

ASSESSMENT OF AUDIENCE KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE TO MEDIA MESSAGES ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND ILLEGAL MIGRATION AMONG RESIDENTS OF EDO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This research work assessed audience knowledge, attitude and practice to media messages on human trafficking and illegal migration. Anchoring on two complementary theories – The Agenda Setting Theory and Attitude Change Theory as well as the survey research methodology approach, the study examines audience knowledge, attitude and practice towards media messages on human trafficking focusing on Edo State. The media through print and broadcast media have produced and disseminated news stories which have contributed a lot towards sensitizing members of the public about the scourge of human trafficking thereby increasing knowledge and understanding of human trafficking and illegal migration root causes. Findings reveal that unfortunately, the increased knowledge level has not led to significant changes in attitude and practice to reduce the exploitation of people. This is because the poor attitude and economic situation prevalent in the country has increased the desire to search for greener pastures. The study concludes that communication should focus more on targeting and dispelling misconceptions with a view to eliminating them and to spur individuals to change their attitude and adopt life-saving practices. The paper recommends that traditional rulers, the clergy and opinion leaders should be involved in the planning and dissemination of messages to audiences. There is also an urgent need to coordinate and increase the efforts of law enforcement agencies, stakeholders and the government to help in the re-integration of returned trafficked persons and to develop strategies towards developing effective media campaigns against human trafficking and illegal migration.

Keywords: Human trafficking, illegal migration, knowledge, attitude and practice

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Introduction

United States, Department of State Report, (2010), states that human trafficking is a phenomenon that occurs when human beings are smuggled, coerced, bought and sold for profit without their consent. Omeonu, Okoronkwo, Okoronkwo and Enyinnaya (2020), agree that human trafficking is a kind of neo-slavery where people are lured, tricked or forced to work against their will for the enrichment of others. Bale and Soodater (2009) also aver that modern slavery can be classified into labour slavery, which is the recruitment, harbouring, transportation or obtaining of a person and sex trafficking which is the forceful procurement of unwilling persons into any form of sexual practices. There are different forms of slavery, but all forms appear to have the same objectives which are to engage individuals in forced and bonded labour, involuntary servitude and sexual exploitation.

Human trafficking is a crime, a global malaise and a major problem that exists in both developed and underdeveloped countries of the world and is noted to be the third most profitable criminal activity after drug trafficking and sale of weapons with earnings ranging from \$9 billion to \$31.6 billion globally (Osita 2003; Belsar 2005). It involves men and women working in both legitimate and illicit establishments and it engenders devastating physical and psychological trauma experienced on men, women and children of all ages. Trafficking is a noted form of violence against women, given that 71% of those trafficked are girls and women. Boys and men are also victims of trafficking and statistics indicate that perpetrators mainly target migrant women who endure harsh working conditions and sexual exploitation in order to provide for their families (United States Office on Drugs and Crime, 2015). Presently people are trafficked for various reasons ranging from labour, child bearing, child soldiers, sexual activities, rituals and organ donors, (Hassan, 2012).

The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2012), assessment of human trafficking victims in the world indicate that about 21 million victims were exploited through human trafficking. Critically, human trafficking violates basic human rights including the right to life, the right to be free from slavery, servitude; liberty and security; freedom from torture or cruel or degrading treatment and the right to work in just and favourable conditions. Human trafficking, smuggling and illegal migration all involve movement and transportation but differ from each other. The International Centre for Migration Policy Development 2012, (ICMPD) state that human trafficking is a crime involving the violation of the victims right through kidnap, coercion and exploitation which may lead to the death. While illegal migration/people

smuggling is a violation of national immigration laws of the destination country and may not involve the violation of the rights of the individual. Trafficking involves both external and internal trafficking. External trafficking occurs when individuals are moved across national boundaries through air, land or sea while internal trafficking occurs when individuals are moved against their will within state boundaries (Ezeiru 2010; Olujuwon 2008).

