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**FACTORS VITIATING AGAINST THE EFFECTIVENESS
OF THE NIGERIA POLICE IN COMBATING THE
CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND WOMEN**

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Abstract

It is estimated that each year close to one million persons are trafficked across international borders. Nigeria has been identified as a major source, destination, and transit for the trafficking of persons, particularly women and children. The women are trafficked mostly to Europe and the Middle East, as well as to North America for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Children are trafficked within Africa and other parts of the world for the purposes of adoption, for domestic and agricultural labor, and for sale of human body parts. Efforts by the government of Nigeria (including enacting new laws, strengthening existing laws and other social control mechanisms, and collaborating with other countries) to combat trafficking and the sale of humans have not yielded appreciable results. Several factors (inadequate policing, corruption

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within the policing system, relative deprivation of freedoms, mounting social injustices, lack of conventional social opportunities, increasing conflicting social values, gender imbalances in the provision of education and economic opportunities, and the breakdown of social institutions) cause this impasse. This study examines the nature, extent, and development of this phenomenon and attempts to delineate the factors vitiating against Nigeria's law enforcement and government efforts in combating this particularly troubling international crime. Two policies are possible. The short term would introduce mass education about the danger of human trafficking and strengthen the legal instrument and the capability of the law enforcement system to deal with the problem, and the long term would address the social and economic conditions in Nigeria which sustains the phenomenon.

Introduction

Trafficking in women and children for the purposes of economic and sexual exploitation is a transnational organized crime which is a hybrid of corporate, syndicated, and street forms of crime. Many scholars have described trafficking in human beings as a contemporary slave trade (Farr, 2004; U.S Department of State, 2007). Traffickers employ several methods including violence, coercion, and deception to accomplish their objectives of moving the victims away from their homes and families and into places where they are forced to work as domestic servants,

prostitutes, farm laborers, factory workers, etc. It is important to add that while a majority of those trafficked are children and women, men are also victims (U.S Department of State, 2007).

The forceful transportation of people from one part of the world by individuals and some states for profit and sexual exploitation is not a new phenomenon. In various societies, and from ancient through recent history, women, men, and children have been corralled into forced labor, prostitution, and domestic and sexual slavery (Ringdal, 2004; Bechard, 2003; Flowers, 1998). But contemporarily, this phenomenon appears to intensify because of several critical factors. For instance, with the increase in population in regions of the world where economic development and the provision of labor and social infrastructure to develop pursuits in self, community, and national advancement have not materialized, individuals desperate for economic survival are tempted to engage in criminal and unjust activity in order to survive economically. Moreover, even though the effort of acquiring and learning about new technologies is positive and creative, those shrewd enough to exploit advancement in transportation and communication technology often use them to harm others. Broadly speaking then, factors such as increased population, poverty, unequal distribution of basic resources, gender inequality, devaluation of children, and restrictive and complex immigration laws and policies have left many people, especially women and children vulnerable to traffickers who smuggle them through clandestine networks to other countries. The complexity of this exploitation is such that exploiters enter the scene with promises of a better life somewhere else. The individuals

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exploited (especially women and younger children who dream of better conditions for themselves and their families) take the bait. According to available records, each year close to one million persons (approximately 800,000 children, women, and men with at least 80% being women, and 50% minor children) are trafficked across international borders for both economic and sexual exploitation (United States Department of State, 2006, p. 6).

Within Africa alone, over five hundred thousand women and children have been victims of trafficking. While there are no reliable records of the extent of the crime in Nigeria, Nigerian Police report claims that between 1999 and 2001, more than eight thousand six hundred and thirty-three persons were deported to Nigeria from Europe. This figure, of course, does not include those who evaded arrest and those who died or who were killed while in transit. In 2001, a report from the Nigerian Embassy in Italy concluded that there are about 10,000 Nigerian prostitutes in Italy, while about 800 of them were deported to Nigeria between 1999 and 2000 (Loconto, 2001; C. Okojie, O. Okojie, Eghafona, Vincent-Osaghae, & Kalu, 2003; Ume-Ezeoke, n.d.).

The trafficking in children, women, and sometimes men, for the purposes of economic and sexual exploitation is an extremely serious human rights and dignity violation, and an international crime. The United Nations Trafficking Protocol defines human trafficking and some of its complications as follows:

Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment,

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transportation, transfer, harboring 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. ...Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. ...The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) above shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used (United Nations, 2000a, p. 2).

The existing United Nation's position clearly demonstrates that there is a global awareness regarding the criminal phenomenon of trafficking in human beings. To prevent, control and combat the criminal exploitation of women and children, some understanding of the causes of victimization, the perpetrators of this crime, and the conditions of the victims is imperative.

Generally, a majority of the children and women who are victims of trafficking in Nigeria are poor, have limited education and are unemployed (Okojie *et al*, 2004, p. 127). Traffickers aware of how desperate the victims are for money and gainful employment, entice them with promises of money, gainful employment, and opportunities for training and education (See Okojie *et al*, 2004 interviews of repatriated victims). The criminal syndicates recruit vulnerable individuals, tend to be semi-wealthy business individuals (madams) (Okojie *et al*, 2004, p.128-129), and

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from our own anecdotal assessment, are sometimes “well-connected” with operatives of the Nigerian government officials. Sometimes, family members and friends of victims are used as instruments for recruiting those to be trafficked. Specifically, our anecdotal acquisitions show that there is a very broad and popular assumption that popularizes the ruthless pursuit of capital as a significant indicator of status, class, ethnicity, even gender positioning, and a sense of achievement and self-development.

