

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING AS CONSEQUENCE OF POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT IN AFIJIO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE

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## **Abstract**

*Human trafficking, especially of the young ones, into exploitative sexual and hard labour has attracted local, national and international attention. Therefore the study investigated human trafficking as consequence of poverty in Afijio Local Government Area of Oyo State. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The instrument used for this study was questionnaire titled "Human Trafficking as consequence of Poverty and Unemployment (HTACPU)" with a reliability coefficient of 0.81. The data were analyzed using ANCOVA. The results revealed that there is significant influence of trafficking in persons on basis of poverty, and there is no significant influence of trafficking in persons on unemployment rate in Afijio Local Government. Also, the result revealed that there is no significant influence of trafficking in persons on poverty among the youths in Afijio Local Government. The study therefore concludes and recommends that poverty, unemployment and human trafficking have diverse impacts on individuals and the society. Thus, society should be protected by the government from becoming vulnerable to human trafficking through the provisions of jobs, security and qualitative education to prevent people from going out of country to look for greener pasture and quality education in other climes.*

**Keywords:** Human trafficking, Poverty and Unemployment.

## **Introduction**

Trafficking in persons (TIP) has been seen as one of the most lucrative forms of organized crime (Shelley, 2010). It is estimated that TIPs or slavery is the third most lucrative illicit business in the world after arms and drugs trafficking. However, Punam and Sharma (2020 cited in Atolagbe in ( 2022) regard TIP as trade in humans, most commonly for the purpose of forced labour, sexual slavery, or commercial sexual exploitation for the trafficker or others. It is a modern-day slavery involving the illegal transportation of persons under coercion for the purpose of exploiting the victims regardless of sex, age or religion. Surprisingly, trafficking in persons remains a major transnational threat to the national, regional, and global systems despite concerted efforts to curtail it. It is the world's fastest growing global crime with thousands of aliens smuggled or trafficked in various parts of the world.

Moreover, trafficking of a person is a process while many people are involved in it; it is more like a crime industry rather than a single offence. Trafficking not only involves crossing the borders but also happens inside the same country. The way people get trafficked is a question of trust. For example, in a village where there is no electricity, no proper drinking water, no modern facilities and most where there is high unemployment, if someone could promise to offer a good job, accommodation, better facilities, the people would go with them for a better future. As such, human traffickers target these kinds of people who are in need, hungry, and unemployed.

Therefore, the phenomenon of human trafficking, especially in West Africa, has in recent years assumed alarming proportions, and hence receives unprecedented global attention (Olateru-Olagbegi & Ikpeme, 2006). The trend of trafficking in persons has increased the other crimes such as rape, ritual, killing, modern-day slavery, sexually transmitted diseases, drug abuse illiteracy, poor productivity, yahoo(internet fraud), money laundry and many others which have also lead to high level of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria. United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (2009) observed that any response to trafficking in persons must be grounded in comprehension of the conditions or factors affecting vulnerability. The primary causes of vulnerability are economic, social, cultural, legal and political in nature. Economic factors are addressed directly in the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, which include poverty, underdevelopment and lack of equal opportunities as being among the root causes of human trafficking. Economic vulnerability may also include unemployment and lack of access to opportunities, which make people want to migrate in search of better conditions and

opportunities. Social exclusion relates to lack of access to social rights and prevents groups from receiving the benefits and protection to which all citizens should be entitled

Likewise, poverty has also been seen in terms of shortage of resources relative to needs. Poverty and unemployment are so intertwined that one can easily confuse one for the other. Although, it is possible for one to be employed and still poor, this is likely to be a case of underemployment. Thus, unemployment includes those underemployed. Unemployment and underemployment reflect the failure to make use of an important factor of production, labour, for fostering economic growth in the country. Therefore, low returns to labour as well as high unemployment indicate poverty (Bisong, 2019).

