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INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

SNATCHED FOR SEX: A QUALITATIVE SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

EXPLORING THE MOST PREVALENT BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES ABOUT HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR THE PURPOSES OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION IN AFRICA

By

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DECLARATION

I, Nontobeko Thandeka Kweyama declare that:

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All the glory belongs to God (Umvelinqangi) and my ancestors.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the all the children of Africa who have fallen victims of scourge of sexual abuse. To all the adults of Africa who bear the traumatic consequences of being victims of sexual abuse. May they find solace and comfort in knowing that we are keeping them in our hearts and prayers. To all the health care personnel, social service workers, military and police officers directly facing the torment of fighting for all our victims of human trafficking, may you carry on with the good work and never get deterred from the goal of making our country a safe place for the next generations to come.

To my supervisor Professor Steven Collings, thank you for the invaluable contributions that you have made towards protecting and advocating for the rights of children exposed to sexual abuse. The remarkable work that you do is an inspiration to many, generations to come might not know your face but they will surely remember your name. and I was privileged to be supervised by you.

ABSTRACT

Despite the growing body of literature detailing the beliefs and attitudes with regard to human trafficking stimulated by sexual exploitation, there are knowledge gaps that require a systematic review and meta-analysis of this discourse. Arguably, human trafficking poses human rights violation challenges in contemporary times and most countries worldwide are grappling with it in one way or another. Human trafficking has catastrophic consequences in most developing countries in Africa, which serve as origins, destinations, or transit for citizens being transported to distant lands where they are subjected to enslavement through labour or transactional sexual exploitation. Apparently, the topic is still shrouded in clandestineness owing to under-research and very little effort aimed at curbing the scourge.

Feminist Theory was adopted as the conceptual framework. This study is typically a desk top research; hence, no human subjects participated in it. The systematic review was conducted in accordance with the protocol recommended by the Campbell Collaboration (2001), one of the most widely used and recognized protocols for systematic reviews applicable in Social Sciences. The primary sources of data for this review were studies and articles published between 2000 and 2021. Data generated from qualifying studies were meta-analysed and therefore disseminated into distinctive themes.

This study systematically reviewed the most prevalent perceptions around human trafficking specifically motivated by sexual exploitation. A systematic review of the most dominant beliefs and attitudes regarding human trafficking for sexual exploitation and the meta-analysis of the findings, can potentially influence future practice and recommend areas for prospective research, and most importantly, the study findings can raise awareness regarding this human rights scourge.

The findings of this study attest to the fact that the most prevalent beliefs and attitudes regarding the trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation in Africa include: (1) lack of a secure socio-economic status, (2) the victims of human trafficking are to blame for their victimisation, (3) women and children are the only victims of human trafficking, (4) demand propels the trafficking of women and children, (5) the statistics depicting the victims of human trafficking for sexual reasons are understated in African countries, (6) the victims of human trafficking are not easily traceable, (7) Africa serves both as a source and destination of

trafficked women and children, (8) transit countries do not play a role in human trafficking, and (9) finally, law enforcement is at its lowest ebb in African countries.

The findings indicated that human trafficking for sexual exploitation is induced by poverty. The study found that women and children fall victim to human trafficking as they try to escape from poverty. Consequently, socio-political insecurity predisposes women and girls to human trafficking. In addition, the study found that human trafficking is mainly motivated by sexual exploitation; although men can also be subject to trafficking, women and girls are the main targets, as the fundamental reason underpinning human trafficking is embedded in transactional sex and prostitution. Lastly, the study concludes that most researchers misrepresent African countries as they often paint Africa 'black' regarding the continent's role in human trafficking. Researchers tend to portray Africa as a 'dark' continent grappling with intractable trafficking challenges.

The recommendations include the need for governments and international organizations to encourage and support formalized cooperation and coordination of institutions and relevant stakeholders to end human trafficking in Africa. Most importantly, the scantiness of knowledge on sex-trafficking demands that African states redirect their energies towards curtailing the trafficking of women and children. Human trafficking is a scourge that requires responses that reflect respect for human rights, including the best interests of children.

Key words: Human trafficking, sexual exploitation, children, women, human rights, Africa

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Human trafficking presents one of the most relentless human rights challenges the contemporary world has ever witnessed and most countries have been somehow affected by the phenomenon. The aftermaths of human trafficking are particularly catastrophic to African countries the majority of whom are poor; they serve as the origin, transit and destination for citizens being transported to distant lands where they are subjected to enslavement as labourers or objects of commercial sexual exploitation (Van der Watt, 2018). In 2016, there were 4.8 million people victimized by human trafficking for sexual exploitation and over one million of those victims were children (International Labor Organization, 2017). This substantially evinces the magnitude of the scourge and the nature of intervention required in order to curb it.

Human trafficking has been defined as: *"*the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of a threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, and the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability which includes the giving or receiving of payments 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" (Szablewska & Kubacki, 2018, p.105)

According to UNODC (2019), human trafficking may occur at a small scale where it is often perpetrated by relatives or acquaintances. However, the phenomenon often occurs at a large scale where it involves organised crime syndicates that use bribery, abduction, falsified documents, violence and coercion to subdue their victims. Sadly, human trafficking has been among the most notorious crimes due to the involvement of government officials in the actual trade. This shows the complexity surrounding human trafficking as the vice is imbedded in corruption involving government officials. Jordan (1997) posits that in Russia, many perpetrators of organised crime are former Soviet Union security agents, who are now implicated in the provision of intelligence and falsified documentation used in commercial sex trade in exchange for handsome payments. The Russian scenario replicates the situation

obtaining in most African countries where victims are migrants from Eritrea and Somalia. Many African countries are too incapacitated to curb human trafficking due to the lack of mechanisms that enhance the sharing of cross-border intelligence, rendering it difficult to coordinate efforts towards busting of human trafficking syndicates (Fedina & DeForge, 2017; Raphael, 2017).

Arguably, the tradition of low respect for females and treating them as pieces of property owned by their male counterparts hugely contribute towards the objectification of women and girls. This obtains in most African societies arranged along the patriarchal system. As such, indigenous peoples of Africa have been turned into consumer goods and commodities. Some families are enticed by the supposed monetary benefits purportedly availed to them in exchange for their children, whether or not they are knowledgeable about the deception.

The trafficking of children for sexual purposes is also escalating at alarming levels as it violates children's rights. Nonetheless, the trafficking of children ranks among the most covert crimes embedded in societal tolerance or denial of the existence of the crisis, while its escalation is seemingly driven by an apparently insatiable demand (Cockbain & Olver, 2019). The terms 'commercial sex exploitation of children' (CSEC) and 'domestic minor sex trafficking' (DMST) are used interchangeably to refer to the general sexually motivated trafficking of minors, stipulated as individuals under the age of 18 years. Kimley et al. **(**2018) argue that unlike the popular definition of adult trafficking and sexual exploitation and trafficking, crimes involving the trafficking of minors do not often involve force, fraud, or coercion. This definition encompasses any parent, legal guardian, or custodian of a minor who consciously permits or assists a minor to engage in sexual acts in return for financial gain.

The reviewed literature evinces the gaps existing in the whole discourse around human trafficking for sexual exploitation and the many related health, human rights and legislative issues and implications. Therefore, an exploration of the most prevalent attitudes and beliefs regarding human trafficking for sexual exploitation would possibly raise public awareness regarding the magnitude of the crisis and the possible adverse consequences of the phenomenon. It is hoped that the findings of the study may possibly influence the reinforcement and implementation of legislative and policy frameworks with regards to human trafficking.

1.2 Significance of the study

This study focuses on the problem of human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation. Human trafficking, in its various forms constitutes a serious problem that contemporary society is grappling to mitigate. The phenomenon constitutes a serious violation of human rights. Further, the trafficking of humans is by all means a manifestation of social injustice and must be eradicated or at least mitigated. While human trafficking is a global trend, understanding it from a specific context such as the African setting is a worthwhile endeavour. This study contextualises the problem of human trafficking by focusing on literature that emanates from the African context. The dynamics involved in human trafficking are quite complex and seeking to understand them from an African perspective does not only help expose knowledge gaps in the body of knowledge but helps to inform future research.

1.3 Aim and objectives of the study

1.3.1 Study aim

The study primarily aims at exploring the most prevalent beliefs and attitudes regarding human trafficking motivated by sexual exploitation. The study also aims at gaining in-depth insights into the literature detailing this topical phenomenon in order to identify and plug any knowledge gaps that might be evident in this body of literature.

1.3.2 Study objectives

The study seeks:

1. To explore the available literature dated 2000 to 2019 detailing human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation in Africa.
2. To identify the most prevalent beliefs and attitudes regarding human trafficking and the subsequent sexual abuse.
3. To explore the moral and legal implications on human trafficking for sexual exploitation in Africa.

1.3.3 Research questions

The key research questions are as follows:

1. What knowledge is available on human trafficking for sexual abuse?

2. What are the most prevalent beliefs and attitudes regarding human trafficking for sexual purposes?
3. What are the moral and legal implications of human trafficking and sexual abuse in Africa?

1.4 Structure of the dissertation

Chapter 1: This introductory chapter provides a discussion of the main concepts informing the study. The aims and objectives of the study, and the research questions are provided in this chapter. To conclude the chapter, an outline of the dissertation is provided.

Chapter 2: In this chapter, a synthesis of the literature review is provided. The literature review is important because it helps to establish knowledge gaps that future research should fill. It further provides a baseline in terms of the findings of similar researches as well as the methods and paradigms adopted, which served to guide to this study. Finally, it engenders lessons that could be learnt from other researchers regarding methodological perspectives to be adopted for the study area if the scope, context and content of the research are similar and this helps to identify existing knowledge gaps.

Chapter 3: This is a methodology chapter. It focuses on the research methods used in the study. The study is exploratory in nature. It adopted a descriptive design and a qualitative approach. This research study adopted the Feminist Theory as its theoretical framework. This study involves desk top research; hence, no human subjects participated in it. The systematic review was conducted in accordance with the protocol recommended by the Campbell Collaboration (2001), one of the most widely used and recognized protocols for systematic reviews applicable in Social Sciences. Data sources for this review were studies published between 2000 and 2021. Data generated from qualifying studies were meta-analysed and were presented as distinctive themes.

Chapter 4: In this chapter, the findings are presented. Nine most prominent and common perceptions regarding the trafficking of women and children in Africa are presented and discussed. The rationale behind these perceptions is presented to foster an understanding of where they emanate from, thus exposing some of the dominant misconceptions about human trafficking that people hold. The findings of the study can assist both the victims and officials fighting against human trafficking. The review unravelled literature from all the cardinal

corners of the African continent, disentangling people's perceptions regarding the trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation.

Chapter 5: The fifth and final chapter in this dissertation is the summary, conclusion and recommendations, highlighting the multiple conclusions drawn from these findings. Firstly, the study concludes that human trafficking for sexual exploitation is largely induced by poverty. The study found that women and children fall victim to human trafficking as they try to escape from poverty. Precisely, socio-political insecurity predisposes women and girls to human trafficking. Secondly, the study concludes that human trafficking is mainly motivated by sexual exploitation. Although men can also be subject to trafficking, women and girls are the main targets, as the fundamental reason underpinning human trafficking is embedded in transactional sex and prostitution. Thirdly, the study concludes that most researchers misrepresent African countries as they often paint Africa 'black' regarding the continent's role in human trafficking. Researchers tend to portray Africa as a 'dark' continent grappling with intractable trafficking challenges.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review section is an important component of this study insofar as it explores similar studies done on this research area to establish knowledge gaps that need to be plugged. It further provides a baseline in terms of the findings of similar research as well as the methods and paradigms adopted, which then serve as a guide to this study. Finally, it engenders lessons that could be learnt from other researchers regarding methodological perspectives to be adopted for the study area if the scope, context, and content of the research are similar, which helps to identify the existing knowledge gaps.

2.2 Definition of human trafficking

This literature review unravels the conceptual definitions of the key terms. The international law enforcement officials (Sex on the Auction Block, 2004) conceptualise human beings as the third most profitable illegal commodity traded in the cotemporary world, after drugs and firearms . The UN Protocol (Article 3a) defines human trafficking as:

> "*The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the 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 vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation"* (Loring et al., 2007, p. 5).

The above definition presupposes that three distinct elements constitute human trafficking. These are an act, a means and a purpose. The consent of the victim of human trafficking is rendered invalid when any of the means has been applied. Most victims of human trafficking are compelled to partake in the transactional sex industry. Nonetheless, human trafficking is also instigated by labour exploitation particularly domestic servitude, restaurant work, sweatshop factory work and migrant agricultural work among others. With regard to children below 18 years of age, the actions taken for purposes of exploitation constitute human trafficking even when these means have not been employed (Raphael, 2017). It is not necessarily true that human trafficking occurs across borders for it can take place within a country's national frontiers.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 provides that every human being has inalienable right to "inherent dignity" and "freedom." Article 4 particularly indicates that "no one shall be held in slavery or bondage." Article 23 stipulates that "everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work" (International Labour Organisation, 2017). Human trafficking violates an individual's rights to freedom, integrity, security, and freedom of movement. These rights violations often manifest themselves through cruelty, tormenting, and degrading treatment. Researchers have not reached a universally agreed hypothetical structure in terms of understanding human trafficking. The phenomenon can be understood in the context of forced relocation to another country, subjection to manual labour, sexual exploitation through prostitution, felony, human rights abuse, disturbed wellbeing, child abuse, or cruelty against women (Khanyile, 2018). However, human trafficking can take place within the same country without the victim being forced to relocate to other countries such as in Iran, North Korea, the Central African Republic (CAR) and Zimbabwe. Studies indicate that the trafficking of young women and girls is prevalent in Zimbabwe, especially at border posts and the vice affects mostly rural girls who are promised highly paying employment in foreign towns and cities (Miaschi, 2019).

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2017), human traffickers earn an annual income amounting to approximately US$32 billion worldwide, with an individual earning an average of US$1,100 monthly. Global trends indicate that between 600,000 and 800,000 people fall victim to human trafficking annually, with 80% of them being women and girls trafficked mainly for sexual reasons (Esmer & Francis, 2017). Most of these victims travel abroad willingly, unsuspicious of the dangers awaiting them in destination countries. The victims of human trafficking who are subjected to sexual exploitation would be fleeing deteriorating political, social and economic conditions in their home countries. A case in point is the Syrian scenario where victims were trafficked unknowingly as they attempted to evade civil wars. Trafficked children are often forced to engage in early matrimonial affairs in destination countries (Miaschi, 2019).

On arrival in foreign countries, the victims realise the precariousness of the situation they would be in, as they owe money to the transporters who threaten them with death if they attempt to leave (Global Slavery Index, 2018). Kulwane (2017) reported that women are prone to diverse forms of sexual exploitation including but not limited to: street prostitution, indoor prostitution (escort services, brothel work, massage parlour-related prostitution, bar or casino prostitution), strip clubs, phone sex operation, exotic dancing, lap dancing, webcam modelling, pornographic

film performance, nude peepshow performance, room salon networks, residential brothels, cantina bars, escort agency networks and websites.

Victims have reportedly been trafficked from almost every country worldwide. Runaway adolescents are at higher risk of being lured by pimps and traffickers who use them in the sex industry. Reports indicate that people coming from poor families and countries and illegal immigrants face the highest risk of being trafficked for sexual reasons (Yingwana, Walker & Etchart, 2019).

2.3 Human trafficking for sexual exploitation in the world

Sexual assault involves any form of sexual contact or behaviour occurring without the explicit consent of the recipient of such actions (USDOJ, 2014). Human trafficking induced by sexual exploitation includes sexual slavery (Davidson, 2020). Victims of human trafficking are forced to depend on their traffickers that compel them to provide sexual services to customers (Hammond & McGlone, 2014). Activities that constitute crimes related to trafficking for sexual reasons include: acquisition, transportation and exploitation of victims (Kara, 2009); these include child sex tourism (CST), domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST) and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation involving children, and prostitution (Hammond & McGlone, 2014). Arguably, human trafficking for sexual exploitation is one of the most flourishing criminal businesses, globally.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) reported that in 2012, 20.9 million people were subjected to forced labour, and 22% (4.5 million) were victims of sexual exploitation (Odhiambo & Barr, 2019; ILO, 2017). However, owing to the covertness of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, obtaining accurate statistics on the phenomenon remains elusive to researchers (Raphael, 2017). The profits accrued from commercial sexual slavery are approximated at US$99 billion, globally (Daffron, 2011).

Most victims of human trafficking find themselves pitted against coercive, abusive and dangerous circumstances, with minimal chances of escaping. This practice has become a global phenomenon reflective of an intricate web that has sucked in almost all nations, rendering it very cumbersome to develop viable remedies to this human rights catastrophe.