The pursuit of capital, a fundamental philosophy now endorsed by most nations, is not by itself a problem. What is extremely challenging in these nations is the effort to regulate some of the more dehumanizing and negative implications of capital acquisition (for instance, exploitation and rights violations in local, national, and global scenarios). It is important to add that the pursuit of capital is now almost universalized, creating extreme polarities of haves, a gigantic middle struggling to have, and a massive lower class abandoned as have-nots at the bottom (See Sachs, 2006; see also Bond, 2006). In this competitive and exploitative scenario, legal and illegal ways of capital acquisition often materialize in most nations but have specifically devastating consequences in poorer countries. Individuals in extremely desperate need for capital in many economically challenged national contexts, and who also dare to enter illegal commercial activities to foster their business and commercial schemes, often find various ways to sustain and protect themselves. While many of them employ clandestine subterfuge to evade authorities, some of them blossom in the fractured law enforcement (police, judicial, and the military) context of corruption (See Alemika, 2003) and

resort to vicious illicit commercial activities to sustain their addiction to corruption.

The trafficking of human beings (children and women) is one of these several illegal commercial activities. Those caught in this mess are almost always children and women, members of the desperate poor. Family members of the Nigerian elite are rarely paraded as contemporary child laborers and slave-prostitutes in Europe, other parts of Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and North America. In Nigeria, much as in other parts of the world, one of the driving forces behind human trafficking remains the desperation for capital acquisition which many people strongly believe elevates social standing and life chances. But this specific pursuit of capital violates human rights and dignity, and there are additional forces that reinforce it. These forces are characterized in class, power, privilege, and distributive justice dynamics.

Class Differentiation

Our observation leads us to suggest that the construction of class as a developmental replacement of divisive ethnocentric differentiation appears to polarize more than create the needed population-bridging and competition for advancement in Nigeria. At best, class differentiation is dangerous at several levels. While it entrenches the already existing polarity created by ethnic differentiation, it also tends to justify the concentration of advantages in the hands of those who already are mostly better off. Increasingly in the Nigerian scenario, many of those who constantly view themselves as significant social elements are more

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likely to seek out various ways, including ones that are unorthodox and illegal, to sustain their social position with income continuity.

In the Nigerian version of class arrangement, those likely to suffer exploitation are the impoverished and worse off members of the population. The idea most often adopted is that non-membership in the class levels that provide sufficient social sustenance and economic security has tragic consequences. At the bottom or lower classes, populations are stagnated by the mediocrity of social implosion, causing them to be open to suggestions and ideas that appear liberating but in reality further exploit and dehumanize them. The irony here is that those who are better off often employ and deploy the more daring and cunning members of the poor population as middle-workers to help exploit those who are truly disadvantaged and are least likely to understand the dynamics of social disintegration and its promotion of rights violations (see Okogie *et al*, 2004). The audacious poor deployed to exploit their fellow poor view their activity with pride and authority. Their illegal work accords them a much desired income for survival and social placement. Their victims, unaware of a thriving network of criminal human trafficking for prostitution and slave labor, and also unaware that they are now pawns in the process of human rights and dignity violation, simply view the offered opportunity to exit from Nigeria for anywhere else as a welcome reprieve from their nadir condition.

Power and Privilege

In addition to class differentiation, the construction of

power and privilege has deviated from national and international norms. National norms require that citizens be given access to social and political participation through the collaborative construction of national wealth, security, and the context for the pursuit of happiness. International norms require that all people, national origin notwithstanding, enjoy rights to economic and social advantages and privileges. These national and international norms require the central ingredient of liberty as a fundamental driving force in the placement of human civility and the pursuit of social programs that cause social stability and progress for everyone. Most fundamentally, these conditions are usually to be achieved legally. Even though the colonization of Nigerians by the England ended in 1960, the trend since then has been for Nigerians to imitate the social arrangements that exist in Europe and North America. Such a desire suggests that social conditions in Nigerian strongly appropriate a pyramidal social stratification system where social norms constructed out of colonial praxis dictate the relative stasis of each citizen. A contemporary lamentation (Osaghae, 1998) suggests that many Nigerians have adopted a very strange and discordant strategy for social empowerment. Such a strategy focuses on individual capital acquisition at the expense of everyone and everything else. While this strategy may be partially pragmatic, taking into consideration the real, difficult, desperate, and unstable national context, as well as considering the idea that individual self-development may eventually lead to social advancement for many, its futility plays out in its highly sectarian, shortsighted, ethnocentric, genderistic, and egotistic slant.

This strategy first emerged in response to the new found

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freedom gained in the 1960s as an optimistic approach to national development. It increased in promise with the optimism generated by the abundance of new found resources (petroleum, and so on) in the 1970s, but quickly spiraled into sentimental discord in the 1980s and 1990s in the atmosphere of relentless militarism and the total breakdown of civility (Adejumobi & Momoh, 1995; Falola & Ihonvbere, 1985; Graf, 1988; Kirk-Greene & Rimmer, 1981; Schatz, 1977). Power and privilege may be tempered by good leadership, but in Nigeria people take their cues from tainted and corrupt leaders making it very difficult to alter the present arrangement (Ajayi, 2006). In this article, Ajayi (2006) points to a specific kind of abuse of power: the idea that corrupt leaders seek to remain in office for life which causes the entrenchment of corruption.

