The Quest for Education as a Factor of Vulnerability to Child Trafficking: Reflections on "Child Rescue" from the Perspective of West African Children

55

Ifeyinwa Mbakogu and Jill Hanley

Contents

Abstract

While there is increasing attention to the perspectives of people caught up in human trafficking – attention that has helped illuminate the cloudy nature of consent and agency in situations of human trafficking – the perspectives of children are relatively absent from the debate. Western notions of childhood downplay children's agency and decision-making. In this chapter, the results of a study that explored the perspectives of over 50 West African children "rescued" by Nigeria's NAPTIP, a governmental agency mandated to fight human

I. Mbakogu (✉)
School of Social Work, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS, Canada
e-mail: ifeyinwa.mbakogu@dal.ca

J. Hanley
School of Social Work, McGill University, Montreal, QC, Canada
e-mail: jill.hanley@mcgill.ca

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer International Publishing AG 2020

J. Winterdyk, J. Jones (eds.), *The Palgrave International Handbook of Human Trafficking*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-63058-8_59

trafficking and protect its victims, are shared. One theme that emerged strongly from the children's narratives was the centrality of their quest for education, training, and other life opportunities as a factor that led them into situations of human trafficking, a situation likely to exist in other contexts as well. The children's desire for education was often part of what led them away from home, kept them in their situations of trafficking, and made many of them unwilling to return home after being "rescued" by NAPTIP. These findings suggest a critical need to provide for children's educational needs if we hope to combat child trafficking, as well as the need to provide meaningful alternatives to children we purport to "rescue."

Keywords
Human trafficking · Child trafficking · West Africa · Nigeria · Education · Child labor · Children's agency

The trafficking of children is one of the most egregious forms of human trafficking, one that elicits a desire to protect and "rescue" children. Normally absent from discussions of child trafficking, however, is attention to children's understanding of the situation and their agency and motivations in seeking migration opportunities. Outright kidnapping of children for the purposes of trafficking appears (with a few countries being exceptions) to be rare (Aronowitz 2009, p. 55); rather, on a global scale, in both high- and low-income countries, it seems that children and youth seeking to leave home for other reasons become vulnerable to those that would exploit them. Traffickers abuse this vulnerability (economic, emotional, developmental, legal) precisely as a means of exploitation (UNODC 2013). In a recent study with over 50 West African children caught up in human trafficking in Nigeria (Mbakogu 2015), the desire for educational and training opportunities emerged as a critical element of the children's vulnerability, a situation that is likely to exist in other low-income contexts that serve as sources of children into trafficking.

This chapter affirms the importance of making children and their voice the center of child trafficking research. First, a review of the existing literature on the concept of child trafficking in general is offered, before situating the West African literature on the topic within an international context and making an argument to counter dominant views about children's experiences. The methods of a recent study (Mbakogu 2015) facilitated by funding from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) are presented before turning to the narratives of two girls, Praise and Daniella, to illustrate the study's finding that children's agency and desire for education plays into the phenomenon of child trafficking in West Africa. In conclusion, there is a discussion of the way that a new understanding of child trafficking that considers children's desires and motivations might guide better interventions to both prevent child trafficking and protect children who have already been affected – interventions that should take children's desire to pursue education into central account.

The Challenge of Defining Child Trafficking

Child trafficking is an activity that is complex to understand and explain. However, in its simplest form, the concept of child trafficking has been used to depict situations in which children are recruited and exploited for domestic work, farm work, or commercial sex, among other forms of exploitation (Fitzgibbon 2003; UN.GIFT 2008). Under the Palermo Protocol (OHCHR 2000, Article 3c), "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child [under the age of 18] for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered 'trafficking in persons' even" in the absence of the use of force, coercion, deception, or other means, making it sometimes difficult to distinguish child trafficking from other forms of legitimate child migration (Huijsmans and Baker 2012). While child labor migration could be beneficial and less harmful to some children (compared to other phenomenon such as the sexual exploitation of children), it can lead to trafficking when children are recruited by intermediaries who have the intention of handing them over to other people who could exploit and control them for work. It is difficult to determine when child labor migration moves from harmless to exploitative work or acts that are similar to forced labor (De Lange 2009). For some policy makers and researchers, all unaccompanied child migration fits into the trafficking discourse (Huijsmans and Baker 2012); as O'Neill (2001) asserts, the migration of children, especially for exploitation through domestic labor or prostitution, involves the commodification of migrating children and the eventual stripping of their autonomy. It is noteworthy that Dougnon (2011) expressed the need for clarification and setting parameters about what constitutes child trafficking versus child labor migration because to him, what researchers present as "a new disaster called 'child trafficking' is as old as migration itself" (p. 100). The confusion also stems from the platforms for discourse on child trafficking and whose voice has the most capital. Moreover, are we looking at the international framework for distinguishing between what falls under child trafficking and child labor migration or approaching it from a local understanding of the concepts?

