



## **Causes and Effects of Human Trafficking and Teenage Labour in Central Senatorial District of Taraba State**

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### **Abstract**

Human trafficking and teenage labour is one of the modern societal crimes that most societies are battling with it. The crime in recent time has been transformed in to different patterns and forms. This study evaluated the causes and effects of human trafficking and teenage labour in Central Senatorial District of Taraba State. A survey research design was employed. The data of the study were generated from both primary and secondary sources. Interview and questionnaire were the major instrument that were used. The data obtained from the field were presented and analyzed using table, percentage and frequency count. We used percentage and reports to analyze our questions and objectives. Findings of the study shows that many factors such as poverty, ignorance, unemployment, bad governance among others contributed to the spread of the act. The study also found that the menace affect both the victims and the two societies that are cut up in the web of the act. The victims do suffer from psychological trauma, stress and mental disorder. It also has adverse effect on the economy of the victim and the host countries. The study recommends need for good governance, employment opportunities, enlightenment, among others

**Keywords:** Causes, Effect, Human Trafficking, Teenage Labour, Nigeria and Taraba State

## **Introduction**

Trafficking in persons and teenage labour is a modern practice of procuring human beings most especially the teen for unpaid work in a physically abusive setting and location from which they are not allowed to leave (Okafor, 2000). Trafficking in persons is a new societal menace that is fast growing in most societies. The growth rate is in higher proportion in developing societies than in developed societies. The traditional form of trafficking is dated back during the trans-Atlantic Slave trade where able young men and women were forcibly taken to Europe, Middle-East, USA and South America to work on plantation farms (Okafor, 2000).

The contemporary form of trafficking in persons has taken a new dimension; it has metamorphosed from young able men and women to teens who are mostly helpless and ignorance of what the act entails. There is hardly no day the issue of teen trafficking, deportation and child labour is not being mentioned in the media of most states. It is a nightmare that every society is battling to curb. Every state is affected, either in term of loss of potential human capital, crime, population outburst, among others (Cinjel & Chujor, 2020). Bigger  
Volume 8, Number 2  
March, 2025

nations like Spain, USA, France, England, among others kept designing strategies to restrict and discourages the offloading of the victims across its shore but all to the contrary.

In Africa, the act is daily increasing and transforming itself into different form despite several effort by most state to check made it. Libya, Morocco and Ethiopia are the most affected states. Most of the victims are taken to the mentioned states before they are taken to Europe. Human Watch in 2024 states that most of the victims of trafficking in persons in Africa are mostly from Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, Mauritania and Mali. It went further to state that the crime is organized and perpetuated by syndicate who have chain of network in many countries (Terkula, 2001).

Trafficking in person and teenage labour in Nigeria is a menace that has long history. It was done during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and at the contemporary period, it has transformed into different forms and ways. The state and its apparatus has taken several action to weaken the act but all to the contrary (Cinjel & Chujor, 2020). Several institutions were established and this includes the Nigerian immigration service, the custom, the NAPTIP, NAICOM, among others. The Nigerian immigration and NAPTIP are the principal organ that are directly saddled with the management of tasks on trafficking. Irrespective of the creation of the aforesaid establishment, the act has not stopped (Quirk, 2011). It kept rising and reappearing in different form. Human Watch in 2024 states that trafficking in persons is a menace that is more pronounced among developing countries than developed societies. It went further to state that all countries are affected directly or indirectly; either as a host or casualty of the victims

Most of the victims in Africa passes through Libya and morocco before they are shipped on the Mediterranean Sea. NAPTIP in 2024 states that 14,000 Nigerians are victims and most of the victims come from states such as Edo, Akwa-Ibom, Benue, Bayelsa and Taraba State. Thought on what are the underlying causes vary and differ among nations. But it is widely believe that factors like poverty, economic hardship, poor governance and national instability exacerbated it(Cinjel & Chujor, 2020). . Some would prefer to label the menace on act such as unemployment, poor parental upbringing, broken homes, and weak legal system, among others as the primary causes. The cause is relative even among the victims. The unified consensus is that the act is more common among developing societies than the developed societies. The developing societies are often the base of the victims while the developed states are the host. Human Watch in 2024 states that USA , Spain , Italy, Israel, Morocco and Saudi Arabia deport not less than 15,000 victims of trafficking out of its shore annually (Gallagher,2011).

Irrespective of the severe and stringent measures that is taken by most states, the act kept re-occurring and it has ransacked many societies of its prospective and potential human capital. Taraba State, is one of the most affected state in Nigeria. The state for long was plagued by the menace. It was rated by NAPTIP as the most affected in the north-East geo-political zone. The closeness of the state to Cameroon is widely seen as the cause. But some attribute the causes to bad governance, poverty and instability (Logan, 2009). This study intent to assess the causes and effects of trafficking in persons and teenage labour in Taraba State. The study dwelled on the incidence in the Central Senatorial District of Taraba State which comprises of the following local government area: Bali, Gashaka, Gassol, Kurmi and Sardauna

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- i. What are the underlying causes of human trafficking and teenage labour in Central Senatorial District of Taraba State?
- ii. What are the effects of trafficking and teenage labour on the development of Central Senatorial District of Taraba State?

