

An Appraisal of Traditional Methods of Intervention in Conflict Resolution: The Case of Human Trafficking in Edo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The traditional intervention on human trafficking in Edo State, which is the hub of human trafficking in Nigeria in 2017, 2018 and 2019, has sparked-off deep controversy among the national and international political pundits. While some argue that it will have no impact, others insist that it will reduce human trafficking to the lowest minimum. The debate remains proliferated with claims and counterclaim. However, using a sample of 910 respondents from the three senatorial zones of the state and evidence from secondary sources and the social control theory, the study revealed that the traditional method of intervention adopted by the traditional leadership has reduced drastically the conflict of human trafficking in Edo State. It was recommended that Edo State government and Nigeria in general should endeavour to create job opportunities for these teaming unemployed youths to discourage them from thinking of migrating abroad illegally, thereby, falling victim of human trafficking.

Keywords: *Conflict resolution, Edo State, human trafficking, traditional intervention method, social control theory, Nigeria.*

Introduction

Human trafficking is a global threat to which no country is immune. It is driven by enormous demand for cheap goods that generates huge profit for the traffickers and organized crime syndicates, but continues to impact negatively on human beings, their families and the society at large. Young female and children, especially from poorer economies are mostly the victims for the traffickers who constantly migrate across the borders for a greener pasture to a healthier economy. For instance, the International Labour Organization (ILO) on 2017 estimated that “21 million victims are trapped in modern-day slavery with 14.2 million (68%) exploited for Labour, 4.5 million (22%) sexually exploited, and 2.2 million (10%) exploited in state-imposed forced labour. The Forced Labour takes place in many different industries. Out of the 14.2 million trafficking victims exploited for Labour; 7.1 million (50%) forced Labour victims work in construction, manufacturing, mining, or utilities; 3.4 million (24%) forced labour victims are domestic workers; while 3.5 million (25%) forced labour victims work in agriculture. Also, 55% of trafficking victims around the world are women and girls and 45% are men and boys; 15.4 million victims (74%) are aged 18 or older, with the number of children under the age of 18 estimated at 5.5 million (26%). The Asia-pacific region accounts for the largest number of forced laborers with 11.7 million (56% of the global figure). Africa has 3.7 million (18%) followed by Latin America and the Caribbean with 1.8 million (9%). Countries in central, south-eastern and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States have 1.6 million (7%). The Developed Economies and European Union account for 1.5 million (7%). There are an estimated 600,000 (3%) victims in the Middle East. Human trafficking does not always involve travel to the destination of exploitation: 9.1 million victims of forced labour (44%) moved either internally or internationally, while the majority, 11.8 million (56%), were subjected to force labour within their place of origin. Victims spend an average of 18 months in forced labour, although this varied with different forms of forced labour” (cited in Ahiuma-Young, 2017, 5).

ILO (2017) further noted that “not less than \$150 billion profits are earned annually by traffickers across the globe. The breakdown of the profits by sector shows \$99 billion from commercial sexual exploitation, \$34 billion in construction, manufacturing, mining and utilities, \$9 billion in agriculture, including forestry and fishing, just as \$8 billion dollars is saved annually by private households that employ domestic workers under conditions of forced labour. While only 22% of victims are trafficked for sex. Sexual exploitation earns 66% of the global profits of human trafficking” (cited in Ahiuma-Young, 2017, 5).

Africa contributes significantly to the global threat for trafficking in persons. Since the ousting of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 in Libya and the consequent political turmoil and armed conflict that erupted in the country, Libya has now become the main departure point for African traffickers and organise syndicate to Western Europe, especially Italy, Spain, Belgium and France, the Middle East and the Gulf countries

(Zavis & Simmons, 2017; Walk Foundation's Global Slavery Index, 2016; Elbagir, Razek, Platt & Jones, 2017). The above view was attested to by Nita Bhalla on 31st of July 2018, when he stated, among other things, that,

Libya is the main departure point for African migrants attempting to reach Europe by sea, with more than 600,000 migrants crossing the Mediterranean to Italy over four years. Trafficking and smuggling networks have flourished in Libya due to political turmoil and armed conflict, with groups often profiting from fuel and weapons to drugs and migrants. These migrants are often subjected to torture, extortion and trafficking for organ removal. Armed groups also traffic them to the territories where they operate for sexual slavery, and force men and boys to become combatants (Bhalla, 2018, 3).