The Palermo Protocol is considered a major step in situating trafficking within the violation of the human rights of persons (UNESCO 2006), shifting the focus of conceptualizations of trafficking from sex trafficking to include other forms of human trafficking. Notwithstanding, Garrard (2007) suggests that further progress will be made when a new international instrument is created within the human rights framework that is focused entirely on child trafficking. Garrard (2007) acknowledges the achievements of the Protocol but faults it in terms of protecting vulnerable children. For instance, while states are required to take the needs of vulnerable children into account, the Protocol ". . .makes no specific demands on States in this area" (p. 164). Moreover, it could also be assumed that the protection of children is augmented by other instruments intended to protect children from trafficking as the Armed Conflict and Sale of Children Protocol, the CRC and ILO 182. But these instruments have their limitations, beyond the focus of this chapter.

The question then becomes if children will be served better when efforts are combined or when there is a single international instrument that effectively

accommodates their needs. Considering that the Protocol draws a lot of attention to the trafficking of persons for prostitution with less attention to other forms of exploitation (such as child soldiering, domestic servitude, and bonded labor), some suggest that a stand-alone instrument within a human rights context be designed for children rather than fitting children within adult frameworks (Edelson 2001). When frameworks are specifically designed for children, then their problems – vulnerability and protection of children in the course of trafficking – which are currently haphazardly identified and treated, will be accommodated. This inclusive Protocol will hopefully begin with such missing pieces as a concise definition of who is referred to as a "child" and questions of an absolute minimum age (Edelson 2001). A new Protocol specifically designed for children within a human rights framework will be more focused on the child survivor and understanding the child rather than concentration on perpetrators as happens within an organized crime framework. Furthermore, when the trafficking Protocol functions within an organized crime framework, some aspects of trafficking, especially those perpetuated by family members, could be ignored.

From the foregoing, the implication is that the way a country understands or defines child trafficking will determine its stance on the issue and how it will design its anti-trafficking programs or policies. One thing in common internationally, however, is an impulse to "rescue" children deemed to have been trafficked. That is where the present chapter comes in by presenting children's voice as they ask: what are you rescuing them from; and where are you taking them to after the rescue mission?

The Context of Child Trafficking in Nigeria/West Africa

Several explanations are presented in the literature on child trafficking as to why parents and children could look for alternative means of survival. A common explanation is traced to modernization and western education which resulted in children being sent from rural areas to urban settings to assist relatives in exchange for access to better educational opportunities (Dottridge 2002; Scarpa 2006). Recently, this child-fostering practice became monetized with "employers" colluding with trafficking agents to take children away from their parents to be placed in homes or establishments where children face maltreatment and death at the hands of employers, whether relatives or not (Abdulraheem and Oladipo 2010; Okafor 2009).

In terms of empirical research conducted by West African scholars, studies conducted in Nigeria have predominantly dwelt on understanding the effects of trafficking for domestic work on children's physical and mental capacity (Okafor 2009; Oluwaniyi 2009). These studies have been successful in providing information on children's high school dropout rates and its relationship to trafficking and child maltreatment by employers (Okafor 2009). These studies typically adopt qualitative methods with a preference for interviews. This could be because the respondents were few, a hidden population with busy schedules. Other studies with larger samples sought information about female perception of trafficking from working women and school children. The intention was to determine people's

level of awareness of the physical, emotional, economic, and health implications of the problem (Adejumo 2008; Okonofua et al. 2004). Additionally, though there is a vast global literature on trafficking, mostly written by foreign experts (Boyden 2015; James and Prout 2015; Ray 2006), little attention is given to listening to the narratives of trafficked West African children themselves.

In patriarchal societies such as Nigeria, where women are unable to inherit their father's property or lands, they are marginalized in terms of employment and relegated to positions of second-class citizens (Opara 2007). Linked to the cultural practices that limit the social, educational, and economic opportunities accessible to female children is the demand for girls to work as domestic servants in affluent households in the oil-rich countries of Gabon and Nigeria (Dottridge 2002; Jordan 2002) and in prostitution in European countries (Nwogu 2006). Though reports by researchers such as Dottridge (2002) attest to the high vulnerability of African girls to trafficking, a small number of studies have spoken to female survivors to hear, in their own words, what made them more vulnerable to trafficking than their brothers. Understanding the factors making girls vulnerable to trafficking will help in designing programs to reduce their vulnerability.

Children's Perspectives on the Trafficking Experience

Regardless of the contribution of the literature for understanding the causes of trafficking and the situation of trafficked children, a common trend is the absence of children's voices to help us understand why they are involved in trafficking and knowing from children what they want after they are "rescued" from trafficking. Researchers are not incorporating children's narratives or focusing interventions and policy making within the lived realities of children involved in trafficking (Mbakogu 2012). The literature focusses on poverty as the driver of children's movement from home without attending to other variables such as children's agency (Mbakogu 2015) and children's quest to access education as argued via the children's narratives presented in this chapter.