Gaps in Distributive Justice

Since the 1960s, distributive justice has been a challenge, and once individuals acquire political or economic power, they assume that the enjoyment of all privileges and the exploitation of human beings, especially the truly disadvantaged, are automatic. In this context where the accountability for violations of rights and dignity are belittled, several things go wrong. It is difficult to find conversations about the significance of some of the elements of distributive justice. For instance, merit – the idea that one must work hard to be publicly recognized for certain privileges – is simply trumped by corruption. Here, merit is forcibly ascribed or arbitrarily appropriated. Similarly, the notion of just reward often discussed as the principle of desert (the idea sustained by a positive

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work ethic that the rhythm of a responsible and honest labor behavior drives the appropriate reward given) is simply non-existent in some contexts and downplayed in others. There is no place for the notion of citizens enjoying equal opportunity in the distribution of resources (Rawls, 1981).

The high level of inequality accentuates the social and economic polarity. In this radically unstable social context all citizens are simultaneously victims and vulnerable to each other's inappropriate behaviors. Such victimization and vulnerability actuated by a seemingly consensual national lawlessness plunges exploiters and the exploited into a dismal quagmire where exploitation, corruption, and injustices are no longer recognizable as socially destructive elements. Corruption is indistinguishable from the acts of regular laws because those citizens disposed to illegal commercial and other behaviors are no longer able to distinguish between what is legal and/or illegal or just and/or unjust. Even though there appears to be a national outcry concerning the state of affairs (Ehusani, 2002; Utomi, 1999; Williams & Falola, 1995), once in position of power and/or privilege, those who complain re-enact the circus of discord and drive the nation into further oblivion (Osaghae, 1998). It is important to suggest at this point that in such a socially unstable context, the arrangement of the legal structure, the nature of law enforcement, and the provision of social and political systems are negatively and fundamentally affected. Public institutions fail or often shut down indefinitely because public revenues, which ought to be consistently earmarked for local and national infrastructural development, have been directed to personal/family activities or

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carted off to Middle Eastern, Asian, European, and North American banking institutions. In Nigeria, the structure of power and privilege and the intense rage to hold on to them because of the advantages they bestow, in conjunction with the crippling confusion citizens experience in being unable to distinguish between legal and illegal behaviors because of their intense socialization into corruption, often lead to outrageous violations of the rights and dignity that democratic and civil societies crave and for which they continue to work.

Diminished Ethical and Social Responsibility

Beyond the functionalist economic and political assessment of Nigeria's instability and the clinically depressive social scenario caused by the debilitating fusion of power, notoriety, greed, and social apathy, ethical consciousness, whether in its Afrocentric or other forms, has waned considerably. In a context where ethics in the workplace and even in basic social intercourse has no significant proponents, it is often difficult or nearly impossible to engage in concrete and responsible discourses about justice and liberty issues directed toward radical social change. The conflicts between rights and responsibilities, where an overwhelming number of people claim to have rights but mostly participate in the exercise of social negation at the expense of other citizens, or claim to be engaged in the enactment of their various responsibilities but are equally mostly participating in exercises steeped in corruption, abuse, and human rights and dignity violation, mitigate against the search for a responsible and reasonable approach to encourage practical, ethical, and legal

solutions to halt human trafficking.

Ethnicity and Religious Polarization

The notion that nations exist for their people and that people exist to sustain their nations has less value in any national context where human value is measured ethnically and religiously. Much of the discourses about social dislocation, and economic and political distress in Nigeria appear to hinge around the discord socially constructed around ethnic and religious sentiments (Falola, 1998; Kukah & Falola, 1996). It is still the case that Nigerians continue to view each other in these reductionist perspectives, and appear to do “good” or “bad” business with each other on the basis of these sentiments. Although the idea of ethnic and religious configuration is not as intense as the class, power, and privilege structure, it still plays a significant role in deciding who is to be carted off as a contemporary slave for capital gains. The question of accountability is less likely to enter into decisions because those who are viewed to be ethnically valueless call less attention to clandestine and illegal human trafficking. In other words, their lives are worthless, and their ethnicity which has correlation to their poverty defines that view.

Moreover, the docility created by the extreme religiosity now rampant in Nigeria (Muyubi, 2005) also constructs the fertile scenario for gullibility and a direct pathway to victimization and exploitation. To be promised a good life filled with high paying work that would create an intoxicating materialism and an untold comfort that will generate happiness in other parts of Africa,

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Europe, the Middle East, or North America, is to have prayers answered. Believing in such a promise demonstrates the level of social naivety and mediocrity caused by the grip-hold of the simultaneously acting forces of unbridled power, trumped promises, devastating poverty, economic shortsightedness, social morass, continued corruption, and ignorance.