2.4 Features of human trafficking

Monzini (2001) identifies three main features of human trafficking, namely; demand, supply, and institutional framework. Recently, demand has undergone unprecedented extension in response to the wide varieties of legal or illegal sexual labours that are convenient to the clients. The demand and supply variables are mutually connected as demand ceases to be meaningful without supply. The supply side constitutes young women and girls being sexually exploited as providers of sexual services. The term 'supply' implies that they are the inputs of the 'work' provided by the exploiters. Regarding the institutional framework, national regulations meant to check human trafficking are either weak or completely non-existent in the countries of origin, transit or destination.

Nonetheless, the pattern of human trafficking has undergone a significant transformation in recent years (Skosana & Wilkinson, 2017). Kidnapping has become outdated, as traffickers now resort to preying on weaker women grappling with financial and personal challenges in home countries. Interestingly, victims are usually acquainted with their traffickers. For instance, the Albanian scenario in 2004 indicated that 85% of the victims were acquainted with their traffickers. Most of these traffickers were former boyfriends, husbands, or fiancés of the victims. The traffickers have since devised new strategies of luring their victims; the living conditions of the trafficked women are better than before; therefore, they remain stuck in the vicious cycle of human trafficking. In Kosovo, for instance, trafficked women do not reside in crowded rooms; rather, they occupy individual residential apartments (Andreani & Raviv, 2004). More often than not, the women are afforded free time, eliminating their desire to break away from the system. Further, these women often choose to linger around as the minimal pay they get from their pimp, in spite of being a paltry, sometimes surpasses what legal jobs would be paid in the countries of origin.

2.5 The nature of sex trafficking

Human trafficking takes on the three most common models namely, sex trafficking, forced labour and debt bondage. Forced labour, also referred to as involuntary servitude, constitutes the largest segment of human trafficking globally (The US Department of State, 2017). Studies indicate that sex trafficking has metamorphosed into cotemporary slavery, with transactional sex being induced coercively or fraudulently, and the person being compelled to indulge in such sexual acts is below 18 years of age. Although sex traffickers target women, men, girls, and boys, the commonest victims are young women and girls. Surtees (2008) identified the most common trends regarding the luring of victims into sex trafficking. These are:

- Prospects of a highly paying legal job in the destination country;
- A marriage promise that turns into bondage or servitude;
- The selling of individuals to sex traders by parents, husbands or boyfriends;
- The kidnapping of victims by traffickers.

Quite often, sex traffickers subject their victims to debt-related bondage by telling them that they owe them money used to foot their daily expenses, including transport to the destination country; hence, they ought to render their personal services to the repayment of the debt. Furthermore, sex traffickers employ various techniques to "condition" their victims and these include starving, confining, beating, physically abusing them, raping, and gang-raping them, threatening them with violence and threatening to unleash violence on the victims' families; forced drug use and the threatening to shame their victims through disclosing their activities to their families and friends (Sambo & Spies, 2020).

The victims of sex-trafficking grapple with a multiplicity of health-related risks. Physical risks encompass drug abuse and addiction to alcohol, physical injuries (broken bones, concussions, burns, vaginal or anal tearing), in more serious cases these injuries can lead to traumatic brain injuries (TBI) resulting in other neuropsychological impairments (Calvo, 2014). Furthermore, because of the poor living conditions in which these victims usually find themselves in, they often are preventing from accessing quality health care, thereby exposing them to poor health conditions which can lead to them being exposed to a multitude of other infectious diseases such as tuberculosis (TB), hepatitis, malaria, pneumonia and the recent COVID-19 pneumonia. Considering that most of these victims are forced into sex trade, this often has detrimental consequences to their sexual health. Many are exposed to sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV/AIDS, and urinary tract infections (UTIs). Subsequently, all these STIs could potentially lead to other gynaecological problems such as miscarriages, unsafe abortions and sterility (Hopper, 2017; Reid, 2018).

Psychologically, the victims experience disorders such as mind or body separation or dissociations, feelings of shame, grief, fear, distrust, hatred towards men, self-hatred, and harbouring suicidal thoughts, often resulting in suicide behaviours. The victims are also at risk of experiencing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) – acute anxiety, depression, insomnia, physical hyper-alertness, perpetual self-loathing and resistance to change. Further, victims may also suffer traumatic bonding – a form of coercive control the perpetrator uses to instil fear in

the victim as well as making them feel gratitude for being allowed to live (Cook et al., 2018; Landers et al., 2017)).

2.6 Causes of human trafficking

Human trafficking is instigated by various factors which are often peculiar to individual countries. The phenomenon is complex as it is often driven by an interplay of social, economic, cultural and other factors. Most of these factors are specific to individual trafficking trends, for instance, Africa which is being reviewed in this study. However, some factors are common to trafficking in general or they are found in a wide range of regions, patterns or cases. A case in point is the desire by potential victims to migrate, which is manipulated by offenders in their bid to recruit and gain initial control or cooperation of their victims; these are later replaced by coercive measures when the victims have reached alien regions, which they had not intended to migrate to (Urama & Nwachukwu, 2017). This disenfranchises the victims of human trafficking who end up entirely dependent on their traffickers for survival.

Some common factors created by local conditions that include migration in search of better living conditions. Poverty, oppression, human rights violations, lack of social or economic opportunities, and dangers posed by conflict or instability are among the local conditions that necessitate migration. Studies indicate that political instability, military combat, civil unrest, internal armed conflict and natural disasters exacerbate human trafficking (Perkins and Ruiz, 2017; Urama & Nwachukwu, 2017). The destabilisation and displacement of populations increase vulnerability to exploitation and abuse through human trafficking and forced labour. War and civil strife often result in displacements of huge populations, exposing orphans and street children to human trafficking (Patel, 2020). Furthermore, the intractable global economic crisis and its negative impact on Africa have exacerbated human trafficking. Eighty-nine per cent of African countries are affected by trafficking flows within the African continent. In 34 per cent of these African countries, trafficking also occurs between them and Europe, and in 26 per cent, trafficking flows occur with the Middle East (Rossi, 2005). Half of Africa's 53 countries admit that trafficking is a serious cause for concern (Bello, 2018).

These factors "push" victims into migration, exposing them to traffickers. However, there are other significant factors that tend to "pull" potential victims. Poverty and wealth relatively contribute towards both migration and trafficking patterns, with victims attempting to escape extreme poverty (Bello, 2018; Yingwana, 2018). Such movements have been aided by the rapid expansion of the Internet-based broadcast and telecommunication media across the developing

world. These developments have increased the desire to migrate to developed countries, thereby exposing the potential migrants to human traffickers.

The tendency of entrusting vulnerable children to more affluent friends or relatives often exacerbates the vulnerability of such children. Some parents even sell their children, not just for the sake of money, but they also do so in the hope that their children would escape chronic poverty by migrating to places promising better life and more opportunities. Social or cultural practices also contribute to trafficking in some instances (Khanyile, 2018). For instance, the devaluation of women and girls in some societies makes them disproportionately vulnerable to human trafficking.

These factors are compounded by porous borders, corrupt government officials, the existence of a network of international, organised criminal groups and immigration and law enforcement officers' incapacity or lack of commitment to control borders. Inadequate legislation and lack of political will and commitment to enforce existing legislation facilitate the trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation (Van der Watt & Van der Westhuizen, 2017).

As highlighted earlier, the root causes of sex trafficking are complex and interrelated. Among the causes, poverty, weak governance, armed conflict, and a lack of effective protection against discrimination and exploitation are typical examples. However, generalising the causes of sex trafficking in Africa is misleading. It is imperative to take cognisance of the fact that individual countries present specific conditions or a combination of factors that are peculiar to particular situations (Bello, 2018). Further, any effective analysis of trafficking flows considers the rapidly changing environment that is capable of altering the trafficking patterns at both the local and international levels. Analyses of the causes of sex trafficking conducted so far generally concentrate distinctively on the "push factors" – on the so-called "supply side" – neglecting the demand dimension of the problem. It should be underscored that "pull factors" on the demand side are equally salient if effective counteractive measures are to be mounted against the trafficking of women and children. The following sub-sections articulate the crosscutting causes and vulnerabilities inherent in the African region.

2.6.1 The push factors

The "push factors" are different reasons that compel an individual to migrate (Miller & Wurtele, 2007). On the other hand, 'pull factors' are conditions that attract migrants into an area. These include better employment opportunities, higher wages, better working conditions, better educational opportunities, and attractive amenities.

2.6.2 Poverty, power and violence

Reports on human trafficking in Africa typically depict poverty as the chief cause of sex trafficking though it is only one part of the whole continuum. Another strong determinant relates to the vulnerability of women and children, which makes them easily targeted by human traffickers. Instability, oppression and discrimination also place women and children at a greater risk, with socio-cultural prejudices and gender-based violence presenting additional impediments to their effective protection from human trafficking (Emser & Francis, 2017). At the local level, the deeply rooted gender discrimination creates a cultural climate in which human trafficking is morally acceptable (ILO, 2017). The combination of these cultural attitudes and practices and poverty-stricken living conditions exacerbate the trafficking of women and children. The trafficking of girls and women under very violent conditions and deprivation aggravate the overall prevalence of violence against women in public and private spheres. The findings of Miaschi's (2019) study indicated that nearly 50 per cent of the women are often subjected to physical abuse. For instance, all of the three African countries (Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe) surveyed in the study by West and Johnson (2013) showed that the numbers of the physically abused women ranged between 32 and 42 per cent (West & Johnson, 2013).

The situation is compounded by attitudes and perceptions that objectify women and girls, viewing them as inferior and weaker in relation to their male counterparts. This has largely contributed to the manner in which they are recruited, either by force, abduction or deception, into the most destitute and deplorable living and working conditions. Underprivileged families are incapable of supporting their children, forcing them to sell or hire out their girl children and young women under their custody, thus making them the first to be vulnerable to commercial exploitation and trafficking for this purpose (Kimley et al., 2018; Sprang & Cole, 2018). In Northern Ghana and parts of Togo, girls are 'donated' to priests as 'wives', submitting sexually to the shrine priests in return for the protection of their families (Fowler, 2004). Women and girls are treated as second-class citizens and their vulnerability to human and sex trafficking also increases. These beliefs and attitudes render the curbing of human and sex trafficking impractical.

The findings in McTavish's (2017) study established a correlation between the existence of migrant labour and an increase in the vulnerability of women, especially in cases where family members live in separation for greater parts of the year. In some instances, traditional practices

instigate the trafficking of women and girls and early marriages are a typical example. In cases of severe poverty, many a young girl is regarded as an economic burden and her marriage to a much older man can act as a survival strategy for her family. In Sub–Saharan Africa, traditional families insist on the norm that the bride's family receives cattle or grain from the groom's family as bride price for their daughter (Mashayamombe, 2017).

A study conducted by Miller and Wurtele (2017) found that the links between poverty, violence, and human trafficking were compounded by the effects of HIV/AIDS. Evidently, women and girls who are trafficked for transactional sex are unequivocally vulnerable to HIV infection. Insufficiently informed, these women and girls are seduced or forced into having unprotected sex, and once infected with HIV/AIDS, they are often left without care or support. Furthermore, children orphaned due to HIV/AIDS are more vulnerable to trafficking than other groups due to poverty, stigmatisation, rejection, and marginalisation to which they are exposed by their households and communities (Bello, 2018; Yingwana, 2018). Hence, the beliefs and attitudes of communities, which eventually shape their response, directly affect the trafficking of women.

At the macro-level, socio-economic changes transform marketing conditions and labour requirements. Gaining access to global markets and information resources often has negative repercussions particularly the raising of unrealistic expectations regarding living standards. Exposing young women and girls to images depicting frivolous life styles may tempt them to seek fortunes abroad, thus elevating their susceptibility to traffickers' fraudulent promises. In a statement on World Day Against Child Labour on June 12, 2003, Carol Bellamy, the Executive Director of the UNICEF, reiterated the view that human traffickers manipulate children's vulnerability and take them as commodities that can be easily exploited over a long period (Swigonski, 1994). Children are lured by promises of quality education or a "better job" and smuggled across borders in underhand dealings that elude many and without legal protection. On arrival in foreign countries, trafficked children are disoriented as they lack travel and citizenship documents; thus, they are excluded from protective environments and made to partake in prostitution, domestic servitude, early and involuntary marriage, drug abuse and hazardous and gruelling labour (Mushohwe, 2018).

The lack of birth registration and identity documents creates an environment that promotes trafficking due to the state of emasculation it imposes on individual children. For instance, a child without official recognition of his or her name and nationality, one who lacks official registration of birth, stands more chances of being targeted by traffickers (Mashayamombe,

2017; Mushohwe, 2018). The effect of a lack of identification often implies that trafficked children can hardly be traced to their country of origin; thus, they cannot easily be repatriated to their communities of origin for rehabilitation.

In the countries of origin and destination, victims of sexual trafficking deprived of birth identification often lack protection from the authorities of the countries to which they are trafficked. During times of civil unrest, registering a child's birth, name and nationality hits the lowest ebb. Hence, organised crime and international human trafficking thrive in those situations. In some parts of Uganda, the failure of the birth registration system has exacerbated the difficulties impeding family reunification for children abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army (West & Johnson, 2013). The removal of these children from exploitative situations, such as conscription as child soldiers and their subsequent rehabilitation, is hampered by the fact that most of them do not have legal documents detailing their ages, family links and places of birth.

2.6.3 Demand side: exploitative uses

The African scenario attests to the fact that human trafficking is stimulated by a multifaceted demand that, in most cases, is not adequately analysed. With reference to the 'pull factors' prompting the trafficking of women and children, there are five distinct areas of concern that deserve specific attention and these are: sexual exploitation, some forms of economic exploitation, traditional practices, adoption as well as post-conflict situations (McTavish, 2017). Sexual exploitation, particularly prostitution, is the most widely documented form of exploitation women and children trafficked within and from Africa are subjected to. The demand for such a practice is high within Africa as in many other countries worldwide. Sexual exploitation has also been exacerbated by the demand created by foreigners, particularly those in holiday resorts; the Malawian scenario bears testimony to reports of children being sexually exploited by European tourists, with some being sent to Europe as sex slaves (McTavish, 2017). The escalation in HIV/AIDS prevalence rates can be attributed to the demand factor within the context of women and girls being trafficked for sexual exploitation. Reports indicate that women and girls are sometimes trafficked as brides for various reasons; for instance, men in a migrant community may arrange the trafficking of a woman for matrimonial purposes, regardless of the fact that the village from which the woman comes has distant national or tribal links with the migrant community. Precisely, there is an unprecedented demand by older men for young, virgin brides, amid the high risk of HIV/AIDS infection. This practice is prevalent

in extended families in western Kenya, Zimbabwe and some parts of Ghana where girls as young as eight years old are selected as child brides whose sexual "purity" is perceived as certain (Mashayamombe, 2017; Adepehumi, 2015).

2.7 Key actors in sex trafficking

The sex trafficking network comprises three key groups of actors: victims, traffickers, and users. Each category of actors is characterised below:

a) Victims

The recruitment of victims of sex trafficking often occurs in one of the two ways that follow:

- Initially, traffickers contact the potential victim or his or her family. In most cases, the traffickers know the victim personally and their family and often manipulate their general vulnerability, such as illiteracy, poverty, lack of information, age, and gender;
- The process starts when the potential victim or their family contacts the traffickers; usually, the potential victim would be in a precarious position, groping for "help" out of oppression, desperation or persecution. This often facilitates the smuggling and trafficking of the victim (Allais, 2006).

b) Traffickers

Traffickers of women for sexual exploitation function as the conduit between the supply and demand side. One of the major reasons why sex trafficking is proving difficult to curb, is because on the one hand, traffickers are constantly striving to maximise the supply of trafficked persons through a network of recruitment strategies, including the provision of falsified information and fraudulent identification documents by authorities at border posts who abuse their power. On the other hand, they work towards boosting the demand by providing easy access to a steady supply of trafficked persons for the human traffickers in destination countries (Van der Watt & Kruger, 2017). Human traffickers usually organise themselves into criminal groups, often forming a network of middlemen. International criminal gangs sometimes snatch or recruit the children themselves. The children are snatched under the guise of employment or educational opportunities. A typical example is that of a group of Tanzanian girls in Sweden who narrated their ordeal to medical personnel, detailing how an African woman approached their parents promising to offer them "educational opportunities" abroad. On arrival in Sweden,

the girls reportedly remained in the custody of the woman, showing them pornographic videos and forcing them to work as street prostitutes (Nichols, 2015).

