

Original Article

Understanding Recruitment Practices of Human Trafficking

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Abstract - Millions of people are trapped in the cycle of human trafficking. A lot of legal structures have been put forward to stop this crime; however, it is believed that it is persistent. Little is known about the traffickers, how they operate and who they are. It is with this concern that this study was conducted in Arusha, Tanzania. The study involved 400 respondents from seven district councils of the Arusha Region. Both probability and non-probability methods were utilized to sample the respondents. Data was collected using a questionnaire, face-to-face and key informant interviews and focus group discussions. It was reported that the women (96%) are the main perpetrators of trafficking in person and normally use false promises, fraudulent techniques and even force. These women are either relatives or friends of the victims or their families. During recruitment, Parents send their kids to relatives or friends abroad or in urban areas (54%); Family members entrust wealthier persons or members of a community (52.8%); and trafficker offer opportunities, better lives and well-paying jobs. From the study, it is concluded that much as men were also involved in the trafficking of young women, females as the main recruiter as compared to men though through the eye of the lawmen, are seen as the main culprit. This study is believed to add more information to the world of academics, which seeks to know much information on human trafficking to end it.

Keywords - Human, Trafficking, Recruitment, Women, Perpetrators.

1. Introduction

Millions of men, women and children suffer the consequences of human trafficking worldwide. It is estimated that more than 29.5 million people worldwide are victims of human trafficking (Childreach International, 2013; European Parliament, 2016). These men, women and children are trafficked from one country to another or one continent to another to perform different activities such as agricultural activities, domestic servitude, prostitution and mining (Kamazima, 2009; Mtewe, 2012; IOM, 2008). Though trafficking involves all men, women, boys and girls, statistics inform that more than 70% of the trafficking victims are women and girls (Veil, 1999; Pouyki, 2012; Woldu, 2014; Voronova and Anja, 2016; and UNODC, 2022).

Traffickers are people of different age groups, male or female, who enable or partake in the trade and exploitation of individual human beings (UNODC, 2008). Traffickers occupy a central place between supply and demand. On the one hand, they try to increase the supply of trafficked persons through recruitment, often using false information, fraudulent identification and abuse of power. On the other hand, they try to boost the demand by providing easy access to a steady supply of trafficked persons (UNICEF, 2006). The perpetrators of human trafficking earn a lot through this illegal business. The human trafficking business is the second largest criminal enterprise in the world, as it is

estimated to earn more than 150 Billion Dollars each year (ILO, 2014; OHCHR, 2014). This illegal business has been persistent despite different efforts to end it, and it is reported that it is steadily growing. According to human rights first (2020), traffickers range from small-time, solo operators to lose networks of criminals to highly sophisticated criminal organizations that operate internationally. Also, it is believed that traffickers choose this trade in humans because the perpetrators need low startup capital or none, minimal risk, and eventually, they gain high profits.

In Tanzania, human trafficking has been persistent, like in other countries worldwide. It is reported that the country is a destination, transit and source of victims of human trafficking. According to the Global Slavery Index Report of 2018, human trafficking in Tanzania is still a problem. It is estimated that more than 336,000 people have been trafficked within and outside the country in 2018 only. The report continues to reveal that Tanzania is a leading country among the East African countries in human trafficking (Global Slavery Index, 2018). Domestic trafficking is more prominent in the country despite different efforts implemented. Women and girls are moved from rural to urban areas for commercial sex, labour and domestic servitude. People involved in the trafficking network are not well known, and the trafficking network is still working in private ways. Many studies have been conducted to establish



the causes, magnitude, effects and impacts of human trafficking (Kamazima, 2009; IOM, 2008, Mathias, 2012; and IOM, 2018). However, none of these studies has concentrated on understanding who the perpetrators of human trafficking are and how they operate. The current studies conducted research in the Arusha Region, which is a Destination and also a source of the victims of human trafficking, to establish the perpetrators and to understand the trafficking operation in the study area.

