

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING: PERCEPTIONS OF CHILD TRAFFICKING IN AWKA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, ANAMBRA STATE, SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA.

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**ABSTRACT:** Child trafficking, the cankerworm that is eating into the Nigerian society has become an issue of concern at global and national levels. Child trafficking is a crime that exploits children for numerous purposes including labour and sex trafficking. This study was conducted to examine public perception of child trafficking in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State, South East, Nigeria. Strain theory was adopted as theoretical framework for the study. Mixed methods research design was employed in the study. The multi stage sampling procedure was used in selecting respondents in the study. A sample size of 384 was generated using Cochran's formula for determining sample size. Structured questionnaire and in-depth interview were quantitative and qualitative instruments used for data collection. Quantitative data generated from the study were processed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Windows, Version 17. Also, data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency tables, simple percentages and graphic illustrations. The data collected from in-depth interviews were analyzed using content analysis. Findings of the study indicated that child trafficking is a widespread phenomenon and a serious crime which violates the rights of the child. It was recommended among others that government should intensify awareness campaign on child trafficking. The study further recommended that government should make efforts towards the reduction of poverty in the society.

**Key Words:** Child, child trafficking, human trafficking, perception, prevalence

### I. INTRODUCTION

Child trafficking is a serious crime and a grave violation of human rights. It is a global phenomenon that involves millions of victims in countries across the world. As the world has experienced globalization, trafficking of children has taken yet another turn (Dada, 2013). Supply and demand have increased through the years particularly due to the internet and the ease with which traffickers and customers can discreetly complete transaction.

Child trafficking refers to the use of deceit and coercion to recruit and transfer persons either internally within the domestic borders of a country or externally across international borders for the purpose of exploitation (United States Department Report, 2013). Child trafficking cuts across gender and ethnicity. Trafficked children are exploited in different economic sectors and for various purposes. Over the years, child trafficking has been identified as a heinous crime which exploits the most vulnerable in the society (United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2013). Thousands of children are forced out of school by parents and given out to people who eventually exploit them by recruiting them into commercial sex work or forced labour within the country or in foreign countries where they are abused in different ways (US Report, 2013). Due to lack of regard for family values, coupled with illiteracy, poverty and greed, some parents desperate for any source of additional income, have pushed their children into the arms of traffickers. Some parents and relatives readily give their daughters to traffickers or put pressure on them to travel abroad with the hope that they can lift the family out of poverty through prostitution (Onyeizugbo, 2011).

According to Onyeizugbo (2011), child trafficking is comparable to the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. Child trafficking is a form of modern day slavery (Rahman, 2011). Modern day slavery involves exploiting people often through forced labour or sex. Although slavery has been banned across the globe, more than 5 million children are living in slavery (United States Department Report, 2009). Despite the fact that many people believe that slavery no longer exists, yet slavery continues today in different forms including child trafficking.

Child trafficking is most prevalent in developing countries, though it does occur in developed and industrialized economies as well (United States Department Report, 2011). We live in a world that faces many challenges which range from economic, social and political. Nigeria is rich in resources, but political instability and widespread corruption have facilitated trafficking in persons and hindered the progress towards reducing poverty. Nigeria is a source, transit and destination country for children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking. Trafficking victims from Nigeria are recruited from rural areas, especially the country's southern regions and to a lesser extent urban areas.

Efforts have been made by Nigerian government to tackle this menace of child trafficking, for instance, Nigeria ratified most of the important international instruments fighting human trafficking and protecting women and children. Among them are the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000) and the Palermo Protocol in 2001, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol to it on the Sale of Children. Nigeria enacted the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act 2003 and Child Rights Act 2003 (Huntley, 2013). The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) and other related matters was established to combat human trafficking. However, despite Nigeria's legislative efforts to combat child trafficking, it still thrives in Nigeria. It is against this background that this study focused on the perceptions of child trafficking in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State, South East, Nigeria.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Child trafficking, the cankerworm that is eating into the Nigerian society has become an issue of worry and concern at global and national level. Despite the abolition of slave trade, this obnoxious trade still thrives in our society (Onyeizugbo, 2011). The traditional practice of child fostering has been manipulated by traffickers in order to exploit children. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2009), Child fostering which was used for centuries as socio-economic regulation mechanism within extended families is increasingly being used by traffickers to take the children away from their families for forced labour or sexual exploitation. In Nigeria, children are bought, sold and smuggled like modern day slaves, often beaten, starved and forced to work as prostitutes or to take up jobs as domestic servants, restaurant or factory workers with little or no pay. Nigeria is one of the leading countries in child trafficking among African countries (UNESCO, 2009).