Similarly, Sub-Saharan Africa is estimated to be 13.6 percent of the world's trafficking (Walk Free Foundation, 2016, p.76). Unfortunately, Nigeria which is one of the countries in Sub-Sahara Africa serves as a source and transit root for human trafficking from Libya to Europe. It is a country of 198 million populations with 87 million poor citizens, making it the world's poverty capital (Adebayo, 2018; Akinkuotu, 2018; Chima, 2018; Adekunle 2018 and Anumihe, 2018). No wonder, human trafficking which is mostly driven by extreme poverty, corruption, conflict, climate change, etc thrives in the country. For instance, the Global Slavery Index (GSI) (2018) report, noted that Nigeria ranks 23rd out of the countries with the highest number of slaves. Equally, GSI noted that the population of the people in slavery in Nigeria is 1.384 million people, more than the total number of all the other 16 West African countries added together, which is put at 1.081 million. It further noted that seven out of 1000 Nigerian citizens live in modern slavery, while the vulnerability of Nigerians to modern slavery is 74 out of 100 people. Similarly, in January 2017, according to the statistics by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the number of Nigerian women who travel by boat from Libya to Italy in 2016 doubled. The breakdown is as follows:

Approximately 80% of the 11,009 Nigerian women registered at landing points in Sicily in 2016 were trafficked, and will go on to live a life of forced prostitution in Italy and other countries in Europe. The figure is almost double that of 2015, when 5,600 women were registered by the IOM. The 2016 figures represent an almost eightfold increase from 2014, when 1,450 Nigerian women were registered at landing points in Sicily (*The Guardian*, 12 January 2017, 5).

Edo State, which is the focus of this study, is the hub or capital of human trafficking in Nigeria, and Africa's largest departure point, as hundreds of human trafficking are certified by the researchers to be illegally smuggled out from Auchi, a town in Edo State to Kano state in the North West of Nigeria, to Libya, from where they are transported to Europe and other parts of the world. In fact, majority of these trafficked women are from Edo State. For instance, an astonishing 85% of all Nigerian women trafficked to Europe for prostitution hail from Edo State (*Okokon, 2016*), with Italy being the number one destination country. Corroborating the above view, IOM (2018) noted that, as of July 2018, over 60,000 Nigerians remain trapped in Libya, with 50% of them hailing from Edo State. Similarly, Nigeria has repatriated over 8,000 migrants from Libya since April 2017 via EU- IOM Initiative. Of these numbers rescued, most of the victims are from Edo State and Delta State with Edo State leading (National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons, NAPTIP, 2017).

This ugly development which has greatly portrayed Edo State in bad light nationally and internationally has made the successive administrations in Edo State to take different drastic measures to curb this excess. For instance, the current governor of Edo State, Nigeria, Godwin Obaseki, in 2017 declared human trafficking to be one of his top priorities. He immediately created the Edo State Task Force to combat trafficking in persons which is made up of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons, IOM Nigeria, participants from NGOs, Edo State Police Commissioner, Nigeria Immigration Services, Edo State Director of State Security Services, Edo State Executives - the Attorney General, the Commissioner for Local Governments, the Commissioner for Youth, and among many others. These groups immediately swung into action, fortunately, some arrests have been made and very few prosecuted and jailed by the current State governor's newly constituted committees, yet, many could not be prosecuted because the victims failed to open up in court because of the oath they took in different deities in Edo state. The above view was attested to by the NAPTIP spokesman in Edo State, Mr. Josiah Emerole, on 18 February 2018, when he noted that,

The issue of oath taking has been a fundamental challenge faced by NAPTIP over the years, especially as regards victims' testimony, as the victims believe that the oaths will kill or harm them if they cooperate with us in the course of our investigation (Emerole, 2018, 6).

In fact, all efforts put by the state government and different agencies charged with the control of human trafficking in the state proved abortive as human trafficking continues to increase in intensity and magnitude to the embarrassment of the state and the country in general.

However, the timely intervention of the traditional leadership led by His Royal Majesty, the Omo N'Oba N'Edo Uku Akpolokpolo, Oba Ewuare II, Oba of Benin, on March 10, 2018, through placing a curse on human traffickers, native doctors and cultists who aid and abet human trafficking in Edo State has been seen as a welcome development by Edo State government, indigenes at home and diasporas (Egbegbulem, 2018). According to the Royal Majesty,