2. Methodology

The study was conducted using both qualitative and quantitative methods. A questionnaire was utilized to 400 respondents from seven district councils of the Arusha region. Apart from the questionnaire, the study used key informants and face-to-face interviews as qualitative data collection tools.

It applied both probability and non-probability sampling techniques to select the respondents. Simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were utilized to get respondents for the questionnaire. In contrast, snowball and purposive were utilized to get respondents for face-to-face, focus group discussions and key informant interviews. A total of 400 respondents were included in the study through a questionnaire, and a total of 14 respondents were obtained for face-to-face interviews. At the same time, 19 individuals were involved in key informant interviews. Two groups of women and two groups of men were involved in focus group discussions.

Descriptive statistical analysis employed frequencies, percentages, mean, and measures of variations for data analysis. In contrast, for qualitative data, the content analysis involved thematic exploration (based on words, concepts, literary devices, and nonverbal cues) and exploration of the interconnections among themes (Schurink, 2005; Zvavanyange, 2016).

3. Results

3.1. The Characteristics of the Respondents

The study had a total of 400 women who, in a way, have experienced the grudges of human trafficking. The respondents aged between 15 to 24 years since it is the age mostly affected by trafficking. The age, education level, marital status, occupation, residence status, education level of partner, income per month and type of house are presented in Table 1

From the research findings, it was established that the majority (71.2%) of the respondents were at the age group of 20 to 24 years of age, while 43.8% of them reported being married before being trafficked. In their education level, a good number of them (74%) revealed that they at least have

completed primary education while very few (1.5%) have achieved tertiary education.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents (n=400)

Category	Frequency	Percent
Age		
15-19	115	28.5
20-24	285	71.5
Education level		
No formal Education	39	13
Primary	210	70
Secondary	33	11
Tertiary	18	6
Marital status		
Have you been married before	175	43.8
Have never been married	225	56.2

4. Key findings

The following section will discuss different information regarding the sex of the traffickers, how the victims and the traffickers connect and who travels with the victim from her home to her new destination. A series of questions were asked to understand the trafficking process for the women and the people involved in the cycle of trafficking. Initially, the study investigated the methods and networks used to recruit the victims. With this question, the study intended to know the type of network or method available for recruiting the victims and potential victims. Also, the sex of the trafficker was questioned, and the relationship between the recruiter and the victim was inquired. Afterwards, if any, the promises given were inquired since it is believed that a person moves from one place to another only when the benefits of moving to outweigh the current situation. Data collection tools used in this study was the questionnaire as the quantitative tool and face-to-face and key informant interview as the qualitative tools. Percentage and frequencies were presented as descriptive findings, while different quotes and statements were presented as themes from qualitative data.

5. Sex of the Trafficker

The study intended to establish the sex of the traffickers in the study area. Table 2 shows that 96% of respondents reported that the majority of the traffickers were females, and only 4% described that the traffickers were males. That means these women are the ones who arranged and facilitated the process of trafficking the victims to their current destination. The victims were either taken from their parent's homes or met the trafficker after they had escaped or moved from their parent's homes.

Table 2. The sex of traffickers (n=400)

Sex of traffickers	Frequency	Percent
Female	383	95.8
Male	15	3.7
Both Male and Female	2	0.5
Total	400	100

This was also mentioned in the focus group discussions and face-to-face interviews. It was learnt that most of the time, women living in urban areas like those from Arusha town, Dar es Salaam and other places like Namanga and Karatu town go back to the village where they come from to fetch new girls for trafficking. These women convince the victims and their parents about the type of work the girls will work, and after reaching the new destination, the victims are sold or given to other people who employ them in exploitative jobs. Most of the time, the traffickers might be relatives, friends or neighbors. A case of this sort is reported in Mto wa Mbu is illustrated below;

"My cousin came back to the village and convinced my parents to take me with her to Arusha town. My parents were convinced since she promised to take me to VETA for some cookery course. When I came with her, I ended up doing all the household chores and taking care of her children. Years later, I was still a helper. So a friend I met told me to escape so that I can go and work with her in a bar, I escaped my cousin's place, and here I am, working as a barmaid".