The main objective of the study is to examine the causes and effects of human trafficking and teenage labour in Central Senatorial District of Taraba State? Specifically, the study will look at:

- (a) Those factors that contribute to human trafficking and teenage labour in the Central Senatorial District of Taraba State
- (b) The effect of human trafficking and teenage labour on development in the Central Senatorial District of Taraba State

## **Conceptual Review**

### **Trafficking in Persons**

There is seemingly no consistency in the definition of trafficking in persons (TIP), as it varies depending on environmental and cultural dispositions (Healey, 2012). However, in 1994, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA, 2022) depicted that TIP is a reflection of illicit and clandestine movement of persons across national and international borders, largely from developing countries and some countries with economies in transition, with the end goal of forcing women and girl children into sexually or economically oppressive and exploitative situations, for the profit of recruiters, traffickers and crime syndicates, as well as other illegal activities related to trafficking, such as forced domestic labour, false marriages, clandestine employment and false adoption.

This definition might be challenged on the basis that it is considered to be narrow in its scope because it focuses on the movement of people from developing countries and some countries with economies in transition (United Nations General Assembly, 2022). In addition, the UNGA definition limits TIP to women and girl children. In doing so, other categories such as men and boy children are ignored. However, it should be noted that in this definition a number of the end purposes of TIP have been included, such as ‘forced domestic labour, false marriages, clandestine employment and false adoption’ as well as sexual exploitation.

The Inter-American Convention on International Traffic in Minors (1997) viewed Trafficking in Persons as the abduction, removal or retention, or attempted abduction, removal or retention, of a minor for unlawful purposes or by unlawful means. It is noteworthy that this definition has a strong effect on the definition of TIP that was adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 2000. Illustratively, this definition used expressions such as ‘unlawful purpose’ and ‘unlawful means’ which comprise the purpose and means elements of TIP, and which were incorporated in the 2000 UN definition (Gallagher, 2011).

Article 3 of the United Nations (2004) Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking states that trafficking is “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, trafficking for sex and others forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. This definition requires three elements in order for a case to constitute trafficking. The first is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons; the second is the use of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, force, threat, abuse of power, or payments; and the third is that the first two elements are for the purpose of exploitation. The exploitation includes forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, and servitude.

There is some discussion on the first element of this definition, insofar as whether it covers internal movement or even if trafficking includes all forced labour regardless of whether or not any movement occurs at all. The US chooses to focus on the enslavement aspect of trafficking, that is, the exploitation, and as long as that occurs, they consider trafficking to have occurred (United States Department of States, 2010). The occurrence of trafficking without a movement dimension is also supported by Bakirci (2009), who acknowledge that the transportation of a person does not always occur, and by definition trafficking only requires the recruitment, harbouring or receipt of a person. With the US definition of trafficking, trafficking does not just focus on migrants, but also the possibility of nationals being trafficked into a position of slavery.

The US definition certainly has the advantage of a broad scope of inclusiveness of the protections and opportunities for redress that a victim of trafficking has under the UN Protocol, letting less trafficking victims slip through the gap because of technicalities. This is still valid on an international level, because recruitment, harbouring or receipt of a person can occur without movement, and in fact transfer could refer to a change of the person in possession or harbouring the victim, rather than physical movement over some distance.

Sussanu (2019) defines human trafficking as the Recruiting, transporting, transferring, sheltering or receiving people by threat of force or by using force or other forms of coercion, kidnapping, fraud, deception, abuse of power or vulnerability or by offering or accepting payments of benefits to obtain the consent of a person who has control over another person for exploitation. Human trafficking is a deprivation of the most basic entitlements of life. Therefore, it is not just stealing someone's labour or violating someone's privacy; it is the theft of an entire life (Logan et al., 2009). The exact number of victims and offenders involved in trafficking is unknown. Out of more than 26,000 calls related to international human trafficking, over 4,500 calls received directly from victims of human trafficking, and more than 8,500 human trafficking cases in 2017, only 21,242 human trafficking victims were identified (Polaris, 2021). The number of victims is undoubtedly much higher than this.

Although trafficking survivors have often been treated as a unitary population of sexual slaves, research is beginning to highlight significant differences between the subgroups of sexual trafficking and labour trafficking (Hopper, 2018). Sex trafficking involves restrictive conditions, confinement, lack of compensation, no access to medical care, social exclusion, and a constant threat of physical violence. In contrast, labour trafficking entails long hours, little to no pay, health hazards, an unsanitary environment, and an absence of communication between the employer and the employee (Lutya, 2010). Even in 2020, there is still controversy in the literature about the numeric extent of sex trafficking versus labour trafficking. Indisputably, sex work is more public and easier to investigate due to the higher probability of acquiring DNA evidence, which may explain the higher number of reports in this domain (Logan et al., 2009).

In 1996, another view of trafficking was proposed by 'a Plan of Action commissioned by the Council's Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men to include situations where a woman is exploited in a country other than her own by another person (natural or legal) for financial gain, the traffic consisting of organizing (the stay or) the legal or illegal emigration of a woman, even with her consent, from her country of origin to the country of destination and luring her by whatever means into prostitution or any form of sexual exploitation' (Hirsch, 1996, cited by Wijers & Lap-Chew, 2018, p.26).