Trafficked children are exploited in different economic sectors for various purposes. In Nigeria, children are trafficked for many purposes, ranging from sexual exploitation, begging, under paid and exploited forced labour in the agricultural, manufacturing and construction industries, domestic service and organ transplanting (UNODC, 2016). Nigeria has enormous natural and human resources, but debt burden and institutionalized corruption take serious toll on the country's economy. Nigeria is a country rich in resources but with widespread poverty. Destitute families are vulnerable to persuasion to hire out or sell their children because they lack adequate resources to provide for their family (Kwagyang, Saulawa & Daud, 2016). According to UNODC (2011), trafficked victims mostly women and girls are recruited by means of threat and are often sent into the sex trade or forced to get involved in manual and servitude work.

Most children trafficked for forced labour and domestic work often end up being sexually exploited by their employers. Children are often trafficked, employed and exploited because compared to adults, they are more vulnerable, cheaper to hire and are less likely to demand higher wages or better working conditions. In recent years, traffickers in Nigeria have started exploiting their victims for baby harvesting which is a more dangerous and complex form of child trafficking (Huntley, 2013). Teenage girls are brought by traffickers to the baby factory with false promises of jobs or safe abortions; and as a result, they are confined and forced to give birth. Some of the victims are trafficked while pregnant; others are later impregnated by men specially hired for such purpose. Consequently, their babies are sold for international or domestic adoption, rituals, slave labour or sexual exploitation (Huntley, 2013).

Child trafficking is a crime with many victims, not only those who are trafficked, but also the families they leave behind, some of whom never see their loved ones again. Trafficking has a broad global impact. It weakens legitimate economies, fuels violence, threatens public health and safety, shatters families and shreds the social fabric that is necessary for progress (ILO, 2008). Poverty is the principal driving force behind child trafficking, propelling vulnerable children into the hands of traffickers.

Though, efforts have been made by Nigerian government to tackle this ugly menace of child trafficking, child trafficking remains a serious problem in Nigeria and Anambra State in particular. Thus, in view of the aforementioned problems, the study examined, perceptions of child trafficking in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State, South East, Nigeria.

## III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of awareness of child trafficking in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State, South East, Nigeria?
2. How do they perceive child trafficking in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State, South East, Nigeria?
3. How prevalent is child trafficking in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State, South East, Nigeria?
4. How frequent is child trafficking in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State, South East, Nigeria?

#### IV. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

##### Prevalence of Child Trafficking

Iyanda and Nwogwugwu (2016) conducted a study on the relationship between globalization and rising level of human trafficking in Nigeria. The study utilized descriptive survey research design with triangulation methodology involving the use of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. Three states, Edo, Lagos and Ogun states were selected given their strategic importance as states where high incidence of human trafficking of various forms are reported to have occurred. Primary data were obtained through questionnaire administration, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The study found that there is a direct relationship between globalization and rising trend of human trafficking in Nigeria.

Abudraheem and Oladipo (2010) conducted a study on the patterns of trafficking in women and children and factors influencing it in Kwara State, Nigeria. Quantitative and qualitative study designs were used. Women and children aged 15-49 and 10-14 years respectively constituted the study population. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected through the use of questionnaires. The study found that the most frequent type of trafficking was commercial sex followed by child labour. The contributing factors for trafficking in women and children in the study are poverty, parental discrimination favouring boys over girls, lack of knowledge of human slavery and trafficking, family disintegration and increase in school drop-outs. These appear to be significantly associated with trafficking in women and children, majority of the trafficked children were girls.