Infrastructure Deficiency and Injustice

Other more mundane circumstances result in the concrete choices that citizens must face when given only one seemingly positive option in a sea of negative conditions. For instance, the nature of a nation's infrastructure may be a source of creativity in several directions. The availability of several options of transportation, uninterrupted electrical supply, adequate clean water, consistent supply of resources for personal/private, corporate, or state development and construction, consistent and an ongoing updated education grids, and consistent expenditure disbursed to sustain institutions and health services, could be an incentive to empower and expand life chances. Some specific nations within regions such as Asia, Europe, and North America used as enticements by traffickers condition their social, economic, and political systems to consistently generate revenues for national infrastructural advancement. Without such revenues and their accountability, and without a consistent program to intensify the exploitation of natural resources, and in some cases labor, from

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Nigeria and many other poor nations, these nations with all their infrastructural effervescence would collapse. The suggestion here is that many Nigerians are imitating these economically better-off nations without appropriating productive precautions and accountability. Recently, many Africans lament the brain drain from Africa, especially from Nigeria, a sentiment echoed by Ali Mazrui (2004), Amadu Jacky Kaba (2006), and Phillip Emeagwali (2003). Jeter (2002) points out that 650,000 to 1 million Nigerians live in the United States alone, but according to Emeagwali (2003), the exodus of scholars and professionals from Nigeria is heightened by the rampant social collapse. Unfortunately, the collapse of the will to contribute to social infrastructural development by many Nigerians exiting the country is worsened by the audacious acts of injustices that punctuate the national scene.

In addition to government and political apathy, and because the number of armed robbers, rape, and abuse has exponentially increased since the late 1980s, and their vicious violations of innocent citizens often progress without punitive sanctions, civilians take laws into their hand (Harnischfeger, 2003), seeking to create a form of street justice, but often creating contexts of fear, dereliction, and increased social apathy. The operations of violators are so profoundly intense and fully gang-based, that they often massacre with impunity while helpless citizens watch. They can spew out their acts of injustices, operating mercilessly because some corrupt members of the government and law enforcement (the police and the military) often supply the arms for such nihilistic violation of human life. Uzokwe (2004) identifies how

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this phenomenon is a serious problem and adds that the immediate past president (Olusegun Obasanjo) of Nigeria once complained about the link between police corruption and the supply of arms to armed robbers. It is important to mention that some of the loot expropriated from robbing people is often shared with those members of the government and law enforcement who support and encourage such illicit and tragic behavior. This reciprocal process – government support of criminality and loot sharing – further entrenches the arbitrary and seasoned behaviors foundational for audacious criminal activities.

Human trafficking in Nigeria is a real social phenomenon (Abati, P. Ukpabio, & J. Ukpabio, 2004; Adepoju, 2005; Chemonics International Inc., 2005; Fagbohunge, 2001a; Fagbohunge, 2001b; International Labour Organization [ILO] 2000; Osakue & Okoojion, 2004; Okojie & Prina, 2004). When the general infrastructural weaknesses, inequalities, and poverty, and daring criminality that has matured into more hideous forms of exploitation, such as trafficking in Nigeria is taken into consideration, it is quite understandable that (in addition to scholars and professionals fleeing) thousands of poor and vulnerable women and children, enticed by promises of a stable and a different world would also want to escape the misery of their condition.

The only difference between scholars, professionals, and students and poor innocent children, and women is that the latter are being exploited for capital gain. The former has options and can bounce from one region of the world to another seeking

academic or professional glory, but the latter are usually suspended in excruciating services (prostitution, maids, sex slaves, child labor, etc.), and because of prior mediocrity and ignorance (not their own fault but that of the shortsightedness of a nation that has been battered by corporate social dislocation) of the hideously sophisticated world, they are not even able to navigate from one town to another in the places where they now serve their unjustifiable and illegal sentences as contemporary slaves. They cannot easily or simply abandon the option of being sex slaves, slave nannies, or human sepulchers waiting for their masters to harvest their vital organs to be sold to human beings who are supposedly more valuable. This scenario suggests that the option designed for trafficked women and children, defined in concrete terms as contemporary misery, is no different, if not worse, than the one they had in Nigeria.

Globalization and Human Trafficking

It follows that if women and children are traded like commodities on the global market place, then several players must be implicated. With regards to Africa, inequity already exists in international trade and commerce. This means that the idea of globalization at least as it currently exists is tragically one-sided, always constructed to the advantage of wealthier and already advanced nations. These nations set and control tariffs and prices in such ways that their revenues are guaranteed and maximum profit is expropriated from every transaction. In such conditions of inequality, dehumanization and exploitation are easily anticipated. It would follow that in the global commercial trade of human

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beings, African poor children and women are valued less. To understand this valuation process, one only needs to visit the history of slavery, as well as explore the contemporary persistent racism and homophobia against Africans everywhere. A current palpable example may be gleaned from examining the adoption of children in the United States to see the desperate differentiation of human valuation. White babies are worth more than black babies (Rhodes, 2005).

A more hideous example comes out of an entrenched philosophy often silently practiced, but which every now and then spills out in the open. The comments of Bill Bennett (Media Matters for America, 2005), a former Ronald Reagan Administration Secretary of Education, demonstrate clearly this human valuation grid when he offered that "...if you wanted to reduce crime, you could – if that were your sole purpose, you could abort every black baby in this country [the United States], and your crime rate would go down." It is clear that as he spoke, he realized that he had unwittingly revealed a cherished secret (that he and many folks in the dominant population have always considered Blacks (African Americans, in this case) valueless or less valuable, and scrambled to moralize his position, but in the end, he still insisted that aborting black babies would bring the crime rate down. By thinking and offering such an outrageous perspective in a public theater, Bennett demonstrates that he is one of many people who still enjoy living in a world where human devaluation exists. It is important to point out here that Bennett who was put in charge of guiding the educational initiatives of the United States in the 1980s revealed in this incident that his time in

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public office may have been dedicated to constructing inequity in education because he always considered black (African American) members of the United States population to be less valuable. In Bennett's thinking Blacks are criminals, socially destructive, and irrelevant in "his" society.