This definition was criticized because it was not clear in terms of whether the concept of TIP will be applied to the process and the end result of TIP. Along with this, the definition of trafficking has also been criticized for being narrow by limiting its scope to one category (women). Furthermore, the end purpose of TIP, according to this definition, is limited to prostitution and sexual exploitation. Additionally, a Joint Action was issued by the Council of the European Union in 1997, claiming that, Any behaviour which facilitates the entry into, transit through, residence in or exit from any territory of a member state for the purposes of (a) sexually exploiting a person other than a child for gainful purposes where use is made of coercion, in particular violence or threats, or deceit is used, or there is abuse of authority or other pressure which is such that the person has no real and acceptable choice but to submit to the pressure or abuse involved; (b) trafficking in persons other than children for gainful purposes with a view to their sexual exploitation is considered as trafficking in persons (Council of the European Union Joint Action on Trafficking, 1997, p.21).

This definition was criticized for being narrow. To be more specific, the migratory aspects were strongly emphasized. Likewise, according to this definition sexual exploitation was visualized as the solitary potential end result of trafficking (Gallagher, 2011). Furthermore, a recommendation on trafficking was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the European Union; this recommendation defined trafficking as, “The procurement by one or more natural or legal persons and/or the organization of the exploitation and/or transport or migration - legal or illegal - of persons, even with their consent, for the purpose of their sexual exploitation, inter alia, by means of coercion, in particular violence or threats, deceit, abuse of authority or a position of vulnerability” (Council of Europe Treaty, 2005).

This conceptualization includes the main elements of TIP which are: the action element, the means element, and the purpose element, devoid of any attention to a particular gender. Furthermore, the consent of trafficked victims is not taken into account in TIP. However, this definition could be criticized on the basis that it focuses on sexual exploitation and ignores the other end purposes of TIP. Moreover, shortly before the adoption of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, hereinafter referred to as the Trafficking in Persons Protocol (TIPP), in 2000 the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women proposed that “Trafficking in persons means the recruitment, transportation, purchase, sale, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons: (i) by threat or use of violence, abduction, force, fraud, deception or coercion (including the abuse of authority), or debt bondage for the purpose of (ii) placing or holding such person, whether for pay or not, in forced labour or slavery-like practices, in a community other than the one in which such persons lived at the time of the original act” (United Nations, 2000).

The effect of trafficking affects both men and women and occurs for a number of exploitative purposes. The process of trafficking in-persons is a chainlike situation that includes both the process of trafficking in persons (the action element) and the result of trafficking in persons (the purpose element) (Gallagher, 2011). Significantly, Trafficking in Persons entails, the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation (United Nations, 2000).

It could be argued that Article 3 of the TIPP has defined the term ‘Trafficking in Persons’ for the first time in international law (Gallagher, 2011). Furthermore, the definition of TIP aims to give consistency to and consensus on the trafficking phenomenon all over the world (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2008). In particular, this definition is considered to be a guideline for states parties to this Protocol to adopt the most effective legislation to criminalize TIP. Additionally, this definition classifies TIP as a crime against all persons, not just women and children. Along with this, the definition of trafficking visualizes a number of purposes of trafficking, apart from sexual exploitation. A point to note, however, is that the definition of TIP in the TIPP is considered to be the most accepted and agreed definition of TIP worldwide.

The definition of TIP in the TIPP was preceded by the Roundtable on 29th January 1998 on the Meaning of “Trafficking in Persons”: A Human Rights Perspective’, which seeks to define TIP, because it realizes that there is a pressing need to understand what TIP means in order to address and prevent this crime (Quirk, 2011). The Roundtable on the Meaning of Trafficking in Persons raises the issue of who might be protected according to this definition, because trafficked victims include males, females, adults, and children. Therefore, the best expression is ‘Trafficking in Persons’ since this expression includes all categories without any distinction between victims according to their sex, colour, and age, or any other types. It might be argued that distinctions are still made between categories included in the definition of TIP. The definition of TIP does not solve the distinction between male and female, adults and children. An example of this is that children should be given greater protection than other categories, and their status should be considered separately from trafficking in adults. In this regard, it should be stressed that reaching the age of 18 is what distinguishes childhood from adulthood (International Labour Organization, 2017).

It is worth noting that the connection between women and children in the TIPP creates some problems for women’s rights for the following reasons. First reason is that it deals with women and children as the same category, assuming they have the same rights, and often

treating women as legal minors with less legal capacity. Secondly, it illustrates that women's only role is that of caretakers of children, despite the fact that their role has other concerns and rights. Thirdly, is that, if the intent is to combine women and children on the basis of gender discrimination, the expression should be 'women and girls' (Quirk, 2011). However, this might be challenged on the basis that according to both 'the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women' and 'the Convention on the Rights of the Child', the connection between women's and children's rights might enhance the protection of those categories of rights by combining them on the basis of gender and age (Goonesekere & De Silva-de Alwis, 2005).

