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Chapter

Twenty-first Century Slavery: A Psychosocial Exploration of Human Trafficking, Migrant Smuggling, and Enslavement in Africa

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Abstract

This paper seeks to investigate human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and enslavement as global phenomena, public health concerns, gross violations of human rights, and crimes against humanity and the state. The twenty-first century slavery revolves around illegal control, including forced labor, debt bondage, forced marriage, slavery and slavery-like practices, and human trafficking. Thus, SDG Targets 5.2 and 8.7 stipulated that immediate and effective measures should be taken by all concerns to eradicate forced labor- end modern slavery, human trafficking, sexual and other types of exploitation, as well as to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor among others. The desktop approach was used to identify the varied forms of these menaces and their perpetrators. A wide range of secondary sources of data in peer-reviewed and edited conference proceedings, workshop proceedings, and published articles in local and international journals were consulted to obtain an in-depth appreciation of the problem being investigated. The paper further highlighted the psychosocial effects of human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and enslavement. The article concludes with recommendations for ending all forms of slavery in the global community in line with the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

Keywords: human trafficking, migrant smuggling, enslavement, slavery, psychosocial effects

1. Introduction

Human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and enslavement are global phenomena, public health concerns, gross violations of human rights, and crimes against humanity and the state [1, 2]. These criminal activities seriously violate the fundamental human rights of victims as enshrined in international laws and the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights.

Human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and enslavement are widespread and fastest-growing global criminal industries that sell and use men, women, and children for profit [3, 4]. They have been linked with a host of other crimes, including gang activity, drug operations, property crimes, organized criminal operations, and other violations of state, federal, and international law [5].

Human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and enslavement undermine labor relations, health, safety, and security of all nations serving as sources of victims, transit points, or final destinations. In contemporary times, enslavement is often perpetrated against kidnapped or coerced vulnerable men, boys, women, girls, and children [6]. The victims are often subjected to unimaginable human rights violations, including loss of freedom, control, involuntary actions, and exploitation for personal or commercial gains. The traffickers treat their victims such as commodities and animals, trampling on their fundamental human rights to decision-making, freedom of movement, and choice to work wherever and for whom they choose [7].

In spite of these realities about these phenomena, the literature appears to be sparse on the psychosocial dimension of twenty-first century slavery in Africa. Minimal scholarly attention seems to be paid to these even in the global north [2, 8–10]. For example, Lazzarino, Wright [8] in a scoping analysis of the characteristics of provision and types of mental health support available to survivors globally, reported that most of the service providers for the female population were located in Asia and South America and could be categorized as Christian faith based. They further noted that little information on evidence-based interventions and monitoring and evaluation was found in Asia and South America. More so, Quirk and Broome [11] and Weitzer [12] claimed that the hidden nature of these phenomena made it difficult to obtain an accurate picture of how many people are enslaved in global or African communities.

Thus, no systematic literature review has been conducted on the psychosocial exploration of human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and enslavement in Africa to date. Therefore, the aim of this study is to analyze the existing literature on the psychosocial effects of twenty-first century slavery in Africa.

2. Conceptualization of terms related to slavery and enslavement

The following concepts are defined as used in this study:

- *Enslavement*: This is a form of crime against humanity as stipulated in Article 7.1.c of the Rome Statute (1998). According to the Rome Statute (Article 7.2.c), enslavement is “the exercise of any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over a person and includes the exercise of such power in the course of trafficking in persons, in particular women and children.”
- *Human trafficking*: This is a contemporary form of slavery, and its victims are predominantly women and children. It involves the involuntary and forceful movement of persons within a country or across an international border to a destination to be exploited for cheap labor or other services. Approximately, 700,000 persons (majorly v) are trafficked annually within or across international borders into the international sex trade, often by force, fraud, or coercion.
- According to Article 3(a) of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, trafficking in persons is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of

persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, 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 [13].

- *Migrant smuggling*: This criminal act involves an agreement made by a person to pay smugglers who would assist him/her to illegally and voluntarily cross over an international border.
- *Slavery*: The 1926 Slavery Convention in article 1(1) defines slavery as the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised [14]. This definition encompasses both *de jure* slavery (slavery. Established by law) and *de facto* slavery (slavery in fact) [15, 16], In line with legal parameters, slavery entails a power relationship based on ownership, possession, control, and deprivation of a person's individual liberty, with the intent of exploitation through the use, management, profit, transfer, or disposal of that person. [16, 17] With slavery, women, men, and children were legally owned as chattel. The sexual enslavement of white women during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was referred to as "white slavery" [18].
- *Slave trade*: This is the buying and selling of human beings as slaves and sexual trafficking.

2.1 Research questions

RQ1: What is the nature of Modern-Day Slavery?

RQ2: What is the status of Africans in Modern-Day Slavery and elements of human trafficking?

RQ3: What are the Sources, Transit, or Destination Points of Slavery in Africa?