According to Bello (2018) , victims of trafficking can also enhance the traffickers' network. Studies indicate that in northern Tanzania, trafficked youths are sometimes made to return to their villages to recruit new children to work in tanzanite mines. Reports also indicate that women who engage in prostitution return to their villages to recruit young girls, enticing them with the promise of easy money (SAD, 2009). In the case of trafficked children, it is worthwhile to explore the influence of the family, particularly the role played by parents. Human traffickers are often blamed for initiating sex trafficking; however, the victims of trafficking play a significant role as conduits facilitating further trafficking. Numerous reports depict parents as inducing or forcing children into trafficking because they perceive the move as the only survival strategy. Togo presents a typical example of family involvement in trafficking transactions, as parents accept money from traffickers; distant relatives pay intermediaries to find work abroad, or parents' hand over their children in response to the promise of education, professional training or employment (UNODC, 2019). Daffron (2011) alludes to cases where parents have offered their children to militia or other civil defence forces in exchange for protection by them during times of civil unrest. Apparently, the attitudes and beliefs of the community play a facilitative role in sustaining human trafficking for sexual purposes. **c) Users**

Hammond and McGlone (2014) distinguished between users and traffickers in order to delineate the intricate patterns of trafficking so as to develop sustainable interventions. Users complete the circuit in the trafficking process. Apart from acting individually, users are often networked through access to illegal activities (such as prostitution or sexual abuse of children), reducing costs by using cheap labour (such as illegal immigrants), accessing easily manageable workers (such as working children), or fulfilling scarce or unavailable supply (such as adoption). More often than not, they are oblivious of or disinterested in the trafficking process; neither are they aware of the routes and procedures the traffickers use (Van der Watt, 2018). In fact, they do not perceive themselves as an important cog in the trafficking nexus, yet they constitute the engine in this exploitative machinery. As long as the beliefs and attitudes of users remain obstinate, human trafficking induced by sex is unlikely to relent any time soon.
However, all the aspects related to the role of users are a subject for further research.

2.8 Barriers to escaping from sex trafficking

Whichever network women victims of sex trafficking find themselves in, the entrapment is apparently inescapable. There are internal and external barriers that render escape virtually impossible for these women (Van der Watt, 2018). The intricate human trafficking networks and the destination countries create a conducive environment for the external barriers. Hughes and Denisova (2001) have identified three ways of escaping from sexual exploitation: thus, ceasing to be beneficial because of trauma emanating from pregnancy; being helped by a client; or dying. Moreover, psychological damage caused by their enslavement is one of the main internal barriers impeding the women victim's escape from enslavement. These victims are most likely to be emotionally terrorised, physically abused, and mentally manipulated (Cook et al., 2018). This renders their escape almost impossible.

Moreover, a number of factors contribute to professionals' failure to recognise and identify victims and survivors of human trafficking for sexual exploitation not just in the healthcare system, but in all the various sectors that provide services to trafficked youths (Calvo, 2014). Most of these factors replicate those that contribute to failure to identify the victims of sexual trafficking. These factors encompass, among others, a lack of understanding of commercial sexual exploitation and sexual traffickers of minors (by both professionals and victims or survivors), a lack of disclosure by the victims, potential and perceived complications emanating from mandated reporting, and a lack of policies and protocols regulating these crimes to assist professionals in the healthcare division to assess and treat victims and survivors.

There are also four persistent stereotypes that particularly inhibit the identification of victims and survivors of sexual trafficking (USAID, 2016). These include:

- The notion that the victims of these crimes are sometimes young, adolescent girls from foreign countries who are trafficked to destination countries only to be coerced into prostitution (Konyves-Kolonics, 2013), whereas in fact, the group of victims is inclusive of girls, boys, and transgender youths of different races or ethnicities and from both domestic and international backgrounds; and secondly, there is a tendency to label victims of these crimes as wilful prostitutes.
- There are financial constraints impeding the development, provision and evaluation of training and curricula on sexual trafficking targeting women and girls.

- In worst situations, the victims often do not perceive themselves as victims or they may have been conditioned to accept responsibility for their exploitation.
- Victims refrain from disclosing that they are sexually exploited or trafficked for sexual reasons. Perhaps, this could be attributed to fear or distrust of professionals and the systems within which they operate (Van der Watt, 2018). They also dread their traffickers' possible responses if they learn of their disclosure. The victims are sometimes coached on how to answer questions from authoritative figures to conceal their exploitation.

2.9 Psychological and medical consequences of human trafficking

Victims of sex trafficking are subjected to an array of physical and psychological health problems emanating from the inhospitable living conditions, poor sanitation, nutritional deficiencies, poor personal hygiene, physical and emotional brutality perpetrated by human traffickers, risky occupational conditions, and general lack of quality healthcare services (Cunningham & Cromer, 2014). The victims hardly access preventive healthcare services. Health-related issues are not addressed in their budding stages until they degenerate into critical and even life-endangering conditions. In most cases, the victims' healthcare needs are initially administered by unqualified individuals hired by traffickers despite having little or no regard for the well-being of their 'patients'; and they even pay less attention to the control of disease, infection and contamination.

Apart from being a human rights violation, human trafficking has psychological and medical consequences for trafficked individuals (Sambo & Spies, 2020; Middleton et al., 2018). Healthrelated problems emanate from physical violence, mental illness, substance abuse, sadistic and unsafe sex, unhygienic living and working conditions, and deprivation of essential healthcare services. In a study conducted by Miller et al. (2007), one of the participants reported that she experienced weight loss, anorexia, unintended pregnancy, depression, anxiety, and harboured suicidal thoughts in addition to suffering from sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Another study conducted by Zimmermann et al. (2003), which was the first to document the consequences of human trafficking on the health of the victims, established that the victims complained about headaches 82% of the time, tiredness with 81%, dizzy spells with 70%, back pain with 69%, memory difficulty with 62%, stomach pain with 61%, pelvic pain with 59%, and gynaecological infections with 58% of the time. Regarding psychological problems,

victims reported high levels of depression, including suicidal thoughts (39%) and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (57%).

Victims are usually tortured during transportation; human traffickers often rape, starve, and physically assault their victims (US Department of State, 2019). These abuses continue and intensify once the women reach their destination. The victims sustain broken bones, cuts, loss of teeth, and burns as part of the everyday disciplinary measures taken against them. These women are made to work twelve hours a day (Cwikel et al., 2004) and seven days a week in order to repay the money they 'owe' to their traffickers. These victims are also manipulated, threatened and isolated from the public, putting them in danger of becoming mentally ill. The victims are susceptible to the high risk of being infected with HIV and other STIs such as gonorrhoea, syphilis, trichomoniasis, human papilloma virus (HPV), genital herpes, and hepatitis contracted through unprotected sex. These diseases and infections develop into lifethreatening conditions owing to lack of access to healthcare. US Department of State (2019) maintains that the psychological consequences of human trafficking are tantamount to the costs associated with being a victim of trauma.

Van der Watt (2018) avers that being a victim of human trafficking often leads to complex post-traumatic stress disorder (CPTSD) which happens when an individual is consistently subjected to a traumatic situation over a protracted period. Prolonged exposure to trauma implies that the victims of CPTSD may develop very complex symptoms ranging from failure to regulate their anger to outbursts that render their adjustment back into society impossible. Additionally, these victims often lose their sense of reality and fall into a dissociated state, thereby failing to function properly. They experience a strong sense of guilt, causing low selfesteem, which may in turn make it difficult for them to find a proper job or start new relationships. When the symptoms of CPTSD fail to manifest emotionally or mentally, they may manifest through the body in the form of somatization (e.g. victims will complain of persistent headaches, tummy aches and other minor ailments) rendering the overall physical wellbeing of these victim's poor.

Most of the victims of trafficking grapple with a multiple of complex mental disorders; hence, mental health professionals are encouraged to develop treatment plans that specifically target this group. However, finding the right therapy for the complex trauma is quite cumbersome. Research, however, has been conducted to determine effective post-trauma treatment strategies and the education of victims. For example, Shkurkin (2004) suggests that adopting strategies

of coping with stress and negative emotions would help expedite the victims' recovery. Also, disclosing one's feelings to others somewhat helps these women relieve their burden of trauma. Therefore, Shkurkin (2004) recommends use of group therapy, a platform where the victims share their experiences and by expressing their emotions, they may be able to vent their pain and suffering. He further suggests that these women must develop future plans which consider their financial support and independence in order to start life anew in the future.

2.10 Legislation on human trafficking for sexual abuse and its enforcement

Studies indicate that East African countries such as Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania have promulgated anti-trafficking legislative polices. Some countries enacted laws and are applying them and such pieces of legislation border on combating child abduction and stealing (UNODC, 2019; Government of Kenya, 2010). In 2008, Mozambique played a pioneering role in the Southern African region in terms of adopting anti-trafficking legislation. In Zambia, the Criminal Code which was promulgated in 2005 includes provisions that criminalise trafficking. The Prevention of Organised Crime Act (POCA) of Namibia, which was promulgated in 2004, prohibits trafficking in persons. In fact, all countries have put in place pieces of legislation in order to combat trafficking, even in the absence of specific laws related to trafficking in persons. The SADC Ministers responsible for combating human trafficking adopted a ten-year Regional Strategic Plan of Action on Combating human trafficking, especially women and children, in May 2009 (SADC, 2009; UNODC, 2009; U.S. DOS, 2010). Within the context of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, the Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development adopted the Ouagadougou Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, Especially Women and Children, in Tripoli in 2006 (African Union, 2006).

The South African Government adopted a comprehensive legislative framework aimed at combating human trafficking in 2013 (Act No. 7 of 2013: Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act) under the leadership of former president of South Africa, President Jacob Zuma. The legislation criminalises various actions that are tantamount to human trafficking and imposes stiff penalties for violating the law. The legislation stipulates that:

- Trafficking in persons attracts punishment amounting to a maximum of life imprisonment.
- Transporting a victim of trafficking in and/or out of South Africa knowing that the victim does not have proper documentation attracts a fine or five years imprisonment.

- Facilitation of trafficking in persons (including advertising or promoting the trafficking of persons), to report to South African Police Service when they discover such uses, and to take measures to suppress such acts. Failure to comply with such provisions is a punishable offence attracting up to five years of imprisonment (Adepehimi, 2015) (Act No. 7 of 2013: Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2013).

This anti-trafficking legislation affords South African courts extra-territorial jurisdiction over certain circumstances. Such examples include allowing the court of the Republic to have jurisdiction in respect of an act committed outside the Republic which would have constituted an offence under the Prevention and Combating Trafficking in Person Act. This act also reinforces that the court of the republic should be given jurisdiction even if the act had it been committed outside of the Republic, regardless of whether or not the act constitutes an offence at the place of its commission.

The legislation further provides for the protection of victims of human trafficking, including foreigners. Precisely, the piece of legislation provides that a victim of human trafficking may not be charged for contravening immigration laws, forgery of documents or other crimes they are compelled to commit by their captors. It also affords alien victims of human trafficking the same rights to public healthcare services as citizens of South Africa. The victims of trafficking are granted the permission to remain in South Africa for a non-renewable period of 90 days as a "recovery and reflection period" (Onuoha, 2013).

2.10 Laws and legislation against human and sex-trafficking

Admittedly, there is scant hard data on the levels of law enforcement; however, anecdotal evidence suggests the existence of criminal provisions, though application remains very weak. This situation is attributable to various factors, including ineffective anti-trafficking laws, little knowledge on legislation, scarce resources available to law enforcers, inadequate or no resources availed for transnational investigations, as well as victims' fear of divulging evidence that incriminates traffickers.

In some cases, the situation is compounded by corruption and complicity. In some cases, traffickers engage in corrupt activities to marshal police officers into dropping investigations or tampering with evidence (Olufunke, 2016). The available information further indicates that when traffickers are arrested, they are sometimes released on grounds of lack of incriminating evidence. In other instances, the arrests of potential traffickers do not seem to be underpinned

by the relevant legal actions. Inter-country information sharing is rudimentary and problematic as it is being tackled through innovative ways (Olufunke, 2016).

In recent times, an Italian non-governmental organisation organised a delegation comprising Italian police, immigration offices, prosecutors and magistrates to engage the relevant Nigerian authorities to enhance collaborative effort aimed at decimating trafficking flows from Nigeria to Italy. Such an initiative has been appraised as typically successful. The experiences of a number of particular African countries and the views of experts in the African region suggest that in enforcing trafficking laws, it is worthwhile to be cognisant of the need to: develop laws that are appropriate to a particular country's capacities and constraints; mount awareness campaigns on public information encompassing the laws and the underlying policies; promote the empowerment of local communities and mobilise support for the implementation of legal provisions; enhance the sustainable dedication of resources for the implementation of the laws and foster the promotion of continuous training for all the relevant public officials (Olufunke, 2016).

In the context of criminal law, it is particularly necessary that governments ensure consistency during investigation and prosecution. This should be backed by the establishment of joint investigation units at both national and international levels, ensuring that penalties are severe, that law enforcement officials are properly trained in protecting the rights of victims, and that border patrol activities are tightened and that the relevant travel documents are provided by people travelling in and out of countries. In its examination of policy responses to trafficking, the next chapter also investigates the connection between policy and law, enabling the presentation of an overall framework for effective responses to the problem being investigated.

The three main trafficking activities being explored are: the recruitment, transportation, and exploitation of the victims of sex-trafficking (Gajic-Veljanoski & Stewart, 2007). Apparently, recruitment trends indicate that countries of origin have not developed laws that curb human trafficking. The checking of passports is usually frivolous due to rampant corruption. Furthermore, the public lacks knowledge about human trafficking and the dangers it poses to the victims. Some organisations, including non-governmental organisations (for instance, Free the Slaves, The Polaris Project, Not for Sale), are fighting to combat human trafficking; however, this type of sexual exploitation still remains a flourishing business venture. With regard to transportation of victims, a lack of law enforcement regulating human trafficking for sexual exploitation remains a rule rather than an exception in the transit countries. Most

countries enact domestic laws that outlaw the inward trafficking of people but simultaneously condoning the outward transportation of people into other countries. With reference to the exploitation of victims in the destination countries, the existing laws hardly defend immigrant sex labourers and the working conditions they are subjected to (Van der Watt, 2018; Bello, 2018; Emser & Francis, 2017). It is worth noting that the investigation and prosecution procedures are worrisomely time-consuming, rendering cases of sexual exploitation extremely difficult to pursue. Further, cooperation between countries of origin, transportation, and destination is usually non-existent, further scuttling hopes of successful investigation and prosecution.

In the past years some countries intensified their fight against human trafficking (Bello, 2018). A case in point is the Czech Republic, which has deployed police units whose area of speciality is human trafficking. At international scale, at Palermo in December 2000, the United Nations introduced initiatives such as the "Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children" and "The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime." These instruments were operationalised in December 2003 to stimulate collaborative effort among world criminal justice systems in terms of protecting victims of human trafficking, raise global awareness of organised crime in the form of human trafficking, as well as stressing the centrality of human rights issues (Nichols, 2015).

In March 2007, 147 countries partook in the Convention; 132 countries were state parties and 117 countries had opted to take part in the Protocol to Prevent Trafficking with 111 countries as state parties. To satisfy the requirements of the Convention and the Protocol to Prevent Trafficking, state parties had to approve of internal criminal and civil laws and the administrative systems had to execute the regulations. Therefore, state parties had to agree to laws that criminalise all types of human trafficking, criminalise public bribery, arrest human traffickers, and develop systems that defend and support victims as well as protecting witnesses (Van der Watt, 2018).

Merely focusing on the victims' behaviour change, ignoring issues inherent in the whole human trafficking supply chain will not yield the desired results (Van der Watt, 2018). Van der Watt (2018) further recommends that professionals such as social workers, psychologists, nurses and police should identify the traffickers and the way they operate; they must also be empowered to control human trafficking and appreciate the fact that the business is growing tremendously. Further, professionals must understand that interviewing victims may not necessarily lead to the apprehension of human traffickers and clan members who are involved, since the

traumatised victims are not always willing to disclose the full details of their exploiters or their experiences, due to fear of the perpetrators finding them and punishing them (Capazorio, 2017). The victims of human trafficking are usually compelled to work in obscure locations where they are often terrorised, tortured, manipulated, and intimidated, making them unable to disclose their traumatic experiences, regardless of the accessibility of support systems (Van der Watt, 2018).

2.11 Conclusion

The literature reviewed demonstrates that human trafficking of women and children remains a serious challenge in Africa. Trafficking of women for domestic and sexual exploitation is a flourishing business in Africa. Human trafficking thrives as a result of terrible living conditions in the nations or places of origin, which are characterised by poverty, unemployment, and a lack of opportunities or alternatives. Permeable borders, poverty, a lack of job, gender discrimination, and a lack of understanding and information on the topic of human trafficking are all underlying causes of human trafficking in South Africa. The literature review further reviewed that in terms of personal characteristics, a human trafficking victim is already a vulnerable person who lacks options owing to his or her circumstances rather than societal changes or dynamics. Most of literature reviewed reported that poverty was the main contributing factor in human trafficking. In other instances, organised crime syndicates may deceive victims of human trafficking by promising them better opportunities and attractive employment prospects that do not exist.

The literature further reviewed that the psychological impact for the victims of human trafficking is immense. Human traffickers frequently rape, starve, and physically attack their captives while they are being transported. These victims are also misled, threatened, and secluded from society, placing them at risk of developing mental illnesses. The victims are at a greater risk of contracting HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Human trafficking frequently results in complex post-traumatic stress disorder (CPTSD), which occurs when a person is repeatedly exposed to a distressing environment over a long period of time.