Teenage trafficking is a perennial problem, and until communities recognize it, the problem will continue. While this is so, few studies have examined the experiences of teenage trafficked in labour in Nigeria. Terkula (2021) investigated child labour and human security in Benue state. From another perspective, Kwangyang et al. (2016) considers child trafficking, which its consequences, also suggesting the way forward. While these studies abound, no study investigates the experiences of teenage trafficked for labour in central senatorial district Taraba State.

### **Teenage Labour**

A teenager is socio-culturally determined and therefore varies from society to society. Even within the same society the socio-cultural imperatives compel variation in the concept of a teenager. In some societies the maximum age of the child is seventeen (17) while in others the upper limit ranges from twelve to even twenty-one. UNICEF (2002) considers anyone who has developmental disability, regardless of age, as a teenager. The United States Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment of 1994 sees a teenager as anyone under the age of eighteen years (18) (Okafor, 2000). The convention on The Rights of the Child endorsed by Nigeria in 1991 conceptualizes a teenager as; "every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to child, maturity is attained earlier" The National Child Welfare Policy in Nigeria defines a teenager as "any person who is-twenty years or below" (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). The Labour Act states that a teenager is a person under the age of twelve years, while the Criminal Procedure Act assumes any person under the age of fourteen years as a teenager.

The Constitutional Law forbids any citizen who has not attained 18 years from seeking elective position and cannot vote in any election, while the Law of Contracts stipulates that one cannot genuinely enter into a contract until he has attained the age of 18 (Aturu, 1999). The foregoing variations impede an easy pin-pointed conceptualization of a teenager. In spite of this, our conceptualization of a teenager shall be influenced by the limit set by the compulsory school age. This is the acute socialization period of a teenager, and we say, for the purpose of

this exercise, a teenager is any person below the age of eighteen y (18) years. Let us now see what constitutes teenage labour

Teenage labour has been view by different scholars. According to Suda (2011) the term teenage labour refers to when a teenager is working in any type of work that is dangerous and harmful to their health or the work hinders their education. For Moyi (2011) teenage labour refers to low wages, long hours, physical and sexual abuse. According to Edmonds and Pavcnik (2005) teenage labour is viewed as a form of teenage abuse, when they work in bad conditions and hazardous occupations. The meaning of the term of teenage labour also varies among organizations; ILO argues that teenage labour is difficult to conceptualize. It depends on the type of the job and if the age is under eighteen and if the job intervenes the teenager's education and development (ILO, 2004). A teenager, according to the UN 1989 convention on the Rights of the Child, it refers to a person under the age of eighteen. The World Bank assumes that teenage labour can do serious threat to long-term national investment. Furthermore, according to UNICEF the problem of teenage labour can have more bad consequences besides all the concerns of investment or its relation to economic activity (ILO, 2013; Weston, 2005).

According to UNICEF (2002) teenage labour refers to teenagers working in contravention of ILO standards in convention 138 and 182, that is, all teenagers below twelve (12) years working in any economic activities, those aged twelve 12 to fourteen 14 years engaged in more than light work, and all teenagers engaged in the worst forms of teenage labour. Worst forms of teenage labour refers to teenagers being enslaved, forcibly recruited, prostituted, trafficked, force into illegal activities and exposed to hazardous work. Bhat (2010) asserts that the concept of teenage labour is not simple because it includes three difficult element, which are "teenagers", "work" and "labour". He claims that the term teenager can be observed by age but in some societies, people cease to be teenagers at different ages. The onset of puberty occurs at different ages for different people. Therefore, in the Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (No. 182) defines a teenager who is under the age of eighteen years (Bhat, 2010). Concept of teenage labour differs among societies, for example in Africa and Asia they do not consider the work of fifteen years old person as a teenage labour, and they view teenage labour as a good task that teenagers learn skills from work. They distinguish between teenage labour and teenage work, where teenage work is considered to be a part of the children's training to be responsible adults while teenage labour is thought to be exploitative (Omokhodion & Odusote, 2006).

Not all work that teenagers do is severe, according to ILO reports (2002), if a work does not hinder their schooling or do not affect their health physically and mentally, then it is generally not categorized as teenage labour. For instance, helping parents at home, looking after siblings or working for pocket money after school hours and during holidays. Also, Aqil  
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(2012) assumes that not all work that teenagers do can harm their health or be considered exploitative but it depends on what kind of work they are involved in and how many hours they work. It also depends on work conditions, or environment. However, Weston (2005) argues that any work teenagers do, can be damaging to their health because the work can be abusive, exploitative or hazardous and it can influence their health. Omokhodion and Odusote (2006) argued that any work that teenagers does outside home is classified as teenage labour. According to them working outside home is usually exposed to environmental hazards which may affect their health and safety.

