enforcement agencies, NGOs, and international organizations. Combatting trafficking requires collaboration among government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), educational institutions, security agencies and community groups. Such cooperation promotes information sharing, resource pooling and coordinated interventions that strengthen anti-trafficking efforts (UN, 2023).

Multi-stakeholder partnerships: Collaborate with government agencies, NGOs, civil society, and private sector organizations. Multi-stakeholder partnerships bring together governments, businesses, culture, international agencies and local communities to address trafficking comprehensively. This partnerships combine expertise, funding and resources to implement sustainable anti-trafficking initiatives (ILO, 2022).

International Cooperation: Strengthen partnerships with international organizations and other countries to combat transnational trafficking. Since trafficking often crosses national borders, countries must cooperate through intelligence sharing, extradition agreements, joint investigations and international conventions. International cooperation helps trafficking networks and protect victims across different jurisdictions (UNODC, 2024).

Community-based Initiatives: According to UNICEF (2023), Support community-based initiatives and organizations working to prevent trafficking. Community-based initiatives empower local populations to identify and address trafficking risks. Examples include neighborhood watch programs, child protection committees, and community education projects. These initiatives promote local ownership of anti-trafficking efforts and enhance sustainability.

Economic empowerment: Provide economic opportunities and vocational training for vulnerable individuals and communities. Poverty is a major driver of trafficking and modern slavery. Economic empowerment programs such as microcredit schemes, entrepreneurship support, job creation, and income-generating activities reduce financial vulnerability and the likelihood of

exploitation. Families with stable incomes are less likely to resort to risky migration or child labour (World Bank, 2023).

Education and skill development: For UNESCO (2023), enhancement of access to education and skills development programmes. Providing access to quality education and vocational skills training increases employment opportunities for young people. Skills development enables individuals to become self-reliant and reduces their susceptibility to deceptive promises from traffickers. It also promotes long-term socioeconomic development.

Social protection: Implement social protection programs to support vulnerable populations. Social protection measures such as cash transfers, school feeding programs, health insurance, and welfare assistance support vulnerable families and reduce conditions that facilitate trafficking. These programs help protect children from exploitation by addressing economic hardships (World Bank, 2023).

Digital literacy: Promote digital literacy and online safety education. Digital literacy equips individuals with the skills to use technology safely and responsibly. As traffickers increasingly use online platforms to recruit victims, educating children and adults about online safety helps them recognize and avoid digital exploitation and recruitment schemes (UNESCO, 2023).

Technology-based solutions: Leverage technology to track and prosecute trafficking cases and provide support services. Technology can enhance anti-trafficking efforts through data management systems, victim identification tools, online reporting platforms, mobile applications, and artificial intelligence for detecting suspicious activities. These innovations improve prevention, detection, and response mechanisms (UNODC, 2024).

Data collection: establish a system for collecting and analyzing data on human trafficking. Accurate and reliable data are essential for understanding the scale, patterns, and trends of trafficking. Systematic data collection helps policymakers and researchers identify risk factors, allocate resources effectively, and develop evidence-based interventions (ILO, 2022).

Monitoring and evaluation: Regularly monitor and evaluate anti-trafficking efforts to identify areas for improvement. Monitoring and evaluation involve assessing the effectiveness of anti-trafficking programs and policies. Regular evaluation helps identify successes, challenges, and areas requiring improvement. It also ensures accountability and supports continuous learning for better outcomes (United Nations, 2023).

Conclusion

There is no time that the issue of slavery will be discussed without evoking emotions in reasonable and responsible

people. The struggle for freedom, it is stressed, must always start from the oppressed. This is one point that this paper has demonstrated. Thus, the impact of modern day slavery and child trafficking on the image, economy and family of the trafficked person is no doubt more negative than positive. Therefore, the fight against modern day slavery and child trafficking requires a comprehensive approach involving all stakeholders. The solutions proffered when implemented will not only protect children from exploitation but also promote educational access and contribute to the development of a more educated, secure and prosperous society.

From the foregoing, the following suggestions were made:

1. More enlightenment campaigns should be carried out using all available means to educate parents, community leaders and religious bodies on the dangers of child trafficking.
2. Compulsory Primary education of good quality should be encouraged in contemporary Nigerian society.
3. The government should address the issues of massive unemployment and poverty in Nigeria through financial employment for the youths.
4. The laws on human trafficking should be strictly enforced while culprits should be allowed to face the wrath of the law.
5. Integration of human trafficking topics in school curricula and provide training for teachers, law enforcement agents and other stakeholders.

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