Bennett's position appears to have semi-universal appeal in the United States, as we see evidence in the high incarceration rate of African Americans since the 1980s. The irony here is that they make up approximately 13% (plus or minus) of the United States population, but constitute slightly more than half of the national penal system (United States Department of Justice, 2005). It would be difficult to assume that the trafficking of African children and women would receive any reasonable high monetary value on the global market. This suggests that while on the one hand Nigerians trade their poor children and women for capital, on the other hand, the recipients of these "goods" do not place significant value on them. These African human goods are often used up quickly and discarded. Analogically, they are like engine oil hidden under the hoods of automobiles. Tucked away in these advanced nations (no one cares who they are), and once used up, like spent engine oil, they are removed and discarded (repatriated or abandoned). The idea here is that the "population increase" in Nigeria produces so many children and women, whose extremely poor and desperate condition qualify them as easily acquired disposable cheap goods. It is pertinent to mention that the bi-directional, illegal, and commercial activity of human trafficking violates human rights and dignity, violates local and international laws, and it also collaborates in entrenching the dehumanization

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that is already popularized by racism and the fundamental discrimination of Africans in diaspora.

Consequently, any group or individuals in any country open to the trading and buying of human beings for any purpose, exploitation included, is involved in an illegal act with global criminal implications. While rights and freedoms are violated, the devaluation of African children and women further diminishes their human dignity, triggering broader consequences in terms of the continuing perceptions and the significance of racism and discrimination. In Nigeria however, the law enforcement system may be confounded as to the true nature of globalization, global trade, and the implications of the commercialization of everything including the human being. In police training manuals, there are no distinctive sections dealing with counteracting illicit trade in human commodities. While this vacuum in training is hindering their effective enforcement services, the global demands of advanced nations' for assorted goods, cheaper labor, and increased profits is strongly contributing to the diminution of their already weakened ability to serve and protect citizens. The demand of advanced nations to satiate the extreme high appetites (goods, pleasure services, etc.) of their citizens which is now sought through the process of hyper-aggressive globalization has tremendous consequences. Roddick (2003) and Thorpe (1999) amongst many analysts have shown that the particular form of globalization that cares less about human rights and dignity exploits the most vulnerable populations of already disadvantaged nations.

In Thailand, India, and Senegal, women and children are

the sacrificial lambs for the economic advancement of advanced western nations (Moyers, 2003). This desperate form of globalization leaves already vulnerable populations in derelict conditions, with corporations bouncing from poor nation to poor nation when conditions are economically unfavorable for the expropriation of extreme profit. A common practice attached to this seasoned behavior is the growing role of middle-men (often always men in extremely poor nations) to create and manage profit for agents and their corporations originating from advanced nations. Yet some scholars, especially Bhagwati (2004) consider globalization to be mostly positive. Because Bhagwati and those who think like him insist that globalization has done more to improve conditions in poor nations, he will find the linking of globalization to human trafficking in Nigeria to be problematic. In his sense, the Nigerian phenomenon of trafficking children and women would be considered serious but an isolated incident identifiable with the collage of negative behaviors that would eventually give way to the positive influence being ushered in by globalization. But globalization is perceived differently in different regions of the world (P. L. Berger & S. P. Huntington, 2002), the particular flavor of globalization being discussed here often seeks to displace significant cultural values by pushing the solitary focus of capital acquisition. It is this predominantly virulent behavior that contributes to human rights and dignity violation.

In a previous article, Berger (1997) distinguishes four elements of cultural globalization (Davos culture or the international business culture, McWorld culture or the global

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popular culture, faculty club international or the world intellectual culture, and new religious movements or the popular religious culture). These are crucial identifiers, but they appear to make sense in regions and nations where the social, economic, and political infrastructure allow some fluidity in global interaction, exchange, and management. However, for the Nigerian context, Berger's typology of consequences appears to cause more concern. Nigeria does not appear to reject the global culture. Most Nigerians actually prefer a globalized culture where they can have the best of several worlds. In some cases – and this is varied by the extensive linguistic, ethnic, and religious diversity – where good things (for instance, competition for self and social advancement, or ideas for better social, entrepreneurial, and social/economic/political systems management) arrive with globalization, Nigerians appear to prefer coexistence of the local and global cultures without any significant merging of the two perspectives. Nigerians still wear their traditional clothing, enjoy traditional meals, bribe each other, embezzle public funds, wallow in corruption, but drive and fly in Western automotives, speak English, and trade in several foreign languages. Because of this duality, a total synthesis of the global universal culture with indigenous cultures in Nigeria has not happened.

We are concerned that the rage and drive to commercialize everything, including trading in children and women seems to replace some significant and sustaining elements of the Nigerian cultural experience (compassion, compunction, collaboration, sensitivity, and the appreciation of the sacred nature of human life) with the negative phenomenon (profit at the expense of other

human beings) of the globalized culture.