RQ4: What are the Nature and Forms of Sexual Slavery and Reproductive Exploitation of Enslaved Women?

RQ5: What are the Procurement Methods of Slavery and Enslavement?

RQ6: Who are the Perpetrators of Human Trafficking, Migrant smuggling, and Human Enslavement?

RQ7: What are the existing International and Regional Tools on Human Trafficking?

RQ8: What are the Gender Dimensions of Human Enslavement and Slave Trade?

RQ9: What are the drivers of the Help-Seeking Behavior of the Enslaved?

RQ10: What are the Psychosocial Effects of Human Trafficking, Migrant Smuggling, and Enslavement?

2.2 Objectives

1. Highlight the nature of Modern-Day Slavery, the status of Africans in Modern-Day Slavery, and elements of human trafficking

2. Identify the Sources, Transit, or Destination Points of Slavery in Africa

3. Highlight the Nature and Forms of Sexual Slavery and Reproductive Exploitation of Enslaved Women

4. Identify the Procurement Methods of Slavery and Enslavement
5. Identify the Perpetrators of Human Trafficking, Migrant smuggling, and Human Enslavement
6. Identify the International and Regional Tools for Human Trafficking
7. Identify the Gender Dimensions of Human Enslavement and Slave Trade
8. Identify the drivers of the Help-Seeking Behavior of the Enslaved
9. Identify the Psychosocial Effects of Human Trafficking, Migrant Smuggling, and Enslavement

2.3 Study methodology

2.3.1 Search methodology and article selection

This study adopted a scoping and narrative analysis of existing literature on human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and enslavement. The purpose was to unravel and make sense of the complex literature and to identify the varied forms of these menaces and their perpetrators.

A search of the Google Scholar articles was undertaken using the search terms “twenty-first century slavery”, “human trafficking”, “migrant smuggling,” and “enslavement” in various permutations and combinations. A wide range of citations were retrieved using this method from peer-reviewed and edited conference proceedings, workshop proceedings, and published articles in local and international journals to obtain an in-depth appreciation of the problem being investigated.

2.3.2 Methodological and thematic analysis of selected articles

A total of 84 articles (published between 1995 and 2023) were included in this review. The study adopted a narrative review, giving priority to the few observational studies available, and briefly summarizing the salient themes from the other publication types. The broad themes identified across these publications were used to organize this review on the psychosocial exploration of human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and slavery in the twenty-first century.

3. Results

3.1 RQ1: What is the nature of modern-day slavery?

In modern times, more than 50 million people are trapped in slavery and enslaved globally [19, 20]. The index [20] specifically reported that about 40.3 million people are enslaved worldwide. Rafferty [21] and Langier, Johnson [22] claimed that the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse among minors and vulnerable migrants are great. While Quirk and Broome [11] and Weitzer [12] and Fouts [23] reported that the majority of them, who are working as cloth designers, cooks, farm laborers, factory workers, domestic servants, cleaners, or nannies, are hidden from plain sight, human

trafficking, migrant smuggling, and enslavement are prevalent in under-regulated industries that depend on cheap, low-skilled, or unskilled labor.

3.2 RQ2: What is the status of Africans in modern-day slavery and elements of human trafficking?

Internationally, many Africans have been trapped in the modern slave markets while trying to escape poverty or insecurity, improve their socioeconomic status, and support their families [24, 25]. Many of the trapped victims often experience violent threats, rape, forced and inescapable debt, withholding of their travel documents (international passport), and the threat of deportation. Human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and enslavement violate the rights to life, equality, dignity, and security; the right to health; the right to freedom of movement; freedom from violence and abuse; and the right to be recognized as a person before the law. The basic elements of human trafficking as identified by Winterdyk J, Perrin and Reichel [26] are highlighted in the table below. This is in line with the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the TVPA's Action-Means-Purpose or A-M-P Model which help to determine whether force, fraud, or coercion was present, and indicating non-consensual encounter (**Table 1**).

3.3 RQ3: What are the Sources, Transit, or Destination Points of Slavery in Africa?

A. Sources and destination points of slavery

Sources of the slave trade imply the avenues through which traffickers obtain their supply of human beings for slavery or enslavement. Many of the enslaved people transported to the New World (United States, Brazil, and many Caribbean islands) originated from Africa, specifically from Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali; West-Central Africa, including Angola, Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Gabon; and West African nations - Ghana, Ivory Coast, the Bight of Biafra (including parts of present-day eastern Nigeria and Cameroon), an inlet of the Atlantic on Africa's western coast that was a hub of extensive slave-dealing operations.

A summary of the sources and destination points include the following:

Act	Means	Purpose
The trafficker must commit one or more of the following acts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruit • transport • transfer • harbor • receive • give/receive benefit • control 	Using one or more of the following means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • violence • threat of violence • coercion • abduction • fraud • deception • abuse of power or position of vulnerability 	For the purpose of exploitation in one or more of the following forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sexual exploitation • forced labor • slavery • servitude • organ removal • forced labor or services

Table 1.
Elements of human trafficking.