The literature reviewed also highlighted that lack of successful prosecutions in cases of human trafficking appears to be a global reality. Importantly, the literature indicated that lack of legislative enforcement on human trafficking is due to a number of factors, including ineffective anti-trafficking laws, a lack of legislative knowledge, limited resources available to law enforcement, insufficient or no resources available for transnational investigations, and

victims' fear of disclosing evidence that incriminates traffickers. In light of the lack of comprehensive anti-trafficking legislation, the literature reviewed indicates that existing common law crimes and statutory offences were a crucial instrument for prosecuting criminal conduct within the human trafficking process.

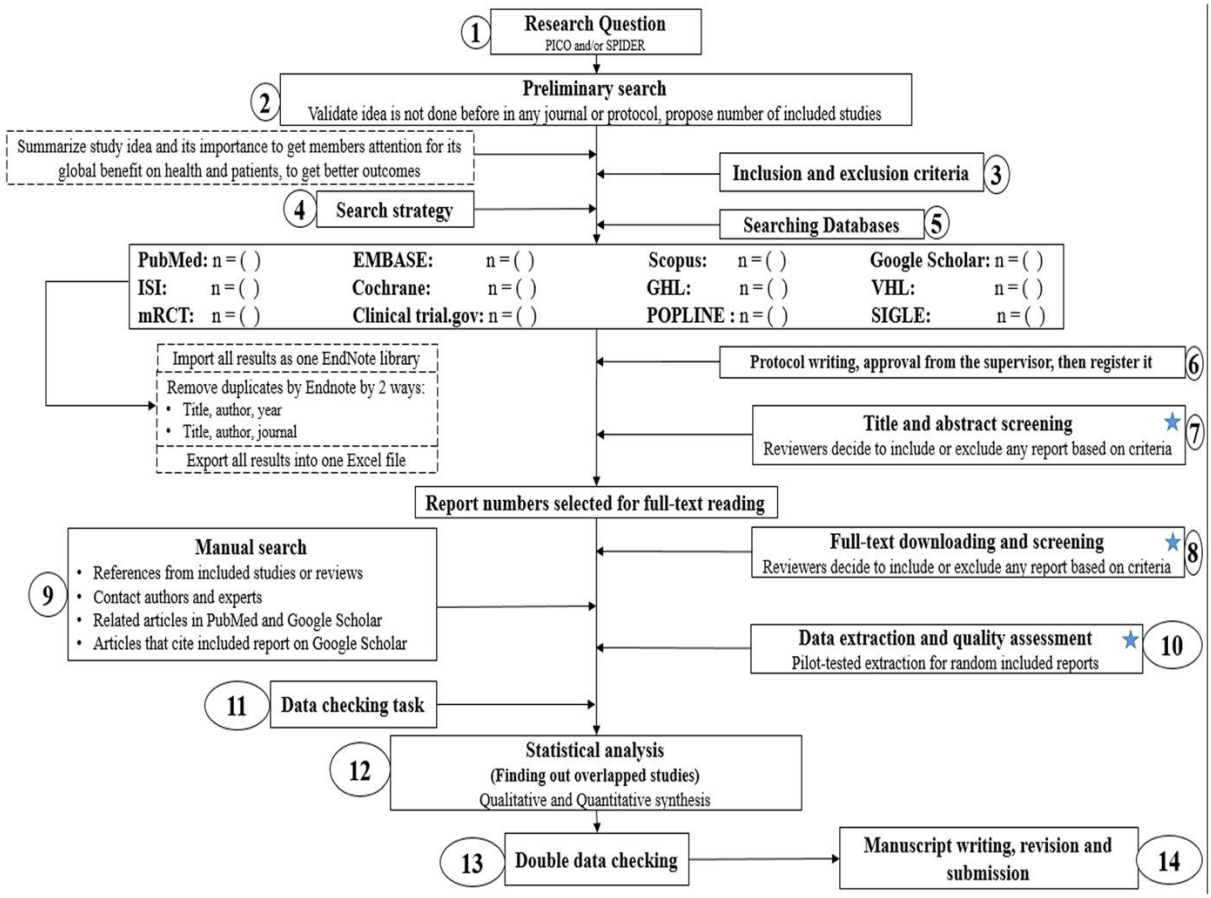
There are gaps in literature that were noted by the researcher whilst conducting the literature review. The review of the literature revealed a scarcity of high-quality research on human trafficking, as well as a lack of evidence in much of the debate, policymaking, and enforcement surrounding the subject. Most literature on human trafficking focuses on its flaws, such as its sensationalistic and circumstantial nature. There appears to be an information gap regarding the true nature of human trafficking or the effectiveness of anti-trafficking strategies. Additionally, because of the complexities of human trafficking, gathering trustworthy data to verify local, regional, and worldwide occurrence is difficult.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Despite the growing body of literature available, prevalent beliefs and attitudes regarding human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation are yet to be systematically reviewed and meta-analysed by researchers. Literature on prevalent beliefs and attitudes regarding human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation needs to be gathered to enable the formulation of preventative and curative measures. It is imperative that effective policies are formulated and examined for positive effects. Systematically reviewing the prevalent beliefs and attitudes regarding human trafficking for sexual exploitation and analysing the results can guide practice and identify areas for future research.

A comprehensive description of all the steps undertaken in the methodology section are discussed in this chapter. The flow diagram below, proposed by Tawfik et al. (2019) encapsulates a basic overview of the methodological structure of the systematic review



The research uses the spider search tool because it offers a systematic strategy for searching for qualitative and mixed-methods research studies. To define key components of the review topic and to guide and standardize the search method, the SPIDER (Sample, Phenomenon of Interest, Design, Evaluation, Research type) tool was used. The SPIDER tool is a better alternative to the more commonly used PICO (Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome) tool since it modifies the PICO elements to find qualitative journal articles (Cook et al., 2012). Additionally, by defining important aspects of non-quantitative research questions, the SPIDER tool aids rigor in research (Cook et al., 2012).

Table 3.1 The SPIDER tool applied to the review questions

Sample	Victims of human trafficking in Africa

Phenomenon of interest	Human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation in Africa
Design	Published literature of any research design
Evaluation	Characteristics, views, experiences
Research type	Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods peer reviewed studies.

3.2 Conceptual framework

Smyth (2004) describes some of the functions of a conceptual framework to be a tool to scaffold research and, therefore, to assist a researcher to make meaning of subsequent findings. Further, the conceptual framework forms part of the agenda for negotiation to be scrutinised and tested, reviewed, and reformed as a result of investigation. Therefore, at any stage, a framework should only be seen as a snapshot of developing work, and as a means of communicating the various elements of any analysis. However, it is not an attempt to accurately portray the entirety of the field.

This research study was conducted using Feminist standpoint theory as its conceptual framework. Feminist standpoint theory is a modern theoretical construct that analyses the world, using the experiences of women as its "starting point" (Dominelli, 2002, p. 7). One of the core assumptions of the feminist standpoint theory is that, "less powerful members of society experience a different reality as a consequence of their oppression" (Swigonski, 1994, p. 9). Feminist standpoint theory focuses on the concept of marginality, meaning that on the one hand, the people at the "centre" of society, the "oppressors," hold positions of social, political and economic power. On the other hand, the "oppressed groups" of people are living at the margins of society and are further away from the "center of power" (Dominelli, 2002). As a result, they have less access to the resources and security needed for social advancement (Forte, 2007). Their marginalisation often results in them seeking survival through unorthodox means.

The goal of feminist standpoint theory is to identify and eliminate the inequalities experienced by society's marginalised groups such as women, immigrants (sex traffickers included), persons with disabilities, persons of colour, children, and individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, or transgender (Dominelli, 2002). Feminist theorists are committed to improving the quality of life for all members of society (Dominelli, 2002). The feminist theory

helps in this case to unravel the attitudes and beliefs regarding human trafficking, especially for sexual exploitation. These beliefs and attitudes help model effective legislation to curb human trafficking and sexual abuse.

Feminist standpoint theory is beneficial for social research because it "offers an explanation of how research directed by social values and political agendas can produce empirically and theoretically preferable results" (Swigonski, 1994, p.3). The theory also aligns very closely with the values and ethics of social workers as defined by the National Association of Social Workers (Swigonski, 1994). The primary goal of feminist standpoint theory's is to help people in need and to address social problems. This theory of Feminist standpoint theory also help social workers to pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people, including social workers that respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person (SAD, 2009).

Raymond (2004, p.1184) states, "The most glaring evidence of women's marginalization and social inequality is the rampant commodification of women in prostitution, sex trafficking, sex tourism, and mail-order-bride industries". Thus, social workers and other health professionals working in the forefront of human trafficking need to understand public attitudes and beliefs related to sex trafficking and the public's overall awareness of sex trafficking so they are prepared to pursue social change on behalf of the vulnerable women and children that are exploited by the sex trafficking industry. Since social policy development is influenced by the ideologies and attitudes of the people (Bello, 2018), social workers can use the knowledge gained from this research to pursue social change on behalf of women and the girl child who are victimised by the sex trafficking industry.

3.3 Systematic review of the literature

A systematic review of prevalent beliefs and attitudes regarding human trafficking for sexual exploitation was conducted to thoroughly examine literature from 2000 to 2019. According to Petticrew and Roberts (2006), a systematic review comprehensively identifies, appraises, and synthesizes all the relevant studies on a given topic. A systematic review is particularly pertinent to research in which there is uncertainty about the outcome of the effectiveness of an intervention. As is the case with human trafficking, there are diverging and conflicting views on both causes and intervention mechanisms (Pattel, 2020; Van der Watt, 2018; Bello, 2018).

The current systematic review was written in accordance with the recommended protocol set forth by the Campbell Collaboration (2001). The Campbell Collaboration's systematic review protocol is the most widely used and recognized protocol for systematic reviews in the field of social sciences (Cooper & Hedges, 2009). The Campbell Collaboration is a worldwide establishment which was founded as an influence of the Cochrane Collaboration. It is an international network, which supports the preparation and dissemination of high-quality systematic reviews of research evidence on the effectiveness of social programs, policies, and practices. Its goal is to promote positive social change through contributing to better-informed decisions and greater effectiveness for public and private services, globally. The primary aim of this organization is to assist practitioners, policy makers and the public at large to make policy intervention decisions. This is done by conducting systematic reviews which focus on the effectiveness of social and behavioural interventions in education, crime and justice, and social welfare (Davies & Bourch, 2001).

The Campbell Collaboration protocol (2001) requires:

- a cover sheet,
- background for the review,
- objectives of the review,
- methods,
- criteria for inclusion and exclusion of studies in the review,
- search strategy for identification of relevant studies,
- description of methods used in the component studies,
- criteria for determination of independent findings,
- details of study coding categories,
- statistical procedures and conventions,
- treatment of qualitative research,
- timeframe,
- plans for updating the review,
- acknowledgments,
- statement concerning conflict of interest,
- references, and
- tables.

3.4 Problem formulation

The problem being investigated by this study is exploring the most prevalent beliefs and attitudes regarding human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation. Data generated from qualifying studies is meta-analysed. In addition, this study also identifies the legal implications and the available legislature relating to issues of human trafficking and sexual abuse.

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What knowledge is related to the topic of human trafficking and sexual abuse?
2. What are the most prevalent beliefs and attitudes regarding human trafficking for sexual purposes?
3. What are the moral and legal implications of human trafficking and sexual abuse in Africa?

3.5 Description of methods used in primary research

The most common methods used in human trafficking research are comparing the human beliefs and attitudes and intervention strategies against comparable countries experiencing the same challenge. Some studies included in this review are comparisons between two or more types of beliefs from countries in different geographic locations. However, all the studies selected in this review are set in Africa. For example, a study was conducted by Miaschi (2019), comparing beliefs in Arabian countries such as Syria and African countries, focusing on child trafficking for sex slavery. Most studies that were reviewed provide multiple beliefs and attitudes on sex slavery as a result of human trafficking. However, there are also varying policies applied in curbing human trafficking for sex.

3.5.1 Criteria for inclusion of studies in the review

The following criteria was used to determine whether a study would be included in the review for purposes of exploring the most prevalent beliefs and attitudes regarding human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation:

(1) Types of studies

The meta-analysis included single-case and qualitative design studies. Single-group case studies and exploratory designs were reviewed and discussed to help provide further explanations and to provide a basis for future research (Littell et al., 2008).

(2) Types of participants

All African countries that have experienced human trafficking for purposes of sexual abuse with written literature were included in this review. Literature focusing on destination countries, whether African or otherwise were also included.

(3) Types of settings

This review included all humans trafficked for purposes of sexual exploitation who originated from Africa regardless of the countries of destination. Thus, only studies focusing on victims from Africa were included in this review.

(4) Types of intervention

The review includes all studies focusing on victims of human trafficking who were trafficked for purposes of sexual exploitation irrespective of their age or their destination country. However, studies that involve policies on human trafficking for sex even if they were not African in terms of their geographical settings were considered for their policy intervention strategies.

(5) Geographical context

This review included all studies conducted which focused on the beliefs and attitudes regarding human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation within the African continent. Due to limited resources, this review is limited to articles written in English.

(6) Timeframe of studies

Studies that were conducted between 2000 and 2021 were included in the current review. Search strategy for identification of relevant studies was done through a thorough literature search. When conducting systematic reviews and meta-analyses, it is important that the literature search be approached systematically in an effort to exhaust both published and unpublished research. An exhaustive search for studies and research was conducted using a combination of the keywords “human trafficking”, “sex trafficking”, “human-trafficking Africa”, “child trafficking”, “trafficking policies” and “policies against trafficking,” on several electronic databases. The electronic databases searched included Psych INFO, ProQuest (for

unpublished dissertations), Dissertations and Abstracts, Academic Search Premier, Social Work Abstracts, PubMed, and Medline. Personal contacts of researchers and scholars were used for seeking clarifications.

Lipsey and Wilson (2001) recommended that professional associations and professionals in the field of study be contacted as potential sources of fugitive data. In accordance with those recommendations, an attempt was made to contact specific publishers on human trafficking for sex exploitation for information pertaining to conference presentations and other leads for published and unpublished work and for assistance in locating research conducted internationally. Conference presentations and unpublished research were sought by emailing first authors requesting additional studies. However, no correspondence was received.

Exclusion criteria

1. Research published pre-2000, unless a seminal piece of literature.
2. Non-African countries that experienced human trafficking were excluded from this review.
   3. Further, the review also excluded victims of human trafficking whose destination was Africa, but their country of origin is not Africa.
4. In addition, this review excluded humans trafficked for labour/slavery without any sex inclinations.
5. Non-African countries that experienced human trafficking are excluded from this review.
6. Research written in another language other than English.

3.5.2 Hand searching

Several journals were manually searched. The inclusion criteria were relevance to the topic (human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation and publication dates between 2000 and 2019). These included; Journal of Black Feminism and Social Research, Journal of Pan African Studies, International Journal of Development and Policy Studies, and Crime Goes Global journal. The journals were hand-searched as they were likely to contain information relevant to the population under investigation (human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation), and they were known to contain information relevant to sex trafficking and in an attempt to locate African continent cross-sectional studies.

3.5.3 Internet search

Keyword searches (as stated above) were conducted using google scholar which is a division of the search engine Google. It is a widely used search engine, popular for its widespread selection of scholarly articles which can be found at the convenience of one place. The decision to use Google scholar primarily rested on the premise that Google scholar is a comprehensive platform known to contain good quality academic articles. The use of specific independent websites was avoided as they tend to limit the span of articles available at disposal. However a scopus was also used to search for additional articles. Websites such as UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre., African Women's Leadership Institute., Presence Africaine, Berkeley: Human Rights Watch, Borderline Slavery, ILO-IPEC, and the International Movement against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR) were searched for research and professional contacts.

3.5.4 Reference lists

Reference lists of studies found relevant for this review as well as related studies and metaanalyses were examined for sources of further relevant data.

3.6 Conducting and documenting the search and selection process

A detailed search account of data collection procedures and storage of records was maintained to keep track of all searches including (1) Time periods searched; (2) Databases utilised; (3) search engines used; (4) amount of time searching; and (5) key words used. Studies were located primarily through the University of KwaZulu-Natal library system and these were saved in an electronic folder. When electronic versions were not available, hard copies were made and kept in a designated file. Inclusionary decisions made were documented throughout the reviewing and screening process based on the target population and corresponding intervention. The appraisal of study quality and information required for analysis were coded using a coding form. Coding was also conducted for the analysis of country sex trafficking incidences, and for key intervention policies seeking to mitigate sex trafficking.

3.6.1 Details of study coding categories

Coding was conducted for all studies meeting the inclusion criteria. The coding instrument included categories concerning all the relevant bibliographic information, the studies' design, the studies' intervention criterion, the studies' inclusion and exclusion criteria, the follow-ups

of authors of the literature searched, type(s) of policy interventions, different ways in which sex-trafficking victims are lured, age group examined if available, challenges in curbing sex trafficking, policies on curbing sex trafficking from successful countries, and all outcome data (Van der Watt, 2018).