Teenage Labour has been an integral part of the labour force especially in third world countries and enters labour market at tender age (Nanjunda, 2008). It is asserted that any work done by a teenager who is below the age of fourteen years as prescribed by law. The word 'work' means full time commercial work to support and sustain self or to add to the family income. Teenage labour is hazardous to their mental, physical, social, educational, emotional and spiritual development. According to International Labour Organization (ILO), the term 'teenage labour is often seen as work that deprives teenagers of their childhood, their potential and their dignity and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It refers to work that:

- i. Is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children and
- ii. Interferes with their schooling by:
- iii. Depriving them of the opportunity to attend school;
- iv. Obliging them to leave school prematurely;
- v. Requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work

### **The Factors Contributing to Trafficking in Teenage**

Ukwayi et al. (2019) conducted a study on the associate factors of trafficking in women and children in Calabar, Cross River state, Nigeria. The study focused was on lack of basic needs and unemployment relates to trafficking in women and children. The study adopted the survey research design. Non-probability sampling technique and purposive and snowball sampling method used to select one hundred and fifty one (151) respondents. Data were collected through questionnaire. The data were analyzed by the Pearson product moment correlation analysis. The study found that, unemployment significantly correlated with trafficking in women and children. The study recommended that governments should make efforts towards the reduction of poverty in the land. Skill acquisition should be promoted and small loans be made available for eligible persons.

The government should encourage parents' involvement in cooperative societies through which they would be empowered for economic self-reliance. While their study explored the broader associated factors of trafficking, such as unemployment, it failed to delve into the specific experiences of teenagers trafficked for labor. This study fills this gap by

focusing on the lived experiences and specific challenges faced by teenagers in labor trafficking, providing a more nuanced and in-depth understanding that is currently lacking.

Abiodun (2022) conducted a study on the factors that contribute to the trafficking of Nigerian women and children. The focus was to examine the elements that contributed to the trafficking of Nigerian women and children into European labour markets. The study adopted qualitative research design. Data were collected through archival/ documents and a case study method. The study found that poverty; porous borders and protracted unemployment were the major factors of teenage trafficking Nigerian girls' and women's sexual migration abroad in Europe and America.

The study also indicated that Nigeria's porous borders, the operations of traffickers, and corrupt officials at the country's embassies who issued visas to traffickers and their victims as of one of the factors. The study was on the elements that contributed to the trafficking of women and children ignoring experiences of teenagers trafficked for labour. The study was deficient in its methodology that cannot be generalized. . While Abiodun's study focused on the trafficking of women and children into European labor markets, it did not specifically address teenagers trafficked for labor within Nigeria. This study addresses this gap by concentrating on the internal trafficking and labor exploitation of teenagers in Nigeria, an area that has been under-researched, especially in terms of the unique vulnerabilities and experiences of teenagers.

In Nigeria, Anyo et al. (2021) conducted a study on female teenage hawking: A manifestation of child abuse/child labour in Makurdi metropolis. The focus was on the causes of teenage hawking. The study adopted Marxian theory as its theoretical framework. Survey research design was used for the study. A sample of 364 respondents was drawn from population of teenage hawkers using non-probability sampling technique and convenience sampling method. The data were collected through structured questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study found that poverty, religion, poor sense of family planning, and illiteracy were the factors accounting for the increased in teenage hawking. The study recommended that: Government should enact a law to proscribe hawking. While their study did not explore other forms of labor exploitation or the personal experiences of trafficked teenagers, this study expands the scope beyond hawking to include various forms of labor exploitation, thus offering a comprehensive view of teenage labor trafficking that includes personal narratives and broader labor contexts.

Cockbain et al. (2018) conducted a study on human trafficking for sex, labour and domestic servitude: How do key trafficking types compare and what are their predictors in the United Kingdom. The study used exploratory and quantitative research design. The sample of 2630 respondents was selected. Data were collected through empirically-rich, individual-level

dataset and structured questionnaire. Data were also analyzed by Likelihood Ratio Tests and multinomial logistic regression to identify predictors of trafficking type. The study found that, the factors underline the complexity and diversity of human trafficking were gender pattern, region of origin and seasonal patterning. The study recommended a holistic and more disaggregated and nuanced approach to analysis. The study also recommended research, policy and practice. Their study provided a comparative analysis of different types of trafficking but lacked a detailed focus on teenage labor. This study specifically targeted this demographic, with an emphasis on the predictors, experiences, and conditions of labor trafficking among teenagers, thereby offering a more targeted analysis that Cockbain, Bowers and Dimitrova did not provide.

Nwokeoma et al. (2019) studied interrogating the nature and push factors of human trafficking in Benin City, Edo state, Nigeria in the context of the Africa we want. The study adopted qualitative and quantitative methods. 360 sample sizes were selected. The data were collected through structured questionnaire, in-depth interview and focus group discussion. The study found that traditional beliefs, poverty and ignorance, polygyny and serial polyandry, single families and inheritance rights. The study recommended that, massive family planning programme which discouraged large family size should be promoted. Discriminatory traditional practices of inheritance which exclude women should be modified. Although their study examined the push factors of human trafficking, it did not specifically address the nature of labor trafficking among teenagers. This study will fill this gap by detailing the types of labor exploitation that teenagers experience, focusing on non-sexual forms of exploitation, and providing a more detailed exploration of the labor aspects rather than general trafficking factors.