It has been reported that the traffickers would first take their victims to native doctors to swear an oath that they would not disclose the names of their traffickers and sponsors. Your power is to fight for the progress of Benin kingdom and not to be used for the destruction of our young people. From the statistics available, most of those being trafficked and the sponsors are from Edo state, and it is shameful that people who already have jobs would sell all they have and give to sponsors just to go to Europe. We have some people gainfully employed as mechanics, welders, tailors etc, selling their working tools to pay traffickers to take them to Italy or Germany. Those who traffic people to Italy, Germany and other countries first take them to Libya where they are enslaved. I urge you all to tell those who took the oath of secrecy to speak up, we will protect them. We need to start arresting those involved because this is a crime against God and humanity. It is modern day slavery. From today, we no longer want to hear of human trafficking in Benin. I hope those who have been involved in this illegal trade will stop from today. All native doctors who have administered oath of secrecy on victims of human trafficking should also tell those they administered such oath on to speak out. I am appealing to all native doctors to stop administering such oaths on trafficked victims and all such oaths are hereby nullified. No native doctor should do any charm for any potential illegal migrant to cross international border. Those who did it before now are forgiven and whoever does it from today will face the wrath of our ancestors (cited in Ebegbulem, 2018, 2).

It is in this light that this study, among other things, intends to carry out a critical appraisal of the role of traditional leadership in conflict resolution of human trafficking in Edo State, Nigeria. Therefore, the study proceeds as follows: the first section presents the introduction, followed by the second section which provides the conceptualization of human trafficking and traditional method of intervention. The third section presents literature review and theoretical underpinning of the study, while the fourth and fifty sections look at the methodology, results and discussion of the study. The sixth section examines the traditional leadership intervention in human

trafficking in Edo State Nigeria. The final concludes.

Conceptualizing Human Trafficking and Traditional Method of Crime Control

Human trafficking is defined within the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, (hereafter, Trafficking Protocol) supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (hereafter, Organised Crime Convention). The Trafficking Protocol defines human trafficking as:

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation (Trafficking Protocol 2000: article 3 cited in Ikeora, 2016, 3).

On the other hand, traditional method of crime control is culturally relative to most of the 250 or so ethnic and sub-ethnic nationalities in Nigeria. While in some cultures or ethnic groups, the chiefs, elders in council, village heads, age-grade, vigilante groups, religion etc, are used for crime control, others use the invocation of their respective deities – juju, to put a curse for prevention of criminal behaviours. However, we are strictly concerned with using juju, the deities, gods, and ancestors for crime control. Juju, as most people in West Africa call it, can be defined “as a fetish charm believed by (but not limited to) West Africans to have magical or supernatural powers, mostly vindictive. It forms part of an African traditional belief system one which takes diverse forms and practices in different cultures and traditions” (Ikeora, 2016, 7). So, these jujus', the deities, gods and ancestors are used to put a curse, either by the chief priest or the traditional leadership, on anybody who would break the law or do anything that the community or society prohibits. In fact, they are used to prevent or control serious crimes or the society's laws before the advent of modern crime control. Therefore, this study will adopt the definition of curse as vividly stated by Oba (2006). According to him, curses are defined as a measure to compel people to respect their taboos and laws which serve as a control. Curses were generally feared because of the belief that defaulters would be inflicted with protracted sickness, sudden death or other calamities.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The escalation of human trafficking in Nigeria has elicited explanations from different scholars. For instance, Okonofua, et al (2004) noted that Benin City, the headquarters of Edo State, is known to have one of the highest rates of international sex trafficking of young women in Nigeria. This study was designed to determine the

knowledge, attitudes and experiences of young women in Benin City, towards international sex trafficking. A random household sample of 1456 women aged 15–25 years was interviewed with a structured questionnaire that elicited information on women's experiences of, and attitudes towards international sex trafficking. The results indicate that 97.4% of the women have heard of international sex trafficking; 70% had female relatives who lived in the receiving countries of Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands; while 44.0% knew of someone who was currently engaged in sex work abroad. Up to 32% of the women reported that they had been approached by someone offering to assist them to travel abroad. Women of poorer socio-economic status (being out-of-school, unemployed, parents uneducated and unemployed) were more likely to report having been offered assistance to travel abroad. Up to 81.5% of the women supported the notion that sex trafficking should be stopped, while 18.5% felt it should be allowed to continue. They noted that the perception that sex trafficking leads to wealth creation and economic gains for women was the most common reason proffered by those wanting the practice to continue. By contrast, the fear of adverse health consequences and the need to maintain social and religious morals were the reasons given by those wanting the practice to discontinue. These results suggest that programs that promote the economic well being of women, and social advocacy focusing on harm reduction will be most helpful in reducing the rate of sex trafficking in Benin City. However, the authors failed to address the core issues that will reduce human trafficking drastically such as breaking the yoke of voodoo religious rituals on juju shrine.