The illegal trafficking of children and women from Nigeria to other parts of the world is one element in the maze of the commercialization of everything. In this sense, the process of globalization, and the populations that enjoy most of its advantages force once again, as was the case during the European slave raid and trade, desperate Nigerians to devalue each other and proceed to trade people as products for capital on the global market. In 2006, although the forces of globalization play a significant role in the economic commercialization of children and women in Nigeria, the attendant complicit role of the Nigerian trafficker knowingly engaged in the criminal behavior must not be lost. In addition to their criminal behavior they also help to dehumanize, devalue, and commodify their fellow citizens on the global scene. Much like other commodities or products coming out of Africa, the defining factor “African” cuts into the value and completes the utter degeneration of the activity. The increasing demand in the West for extremely cheap labor (which fuels the rage of contemporary globalization), and sexual pleasure without consequences (which also fuels the demand for and the use of naïve women with no notion of existing human rights rules against exploitation of women and children for sexual pleasure) drives the aggressive commercialization of human beings.

In addition to the problem of ineffective and inefficient law enforcement behavior, the Nigeria police system must also deal with a trade that is now increasingly clandestine, making the role of the invisible middle-tradesperson extremely significant and

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harder to detect. On the other side of the phenomenon, the shrilling voices of social activists calling for social justice, police reform, and functional economic and political systems continue to have less impact because human traffickers are elusive, constantly on the run, have some members of the law enforcement on their side, and are less likely to read articles and social analysis on the negative impact of their activities.

Even though some views (Baghwati, 2004; Schaefer, 2006), promote the positive notion of globalization, others (Juhasz, 2006; Rajivah, 2006) point out that the phenomenon may also be causing extensive marginalization and inequality. Recently, Obiora (2004) edited a piece that considers the sentiments of Africans as they weigh in on the impact of globalization. Some of the responses suggest that Nigerians expect increased economic gain, and hope for better social and political conditions. Yet, the same hope in the merits of globalization, echoed also in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and African Union (AU) perspectives on development, is dampened by economic, social, and political limitations which fuel local and global illegal commercial activities. In this sense, the approximation and appropriation of globalization as a foundation for self-development has become one of the factors which drives and entrenches the illicit activity of human trafficking. Traffickers simply view the pursuit of capital to be linked to the notion that anything can be turned into profit. In this global scenario, children and women, specifically of poorer stocks, are often the most vulnerable.

Nigeria and Global Criminal Justice

Several scholars have offered the world a collection of information describing the policing systems in various countries (Ebbe, 1996). Ebbe's (1996) contribution in the edited collection first delineates the importance and structure of a judicial and police system and then suggests that Nigeria has laws and a policing system in place. Human Rights Watch (2005) captures the structure and organization of the Nigerian Police system. The system is federally administered, and headed by the Inspector General of Police appointed by the president. There are thirty-six states, and each state is given a unit called a command headed by a commissioner. Further, three or four commands form a zone run by an Assistant Inspector General. There are twelve zones. Within each state command, smaller divisions are headed by Divisional Police Officers. These divisions are further divided into much smaller local posts run by inspectors, sergeants, and constables. All together, the force consists of 325,000 officers, but many of the senior positions are filled through a patronage process, making only favored members deemed to be loyal selectable by the government. The police force has been considered a tool of the ruling government in office (Human Rights Watch, 2005). Unfortunately, the social and political systems to effectively deploy them for efficient utility and positive social control are not available.

In the introduction of his article on the Bakassi Boys, Harnischfeger (2003) concludes that "Nigeria is the freest country in the world; you can get away with anything." He is suggesting

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here that a deluge of social disarray and lawlessness is commonplace. Getting away with anything suggests that anything goes in terms of sanctions for the heinous crime of human trafficking. Harnischfeger's article regrettably recounts the dramatic disintegration of national institutions such as the policing and legal systems. This disintegration has resulted in the formation of various bands of individuals such as the Bakassi boys of Aba in the Eastern part of Nigeria and several other groups elsewhere in the country to develop as vigilante-militia law for self or group protection (Harnischfeger, 2003). But the Bakassi Boys, the O'odua People's Congress, the Anambra State Vigilante Service, the Abia State Vigilante Service, the Imo State Vigilante Service, and similar local militias (Danish Immigration Service, 2005) are focused on visible internal crimes such as armed robbery, theft, religious discord, and so on. They are not as sophisticated in detecting and eventuating justice on those hard-to-detect illegal commercialists of human beings operating across international borders. In more ways, lawlessness and huge inequalities within Nigeria create the fertile ground for increased illegal global commercial activities, but the kinds of questions that arise from this social chaos tend to be alarmist rather than activist.

Concerns such as how Nigeria got to this point of civil collapse and why citizens are disconnected from positive options focused on productive social change must include and engage the links between entrenched negative behavior, the desire of the powerful and the privileged to sustain such behavior, increasing economic and social inequality, and the increasing social and intellectual vacuum caused by internal corruption which, in turn,

fuels the brain-drain phenomenon. These concerns not only increase citizens' frustration and helplessness, they also spark quick-fix but shortsighted solutions. In the 1980s, for instance, there was such a thing as War Against Indiscipline (WAI). Because many of Nigeria's poor citizens could not link personal, local, and national development to their social behavior, this program was designed to assist in curbing citizens' nihilistic appetite for corruption, disorderly conduct, and social morass. To generate immediate responsibility, situation justice emerged, and people were publicly flogged when, for example, they disposed of their garbage on the ground instead of a garbage container. This quick-fix did not last long, and there was no measurable lasting responsible behavior modification. Soon many citizens were back to disposing garbage everywhere, passing human waste anywhere they saw fit, and so on.