This was just one of the cases where the victims reported having their relatives traffic them to new destinations to exploit them. In other cases, the victim escapes from their parent's home for different reasons, such as gender violence, forced marriage to an older suitor, e.t.c. and meets the trafficker who takes them in, ready to exploit them. The following case illustrates this;

"I am from Singida and was married as a second wife when I was only 17 to an old man. After getting married, I had my three kids, two boys and a girl. I went to VETA after my second child. Life was okay up to when my husband had to take in a third wife. He became very abusive to me. It was during this time that I decided to escape after I met a friend's aunty who lived in Arusha. She told me life was so good, and there were lots of opportunities. She promised to find me a job as a hotel manager since I had knowledge from VETA. After escaping, she took me in as a domestic helper at her home with a salary of Tshs 20,000/= per month; I had to escape and find a better job to support my kids back home".

6. Relationship between the Victims and Trafficker

The study also established the relationship the trafficker had with the victim. Table 3 shows the relationship between the victims and the trafficker.

Table 3. The relationship between the victim and recruiter (n=400)

Relationship between the victim and recruiter	Frequency		Percent	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Neighbor	78	322	20	80
Acquaintance	98	302	25	75
Friend	173	227	43	57
Relative	201	199	50	50
Partner	21	379	5	95

From the table above, it is clear that the majority of respondents (50%) were recruited for human trafficking by their relatives, while 43% reported their friends to be their recruiters. Neighbours' recruitment contributed to 20% of all the respondents. This confirms that relatives and friends are the main perpetrators of human trafficking. This might be because the parents of the victims and the victims trust them to take care of their children while they are with them. The above findings correlate with those reported by IOM (2016), which states that almost half of identified human trafficking cases begin with some family member involvement. The report further states that a family member or relative contributes to about 41% of the recruitment of victims and children, while friends contribute to about 11% of all cases reported. Taken together, family members or relatives, friends, and intimate partners are involved in the initial stages of human trafficking. A substantial proportion of trafficking cases, therefore, involve persons who have intimacy, bonds of trust, and familial ties with the victims in the initial stages of trafficking (IOM, 2016). In addition, ILO (2016) also reports that Studies by International Domestic Workers Network (IDWN) in Tanzania indicated that 68 per cent of workers are recruited through friends or family members, 10 per cent applied personally, seven (7) are employed through a recruitment agency and 2 per cent other methods. From focus group discussion in Meru, it was also learnt that even truck drivers are used to traffic the victims from one place to another, as they state;

"Fuso drivers are the ones ferrying the girls from Meru to Dar Es Salaam; the drivers sometimes hide the girls in their vehicles and transfer them to far regions or even aboard to Kenya Nairobi. They are paid a large amount of money starting from Tshs 200,000/= to even 700,000/=".

This was also reported in Longido and Ngorongoro districts during face-to-face interviews. The victims reported crossing Kenya - Tanzania border through a truck. The truck

driver hid them well in the luggage. The following case illustrates;

"During the night, the immigration officers do not inspect the vehicles passing. I waited with the driver of the truck till it was dark. After 8.00 p.m. that is when we started our journey crossing the border to Nairobi. We reached there around 24.30 a.m. My boss was waiting for me to arrive. The driver was paid a certain amount of money, and he left me there".

This situation relates to a situation explained by USAID (2007), which did research in Africa and found out that in Africa, methods of trafficking are varied and depend extensively on the availability of public transportation and communication systems, as well as on the presence of border control. High levels of corruption can facilitate trafficking and increase the presence of organized crime groups.

OHCHR (2016) also supports the argument that the recruiters are often relations, friends, and neighbours who can, at times, deceive the parents that they are assisting in giving their children a better life by taking them to the city or outside the country. Delightful words and promises will be said to the parents, who, in the end, agree with the recruiters.