Spreading Information by providing sounds, pictures or video to highlight cases are essential in stopping slavery and aid trafficked persons and groups to project their messages into the limelight. FitzPatrick (2013), states that it is impossible to solve human problems without media visibility. Invariably, visibility through projection of stories by the mass media is vital in creating and sustaining vibrant effective media campaigns against human trafficking. Agba, (2002) agrees that the role of the mass media is encapsulated within its capacity and capability to instruct, manipulate, sensitize and mobilize people through information dissemination. Information dissemination is essential on issues concerning human trafficking and the voice of the mass media is indispensable towards this effort. Moemeka (2000) states that the success of the mass media in behavioural change role greatly relies on its ability and willingness to create for the people, access to the media and to induce the people's physical participation in the behavioural change process. Members of the public will not be mobilized to give financial and legislative support to solve human tracking if they are not properly informed to create a visible, vibrant and sustainable movement against the scourge. Emmert and Donaghy, (1981); Baran (1999) and Daramola (2003), all aver that the mass media perform the functions of mobilization, status-conferral, education, entertaining, surveillance, agenda-setting, status conferral, social linkages, social issues interpretation and transmission of societal values. The mass media help to draw perspectives about the world through media outlets and journalists and social media influencers on their part bring topical issues to the fore through news stories which help to provide accurate information about current events. Udoudo (2008) observes that frequent projections of topical issues by the media have the ability to inculcate in the audience knowledge associated with that specific problem. When the appropriate media are utilized, different audiences can be reached with certain kinds of media which will help to motivate and persuade them to be involved and improve behaviour (Peterson, Chandlee and Abraham, 2008). Undoubtedly, the media have a important role to play as the "watchdog" of the society in providing timely communication to aid positive outcomes.

The media disseminates messages through modern communication technologies and infrastructure to support information and these messages can be transmitted through a variety of channels and even in one-on-one interactions. In this regard, the mass media becomes a vehicle for public enlightenment to encourage participation essentially because it provides members of the public with appropriate and consistent information and knowledge to respond critically to topical issues. Thus, effective communication utilizes various channels so that information and communication messages can be frequently disseminated to specific audiences (Atkinson, Vallely, Fitzgerald, Whittaker and Tanner, 2011). These messages seek to influence, inform, educate and to persuade targeted audience to change their attitude to accept positive behaviours. They also aim to dispel misconceptions, myths and fake news while adopting best practices on preventive measures. Nigeria is noted as a source transit and destination country for human trafficking and illegal migration. Uwa, (2010) states that people move through Republic of Benin, Niger Republic, Libya, Cameroon, Morocco Spain, Saudi Arabia, etc to Europe with most victims coming from Edo, Akwa Ibom and Cross Rivers states which may not be unconnected with poor awareness, knowledge which may affect attitude and responses. Thus, there is need to investigate the awareness, knowledge and practices of residents of Edo State Nigeria in order to ascertain if messages on human trafficking and illegal migration reach and influence the intended audience to induce the expected changes in their attitudes.

Statement of the Problem

Human trafficking, illegal migration and slavery has many root causes which include poverty, corruption and gender inequality, which is where the media come in through news coverage by helping to bring topical events into the mainstream reports and cause individuals who do not frequent human rights information sites to gain knowledge and become engaged in the fight. Individuals across different countries and potential supporters would take a stand against human trafficking and illegal migration if they are provided with adequate information on the various means and ways by which human trafficking manifests. The collective voice will help anti-slavery efforts to grow and succeed.

Critically, many laws have been enacted and diverse campaigns have been made by individuals, the government, civil society and stake holders in tackling human trafficking and illegal migration. But this phenomenon still appears to be on the upsurge which may not be unconnected with its

complexity, poor awareness and lack knowledge to induce the desired attitude change (United States Office on Drugs and Crime, 2015).