Accommodating Children's Agency and Resilience Within Child Trafficking Interventions

Children's narratives counter the dominant narrative by presenting new perspectives on their trafficking journey and their experience within it. Children's narratives attest to their agency in either initiating the initial journey into trafficking or finding the journey not meeting their expressed needs, getting out of trafficking. Based on her study with young trafficked persons in Marseilles, Breuil (2008) found that children do not feel they have lost their agency or ability to make choices simply because they have been trafficked. With evidence from her study with children of diverse nationalities trafficked to the United States, Gozdziak (2008) adds that accepting the tag of victim would go contrary to children's reasons for migrating to a different country, which is often to earn money, some of which is remitted home or used to offset their

smuggling costs. Why is the literature silent on children's agency and resilience? The literature could be silent because professionals see children as passive and helpless victims of trafficking in need of rescue and reintegration (Harrington 2005; Jordan 2002), an image that may differ from interactions and discussions with the children documented in this chapter.

It is normal for society to question children's agency, preferring to consider children to be simply in need of protection. However, children with agency can still be vulnerable and in need of protection, especially when they face harmful situations. But while children may be vulnerable, it need not imply that they are passive victims, constantly requiring people to "rescue" them and provide for their needs. Woodhead (2004) elaborates that the only aspect of work in which children may be passive participants or victims is in the area of forced or bonded labor. But in other forms of harmful work, he sees children as "...social actors, trying to cope with their situation, negotiating with parents and peers, employers and customers, and making the best of oppressive, exploitative and difficult circumstances" (p. 327). Children's negotiating skills are evident in their interaction with potential traffickers, foster families, or employers, to determine the best alternatives between remaining at home with family and moving to work.

James and Prout (2015) explain that the fact that children have agency does not mean that they work in isolation. The decisions children make are achieved through the interaction of social relationships that are built and influenced by their beliefs, parental relationships, education, culture, religion, and past experiences. Berlan (2009) indicates that child workers exhibit great resilience in dealing with situations they find themselves in and do not consider themselves "victims," in contrast to the dominant discourse on child trafficking. This view is shared by Montgomery (2001), who voiced wariness for interventions claiming to be in the child's best interest, without consulting with children or sharing their everyday experiences.

Seeking Children's Perspectives in Nigerian Trafficking Situations

Building on the argument for an alternative conceptualization of children's reasons for leaving their home in Nigeria and West Africa that considers child agency and challenges their rescue from trafficking, children who have experienced trafficking were at the core of the research design. The study relied on Nigeria's anti-trafficking agency, The National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons and other related Matters (NAPTIP), for access to children in their shelters. The decision to use children in agency care is largely informed by Goździak's study (2008), in which she explains that since it is nearly impossible and dangerous to have access to children while they are still with their traffickers, the only time to interact with children is when they have been removed from trafficking and in the care of a rescue agency.

The case examples used to illustrate the arguments here draw on one year of research with 50 trafficked children (aged 7–17) and 12 NAPTIP personnel from five shelters in five states (i.e., Lagos, Cross Rivers, Edo, Enugu, and Abuja) in Nigeria, conducted in the context of the first author's doctoral dissertation supervised by Jill Hanley (Mbakogu 2015). The child participants were citizens of Nigeria,

Benin, Togo, and Ghana. The study adopted qualitative research methods involving documentary analysis, participant observation in NAPTIP and NGO shelters, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with children (including drawing as a tool), and semi-structured interviews with NAPTIP and NGO representatives.

Child Agency in Seeking Educational Opportunities: The Limits of Addressing Children's Needs After "Rescue" from Trafficking

Are children almost always lured away from home based on the manipulations of unscrupulous trafficking agents, poverty in households, or at the request of parents, as the literature tells us (UNICEF 2007a; UN 2001)? Findings from this study reinforce the need for further insight into the reason for children's movement away from home. Many of the children in this study were trying to carve out a future for themselves, thinking of fulfilling their educational dreams and aspiring for economic independence in future. Some children attested to instigating their trafficking by expressing their frustration with idling away at home in rural settings with minimal access to education. All these factors are ignored when efforts to understand children's reasons for leaving home do not include the voices of children removed from diverse types of trafficking.

In order to better understand the way children's quest for education – and their agency in trying to reach that goal – leads them into trafficking situations, we consider the trafficking experiences and narratives of 14-year-old Daniella and 14-year-old Praise (these names are pseudonyms), two of the children "rescued" from trafficking by NAPTIP, as the focus of the discussions. We see how their desire for education led them to leave home in search of opportunities, kept them in trafficking as the girls hoped a better situation (giving them access to education) would materialize, and ultimately meant that they did not wish to return home after being "rescued," preferring to persist in their quest for education in the urban area.

