



Open Access Journal Available Online

The Globalization of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery: An Analysis of the Psycho-Politico-Economic Implications

1Hyginus O. Ogbonna, 2Benedict, I. Ajayi, 3Ogunbor Isibhakhomen Joy, 4Chidi Slessor Mba, 5Hilary Agbaiza. O. & 6Francisca-Xavier Pamni.

1Department of Sociology, Igbinedion University Okada.

2Department of Sociology and Anthropology,
Benson Idahosa University Benin-City,
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7071-0786>.

3Department of Sociology, Igbinedion University Okada.

4Department of Sociology, Abia State University Uturu.

5Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Benin, Benin-City.

6Department of Public Health & Community Medicine, Benson Idahosa University
Benin-City.

Emails: obinnaogbonna71@gmail.com; iajayi@biu.edu.ng; isiogunbor@ymail.com; chidiguuuturu@gmail.com;

hilary.agbaiza@uniben.edu; francapamni@gmail.com

(Corr. Author): obinnaogbonna71@gmail.com

Received: 27/02/2025

Accepted: 17/03/2025

Abstract: The paper examines the globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery, with the specific objectives to; identify the psychological, political and economic implications of human trafficking and modern slavery globally. To achieve its objectives, Mixed Methods-- qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection were adopted in its methodology. In the qualitative method, the study employed content analysis of UNODC and ILO reports, along with peer-reviewed journals on migration and trafficking. Observational data were drawn from documented case studies and news reports in Africa, Europe, and the Americas. While the quantitative data entailed tabulated numeric figures on the global prevalence of human trafficking and modern slavery, adapted from document screening of Statista (2025): spanning the countries of the African region, Europe and Central Asia, and the Americas. The paper made some findings, a few of these include: the

globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery are interlinked with certain psychological, political and economic implications that are deleterious at various multiple levels of the individual victims, national, and global level; besides, unbridled nature of 'global capitalism' (the dark side of globalization) was identified as the chief causal driver of the prevailing globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery; inter alia. The paper therefore recommends as follow: there should be stricter anti-human trafficking policies and sincere commitment of global leaders towards curbing the menace; National governments should commence awareness campaigns for their citizenry on strategies of the traffickers to prevent them from falling victims; inter alia.

Keywords: Globalization; Human Trafficking; Modern Slavery; Politico; Psycho.

Introduction

In concrete terms, it is quite contradictory that in contemporary times when the pursuit of democratic ethos and its permissiveness have gained the focal attention of most nations globally, human trafficking and modern slavery that should have abated are rather spreading with increased celerity among the nations of the world. As Todd and Bernard (2019) observed, popular understanding of slavery usually conjures up imageries of African slaves brought to the Caribbean, Brazil, and the U.S; where such reminiscent imageries are redolent with images of slave ships, slaves bound in chains, and slaves auctioned at market. Such somber imageries tend to obscure the current realities of slavery; and as such, relegate the phenomena of human trafficking and/or modern slavery as a problem of the past, especially with the historical abolition of slave trade in Great Britain in 1807, the United States in 1808 (Fage & McCaskie, 11 January 2025), and at different dates in diverse parts of the world. Modern slavery has resurfaced through human trafficking and forced labour, threatening global peace and security through economic and political instability. Moreover, its untamed globalization or spread among nations via the mechanisms of migration,

displacement of persons, high demand of cheap labour across nations, and political instabilities, portend certain psychological, political, and economic implications that pose a threat to global peace and security.

Albeit, the twin concepts -- human trafficking and modern slavery-- are often used interchangeably, a significant difference exists between the two: whereas human trafficking is a specific form of modern slavery; modern slavery itself, is generic and encapsulates all forms of exploitation of others (including human trafficking) for personal gain that denies the victims their freedom, whether trafficked (transported) or otherwise. To be sure, the crime of human trafficking and modern slavery is a global phenomenon, constituting global crisis that endangers global peace. Typically, U.S Department of State (2024) affirmed that, around the globe, an estimated 27.6 million trafficked persons were exploited for labour, services, and commercial sex; and 49.6 million persons were in modern slavery (inclusive of all forms of modern slavery) as at 2021. Through force, fraud, and coercion, they are made to toil in fields and factories, in restaurants, and residencies. Traffickers prey on some of the world's most marginalized and vulnerable individuals, profiting from