From table 4, it is shown that the victims (57.8%) are the ones who approached the recruiter. While 24.5% of the respondents reported being approached by the recruiter. When asked why they had to approach the recruiter, the respondents reported that harmful practices, violence, and hard work pushed them due to the extreme poverty situation in their homes. They thought the only solution they had was to leave their homes. However, they had to find someone who could facilitate the process, which is when the recruiter was found. The recruiters, as discussed above, are either their friends or relatives and happened to traffic the victims, and in other cases, the recruiters were found through their friends or relatives. The following case of a girl in Namanga illustrates this;

"My family survived only through subsistence farming and working as labourers in farms, we lived under very hard conditions. Since I was the eldest, after completing my primary education, I started thinking of finding a job to assist my parents. It was in 2016 when a friend returned home from town; she was looking good, wearing good clothes and even her appearance. I approached her to help me find a good job in town. After she came back to the town, she sent me a bus fare from Karatu to Namanga to come for the job. Without knowing anything, I came here. Nothing promised has been fulfilled; I am struggling to work as a bartender and sometimes a prostitute to make ends meet".

Table 4. The communication between the victim and recruiter (n=400)

Communication between the victim and recruiter	Frequency	Percent
The victim has approached the recruiter	231	57.8
The recruiter has approached the victim	98	24.5
The family of the victim has approached the recruiter	71	17.8
Total	400	100.0

7. Methods and Networks Used to Recruit the Victims

A number of methods were mentioned by the respondents to be used by the traffickers in recruiting them. The methods include; Parents sending their kids to relatives or friends abroad or in urban areas (54%); Family members entrusting wealthier persons or members of a community (52.8%); and trafficker offering opportunities, better lives and well-paying jobs. The trust and the promises are not always kept, as a good number of respondents reported that the recruiters never kept the promises they made before being trafficked to their new destination. The following incidence from the Meru focus group discussion shows;

"I was recruited through a relative who lives in Dar es Salaam; she came with me to Arusha and left me here. When I was being recruited to come and work in Arusha, I was promised a good salary of 60,000/= Tanzanian shillings per month, better living conditions (a rented room with bed and cooking facilities), and once in a year, I was promised to go home for holidays. After reaching here I am receiving 20,000/= Tanzanian Shillings as my salary with no other benefits. I share a room with other three girls. Nothing goes as I was promised".

Table 5. The methods and networks used to recruit the victims (n=400)

Method	Frequency		Percent	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Parents send their kids to relatives/ friends abroad or in urban areas	216	184	54	46
Family member entrusting a wealthier person or member of a community	211	189	52.8	47.2
Traffickers offer opportunities (better lives and well-paying jobs)	158	242	39.5	60.5
Force, Abduction and Fraud	60	340	15	85

This was further discussed and elaborated during the focus group discussion, where the participants explained that many parents trust their relatives, hoping they will take good care of their children. This is not often the case, as some of them end up exploiting the child into working as domestic helpers, barmaids or sometimes as attendants at their eateries. During the face-to-face interviews, some of the young women reported that they were promised vocational and secondary education. Others were offered bar managers opportunities but ended up being bartenders. That shows that the majority of the victims suffer instead of enjoying as they were promised before trafficking. The following quotations from face to face interview explain;

"My aunty promised to take me to study in vocational institutes, my family was so happy since they could not afford to pay for my studies in such institutes. I came to Karatu knowing I am going to be an hotelier, this is the fourth year I am yet to be enrolled".

In another incident, a girl from Longido Districts retorts;

"I never could have imagined that working in an eatery (Mama lishe) as a waiter was what my aunty meant when she convinced me and my family to come to Namanga. After reaching here, I wanted to go to VETA, but she said I should gain experience first. Afterwards, she will take me there. Nowadays, whenever I ask her about VETA, she becomes very furious and threatens to beat me".