##### Perception of Child Trafficking

Nwokeoma (2010) carried out a study on comparative examination of opinions and perceptions on factors affecting human trafficking in Imo and Edo States of Nigeria. The study adopted cross sectional survey design and used multi-stage sampling procedure to achieve a required sample size of 1200. The study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. The findings established a high level of human trafficking in both states. In Edo State however, there was a higher level of trafficking in women, but recorded high level of child trafficking in Imo State. The study found that the traffickers were mostly close relatives and parents. The age groups of persons with most vulnerability of being trafficked are 15-24 years for women and 6-15 years for children. The study also found that the unemployed and out of school persons were mostly the victims of trafficking. Another important factor that was found to be significantly related to human trafficking was families with large number of children.

Ndiora (2011) conducted a study on public perception of Onitsha inhabitants on female trafficking and organized crime in Nigeria. The study adopted cross sectional survey design and used multi-stage sampling procedure involving cluster and systematic sampling methods to select the sample size of 636 respondents. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected through the use of questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The study found that many inhabitants in Onitsha are not aware of the phenomenon of trafficking in female and that there is a positive relationship between poverty and female trafficking. The study also found that level of education has significant relationship with trafficking and that the desire to make money is the major motivating factor for traffickers.

#### V. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is anchored on strain theory. Strain theory is a sociological and criminological theory developed in 1938 by Robert Merton (1910-2003). Theory of strain was adopted from Emile Durkheim's theory of anomie. The idea of strain was built on the assumption that most societies place much value on success and desire that people should become wealthy only through socially acceptable means particularly by acquiring a good education and securing high remunerating jobs. However, as long as there is no equal means of attaining the respectable status recommended by society, people are bound to adopt unconventional means to succeed (Merton, 1938a). When individuals are faced with a gap between their goals, usually money and their current status, strain occurs and when faced with strain, there are five ways to adapt which are; conformity, which is accepting both the cultural goals and the means institutionalized to achieve it; innovation, accepting the goals but designing unconventional, inappropriate or illegitimate means of achieving the goal; ritualism, forgoing the societal goal but continuing with the institutionalized means; retreatism, rejecting both the cultural

goal and the imposed means of attaining same and then, rebellion, abandoning both the cultural goals and societal approved means and substituting them with new cultural goals and norms. The mode of adaptation that is relevant to this study is innovation which has to do with using socially unapproved or unconventional means to obtain culturally approved goals, for example, people dealing on drugs, stealing, child trafficking etc. The celebration and undue honour often given to wealthy individuals in communities in Nigeria without ascertaining their sources of wealth could encourage the acquisition of wealth through any illegal means including child trafficking. Strain theory was adopted in this study as the theoretical framework because in Nigeria, while great importance is attached to success, relatively little importance is placed on the acceptability of the ways of achieving it (Enaikelé&Olutayo, 2011). This situation creates huge tendency to reject the rules of the game and strive for success by alternative criminal means such as child trafficking. Therefore, strain theory was adopted as the most appropriate and relevant theory and it best explains the problem of child trafficking which is a form of human trafficking in Nigeria