Human trafficking and illegal migration rates can be significantly lowered if the mass media creates awareness and knowledge through effective message dissemination. The mass media remain key drivers in the spread of information or misinformation about human trafficking, knowledge or lack of it determines our response to information available (Ezeanwu, 2020). Media reports and how it is reported, goes a long way in shaping individual assimilation, government policy and creation of action agenda which has implications for the traffickers and the trafficked. These denote the importance of studying audience knowledge, attitude and practice to already disseminated messages on human trafficking and illegal migration in Edo State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. What is the knowledge level of residents of Edo State on human trafficking and illegal migration?
- ii. To what extent has media messages on human trafficking and illegal migration influenced the attitudes of residents of Edo State?
- iii. To what extent has attitude to media messages on human trafficking and illegal migration influenced the practices of residents of Edo State?

Review of Related Literature

Human trafficking is a form of neo-slavery where people are lured, tricked or forced to work against their will for the enrichment of others. Jeremy (2000), notes that slavery in all its forms is ancient and goes back thousands of years. In the past victims are engaged as palace guards, farm workers, stewards or in some cases as objects of sacrifice to appease the gods during a festival, (Forte, 2006). Historically, between 800 C. E and 1990 C.E., it was noted that over 12 million Africans were forcefully removed from the interior of Africa to various parts of the world (Freamon, 2008). He further opines that Sub-Saharan African society's wealth was measured in persons and a wealthy lineage or state had large numbers of dependent people. Today human trafficking and illegal migration are undoubtedly serious socio-economic maladies with grave national and international implications (Odiase, 2019). Adepoju (2005) notes that little was known about human trafficking and illegal migration until late 1990's when activists, the media and Non-Governmental Organisations, (NGO's) brought it to the fore. (Patricia 2008; ACARTH 2016; Ezeiru 2010).

Ajagun (2012), reports that many state governments and federal bodies have made various efforts toward curbing this menace of human trafficking and illegal migration by establishing skill acquisition centres to rehabilitate victims in Nigeria. He furthermore noted that several international bodies and organization such as the United Nations Global Initiative (UNGIFT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) have given aid to the Nigerian government towards the effort of developing partnerships for joint action, improving awareness and knowledge, technical assistance provision and capacity building to stop human trafficking. In Palermo, Italy, Nigeria was among the 117 signatories to the World Trafficking Protocol which came into force in December 25, 2003. This protocol aims to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in especially women and children (Ajagun 2012). The pioneering efforts of individuals like Mrs. Eki Igbiniedion, the Idia Renaissance an NGO together with the efforts of the Edo State House of Assembly enacted the Criminal Justice Law relating to the Edo State Criminal Code (Amendment, Law 2000) which criminalized prostitution. Despite these, it is worthy to note that criminal activities of which human trafficking is inclusive, is persistent because of corruption bedeviling the administration of criminal justice system in Nigeria (Obarisiagbon, 2019).

Nigeria is the most populous black nation in the Africa and was the first African country to enact a law against human trafficking in July 14, 2003 which is known as Trafficking in persons Prohibition Law Enforcement and Administration Act. Although the Criminal and Penal Codes (2004) prohibit the act of modern slavery they are scattered legislative laws that need to be strengthened (Braimah, 2013). On August 8, 2003, the country also established the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) which was mandated to enforce the fight against human trafficking in Nigeria (Osimen, Pedro and Ahmed 2014; Ezeiru 2010). The law was later amended in 2005 to increase the penalties in section 11, 13 and 16 for offenders accused of exporting persons in/out of Nigeria on conviction to imprisonment of 10 years without fine (NAPTIP fact sheet, 2005). The body has not been able to carry out its core mandate and earning convictions against offenders have been at most epileptic and near none existent (NAPTIP Summary of Convictions Report, 2012).