In another study, Joseph and Jude (2018) identified the disposing factors of the phenomenon of human trafficking: Discourse of the social realities of Nigerian society. The study found that demand for cheap and free labour, poor polygamous homes, open or porous borders and relaxed enforcement, lack of documents requirement and corruption of border patrol agents were the factors contributing to teenage trafficking. The study recommended that: Alternative livelihood training. Industrial projects should be located in poor areas to prevent male migration and resultant demand for sex workers. Agricultural and animal raising skills training should be promoted to tackle hunger and starvation. Community based economic intervention such as infrastructural development of local communities. Micro-credit with little or no interest should be provided for local farmers especially for trafficking endemic areas. While their study identified factors contributing to human trafficking but did not specifically focus on teenagers or the labor exploitation aspect, this study concentrated on the labor trafficking of teenagers, offering targeted insights and recommendations that are specifically

designed to address the vulnerabilities of teenagers in labor contexts, which Joseph and Jude's study did not cover.

### **Effects of Trafficking in Teenagers**

Geuron (2022) conducted a study on the hope to despair: Children and young people's lived experiences of trafficking abuse in England. The focus of the study was on the young people who had lived experiences of child trafficking. The study adopted a qualitative research design. The study used non-probability sampling technique and purposive sampling method to select twenty respondents. Data were collected through in- depth interviews, focus group discussion and semi-structured interviews. The study found that children were deceived, subjected to multiple and severe forms of abuse and were used, sold and resold for traffickers' gain.

Furthermore, the study provided valuable insight into the lived experiences of trafficking abuse, enabling practitioners to understand the dynamics, processes and acts, children and young people were exposed to. The study recommended that the critical role connected with peers should be recognized in coping the trafficking process. The study captured child trafficking only ignoring teenagers trafficked for labour. The qualitative data collected were not analyzed. While this study provided valuable insights into the lived experiences of children trafficked for abuse in England, it did not specifically address teenagers trafficked for labor. It also lacked a thorough analysis of the qualitative data collected, which limits the depth of understanding of the complexities of labor trafficking among teenagers. This study addresses these gaps by focusing specifically on teenagers trafficked for labor using qualitative data to capture their unique experiences.

In another study, Dhungel and Webster (2022) examined trauma-informed practice in anti-trafficking movement in urban centres, Nepal. The focus was on the intersectional oppression experienced by trafficking survivors and the cumulative trauma they experienced post trafficking in Nepal, with a special focus on urban centers. The study adopted a qualitative research design. Non-probability sampling technique and convenience sampling methods was used. A sample of 8 respondents was selected. Data were collected through focus group discussions and individual interviews. Data were analyzed were transcribed into Nepali and transcribed into English.

Transcripts were subsequently analyzed to identify, verify, and clarify themes to ensure they authentically reflected the participants' views. The study found that survivors in urban centres face, including gender oppression, a deficient criminal justice system, exclusion, and rejection. The on the contrary, they are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, which escalates survivors' vulnerability to social, economic, and mental health marginalization. Their

study explored the trauma and oppression faced by trafficking survivors in urban centers of Nepal, with a focus on intersectionality and trauma-informed practices. Also, the study did not address labor trafficking among teenagers specifically, in addition to how its small sample size limits generalizability of the findings. This study addressed these research gaps by focusing on labor trafficking among teenagers within Nigeria, which provided a broader context on labor exploitation, which is under-explored in existing literature.

Wright et al. (2021) conducted a study on the prevalence and correlates of labour and sex trafficking in a community sample of youth experiencing homelessness in metro-Atlanta, the United States of America. The study adopted cross-sectional research designed to estimate the size and describe the population of youth experiencing homelessness. Non-probability sampling technique and capture–recapture methods were used to recruit 151 respondents. Data were collected through questionnaire. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using logistic regression by computer.

The study found that young people had been homeless for more than a year, and significantly had higher odds of experiencing some type of fraud, coercion and commercial sex exploitation. Their study examined labor and sex trafficking among homeless youth in metro-Atlanta, highlighting the prevalence of exploitation. However, it did not provide a focused examination of teenagers trafficked specifically for labor or explore the qualitative aspects of their lived experiences. This study bridged this gap by concentrating on teenagers trafficked for labor by providing an in-depth qualitative analysis of their lived experiences.

Edegbe (2021) studied human trafficking and sexual abuse: Evidence from female Libya returnees in Edo state, Nigeria. This was because females were largely involved in the ignominious criminal industry. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design. Data were collected from 39 female participants. Non-probability sampling technique and purposive sampling method was used. A sample size of 39 female respondents was selected. The selected participants were returnees from Libya to Edo state. Data were collected through in-depth interview. The data were analyzed manually following Walcott (1994) three models of analysis which included: description, analysis and interpretation.

The study found that the respondents were sexually abused and fell prey to exploitative labor, engaged in unavoidable survival sex, had unwanted pregnancies and fatherless children. Other findings revealed that, majority of the victims were from poor socio-economic background and largely driven into trafficking by combine factors of family and peer pressure in addition to forces of globalization which gave them access to information to compare their living standard with those other people in other climes especially in developed countries. The study was on the female respondents ignoring males. Therefore, study cannot be generalized. While their study focused on the experiences of female Libya returnees who

were trafficked, primarily addressing sexual abuse and labour exploitation which limits its applicability to a broader population, including male teenagers trafficked for labor within Nigeria, this study addresses this limitation by including a broader demographic, focusing on various forms of labour trafficking among teenagers.