- *International human trafficking*: This occurs when a trafficker transports the citizen of one country into another country with valid documents or clandestinely or using fraudulent documents for the purpose of exploitation. Forms of international human trafficking include:
 - i. From developing nations/continents to industrialized nations/continents: This is usually from developing nations; they are transported and harbored through a variety of places to ultimately get them to the destination point and then sell them into servitude in industrialized nations. The slave trades out of Africa to Europe and the United States represent one of the most significant forced migrations and enslavement in history [27]. The main destination points for traditional slave trading were Brazil (45%), the Caribbean (22%), the British and French (10%), the Spanish Americas (12%), and North America (<4%) [27, 28]. Italy and Arabian nations are mostly the destination points for modern-day slavery [29, 30].
 - ii. *Poor Country to another poor country*:
- *Domestic human trafficking*: This is trafficking within countries. The trafficked person may be a citizen, permanent resident, visitor, temporary worker, or student within the country. Some nations are all in one point, serving as sources, transit, and destination points. The UN Global Report on human trafficking states affirmed that domestic human trafficking accounted for more than 25% of the total number of victims detected globally [31].

B. Slaves' embarkment, transportation routes, and disembarkation

Table 2 presents the embarkment points during the slave trade era' in Africa, especially from West-Central Africa (45%), Benin (16%), Biafra (13%), the Gold Coast (10%), and Senegambia (6%) as obtained from the slave voyages website and culled from Bertocchi [27].

The transportation routes for slave movement between 1400 and 1900 were the trans-Saharan, Indian Ocean, Red Sea, and trans-Atlantic slave trades.

i. *The Indian ocean slave trade*

This entails the embarkment of slaves from East Africa delivered to the Middle East and various parts of Asia — India and plantation islands in the Indian Ocean [32]. During this period, more women were embarked as slaves compared to their male counterparts [33–36].

ii. *The red sea slave trades*

The Red Sea slave trade was basically the embarkment of slaves from inland ethnic regions close to the Red Sea to the Middle East and India [32]. Some of the slaves captured from sub-Saharan Africa (mainly Zanj) and the Caucasus (mainly Circassians) were engaged as sex slaves in certain regions of the Middle East up until the twentieth century. About 1.25 million slaves were also captured and shipped from Western Europe by the Barbary Pirates between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries [18].

	Senegambia	Sierra Leone	Windward Coast	Gold Coast	Bight of Benin	Bight of Biafra	West-Central Africa	South-East Africa	Totals
1501–1600	147,281	1405	2482	0	0	8459	117,878	0	277,505
1601–1700	136,104	6843	1350	108,679	269,812	186,322	1,134,807	31,715	1,875,632
1701–1800	363,187	201,985	289,583	1,014,529	1,284,585	904,616	2,365,204	70,930	6,494,619
1801–1900	108,941	178,537	43,454	86,114	444,662	495,164	2,076,685	440,022	3,873,579
Totals	755,513	388,770	336,869	1,209,322	1,999,059	1,594,561	5,694,574	542,667	12,521,335

Source: TAST Database—Voyages: <http://www.slavevoyages.org/>

Table 2.
Embarkment points for slaves from Africa.

iii. *The trans-Saharan slave trades*

The trans-Saharan slave trade embarked slaves from the sub-Saharan desert to North Africa [32].

iv. *The trans-Atlantic slave trade*

Between 1529 and 1850, more than 12 million Africans (young men and women) were embarked, as slaves mostly from West, West-Central, and East African coasts to work in European colonies and plantations in the Americas. They were forced to undertake the Middle Passage journey across the Atlantic Ocean [37–39]. The ratio of males who embarked during this period was larger than their female counterparts [33–36].

Slave embarkment got to its peak between 1780 and 1790, with more than 80,000 slaves per year being transported from Africa [38]. This was further intensified during the nineteenth century with the embarkment of between three to four million people annually (**Table 3**) [40].

Table 4 shows that the largest proportion of enslaved persons instead of slaves shipped from Africa across the Atlantic was transported to the Eastern coast of Latin America and the Caribbean, especially Haiti and Jamaica.

v. *Sources and destination points of modern-day slavery*

Sources of trafficked persons in the modern-day slave trade are Thailand, China, Nigeria, Albania, Bulgaria, Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine. With modern-day slavery, the most common destinations for victims of human trafficking are Thailand, Japan, Israel, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Turkey, and the United States.

3.4 RQ4: What are the Nature, Forms, and Causes of Sexual Slavery and Reproductive Exploitation of Enslaved Women?

3.4.1 Nature of sexual slavery

Sexual slavery and the reproductive exploitation of enslaved women and girls are forms of human rights abuses. Some of the major societal and personal level factors sustaining these criminal activities are displacement (due to war and natural disaster), unstable family conditions or family rejection, insecurity, political instability, poverty, racism, and the legacy of colonialism, gender inequality, addictions, and mental health issues. Other factors include homelessness, being in the foster care system, the experience of neglect and domestic violence, previous experience of marginalization and discrimination, and identifying as LGBT.

