



## Trafficking in persons (TIP) in Nigeria: Its etiology and control measures

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### Abstract

It is obvious that the illicit trafficking in persons especially women and children is an oven-hot global problem and Nigeria is trapped in the web. Women have been dehumanized or killed in the process. A girl-child could be used by sex merchants and patrons in pornography by being subjected to sexual ordeals with such Erotic animals like Alsatian and apes. She would end up with monumental but hidden pediatric problems. This paper is therefore a clarion call on all governments to explore strategies to curb this scourge. Some of the identified causes of human trafficking include greed, unfavourable economic conditions, poverty, unequal access to basic amenities, shallow commitment to ethical imperatives of an orderly society by Nigerian parents, ignorance, lack of formal education or the diabolical mindset of some Nigerians to tackle this social malady. The Federal Republic of Nigeria should make Social Studies and Civic Education compulsory in all tiers of the school system. Social Studies is an eclectic, value-laden and problem-solving discipline. Civic Education and social engineering are Siamese twins. Civic Education is the study of the process through which people acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and positive disposition that are needed for an effective democratic citizenship. Additionally, all the three tiers of government (Federal, state and local) should establish community counseling centres charged with the responsibility of counseling members of the community against trafficking in persons.

**Keywords:** causes, civic education, remedial approaches, definitions, social studies education

### Introduction

The social life in Nigeria today is replete with moral faults: licentiousness, indiscipline, tribalism, armed robbery, ritual-killing, oil bunkering, hired assassination, thurgry, cultism, abortion, vandalisation of PHCN and oil installations, examination malpractices, corruption, sycophancy, selfism, avarice, sabotage, oppression and apathy to work. The social problems which afflict and embarrass us as a people are the result of the strategy of development which has prevailed in the country (especially since Independence). Social problems in most cases, are a reflection of the level of "marginalization" in society. When people are alienated from the decision-making process and power; from production and consumption and from themselves, these problems become inevitable. For any country to attain any meaningful development, the structural character of the social problem and the situation of the person must be reckoned with. The social order must be addressed (Akeredolu-Ale in Abashi, 2012) [1].

Nigeria is also presently facing serious security challenges because the national security agenda has not only been compromised but also is grossly inadequate. The pervasive internal insecurity typified by increased trafficking in human beings experienced in Nigeria today smacks of the misplaced security option. Today, there is the burden of searching for a sustainable solution to the menace of Trafficking in Persons (TIP).

Trafficking in persons commonly referred to as human-trafficking has re-emerged in recent times as a globalised and modernised form of slavery thus recapitulating the history, mechanisms of recruitment and the socio-economic, cultural, health and educational consequences associated with the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.

Trafficking in persons, mostly children and women, has become a global business that affects almost all countries and reaps enormous profits for traffickers and their criminal intermediaries. The fact is that trafficking as a concept is the illegal movement of arms, drugs and human beings which has acquired the status of a discipline of intellectual inquiry which Ehindero (2004) [11] has described as *traffology*: the multidisciplinary scientific study of different forms and contexts of intentional and criminal abuse and violation of human rights and international laws through activities and behaviours related to the illegal recruitment, acquisition, movement, manipulation and marketing of persons, goods and services within and across national and international borders with consequences on the individual, society and the world.

The United Nations General Assembly in Adoba (2004) [5] defines human trafficking as the illicit and clandestine movement of persons across national, international borders, largely from developing countries in transition with the end goal of forcing women, children into sexually or economically oppressive and exploitative situations for the profit of recruiters, traffickers, crime syndicates as well as all other illegal activities related to trafficking such as forced domestic labour.

