

Topic : Human Trafficking

Introduction

Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, harboring, or receipt of people for the purpose of slavery, forced labour and servitude.

Human trafficking can be defined as the act of recruiting, transporting, or receiving a person through force, coercion or through other means for the purpose of exploiting them.

Human trafficking is the trade in humans, most commonly for the purpose of sexual slavery, forced labor or commercial sexual exploitation for the traffickers.

Put simply

Human trafficking denotes exploitation which includes;

- Sexual exploitation
- Forced labour
- Slavery
- Removal of organ
- Trafficking for early marriage
- Child soldier recruitment
- Beggars

Causes of Human Trafficking

The following points below are causes of human trafficking,

1. **Poverty:** This is a situation where a person fall short of a level of economic welfare, where a person lacks the basic human want which are clothing, food and shelter. A person who is poor can easily be deceived to come over to another place with the promise of getting a good job and become a victim in the hands of the traffickers.
2. **Lack of employment opportunities:** Due to the bad economic situation of some countries that made some people jobless, some people therefore get lured and deceived by traffickers because they want to get out of the country and thereby using them as slaves and prostitutes in other countries.
3. **Profit:** Because of the profits the trafficker wants to make from doing trafficking business make them to engage themselves in such evil business all because of profit.
4. **Low self esteem:** Many people because they do not know their worth and value, they see themselves as nobody thereby making them vulnerable and they fall into the hands of

traffickers and because they have low self esteem they allow any body to direct them to anywhere.

5. Illiterates: illiterates are those who are not able to read or write, illiteracy has made so many people to become a victim of trafficking, for instance, signing on a paper you do not have any knowledge about. They deceived them by telling them they will enroll them into school and teach them many things, because they want to be educated they then fall victim of trafficking.
6. The search for greener pastures: Some people believe that it is by travelling and relocating to another place before they can make it in all aspects of life.
7. Economic system: Because of poor economic system of some countries the citizens prefer to live somewhere else and would not mind to go anywhere and because of this they become a victim.
8. Greed: Some people are not satisfied with what they have, because of the love to earn more than what they can have they end up falling into the hands of traffickers.

Other causes are:

- social discrimination
- political instability
- lack of employment opportunity
- group deprivation and marginalization of the poor
- corruption in government
- profitability
- economic disparities
- insufficient penalty against traffickers
- regional imbalance
- armed conflict

The following are the basic reasons for human trafficking in many under developed countries:

1. Leaving a place of poverty to gain wealth

Many victims want to get out of their situation so they risk everything to leave the place that sees them mired in poverty. This gives the human traffickers bait to lure victims to move to a different country. Traffickers lie, promising jobs and stability in order to recruit their victims. Upon their arrival to another state or region, captors take control. More often than not, they are held in places where victims did not want to make their home. The practice of entrusting poor children to more affluent friends or relatives may create vulnerability. Some parents sell their children, not just for money, but in hope that their children may escape poverty and have a better life with more opportunities.

2. Political conditions

Political instability, militarism, generalized violence or civil unrest can result in an increase in trafficking as well. The destabilization and scattering of populations increase their vulnerability to unfair treatment and abuse via trafficking and forced labor.

3. **War**

Armed conflicts can lead to massive forced displacements of people. War creates large numbers of orphans and street children who are especially vulnerable to trafficking. Their families have either passed away or are fighting a war, complicating child-rearing.

4. **Social and Cultural practices**

Many societies and cultures devalue abuse and exploit women and girls, creating perilous living conditions for these women. With little opportunities of upward mobility and with little value placed on women and girls, they are more vulnerable to human trafficking.

Group or Human Trafficking Victim

A group of people can be taken for trafficking at once or an individual, when it involves more than one person it is referred to as group trafficking, but if it involves just one person it is referred to as human trafficking. The example below makes it clearer how a group of people can be victims of human trafficking.

- As bride
- In the sex industry
- Domestic servitude
- Of organ donor
- Forced labor in factories and restaurants

Topic: Health Implications of Human Trafficking on Victims

What is Human Trafficking?

Trafficking in human beings is a gross violation of human rights, a modern day form of slavery and an extremely profitable business for organized crime. 'Trafficking in persons' is defined as: 'the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of 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. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.' This

definition has three distinct elements, which must be fulfilled for a situation to be one of trafficking – there must be an act, a means and a purpose. The consent of the victim is irrelevant when any of the means have been used. Many victims of human trafficking are forced to work in prostitution or the commercial sex industry. However human trafficking also occurs in forms of labor exploitation such as domestic servitude or restaurant work, sweatshop factory work or migrant agricultural work. In the case of a child (anyone under 18 years of age) actions taken for the purpose of exploitation constitute trafficking even where the means have not been used. There is no requirement that a person must have crossed a border for trafficking to take place – it can and does take place within national borders. Identifying victims of Human Trafficking Victims of human trafficking may look like many of the patients coming to GP waiting rooms, health clinics or emergency rooms. Victims can be young children, teenagers, men and women. By looking beneath the surface and asking yourself questions such as the following, you can help identify potential victims:

- Is the patient accompanied by another person who seems controlling (possibly the trafficker)?
- Can you detect any physical or psychological abuse?
- Does the patient seem submissive or fearful?
- Does the patient have any identification?