3.6.2 Missing data

In the event of missing data, the reviewer made every attempt to contact the authors of the studies to account for the missing information (Littell et al., 2008). Where no responses were received from the authors, then the studies were eliminated from the meta-analysis. However, these were retained for discussion.

3.6.3 Summary table of retrieved articles and included articles

The inclusion and exclusion of literature were documented in detail at all stages to maintain accuracy in reporting and reproducibility of research. To illustrate the reduction strategies and results of the search, the Cochrane Handbook (Higgins & Green, 2011) suggests the use of a flow diagram. The PRISMA flow diagram (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, 2009) was used. The number of articles that were found in the search processes is stated in the appendix 2 as well as stating those that would be finally found useful. Duplicated articles were eliminated.

3.6.4 Quality appraisal of retrieved articles

Quality assessment is crucial to ensure that the findings of the research papers selected for review are consistent with the purpose of the study. For this systematic literature review, only peer-reviewed articles were included, which excludes the need for a further quality assessment.

3.7 Critical review

The critical review entails the three independent processes. These were data extraction, analysis, and synthesis.

3.7.1 Data extraction

To extract relevant data from the literature included, a data extraction form was developed by the researcher in collaboration with the research supervisor. The form categorises articles. The completed data extraction form is provided as an appendix. Using the data extraction form, each article was screened for relevant information, which eliminated the need to read all papers

completely. This process was undertaken by the researcher, though it might have resulted in subjectivity bias. The key search terms utilised were human trafficking, sex trafficking, human trafficking in Africa, child trafficking, trafficking policies and policies against human trafficking. Table 3.2 flow diagram guideline for systematic review and meta-analysis steps.

A meta-analysis component is frequently included in systematic reviews, which entails utilizing statistical tools to synthesis data from multiple studies into a single quantitative estimate or summary effect size (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). Systematic reviews frequently employ statistical approaches to integrate data from the research studies under consideration and draw new statistical findings based on the data obtained. This is called meta-analysis, and it represents a specialized subset of systematic reviews. Impellizzeri and Bizzini (2012) describe meta-analysis as the statistical analysis of a large collection of analysis results from independent research with the goal of integrating the findings.

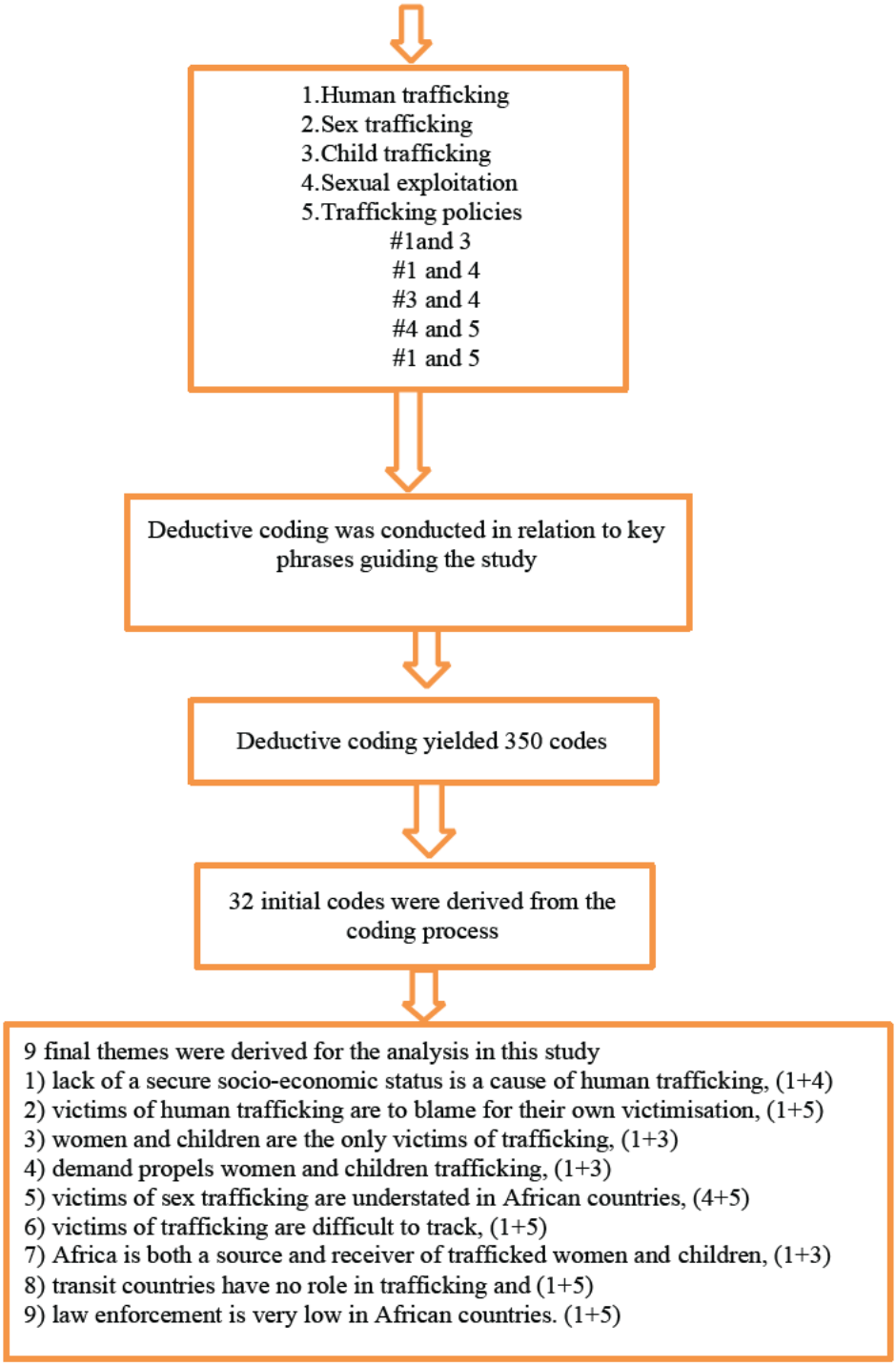
Utilising the meta-analysis technique was beneficial to the research. Several scholars have claimed that meta-analysis is an important technique for improving our understanding of organizational phenomena and determining how well data supports theoretically based ideas (Ones et al., 2017). For example, researchers asserted that, in many circumstances, metaanalysis findings can provide better estimates of population relationships than single investigations (Schmidt & Hunter, 2014). Furthermore, the increased amount of data utilized in a meta-analysis provides more statistical power to identify effects than individual independent investigations, therefore, the precision and accuracy of estimates can be enhanced. Additionally, summary estimates can be subjected to hypothesis testing, and the presence of publication bias can be determined. Apart from these advantages, meta-analysis aids researchers in resolving inconsistencies in research findings and identifies mediating factors that may illustrate why these differences exist. These were strong acceptable reasons for the researcher to analyse data using the meta-analysis method.

3.7.2 Data analysis

The retrieved data were then analysed to answer the main research and sub-questions. The complete analyses are attached below.

Table 3.2 Coding and data analysis flow chart

Initial codes were generated using a string of pre-selected key words and phrases



3.7.3 Synthesis

Finally, the findings are summarized in a narrative synthesis. The synthesis is presented in the next chapter.

3.8 Checking the reference list for accuracy

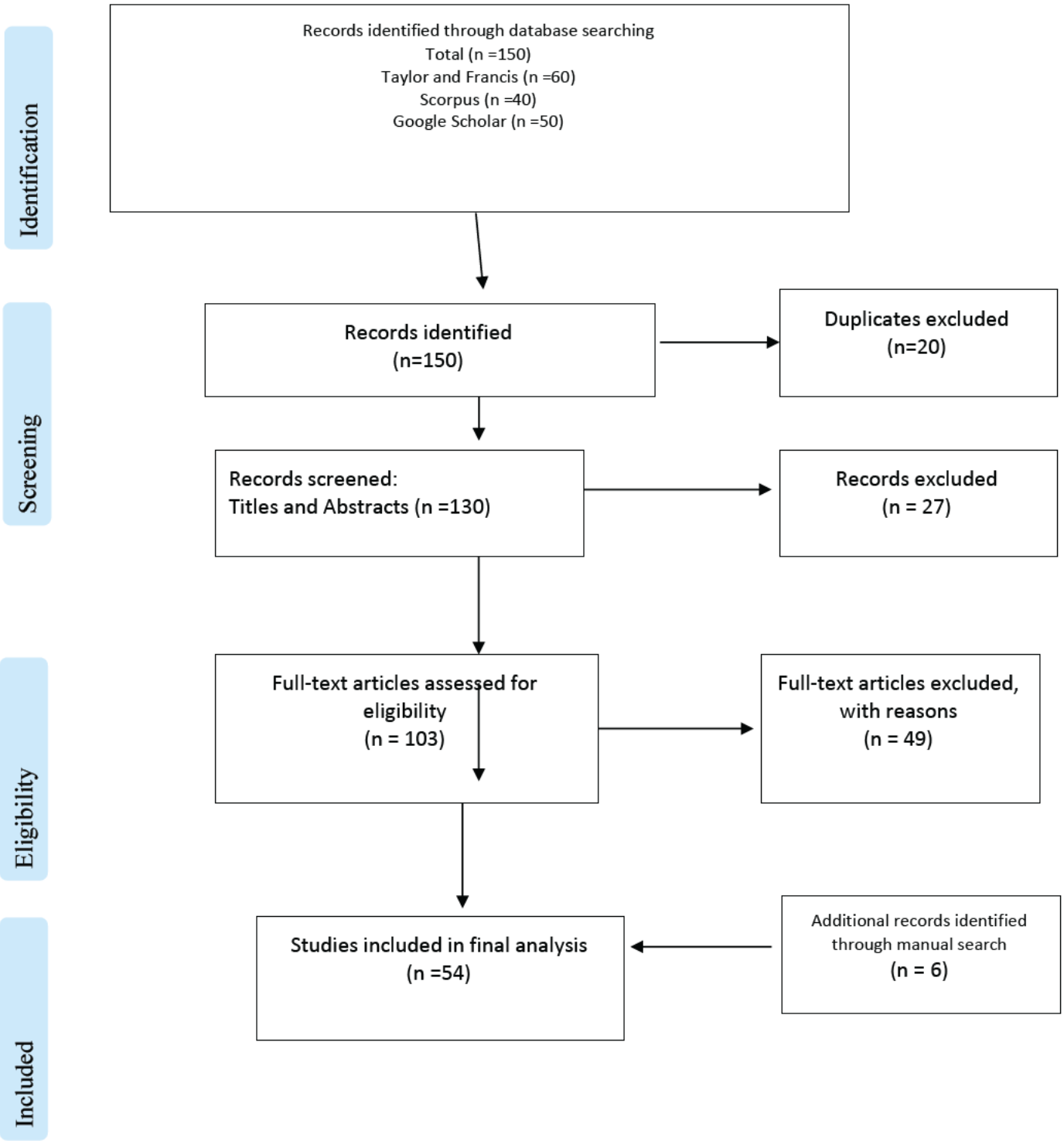
The number of articles included in the review used is listed. Those that are not referenced are presented on a separate list.

3.9 Conclusion

The above chapter presents a methodological overview of the study by highlighting main theoretical frame adopted, which is feminist standpoint theory. By virtue of the study being typically a desk top research; hence, no human subjects participated in it. The systematic review was conducted in accordance with the Campbell Collaboration protocol (2001). Therefore, procedures and protocols used for this type of research are outlined in the chapter. The primary sources of data for this review were studies and articles published between 2000 and 2021. Data generated from qualifying studies were meta-analysed and therefore disseminated into distinctive themes. Therefore, the researcher was able to analyse the data by following these steps: formulating the research question, develop and use an explicit, reproducible methodology, developing and use clear inclusion/ exclusion criteria, critically assessing the validity of the findings in included studies, analysing of findings across the studies and synthesising and interpretation of results.

Chapter 4: Presentation of findings

Table 4.1 PRISMA 2009 flow diagram



4.1 Introduction ***Source:*** **Adopted from Moher D, Liberati A, Tetzlaff J, Altman DG, The PRISMA Group (2009).**

A flow diagram is presented above to demonstrate how data was derived. The meta-analysis of the reviewed literature indicates that the trafficking of women and children has become a global

phenomenon that is unequivocally intractable. The results include nine (9) prominent perceptions out of the 32 that were inherent in the reviewed literature. The most common and prominent perceptions extracted from the reviewed literature were: 1) lack of a secure socioeconomic status is a cause of human trafficking, 2) victims of human trafficking are to blame for their own victimisation, 3) women and children are the only victims of trafficking, 4) demand propels women and children trafficking, 5) victims of sex trafficking are understated in African countries, 6) victims of trafficking are difficult to track, 7) Africa is both a source and receiver of trafficked women and children, 8) transit countries have no role in trafficking and 9) law enforcement is very low in African countries.

These perceptions were derived from various sources of literature. Table 4.1 summarises the perceptions according to their frequency category. The first category comprised perceptions that appeared more than 15 times. These were ranked as common perceptions. The second category comprised perceptions that appeared in literature 12 to 14 times (relatively common perceptions) whilst the last category comprised perceptions that appeared 10 to 11 times in literature and these were categorised as rare perceptions.

Table 4.2: Perceptions extracted from literature

Perception Category	Frequency Range	Perception Examples
Common perception	15 or more times	• Lacking socio-economic status is a cause of human trafficking • Victims of human trafficking are to blame for their victimization • Women and children are the only victims of human trafficking
Relatively common perception	12-14 times	• Demand propels woman and child trafficking • Victims of sex trafficking are understated in African countries • Victims of trafficking are difficult to track • Africa is both a source and receiver of trafficked women and children
Least common perception	10-11 times	• Transit countries have no role in trafficking • law enforcement is very low in African countries

The following section discusses perceptions about the trafficking of women and children in Africa. This suffices as perceptions in turn, shape and model strategies that mitigate sex-trafficking.

4.2 Perceptions related to lack of a secure socio-economic status is a cause of human trafficking

In the reviewed literature, much attention was paid to the perception that blames victims of human trafficking for lacking a secure socio-economic status and character traits needed to acquire that socio-economic status. Van der Watt (2018) argues that trafficked women and girls originate from countries such as Zimbabwe, Malawi and Sudan since they are experiencing socio-economic challenges; therefore, trafficking appears to offer a solution to the challenges confronting them. Hence, the victims of trafficking belong to a low socio-economic class; they

are withdrawn, dirty, uneducated and lack luxuries which they envy when promised (Cockbain, Bowers & Dimitrova, 2018; Khanyile, 2018). This view is supported by the Feminist Abolitionist perspective, which postulates that all the victims of human trafficking need to be rescued (Bello, 2018). This perspective is based on a radical feminist perspective whose goal is to extricate the victims of trafficking from sexual exploitation. Feminists regard sex work as an epitome of gendered oppression and perceive sex workers as victims of human trafficking. They believe the bodies of sex workers are battlegrounds that need protection from sexual objectification (Szörényi, 2014). This perspective is shared by Evangelical Christians, which partnered with feminists in raising awareness about sex trafficking and fighting to "save" those they have identified as victims working in the commercial sex industry (Bernstein, 2007).

Lack of a secure socio-economic status implies that if the victims were educated or born into higher socio-economic classes, they would have known better and shunned or resisted the tricks of human traffickers. The victims of human trafficking are often forced to portray themselves in a specific and stereotypical narrative of "backwardness" that depicts them as such (Van der Watt, 2018). These stereotypes build on victim blame, because the victim must fit the stereotype to be a "real" victim; simultaneously, the victim is considered at fault due to the stereotype.

This perception maintains that poverty, weak governance, armed conflict, lack of effective protection against discrimination and exploitation exacerbate the insecurity of victims of human trafficking ((Bello, 2018; Yingwana, 2018). However, generalising the causes of human trafficking in Africa is misleading. Each country presents specific factors that are unique to each situation, though many of them relate to deprivation. An analysis of the causes of human trafficking indicates the "push factors" on the "supply side", neglecting the demand as a crucial dimension of the problem. However, "pull factors" on the demand side are equally salient for countries to effectively combat trafficking in women and children (ILO, 2017). In the following sub-section, the study examines some of the cross-cutting causes and vulnerabilities that hinge on scenarios of insecure victims in the African region.