Daniella's parents have ten children, five boys and five girls. Daniella is the last child. Daniella's parents are farmers, and she had completed the fifth year of primary school in her village school before leaving home. Praise is the third child of her parent's five children, four girls and a boy. Her parents are farmers, but her mother also sells cooked rice in the market. Praise had spent four years in primary school. Neither girl was kidnapped, so it was important to know why the girls' parents allowed them to leave home. Daniella's parents clearly allowed her to leave the village for a distant city in Lagos State to increase her chances of finishing school:

> *. . .my father said that I should go and find money so that I can go and finish school. I didn't have money to go to school. So, I said I will come to Lagos and find money to finish school.*

Daniella wanted to go to school and since her father could not fund her education and was willing to allow her to earn money to fund her education, Daniella made the decision to leave home with the support of a family friend who was already in the business of recruiting children as domestic servants. Praise's reason for leaving home were similar to Daniella's:

I came [to Lagos] to look for money. I want to learn tailoring. I tell them that I want to learn tailoring. My father and my mother said that I will learn.

Praise had given up on acquiring formal education from secondary to university level because of her low socioeconomic background. She opted to learn something that would make it possible to earn a living, whether she remained in Lagos or returned to her village. Praise had narrowed her vocational objectives down to dressmaking, which her parents would only support after she had made adequate money working as a domestic servant. Her parents could not afford to pay for her training as a dressmaker, but she did have their blessings when she has her own money for the training.

Praise's dreams were cut short, however, because during their journey to Lagos, they were apprehended by police concerned about the trafficking of several young persons. The failure of the initiative may not have come as a complete surprise, as people in the village knew of other girls who left home and later returned without reaching their educational objectives. Praise tells us:

My father knows one girl that lives [in the village]. He [the trafficker] carried the girl away to look for work in Lagos. The girl is back in the village now. She did not learn anything in Lagos. She went to work as house-girl.

Praise's narrative leads us to question the basis for parents' decisions and negotiations about their children's future prior to leaving home. Are these decisions made in a hurry? Or are they built on hopeful dreams that when a child leaves a rural area for an urban setting she is assured of a brighter future? This, despite being faced with evidence, such as the case of the girl from Praise's village, that such dreams are not always realized? It may be difficult to understand why Praise could leave with the same middleman, when another girl from her village had worked as domestic servant in Lagos only to return to the village without skills or anything to keep her busy on returning home. While the other girl returned to the village without learning any skills to keep her busy, Praise believed that unlike her, she would enroll for a vocational program and make a difference on returning home.

Building on Praise's narrative, one can observe a close link between education and children's desire to leave home. Although this link is mentioned and/or addressed in literature on child labor (Dar et al. 2002; Guarcello et al. 2006), it leaves one to wonder if the lack of emphasis on this link in the child trafficking literature is because the literature usually concentrates on children leaving home to be absorbed in formal school settings rather than the informal, vocational training options that some of the trafficked children aspire for as substitutes for the more desired formal programs.

From the findings, one can see that children's inability to bring about changes to their current situation may cause them (children) to endure and make the best of the situation they have found themselves. This is illustrated by Daniella's, who was sent by her uncle to work as a domestic servant in a woman's house in Lagos. It was only after traveling home for Christmas and returning to Lagos State in the company of Praise and other children her uncle was sending to his customers that they were

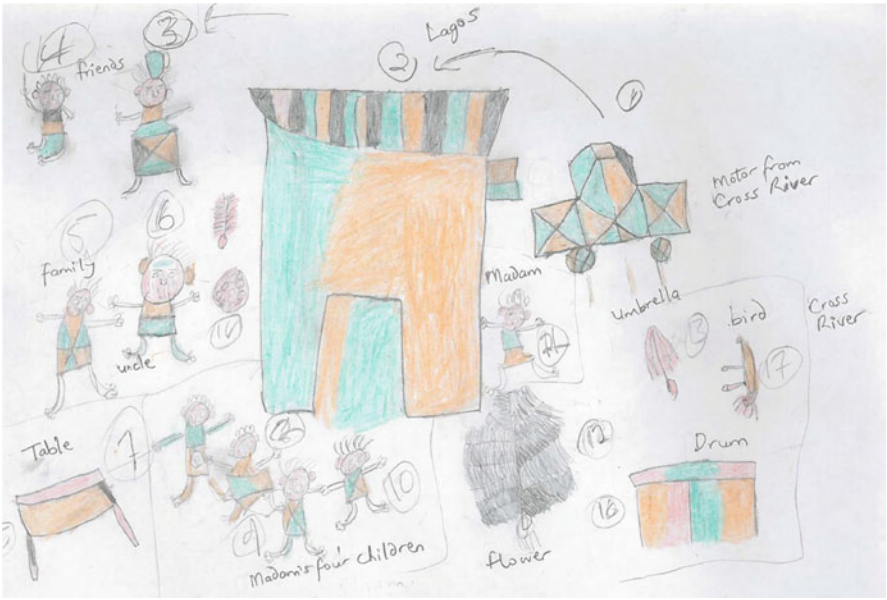
"arrested" by the police and sent to the NAPTIP shelter. Daniella recounts her experience at the woman's house:

> *I have stayed with a madam before the police came to catch me. My uncle took me to this madam that has four children. I was working. I will wash toilet, I will wash clothes, I will cook, wash car and I will do many things. She was not treating me well. She was beating me even though I was not doing bad things. She will not give me food. I will eat in the morning [rice] and I will not eat in the night.*

Daniella was the one cooking the food and feeding the children. When asked why, she could not dish some of the food for herself since she was the one cooking the food; she responded that she could not because:

> *She [the madam] will come and stay in the kitchen and she will be looking at me.*

Sometimes children put their dreams ahead of their discomfort. Daniella knew she was treated unfairly in a home where she was only sure of breakfast, but she remained because she wanted to collect her monthly salary and make enough money to return to school. She recounts feeding the madam's children on an empty stomach and not having the opportunity to taste even bits of her cooking because the madam remained in the kitchen until all evidence of the meal is cleared.



Daniella's drawing of her journey away from home

There is further evidence of children's agency displayed in their readiness to withstand exploitation to meet their objectives for leaving home in Praise's elaborate

description of the process devised by her trafficker to recruit and distribute children via his depot in Ogun State:

> *We got to Sagamu and we entered another bus that carried us and dropped us at Ikode. He cooked food, we ate. . .It's the uncle that carried us that gave us everything. People were plenty. So, we will buy food and cook on the stove. That uncle used to bring people to Lagos, so he has bought everything and kept inside the house, pot, everything is there. It is a mud house that he showed us to sleep. The next day, he carried another set of people [children] to go and give them work. He didn't come back again. He carried people for work around 5 o'clock. He will carry people for work until they finish. . .*

Praise's drawing of her journey away from home

From Praise's narrative, in the excited words of a child who had never left home, she unconsciously provides useful details about ingenious or carefully orchestrated business networks. In addition, from the child's description, one discerns a mind that understands that what the trafficker was doing was wrong, but she considers him the link between herself and her dreams. Moreover, Praise was the person that initiated and negotiated her departure from home (with the support of her parents). The child is willing to turn a blind eye to her trafficker's transgressions if she is eventually sent to a good place to work and earn money needed to pay for her vocational training.

The way income generated from a child's work during trafficking is used generated a lot of debate among the trafficked children in the study. While some children expected that their earnings would be used to take care of their family's household needs, others, especially those who had moved away from home to access education, felt it was their personal money and should be kept solely to finance their education. Consider the positive outlook to income spending, evident in the discussion with

14-year-old Daniella. Daniella agreed before leaving home that she would earn 8000Naira (41USD) monthly.

> *My madam will give my salary to my oga [master or male employer] . . . the man that carried me from home. He will give the money to my mama. She will use it for farming. She will keep it for me. She will take some and the remaining one she will keep for me.*

Daniella felt that, since she left home because there were insufficient funds to meet even her basic educational needs, this arrangement was only fair.

Another aspect of this quest for education by children "rescued" by NAPTIP is their immense hope, but also dependence, that NAPTIP would remove them from the condition of trafficking that warranted their "rescue" to a new situation with promises of a future better than what their parents or relatives could offer. This is expressed by Praise when she is asked what she hopes NAPTIP can do for her:

> *I want them to help me to go to school.*

To this child, it is a simple request and one that, in her innocence, she hopes the agency can meet. Praise knows what to expect from home, and she expressed this knowledge when asked what she would do in the likelihood that NAPTIP would reunite her with her family. She was quick to respond that if NAPTIP chose to return her to her home, she would refuse to go:

> *I don't want to go. I want to go to school. If I reach my village, I will still come back to Lagos.*

Praise's response may sound poorly informed, but the response comes from a mind that has spent time weighing her options: returning home, then searching for another channel to return to Lagos; and remaining at the shelter to lean on NAPTIP for support. She has gone so far as to plan a strategy for obtaining that support. Other children face the likelihood of returning home and getting re-trafficked by their parents. On the one hand, if Praise is returned home, she will find alternative means of returning to Lagos since home, for her, calls up associations of a place where there is no money to fund her dream of learning to sew. On the other hand, Praise's parents have assured her of being able to learn dressmaking after she had made enough money to cover her training. In the absence of alternatives, Daniella also falls back on NAPTIP to assist with either enrolling her in school or being able to learn a vocation. Daniella and Praise both know that their trafficker was arrested, which should mean the end of their trafficking journey, but they are keen on remaining in Lagos and achieving their goals of leaving home in the pursuit of education. Importantly, Praise and Daniella were both able to self-advocate so that, rather than being returned home after their stay in the NAPTIP shelter, they were able to negotiate being moved to a residential NGO facility where they were enrolled for training in their preferred vocation, dressmaking or sewing.