There is a fundamental link between law enforcement and good behavior when the styles and system of law enforcement are positive. In the context where law enforcement and legal systems are inept, corrupt, and unwilling to sustain consistent programs until visible changes manifest, social behavior often spirals into disarray because there are no positive, sustained, and continued social control mechanisms. A few weeks of public flogging and yelling by WAI workers on poor and uneducated citizens, who at the time were mostly unaware of the link between their behavior and social development, did not change entrenched behaviors that would eventually mature and lead to illicit global activities. The lack of the longevity of social, economic, and political programs which allow citizens to quickly return to the familiar – business as

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usual (which includes bribery, corruption, and many forms of illegal activities) – does not and can not cure an endemic and chronic socialization trajectory that has disposed citizens to specific ill-fated behaviors which are mostly to their disadvantage. Corruption and the disposition to violence among citizens continue to delay the efficient and effective enactment of the legal and policing mechanisms necessary to control illegal commercial behavior and human rights violations.

Such corruption is increased and entrenched when individuals in the legal and policing systems are also active participants in the dehumanization schemes and rights violations. To appreciate the intensity of this involvement, Agwumesie (1999) focused his study on the administration of the Nigeria Police Force. In evaluating how police officers are perceived, he concluded that the organization of the police system is filled with rampant corruption. In other words, the administration of the policing system is more disposed to receiving or extorting bribes than it is focused on dealing with the root causes of crime and illegal activities that violate citizens' freedoms, rights, and dignity. Other scholars have argued more directly that police corruption is endemic and intractable. Ukoh (1981) captures this phenomenon earlier on and causes us to conclude in 2006 that corruption is now socially endemic and entrenched, and may be extremely difficult to dislodge. The following perspectives, Jike (2003), Alemika (2003), Oseni (1993), Okereke (1993), Elechi (2004), point to the difficult scenario that the Nigerian policing system which ought to be dedicated to the construction and sustenance of justice and fairness is itself trapped with those who construct inequalities and

injustices. This is one of the more seriously constraining factors that vitiates against the police system's capability to respond effectively, efficiently, and adequately to the violation of human rights caused by the trafficking of children and women.

In addition to strengthening local and international legal mechanisms already in place, it may be extremely important to construct more powerful laws and initiatives and universalize them to respond to the mounting illicit incidence of human trafficking. This would mean that the development of an enhanced notion of global justice with special global legal mandates may become a system which sustains poorer populations whose rights and liberties are violated within specific nations. Such an internationally interactive taskforce, which already exists in some ways between some nations (Inter-policing: Interpol) may become a vehemently active consensual legal and policing global system deployed to insist on the illegality of human trafficking. Since human trafficking occurs on both sides by those who trade and those who benefit from the trade, punitive measures cannot be relative to the context from which traffickers operate because such sanctions may not diminish the illegal and exploitative behavior on the global level. Customers in other nations of Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Europe, and North America (United States Department of State, 2006) whose sex addiction, insatiable appetite for concubines, serial monogamy, and unbridled demand for cheap labor and vital body organs, must be tracked down and included in the global criminal justice response to complete the grid of punitive sanctions. International punitive sanctions must be drawn across the board to help slow and eventually halt the illegal trade

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of human beings. Even though it is significant to globalize policing and legal initiative in view of the trafficking of human beings, another important global effort, the democratic will of the people to change their social conditions must also be considered and included in the process for change.

Combating Strategies (Global)

The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF, 2000) and the International Labor Organization (ILO) in their Libreville Consultation 2000 Common Platform of Action identified the following as good strategies to fight child trafficking in West and Central Africa. They collaboratively insist that Africans must develop the need for advocacy and awareness, raising efforts to reinforce social regulation mechanisms within communities. There must be an appropriate legal and institutional framework on trafficking. There must be enhanced knowledge about, and monitoring of, child trafficking through decentralized and flexible mechanisms. And Africans must strengthen cooperation between governments and their ministries to ensure that these directives are implemented and adequately tracked (Ume-Ezeoke, n.d.).

In addition, the Forum on the Exploitation and Trafficking of African Children (FETAC, n.d.), along with Anti-Slavery International, a United Kingdom (UK) non-governmental organization, provided the following recommendations to the UK government as measures to combat trafficking in persons. It

suggests the introduction of a law defining and prohibiting trafficking for sexual and labor exploitation which is consistent with the United Nations (2000a) Protocol on Trafficking. Furthermore, it delineates that the UK government must ensure that victims of trafficking are granted a stay of deportation for at least three months to enable them recover from their ordeal through counseling and other social and economic support, and that such a stay of deportation should not be contingent upon the victims' cooperation for prosecution. It adds that funding ought to be provided through a specialized agency which would provide psychological counseling, medical support, safe accommodation, and training for victims. In addition, victims who are at risk of threat or harm from traffickers, whether or not they cooperate with prosecution, are to be granted the right to stay in the UK. The report also recommends that proper systems be put in place for adults bringing other people's children to register as private foster care, that better collaborations and consultations with Africans be put in place in efforts to combat the trafficking of African children, and that awareness raising programs should be established in countries of origin of victims to inform parents, young people, and others concerned (FETAC, n.d.).

Combating Strategies (Local)

It is important to conclude this study by briefly pointing back to six specifically powerful factors that must always remain

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visible when considering strategies for combating and preventing trafficking in children and women in Nigeria.