4.2.1 The push factors: poverty, power and violence

The final analysis and synthesis of the literature and reports on human trafficking in Africa identified poverty as the most significant cause of human trafficking (Yingwana, Walker and

Etchart, 2019; Urama and Nwachukwu, 2017). Be that as it may, poverty presents only one dimension of the entire picture. The reviewed literature indicates that the vulnerability of women and children makes them easy targets for traffickers in Africa. The bulk of the reviewed literature noted the prevalence of political instability, tyranny and discrimination as placing women and children at greater risk, with socio-cultural bigotries and the prevalence of gender-based violence hampering their effective protection from trafficking (Van der Watt, 2018; Gallagher, 2014). At the local level, in Africa, gender-based discrimination creates a cultural environment that tolerates human trafficking as morally acceptable. These cultural attitudes and practices coalesce with poor living conditions to stimulate trafficking in women and children (Patel, 2020). Van der Watt (2018) detailed the trafficking of girls and women for sex under conditions of violence and deprivation, which are also connected to the whole spectrum of overall violence perpetrated against women in public and private spheres.

A research conducted by Dunne (2012) found that nearly 50% of the women interviewed in some parts of the world confirmed that they were regularly physically abused. In all of the three African countries (Kenya and Zimbabwe) surveyed by the UNICEF in 2000, the numbers are between 32 and 42 per cent (Elechi et al., 2007; Dunne, 2012). Societal attitudes despise women and girls as inferior and weaker members of society; hence, society objectifies them. Such attitudes culminate in society conniving with perpetrators in their recruitment, either forcefully or fraudulently, into the most destitute living and working conditions. Families that are too poor to support their children may be compelled to sell them or hire them out, with girls and young women being more vulnerable than their male counterparts (Mashayamombe, 2017) in terms of being given away for commercial exploitation and, thus, are very likely to be trafficked in the process.

The literature has established that in Northern Ghana and some parts of Togo, girls are forcefully ‘donated’ to priests as ‘wives’ and subjected to sexual exploitation by shrine priests in return for the family’s protection (Mlambo, Hlongwa & Msthalui, 2019). Studies indicate that traditional practices also contribute to the trafficking of women and girls and early marriage is a typical example. Acute poverty dictates that the young girl child be regarded as an economic burden and her marriage to a much older man is often regarded as the family’s survival strategy (Mushohwe, 2018). In Sub–Saharan African countries like Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi, traditional societies sanction that the bride’s family receives cattle from the groom or his family, as bride price for their daughter (Mashayamombe, 2017). Also, the

risk of trafficking linked to early marriage occurs when some men face the impossibility of finding young girls in their own communities (in the case of migrant workers). Studies established that early marriage is generally more prevalent in Central and Western Africa – with 40 per cent and 49 per cent, respectively, of girls under the age of 19 – compared to 27 per cent in East Africa and 20 per cent in North and Southern Africa (Mlambo, Hlongwa & Msthalui, 2019). Civil conflict and economic hardships often expedite early marriages and the risk of human trafficking.

In fact, a weak socio-economic status predisposes women and children to human trafficking. For example, in refugee camps in Burundi, families protect their honour by marrying off their daughters as early as from the ages of 12 years. Although poverty often induces parents into marrying off their daughters, child marriage may result in poverty for women through divorce, separation or abandonment. Quite often, the only option available for girls and women grappling with extreme marital stress is escapism; however, they mostly fall into the land of traffickers. In Ethiopia and Kenya, for instance, many runaway victims end up living in poor urban communities, particularly in brothel environments presided over by traffickers (Smith, 2011).

Furthermore, the reviewed literature shows that during protracted conflicts, the affected countries are trapped in an 'economy of war' and populations are forced to flee across or within national borders; women and children are often exposed to violence, sexual exploitation and risky working conditions (Elezi, 2011; Van der Watt, 2018). In some cases, they are forced to offer sex in return for survival and 'protection'. It is under these circumstances that organised crime related to international trafficking escalates. Civil unrest makes it hard for women and children to have their birth, name and nationality registered. In some sections of the Ugandan society, for example, the collapse of the birth registration system has impeded the possibility of families reuniting with their children abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army. The extrication of these children from their exploitative circumstances as child soldiers and their consequent rehabilitation are rendered highly problematic due to the fact that most of them lack the legal identity documents (Gallagher, 2014).

Studies have established links between poverty, violence, and trafficking have been compounded by the effects of HIV/AIDS (Wooditch et al., 2009). Women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation face the highest risk of exposure to HIV infection. They are

insufficiently informed, seduced or coerced into unprotected sex; once they get infected with HIV/AIDS, they are deprived of care and support. Furthermore, children orphaned due to HIV/AIDS are also vulnerable to trafficking due to the increasing poverty that characterizes their households and communities (Walker-Rodriguez & Hill, 2011). This results from the stigmatisation, rejection, or marginalisation to which they are exposed by their communities.

Alluding to the contribution of poor socio-economic status to human trafficking, the literature reviewed for a study conducted by Olubukola (2014) in Nigeria identified poverty and armed conflict; lack of economic opportunities and education; discriminatory practices (including gender-based discrimination); abusive family environments; restrictive migration policies; and a poorly regulated industrial sector as exacerbating the trafficking of women and children.

Studies confirm that human trafficking depends on the existence of source countries with people deprived of sustainable economic and living conditions, and destination countries with people and industries craving for cheap labour or cheap prostitutes to maximize their profits. Research conducted on the African peoples' perceptions on human trafficking in Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa and other African countries indicates that the crime has been fuelled largely by demand for the victims' labour, coupled with the increasing ease of global travel and immigration (Urama & Nwachukwu, 2017).

The bulk of the reviewed literature indicates that extreme poverty in Africa remains the most significant factor contributing towards human trafficking (Dunne, 2012; Yingwana, Walker & Etchart, 2019). Human trafficking is powered by source countries that maintain a constant supply of persons seeking better economic opportunities and destination countries sustain the trafficking process by heightening the demand for cheap labour and/or cheap subjects for prostitution. The literature suggests that the existence of a lucrative market for trafficked persons, alongside poverty and weak political institutions, human trafficking remains too obdurate to eradicate (Bello, 2018). Evidently, victims' movement trends show a shift from less developed to more developed countries (Gallagher, 2014); nonetheless, all countries are affected by human trafficking, as source, transit, or destination nations.

4.3 The perception that victims of human trafficking are to blame for their victimisation

The reviewed literature comprises perceptions that lay blame on the victims for their trafficking.

In a research conducted by Kreston (2007), the blaming of victims appeared in 45 per cent of the interviews conducted. Most of the reviewed literature indicates that victim blaming served as a way of categorising victims into a separate group with distinct behaviours or character traits which were used to describe the "flaws" that made the victims susceptible to victimisation and to distance them from their traffickers and users (Jones, 2012; Kotrla, 2010; Malarel, 2007). The perceptions that human trafficking is synonymous with sex trafficking and that the victims of human trafficking are women both influence the behaviours and character traits the participants of that study focused on, particularly the most prevalent beliefs and attitudes regarding the trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation in Africa (Dempsey, 2017).

Moreover, previous researches identified behaviours that predispose women and children to trafficking, particularly choice of clothing (Stolz, 2010) and alcohol consumption (Troshnski & Blank, 2007), as they cause victimization which manifests through sexual assault, leading to trafficking. Women and children are often trafficked from Malawi, Ghana, Uganda and Somalia to South Africa en-route to overseas destinations when they exhibit traits that are attractive to traffickers (Patel, 2020; Van der Watt, 2018). Such perceptions exonerate the actual perpetrator of human trafficking. In some studies blame is placed on the victims of trafficking as opposed to the traffickers.

A research conducted byCockbain, & Olver (2019) on sex-trafficking cases focused on the victim and little attention was paid to the role of the abusers in the whole human trafficking supply chain. Such studies perceive personality traits as contributing immensely to the victimisation of vulnerable groups. For instance, young women and girls are targeted because they would not have reached a stage where they feel confident and they are obsessed with men's attention, especially being praised as beautiful (Kabede, n.d). This makes them susceptible to trafficking. This view is reinforced by Van der Watt (2018) who reiterates that female victims exhibiting a perceived character flaw experience the greatest share of blame as victims. Obsession with attention, the desire to appear beautiful and a lack of confidence have been singled out as some of the character flaws that galvanize the victims into allowing the traffickers in. However, though the above perception acknowledges the active participation of the traffickers in the human trafficking supply chain, the victim shoulders the greater blame.

4.4 The perception that women and children are the only victims of trafficking

The bulk of the reviewed literature confirms the perception that the victims of human trafficking are exclusively women and children. The reviewed studies concurred that human trafficking is synonymous with sex-trafficking, a perception which portrays human trafficking as exclusive to women and children. Papanicolaou (2008), in a research on human trafficking in East and Southern Africa, found that 91% of the confirmed cases of human trafficking included a female victim. Pursuant to these findings, the number of male victims of human trafficking is likely to be underreported owing to the preconceived ideas regarding what it means to be a victim of human trafficking (Emser & Francis, 2017). Jones' (2012) study points out that the media's representations of human trafficking depicts it as a crime perpetrated by men, with women at the receiving end, neglecting male victims of human trafficking. As such, media representations should diversify its coverage of the experiences of human trafficking so as to raise awareness about the male victims of human trafficking. It has been argued that the number of male victims is underestimated because the numbers of male victims are underreported (Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW), 2018).

Admittedly, women and girls bear the greatest brunt of human trafficking. Accessing global markets and information resources often raises unrealistic or unattainable expectations regarding living standards. Exposure to images conjuring extravagant lifestyles may tempt young women and girls to try their fortune abroad and, thus, becoming susceptible to traffickers' fraudulent promises (Aronowitz, 2011). Carol Bellamy, the Executive Director of UNICEF, stated on World Day Against Child Labour, on June 12, 2003, that traffickers take advantage of children's vulnerability and see them as commodities that are easily manipulated, on high demand and can be exploited over a long period. Without being noticed and deprived of legal protection, children fall prey to fraudulent promises of quality education or "better jobs" and get smuggled across borders. Upon arriving in a distant foreign country, trafficked children would be totally disoriented, without identity documentation, and excluded from any protective environment. They are made to endure prostitution, domestic servitude, early and involuntary marriage, and hazardous and hard labour.

The reviewed literature shows that in Africa, women do not generally occupy positions of power, with the majority of them remaining unskilled and uneducated (Dill, 2011). Literature is awash with instances of young women migrating out of their communities, not just for

economic reasons, but also as a way of attaining personal freedom and improved living conditions. However, these women are uninformed about the risky working conditions abroad; neither are they made aware of their rights and the available legal protection (Bello, 2018). In this regard, initiatives that seek to reduce women's vulnerability through improving their access to education are significant. The widespread lack of birth registration documents for children also fosters an environment prone to trafficking as children are exposed to a state of emasculation. A child whose birth, name and nationality are not officially registered and recognised is much more susceptible to trafficking operations (Barnes-September et al., 2016). Consequently, when such children have been trafficked between countries without identification, they cannot be traced back to their country of origin, and thus making it difficult to repatriate them to their communities for rehabilitation. In the countries of origin and destination, they may lack protection from the law and law enforcement authorities. These situations are exacerbated by political instability or conflict.

4.5 The perception that demand propels the trafficking of women and children

The view that in Africa, human trafficking is driven by a multifaceted demand that is mostly not thoroughly analysed (ILO, 2017) was reiterated by a number of researchers. The reviewed literature identified the 'pull factors' instigating the trafficking of women and children, but this research zeroes in on sexual exploitation within the context of commercialised prostitution. This is arguably the most sufficiently documented form of exploitation involving women and children trafficked within and from Africa (Esmer & Francis, 2017). The internal demand for such a practice is high in many African countries. This demand has also been exacerbated by foreigners in holiday resorts, as reported in Malawi regarding the sexual exploitation of children by European tourists, who even send these children to Europe as sex slaves (ILO, 2017).

The demand for workers in the domestic arena, commercial agriculture and plantations eventually leads to sexual exploitation. Reports indicate that girls from Togo are trafficked from their home countries to distant workplaces as domestic workers, but they eventually end up being sexually exploited. Perceived as a cheap and always available labour source, children in West Africa are trafficked to work on tea, cotton and cocoa plantations, ultimately rendering them vulnerable to child sexual abusers (UNICEF, 2002b).

The bulk of the consulted literature noted that African traditional practices that promote forced or early marriage ultimately induce human trafficking. African women and girls are often trafficked as brides for various reasons. For example, men living in migrant communities may organize the trafficking of women for marriage purposes in distant villages without national or tribal links with the migrant communities. In fact, older men raise the demand for young, virgin brides amid the high risk of HIV/AIDS infection. This practice has been reported in extended families in western Kenya, Zimbabwe and parts of Ghana (Mashayamombe, 2017).

4.6 The perception that victims of sex trafficking are understated in African countries

Most of the reviewed literature confirmed that the trafficking of women and girl children poses a huge problem in the African countries (Van der Watt, 2018). The number of African countries that have reported the trafficking of girl children has doubled that of countries reporting trafficking in women. In all the countries that have reported trafficking in women, the trafficking of girl children has also been reported extensively (Yingwana, Walker, & Etchart, 2019; Dempsey, 2017). The trafficking of girl children surpasses the trafficking of women. The demand of children in the sex industry is attributable to the issue of child trafficking; otherwise the phenomenon would have been non-existent. It is argued that children are being trafficked and sold specifically for sexual reasons (Interpol, 2010).

Literature also reports that children in their late teenage years may at times voluntarily migrate in order to engage in commercial sex (Mushohwe, 2018). In Southern Africa, young girls are perceived to be more erotic than adult women; this is compounded by the perception that young girls are not carriers of HIV/AIDS, raising demand for young girls in the sex industry (Gozdziak, 2010; Hepburn & Simon, 2010). However, young girls are equally in an extremely vulnerable position. Clearly, if it was not for that demand; children would not be trafficked and sexually abused in the sex industry.

In 2001, a review of studies indicated that in West and Central Africa, the problem of sex trafficking was prevalent in more than 70 per cent of the countries in Western and Central Africa (Salah, 2001). In more than one in three countries in the region the problem is perceived either as severe or very severe. Contrary, in East and Southern Africa, human trafficking was prevalent in the severe category (Van der Watt, 2018). In contrast, the problem did not seem as

severe as it was in West Africa. However, Dempsey (2017) argues that this might be due to the dearth of information on human trafficking or lack of studies conducted on the subject. For instance, information on human trafficking is scanty in Northern Africa owing to low levels of awareness and limited records detailing the severity of the problem. In Egypt, a preliminary report compiled by the Egyptian Centre for the Rights of the Child (ECRC) in 2002 emphasises the reluctance by the society to accept sex trafficking as existing in the country. Due to the religious or cultural beliefs, trafficking is considered a very sensitive issue; hence, it is difficult to obtain data on the victims (Fedina & DeForge, 2017; Raphael, 2017).

The reviewed literature does not include official sources, but victims of human trafficking from certain North African countries have been reported in a number of European countries (UNODC, 2019; Global Slavery Index, 2018). Denying the existence of sex trafficking due to its sensitivity might lead to the understatement of the research statistics. Africa might be experiencing sex trafficking at more alarming rates than currently being reported. There is a need to undertake a specialised research on sexually-induced human trafficking especially in West and North Africa.

Furthermore, the reviewed literature highlights the importance of mounting relatively higher awareness campaigns and the dissemination of more information on human trafficking in countries of origin since it is less politically sensitive to admit being a victim of trafficking than to admit having been in association with the exploitation of the victim. However, it is difficult to collect reliable information on the specific final destination of trafficked persons as they leave the country of origin (Bello, 2018). Victims who manage to escape are often unwilling to return home because of complications in repatriation. In addition, victims fear being stigmatized and rejected by their families or people in their town or village. Moreover, they fear being re-induced into trafficking chains (Rizer & Glaser, 2011).

4.7 The perception that victims of trafficking are difficult to track

The reviewed literature noted that when victims trafficked for sexual reasons have been captured, rescuing them has never been successful. This has been confounded by the complexity of human trafficking flows, characterised by dynamic movements of people often occurring fraudulently and clandestinely, thus limiting the possibility of successfully tracking the patterns. The problem is aggravated by the constant shifts in the human trafficking patterns

(Interpol, 2010). These patterns are often known through interviewing victims after trafficking has already transpired. An effective analysis of the human trafficking flows should be cognisant of a number of factors. While various combinations of these factors determine the pattern of a particular flow, their relative influence is likely to shift from place to place, and from time to time. These patterns are as follows:

- Geographical patterns: geographical proximity often serves as the most important factor in determining trafficking routes, though in some cases the shortest route from the country of origin to the destination country may not be the best option for human traffickers (Stolz, 2010).

- Physical barriers, particularly mountains, deserts or forests pose formidable obstacles. For example, while the shortest route for human trafficking occurring between Mozambique and South Africa passes through Kruger National Park, the traffickers tend to bypass this route to circumvent the danger of encountering wild animals. In such instances, longer routes may be chosen. For example, human traffickers may move from Mozambique to South Africa via Zimbabwe (Bello, 2018).

- Transport and communication: the availability of public transport system either by road, railway, river or ocean crossing, determines transition routes. Human traffickers use the available transportation and communication systems, unless there are impediments such as police checkpoints or border crossings. In Mali, human traffickers transport trafficked women and children using minibuses or large trucks. Research indicates that many human traffickers and intermediaries are either drivers or transport managers Tanzanian truck drivers reportedly traffic girls within and out of the country. In Mozambique, young women are trafficked to South Africa by taxis (US Department of State, 2019).