## VI. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study adopted a mixed methods research design (sequential explanatory design). Mixed methods research is a methodology for conducting research that involves collecting, analyzing and integrating both quantitative (e.g. experiments, survey) and qualitative (e.g. focus groups, interviews) data in a single study or series of studies (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). This study design was adopted because it was easy to conduct, economical and consumes less time. The study was conducted in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, South East, Nigeria. Awka South Local Government Area is one out of the twenty one (21) Local Government Areas that made up Anambra State. The Local Government Area remains the most heterogeneous Local Government Area in Anambra State, as it accommodates people with different cultural background. Awka South Local Government Area comprises nine (9) towns with the headquarter at Awka. The towns include, Awka, Amawbia, Nibo, Nise, Ezinato, Isiagu, Mbaukwu, Umuawulu and Okpuno. Awka South Local Government Area was created in 1989 from Awka Local Government Area. Geographically, Awka South Local Government Area is bounded on the North by Awka North Local Government Area, on the East by Oji-River Local Government Area of Enugu State, on the South by Anaocha Local Government Area and on the West by Njikoka Local Government Area. Awka South Local Government Area is known basically as the seat of indigenous technology and craft. Carving and iron works industry predominate the area. In the past, the people of Awka South Local Government Area were well known for blacksmithing; however, presently they are respected among the Igbo people of Nigeria for their technical and business skills. The natural resources found in Awka South Local Government Area are agricultural produce and iron ingots. The researcher selected Awka South Local Government Area as study area because of the high rate of child trafficking in the area and other parts of Anambra State. The projected population as at 2016 of adult residents in Awka South Local Government Area was about one 137,241. However, 69,519 are males while 67,722 are females (National Bureau Statistics, 2017). The target population that was studied were the adult residents who have attained the age of 18 years and above that can respond to the research questions. A sample size of 384 was determined using Cochran (1977) formula for generating sample size. Multi-stage sampling procedure involving successive random sampling was used in selecting communities, villages and households and respondents in this study. Awka South Local Government Area has nine (9) communities and balloting method was used to select four (4) communities from the nine communities. Simple random sampling technique of hand-drawing method without replacement was used to select two villages each from the four communities. Again, systematic sampling technique was used to select households from the selected villages and this was done by choosing every fifth household in the selected villages till the researcher got the desired number of 96 respondents from each of the four villages and to ensure gender balance the researcher alternatively choose one sex from the selected house hold and another sex in the next. The respondents for in-depth interview were selected using purposive sampling technique which is a type of non-probability sampling method based on the relevance and position they occupy in the society. The in-depth interview respondents were eight (8) in number, which comprised two (2) officers of NAPTIP in Enugu. Enugu is where the NAPTIP umbrella office for the South East Zone of Nigeria is located, since Awka South Local Government Area falls under the South East Zone of Nigeria, there is therefore need for information from NAPTIP office in Enugu, also four (4) stake holders from the selected communities and then two (2) Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) members, this gave the total of eight (8) respondents for the IDI. Quantitative and qualitative instruments for data collection, such as questionnaire and in-depth interview were used in the study. The researcher administered the questionnaires with the help of two (2) research assistants, who were recruited and trained on the methods and objectives of the study. These field assistants were graduates and residents in the area. The rationale behind the selection of these set of people is that they are conversant with the area under study and were able to interpret the questions to the respondents. The questionnaires were administered on a one-on-one basis to all respondents to ensure uniformity in interpretation of concepts and recording of responses. In in-depth interview, the researcher conducted the interview at a time

and place that was suitable and convenient for the respondents. The researcher moderated the interviews, one research assistant recorded the responses with tape recorder while the other research assistant took notes. The data collected through questionnaire was processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software application. Descriptive statistics such as the frequency tables, percentages and graphic illustrations were used in analyzing the quantitative data. The data collected from the in-depth interviews were analyzed using content analysis.

## VII. FINDINGS / RESULTS

Out of 384 copies of questionnaire administered to the respondents, 358 copies were correctly filled, returned and used for analysis, while 26 copies were not filled correctly, discarded and were not included in the analysis. The response rate was 93.2%. The findings are presented in the tables and figures below:

**Table 1: Personal Data of Respondents**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<b>Sex</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>48.0</b>
	<b>Female</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>52.0</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>18 – 27</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>20.7</b>
	<b>28 – 37</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>27.4</b>
	<b>38 - 47</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>20.7</b>
	<b>48 - 57</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>16.2</b>
	<b>58 - 67</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>5.3</b>
	<b>68 and above</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>9.8</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Marital status</b>	<b>Married</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>60.6</b>
	<b>Single</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>29.3</b>
	<b>Divorced</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1.7</b>
	<b>Widowed</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>5.9</b>
	<b>Separated</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2.6</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Educational qualification</b>	<b>No formal education</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>8.1</b>
	<b>FSLC</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>7.5</b>
	<b>SSCE/GCE</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>24.0</b>
	<b>OND/NCE</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>16.2</b>
	<b>B. Sc/HND</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>33.8</b>
	<b>M.Sc./PhD</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>10.4</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>20.7</b>
	<b>Farmer</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>10.6</b>
	<b>Civil servant</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>34.4</b>
	<b>Trader</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>26.0</b>
	<b>Clergy</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2.8</b>
	<b>Artisan</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2.0</b>
	<b>Self employed</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3.7</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Religious affiliation</b>	<b>Christianity</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>93.6</b>
	<b>Islam</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4.2</b>
	<b>African Traditional Religion</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2.2</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number of children</b>	<b>1 – 3</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>47.5</b>
	<b>4 – 6</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>41.1</b>

	7 – 9	21	5.9
	10 - 12	5	1.4
	13 - 15	3	.8
	22 and above	1	.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Annual income</b>	<b>100,000- 400000</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>18.4</b>
	<b>400001 - 800000</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>9.2</b>
	<b>800001 - 1200000</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>7.3</b>
	<b>1200001 - 1600000</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1.1</b>
	<b>1600001 - 2000000</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>15.4</b>
	<b>2000001 - 2400000</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3.1</b>
	<b>2800001+</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>6.7</b>
	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>38.8</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Field Survey, 2018

The findings showed that 172 (48%) of the respondents are males whereas 186 (52%) of them are females. This shows that there are more females in the distribution. Age distribution of the respondents has a mean age of 37-64 years, a median age of 36 and a modal age of 30. The distribution also has a standard deviation of 11.541, a minimum age of 18 years and a maximum age of 76 years. Table 1, also shows that 98 (27.4%) of the respondents are 28-37 years old, while 35 (9.8%) of the respondents are 68 years old and above. The implication is that majority of the respondents are young. The marital status of the respondents shows that majority 217 (60.6%) of the respondents are married, while the least number 6(1.7%) of the respondents are divorced. This is not surprising since majority of respondents in the study have attained adult age and the societal expectation is that once a person is an adult he or she is expected to get married and settle down. Marriage is seen as a sacred and important institution. Divorce is not an acceptable practice in this part of the world and this may be the reason for a small number of respondents in this category. On the educational attainment of the respondents, it shows that majority 121 (33.8%) of the respondents have B.Sc./HND Certificates while 27 (7.5%) of them have FSLC. This is not strange because people from this state and geo political zone attach so much importance to education. A look at the occupation of the respondents shows that those who are not employed formed 74 (20.7%) of the respondents, 38 (10.6%) are farmers, 123 (34.4%) are civil servants, 93 (26%) are traders, 10 (2.8%) are clergy, 7 (2%) are artisans and 13 (3.7%) are self-employed. This is attributable to the fact that Awka is the capital of Anambra State and majority of the respondents who are civil servants work in government establishments in the study area. The religious affiliation of the respondents shows that majority 335 (93.6%) of the respondents are Christians, while 8 (2.2%) are African traditional religion worshippers This is expected because people from South East are mainly Christians.. On the number of children in a household, majority 170 (47.5%) of the respondents have between 1-3 children, while the least number 1 (.3%) of respondents have 22+ number of children. Lastly, but not the least is the annual income of the respondents, majority 66 (18.4%) of the respondents earn between ₦100,000 - ₦400,000 annually while the least number 4 (1.1%) earn between ₦1,200,000 - ₦1,600,000 annually.

### VIII. ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**Research Question One.** What is the level of awareness of child trafficking in Awka South Local Government Area ,Anambra State, South East, Nigeria?