Similarly, Lawal (2013) in his work titled “Human Trafficking in Edo State (Nigeria): A Socio- Economic Study”, focuses on Benin City which is inhabited mostly by the Bini group although other groups like the Ishan, Etsako, Akoko-Edo, and Owan are also well represented. He disagrees with the generally believe that Bini girls/women dominate the sex export to Europe through human trafficking. According to him, there is no reliable statistics to validate this assertion as most commentators engage in a blame game. However, the factors that account for human trafficking include the impact of the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970) and especially the six week occupation of the Bendel State by “Biafran” soldiers who raped girls and women recklessly; the corrupt military regimes (1966-1979, 1984-1998); the socio-economic impact of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP)-1986-1993; early physical and sexual abuse of teenage girls; collapse of family values and family honour, owing to prevalent polygamy, polyandry, adultery and prostitution to satisfy the inordinate ambition for affluence in the society. Others are the absence of parental role models; parental pressure, peer pressure and societal pressure to “go get money regardless of how it is earned” and remit some to build houses, supermarkets and buy custom-made cars. The paper gives the details and recommends some measures for the gradual eradication of the evils of human trafficking. It emphasizes that many Christians, Muslims and shrine priests are involved in the business just as the Yoruba, Edo, Igbo,

Hausa, etc. serve as agents and traffickers. However, the author's analysis on the factors that facilitate human trafficking is adequately captured but his view that there is no adequate statistics showing that Edo State dominates prostitution in Europe is unscientific. For instance, he should consult data on National Agency for the Prohibition on Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) 2017 – 2019. Also, data from International Organization for Migration (IOM) 2016 and 2018 and United Nation Office for Drugs and Crime (UNDOC) 2016 clearly and distinctly stated how Edo state is the capital of human trafficking in Nigeria.

In the same vein, Osezua (2016) interrogates “Gender Issues in human trafficking in Edo State, Nigeria”. He examines in particular the predominance of human trafficking within a social cultural milieu in Nigeria, by taking into account gender issues that have reinforced the phenomenon in the region. The study relied on primary data generated from an anthropological fieldwork conducted in the affected area. A total of 120 household heads were purposively selected and interviewed in order to capture family dynamics and power relations and women status in contemporary Benin society. In addition, four key-informants were interviewed to appreciate the historical and cultural context of the Benin people. Furthermore, eighteen (18) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted among males, females and youths with a view to capturing the insiders perspective of the perceived gender issues precipitating human trafficking. Findings revealed that the presence of classical patriarchy as shown in high prevalence of polygyny, male- child preference, inheritance and succession systems and highly controlled female sexuality, segregated and unequal access to critical economic resources have continued to heighten the inequality within the social structure in favour of the male child. The study concluded that efforts targeted towards eradicating existing gender inequality in the region can potentially mitigate the convoluted challenges posed by high human trafficking incidences in the region. However, the researcher didn't take into cognizance the juju saga which is the most important issue that can mitigate tremendously human trafficking in Nigeria.

Furthermore, Badejo (2016), examines “understanding human trafficking as a social issue in Nigeria: A multi-stream formative social marketing approach”. He observes that the traffickers offer young women the opportunity to travel to Europe, usually luring them with promises of well-paying jobs. These reports claim that though some trafficked women are increasingly aware that they will have to work as prostitutes as part of the 'job' they still choose to go because of lack of alternative employment opportunities. According these reports, before the journey, the woman and the human traffickers agree that the woman incurs a debt between US\$40,000-100,000, which normally takes between one and three years to repay. The agreement is sealed through a religious ritual in a 'juju' shrine where the victims swear an oath not to divulge identities of their traffickers and to pay back their debts in full. The oath is perceived as

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rehabilitation organizations working with trafficked individuals. Based on field research conducted in Lagos and Oyo States, the study focuses on health issues experienced by trafficking victims and rehabilitated individuals. The study documents the physical and psychological effects of trafficking as resulting from the living conditions of victims. It also investigates the (self)-medication practices among trafficked individuals. Nevertheless, the author is correct on the dearth of literature on the sexually transmitted diseases with regard to human trafficking. In fact, most of the literatures are concentrated on the process, economic advantage, the binding force-juju shrine etc, on human trafficking neglecting conspicuously the hazards of sexually transmitted disease and self-medication among trafficked victims.