In Nigeria, Benin City has been noted to be the seat of human trafficking (*Vanguard Newspaper 2017*). Nnadi (2013), posits that of all girls and women trafficked into Italy, 65 percent are Nigerians with 85 percent being from the Edo State. Dimensions and reasons adduced for human trafficking and illegal

migration include; sexual exploitation, labour exploitation, domestic work, diya or blood money, illicit adoption and poverty, (Ebigbo 2009; Stapleton 2011; Ezeiru 2010; National Bureau of Statistics, 2018). Trafficking in persons is a widespread phenomenon in Nigeria and has become multidimensional and multi-faceted. Although trafficking involves coercion and deception, many Edo girls willingly submit themselves to be trafficked with the hope that their travails would be short-lived in order to lift themselves and their family members out of endemic poverty (Mojeed, 2019). Latonero, (2010) agrees that willful involvement in human trafficking and illegal migration can also be attributed to poverty, peer pressure, false information, influence of 'spiritual leaders' and poor family role models who impel victims through misleading and arranged sponsors or madams. Human trafficking and illegal migration have assumed glamorous means and are deemed to be normal and acceptable in wealth creation in Edo State (Adams, 2011). In Africa, human trafficking and illegal migration have patterns which have aided human traffickers over the years (Essien, 2013).

One of such Nigerian and indeed African pattern is the use of juju charms unlike in Western climes where trafficked persons are not involved in fetishism. Traditional African oath taking has played a major role of control in aiding traffickers by making their victims loyal which is a form of spiritual bondage. Adams (2011) opines that many Edo girls who are lured into being trafficked are forced before departure into taking traditional oaths (juju) not to escape until she/he repays their debts and never to report the traffickers to law enforcement agencies. In order to instill fear and compulsion, many trafficked victims are forced to undertake traditional rituals involving the use of their body parts such as finger nails, pubic hair, underwear, photographs and menstrual blood in the oath taking ceremonies (Kara, 2013).

Another dimension is the high availability of trafficking routes as a result of porous borders available in all parts of the country (Osimen et al, 2014 and Lambo, 2008). Ebigbo, (2000) revealed that traffickers continually change their styles, strategies and land, sea and air routes. Thus, many communities possess their own unique patterns based on their socio-economic problems, level of educational development and cultural factors which portends the necessity for effective planning and execution of holistic anti-human trafficking campaigns to checkmate these varied patterns adopted by traffickers (Essien, 2013). There is also a religious undertone to human trafficking as indicated in the Nigeria since April 2014, when more than two hundred teenage girls of Government School, Chibok in Bornu State of Nigeria were abducted by gunmen from the

Boko Haram Terrorists, an extremist Islamic religious sect. This initial action has led to yet more abductions mostly in the Northern Nigeria and in some cases, ransoms are paid and the victim killed or missing.

The media makes conscious effort to inform the public by emphasizing and amplifying stories relating to human trafficking over numerous others, thus setting public agenda (Ezumah 2013). Media establishments attract and design media contents for the consumption of their audience who are central to their survival. The mass media utilizes a host of avenues to reach their target audience. As part of the human relationship process, the mass media also helps to provide links between planners, goals and their audience which enables society-wide messaging, coverage and dissemination to audience of widely varying characteristics (McQuail, 2005). However, the media do not always report stories about human trafficking in ways that are helpful or accurate. When poorly executed, news sources and social media can have a variety of negative impacts on victims and on public perceptions of trafficking. The media has a responsibility to effectively communicate relevant news stories. In carrying out this function, considerations which include the reporting angle, sensitivity to language that victimizes subjects and the extent to which the crime is exposed or camouflaged amongst others.