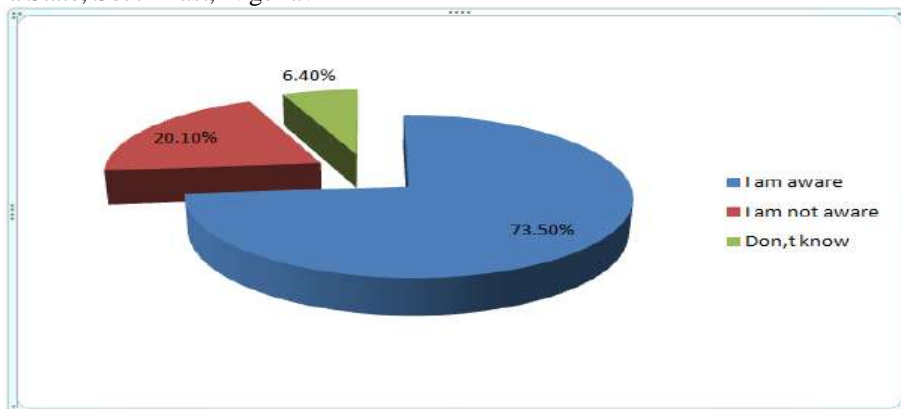


Fig. 1: Respondents' views on their level of awareness of child trafficking

The findings showed that 73.5% of the respondents said that they were aware of child trafficking in Awka South Local Government Area, while only 20.1% of the respondents said that they were not aware of child trafficking. The implication is that the level of awareness of child trafficking is high in the area and this may be due to sensitization programmes of NAPTIP officials in different parts of the country especially in schools and market places and also information from Media. However, more efforts are still needed in the campaign against child trafficking in the state. Findings from qualitative data also indicated that majority of the residents of Awka South Local Government Area are aware of child trafficking in the area. According to an IDI respondent, *“Stories of child trafficking is everywhere. Just recently, we heard from the social media about a woman that went to Nnewi Teaching Hospital to steal a baby, but unfortunately she was caught”* (Female, 49 years, NGO, Awka).

**Research Question Two:** How do they perceive child trafficking in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State, South East, Nigeria?

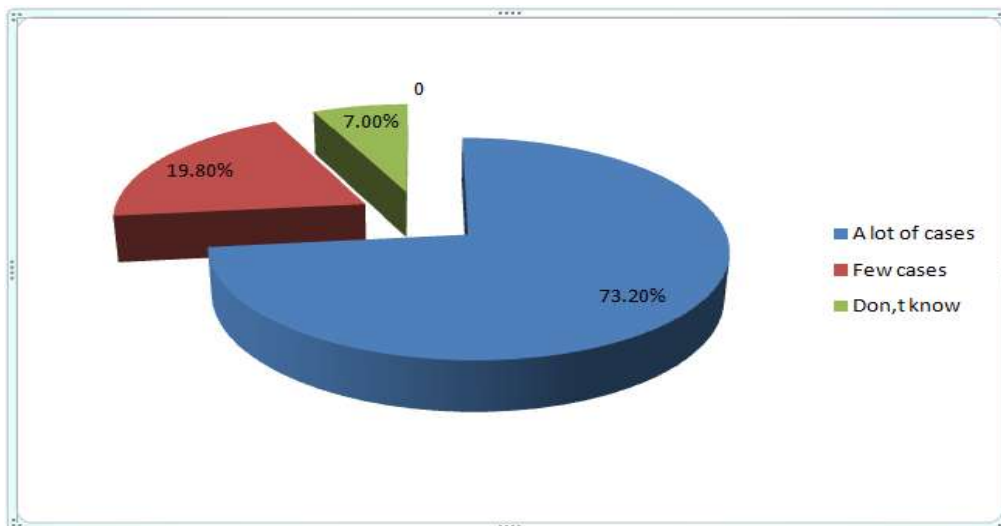
**Table 2: Respondents’ views on their perception of child trafficking**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Helping a child to travel abroad for a better job	8	2.2
Helping to train a child in school	10	2.8
Deceiving or forcing children to work for another person’s gain	244	68.2
Don’t know	3	.8
Not applicable	93	26.0
Total	358	100

Field Survey, 2018

Majority 244 (68.2%) of the respondents said that child trafficking can be defined as deceiving or forcing children to work for another person’s gain, 10 (2.8%) of the respondents said that it means helping to train a child in school, while 8 (2.2%) of the respondents said that child trafficking refers to helping a child to travel abroad for a better job.

