



An Assessment on the Factors Influencing Human Trafficking in Malawi: A Case Study of Kanyama Village in T/A Zulu, Mchinji District

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ABSTRACT:

The major focus of this paper was to assess the factors influencing human trafficking in Malawi. The spread of trafficking in person activities makes it a global issue. Many people have become victims of trafficking activities across the globe and with significant contribution from Sub-Saharan Africa. Malawi had been ranked highly on Trafficking In Persons (TIP) index. Studies have shown that, high levels of poverty and economic hardships are some of the reason why many people are failing into victims of human trafficking. Being the poorest region in the world, sub-Saharan Africa is the most vulnerable region from which substantial number of victims has been recruited for both continental and intercontinental transaction.

The use of the victimology theory was noted to be relevant due to its explanation at the individual level at which trafficking activities take place especially in developing countries like Malawi.

The study employed a mixed research design. The research design is both qualitative and quantitative which involved conducting interviews and questionnaires as research instruments in order to collect both qualitative and quantitative data respectively from a sample size of 70 with the use of purposive sampling. The qualitative data from these focus group discussions was analyzed using Thematic analysis while the quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS.

It was found that the common forms of human trafficking in this area are sex trafficking, forced labor and domestic servitude. It was also found that the factors influencing human trafficking are; Poverty, poor laws related to human trafficking, growing sex industry, demand for low-skilled and cheap labor, demand for organs and body-parts, lack of knowledge

KEYWORDS: Human Trafficking, Trafficking In Persons

I. INTRODUCTION

Many people have become victims of trafficking activities across the globe and with significant contribution from Sub-Saharan Africa. Children are also vulnerable to trafficking in persons due to their parents and families' socio-economic situation. Girls are particularly vulnerable to trafficking because in many societies, parents often choose to send girls to work because they believe that education is not as important to girls who will one day marry and leave the parents.

Poverty is one of the primary risk factors to create vulnerability to trafficking; however, poverty alone would not push people into human trafficking. There are many risk factors that make potential victims vulnerable to trafficking.

African slave trade era to the contemporary modern society. Despite its long history, attention has been given by the international community only in 1990 to collectively stand to control and combat it. Yet, the extent and magnitude of human trafficking has been escalating dramatically.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Malawi has long been a trafficking hot spot in southern Africa and a major driver for this is endemic poverty and extensive rural unemployment. Therefore, human trafficking is extremely high in rural communities, especially in border districts, some of the factors that contribute to trafficking are illiteracy, and lack of knowledge on trafficking. Despite this, there is very limited documentation with regard to the factors influencing human trafficking in Malawi. This is the why the researcher sought to undertake this study.

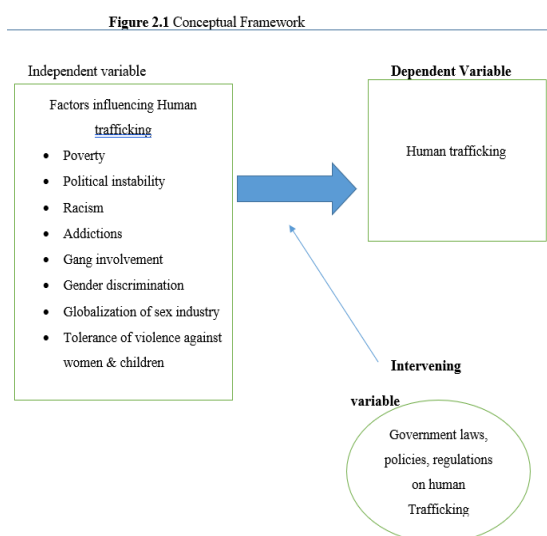
III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Malawi had been ranked highly on Trafficking In Persons (TIP) index. Studies have shown that, high levels of poverty and economic hardships are some of the reasons why many people are failing into victims of human trafficking. Being the poorest region in the world, sub-Saharan Africa is the most vulnerable region from which substantial number of victims has been recruited for both continental and intercontinental transaction.

Often times the perpetrators of human trafficking lure individuals into slavery through the promise of good jobs and better life. Of late the following have been the trends on human trafficking, victims are trafficked to other countries with Malawi as a source or transit country. Victims in Malawi are being trafficked predominantly for labor and sexual exploitation. Trafficking in Person is an issue that cuts across board and undermines human rights and the realization of full human development.

Even though tremendous efforts have already been made at both national and international levels, the response systems to combat human trafficking are still not adequate for various reasons. Many challenges still remain to be addressed in order to close existing gaps and loopholes, such as data collection, legislation, training and capacity building among law enforcement authorities, and better prevention and protection of vulnerable groups at risk of human trafficking.

Conceptual Framework



IV. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

As part of the Master of Social Work program at St Eugene University in the area of project implementation monitoring and evaluation, this study is primarily for academic purposes. The scope of this study is to assess the factors influencing human trafficking in Malawi

So far, Malawian government and other players have not taken up its role to the issue of human trafficking in Malawi. The study will focus on Kanyama Village In T/A Zulu, Mchinji District

V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Main Objectives

To assess the factors influencing human trafficking in Malawi

Specific Objectives

To identify the common forms of human trafficking

To investigate the factors influencing human trafficking

To explore solutions which can help combat human trafficking.