Poverty is one of the significant global problems (Bako, 2020). It has become a vicious cycle in Nigeria which has made life difficult and unbearable especially in the attainment of means of livelihood. The incidence of this state of penury did not start now; it has been on the increase since 1980, with poverty level of 28.1 percent to 54.4 percent and keeps on increasing until the present time. In addition, reports from National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2005) show how the “population in poverty has maintained a steady increase from 17.7 million in 1988 to 66.7 million in 2004.” In 2010, NBS reported that 60.9% of Nigerians were living in poverty. The world poverty clock in 2018 stated that Nigeria assumed the ignominious position of being the poverty capital of the world after overtaking India, with about 86.9 million of her population in extreme poverty (Daniel, 2019). The above incidences of poverty can be linked to certain remote or immediate factors in Nigeria such as unemployment, monolithic economy, corruption, inequality and so on.

Poverty is also regarded as a plague which affects people all over the world, though generally considered as one of the manifestations of underdevelopment (Abdulkareem, Babalola and Ogunwole, 2021). Poverty and human trafficking have remained high in Nigeria. Poverty has been seen as a sense of helplessness, dependence and lack of opportunities, self-confidence and self-respect on the part of the poor. Nevertheless, to attempt a concise definition of poverty, one can see it as a condition where an individual is not able to cater adequately for his/her basic needs (such as food, clothing and shelter), is unable to meet social and economic obligations, lacks gainful employment, skills, assets and self-esteem; and has limited access to social and economic infrastructure (such as education, health, potable water and sanitation), and

consequently has limited chance of advancing his/her welfare to the limit of his/her potentials and capabilities.

Poverty according to Chimobi (2010) cited in (Isah, Ugwuanyi, Obara and Achi, 2021) is a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. They explained poverty further to mean lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in the society, not having enough to feed and clothe a family, not having a school or clinic to go, not having the land on which to grow one's food or job to earn one's living and not having credit.

Unemployment on the other hand is becoming a pervasive problem across the world. Longe (2017) says even the most developed nations have not shown exception to this frightful social problem. In Africa however, the average unemployment rate is generally high as corroborated by Bisong (2019) while citing Alawade (2010) that, unemployment in South Africa, Botswana and Angola was 21%, 17.5% and 25% respectively. Unemployed refers to people who are willing and capable of work but are unable to find suitable paid employment. The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2006) defines the unemployed as numbers of the economically active population who are without work but available for and seeking work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work.

To corroborate the above forgoing, National Bureau of Statistics in the 2012 National Baseline Survey, (cited in Abdulkareem, 2021) posits that more than half of the Nigerian youth populations in the country are unemployed due to the inadequate employment situation. This has resulted in poverty and human trafficking in Nigeria which are chronic and rising. The poverty profile in Nigeria show that incidence of poverty has increased. The analysis of the depth and severity of poverty in Nigeria show that rural areas are the most affected. Several reasons accounted for the situation include the large concentration of the populace in the rural areas, many years of neglect of the rural areas in terms of infrastructural development and lack of information on the way government is being run (Agbara, 2016).

Unemployment is therefore a serious factor that makes people idle bearing in mind that an idle hand is the devil's workshop. So, as the rate of unemployment continues to raise so does the wave of crime and its attendant effect rise proportionately. These unemployed people now employ themselves by engaging in illegal activities such as human trafficking, organ harvesting, kidnapping, robbery, bunkering, and other nefarious activities. Atolagbe (2022) opined that unemployment is a major root cause of trafficking in Nigeria and other most African countries.

This occur when employable citizens are actively seeking jobs but unable to secure appropriate one. This condition according to him is frustrating which makes frustrated and desperate individuals seek jobs outside their states, country and also brings about exploitation of the victims through promises of high- paying jobs and free transportation to the Promised Land.

Over the years, poverty, unemployment and human trafficking continue to rise vertically, translating into social problems of more monumental and complication proportions, attempting to defy. Federal Government has undertaken some social and justice interventions programmes geared towards ameliorating them. Every government since 1999, have had their signature on poverty reduction or alleviation, empowerment scheme, counter trafficking measures, or whatever appellation. This research therefore tends to investigate human trafficking as consequence of poverty and unemployment in Afijio Local Government Area of Oyo State.