McQuail (2005) notes that no one can deny the fact that the mass media contributes in shaping our ways of thinking. In other words, the mass media are known to exert high degree of influence on the audience within their reach. Effective communication which depends largely on facts, circumstances, relationship issues relating to problems as well as the solutions plays a large role towards the success of curbing any societal problem. Udoakah (2006 p.2) posits that, "generally the performance of the communication enterprise should be beneficial to individual and society as a whole it should reflect environment problem and community welfare, the economic, labour as well as human right issues". Given the influence of media on our day-to-day lives, it is not surprising that the media has the power to shape our conception of human trafficking, vices and other anti-social behaviour. Media outlets can be leveraged to ridicule or empower victims to speak plainly about the atrocities committed by perpetrators, and help to improve awareness on information relating to the prevalence of human trafficking. The mass media in conjunction with statutory agencies and laws established specifically for this purpose can serve as an important means of fighting human trafficking. Consequently, political will is needed to implement many of the solutions and efforts need to be sustained

and stepped up to ensure that human trafficking and neo slavery is eradicated which is why the mass media is very important.

Owasanoye (2005), carried out a study on government empowerment strategies for trafficking in person's (TIP) in Edo State. Findings indicate that the need for empowerment measures must be strong for preventive, protective, prosecution and rehabilitation measures in order to combat the high rate of human trafficking. Emenyeonu (2009), also conducted a study on causes of human trafficking in Edo State. The study revealed that poverty, high rate of unemployment, strong desire to migrate and low-level education were the main causes of trafficking in person's (TIP).

Nwokeoma (2010) study on opinion and perception on factors affecting human trafficking in Imo and Edo States revealed that there existed high levels of human trafficking in both states. Findings established that there was a higher level of trafficking in women in Edo State but recorded higher level of trafficking in children in Imo State. Victims were noted to have gone through traditional forms of oath taking to ensure loyalty and obedience to traffickers. In a similar study by Agbamuche (2014), on audience perception of social media campaigns on human trafficking in South-South, Nigeria revealed that 55.4% of respondents were exposed to media campaigns while 81% respondents were to some extent aware of human trafficking campaigns.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on two complementary theories – The Agenda Setting Theory and Attitude Change Theory. The agenda setting theory can be historically traced to Walter Lippman but was coined by McCombs and Shaw in 1963. As a theory, it was propounded by Maxwell McCombs & Donald Shaw in 1972. This theory describes the power of the media to influence topical issues and salient messages in the public sphere. The theory propounds that when topical news items and messages are prominently covered and frequently reported by the mass media, the audience will regard such news as being of importance. The mass media in informing its audience place emphasis on certain news items, events, ideology which they consider important. This media agenda is consciously and unconsciously assimilated and accepted based on the level of importance attached to it which in turn becomes public agenda. The transfer of salient topical issues or messages to public agenda is the first level of agenda-setting theory also referred to as traditional agenda-setting (McCombs 1972). The second level of the agenda-setting theory is related to the framing theory which describes the process by which news messages or issues are

portrayed by the media. These media frames indicate the emphasis, modes of presentation, boundaries, specific values and facts around particular new stories and helps in making relevant related judgement to determine what is notable or news worthy. The theory is relevant to this study because it lays emphasis on the setting the human trafficking and illegal migration agenda for the public to follow.

The Attitude Change Theory was propounded by Daniel Katz, Irving Samoff and Chares McClintock in 1960. The theory propounds that attitude change is said to occur when subjects receive new information from other people or media through direct experience with the attitude or object and this forces the subjects to behave in a way different than they used to (Chan, 2008). The application of the attitude change theory to this study is that Edo State indigenes will change their attitudes towards human trafficking and illegal migration and protect themselves from potentially harmful practices by being educated about and prepared for influence. The influence is in regard to variable factors such as the environment, time and trends, associations, motives, motivation and circumstances.

Methodology

The study adopted the survey research design method. Osuala (1993) notes that survey focuses on people, the vital facts about people, their beliefs, opinions, values and lifestyle. This method aims at ascertaining people's opinions about their knowledge, attitudes and response to media messages on human trafficking in Edo State. The questionnaire was used as the instrument for collecting data. The people resident in Edo State constituted the population of this study. The population was projected using the last official government statistics of 3,233,366 (National Population Commission, 2006) over a period of 13 years with an annual growth rate of 3.2%. The total population of Edo State arrived at is 4,578, 580. Based on the population and 95% confidence level targeted for this study, the appropriate sample size was 385 (Australian Sample Size Calculator). Thus 385 copies of questionnaire administered, only 364 were returned and found useful.