Finally, Diagboya (2017), in his study titled “**trafficking for sexual exploitation: the gender gap**”, notes that the academic and grey literature only pay attention to human trafficking primarily focused on female victims. However, this study argues that they have suffered a gender bias. Based on field research conducted in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) in Abuja Nigeria, the study intends to bridge the gender gap by studying the experience of Male Sex Workers (MSWs). The study points out the variety of places and networks used by this population in the FCT. It also pinpoints series of migration trends that account for the presence of MSWs in Nigeria. As such, it looks at the various biographical trajectories of Abuja MSWs and provides an outlook on the community perceptions, along with a comparison with the classical female sex networks. However, the author is correct. Most of the literatures on human trafficking concentrated on the Female Sells Workers (FSW) neglecting the Male Sales Work (MSW). However, the author was silent on whether MSW are trafficked abroad.

Nevertheless, though many research works have been done on human trafficking by different world organizations - government and non-governmental organizations, scholars etc, which have been clearly and distinctly stated above. However, available literature above failed to examine an appraisal of traditional method of intervention in conflict resolution of human trafficking in Edo state, Nigeria, hence the need for this study.

Interestingly, the study adopted social control **Theory**. This theory is as well-known as the “social bond theory”. It was developed by Travis Hirschi in 1969. Hirschi clearly postulates that all people from the time we are born are basically bad apples that must be controlled by laws, rules and regulations in order to keep the society in check. It goes on to maintain that those who have a weak bond to societal controls ends up participating in deviant or criminal behaviour (Hirschi, 1969; Pratt, Gau and Franklin, 2011; Crawford, 2014). Hirschi goes on to state that people become involved in society in four distinct ways namely: (a) attachment (b) belief (c) commitment and (d) involvement. Pratt, Gau and Franklin (2011) clearly and distinctly explained the above

four bonds. For them, the attachment bond refers to the “the level of psychological affection one has for prosocial others and institutions” (Pratt, Gau & Franklin, 2011, 58). On the commitment bond, Pratt, Gau & Franklin (2011, 58) explain that it is the “importance of the social relationship that people value, which they would not want to risk jeopardizing by committing criminal or deviant act”. The involvement bond, according to Pratt, Gau & Franklin (2011, 58) as well is “the opportunity cost associated with how people spend their time... Idle hands are the devil's workshop”. The last bond is the Belief Bond which refers to “the degree to which one adheres to the values associated with behaviours that conform to the law” (Pratt, Gau & Franklin, 2011, 59).

Hirschi's social control theory explains society's involvement and engagement in criminal activity. Crawford (2014, 3) summarizes the above Hirschi's societal involvement and engagement in criminal activity, thus:

That human beings are not born with a conscience but rather that it is developed over time through interaction with important people and places in our lives. We are taught morals and values by our parents, schools, courts and police. Our churches and families instil in us religious beliefs that are also a huge influence on our behaviour and decisions. Parents enrol their children in extracurricular activities not only to teach them discipline and how to interact with their peers, but also in an effort to fill some of their free time so they do not spend it getting into trouble. It is children who do not have these influences in their lives that ultimately end up committing deviant or criminal acts according to the social control theory.

Also, social control theorist such as Hirschi (1969) delves into issues related to the prevention of crime. Crime can be prevented through the rules and regulation established by our parents, values and morals taught by the church or other religious institutions, and finally laws and regulation regulating the society or the state, which when broken, bring in the state security agencies – police etc. However, this study is strictly restricted to the issues of social control in preventing crime by value and morals that are taught through the African traditional religion.

When applied to an appraisal of traditional method of intervention in conflict resolution of human trafficking in Edo state, Nigeria. This theory suits the analysis because it is a model or theory that not only explains why people break the law, but also how to prevent such crime to keep the society in check. Whereas the modern method of conflict management and resolution in human trafficking in Edo State has proved abortive, the application of traditional mechanism by the traditional leaders led by his

Royal Majesty, the Oba of Benin, through the invocation of the wrath of the deities, gods and ancestors of the Benin kingdom on anybody who will involve themselves on human trafficking in Edo State, seems to have an impact which the analyses section will unravel. In Benin kingdom, the deities, gods, and ancestors were used in the olden days as a means of social control before the advent of colonialism in Nigeria. In those days there was peace (reduced crime) because of the general belief in the efficacy of their punishment should anybody disregard the reason by which it is invoked. In fact, they believe that the deity and the ancestors had the capacity to inflict death punishment on anybody who fails to adhere to any of the peace agreement. No wonder, the severity of the gods or deities punishment when it was invoked on the society for any issue was re-echoed by Kpae (2018, 40), when he noted that,

The deities or ancestors provided a means through which the people became attached and bounded to communities, because there was a general belief in the efficacy of their punishment should disputing parties disregard decisions and or resolution reached in a *tur-bue*. It was also believed that the wrath from ancestors and gods were severe if invoked in murder cases and other offences that could offend the gods of the land.