### **Statement of the problem**

For any given country to develop and grow well there will be a need to adopt a proper and effective method by government to drastically reduce or curb the problem of trafficking in persons and high rate of poverty and unemployment in the country. Without mincing words, unemployment can be seen as one of the root causes of human trafficking and poverty in Nigeria. If government is able to create a gainful employment environment, people will not perpetuate the human trafficking business.

Secondly, inability of government to provide better educational opportunities for the citizenry has led to a situation where the citizenry search for better and faster educational opportunities to avoid falling victims of ASUU recurrent and protracted strikes, poor admission policies, and frustrations from the grip of stakeholders in the educational sector. It is this frustrating condition that makes some employable citizens seek jobs and better educational opportunities outside their states, countries or regions .Also, this same situation enables the traffickers the opportunities to lure and exploit their victims. If the government is able to provide better educational opportunities by making quality education accessible to all in the country, people will not engage in fraudulent means of attainment of good grades or use fraudulent travel agencies and fake documents to get out of the country.

Finally, inability of government to provide adequate security to guarantee a conducive environment has contributed to high rate of poverty and unemployment. If the government is able to provide adequate security in the country, the lives and property of the people will be

saving. This will guarantee a conducive environment for investors, promote state's economy and create employment opportunities.

The above mentioned shortcomings are responsible for increasing level of trafficking business which consequently promotes poverty and unemployment in the nation at large. This study therefore set to address the human trafficking as outcome of on the poverty and employment.

### **Purpose of the study**

The general purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which human trafficking has influenced the increasing rate of unemployment and poverty in the country and how this as well affected and damaged the country's economy. Specifically the study is to:

- i. Find out the challenges which human trafficking and unemployment have posed on the image of Afijio Local Government, the country and its economy
- ii. Investigate the several efforts made by the Afijio Local Government and Federal government to curb the phenomena of human trafficking and unemployment in the country
- iii. Examine the efforts made by the government to empower people against poverty in the country.

### **Hypotheses**

- i. There will be no significant different influence of trafficking in persons on poverty among the youths in Afijio Local Government
- ii. There will be no significant effect of trafficking in persons on unemployment rate among the youths in Afijio Local Government.
- iii. There will be no significant interaction effect of gender on poverty and unemployment on trafficking in persons among youths in Afijio Local Government.

### **Methodology**

The research design used for this study was descriptive survey design. The research was carried out in Afijio Local Government Area of Oyo state. The sample comprised 450 respondents from among the youth in Afijio Local Government. The research instrument used for this study was structured questionnaire titled " Human Trafficking as consequence of Poverty and unemployment (HTACPU)" rating scale. It had 50 items with four likert scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Strongly Disagree and Disagree. The reliability coefficient was

0.81 using Cronbach Alpha. The data collected were analyzed using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA).

**Hypotheses 1:** There is no significant difference on influence of trafficking in persons on poverty among the youths in Afijio Local Government

**Table 1:** Summary of ANCOVA showing influence of trafficking in persons on poverty in Afijio Local Government.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	3296.153 <sup>a</sup>	6	32296.153	83.265	.000
Intercept					
Trafficking in pers.	27989.317	1	27989.317	432.967	.000
Poverty	10.660	1	10.660	.165	.685
Unemployment	27089.804	1	27089.804	419.052	.000
Gender	172.535	2	172.535	2.669	.104
Achievers	176.535	1	176.185	2.725	.100
	43.467	1	3.467	.672	.413
Method *					
	18.615	2	18.615	.288	.592
Achiever	13252.314	435	205	64.645	
Error	425843.000	450	212		
Total	45543.467	449	211		
Total Corrected					

Table 1 shows that the calculated f-value (.052) for the incidence of trafficking in persons on the basis of poverty among the youth in Afijio Local Government is greater than the table value (3.84) also  $p < 0.05$ . Based on the result, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative upheld at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that there is significant incidence of trafficking in persons on the basis of poverty in Afijio Local Government.

**Hypotheses 2:** There will be no significant effect of trafficking in persons on unemployment rate among the youths in Afijio Local Government.