Olubukola (2020) studied human trafficking in Edo state. Nigeria: Experiences of some young girls who have survived trafficking. The focus was on the survivors of human trafficking who escaped with some other girls from Libya. The study adopted feminist methodological approach and intersectionality theory. The study found that, the survivors were caged, starved and beaten if they refused to engage in sex work with any suitor. Threats, intimidation and violence were used by the traffickers and in most cases these broke their spirits and it is ingrained in their minds. The study recommended that the issue of gender inequality should be addressed. Nigerian educational curriculum should include gender education which will teach women especially about gender equality in every section of the society. Women should be empowered economically so that they could be financially independent.

Young girls should be educated in terms of skill acquisition so that they can be self-dependent. Olubukola's study explored the experiences of trafficked girls who escaped from Libya, with a focus on the intersection of gender-based violence and trafficking without addressing labor trafficking among teenagers, particularly within Nigeria. This study on the other hand, provided a targeted exploration of teenage labor trafficking, offering insights into the experiences of both male and female teenagers.

In another study Mostajabian et al. (2019) identified the sexual and labour exploitation among sheltered youth experiencing homelessness: A comparison of screening methods in Houston, Texas, the United States of America. A quantitative dominant mixed-method research design was used. A sample of 129 respondents was selected. Data were collected through structured questionnaire and focus group discussion. The quantitative data were analyzed by computer through STATA 13, statistical software release while the qualitative data were analyzed and organized using ATLAS scientific software development.

The study found that substantially higher reports of both sexual and labour exploitation. The study also found that respondents experienced more than one form of exploitation. It was recommended that increasing awareness among providers about the need to screen for both sexual and labour exploitation was crucial, particularly when youth had experienced either. While their study identified sexual and labor exploitation among homeless youth in Houston, comparing screening methods, it lacked a focused analysis on teenage labor trafficking and did not extensively explore qualitative aspects of individual experiences. This study addressed this by specifically targeting teenage labour trafficking within Nigeria by

providing a comprehensive qualitative analysis of the experiences and challenges faced by trafficked teenagers in Nigeria.

Oludayo (2019) conducted a study on global trend of child trafficking among girls experiencing violence and neglect in the Yorùbá ethnic group in Nigeria: A transnational feminist approach. The study adopted qualitative research design. Non-probability sampling technique and purposive sampling method was used to select respondents. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews. Narrative analysis which involved reformulating stories presented by people in different contexts and based on their different experiences was used. The study recommended ways to combat violence and neglect in the home among Yorùbá ethnic communities and further suggested solutions to eradicate the universal plague which was not only physical, but obtruded on the emotional, mental and affective domain of the survivors and possible preventive measure to combat girl child trafficking in Nigeria, using transnational feminist perspectives. While their study examined child trafficking among girls in the Yoruba ethnic group in Nigeria, using a transnational feminist approach, this study addressed these gaps by focusing on labor trafficking among teenagers across various Nigerian communities in Taraba State, offering a more inclusive perspective and targeting specific labor exploitation contexts.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical review for this research is based on two major theories: the Theory of Parental Callousness and the Routine Activity Theory. These theories were employed to help provide explaining on the causative factors and effects derived from the experiences of trafficked teenage victims in the central senatorial district of Taraba State, Nigeria. This study therefore integrated these theories, making it a multi-theoretical approach to help in understanding the experiences of teenage trafficking in central senatorial district of Taraba State, Nigeria for the conceptual framework, the focus of the study was on providing detailed explanations of the concept trafficking in persons, concept of teenage labour including definitions and explanations regarding the social characteristics of teenagers trafficked for labour, the trend of trafficking on teenagers, the factors contributing to trafficking in teenage and the effects of trafficking in teenagers in Central Senatorial District of Taraba State, Nigeria.

This study adopts qualitative design which is mostly used in social research so that it freely expresses idea, feelings, and motivation about the topic. This design allows for generalization of findings, regarding the concerns, experiences of teenagers trafficked for labour in a given geographical area and beyond. Furthermore, the design is adopted by the researcher in order to enhance the understanding of how community participation can further boost the elimination of teens trafficked. Qualitative methods are sufficient by themselves to

capture the trends and details of the situation. The key variable in this study is experiences are better captured through qualitative methods that allow the respondents narrate their experiences in their own ways. It is a qualitative concept and is measured through qualitative and descriptive methods. The instrument to be used is semi-structured and in-depth interviews.

## Research Method

The research setting for any study can be either natural or controlled. An uncontrolled or non-contrived setting is the natural environment in which events occur normally. Taraba State was created out of the defunct Gongola state in 1991 and it is divided into sixteen local government areas which include Ardo Kola, Bali, Donga, Gashaka, Gassol, Ibi, Jalingo, Karim Lamido, Kurmi, Lau, Sardauna, Takum, Ussa, Wukari, Yororo, and Zing, Usa special development area and Nganda special development area.