The exploitation of enslaved persons includes the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery, or practices such as slavery, servitude or the removal of organs, lack of educational opportunities, high unemployment rate, lack of social and health care, as well as the lack of timely and effective protection of persons from violence and discrimination.

These could be categorized as traditional enslavement and modern-day slavery.

	EU	North America	British Caribbean	French Caribbean	Dutch Americas	Danish W. Indies	Spanish Americas	Brazil	Africa	Totals
1501–1600	640	0	0	0	0	0	169,370	29,275	0	199,285
1601–1700	2981	15,147	310,477	38,685	124,158	18,146	225,504	784,457	3122	1,522,677
1701–1800	5240	295,482	1,813,323	995,133	295,215	68,608	145,533	1,989,017	2317	5,609,868
1801–1900	0	78,117	194,452	86,397	25,355	22,244	752,505	2,061,625	150,130	3,370,825
Totals	8861	388,746	2,318,252	1,120,215	444,728	108,998	1,292,912	4,864,374	155,569	10,702,655

Sources: *The legacies of slavery in and out of Africa*; & TAST Database—Voyages: <http://www.slavevoyages.org/>

Table 3.
Slaves' disembarkation during the Trans-Atlantic slave trade.

Manner of enslavement	Percentage
Taken in a war	24.3%
Kidnapped or seized	40.3%
Sold/tricked by a relative, friend, etc.	19.4%
Through a judicial process	16.0%

Source: Data was culled from Sigismund Koelle's Linguistic Inventory of 144 informants who were interviewed about the means of their enslavement.

Table 4.
Enslavement methods identified by Koelle's informants [40].

3.5 Forms and causes of traditional enslavement

For Africans, the perpetuation of the traditional forms of exploitation of enslaved women, girls, boys, and children was fueled by the gun-slave cycle for centuries. The rationale for the Europeans' engagement in slave trading was the need for manpower to work on their expanded plantation economies in South and Central America to satisfy the increasing taste in Europe for colonial goods, such as tobacco and sugar.

Forms of traditional slavery include the following:

- a. *Serfdom*: This connotes an obligatory condition that enforces "serf" to permanently live on another person's property and render compulsory labor. Forms of modern-day serfdom include domestic servitude, the enslavement of small boys as herdsmen, recruitment of children as child soldiers, children's inheritance of lifetime debt bondage, and sales of female infants at birth.
- b. *Sexual slavery and exploitation*: The sex industry involves the sexual exploitation of persons, predominantly women and girls. Sexual slavery is a particular form of enslavement that includes limitations on one's autonomy, freedom of movement, and power to decide matters relating to one's sexual activity. The sexual activities are related to prostitution, pornography, sex tourism, and other commercial sexual services. Article 7.1.g of the Rome Statue identifies sexual enslavement as any act committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against any civilian population. These imply that the trapped victims are owned by their masters and mistress and could be forced or coerced to engage in nonconsensual sexual activities or forced prostitution, single-owner sexual slavery, commercial sex, forced marriage, and sex trafficking of persons. Ritual slavery is another form of sexual slavery. In Africa, sexual slavery is mostly associated with certain religious practices in Ghana, Togo, and Benin.

During World War II and the second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945), the Japanese government needed soldiers, laborers, and "comfort women," and they kidnapped approximately 200,000 Chinese, Korean, and Filipino women from impoverished backgrounds and coercively forced them into sexual slavery in Japanese military "comfort stations" [41, 42]. The comfort women were unpaid and forced to serve as many as 60 soldiers in 1 day. The "comfort women" who refused to have sex with the Japanese soldiers were raped and beaten. These women had syphilis, sexually transmitted diseases, post-traumatic stress disorders, and severe trauma [42–44].

c. *Loss of bodily autonomy and reproductive abilities:* The slave woman or girl is voiceless and has lost total control of her personality, body, and reproduction to her master or mistress. The exploitation of a slave's reproductive ability dates back to the biblical account of Sarah's, Rachel's (Gen 30:3–7), and Leah's servants who were used as reproductive entities for their masters, Hagar, Bilhah (Gen 29:29; 46:25) and Zilpah (Genesis 30:9) were slaves given to their husbands to bear children. Hagar was an Egyptian slave of Sarah whom she as a wife to bear him a child. - Ishmael,

After Jacob had fathered six sons by his wife Leah, Rachel gave her servant Bilhah to Jacob as a wife, and Leah gave her servant Zilpah to be married to Jacob as well. Each servant bore Jacob two sons. Dan was Jacob's fifth son, and the first son born by Jacob to Rachel's servant Bilhah (see Gen. 30:1–6).