The multistage sampling technique procedure was adopted to select sample from the population of the study. In the first stage, cluster sampling method was used to delineate the 19 local government areas in Edo State into three senatorial districts (Edo Central, Edo North and Edo South). In the second stage, simple random technique was used to select one local government area each from the cluster of local government areas in senatorial districts. The same

method was used to select Wards from the Independent National Electoral Commission list. Three different boxes were arranged to represent the senatorial zones and all the local government areas in each of the senatorial districts of the state were written in separate pieces of paper and assigned a number without any visible identifying factor. They were crumpled and placed within the box and mixed properly before being handpicked from the box. The same process was repeated in choosing for box 'B' and 'C' and the following local government areas were chosen. In Esan West (Irukekpen, Emaudo/Eguare/Ekpoma), Etsako (Fugar I, Fugar II and Iraokhor) and Oredo (Ogbelaka/Nekpenkpen, Ibiwe/Iwegie/Ugbague and New Benin I) were selected. The same method was used to select Wards from the Directory of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Registration Areas in the selected Local Government Areas. At the third stage, the Bowley Proportion Technique was used in allotting the copies of the questionnaire to the selected local government areas and Wards. This technique ensures that the allocation of questionnaires in different strata is based on the sizes of sample in each stratum which implies that the higher the stratum, the higher the number of allocated questionnaires and vice versa. Accidental and purposive sampling was used in the fourth/last stage to administer copies of the questionnaire to respondents who were available at the time in which the research was conducted.

Data Presentation and Analysis

In order to ensure qualitative accuracy, data was presented and analysed using quantitative methods made up of simple frequencies, tables, percentages, mean ratings and standard deviation. Face validation was utilized in ensuring the validity of the questionnaire which was drafted under guidance and supervision. To ascertain the reliability of the research instrument, the test-retest method was carried out using 20 copies of the questionnaire. To measure reliability or the degree of consistency between the two sets of response the Cronbach Alpha statistical method was utilized which returned an internal consistency coefficient of 0.861.

Research Question 1:

What is the knowledge level of residents of Edo State on human trafficking and illegal migration?

Table 1: Do you receive news or information on human trafficking and illegal migration from the mass media?

Response	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Yes	327	89.8
No	13	3.6
Undecided	24	6.6
Total	364	100

Source: Field survey 2019

Table 1 above indicates shows the frequencies and percentages on respondents who received information on human trafficking and illegal migration from the mass media. 327 (89.8%) majority of the respondents agreed to this, 13 (3.6%) respondents noted 'No' while 24 (6.6%) respondents were undecided.

Table 2: How often do you access information on human trafficking and illegal migration?

Response	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Daily	24	6.6
Weekly	43	11.8
Monthly	124	34.1
Yearly	160	43.9
Not at all	13	3.6
Total	364	100

Source: Field survey 2019

Table 2 shows the frequencies and percentages on how often respondents access information on human trafficking and illegal migration. 24 (6.6%) respondents noted daily, 43 (11.8%) respondents noted weekly, 124 (34.1%) respondents noted monthly, 160 (43.9%) respondents noted yearly and 13 (3.6%) respondents noted not at all.

Table 3: From media messages are you aware that many individuals have gone missing or have died in their attempts to travel abroad through illegal migration?

Response	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Yes	247	67.9
No	81	22.3
Undecided	36	9.8
Total	364	100

Source: Field survey 2019

Table 3 indicates the frequencies and percentages on if respondents are aware that many individuals have gone missing or have died in their attempts to travel abroad through illegal migration. 247 (67.9%) respondents stated yes, 81 (22.3%) respondents noted no and 36 (9.8%) respondents were undecided.