Taraba is a highly heterogeneous, multi ethnic state with close to eighty indigenous ethnic groups speaking different languages. Some of the major ethnic groups include Fulani, Mumuye, Jukun, Jango, Kuteb, Chamba, Tiv and Mambilla. The major occupation of the people of Taraba State is agriculture. This includes activities like fishing, pottery, cloth weaving, dyeing, mat making, woodcarving, embroidery and blacksmithing. There are a variety of cultural festivals mostly performed to mark harvest, initiation into manhood or womanhood, installation of rulers, marriages and other ceremonies and entertainments.

Covering a total of 54, 428sqkm land area, Taraba State is bordered to the east by Adamawa state, bordered to the north by Gombe, Bauchi and Plateau states, bordered to the west by Nasarawa and Benue states and Republic of Cameroon to the South. The state lies largely within the middle of Nigeria and consists of undulating landscape dotted with a few mountainous features. Like most parts of Northern Nigeria, Taraba State has a wet and dry climate; the wet season lasts, on the average, from April to October with mean annual rainfall that varies between 1058mm in the North around Jalingo and Zing, to over 1300mm in the South around Serti and Takum.

According to the National Bureau of Statistic the population growth rate for central senatorial district of Taraba State is 1,351,100 which is a projected population by the National Population Commission 2022 – 03 – 21.

Population growth rate for central senatorial district of Taraba State.

District	Population
Bali	332,000
Gashaka	137,100
Gassol	385,500

<b>Kurmi</b>	143,600
<b>Sardauna</b>	352,900

Source: National population commission 2022

The instrument for data collection is in-depth interview schedule which is a qualitative instrument for collecting qualitative data. Open ended questions schedules were used to collect qualitative data. Through interviews, the researcher intends to gain a deeper understanding of the respondents with respect to the research variables. The interview method allowed the researcher seek clarity and probe deeper understanding.

In qualitative method of data collection employed in this study, the research used key informant interview (KII) who were selected from NAPTIP, an agency responsible for human trafficking in Nigeria. The key informant interview (KII) was based on the research questions and objectives of study which is human trafficking and teenage labour experiences. The justification for this method is to get an in-depth understanding and to gather information from the respondents through words, images, attitudes, behavior, beliefs and observation.

## Results and Discussion

### Factors Contributing to Trafficking Teenagers

Regarding research objective three, the study desired to explore the factors that contribute to the trafficking of teenagers in central senatorial district of Taraba State. Like the other objectives, five questions sought to capture the views of the respondents as necessary for achieving the research objective as captured. The first question sought to understand whether trafficking is a means of employment. An overwhelming majority rejected this assertion that it is a means of employment (73 or 80.2%) compared to those who accepted this submission (18 or 19.8%). In addition, one of the questions identified communal or ethnic crises as one of the factors worsening teenage trafficking in Taraba State. The respondents offered differed viewed which were evenly split between those who supported (48 or 52.7%) or disputed (43 or 47.3%) the claim.

Another factor that the researcher sought to explore was whether a large family size contributes to the worsening situation of teenage trafficking in Taraba State. Majority of those interviewed supported this position (76 or 85.4%) against those who did not support (12 or 13.5%). Only a single respondent was not sure (1.1%). Additionally, the researcher wanted to understand whether a promise of a better education to the trafficked teenager plays a significant role in the worsening trafficking situation in Taraba State. Overwhelmingly, the respondents averred that this plays a significant role (84 or 93.3%) as against those who do not see this as

a reason for the worsening trafficking situation in Taraba State (6 or 6.7%). Another likely reason explored in this study was whether the trafficker lured the victim by promising them that it will help them live a luxurious lifestyle in their community. More than two-third expressed such views (66 or 74.2%) compared to only a third that support such views (23 or 25.8%). A cross-section of their views are captured in Table 7.

### Effects of Trafficking Teenagers

In the second research objective, the researcher sought to understand the effects of teenager trafficking in the central senatorial district of Taraba State. Like the other research objectives, five questions were set to explore the respondents' underlying perceptions. The first question sought the opinions of respondents regarding whether the victims were exposed to harsh, cruel or inhuman treatment. A third of them expressed the view that they are not exposed to harsh, cruel or inhuman treatment (33 or 36.3%) while over 58 (or 63.7%) indicated that they are exposed to such treatment.

In terms of their feeding as well, the views were relatively evenly distributed between those who expressed the view that they were adequately fed (43 or 47.8%) or not adequately fed (47 or 52.2%). Regarding whether they are sexually abused, assaulted or battered, majority expressed such views (48 or 52.7%) against those that held no such view (43 or 47.3%). The researcher then sought to explore whether the victims of trafficking had access to their parents whenever they desired. A significant number expressed the view that they are not allowed access to see their parents whenever they desired (56 or 61.5%) against those that submitted that access is allowed them (35 or 38.5%).

Hence, the researcher went further to understand whether there was any agreement between the victim, parents or trafficker regarding whether the victim's welfare will be attended to. Interestingly, majority alluded to the fact that there was a supposed agreement (75 or 82.4%) compared to those who indicated they was either no agreement (14 or 15.4%) or that they were not sure (2 or 2.2%). Sample opinions expressed by these respondents regarding abuse, assault and battery are captured in Table 8.

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