d. *Slave breeding:* Enforcement of the 1808 international slave trade ban put a halt to the trafficking of persons from West Africa [45]. Slave breeding was adopted as a viable option to increase the enslaved population through “natural growth” for the internal market. During the pre-Civil War era in the US South, the American slave system and slave masters used enslaved women as both producers and reproducers of the next generation of enslaved labor within the plantation communities [46].

e. *Forced reproduction:* Through forced breeding and reproduction, enslaved men and women increased the enslaved workforce. Forced reproduction manifested itself in the emphasis on what enslavers deemed “healthy” and “strong” infants absorbed into slavery. Slaveholders actively encouraged their enslaved “property” to reproduce by cajoling, threatening, and coercing them into intimate relationships [47, 48]. Enslavers then either sold or exploited the children born of these sexual relationships for labor, earning themselves a profit. This practice was promoted by the 1662 Virginia Law of *partus sequitur ventrem*, which stipulates those children followed the status of the mothers [49]. This implies that a child of a free mother would be free, while children of enslaved mothers would inherit the same status. Thus, enslavers coerced enslaved men and women to procreate, supervised their children's exercise and diet to control their growth, and raised them as laborers and commodities to be sold on the market.

f. *Commodification and marketisation of breeding women:* The labor force perception of pregnant women leads to the categorization of full hands or half hands.

3.6 Forms and causes of modern-day slavery and enslavement

Modern-day slavery is a complex global health problem, an affront to human dignity, and a violation of core human rights [50, 51].

According to the latest global estimates of modern slavery by Walk Free [52], the International Labor Organization [53] and the International Organization for Migration [54, 55] about 49.6 million people are currently trapped in modern-day slavery. Africa accounts for about 9.2 million people trapped in modern-day slavery [56].

The victims of modern slavery are usually undocumented immigrants, runaway and homeless youth, victims of trauma and abuse, refugees, and impoverished individuals. Many of these people are in search of a better, better, happier life elsewhere in view of the lack of alternatives within their community. These sometimes make them easy targets of human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and enslavement.

Categories of modern-day slavery are diverse and entail the following:

- a. *Forced marriage and early marriage*: This is the enslavement of women and underage girls in marriage. It is a violation of their basic human rights to make an informed choice, decision, and consensual acceptance of the relationship. Nonconsensual forced marriage is a common phenomenon in many African states, including the Northern parts of Nigeria [54]. Other forms of forced marriage include the sale of a bride, transfer of a wife, and inheritance of a widow [56].
- b. *Debt bondage/bonded labor*: Debt is a key source of vulnerability to trafficking and a major tool used to force victims to work in exploitative or abusive conditions. Debt bondage was classified as forced labor [57] and as a type of servitude that could be classified as slavery if characteristics denoting ownership were present [58]. Article 1(a) of the 1956 Convention defines bonded labor as the “*status or condition arising from a pledge by a debtor of his personal services or of those of a person under his control as security for a debt if the value of those services as reasonably assessed is not applied towards the liquidation of the debt or the length and nature of those services are not respectively limited and defined.*” The 1956 convention further defines debt bondage as ... “the situation of workers trapped in debt bondage in systemic, archaic, feudal systems of slave-labor exploitation, as well as that of migrant workers from developing countries who leave their countries accruing debt to cover the costs associated with recruitment” ... (pp. 4–5).
- c. *Descent-based slavery*: This refers to people who are born or are being born into slavery.
- d. *Child slavery*: Delivery of children by their parents or guardians for exploitation.
- e. *Human trafficking*: The scourge of selling and buying human beings for profit has existed since the beginning of civilization but has exponentially increased due to globalization [59]. It is an obnoxious, despicable, and loathsome phenomenon involving coercive sexual exploitation, labor exploitation in conditions akin to slavery, exploitation in begging, and juvenile delinquency, as well as domestic servitude.

There are varied forms of human trafficking:

- i. *Organ trafficking*: Trafficking for the removal of organs.
- ii. *Trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation of adults and children (CSEAC)*: The demand for commercial sex workers in countries, where prostitution is legalized is one of the major drivers of the growth and perpetuation of sex trafficking or global commercial sex trade in

contemporary times. The purpose of this form of human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons solely for sexual slavery through coercive abusive and violent means. Women and girls account for 99% of victims in the commercial sex industry. Types of CSEA&C include prostitution, child sex trafficking, child sex tourism, child pornography, or other forms of transactional sex with adults or children. Commercial sexual exploitation of children is a form of child sexual abuse by adults with remuneration in cash or in kind to the child or to a third person or persons. Trafficked children are treated as sexual and commercial objects.

- iii. *Trafficking for forced labor*: This treats human beings as objects and beasts of burden. There are over 24.9 million victims of forced labor [60]. Migrant workers, women and girls are disproportionately vulnerable to forced labor and criminal activities:
- iv. *Religious-based ideological sex slaves*: Kidnapped girls are offered to militants to increase their loyalty and adherence to religious ideologies ideology.