Table 4: To what extent do you understand media messages on human trafficking and illegal migration?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very high	50	13.7
High	169	46.4
Low	90	24.7
Very low	37	10.3
No idea	18	4.9
Total	364	100

Source: Field survey 2019

Table 4 indicates the response levels, frequencies and percentages on the extent respondents understand media messages on human trafficking and illegal migration? The majority 169 (46.4%) of the respondents indicated "high", 90 (24.7%) of the respondents noted "low", 50 (13.7%) of the respondents noted "very high", 37 (10.3%) respondents rated it "very low" while only 18 (4.9%) indicated "no idea".

Research Question 2:

To what extent has media messages on human trafficking and illegal migration influenced the attitudes of residents of Edo State?

Table 5: Media messages on human trafficking and illegal migration has made me to understand the dangers involved.

Response	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Yes	221	60.7
No	68	18.7
Undecided	75	20.6
Total	364	100

Source: Field survey 2019

Table 5 shows the frequencies and percentages on if media messages on human trafficking and illegal migration has made respondents to understand the dangers involved. 221 (60.7%) respondents indicated 'yes', 68 (18.7%) respondents indicated 'no' while 75 (20.6) respondents were undecided.

Table 6: Have you encouraged or sponsored any of your friends or relatives to travel outside the country through connections?

Response	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Yes	262	71.9
No	65	17.9
Undecided	37	10.2
Total	364	100

Source: Field survey 2019

Table 6 indicates the frequencies and percentages on whether respondents have encouraged or sponsored any friend or relative to travel outside the country through connections? 262 (71.9%) respondents noted 'yes', 65 (17.9%) respondents indicated 'no' while 37 (10.2%) respondents indicated that they were undecided.

Table 7: To what extent would you support travelling outside the country to go and hustle?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very high	89	24.5
High	151	41.5
Low	25	6.9
Very low	37	10.1
No idea	62	17.0
Total	364	100

Source: Field survey 2019

Table 7 indicates the response levels, frequencies and percentages on the extent respondents would support travelling outside the country to go and hustle? The majority 151 (41.5%) of the respondents indicated "high", 89 (24.5%) of the respondents noted "very high", 62 (17.0%) of the respondents noted "no idea", 37 (10.1%) respondents rated it "very low" while 25 (6.9%) indicated "very low".

Research Question 3:

To what extent has attitude to media messages on human trafficking and illegal migration influenced the practices of residents of Edo State?

Table 8: If you are opportune would you still accept to be trafficked outside Nigeria?

Response	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Yes	240	65.9
No	90	24.8
Undecided	34	9.3
Total	364	100

Source: Field survey 2019

Table 8 indicates the frequencies and percentages on if respondents are opportune, would they accept to be trafficked outside Nigeria? 240 (65.9%) agreed, 90 (24.8%) disagreed while 34 (9.3%) were undecided.

Table 9: Which of these factors do you feel will influence your knowledge and put pressure to make you travel and hustle outside the country?

Variables	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	STDV	DECISION
a. Family problems can make me to travel to go and hustle in spite of media messages to the contrary?	188	208	33	15	3.42	0.24	Accept
b. Friends can make me to travel to go and hustle in spite of media messages to the contrary?	182	123	46	13	2.80	0.18	Accept

c. Low level education and no one to help can make me to travel to go and hustle?	186	107	43	45	2.78	0.16	Accept
d. Poverty, hardship and economic factors can make me to travel to go and hustle in spite of media messages to the contrary?	201	135	13	15	2.91	0.22	Accept

Source: Field Survey, 2019

In Table 9, shows a test carried out on **factors do you feel will influence and put pressure to make you travel and hustle outside the country**. Estimates were made using Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation. The results equally show the decision of respondents on each item. The table shows a cluster of 4 items on factors that influence respondents. The table indicated that the mean required level for all 4 items range from 2.78 to 3.42 and all items were accepted because their Mean were above 2.50 The Standard Deviation values on **factors that will influence and put pressure to make you travel and hustle outside the country** range from 0.16 to 0.24. The values indicate that the responses of respondents were close to one another and the Mean.