The term "trafficking" as originally used in the English dictionary implies the trading in illegal goods, in this case, human beings. With the growing international interest and concerns on trafficking in persons and its implications on the individuals and especially on children and women, there have been several attempts by international organisations and groups to redefine the term and re-contextualise it appropriately to the social, cultural and political economy of trafficking in persons. Alongside this redefinition is the

search imperative to make a clear distinction between a “traffickers” on the one hand and a “smuggler” or a person who simply facilitates the illegal entry of a migrant into another country without any implication of deception or exploitation on the other. The logic of this distinction as pointed out by International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2001) is impeccable and has the added advantage: “smuggling” can involve the movement of people from village to town, from village to village or from town to village within a country. Thus, “trafficking” incorporates both internal and international movements whereas “smuggling” covers only international migrants. The distinction between trafficking and smuggling is more than that of theoretical and research importance partly because both activities are illegal and partly because inability to make the distinction contributes to the problem of eradicating the scourge. Article 3 of the United Nation Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons defines trafficking thus:

1. “Trafficking in Persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or a receipt of persons, by means of 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 giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include at a minimum the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;
2. The consent of the victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in the sub paragraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in sub paragraph (a) have been used;
3. The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set further sub paragraph (a) of this article;
4. “Child” shall mean any person under 18 years of age.

Global Rights (2004) <sup>[1]</sup> defines trafficking as the movement of a person from one place to another by any means for forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. The International Organisation on Migration (IOM) asserts that trafficking occurs when a migrant is illicitly engaged, recruited, kidnapped, sold, etc. and/or moved either within national borders or across international borders; intermediaries (traffickers) during any part of this process obtain economic or other profit by means of deception, coercion and/or other forms of exploitation under conditions that violate the fundamental human rights of migrants. (<http://www.iom.int/ion/iom/policies/trafficking/default.tml>.) According to Arlacchi (2007) The United Nations (UN)

estimates that four million women were trafficked from one country to another and within countries. These estimates do not include internal trafficking which, in Nigeria, has only started to attract public attention. The United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) (2002), for example, estimated that about 8 million Nigerian children were vulnerable and at risk of being trafficked for different forms of exploitative (bonded) labour including domestic work, prostitution, street hawking, begging, etc.

Trafficking in persons is a social problem which Nwabueze in Aderonti (2009) describes as some kind of strains within the system; the product of certain objective condition within the society inimical to the realization of other norms or values for members of society. Fan (2014) <sup>[16, 17]</sup> submits that a social problem is any phenomenon considered socially undesirable; it affects a number of people in the community negatively and the people being aware of this unpleasant condition, make some efforts to combat it.

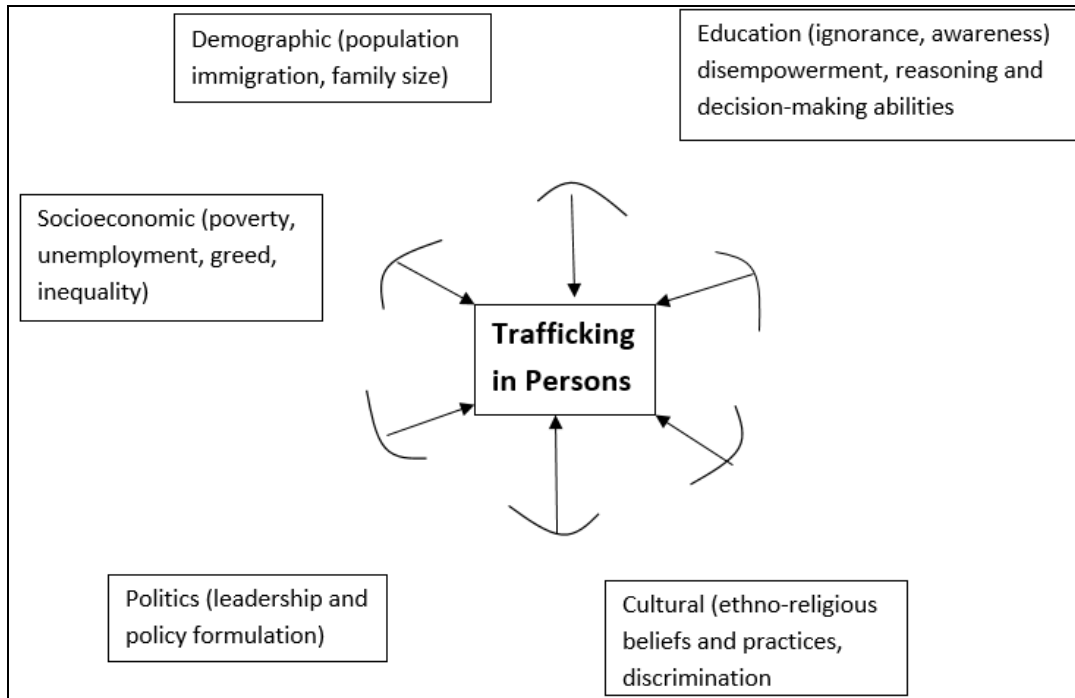
There are risks attached to trafficking in persons. They include safety to one’s life, arrest and prosecution and a possible conviction, physical abuse and contracting life-threatening infections diseases e.g. HIV/AIDS. ILO (2001) <sup>[25]</sup> indicated that in 1996, 4000 children were trafficked from Cross River State to various parts of Nigeria and to other countries. Officially, 157 cases of child trafficking were recorded in 1987, 240 in 1988, 95 in 1989, 204 in 1990 and 174 in 1991. According to Ebigho (2000) the children between 10 and 16 years were subjected to all forms of abuse; sexual, psychological, emotional and physical. Igbinedion (2001) <sup>[24]</sup> reports that many of the young girls who were deported from Europe and Asia for prostitution returned home with deadly diseases that soon terminated their lives leaving their wealth to others. Human trafficking undermines the image of woman in the society. Awah (2007) asserts that women are being subordinated, thereby increasingly pushing downwards their position in the society, reducing their self-image and ultimately affecting the family structure and system adversely. Also, the scourge of human trafficking deprives the society of virile young women who could have acquired knowledge and skills necessary for rapid national development. This makes it a social problem.