- Monitoring and border control: human traffickers often opt for routes that present fewer chances of encountering police checkpoints or border patrols.

- Lack of or weak enforcement of legislation: this factor also significantly determines human trafficking flows. Most transit countries do not have laws that criminalise human trafficking. Wherever such laws exist, corruption within law enforcement or judicial systems facilitates human trafficking within countries or across international borders.

For instance, illegal crossings at Lesotho's border posts are reportedly facilitated by favouritism towards certain individuals known to immigration officers. A victim from Lesotho crossed the borders in the hands of South African traffickers and reported that there was no passport check at the border post. Where border patrols and check points are effectively implemented, human trafficking flows are often diverted to neighbouring countries and boats may be used to circumvent border controls. In Botswana, where officials are reportedly vigilant, human trafficking flows often resort to circuitous routes to evade detection (Taylor & Jamieson, 1999).

- The role of organised crime: this factor determines the patterns of human trafficking. For example, a group of criminals may gain control of a country's particular entry point and that route may then develop into a "highway" for human trafficking. Government and law enforcement officials may be corrupted by or linked to the network of traffickers (Bello, 2018). Law enforcement officers in both East and West Africa reported facing difficulties in tracing the nationalities of victims of human trafficking. This is attributed to the lack of identification documents, especially birth certificates; where such documentation appears to be available, it is usually falsified, further hampering the tracing process (Van der Watt, 2018).

- Multiple destinations: In Africa, most countries of origin display patterns of human trafficking suggestive of multiple destination countries (with an average of 3). This is particularly prevalent in West Africa, with an average of human trafficking having more than four destination countries. In the worst cases of human trafficking, a single country of origin supplies more than ten destination countries. For example, women and children from Togo or Benin are trafficked to almost all neighbouring countries, including Gabon, which does not share borders with these countries. The existence of multiple destinations from Togo was confirmed by many studies (UNICEF, 2001).
- Persons migrating legally: Individual persons migrating legally across international borders also find themselves at risk due to poverty, discrimination and marginalisation, which may entangle them in a network of human trafficking.

- Persons trafficked from one country to another for onward trafficking: Some people are trafficked for a particular purpose, only to be later trafficked to a third country, for a different purpose. For example, a child may be trafficked for initially as a domestic

worker, and later trafficked as a woman, sold or recruited into commercialised prostitution.

- Persons trafficked internally: Victims may be trafficked from a rural area into an urban setting as a source of cheap labour, only to be re-trafficked to another country for a different purpose. Apparently, there is a link between internal and cross-border human trafficking (Gallagher, 2014; Kebede, n.d; Interpol, 2010).

The factors discussed above impede efforts aimed at curbing sexually induced human trafficking. The origins of most victims of human trafficking remain unknown due to a lack of identity documents or falsification thereof. As such, sex trafficking in Africa is a complex and an intractable phenomenon.

4.8 The perception that Africa is both a source and receiver of trafficked women and children

The bulk of the studies reviewed on sex trafficking acknowledge that Africa does not only serve as an origin of human trafficking, but also as a significant continent of destination (US Department of State, 2018). Many African countries that serve as destinations simultaneously serve as countries of origin. The number of African states recognised as destination countries in Western and Central Africa (54 per cent) is higher than what is generally recognised (Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon and Nigeria). A few countries in East and Southern Africa are perceived to be serving as countries of destination (U.S. Department of State, 2018). In North Africa, which is perceived to have no prevalence of destination countries, information collected from countries of origin suggests the contrary. Women and children are possibly trafficked there in transit to Europe and the Middle East. Egypt has also been singled out as a country of transit for young women trafficked from Eastern Europe for transactional prostitution. Reports suggest that Bedouin guides escort Eastern European women on foot across the desert to Israel (Kebede, n.d). A group of organised criminals was arrested in 1998 when an international prostitution ring involving women trafficked from Russia to Egypt was discovered (UNICEF, 2002). A cross-examination of the data gathered from countries of origin and destination suggests the following patterns:

● Most West African countries that serve as destinations receive persons trafficked from a multiple of countries of origin, ranging from three to as many as ten. ● Countries

of destination in the south-east sub-region are characterised by few reported countries of origin.

For intra-continental human trafficking, South Africa serves as the major country of destination, with women and children being trafficked from more than ten different counties of origin. The literature depicts countries of destination as less concerned about the issue of human trafficking as they view it as having originated outside their jurisdiction where they do not have an active role to play (Bello, 2018). Since their citizens are seemingly not at risk, they are unwilling to take preventative action. As such, public opinion and policy makers in countries of destination view human trafficking as migration organised clandestinely by foreigners; hence, it should not distract governments' attention from the needs of their citizens (Van der Watt, 2018). However, although the perception around human trafficking is low among destination countries, the existential presence of trafficked female children provides reliable data on the phenomenon. The victims of human trafficking live in isolation in destination countries; they are insulated from social ties and are often not conversant in the local language. They are even fearful of approaching the authorities. Human traffickers manipulate their vulnerability and persistently isolate the victims to bar them from forging contacts or enter into relationships with the locals (Bello, 2018).

4.9 The perception that transit countries have no role in trafficking

The reviewed literature indicated that human trafficking is not confined to neighbouring countries as women and girl children often pass through countries of transit before arriving in their final country of destination. Van der watt (2018) identifies two main factors determining the designation of a country as a transit country in Africa and these are; geographic propinquity and the ease of facilitating passage. In the case of Southern Africa, some borders with neighbouring countries are regarded as porous and only those persons requiring official stamps for personal or business reasons bother to cross the border legally (Van der Watt, 2018). Geographical proximity is relevant when the transit country is located between countries of origin and destination. Some countries become partly conspicuous because they are perceived as places where "trafficking transitions" occur. Transit countries hardly perceive human trafficking as an issue of national concern and they are not likely to adopt preventive measures. In a report the UNODC (2019) indicated that victims are often mistreated or threatened during transportation but, since it is difficult to detect the exploitation during this phase, legal action appears impractical.

The reviewed literature further reveals that victims are often compelled to traverse long distances or board hazardous forms of transport, some cases resulting in fatal accidents. For instance, sixty-eight Togolese girls were reportedly trafficked from Togo by boat. As they approached Cameroon, the waves worsened and the boat capsized, killing nine girls (Kabede n.d). The study also found that as women and children are being trafficked through a transit country, their passage and vulnerability generate demand, as well as additional exploitative conditions. In some instances, they are subjected to exploitative labour or commercial prostitution within the transit country (Van der Watt, 2018). Furthermore, trafficked persons in transit countries get their identification papers and money confiscated by traffickers to prevent them from escaping.

4.10 The perception that law enforcement is very low in African countries

The reviewed literature further suggests the scantiness of hard data on levels of law enforcement. The availability of widespread anecdotal evidence suggests that, it remains very low with regards to human trafficking criminal provisions. This situation can be attributed to many factors, thus: 1) ineffective anti-trafficking laws, 2) low levels of knowledge on legislation, 3) scarcity of resources made available to law enforcers, 4) few or no resources allotted for transnational investigations, as well as 5) victims' fear of giving evidence that incriminates their traffickers, and in some cases corruption and complicity.

Evidence suggests that traffickers sometimes bribe police officers to avert investigations of cases of human trafficking or induce them into tampering with the evidence. The evidence further suggests that many human trafficking agents are arrested, only to be subsequently released owing to lack of incriminating evidence (Bello, 2018). In other instances, arrests of potential traffickers indeed occur, but such litigation is hardly underpinned by relevant legal action.

Another key factor arising from the reviewed literature is the poor inter-country information sharing which needs to be tackled innovatively. Taking cognisance of human trafficking flows from Nigeria to Italy, an Italian non-governmental organisation organised a delegation inclusive of Italian police, immigration officers, prosecutors and magistrates to engage the Nigerian authorities to enhance collaboration between the two countries (Raymond, 2001). The initiative has been considered significantly successful. The experiences of a number of

individual African nations and the views of regional experts are indicative of the fact that, in tackling issues to do with law enforcement, due consideration should be given to, inter-alia, the need to develop pieces of legislation that appropriately speak to a country's capacities and constraints; campaigns aimed at disseminating information on the laws and the underlying policies; the empowerment of local communities to promote and support the implementation of legal provisions; sustainable dedication of resources towards the implementation of the laws and the promotion of ongoing training for all the relevant public officials (Patel, 2020; Van der Watt, 2018; Bello & Olutola, 2018).

In the context of criminal law, it is necessary to ensure consistency during the investigation and prosecution processes (Vinkovic, 2010). This should include the establishment of joint investigative units at both national and international levels. Penalty should be severe enough; law enforcement officials should be trained in the rights of victims and border patrol activities and governments should ensure the provision of relevant travel documents. The major hindrances to anti-trafficking initiatives in Africa border on the absence of a comprehensive legal framework that fully criminalises human trafficking, a lack of empowerment on the part of the police and prosecutors, and a lack of provisions and funding for the care of victims. Human trafficking is a complex issue and specific policy needs to be adopted in order to address it.

4.11 Conclusion

The chapter has unravelled the widely held perceptions regarding the trafficking of women and girl children. An in-depth understanding of these perceptions demystifies some misconceptions that impede the fight against human trafficking. Some of the perceptions help both victims and those combating human trafficking. The chapter discussed the nine perceptions held on the trafficking of women and children in Africa. The literature review explored all the regions of African, disentangling common perceptions on sex-trafficking affecting women and girls. Research has focused predominantly on the trafficking of women and children for the purposes of sexual exploitation. However, there has been relatively little research on human trafficking in South Africa. The researcher found that Advocacy groups have done the majority of the research, which relies on uncritical citations of prior, methodologically flawed studies and accepts their claims and assumptions as fact. Only a few studies have been published that criticize the way human trafficking is investigated in South Africa, or that attempt to develop

a methodology for studying trafficked people as a hidden subpopulation. Furthermore, none of the studies are ongoing and all are exploratory. As a result, the majority of evidence about human trafficking, trafficking patterns, and the traffickers themselves is circumstantial. In South Africa, survivors of human trafficking are understudied, and their voices are usually neglected. While trends or features of human trafficking might be extrapolated in the context of South Africa, these studies are often unable to provide credible and comprehensive data needed for successful policy planning and governance.

CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The study aimed at exploring the most prevalent beliefs and attitudes regarding the trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation in Africa. This chapter summarises the findings and discussions; it further draws conclusions bordering on the most prevalent beliefs and attitudes regarding human trafficking instigated by sexual exploitation within the African context. The chapter recommends strategies that aim at reducing human trafficking and identifies areas that need further research.

Table 5.1 Key findings and gaps in literature

Key findings	Gaps in literature
The lack of secure socio-economic status is a major driver of human trafficking.	There is scarcity of high-quality research on human trafficking in South Africa.
Women and children are vulnerable to human trafficking and make up the majority of victims.	Because of the complexities of human trafficking, gathering reliable data is immensely difficult in Africa and particularly in South Africa.
Demand propels women and children trafficking.	Survivors of human trafficking are understudied, and their voices are largely ignored in literature.
The victims of sex trafficking are understated in African countries.	There is information gap in literature regarding the true nature of human trafficking or the effectiveness of antitrafficking strategies.
The victims of human trafficking are difficult to track.	
Africa is both a source and receiver of trafficked women and children.	
Law enforcement to curtail human trafficking is low in Africa.	

5.2 Summary

The study found that the most prevalent beliefs and attitudes regarding the trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation in Africa include: a lack of a sound socio-economic status

causes human trafficking, the victims of human trafficking are to blame for their victimisation, women and children are the sole victims of human trafficking, demand propels the trafficking of women and children, the number of victims of sex-trafficking are understated in African countries, victims of human trafficking are difficult to track, Africa serves both as a source and destination of trafficked women and children, transit countries have no role in the human trafficking supply chain and law enforcement is very low in African countries. These perceptions are summarised below:

5.2.1 Low socio-economic status is a cause of human trafficking

The study found that poverty and any kind of deprivation exacerbate the vulnerability of women and children who get enticed by promises of better life. Further, women and children from poor family backgrounds are often less educated, which makes them incapable of making confident, decisive and bold judgments. As they try to escape the different forms of insecurity, they ironically end up falling victim to human traffickers.

5.2.2 Victims of human trafficking are to blame for their victimization

The study established that certain behaviours lead to women being easily enticed by human traffickers; such behaviours include choice of clothing and consumption of intoxicants. Young women and girls are reportedly targeted for they would not have matured enough to be assertive and confident; hence, they seek attention especially being praised for being beautiful. This desire to be the centre of attention and to look beautiful and a lack of confidence in decision-making are some of the character flaws that result in victims allowing the traffickers to find their way "in". Although the traffickers are considered active participants in the human trafficking process, the victims are largely blamed for their victimisation.

5.2.3 Women and children are the only victims of trafficking

This study found that women and children are perceived as the only victims of human trafficking. In Africa, most women are uneducated and do not occupy positions of power; hence, they remain too unskilled to discern the tricks of human trafficking, let alone resisting the temptations that manifest in promises of good life. Some young women migrate or seek employment beyond the borders of their community not just for economic reasons, but as they quest for personal freedom and improved living conditions. However, the reality is that men are also trafficked but their ego bars them from disclosing their victimisation.

5.2.4 Demand propels women and child trafficking

The study found that women and children have a higher demand both within and outside Africa. Young women and girls drive sex tourism; they are exploited as sex slaves; hence, their worldwide demand is higher. The demand is exacerbated by the widely held misconception that young girls are free from sexually transmitted diseases and could possibly cure HIV/AIDS. They are also exploited by their traffickers for profit maximisation in transactional sex.

5.2.5 Victims of sex trafficking are understated in African countries

Owing to cultural beliefs and practices, human trafficking remains a very sensitive issue that is inefficiently reported, rendering it a futile exercise to find statistics on human trafficking. Although official sources are scanty, victims of human trafficking exist in African countries. If the existence of sex-trafficking is denied due to the sensitivity of the subject, this might mean that the research figures are grossly understated.

5.2.6 Victims of trafficking are difficult to track

In many instances, efforts to rescue sex trafficked victims have ended in vain as human trafficking flows are complex and characterised by dynamic, fraudulent and clandestine movements of people, thus tracking the patterns is difficult. The problem is compounded by the fact that the tracking patterns constantly change. The patterns are known through interviewing victims after trafficking has already taken place. In most African countries, law enforcement agents face difficulties tracing the nationality of the victims largely because they lack identification documents, such as birth certificates and this is usually confounded by the preponderance of false documentation, which further complicates the tracing process.

5.2.7 Africa is only a source of trafficked victims

Contrary to this perception, several studies on sex-trafficking have recognised Africa not only as a region of origin of human trafficking, but also as an important destination. Most countries of origin also serve as destinations. More importantly, countries of destination are usually apathetic with regard to human trafficking.

5.2.8 Transit countries have no role in trafficking

Since transit countries do not normally perceive trafficking as an issue of national concern, preventive measures are not likely to be implemented earnestly. Transit countries consider the victims of human trafficking as problematic. They are not educated and capacitated to assist these victims.

5.2.9 Law enforcement is low in African countries

Though the literature suggests scanty hard data on the levels of law enforcement, circumstantial evidence is abundant, suggesting that trafficking criminal provisions are critically low. This situation is attributed to factors such as ineffective anti-trafficking legislative framework, low level of knowledge on existing legislation, scarcity of resources availed to law enforcers, inadequate or no resources for transnational investigations, as well as the fear by victims to give incriminating evidence that implicates traffickers, and instances of corruption and complicity. Inter-country information sharing is at a very low ebb and ought to be activated innovatively.

5.3 Conclusion

The study drew the following conclusions deriving from the findings:

- Regarding the perception that human trafficking is linked to poverty, the study found that women and children are trafficked as they try to escape from their poor backgrounds. Precisely, socio-political insecurity exposes women and girls to human trafficking.
- With reference to the perception that human trafficking is mainly for sexual exploitation, the study established that although men can be trafficked, women and girls are mainly targeted as trafficking is mainly instigated by commercial prostitution. Further, women and girls are targeted as traffickers search for virgins in a desperate attempt at preventing HIV/AIDS.
- Regarding the view that researchers often paint a negative perspective of Africa in terms of human trafficking, the study confirmed that indeed Africa is portrayed as a continent grappling with insurmountable trafficking challenges. It emerged that African countries find it difficult to collaborate in order to uproot human trafficking occurring within the continent. This situation is compounded by absence of harmonious continental

trafficking laws and the failure by law enforcers to apprehend perpetrators of human trafficking owing to poor resource allocation and malignant corruption.