**Research Question Three:** How prevalent is child trafficking in Awka South local Government Area, Anambra State, South East, Nigeria?



**Fig. 2: Respondents’ views on the prevalence of child trafficking in the community**

From the figure above, results of the study indicated that 73.2% of the respondents said that there are a lot of cases of child trafficking in the community, while 19.8% indicated that there are few cases of child trafficking in the community. This is an indicator that child trafficking is a widespread phenomenon in the community.

**Research Question Four:** How frequent is child trafficking in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State, South East, Nigeria?

**Table 3: Respondents' views on the frequency of child trafficking in the area**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	59	16.5
Once a week	29	8.1
Once in month	92	25.7
Rarely	178	49.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>100</b>

Field Survey, 2018.

The table above indicates different views of the respondents on the frequency of child trafficking in the area. About 178 (49.7%) of the respondents said that they hear of child trafficking in the area rarely, 92 (25.7%) of the respondents said they hear of child trafficking in the area once in a month, 59 (16.5%) of the respondents said they hear of child trafficking in the area daily, while 29 (8.1%) of the respondents said that they hear of child trafficking in the area on weekly basis. According to an IDI respondent "*we get reports of child trafficking every month*". (Female, 36 years, NAPTIP, Enugu Zone). This implies that child trafficking is a fast growing phenomenon that needs to be tackled seriously in order to curb the heinous crime and save the image of the nation.

## IX. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this study, it was found that child trafficking is a widespread phenomenon and a serious crime which violates the rights of the child. This finding is supported by UNICEF (2013) where it was stated that child trafficking has been identified as a heinous crime which exploits the most vulnerable in the society. This finding also agrees with the findings of Iyanda and Nwogwugwu (2016) which noted that there is a relationship between globalization and rising trend of human trafficking in Nigeria. Globalization has not only stimulated the movement of capital goods and technology but also the movement of all categories of people from one end of the world to the other. The study also found that the level of awareness of child trafficking is high in the area, which may be due to sensitization programmes of NAPTIP in the state. Findings from the qualitative data agree with the findings from the quantitative data which indicate that child trafficking is a widespread phenomenon that exploits vulnerable children. The strain theory supports the findings of the study because it posits that when people are prevented from achieving culturally approved goals through institutionalized means, they are bound to experience frustration and strain which can lead to their using unconventional means to obtain culturally approved goals. One can rightly say that child traffickers are innovators as identified by Merton in strain theory.

## X. CONCLUSION

Child trafficking is prevalent in Awka South in spite of several attempts made by the government, Non- Governmental Organizations and other concerned agencies like NAPTIP to curb the ugly practice. Poverty is a major factor that encourages parents and guardians to send their children out to be trafficked by perpetrators of this unacceptable business which is becoming lucrative. It is imperative and necessary to organize sensitization programmes such as workshops, seminars and campaigns to educate and enlighten people on the social, emotional and psychological consequences of child trafficking on the victims. This obnoxious phenomenon has an adverse effect on the health and academic performance of the victims. .

## XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government should intensify public awareness campaigns on child trafficking. Children who are victims of child trafficking may not readily see themselves as victims, therefore, special efforts are needed to increase the awareness of children in order to help them avoid becoming victims and this can be done by giving them tips on different strategies used by traffickers.
2. Genuine poverty alleviation programmes should be planned and judiciously implemented especially at the state and local levels.
3. There should be timely prosecution of offenders in order to deter intending offender,. increased rate of criminal investigations, arrest and prosecution so as to improve outcomes. Law enforcement and prosecution must proactively identify, investigate and prosecute offenders.
4. Parents should protect their children from the deceit of traffickers and be ready to report any suspected case to the authorities concerned with child trafficking.
5. Religious institutions should join in the campaign against child trafficking through their teachings by organizing workshops and seminars to sensitize the people on the consequences of child trafficking.



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