### Why People Traffic in Persons

The following factors have been speculated to aid the trafficking of persons in Nigeria.

1. Demographic (Population, immigration, family size).
2. Education (ignorance, awareness) disempowerment, reasoning and decision-making abilities.
3. Socio-economic (poverty, unemployment, greed, inequality)
4. Politics – leadership and policy formulation
5. Cultural – ethno-religious beliefs and practices, discrimination

This is shown in Fig. 1 below:



Source: NAP TIP (2003). The dynamics and contexts of trafficking in persons

Fig 1: A hexagonal theoretical construct of trafficking

Of all these factors, research evidence (NAPTIP, 2003) [27] shows that greed, and poverty are the leading causes of this scourge as shown in Fig. 2 below.

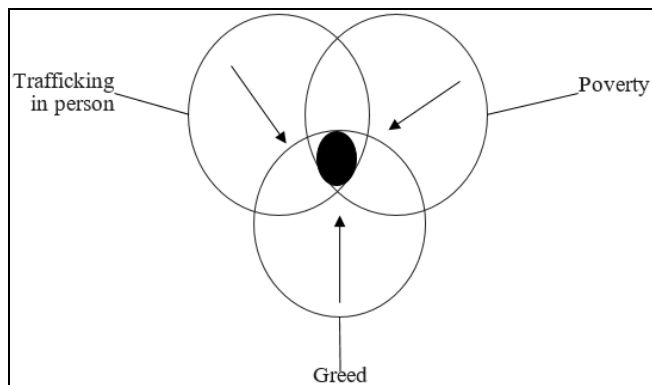


Fig 2: Intersections between poverty and greed

Ebinola (2015) succinctly posits that human trafficking is caused by lack of education, poverty, political unrest, low per capita income, wickedness, famine, unemployment, medical belief and cultural/religious belief. The magnitude and dynamics of TIP in particular contexts or countries dictated by the degree of the proportion of the three components which are dominant at a particular time and contexts. Greed is an acquisitive or selfish desire beyond reason. In Nigeria, naked greed, dishonesty and corruption have become “virtues”. The seeming chaos evident in the Nigerian society calls for urgent moral regeneration, lest there be a replay of what happened in the Biblical Sodom and Gomorrah. In short, the vices enumerated above give testimony to the breakdown of law and order which may eventually lead to anarchic society (Uduigwomen, 2006) [31]. Ezeani in Fan (2014) succinctly puts it that the average Nigerian strongly believes that money is almighty and can achieve anything and everything. It is a key to paradise on earth, to prosperity, power, social importance and even