their plight. Thus, nations of the world, be it advanced nations or developing nations, are enmeshed in this global menace. For instance, in advanced nation like the USA, the U.S Department of State (2024) reported that, traffickers coerced victims to engage in commercial sex and to work in both legal and illicit industries and sectors in the United States. As an ancillary to that, in 2023 the Organized Crime Index (OCI, 2023) gave USA above 50% score of 6 out of 10 for human trafficking, with most of the victims smuggled from Mexico, Honduras or within the United States. Similarly, in developing nations like the African region (e.g, Cameroon, Eritrea, South Sudan, and Cote d'ivoire, etc) human trafficking and modern slavery are abetting rather than abating. For instance, due to its vulnerable population driven by political instabilities, displacement of persons, poverty, climate change, etc.; modern slavery and/or human trafficking is quite critical in the African region. As the International Labour Organization (ILO et al, 2022) noted, the menace occurs in every country within the region. According to ILO (et al, 2022), in 2021 particularly, an estimated seven million including men, women, and children were living in modern slavery in Africa, with a prevalence of 5.2 persons per 1000 population; where 54% of the victims were in forced labour, and 46% in forced marriage. When compared with other global regions, Africa had the 4th highest prevalence, following the Arab nations with the highest prevalence of 10.1 per 1000, Europe and Central Asia (6.9 persons per 1000), and Asia and the Pacific (6.8 persons per 1000) (ILO et al, 2022). Thus, these figures suggest that Africa's ranking is driven by economic instability and weak legal enforcement, which create vulnerabilities to trafficking and forced labour. ⁴Within Africa,

Nigeria, particularly in 2021, had 1.6 million persons living in modern slavery, Ethiopia (0.7 million), Egypt (0.4 million), Kenya (0.2 million) (Statista, 2025), et cetera. Certainly, the causal triggers of this modern slavery have inter-linkages with globalization among other causal drivers.

Globalization has its positive trade-mark of integrating nations, peoples, and corporations of the world together, driven by trade and investments and aided by information technology. However, its dark under-belly or discontent has demonstrated the propensities of fueling the immanent contradictions of global capitalism: By immanent contradictions of global capitalism; we mean that, whereas global capitalism encourages trade relations or economic interactions among nations, the interests for profit maximization at such relations has, ironically, equally encouraged cheap labour among nations that contributes to trafficking, where the advanced capitalist nations have become the 'demand factor' (the destination points) of the trafficked persons, while the poor nations of the Global South play the 'Supply factor' (the countries of exit or origin) of the trafficked persons needed by the advanced capitalist nations to do their dirty jobs at their factories and other sectors for profit maximization at cheap labour (IMF, 2015; Williamson, 2022). This, in all intents and purposes, epitomizes hidden contradictions of persistent underdevelopment and exploitation of the poor developing nations by the advanced capitalist nations (Hickel, et al 2022). To a large extent, this portends neo-colonialism: a subtle resurgence of colonialism and mercantile capitalism via the aegis of neo-slavery and human trafficking tendencies! Thus, in recent times with the growing globalization of human trafficking and

modern slavery around the globe and its attendant antinomies, global peace and security have been threatened (Guterres, December 7th 2023). This has attracted the attention of global leaders and/or state actors in their various responses to tackle the menace. For instance, the United Nations, as part of its response towards curbing this global crisis, in year 2000 launched the 'Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons' (Ruth, 26th February 2010). Subsequently, by 2015 the U.N equally intensified its commitment to combating the menace by including it in the Global Goals (SDGs No 8, target 8.7): which provides that, nations should take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking, and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour (UNICEF, 2016). Additionally, national governments have in their various capacities shown commitment to tackling the menace. For instance, in Africa, in the last four years, some African countries like Nigeria, South Africa, and Rwanda were ranked the top three countries that have shown committed responses to tackling modern slavery (ranking 54%, 53%, and 50%; respectively) (ILO et al, 2022). However, despite these efforts, the globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery has continued to threaten global peace and security. These perceived threats with their immanent implications are felt at various multiple levels: at the psychological, political, and economic levels -- and these remain the *raison d'etre* of the paper; that is, to unveil the psycho-politico-economic implications of human trafficking and modern slavery, and map out the way(s) forward. In the furtherance of the discourse, we shall attend to them.

1.2. Objectives of the Paper.

The general objective is to examine the globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery from the frame of analyses of its psychological, political and economic implications. However, the specific objectives designed to guide the study towards accomplishing the main objective include as follow:

1. To identify the psychological implications of the globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery;
2. To find out the political implications of the globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery;
3. To ascertain the economic implications of the globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery.
4. And to chart a way forward by way of proffering policy-based recommendations.

1.3. Methodology.

The paper was designed to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. In the qualitative method, the study employed content analysis of UNODC and ILO reports, along with peer-reviewed journals on migration and trafficking. Observational data were drawn from documented case studies and news reports in Africa, Europe, and the Americas. While the quantitative data entailed tabulated numeric figures on the global prevalence of human trafficking and modern slavery, adapted from document screening of Statista (2025): spanning the countries of the African region, Europe and Central Asia, and the Americas. In order to minimise bias and ensure data validity, the Statista figures were cross-validated with data drawn from UNODC and ILO reports, which equally confirms the high rates of human trafficking and modern slavery globally.