5.4 Implications for the study

This study contributes to the academic knowledge on human trafficking in Africa for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Hence, the findings from this current study makes significant contribution to the formulation of human trafficking policy in South Africa. Most importantly the current study concludes that in order to combat the epidemic of human trafficking in Africa, each country should identify and address the underlying causes of the crime. These elements are ingrained in the socioeconomic, political, and cultural environments of the countries. These elements will serve as pathways for battling the phenomenon if the various African countries address them. All key players, including the government, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), parents, civic society, religious and educational institutions, and human rights organizations, are collectively responsible for this effort.

5.5 Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered on the basis of the findings emerging from this study:

- Africa needs to establish safety nets to ensure that the poverty-stricken and vulnerable groups are not ensnared by human traffickers. African countries also need to create security-related safety nets as most of the victims are enticed when attempting to escape from socio-political insecurity.

- African states should forge a formidable coalition in combating human trafficking. Harmonious laws should be promulgated and implemented, with law enforcement agents working in collaboration with their international counterparts.

- Women and children should not be commodified as in the present scenario; social media platforms should cease being part of this problem. The media should play a greater role in raising awareness so that women are not easily lured by human traffickers.
- The African experience demonstrates the extent to which African states need to develop effective, comprehensive and integrated counter-trafficking measures at multiple levels

of society. There must be a balance between effective legal reform and commitment to law enforcement to promote and protect the rights of the actual and potential victims.

- The scantiness of knowledge on sex-trafficking demands that African states redirect their energies towards curtailing the trafficking of women and children. Human trafficking is a scourge that requires responses that reflect respect for human rights, including the best interests of the child; this should incorporate a gender perspective, which seeks to empower women and the girl child.

- For African states to develop policies that are responsive to human trafficking, there is a need for the media and governments to continuously disseminate information that reflects the magnitude, nature and economics of human trafficking. To this end, effective cooperation and coordination is required at every level and across all sectors of society; at the national, regional and inter-continental levels. This calls for partnerships between governments, inter-governmental organisations, nongovernmental organisations and other relevant civil society actors.

- Further research should focus on the trafficking of men and boys for sexual purposes and this exploratory study should be conducted against the backdrop of homosexuality.

5.6 Limitations

This study presented a variety of limitations and challenges. To begin with, the research was limited to the conclusions and material contained in the publications reviewed. The original authors may have gathered and evaluated additional data, but it was not included in the final published study. Some of the journals that published the articles have word or page limitations, hence, some findings may have been eliminated. This could explain why some of the articles omitted essential demographic information. In addition, there appeared to be a small number of researchers looking into the issue of human trafficking. Finally, despite the fact that numerous electronic databases were used in the search, it is probable that some relevant and suitable articles were overlooked. As a result, if this is the case, the findings of this study may not accurately reflect the existing literature on human trafficking in Africa.

5.7 Concluding remarks

In order to achieve effective counter trafficking and victim assistance and protection, political will and dedication is required. While progress is being made in addressing the various systemic

and observable factors that make people vulnerable to trafficking, human trafficking still remains the most lucrative and difficult to stop industries in the world. For policymakers and anti-trafficking practitioners, effectively combating human trafficking remains a paradox, as diverse approaches create uneven outcomes and unforeseen repercussions. Despite the multitude of actors and opposing viewpoints and objectives, varied institutions and organizations, one thing stands apparent: the sentiments of trafficked victims remain ignored, and the necessity for their participation is frequently overlooked. While the fight against human trafficking has progressed over the last decade, the lack of participation of trafficked people in the development of policies, tactics, and programs that directly benefit them has remained a constant. Furthermore, governments and international organizations must encourage and support formalized cooperation and coordination of networks, institutions, organizations, and players to end human trafficking in Africa.

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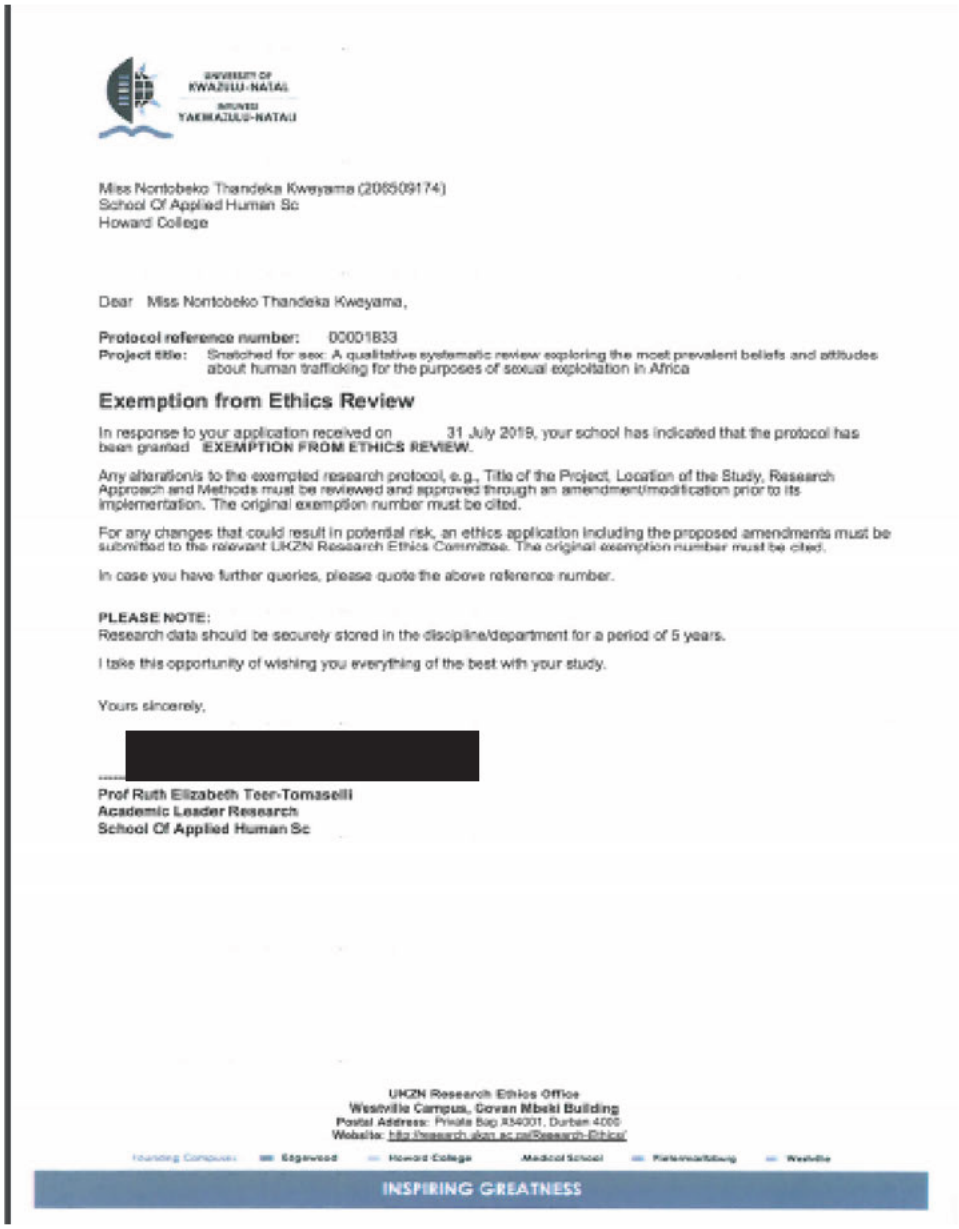
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Ethical Clearance



UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

Miss Nontobeko Thandeka Kweyama (206509174)
School Of Applied Human Sc
Howard College

Dear Miss Nontobeko Thandeka Kweyama,

Protocol reference number: 00001833
Project title: Snatched for sex: A qualitative systematic review exploring the most prevalent beliefs and attitudes about human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation in Africa

Exemption from Ethics Review

In response to your application received on 31 July 2019, your school has indicated that the protocol has been granted **EXEMPTION FROM ETHICS REVIEW**.

Any alteration/s to the exempted research protocol, e.g., Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment/modification prior to its implementation. The original exemption number must be cited.

For any changes that could result in potential risk, an ethics application including the proposed amendments must be submitted to the relevant UKZN Research Ethics Committee. The original exemption number must be cited.

In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE:
Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Prof Ruth Elizabeth Teer-Tomaselli
Academic Leader Research
School Of Applied Human Sc

UKZN Research Ethics Office
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Website: http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/

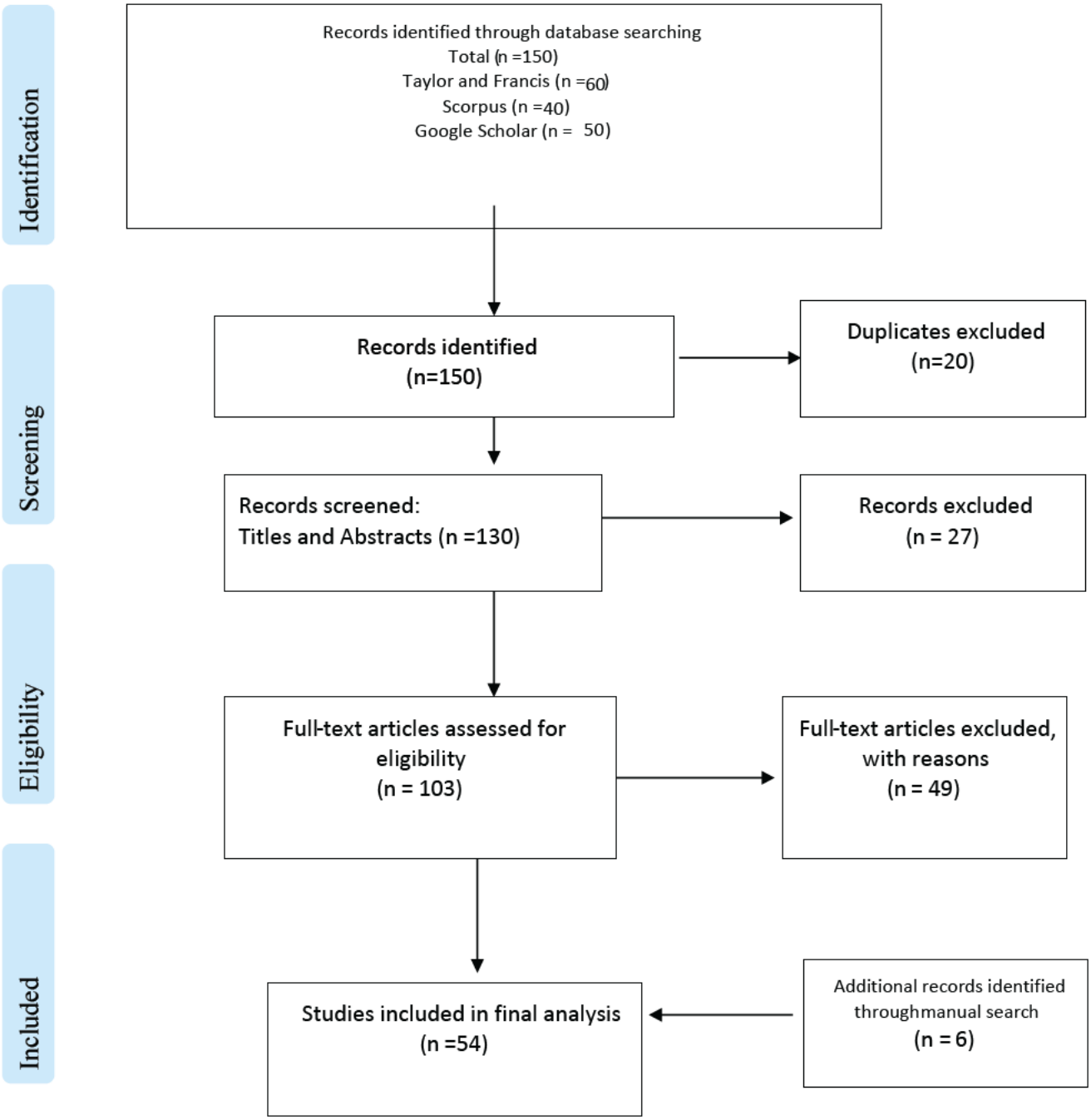
Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

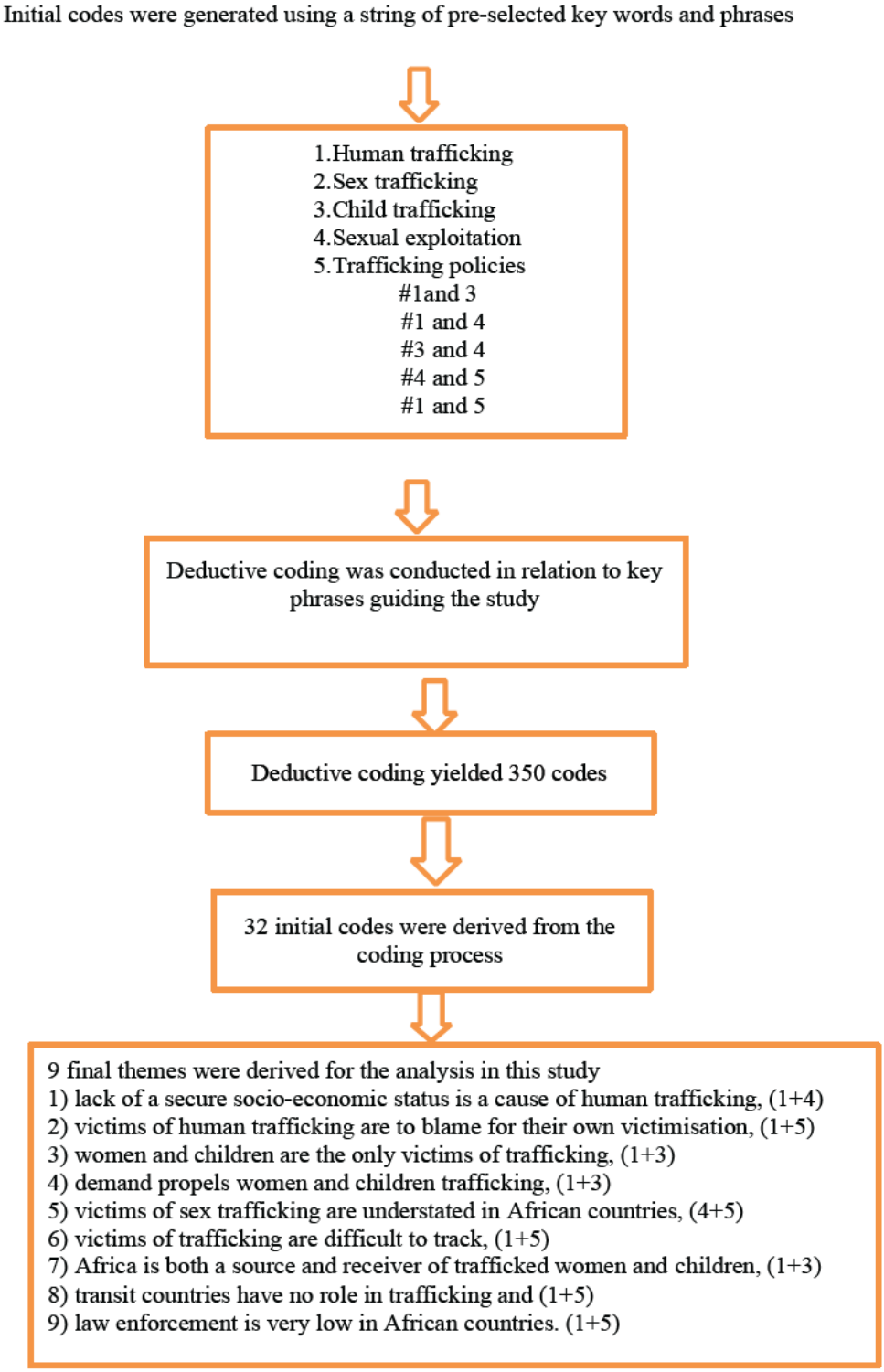
INSPIRING GREATNESS

Appendix 2: Extraction Table

Time Period Search	Databases and Websites utilized	Search engines used	Number of articles excluded	Key words used
2001-2016	3	4	49	6
54 Articles were used for analysis	Databases *Taylor & Francis *Scorpus *Google Scholar Websites UNICEF,Innocenti Research Centre., African Women's LeadershipInstitute., Presence Africaine, Berkeley: Human Rights Watch, Borderline Slavery, ILO-IPEC and IMADR	*Google Search *Yahoo Search *Dogpile *Bing	These articles were excluded from the analysis	*human trafficking *sex trafficking *human-trafficking Africa *child trafficking *trafficking policies *policies against trafficking

Appendix 3: PRISMA 2009 flow diagram



Source: Adopted from Moher D, Liberati A, Tetzlaff J, Altman DG, The PRISMA Group (2009). *Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses*: The PRISMA Statement. PLoS Med 6(7): e1000097. doi:10.1371/journal. pmed1000097

Appendix 4: Coding and data analysis flow chart