Gaining the trust of a victim of human trafficking is an important step in providing assistance. Remember that this may be the first and only contact a victim of human

1. Article 3(a) of the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, 2000 which supplements the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (commonly known as the Palermo Protocol). Trafficking has with someone apart from the trafficker or it may be their one and only opportunity to explain their situation or ask for help

2. Common Health Issues experienced by Victims of Human Trafficking

Trafficking victims may suffer from an array of physical and psychological health issues stemming from inhumane living conditions, poor sanitation, and inadequate nutrition, and poor personal hygiene, brutal physical and emotional attacks at the hands of their traffickers, dangerous workplace conditions, occupational hazards and general lack of quality health care. Preventive health care is virtually non-existent for these individuals. Health issues are typically not treated in their early stages, but tend to fester until they become critical, even life-endangering situations. In many cases, health care is administered at least initially by an unqualified individual hired by the trafficker with little, if any, regard for the well-being of their ‘patients’ – and even less regard for disease, infection or contamination control. Health issues seen in trafficking victims include the following:

- Sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, pelvic pain, rectal trauma and urinary difficulties from working in the sex industry;
- Pregnancy, resulting from rape or prostitution;
- Infertility from chronic untreated sexually transmitted infections or botched or unsafe abortions;

- Infections or mutilations caused by unsanitary and dangerous medical procedures performed by the trafficker's so-called 'doctor';
- Chronic back, hearing, cardiovascular or respiratory problems from endless days toiling in dangerous agriculture, sweatshop or construction conditions;
- Weak eyes and other eye problems from working in dimly lit sweatshops;
- Malnourishment and serious dental problems. These are especially acute with child trafficking victims who often suffer from retarded growth and poorly formed or rotted teeth;
- Infectious diseases like tuberculosis;
- Undetected or untreated diseases, such as diabetes or cancer;
- Bruises, scars and other signs of physical abuse and torture. Sex-industry victims are often beaten in areas that won't damage their outward appearance, like their lower back;
- Substance abuse problems or addictions either from being coerced into drug use by their traffickers or by turning to substance abuse to help cope with or mentally escape their desperate situations.
- human trafficking results in physical and psychological abuse
- human trafficking results in physical and psychological health problems for the victims
- malnourishment, bruises and decayed teeth
- infectious diseases
- undetected and untreated diseases e.g. cancer
- sexually transmitted diseases
- unplanned pregnancy
- depression
- back pains
- stress related disorder
- death
- phobias and panic attacks

Consequences of Human Trafficking

1) Violation of Human Rights. The fundamental human rights of victims of human trafficking have been violated by their traffickers.

2) They are often treated as criminals by officials in countries of transit and destination because they are illegal aliens.

3) Vulnerable to diseases. Given the nature of work and conditions they are exposed, victims are often exposed to risk and dangers of serious diseases including sexually transmitted illnesses such as HIV/AIDS. Some even develop mental illness.

4) Many of the victims who return home are stigmatized and find it difficult to reintegrate.

5) Unwanted pregnancy. Some of the victims are faced with the problems of unwanted pregnancy. Some die in the process of abortion.

6) It could lead to untimely death. Some victims die from ill-health, frustration and violence. Some are killed because their organs need to be harvested.

7) The countries to which they are taken are faced with the burden of tackling the problems of illegal residents, illegal workers and social vices.

8) National disgrace. It is a national disgrace to their country of origin when traffickers are arrested, prosecuted and sentenced.

Government and Individual Efforts to stop Human Trafficking

1) Public enlightenment: Public enlightenment should be done to ensure the creation of awareness on the part of the public on the evils of human trafficking.

2) Education: Government should make education available, affordable and compulsory to all children of school age.

3) Legislation: Laws have been made prescribing different kinds of punishment ranging from 12 months (for an attempt to commit any of the offences) to life imprisonment for serious offences such as slavery and exploitation.

4) Advocacy: Advocacy is giving public support to an idea, a course of action or belief. The presence of an advocacy group, who work to protect and defend children and women against traffickers, could prevent criminal activities.

5) Parents should watch their children closely, regarding the kind of friends they keep.

6) There should be proper counselling at various levels. The children and women should be counseled at homes, schools and public places. Victims need counseling to be properly rehabilitated.

7) Government should provide employment opportunities for the youths, most especially to prevent women and children from becoming victims.

8) Improvement in standard of living: When the standard of living is made better, people will desist from partaking in illegal businesses.

9) Establishment of agency: Government established agencies such as the National Agency for Prohibition of Traffic in Persons and other Related Matters (NAPTIP). This agencies helps in stopping child trafficking

Solutions to Human Trafficking

- government actions

- activities of religious bodies
- provisions of employment
- non-governmental organizations such as WHO
- economic stability
- adequate punishment for traffickers
- awareness programmes
- strict immigration policies