

IMPACT OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN ADAMAWA AND TARABA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Human trafficking remains a critical human rights violation in Nigeria, disproportionately affecting women and children. This study examined the impact of human trafficking on women and children in Adamawa and Taraba States, north-eastern Nigeria. A region uniquely vulnerable to conflict, poverty, displacement, and porous borders. Employing a cross-sectional survey complemented by qualitative methods, the study sampled 400 respondents, including trafficking survivors, vulnerable households, law enforcement officials, and community leaders. Findings reveal that victims are predominantly female adolescents aged 13–18 years, from rural, low-income families with limited formal education, and often from broken or single-parent households. The main drivers of trafficking include poverty, unemployment, limited education, socio-cultural practices such as child marriage, family dysfunction, deception by familiar individuals, and weak institutional enforcement. The consequences for victims are multidimensional, encompassing severe physical abuse, psychological trauma, sexual exploitation, social stigma, and suicidal ideation. Anti-trafficking interventions, including law enforcement, awareness campaigns, and reintegration programs, were found largely ineffective, with significant gaps in rural outreach, victim support, and prosecution of offenders. The study concludes that addressing human trafficking in Adamawa and Taraba requires context-specific, survivor-centred strategies integrating education, economic empowerment, community engagement, trauma-informed care, and stronger institutional accountability.

Keywords: *Human trafficking, women and children, Adamawa State, Taraba State, exploitation, vulnerability, anti-trafficking interventions, Nigeria*