**Table 2:** Summary of ANCOVA showing effect trafficking in persons on unemployment rate among the youths in Afijio Local Government.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	3296.153 <sup>a</sup>	6	32296.153	83.265	.000
Intercept					
Trafficking in pers.	27989.317	1	27989.317	432,967	.000
Poverty	10.660	1	10.660	.165	.685
Unemployment	27089.804	1	27089.804	419.052	.000
Gender	172.535	2	172.535	2.669	.104
Achievers	176.535	1	176.185	2.725	.100
Method *	43.467	1	3.467	.672	.413
	18.615	2	18.615	.288	.592
Achiever	13252.314	435	205	64.645	
Error	425843.000	450	212		
Total	45543.467	449	211		
Total Corrected					

Table 2 shows that the calculated f-value (419.052) for incidence of trafficking in persons on unemployment is less than the probability value also  $p > 0.05$ . Based on the result, the null hypothesis is upheld at 0.05 level of significance.

**Hypotheses 3:** There will be no significant interaction effect of gender on poverty and unemployment on trafficking in persons among youths in Afijio Local Government.



**Table 3:** Summary of ANCOVA showing the interaction effect of gender on poverty and unemployment on trafficking in persons in Afijio Local Government.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	3296.153 <sup>a</sup>	6	32296.153	83.265	.000
Intercept					
Trafficking in pers.	27989.317	1	27989.317	432,967	.000
Poverty	10.660	1	10.660	.165	.685
Unemployment	27089.804	1	27089.804	419.052	.000
Gender	172.535	2	172.535	2.669	.104
Achievers	176.535	1	176.185	2.725	.100
	43.467	1	3.467	.672	.413
Method *					
	18.615	2	18.615	.288	.592
Achiever	13252.314	435	205	64.645	
Error	425843.000	450	212		
Total	45543.467	449	211		
Total Corrected					

Table 3 shows the calculated f-value (.165) for the poverty, f (419.052) for unemployment and (2.669) for gender. Based on the result, there is no significant interaction effect on poverty, unemployment and gender therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. There is no significant interaction effect of gender, 90 poverty and unemployment on trafficking in persons among the youths in Afijio Local Government.

### Discussion of findings

In table 1, it was revealed that there is significant incidence of trafficking in persons on the basis of poverty in Afijio Local Government. This was in line with the findings of Fayomi (2009) who observed that the quest for survival as a result of prevailing inequitable allocation of resources and unemployment are considered major motivators for indulgence in human trafficking.

Table 2 revealed that there is no significant influence of trafficking in persons on unemployment rate in Afijio local government. This contradict Todaro (1992) as cited in Iyanda and Osundina (2014) that human trafficking in Nigeria is as a result of high rate of unemployment and continuous transfer of youths from rural to urban areas.

In table 3 it was revealed that there is no significant interaction effect of gender, poverty and unemployment on trafficking in persons, in Afijio Local Government. This is contradicts Atolagbe (2022) found that unemployment is a major root cause of trafficking in Nigeria and other most African countries. This is corroborated by (Bako, 2020) that Poverty is one of the significant global problems. It has become a vicious cycle in Nigeria which has make life difficult and unbearable especially in the attainment of means of livelihood. However, this is an indication that poverty and unemployment have a significant effect on human trafficking not only in Afijio Local Government but in Nigeria as whole.

### **Conclusion**

From the above findings, it is pertinent that the effects of poverty, unemployment and human trafficking have diverse impacts on the individuals and the society. The victims of the said phenomena encounter multiple problems which come from both government and the society and which also cause psychological trauma to the victims.

### **Recommendations**

- Government should improve on her support programmes for the employable citizens. Government should strength her efforts on the enacted laws to give the victims of human trafficking right to actively participate in the criminal proceeding of their court cases.
- Society should be protected by the government from becoming vulnerable to the crime of human trafficking through the provisions of jobs, security and qualitative education at all levels to prevent people from going out country to look for greener pasture and quality education.
- Youth unemployment should be directly tackled by government at all levels.
- There is need for government at all levels to improve on information technology by installing the CCTVs at the country's various borders to all illegal immigrants in and out of the country.
- There should be enlightenment and counselling programme for the youths to shun the act of TIP and every other shortcut to money making.

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