8. Promises made before Trafficking

As discussed in focus groups and face-to-face interviews, it is obvious that the recruiters use many methods in luring the victims and their families. They use fraud, which is false and attractive promises to ensure the victims are satisfied and agree with the conditions given. They promise many things, such as good job opportunities, safe and clean places to stay, and educational opportunities. This is demonstrated in this case from a face-to-face interview in Meru;

"I was lured to come to Arusha from Babati when I was in standard six; I came with my mother's friend with promises to continue with my studies. I ended up being a domestic helper at her home and never went to school again".

Apart from fraud, the recruiters use coercion which can involve threats of serious harm to physical restraint against any person; any scheme, plan or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that failure to perform an act would result in serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; or the abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process (NHTRC, 2015; UNIGIFT, 2010). In the current study, a number of

promises were given to the victims, as shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6. The promises made to the victims (n=400)

Promise	Frequency		Percent	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Domestic work	219	181	54.8	45.2
Education/ Training	127	273	31.8	68.2
Luxury Life	115	285	28.8	71.2
Prostitution	31	369	7.8	92.2
Marriage	16	384	4	96
Entertainer/ Bar Tender	6	394	1.5	98.5

From table 6, it is apparent that a significant number of the victims were promised to work as domestic helpers (54.5%), while 31.8% of the victims were promised to be educated since they had only attained their primary and secondary education. Only a few of them (4% and 7.8%) were promised to be married or work as prostitutes, respectively. The table shows that only 1.5% of the victims were told they would work in the entertainment and bar. However, table 7 shows that the promises were merely kept, as many victims ended up doing jobs that were not promised to them.

Table 7. The jobs the victims ended up doing in their new destinations (n=400)

Job at destination	Frequency		Percent	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Domestic work	164	236	40.8	59.2
Bar-attendant	137	263	34.1	65.9
Sex work (prostitution)	26	374	6.5	93.5
Food processing	66	334	16.4	83.6
Others	7	393	1.7	98.3

Out of 219 girls who promised to work as domestic helpers, only 164 ended up working in this sector. Only 6 girls were promised to work in the bar and entertainment, but this sector ended up employing 137 girls. Whereby some of them worked as commercial sex workers. The food and catering (Mama lishe) sector employed 66 girls, which was not in the earlier promises. This confirms that the recruiters lied to the victims and their families about the type of work they would be doing. The following case from a face-to-face interview in Mto wa Mbu exemplifies;

"It has been six years since I went back home during the holidays. I am ashamed since my parents know that I am working as a manager in a hotel, but sadly I am working

as a barmaid. The promises given to me as a hotelier were all lies. I always fear the day I will be seen by either our village neighbours or relatives. They will definitely go back and tell my parents. Not only will my parents curse and isolate me but the whole village. This type of work is not accepted in our faith. But what can I do? I need to survive, and I was fooled into accepting this job."

9. Discussion

From the findings in the section above, it is evident that a good number of respondents were recruited for human trafficking by their relatives and friends (50% and 43%, respectively). In comparison, only a few (20%) reported their neighbors as their recruiters. This confirms that relatives and friends are the main perpetrators of human trafficking. Much as men were involved in the trafficking of young women, 95.8% of the respondents reported females as the main recruiter compared to men. Female perpetrators have been reported elsewhere as Agbulos (2018) reports that human trafficking businesses have both men and women who manage and control the distribution and selling of women (as well as men) to interested parties who make up the demand component of human trafficking. Female perpetrators include pimps, madams, managers, recruiters, and handlers. These were most likely former prostitutes and or victims of human trafficking who were promoted to managerial roles alongside their male pimps and who earned money. Another study by UNODC/ UN also supports this argument. GIFT (2008) which reports that most convicted traffickers are male, as are convicts of virtually every other crime. Female offending rates are higher for human trafficking than for other crimes, however. This may be partly due to the importance of trust between the victim and the perpetrator. Additionally, in some markets, victims may become exploiters over time, as this may be the only way to escape further exploitation.