Methodology of The Study

We employed a cross sectional survey designed for this work. It involves gathering data about an appraisal of Traditional Method of Intervention in Conflict Resolution of Human Trafficking in Edo State, Nigeria. The population of the study is made up of the entire residence in the three Local Government Areas of Edo State namely Igueben L.G.A. in Edo Central (70,276), Etsako West L.G.A. in Edo North (63,276) and Oredo L.G.A. in Edo South Senatorial Zones (174,591) (2006 population census of the Federal Republic of Nigeria) and the zonal offices of NAPTIP, IOM and UNDOC in Abuja Nigeria, which is put at 308,143. Therefore, the total population of this study is 308,143. To have sizeable number for this study, judgemental method of sampling was adopted as only people with knowledge and experience in the area under this study were selected. A total of nine hundred and ten (910) respondents were selected for the study out of the population. The data for the study were from primary sources. We structured the questionnaire into two sections. Section (A) captured the personal data of respondents and section (B) was designed to elicit responses on an Appraisal of Traditional Method of Intervention in Conflict Resolution of Human Trafficking in Edo State, Nigeria. Raw data were coded to make analysis easy. Frequency distribution, simple percentages and tabulations were some of the statistical techniques that were adopted in analyzing the data for this study. The chi-square method of testing hypotheses was used to analyze the data thus:

The chi-square test statistics is:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(\quad)}{\Sigma}$$

Where:

χ^2 = Chi-square

F_o = Observed frequency

F_e = expected frequency

The null hypothesis is accepted at 0.05 probability level if the critical/tabular χ^2 value is greater than the calculated χ^2 value and there will be no significant difference (P > 0.05). But null hypothesis is rejected if the critical/tabular χ^2 value is lesser than the calculated χ^2 value.

Examining An Appraisal Of Traditional Method Of Intervention In Conflict Resolution Of Human Trafficking In Edo State, Nigeria

This section focuses on the presentation and analysis of data generated through the survey questionnaire administered on the respondents on the appraisal of human trafficking vis-à-vis traditional method of intervention for conflict resolution in Edo State, Nigeria.

Null hypotheses for the study state thus:

1. **Ho¹**: There is no significant difference in the opinion of the respondents that Edo State was the highest in human trafficking conflict in Nigeria before the intervention of the traditional leadership between 2018 and 2019.
2. **Ho²**: There is no significant difference in the opinion of the respondents that the intervention of the traditional leadership has reduced drastically the conflict of human trafficking in Edo State between 2018 and 2019.
3. **Ho³**: There is no significant difference in the opinion of the respondents that the existing cordial relationship between Edo State government and the traditional leadership in reducing the conflict of human trafficking should be encouraged and strengthened.

Table 1: Data for Testing Hypothesis I (H_0^1)

Local Government Area of Respondents	Edo State was the highest in human trafficking conflict in Nigeria before the intervention of the traditional leadership between 2018 and 2019.				
	SA	A	DA	SD	ROW TOTAL
NAPTIP	145 (237.1)	75 (96.7)	50 (37.8)	15 (12.8)	285
IOM	160 (157.4)	115 (110.5)	40 (42.7)	10 (14.6)	325
UNDOC	135 (145.5)	119 (101.8)	30 (39.5)	16 (13.6)	300
Column Total	440	309	120	41	910
Grand total					

Source: Field Work, 2019.

Table 2: Computation of chi-square Hypothesis one

Fo	Fe	Fo-fe	(fo-fe) ²	(fo-fe) ² /fe
145	137.1	7.9	62.41	0.4552
75	96.7	-21.7	470.89	4.8696
50	37.8	12.2	148.84	3.9376
15	12.8	2.2	4.84	0.3781
160	157.4	2.6	6.76	0.0429
115	110.5	4.5	20.25	0.1833
40	42.7	-2.7	7.29	0.1707
10	14.6	-4.6	21.16	1.4493
135	145.5	-10.5	110.25	0.7577
119	101.8	17.2	295.84	2.9061
30	39.5	-9.5	90.25	2.2848
16	13.6	2.4	5.76	0.4235
TOTAL				15.8588

Source: Field Work, 2019.

Degree of Freedom

$$DF = (r-1) (c-1) = (5-1) (3-1) = (4) (2) = 8$$

Research Decision

$$\text{Calculated } \lambda^2 = 15.8588$$

$$\text{Critical } \lambda^2 = 20.09,$$

$$\alpha = 0.05\%.$$

Research Results

Calculated $\lambda^2 <$ critical λ^2 , $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, data are not statistically significant at $\alpha 0.05\%$ sampling error. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis H_1 is rejected. This means that we should accept H_0 .