Discussion of Findings

Findings of this study confirmed that many of the respondents had received messages about human trafficking and illegal migration disseminated through the mass media. This is in agreement with other studies to the effect that the mass media serve as instruments for social mobilization. Most of the respondents accessed information on their own volition. But respondents who were undecided and who noted "no" were basically rural dwellers and not urban dwellers and did not have access to communication facilities such as radio, television or internet facilities. Despite the fact that news and media campaigns were being disseminated across the capital city of Edo State, its environs and in the rural communities these category of people could not receive anti human trafficking and illegal migration messages. Respondents agreed that they had knowledge gained from or as a result of media messages received.

Many respondents indicated that they were aware of the dangers associated with human trafficking and illegal migration and that they

understood media messages targeted at residents of the state. But despite the media messages on human trafficking and illegal migration received, majority of the respondents are not averse to encouraging/sponsoring friends or relatives to travel outside the country through illegal migration in search of greener pastures. Majority of respondents accepted that they would support/sponsor the desires of friends and relatives who were willing to travel outside the country to go and hustle. This highlights the fact that media messages on human trafficking and illegal migration has not influenced the attitudes of residents of Edo State. This is where the attitude change theory comes in to help is media messages disseminated to respondents through various programmes including live experience rendition of survivors in order to force respondents to change their attitude towards human trafficking and illegal migration. The import of this theory is that public enlightenment would bring about attitude change through persuasive messages targeted at the audience which will ultimately impact on the individual behavioural constructs. These messages should be sustained over time to help residents regulate their behaviour through control and reinforcement to achieve goal-directed behaviour.

Findings further showed that 65.9% respondents of Edo State, Nigeria agreed that that they were willing to be trafficked if opportunities to go outside the country are available. They accepted that some **factors can influence their knowledge and put pressure to make them travel and go to "hustle" outside the country**. This indicates that despite all information obtained from the media, many respondents will still continue to be engaged in illegal migration practices which may lead to them being trafficked as slaves or even in their demise. Respondents accepted that family problems, friends, low level education, poverty, hardship and economic factors can make them travel to go and hustle in spite of media messages to the contrary.

A recent trend involves promising employment opportunities to prospective persons and upon arrival at destination countries such individuals are seized as sex slaves or made to prostitute themselves to pay for passage at a profit for their sponsors or sold as slaves, organ donors or other forms of labour (Osimen, Pedro and Ahmed 2014). Most often, victims of human trafficking and illegal migration are made to believe that they will be sent to school, secure well-paid jobs, run lucrative businesses overseas which will help to improve their standard of living. Omeonu, Okoronkwo, Okoronkwo and Enyinnaya, (2020), aver that unfortunately, traffickers will engage them in degrading

domestic work, child labour or forced labour or begging, prostitution, servile marriage, ritual sacrifices and organ donors.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings, this study concludes that the mass media increased the knowledge level of residents of Edo state. The media had worked in conjunction with the government, civil society, NGO's and law enforcement authorities to carry out its education, gate-keeping and surveillance mandate on society. Data obtained indicates that majority of residents of Edo State are not responding to media messages to abstain from being involved in the problems of human trafficking and illegal migration. The problems of ignorance, poverty, poor security, porous borders, corruption, weak legal system among others are reasons why human trafficking and illegal migration continue to thrive. Culture, low level education, pressure from family and friends are major challenges affecting knowledge, attitude and practices of residents of Edo State. Therefore, the paper recommends that the mass media increase and sustain news and media campaigns against human trafficking and illegal migration. More educative programmes, personal interviews and in-depth analysis should be aired together to help change individual and community beliefs and attitude about human trafficking and illegal migration. The government is also enjoined to invest in education, media engagements and to provide alternative economic opportunities which will help to limit and reduce the number of individuals available for trafficking and migration.

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