Apart from the sex of the recruiter, the method used to get the victims included parents sending their kids to relatives or friends abroad or urban areas through trust (54%); family member entrusting a wealthier person or member of a community and trafficker offering opportunities (52.8%), and 39.5% of the respondents reported that better lives and well-paying jobs were a pull factor for them to human trafficking. A lot of false promises were also mentioned by the victims. The recruiter had promised the victims good job opportunities and working conditions, and as a result, the victims reported all promises as lies. It is apparent that a significant number of the victims were promised to work as domestic helpers (54.5%), while 31.8% of the victims were promised to be educated since they had only attained their primary and secondary education. Only a few of them (4% and 7.8%) were promised to be married or work as prostitutes. Only 1.5% of the victims were told that they would be working in the entertainment and bar. The

working conditions promised included better housing, a good salary, few working hours and food; however, the victims reported these to be contrary to what they were actually getting. Out of 219 (54.7%) respondents who promised to work as domestic helpers, only 164 (41%) ended up working in this sector. Only 6 (1.5%) respondents were promised to work in the bar and entertainment, but this sector ended up employing 137 (34.7%) young women. Other respondents worked as commercial sex workers, while a good number of them (16.5%) worked in the food and catering (*Mama lishe*) sector, which was not in the earlier promises. This confirms that the recruiters lied to the victims and their families about the type of work they would be doing. These findings coincide with the findings from other studies done in Tanzania and elsewhere. In a study by Mathias (2011) and Human Rights Watch (2006), it was reported that the false promises of education, employment and a better life in town attract victims of trafficking. The people involved were parents and close relatives, neighbours, family friends, as well as business persons.

Further it was also reported that low-income families opt for sending children to seek alternative means of living, whereas orphans are attracted by promises of security, support and opportunities of generating income or study. Complementing the above, Kamazima (2009) and IOM (2011) also report that parents from destitute families trust their relatives, friends and neighbours. In a case reported by Kamazima (2009), Female timber traders were reported as the leading traffickers of girls and boys from the Mufindi district. Apart from purchasing timber products, these women persuaded desperate youth by promising them a better life in the urban areas: better-paying jobs, marriage or education. Alternatively, the female traders persuade the youth's parents with fake promises or money ranging from TZS 20,000 to TZS 40,000.

The parents tend to believe the promises given to their children include further education, better jobs and an even better future. Mathias (2011) recalls a case where a young girl, age 12, was taken by her uncle with promises of schooling following the death of her parents. However, she was made house girl (maid) and mistreated, unlike her age mate cousin. This case relates to the cases given elsewhere, where young women were given false promises by their traffickers. They were promised higher incomes to improve their economic situations, support their parents and siblings, and escape violent situations. As a result, they ended up being exploited as domestic servants, bar attendants or other exploitative jobs. In another similar case reported by Childreach (2013), it was affirmed that often, recruiters visit villages and approach unwary parents with glamorous stories promising a better life. Tales of incredible job prospects are spun before unsuspecting parents. Recruiters and returnees often fail to mention the fact that the jobs waiting for them are actually in forced prostitution, hard manual labour or

domestic servitude, where the children are likely to face abuse. Trust is a huge problem, as many trafficked people are victims of their own relatives, friends and partners. Young women and girls especially are often lured by men who promise them marriage, a good life, work or money, and then become dumped into prostitution or domestic servitude.

10. Conclusion

Conclusively, the study shows that relatives and friends are the main perpetrators of human trafficking. Much as men

were involved in the trafficking of young women, the respondents reported females as the main recruiter compared to men. Women perpetrators consist of pimps, madams, managers, recruiters, and handlers who tend to recruit young women and exploit or send them to be exploited) The parents from destitute families trust their relatives, friends and neighbours and agree to send their daughters with them. This has been the issue elsewhere where human trafficking has been happening.

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