3.7 RQ5: What are the procurement methods of slavery and enslavement?

Human traffickers procure their victims in many ways, including

- a. *Allurement of women and girls*: Traffickers sometimes cajoled women and girls into their networks through false promises of decent working conditions at relatively good pay as nannies, maids, dancers, factory workers, restaurant workers, sales clerks, or models.
- b. *Purchase of children from destitute parents*: Traffickers sometimes buy children from poor families and sell them into sexual or domestic servitude — prostitution or into various types of forced or bonded labor.
- c. *The kidnapping of targeted individuals*: This is the art of kidnapping local nationals in their home country as is the current state of insecurity in Nigeria. The victims are usually defenseless children, adolescent girls, travelers, schoolgirls, businessmen and women, journalists and aid workers, and families whose perceived wealth, employment, or social status are deemed by the kidnappers to make them high-value assets in a ransom negotiation. Foreign nationals have also been targeted for abduction by kidnappers in nations such as Nigeria, Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, the Philippines, Somalia, Kenya, and the DRC. There has been a surge in the spate of kidnappings (15.8%) globally since 2016 [53, 61]. Prior to this time, most especially between 1970 and 2010, kidnapping incidents represented a small portion of all terrorist attacks (6.9%) [62].

Forms of targeted kidnapping include kidnap for ransom/stranger kidnap, express kidnap, criminal vendetta kidnap, people smuggling kidnap, hoax/scam kidnap, child abduction, human trafficking kidnap, and tiger kidnap. Kidnapping and extortion have had negative long-term impacts on victims, survivors, and affected families.

- d. *Kidnapping through warfare*: This is also referred to as the “gun-slave cycle” [13]. It was an age-long method of capturing people for slavery and enslavement. Slaves were captured by kidnapping people from neighboring ethnic regions during raids and local wars among Africans and were later sold to foreign slave dealers in exchange for imported goods and weaponry/firearms. Koelle and Hair [63] claimed that approximately 40% of slaves were kidnapped in Sierra Leone. Captured people were then sold to slave merchants in return for imported goods and guns, which were used to capture more people as slaves to be sold.
- e. *Prey on vulnerable communities ridden with poverty*: This is perpetuated against members of such communities who are willing to flee poverty in search of greener pastures. The traffickers, through deception, presented offers of legitimate and decent work to the enslaved in another country.
- f. *Enslavement*: This was perpetrated by family, friends, and other people from the same ethnic group [64]. Koelle and Hair [63] reported that between 20 and 25% were enslaved in Sierra Leone by family and friends and 16% as a result of judicial processes.
- g. *Enslavement for debt recovery*: Enslavement of wives or children to pay off debt [34] is an age-long practice in Africa.
- h. *Pimps*: Traffickers also allure and coerce vulnerable girls into prostitution and the commercial sex trade.

3.8 RQ6: Who are the perpetrators of human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and human enslavement?

Human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and human enslavement are perpetrated by unregistered international organized networks of individuals, mafias, and organizations that generate substantial illicit proceeds, often laundered into licit markets, with a too-low risk of prosecution and confiscation. These illegal and criminal activities are lucrative crimes that take advantage of people who are vulnerable, desperate, or simply seeking a better life.

The perpetrators include:

- *Past slave dealers*: The perpetrators of slavery and enslavement globally were the Portuguese, British, French, Spaniards, Netherlands, and Americas. The Portuguese initiated the slave trade.
- *Contemporary human traffickers, migrant smugglers, and slave dealers*: The slave trades did not only cause contemporary inter- and intragroup mistrust but also mistrust of political leaders as slave traders were often chiefs and leaders within communities [64].

3.9 RQ7: What are the existing international and regional tools on human trafficking?

Since the abolition of the slave trade in 1888, the international community has repeatedly condemned slavery, human trafficking, and smuggling of migrants for

involuntary servitude and violence against women and girls. They have also initiated several declarations, treaties, United Nations resolutions and reports, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the 1956 Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery; the 1948 American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man; the 1957 Abolition of Forced Labor Convention; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; United Nations General Assembly Resolutions 50/167, 51/66, and 52/98; the Final Report of the World Congress against Sexual Exploitation of Children [65]; the Fourth World Conference on Women [66]; and the 1991 Moscow Document of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [67].

The goals and focus of some of the international laws are specifically outlined below:

- a. *The brussels act*: The Act calls on the international community, including institutions at local, regional, and governmental levels, NGOs, IOs, IGOs, and the EU institutions to develop concrete measures, standards, best practices, and mechanisms to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings. The Acts seeks to intensify cooperation in the fields of prevention, victim protection and assistance, and police and judicial cooperation with a view to achieving a swift and sustainable reduction of trafficking in human beings.
- b. *1926 slavery convention (as amended in 1953)*: The United Nations Slavery Convention extended the work accomplished under the Brussels Act to address the slave trade and slavery by defining slavery and the responsibilities of countries to prevent slavery.
- c. *OCFS responding to commercially sexually exploited and trafficked youth*: This is a Blueprint for Systems of Care in New York State offers guidance to develop system interventions to meet the needs of trafficked and exploited youth.
- d. *The universal declaration of human rights*: It declares that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, no one shall be held in slavery or servitude, and no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.
- e. *Victims of trafficking and violence protection Act of 2000*: This Act aims at combating trafficking in persons and ensuring just and effective punishment of traffickers and protecting their victims.
- f. *Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003*.
- g. *Recommended principles and guidelines on human rights and human trafficking, 2002*: The recommended principles placed human rights at the center of all efforts aimed at preventing and combating human trafficking: protecting, assisting, and providing redress for victims.
- h. *The protocol to prevent, suppress, and punish trafficking in Persons, especially women and children*: This was adopted by the United Nations in 2003.

- i. *The Trafficking in Persons Protocol*: The Protocol, which is also known as the Palermo Protocol, aims at protecting and assisting trafficked persons, with full respect for their human rights. It highlighted the following four Ps of Human Trafficking:
 - i. *Prevention*: This focuses on preventing and combating human trafficking through strategies such as public awareness and education campaigns, poverty reduction, and discouraging demand for the labor or services of trafficked persons.
 - ii. *Protection*: This aims at protecting and assisting trafficked persons with the provision of physical safety, legal information, and protection of their privacy and identity.
 - iii. *Prosecution*: This focuses on the prosecution of human traffickers by enacting laws that make trafficking human beings a crime, training law enforcement and other authorities on how to identify traffickers, and protecting the rights of trafficked persons.
 - iv. *Partnerships*: This aims at promoting cooperation and partnerships among countries to effectively meet the goals of protection, prevention, and prosecution.
- j. *The Vienna declaration and programme of action*
- k. *The United States trafficking victims protection act (TVPA)*: The Act was enacted in 2000 and reauthorized in 2008 as the Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2018. The Act identifies five major forms of trafficking: Commercial Sex Act, Slavery, Involuntary Servitude, Peonage, and Debt Bondage. The TVPA provided measures to prevent and deter trafficking. It also provided increased protection for trafficking victims in the United States. The Act further equipped the U.S. Government with new tools and resources to mount a comprehensive and coordinated campaign for eliminating all forms of modern slavery domestically and internationally.

3.10 RQ8: What are the gender dimensions of human enslavement and slave trade?

- a. *Plantation workers*: Between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, the transatlantic slave traders exported more male slaves to the Americas to work in plantations, which required strength and resulted in a decrease in the male-to-female ratio in ethnic regions. Lovejoy [35] and Manning [36] asserted that the ratio of men to women exported in the transatlantic trade was 181:100, that is two men for every woman.
- b. *Domestic servants and sex trafficking*: The Indian Ocean slave trade on the Eastern coast of Africa involved trafficking mostly women to serve as slaves, domestic servants, entertainers, and concubines in the Middle East and India [33, 34, 36].

3.11 RQ9: What are the drivers of help-seeking behavior of the enslaved?

The following are some of the reasons why trafficked persons find it hard to seek help in some countries:

- a. *Illegal immigration*: With victims of human trafficking being mostly illegal immigrants in the destination country, they are often unable to seek legal help because of fear of being incarcerated, fined, or otherwise penalized harshly than the traffickers for comital of unlawful acts consequential to their being trafficked with either false documents, or entering the host country without documentation, or working without documentation.
- b. *Traffickers' control tactics*: Bracy, Lul [68], Rafferty [69], and Hepburn and Simon [70] noted that the majority of the enslaved persons find it difficult to leave their captors, seek help from law enforcement officers, or run to a safe shelter because of the control tactics employed by the traffickers and their accomplices. The most common control tactics include physical and emotional abuse, death threats, severe injuries and threats, psychological torture, isolation from friends and family, and economic abuse.
- c. *Inadequate legislation*: Atak and Simeon [71] and Kruger and Oosthuizen [72] reported that lack of comprehensive laws to penalize the range of offenses involved in the trafficking scheme and to bring traffickers to justice.
- d. *Weak enforcement of laws*: King [73] and Lobasz [74] claimed that enforcement of existing laws against traffickers to deter trafficking is sometimes hindered by official indifference, corruption, and official participation in human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and the slave trade.
- e. *Weak sanctions*: Reid, Jones [75], and Ntlatlapa [76] noted that poor reflection of the seriousness of human trafficking and its components as crimes against humanity in existing laws and current sentencing guidelines often results in weak penalties for convicted traffickers.
- f. *Inadequate services and facilities*: Rafferty [21], Miller-Perrin and Wurtele [77], and Muraya and Fry [78] reported that inadequate services and facilities that address the practical and strategic needs of trafficked victims such as health care, housing, education, legal assistance, and safe reintegration into their home countries.
- g. *Exploitative angle through the financial lens*: Juyal and Chakravarthi [79] reported that traffickers also make promises aimed at addressing the needs of their target to impose control.
- h. *Financial difficulties*: Trafficked persons experience financial difficulties while trying to return home as voluntary returnees [80].
- i. *Language barriers and other difficulties*: Foreign victims may experience language barriers, difficulties navigating escape routes, and fear of the police in their host country [81, 82].