Interpretation

There is no significant difference in the opinion of the respondents that Edo State was the highest in human trafficking conflict in Nigeria before the intervention of the traditional leadership between 2018 and 2019.

Test of Hypothesis Two

Ho²: There is no significant difference in the opinion of the respondents that the intervention of the traditional leadership has reduced drastically the conflict of human trafficking in Edo State between 2018 and 2019.

Table 3: Data for Testing Hypothesis II (Ho²)

Local Government Area of Respondents	The intervention of the traditional leadership has reduced drastically the conflict of human trafficking in Edo State between 2018 and 2019.				
	SA	A	DA	SD	ROW TOTAL
Igueben (Edo Central)	143 (136.5)	76 (96.5)	48 (37.3)	16 (12.7)	283
Etsako West (Edo North)	162 (157.7)	113 (111.3)	41 (43.2)	11 (14.7)	327
Oredo (Edo South)	134 (144.8)	121 (102/2)	31 (39.5)	14 (13.6)	300
Column Total	439	310	120	41	
Grand total					910

Source: Field Work, 2019.

Table 4: Computation of chi-square Hypothesis two

Fo	Fe	Fo-fe	(fo-fe) ²	(fo-fe) ² /fe
143	136.5	6.5	42.25	0.3095
76	96.5	-20.5	420.25	4.3549
48	37.3	10.7	114.49	3.0649
16	12.7	3.3	10.89	0.8575
162	157.7	4.3	18.49	0.1172
113	111.3	1.7	2.89	0.0259
41	43.2	-2.2	4.84	0.1120
11	14.7	-3.7	13.69	0.9313
134	144.8	-10.8	116.64	0.8055
121	102.2	18.8	353.44	3.4583
31	39.5	-8.5	72.25	3.8291
14	13.6	0.4	0.16	0.0118
Total				11.5275

Source: Field Work, 2018.

Source: Field Work, 2018.

Degree of Freedom

$$DF = (r-1) (c-1) = (5-1) (3-1) = (4) (2) = 8$$

Research Decision

Calculated $\lambda^2 = 11.5275$

Critical λ^2 of 20.09,

$\alpha = 0.05\%$.

Research Result

Calculated $\lambda^2 < \text{critical } \lambda^2$, $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, data are not statistically significant at $\alpha 0.05\%$ sampling

error. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis H_1 is rejected. This means that we should accept H_0 .

Interpretation

There is no significant difference in the opinion of the respondents that the intervention of the traditional leadership has reduced drastically the conflict of human trafficking in Edo State between 2018 and 2019

Test of Hypothesis Three

H_0^3 : There is no significant difference in the opinion of the respondents that the existing cordial relationship between Edo State government and the traditional leadership in reducing the conflict of human trafficking should be encouraged and strengthened.

Table 5: Data for Testing Hypothesis III (H_0^3)

Local Government Area of Respondents	The existing cordial relationship between Edo State government and the traditional leadership in reducing the conflict of human trafficking should be encouraged and strengthened.				
	SA	A	DA	SD	ROW TOTAL
Igueben (Edo Central)	140 (134.5)	77 (96.3)	46(36.3)	17 (13.3)	280
Etsako West (Edo North)	161 (155.2)	112 (111.8)	40 (42.2)	12 (15.3)	325
Oredo (Edo South)	135 (146.3)	124 (104.9)	32 (39.5)	14 (14.4)	305
Column Total	436	313	118	43	910
Grand total					

Source: Field Work, 2018.

Table 6: Computation of chi-square Hypothesis one

Fo	Fe	Fo-fe	(fo-fe) ²	(fo-fe) ² /fe
140	134.5	5.5	30.25	0.2249
77	96.3	-19.3	372.49	3.8680
46	36.3	9.7	94.09	2.5920
17	13.3	3.7	13.69	1.0293
161	155.2	5.8	33.64	0.2168
112	111.8	0.2	0.04	0.0004
40	42.2	-2.2	4.84	0.1147
12	15.3	-3.3	10.89	0.7118
135	146.3	-11.3	127.69	0.8728
124	104.9	19.1	364.81	3.4777
32	39.5	-7.5	56.25	1.4241
14	14.4	-0.4	0.16	0.0111
Total				14.5436

Source: Field Work, 2018.