national honour. Its accumulation becomes a virtue, the more and even the fouler the means, the better. In the same vein, Iwe (1991) [26] decried Nigeria’s enslavement to money and the consequent decline in public morality. The author asserts that it is now a matter of common knowledge and experience that many of our Nigerian citizens worship money, wealth, and all that money can buy as their only god. Many citizens are prepared to divert the course of justice for money; they are most willing to sacrifice morality and professional ethics on the altar of mammon; they are ready to betray, maim and murder for monetary rewards. They are even disposed to pollute the politics and jeopardize the future of Nigeria if only financial or other material gratification could be forthcoming. According to Aralacchi (2000), the United Nations estimates that trafficking is a 5 – 7 billion US Dollars operation annually. Moreover, trafficking in persons is the third most profitable criminal activity in the world after drugs and arms trafficking. All this attests to the breakdown of morality in the society. Morality is the ability to reason and discriminate between rights and wrong (Ogbonna and Jatau, 2002) [29]. A moral act is one whose intention, process and consequences are in the social interest, promoting peace and harmony which are a prerequisite for development.

Ignorance is another key factor in TIP operations. Ignorance on the part of the victims contributes to the prevalence of human trafficking. These women are normally deceived by traffickers into believing that they would be engaged in legitimate employment with adequate remunerations. Many times what has kept this illicit business to flourish is largely the ignorance of the victims and their families, plus their obsession to travel to foreign lands (Awah, 2009) [8]. Most of the girls are lured into the act by a cartel that promises them fabulous jobs but seize their passports when they get overseas and force them into prostitution (Ofido, 2009). The accounts given by most of the victims of women trafficking attest that they were lured into illicit sex trade abroad with the hope of making easy money (Njoku, 2005) [28].

Poverty is seen as a motivating force behind people's decision to be involved in this form of slavery. Poverty, according to Fan (2003) refers to a situation and process of serious deprivation or lack of resources and materials necessary for living within a minimum standard conducive to human dignity and well-being. According to Gbarabe (2009) <sup>[19]</sup> poverty is hunger; poverty is lack of shelter; poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor; poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read; poverty is not having a job; it is fear for the future, living one day at a time; poverty is losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water and contaminated food; poverty is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom.

Many commentators now favour the use of the term social exclusion to refer to a situation in which multiple deprivation prevents individuals from participating in important areas of society's activities. Thus, the socially-excluded might be unable to find work, take part in leisure activities or actively participate in a society's politics beyond voting at elections (Haralambos, Holborn and Heald, 2008) <sup>[23]</sup>. Amachi (2008) therefore submits that you cannot find solutions to crime if you cannot find solutions to social problems like hunger and food, good health and good affordable education. Adebola (2010) avers that the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy observes that though revenues from crude oil have been increasing over the past decades, our people have been falling deeper into poverty. In 1980, an estimated 27 percent of Nigerians lived in poverty. By 1990 about 70 percent of the population had income of less than \$1 a day. The figure has risen since then. Among the poor are those who are able-bodied but cannot work because the jobs are not available or are barred from working because of discrimination factors like age, sex or place of origin. There are others who come across job opportunities but cannot work because they lack the requisite qualifications.

### What should be done to curb this scourge?

1. Two school subjects are strongly recommended for this purpose, viz Social Studies and Civic Education. Civic Education and social engineering are Siamese twins. Civic Education is the study of the process through which people acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and positive disposition that are needed for an effective disposition that are needed for an effective democratic citizenship.

Social studies is an eclectic, value-laden and problem-solving discipline. It is a study of man on his environment (physical, social, psychological, technological, political, Economic). That is, how man influences his environment and how the environment, in turn, influences him. Social studies could be seen as a programme of study in our schools which is used to inculcate in the learners the knowledge, skills, attitude and actions considered important in human relationship in the society (CESAC in Yusuf, Agbonna and Onifade, 2010) <sup>[34]</sup>.

Social studies can be seen as citizenship education. United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (1998) describes citizenship education as consisting in the education given to the children, from early childhood, to enable them to become a clear-thinking and enlightened citizens, who actively participate in taking national decisions concerning the society in which they find themselves. This type of education embraces

1. An understanding of the principles and institutions which govern a state or nation;
2. Learning to exercise one's judgement and critical faculty, and
3. Acquiring a sense of individual and community responsibilities.