- j. *Lack of political will*: Inadequate legislation, weak enforcement tools, and lack of political will for handling reported cases, as well as for ending all forms of enslavement in the global community [83].
- k. *Economies of sex trafficking*: The economies of sex trafficking (selling and reselling of human beings) play a major role in the perpetuation of human rights violations and also inhibit victims from reporting [84].

3.12 RQ10: What are the psychosocial effects of human trafficking, migrant smuggling and enslavement?

The psychosocial impacts of kidnapping, human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and enslavement are a cause for concern among mental health practitioners, governments, law enforcement agencies, and communities around the world.

The methodologies, strategies, and tactics deployed by the organized networks of smugglers, kidnappers, and hostage-takers often involve the use of extreme violence and torture to subdue their victims. These include:

a. *Hostage*:

- Ransome to secure their release, the threat of being killed if the ransom is not paid on time or at all, and
- Inability of family and friends to contact the abductee.

b. *Migrant smuggling*:

- A huge sum of payment to an organized crime group to facilitate illegal entry into another country.
- Traffickers sometimes increase the anguish, grief, and despair of their victims and families through extortions and debt increase with forced demands on families to pay up the debt with threats of killing their victims if not paid.

c. *Human trafficking*:

- Forced prostitution in brothels to pay traffickers.
- “Sextortion,” or blackmail, is a growing threat.

d. *Enslavement*: The traffickers typically made use of physical and emotional control measures such as confiscation of the victims’ means of identification, mobile phones, and money, forbidding communication with family or friends and monitoring and restriction of their movement.

All these tactics and methods of violent torture have the following impacts on the enslaved:

- a. *Physical and mental health impacts*: Usage of sextortion, physical violence, starvation, beatings, rape, and gang rape to dominate, subdue, and control their

victims usually have long-term psychological trauma on the enslaved. Some of the physical injuries sustained by victims include broken bones, concussions, burns, and brain trauma. Those in forced prostitution and forced commercial sex acts often suffer from sexually transmitted diseases, menstrual pain and irregularities, miscarriages, and forced abortions, among other problems. Victims of sexual slavery sometimes report post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, panic disorder, suicidal ideation, Stockholm syndrome, substance abuse, and high levels of mortality.

- b. *Sociopolitical impact*: The traditional slave trade disrupted the peaceful and cohesive existence among families and within communities in African traditional city-states. It also constricted pre-existing institutions among and within ethnic regions and resulted in political instability and conflict [35].
- c. *Sociodemographic impact*: The transatlantic slave trade has been associated with an increased prevalence of polygyny and infidelity in Africa [9, 36, 37] with attendant poor health outcomes, such as higher HIV infection rates among women and child mortality [38].

4. Conclusion

Trafficking in persons, migrant smuggling, and enslavement are transnational crimes with national implications. To discourage international trafficking and bring its perpetrators to justice, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action demands nations take up policy actions against serious offenses. These should include prescribing appropriate punitive measures, paying priority attention to the prosecution of trafficking offenses, and protecting rather than punishing the victims of such offenses.

5. Recommendations

Human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and enslavement involve serious violations of human rights and are a matter of pressing international concern. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action demand urgent action to draw global attention to the need to eradicate human trafficking, smuggling of migrants, and all forms of enslavement, including sexual slavery and forced labor. Concerted and vigorous action is required by countries of origin, transit, or destination, and by international organizations to eliminate all forms of human trafficking, smuggling of migrants, and enslavement.

The following recommendations are made in favor of policy implementation and strategies for ending human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and slavery and securing freedom for everyone, everywhere, and always:

- A. Dismantle the criminal enterprises that trade in people and the conviction of the main perpetrators.
- B. Establishment of an interagency task force to monitor and combat human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and enslavement.


- C. Reduce demands for commercial sex.
- D. End business that profits from trafficking-related transactions.
- E. Establish and implement international initiatives to enhance economic opportunity for potential victims of trafficking as a method of deterring trafficking examples of such initiatives include microcredit lending programs, training in business development, skills training, and job counseling; programs promoting women's participation in leadership and economic decision-making; programs focusing on school retention and completion for girls and children in all educational levels; inclusion of the dangers of trafficking in educational curricula; development grants to nongovernmental organizations for the acceleration and advancement of women's participation in political, economic, social, and educational roles within their nation and communities.
- F. Safeguards trafficked persons from abuse, neglect, exploitation, or even death that is associated with these crimes.
- G. Design and carry out programs and initiatives that will assist in the safe integration, reintegration, or resettlement of victims of trafficking. Such programs and initiatives shall be designed to meet the appropriate assistance needs of such persons and their children.
- H. Establish a task force in every community for ending human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and enslavement.

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