Discussion: Protecting Child Trafficking Survivors by Integrating Education into "Rescue" Efforts

Daniella and Praise's "rescue" by NAPTIP follows a pattern that was common among the 50 children interviewed for this study. Most of the children left home willingly, with earning money to pursue education, vocational training, and apprenticeships being the most common motivation. In their home villages, such opportunities simply did not exist, were inaccessible to them because of cost, or were of poor quality because of woeful underfunding.

Unfortunately, the difficulty of accessing education is a struggle for children in many regions of the global south, with 264.3 million children reported out of school in 2015 (UNICEF 2017). Children and youth in sub-Saharan Africa (particularly Nigeria and Ethiopia) are the most likely to be out of school, followed by Central and South Asia (particularly Pakistan and India) and Eastern and Southeastern Asia (particularly Indonesia), all source regions for child trafficking. Globally, the likelihood of being out of school increases sharply with age (UNICEF 2017).

The two main reasons for children being out of school are either the lack of nearby facilities or a family's inability to pay the required fees. Both are directly related to poor investment in public education. And as we have seen in the case examples, such situations can lead to children's departure from home, using their agency to seek opportunities for education and training but also making themselves vulnerable to trafficking. Ordinarily, the trafficking literature lays emphasis on children leaving home because they aim to earn an income to assist their financially strapped households. But almost all the children in the study left home because they wanted better access to education. Poverty was a related issue, but education remained the children's motivation. Children sought to earn an income that could later be plunged into their own education or that could be used to fund the education of the siblings they left behind.

With the importance of education to the children participating in the study, it stands to reason that a key strategy for preventing child trafficking is increasing government investment in education. At the moment, for example, Nigeria operates the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program where children are expected to have access to 9 years of free, compulsory, and uninterrupted education from the age of 6–14 at the primary and junior secondary school levels – that is, 6 years of primary education and 3 years of secondary school education (Okoro 2014; UBE 2004; UNESCO 2014; WENR 2011). Obviously, from children's narratives, this seems to be promises made on paper, because children are either willingly dropping out of school or having their parents withdraw them from school because of inadequate funds (Mbakogu 2015).

With most countries worldwide providing free primary and early secondary education, what could be going wrong? Is education completely free when some parents cannot buy school uniforms and books and pay for supplemental services needed for children such as sports uniforms, after school classes, drama, and parent-teacher association dues? Children also complain of the absence of good and dedicated teachers, poorly equipped library and classroom facilities (Nwagwu 1994, 1997;

UNICEF 2007b), poor standard of education in rural schools, and the transportation costs of moving between home and school (UNICEF 2007b). Also, the budgets allocated to education ministries are sometimes inadequate to meet free education obligations for the entire child population.

Conclusion: Preventing Child Trafficking by Investing in Free and Universal Education

As previously discussed, the problem society has with children's involvement in decision-making could be because of societal perception of children and the notion of childhood. Nieuwenhuys (1996), working from a sociological approach, sees childhood as a time for play and learning and considers work to be exploitative and harmful to children's health. Yet children questioned the direction of their "rescue" or removal from trafficking. Children wondered what they are being rescued from, when for the most part they are unsure what they are doing in NAPTIP shelters and what they will be doing after leaving the agency. A small number of studies attest to the resilience displayed by trafficked children (Hynes 2010; Ní Raghallaigh and Gilligan 2010), yet this came through loud and clear in this study. Children, like Daniella, who participated in the study gave evidence of their resilience by remaining in their trafficking situation not because they are unable to make it out of the environment but mostly because they are more interested in meeting their goals for leaving home. These goals could be saving up for their education, financing learning a vocation, enhancing household income, or settling a family loan. The resilience and agency displayed by the trafficked children attest to their discomfort with the tag of victimhood or trafficking victims in need of a messiah. Simply removing them from the trafficking situation is inadequate. These children are seeking real alternatives and believe they deserve viable opportunities to improve their lives.

Viewed in this way, the state responsibility to make provisions for free, quality education becomes paramount to anti-trafficking efforts. The prevention of child trafficking must go beyond a concern with the incomes of their families. While income is of course an important factor, children are also seeking opportunities, opportunities that they conceptualize as being linked to access to education. Feasible access to secondary and vocational schools, in terms of both geographic location and affordability, is an important part of the prevention of child trafficking. If the children in this study had not been pushed to leave home to pursue their education, they would have been much less vulnerable to trafficking.