The main focus of citizenship education is the development of moral or ethical values which are essential for one to live as a good citizen. Adeyemi and Oyetade (2010) <sup>[4]</sup> aver that citizenship education will not only bring back or renew such values and virtues as honesty, hard work, obedience, respect, loyalty, accountability, humility, justice and fair play etc, that have been lost, z)but also make citizens aware of their civic and political rights and be able to discharge their duties and responsibilities which include law-abiding, respect for sanctity of lives as well as for the rights and opinions of others.

Social studies can also be seen as value education. That agrees with the decision of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) in *National Policy of Education* that the quality of institution of all levels has to be oriented towards inculcating the following values:

1. Respect for the worth and dignity of the individual;
2. Faith in man's ability to make national decisions;
3. Moral and spiritual principle in inter-personal and human relations;
4. Shared responsibility for the common good of society;
5. Promotion of the physical emotional and psychological development of all children; and
6. Acquisition of competencies necessary for self-reliance.

A value is a belief that something is good and desirable. It defines what is important, worthwhile and worth striving for (Fan, 2003). Values are ordinarily those things that people or individuals like, cherish, love or have respect for, for the sake of a happy life (Gbari, 2012) <sup>[20]</sup>. Nigerian citizens need the basic knowledge and skill of social studies which will help them propose a new social order of disciplined citizenry, self-reliant populace, justice, equity and fair play in all human relations, and create development. We need to have disciplined citizens, to develop the attitude of self-reliance, rather than hoping and waiting for others to provide for us. We must treat all fellow citizens with a sense of justice, equity and fair play; we must be creative; we must develop our human potentials and resources to the full and we must reconstruct the Nigerian society for effective life and progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Ukeje, 2000 in Gele, 2010) <sup>[21]</sup>.

Social studies must then set out to achieve value reorientation. The following values should be included in lessons: honesty, goodness, rightness, social justice, loyalty, fair play, respect for other people's interests and property, respect for human dignity and life, diligence, self-discipline (Denga, 1999) <sup>[9]</sup>. Other values are liberty, hard work, faithfulness and tolerance.

Social studies normally teaches learners how to solve their problems through the analytic approach which involves viewing the various aspects of an identified problem in their interconnectedness. Social studies education employs various strategies to achieve this. They are:

1. Talk by a resource person.
2. Use of national symbols
3. Use of classroom discussion

4. Visits to resource centres
5. Use of story telling
6. Use of law, legal and judicial systems
7. Debate
8. Role-planning
9. Independent study
10. Value clarification

Resource persons are well-informed persons who by virtue of their expertise, leadership role, knowledge, travels, occupation, hobbies, talents or experience in special fields, can speak with unchallenged authority in their fields. They need not be highly learned. Sometimes they could be intelligent illiterates. Teachers, musicians, herbalists, businessmen may be capable and willing to share their knowledge and experiences through talks, illustrative lectures, demonstrations or tele-lecture (Inyang-Abia in Fan, 2012) <sup>[14, 15]</sup>. While using National Symbols the social studies teacher may very carefully analyse the wordings of the National Anthem and those of the National Pledge with his students. Discussion method as a communication strategy found its way into the classroom as a result of strong emphasis on interactive and participatory learning. Giving pupils the opportunity to contribute their own ideas through the activities in the class helps them to learn to respect others' ideas and establish the importance of their listening carefully to teach others.

Teachers can organise the class visit to establishments and see where the values of cooperation, interdependence, hard work and dedication are being put into practice. Teachers can urge them to develop such values.

The teacher may tell stories of persons, living or dead, who possess or possessed desirable values approved by the society, and urge his students to develop such values. He may use biographies as well.

Some laws of the country and their operation can be cited bringing out punishment for negative and bad values. In the case of TIP, there is Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act, 2003. Section 27 sub-section 1 of the Act stipulates that:

Where a person is charged with any of the offences under this act and the evidence establishes an attempt to commit that offence, may be convicted of having attempted to commit that offence and shall be liable on conviction to 12 months imprisonment or a fine of N50,000.00 or both.