1. Corruption

Corruption is endemic in Nigeria and other source countries. The crime syndicates are able to avoid prosecution by corrupting the political and legal systems of their countries. Corruption has been identified as the most pervasive and amorphous of all crimes, and often acts as a catalyst for other crimes. Corruption undermines the principles of honesty and fair play, and fosters a moral climate in which lawlessness provokes little or no indignation. Corruption is also known to hinder governmental effectiveness, damages social and political institutions, undermines economic development, damages social relations, and heightens social disorganization (Aubert 1989, Elechi 2005, Elechi 2006).

2. Inadequate Social Control

Trafficking of persons and other crimes occur in an environment where social control mechanisms are not effective. Poverty, corruption, and limited political, social and technological development are additional factors that hinder effective social control, especially considering the Nigeria context. In addition to the poor training of the Nigeria police personnel, the police system also lacks qualitative basic social control tools such as advanced radios, telephones, networked advanced computing systems, adequate law enforcement automobiles and aviation (planes and

helicopters), and even constant supply of electricity, essential for the effective positive policing of the country. Corruption and widespread public distrust of the police and the police's distrust of the public, further contributes to the limited capacity of the law enforcement system. These factors also contribute to weakened informal social control mechanisms necessary for family and community cohesion.

3. Poverty and Inequalities

Many people in Africa live in absolute poverty (Sachs, 2006, UNDP Report 2006). Poverty shapes mindsets, part of which encourages the ignorance, which makes the poor extremely vulnerable to exploitation, including corruption and trafficking. Often traffickers are sometimes even mistakenly perceived as philanthropists poised to assist in alleviating social misery. Even though Nigeria is considered economically poor according to global standards, the level of inequality caused by poverty, ethnic discrimination, and political apathy within the country is extreme and increases the difficulties citizens face. Consequently, the frantic search on the part of poor Africans (in this case Nigerians) to ameliorate and advance their conditions often drives them to desperate measures, most of which lead them to victimization and exploitation. Efforts toward collaborative solutions must consider this dual economic and social reality.

4. Gender Inequality

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Continuing patriarchal values and practices limits girls' and women's access to education, social and political participation, and the formal labor market, making them vulnerable to traffickers. Usually when girls and women are idol and undereducated, recruiters descend on them like vultures. In addition, the culture that sustains masculinity as the "sugar daddy" or the source of resource provision diminishes the image of the female as equal participant in the process of social engineering. Efforts towards eliminating the effect of the oppression of trafficking on girls and women must take gender inequality seriously and create functional social and economic contexts that are conducive for elevating the status of women in Nigeria and generally in all of Africa.

5. The Plight of Globalization

A major contradiction of contemporary globalization is that it has not resulted in free trade and does not encourage free movement of goods and labor. Globalization has further widened the gap between the rich and poor countries, producing enormous wealth in some countries and extreme poverty in others. Though vulnerable to victimization, this increases the strong desire of many people in increasingly worse-off nations to migrate to nations with strong economies. Jeffrey Sachs (2005) produced a monumental discourse on the issue, *The End of Poverty*. As well, the United Nations (2005) and the G8 (G8 Gleneagles 2005 Policy Issues, 2005) tackled the issue of poverty and the widening gap between wealthy and poor nations in 2005, but the conditions still exist. Collaborative global efforts must move beyond discourses to action. Such action must target human trafficking of children and

women among many things as a major detraction from the global movement to create recovery in Africa.

6. Immigration and Labor Opportunities

Several regions such as the European Union, North America, Japan, and Australia continue to close their borders against free and open immigration from African countries. Such moves are based on colonial and eternal colonial terms of interaction with Africa. Free legal immigration can lead to increased opportunities for individuals who seek interactive education to strengthen their sense of global experience. It also allows individuals to move around the globe to use as well as enhance their skills in legitimate labor practices, giving specifically young African women the opportunity to engage with women elsewhere for collaborative development. Because free borders for Africans into Europe, North America, and the rest of the world will be more productive in alleviating illicit behavior and encouraging appropriate legal labor activities, it is pertinent that local and global policies include in their collaborative responses the issues of open border arrangements as part of the practical consideration for diminishing human trafficking.

Conclusion

The trafficking in persons is one of the fastest growing crimes globally. Like all clandestine crimes, there is no accurate information of its prevalence (Kangaspunta, 2003), but it remains an extremely serious criminal problem. Trafficking in persons is a

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crime that results from social conditions. Many trafficked victims fall prey to traffickers because of their desire to escape poverty, discrimination, and decrepit social condition. If Nigerians and members of other nations are concerned about the hideous nature of the trafficking of poor children and women, then a collaborative global political, legal, and law enforcement effort to disrupt and dismantle the networks that encourage the trade is a reasonable and responsible policy. But because of the absence of such a decisive policy, and the increasing intensity of the global rage for child laborers and women slave-prostitutes, and because the factors that have been delineated in this article remain entrenched in the national as well as global social character, we can conclude that the government and law enforcement grids in Nigeria have some significant challenges to overcome. However, to prevent, control, and combat the criminal exploitation of children and women, we view that a short term policy would introduce mass education about the danger of human trafficking and immediately strengthen the legal instrument and the capability of the law enforcement system to deal with the problem, and the long term policy would address the social and economic conditions in Nigeria which sustains the phenomenon. This is to suggest that local and global effort must be actuated immediately to narrow the disparity in living conditions and increase the exercise of the liberty of goodwill between better-off and worse-off countries. In addition, the efforts already in place by the United Nations Millennium Goals must be quickened through internal and global cooperation to continue the eradication of poverty by eliminating legal and cultural practices that specifically limit children's and women's access to education and gainful employment.

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