Summary

This chapter argues that children in West Africa depart from home, using their agency to seek opportunities for education and training. Yet this very initiative also makes them vulnerable to trafficking. Upon "rescue," children often do not

wish to return home but rather prefer to persist in their quest for education. The chapter counters the general notion in current trafficking literature that children leave home because they aim to earn an income to assist their financially strapped households. Given the evidence that many children are motivated by a desire to access higher education or vocational training, it stands to reason that a key strategy for preventing child trafficking is increasing government investment in education. Viewed in this way, the state's responsibility to provide free, quality education becomes paramount to anti-trafficking efforts, and providing access to educational opportunities for those children "rescued" from trafficking becomes essential to preventing their re-trafficking.

Cross-References

- ▶ Dynamics of Child Labor Trafficking in Southeast Asia: India
- ▶ Defining Child Trafficking for Labor Exploitation, Forced Child Labor, and Child Labor
- ▶ Domestic Sex Trafficking of Children
- ▶ Genealogies of Slavery

References

Abdulraheem S, Oladipo A (2010) Trafficking in women and children: A hidden health and social problem in Nigeria. *Intl J Sociol & Anthro* 2(3):34–39

Adejumo A (2008) Psychosocial predictors of involvement of women as victims of trafficking in persons in South-West Nigeria. *Gend & Beh* 6(1):1480–1493.

Aronowitz A (2009). *Human trafficking, human misery: The global trade in human beings.* Greenwood Publishing Group, Westport CT.

Berlan A (2009). Child labor and cocoa: whose voices prevail? *Intl J Sociol & Soc Pol* 29(3/4):141–151.

Boyden J (2015) Childhood and the policy-makers: A comparative perspective on the globalization of childhood. In: James A, Prout A (eds) *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood*. Falmer Press, London, 190–229.

Breuil B (2008) Precious children in a heartless world? The complexities of child trafficking in Marseille. *Chil & Soc* 22:223–234.

Dar A, Blunch N, Kim B, Sasaki M (2002) Participation of children in schooling and labor activities: A review of empirical studies. World Bank, Social Protection Discussion Paper, 221.

De Lange A (2009) Trafficking for labor exploitation in West and Central Africa. In: Hindman H (ed) *The world of child labor: An historical and regional survey.* Abingdon-on-Thames, UK, 194–198.

Dottridge M (2002) Trafficking in children in West and Central Africa. *Gend & Dev* 10(1):38–42.

Dougnon I (2011) Child trafficking or labor migration? A historical perspective from Mali's Dogon country. *Humanity*, Spring: 85–105.

Edelson, D. (2001). The Prosecution of Persons Who Sexually Exploit Children in Countries Other Than Their Own: A Model for Amending Existing Legislation. *Fordham Int'l LJ*, *25*, 483.

Fitzgibbon K (2003) Modern-day slavery? The scope of trafficking in Africa. *Afr Sec Rev* 12(1):81–89.

Garrard V (2007) Sad stories: Trafficking in children – Unique situations requiring new solutions. GA *J Intl & Comp Law* 145–173.