VI. METHODOLOGY

Research Approach and Design

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods of investigation. The case study design will be chosen for this study to find solutions. According to Kothari (2004), a case study is an ideal methodology when a holistic, in-depth investigation is needed. This design describes and summarizes the data by determining the averages, frequencies, and percentages that allows interpretation.

Study Population

The targeted population for this sample were the residents of Kanyama village in T/A Zulu, Mchinji district which include other stakeholders such as immigration officers and police officers. The target population amounts to 1231.

Sample and Sampling Technique

In The study sampling technique relates to the processes of identifying and selecting the representative part of the study population. With regards to the interview respondents, the study employed purposive sampling. While stratified random sampling was used to select respondents for the questionnaires. Sample size of 70 was taken. Calculated using Cochran’s Formula with 5% margin of error.

VII. RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Findings from Questionnaires and Interviews

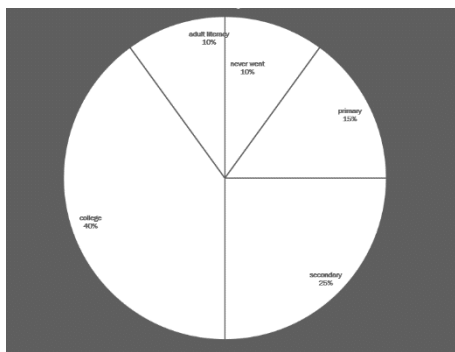
Demographics

Sex of Respondents

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Male	40	57%
Female	30	43%

Gender of the Respondents, 40 of the respondents were Male 57%, 43% were female

Education level of Respondents



Most of the respondents reached college 40%, followed by Secondary 25%.

The common forms of human trafficking

The common forms of human trafficking in this area are; sex trafficking, forced labor and domestic servitude. Sex trafficking are manipulated of forced against their will to engage in sex acts for money. Sex traffickers might use violence, threats.

One of the respondents from the interviews said, “sex trafficking is very common, I remember when I was in South Africa, one of the employment agents that took me to South Africa told me that he will kill me if I don’t have sex with my white bosses, I said no, and they beat me up”.

Another respondents from the interviews was quoted saying “they would force us to work in fields saying if we don’t do it, they will tell the authorities that we are working as illegal immigrants”.

Most of the respondents said that TIP happens within the country, however, in districts which are close to the borders TIP happens within the countries and many times people are taken outside the country to Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique and South Africa.

The factors influencing human trafficking

a) Demand for low-skilled and cheap Labor: The increasing demand for foreign workers for domestic and care-giving roles.

One of the respondents from the interview's said Malawians are prone to human trafficking because they are a form of cheap labor”. One of the respondents from the interviews also said “we Malawians offer cheap labor to South Africa, Dubai, countries such as those”.

- b) The absence of effective laws. Malawi does have a specific law against human trafficking but is not supported by different legal tools to address some aspects of human trafficking activities.
- c) Discriminatory Cultural Practices and Beliefs such as Early marriages. When poverty is acute, a young girl may be regarded as an economic burden and her marriage to a much older man can be a family survival strategy.
- d) Demand for organs and body-parts. The respondents from both research instruments expressed that there is a market for organs and body parts, some are used, or medical purposes will others are used to rituals.
- e) Growing sex industry. With respect to sex industries, it has been argued that development projects in comparatively undeveloped countries often bring with them a rapid increase in the demand for commercial sex.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Civic education, awareness campaigns and effective law-enforcement related to human trafficking that also addressing the root causes.
2. Effective partnerships between government, law enforcement and civil society institutions and the clear intent of improving the quality of life of the target groups, whether through economic empowerment, secure communities, humanitarian assistance.
3. Political commitment towards abolishing human trafficking. Policy makers or government should be the focal point to incorporate all forms of activity to combat trafficking in persons: prevention, protection, prosecution and direct assistance.
4. Tightening security at borders. There is an issue here in Malawi where to some extent the borders are open, and immigration officers are easily bribed. Efforts should be made to rectify these issues.
5. Policy and law reform. Prioritize the fight against human trafficking as a political issue that must be part of the governance agenda, given the specificities it entails. This implies the inclusion of the trafficking issue in the National policies, plans and strategies.

IX. CONCLUSIONS

It can be concluded that the factors influencing human trafficking are; Poverty, poor laws related to human trafficking, growing sex industry, demand for low-skilled and cheap labor, demand for organs and body-parts, lack of knowledge. The common forms of human trafficking in this area are sex trafficking, forced labor and domestic servitude. Most of the times the TIP victims do not know that they are being trafficked because they are deceived and are treated very well by the traffickers. The traffickers are so shrewd that they contact relatives of the would-be victims to convince them that they will benefit from working away from home when they are taken.

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