Section 29 subsection 1 provides that:

Any commercial carrier who knowingly carries a person in contravention of this Act in addition to any other penalty provided in any other Act or enactment, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for 2 year or a fine of N2,000,000 instead thereof

Section 29 subsection 2 provides that:

Where an offence under this Act has been committed by a body corporate, is proved to have been committed on the instigation or with the connivance of or is attributable to any neglect, on the part of a Director, Manager, Secretary of the body corporate, or any person purported to act in any such capacity, he shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for 3 years or to a fine of N2,000,00 or both.

Section 50 provides that:

“Trafficking” includes all acts and attempted acts involved in the recruitment, transportation within or across Nigeria borders, purchases, sale, transfer, receipt or harbouring of a person involving the use of deception, coercion or debt

bondage for the purpose of placing or holding the person whether for a or not in voluntary servitude (domestic, sexual or reproductive) in force or bonded labour, or in slavery-like conditions;

“Trafficked persons” means a victim of trafficking in persons; “Trafficker” means a person or an entity that intends to commit, aids, abets or acquiesces to an act of trafficking in persons.

Debates are discussing a question by considering opposed arguments. In role-playing and identifying problem is role-played by learners in order to stimulate further inquiry into the problem through sustaining the interest of the learners in the problem. The role-played incident stimulates active, creative involvement and participation in the inquiry process. Independent study is encouraged by allowing the student to choose his own focus, plan research, present material and evaluate the process.

Value clarification is a process through which the teacher helps the student in making personal choices through the development of personal values that would be meaningful to him in the context of his personal experiences in life. He helps the student think critically and objectively about the implications and repercussions of the choices he makes, based on personal values. In this approach, the teacher presents the student with alternative choices which are good, approved and ethical, and then leads him to make a choice between them (Ezegbe, 1993) <sup>[13]</sup>.

Social studies curriculum and method of instruction have the opportunity to influence three different aspects of education: intellectual education; social education and personal education. If a person is to solve social problems, and if he is to participate effectively in his society, he needs the contents and procedures involved in social studies (Bruce in Fan, Usoroh and Umoetok, 2012) <sup>[15]</sup>. It is instructive to heed Uyoata and Uwaya's (1995) submission that the citizens must possess knowledge and develop the right attitude towards the maintenance of the accepted values, prevailing standards and the norms on which a strong and progressive nation is built.

(2) The nature of the problems and aspirations of the society have always determined the nature of social studies curriculum. Every curriculum, like a race, has an aim. In this case, to solve the several social problems in the country e.g. human trafficking. The dynamics of TIP should form a part of social studies curriculum at the Junior Secondary School level.

Social studies teachers should organise seminars for political leaders at the state and local government levels on the evils of TIP.

(4) Schools should target where campaigns and advocacy can have an effect on TIP. Among such areas are motor parks, restaurants, hotels, farms as well as traditional and religious leaders.

(5) All hands must be on deck to continually sensitise young ladies on the ills of trafficking of women for prostitution through a wide range of programmes by guidance counsellors/social studies teachers.

(6) Citizenship education is one subject that is specially designed in content and function to produce healthy, good and active citizens. A good citizen is seen as a patriotic, responsible, disciplined, and conscientious, morally sound with love for his state. This subject should be taught in all classes in our school system.

(7) Government should establish community counselling

centres with well trained counsellors and social studies teachers charged with the responsibility of counselling members of the community against TIP.

(8) The Public Enlightenment Unit, should in collaboration with the Federal Ministries of Information and National Orientation Agency, Women and Youth Development, Employment, Labour and Productivity and the Department of Social Studies in all universities be responsible for campaigns, seminars and workshops aimed at educating the public on the problem of trafficking in any person, and making the people at the grassroots change their perception and belief that poverty is the main and only cause of trafficking in persons. It is necessary in such campaigns to emphasize that trafficking in persons has multiple causes of which poverty is just one. The role of love for adventure, ignorance, greed and family size are equally important.

### Conclusion

The paper has explored the dynamics of trafficking in Persons (TIP). Three key factors have been identified as the agents for TIP (ignorance, poverty and greed). The major problem Nigeria faces is a breakdown of moral values. Social studies education can therefore be used to attain value reorientation. In Nigeria, there are many values that are cherished for the political, social, economic, scientific and technological development. When all the social studies values and attitude are fully instilled in our youths, Nigeria would be free from the social vices that plague her.

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