Goździak E (2008) On challenges, dilemmas, and opportunities in studying trafficked children. *Anthro Quar* 81(4):903–923.
Guarcello L, Lyon S, & Rosati FC (2006) Child labor and education for all: An issue paper. Understanding Children's Work Programme Working Paper. Available at: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1780257. [Accessed 9 Oct. 2018].
Harrington C (2005) The politics of rescue: Peacekeeping and anti-trafficking programmes in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. *Intl Fem J Poli* 7(2):175–206.
Huijsmans R, Baker S (2012) Child trafficking: 'Worst form' of child labour, or worst approach to young migrants? *Dev & Change* 43(4):919–946.
Hynes P (2010) Global points of "vulnerability": Understanding the processes of the trafficking of children into, within and out of the UK. *Intl J Hum Rights* 14(6):949–967.
James A, Prout, A (2015) A New Paradigm for the Sociology of Childhood? Provenance, Promise and Problems. In: James A, Prout A (eds), *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood.* Falmer Press, London, p 7–33.
Jordan A (2002) Human rights or wrongs? The struggle for a rights-based response to trafficking in human beings. *Gend & Dev* 10(1):28–37.
Mbakogu I (2012) Child trafficking in Africa: The need for child-centred approaches. In ISID-CIDA – Strengthening Contributions to Evidence-Based Policy Making. Available at: http://www.mcgill.ca/isid/sites/mcgill.ca.isid/files/mbakogu.pb11.pdf [Accessed 9 Oct. 2018].
Mbakogu I (2015) Understanding child trafficking form the point of view of trafficked children: The case of 'rescued' children in Nigeria. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). McGill University, Montreal, Canada.
Montgomery H (2001) *Modern Babylon: Prostituting children in Thailand*. Berghahn Books, Oxford.
Ní Raghallaigh M, Gilligan R (2010) Active survival in the lives of unaccompanied minors: coping strategies, resilience, and the relevance of religion. *Child & Fam Soc Work* 15(2):226–237.
Nieuwenhuys O (1996) The paradox of child labor and anthropology. *Annu. Rev. Anthro* 25:237–251.
Nwagwu C (1997) The environment of crises in the Nigerian education system. *Comp Ed* 33(1):87–96.
Nwagwu C (1994) Women in Nigeria's teaching profession: the challenges ahead. *Voc Aspect Ed* 46(2):167–180.
Nwogu V (2006) Nigeria: human trafficking and migration. *Forced Mig Rev.* 25:32–33.
OHCHR (2000) Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children, supplementing the United Nations convention against transnational organized crime, United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto. Available at: https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/protocoltraffickinginpersons.aspx [Accessed 9 Oct. 2018].
Okafor E (2009) The use of adolescents as domestic servants in Ibadan, Nigeria. *J Ado Res.* 24(92):169–179.
Okonofua F, Ogbomwan S, Alutu A, Kufre O, Eghosa A (2004) Knowledge, attitudes and experiences of sex trafficking by young women in Benin City, South-South Nigeria. *Soc Sci & Med*. 59:1315–1327.
Okoro SUC (2014) Universal Basic Education (UBE) for all: Problems and prospects in Nigeria. *J Teacher Persp,* 8(3):688–699.
Oluwaniyi O (2009) Internal child trafficking in Nigeria: Transcending legal borders. In: Agbu O (ed) Children and youth in the labour process in Africa. Council for the Development of Social Science research in Africa (CODESRIA), Dakar, p 81–110.
O'Neill T (2001) "Selling girls in Kuwait": Domestic labour migration and trafficking discourse in Nepal. *Anthropologica* 153–164.
Opara V (2007) Emerging issues in the trafficking of African women for prostitution. In: Falola T., Afolabi, N. (ed) The human cost of African migrations. New York: Routledge, pp 165–220.
Ray, N (2006) Looking at trafficking through a new lens. Cardozo. *J Law & Gen* 12:909–928.
Scarpa, S (2006) Child Trafficking: international instruments to protect the most vulnerable victims. *Fam Court Rev.* 44(3):429–447.

UNESCO (2006) Human Trafficking in Nigeria: Root Causes and Recommendations. Policy Paper Poverty Series No. 14.2 (E). Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO (2014) Nigeria: Socio-economic indicators. Available at: http://www.uis.unesco.org/DataCentre/Pages/country-profile.aspx?code=5660&regioncode=40540&SPSLanguage=EN [Accessed 9 Oct. 2018].

UN.GIFT (2008) 012 Workshop: The role of the media in building image. The Vienna Forum to fight Human Trafficking 13–15 February 2008, Austria Center Vienna Background Paper. Available from: www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/2008/BP012TheRoleoftheMedia.pdf [Accessed 9 Oct. 2018].

UNICEF (2007a) Child trafficking information sheet: Nigeria with estimates from FOS/ILO National Child Labour Survey, 2003, Available at: http://www.unicef.org/wcaro/WCARO_Nigeria_Factsheets_ChildTrafficking.pdf [Accessed 9 Oct. 2018].

UNICEF (2007b) Girls' education: Nigeria country office. Available at: www.unicef.org/nigeria/NG_resources_girleducationinfosheet.pdf [Accessed 9 Oct. 2018].

UNICEF (2017) Reducing global poverty through universal primary and secondary education. Available at: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0025/002503/250392E.pdf [Accessed 9 Oct. 2018].

United Nations (2001) The Race Dimensions of Trafficking in Persons-Especially Women and Children. World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. Geneva: UN.

UNODC (2013) Abuse of a position of vulnerability and other "means" within the definition of trafficking in persons. Issue paper. Available at: https://www.unodc.org/.../UNODC_2012_Issue_Paper_-_Abuse_of_a_Position_of_V... [Accessed 10 Oct. 2019].

Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act (2004) The Compulsory, Free, Universal Basic Education Act and other related matters. Abuja: UBE Available at https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/87623/99979/.../NGA87623.pdf [Accessed 9 Oct. 2018].

WENR (2011) The education system in Nigeria. World Education News & Reviews (WENR). Available at: http://wenr.wes.org/2011/08/wenr-julyaugust-2011-practical-information/ [Accessed 9 Oct. 2018].

Woodhead, M (2004) Psychosocial impacts of child work: A framework for research, monitoring and intervention. *Int'l J. Child. Rts*. 12, 321.