Degree of Freedom

$$DF = (r-1) (c-1) = (5-1) (3-1) = (4) (2) = 8$$

Research Decision

Calculated $\lambda^2 = 14.5436$

Critical λ^2 of 20.09,

$\alpha = 0.05$

Research Result

Calculated $\lambda^2 < \text{critical } \lambda^2$, $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, data are not statistically significant at $\alpha 0.05\%$ sampling

error. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis H_1 is rejected. This means that we should accept H_0 .

Interpretation

There is no significant difference in the opinion of the respondents that the existing cordial relationship between Edo State government and the traditional leadership in reducing the conflict of human trafficking should be encouraged and strengthened.

Findings

From the data collected from the respondents from the three selected local government areas, including data from NAPTIP, IOM and UNDOC, and the analysis of hypotheses, it was discovered that Edo State was the highest in human trafficking conflict in Nigeria before the intervention of the traditional leadership. Also, there was a consensus among the respondents that the intervention of the traditional leadership has reduced drastically the conflict on human trafficking to 60% in Edo State. Finally, the study showed that the existing cordial relationship between Edo State government and the traditional leadership that led to the successful intervention and the consequent reduction of human trafficking in Edo state should be encouraged.

Understanding the Traditional Method of Intervention in Conflict Resolution of Human Trafficking in Edo State, Nigeria

Several explanations can be constructed for the drastic reduction in human trafficking since the intervention of traditional leadership in Edo State, Nigeria. Specific reasons abound, but they are embedded in social control theory. Social control theory explains society's involvement on criminal activity through tradition method and how the gods or deities can punish anybody when it is invoked on the society for crime prevention. Since the modern method of conflict resolution has proved abortive, the state has no option than to adopt the traditional method which most of the Edo people fear very much—hence, the success in the reduction of human-trafficking in the state. However, human trafficking recorded some success in Edo because of the following reasons:

First, the Benin people have high respect for their traditional leader and see him as the spiritual leader of the State. So the curse by the traditional leaders led by the Benin Monarchy to those aiding and abetting human trafficking in the State send fears on the whole indigenes of the Edo State, hence, the reduction of trafficking in the State. The above view was attested to by Rufus Idris, a senior officer at MADE, a non-governmental organization that equip Edo State youths, vulnerable to trafficking and smuggling with agribusiness skills. According to him, “they have been engaging people to see if that curse will make a change, and that there is evidence that it does” (Shola Lawal, 2019, 3).

Second, the Benin people dread juju so much that they do not want to face the wrath of the gods. In fact, the parents due to fear, will go as far as to report any of their children either to the security agencies or the “Oba Palace”, who tries to defy the monarchy's curse. The parents/guidance takes this action to avoid being affected by the wrath of the gods. This psychological built up on the curse of the traditional leader facilitated the quick reduction of human trafficking in Edo State.

Third, Benin's are highly traditional. They very much believe in tradition both the educated, uneducated and their religious bodies – Christians and Muslims alike. No wonder, they believe in the custodian of their tradition, the Oba of Benin. That explains why the Benin people (irrespective of their religion) troop in their numbers to the Oba Palace to settle different cases. It is estimated that 60% of cases in Benin are settled by the Oba annually.

Finally, even the encroachment of Christian religion in 1515 in Benin kingdom till date has not altered the mentality of the Benin's on their traditional leader. Rather, some of the Benin's who have embraced Christian or Muslim faiths still attend the traditional religion worship of the Oba of Benin - Holy Arosa (Eye of God). The above view was supported by Patrick Ochoga who noted from empirical study that Christians and traditionalist attend Holy-Arosa Church (Ochoga, 2019).

Conclusion

This study has evaluated the traditional method of intervention on human trafficking in Edo state, Nigeria. Interestingly, this research work is predicated on social control theory because it explains the alternative - traditional method, that will help to prevent crime and keep the society in check since the modern method has proved unproductive. In fact, the successful application of this traditional method by the Oba of Benin, as the spiritual leader of Edo State has brought reprieve to the entire state. Nevertheless, based on empirical findings from the field work, there was a consensus among respondents that the curse placed by the traditional leaders led by the Oba of Benin has reduced drastically human trafficking in the state and has shown the effectiveness of traditional mechanism in reducing conflict faster more than the modern method. In fact, all the efforts of successive government administrations in Edo state to use modern mechanism to stop human trafficking really proved abortive. Fortunately, traditional method has done the work.

Nevertheless, to sustain the gains of this reduction on human trafficking in Edo state, the State government should ensure a constant sponsored anti-trafficking advertisements; the law enforcement agencies, NAPTIP and others should ensure fast prosecution of those awaiting trial to serve as a deterrent and Edo state government should also ensure that those corrupt enforcement personnel that aid and abet trafficking in the state should be prosecuted or even flush out from the State.

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