1.4. Conceptual Clarifications.

For the sake of epistemic clarity, certain terminologies (key words) used in the

process of the discourse need to be demystified. These include as follow:
Globalization.

The term describes the growing interdependence of the world's economies, cultures, and populations brought about by cross-border trade in goods and services, technology and flow of investments, people, and information (PIIE, 16 August 2024). To globalize means, to spread or make worldwide in scope or application so as to make international influence possible. In its etymology, it refers to the emergence of an international network of economic systems. Hence, according to Fernando (2024), it connotes the spread of the flow of financial products, goods, technologies, information and jobs across national borders and cultures. For the purpose of our study here, we shall see globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery as, the worldwide spread of the activities of trafficking in persons and modern slavery both across national borders and within national boundaries, including the flow of trade and ICT by which it is aided and driven.

Human Trafficking.

According to United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC, 2011), it is the act of recruiting, transporting, transferring, harboring, or receiving individuals through force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of exploitation. Besides, It is considered a serious violation of the fundamental human rights of the individual and a form of modern slavery (Zimmerman and Ligia, 2017). Its nature usually involves an unlawful act of transporting or forcing persons into a particular destination or work in order to exploit or benefit from their services, typically in the form of forced labour or sexual exploitation.

Modern Slavery

Modern Slavery encompasses various

forms of slavery, including human trafficking. According to Anti-Slavery International (2024), modern slavery connotes when an individual is exploited by others for personal or commercial gain, in such a way that they lose their freedom, whether tricked, coerced or forced. Modern slavery is slightly different from human trafficking: whereas modern slavery is generic; that is, it includes all forms of exploitation of others: trafficked, tricked, forced or coerced for personal/commercial gain whereby the victims lose their freedom. Human trafficking, on the other hand, is specific: that is, it is a specific form of modern slavery that entails transporting or transferring persons against their will, either by force or deception in order to exploit for certain purposes.

Psycho-Politico-Economic Implications.

First, the coinage, "Psycho" abbreviates the term, psychological. Under the rubrics of the discourse, would mean, the psychological implications of human trafficking and modern slavery. That is, an analysis of its implications at the individual level; how it affects the personality or psyche of the individual.

"Politico", itself, approximates the term, political. That is, the political implications of the subject of discourse. In other words, how it affects the government processes or political activities of nations. While, economic, here would suggest, how human trafficking and modern slavery affect the dynamics of the economic structure or activities of nations globally. Therefore, for the purpose of our study here, the aforementioned coined expressions would mean: the psychological, political and economic implications of the globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery.

At this juncture, having clarified certain key concepts that are preponderant in the

discourse in the foregoing analyses, we shall now delve into the literature review in what follows.

2.0 Literature Review

Corpus of literatures (like Bales, 2004; Bales, 2005; and Rahman, 2011) have tended to provide constructive epistemic insights into the subject of human trafficking and modern slavery. However, these literatures have not solely dwelt on the tripartite -- Psycho-Politico-Economic-- implications of the subject matter. Therefore, it is the epistemic *raison d'être* of the paper to fill up the knowledge gap in its analysis. To achieve this, salient sub-themes outlined as follow shall be addressed: Human Trafficking--An Overview; Modern Slavery--An Overview; The Globalization of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery--An Overview; and the Psychological, Political and Economic Implications of the Globalization of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery. It is hoped that these adumbrated thematic outlines shall enable us accomplish the study purpose. In what follows, we shall attend to them, *et seriatim*. To that we now proceed.

2.1. Human Trafficking-- An Overview.

According to Alese and Leonard (1 January, 2025), human trafficking is a form of modern slavery characterized by the unlawful transport of individuals by force or deception for the purpose of service, provisions for wage-earning, sexual exploitation or activities that yield financial benefits to their traffickers. Human trafficking (aka 'trafficking in persons') is a global social problem that affects people, cutting across all ages. Typically, with an estimated 27.6 million trafficked persons worldwide, human traffickers prey on persons of all ages, backgrounds, and nationalities, exploiting them for their own profits (U.S

Department of State, 2024). Globally, human trafficking is trending in contemporary times with high celerity. To be sure, prior to the abolition of slave trade in pre-colonial African countries and other poor countries of the Global South, where victims were kidnapped, sold and transported to Euro-American nations for wage labour and other services; human trafficking had existed then as 'slave trade'. Thus, to a large extent, the modern human trafficking is a 'neo-slave trade' or the renaissance of slave trade. It has attracted nuanced definitions in recent times. For instance, the United Nations (the UN) has grouped human trafficking into 3 categories, namely: Sex trafficking, labour trafficking, and removal of organs (Alese and Leonard, 2025). Hence, the UN has defined it as, the induction by force, fraud or coercion of persons to engage in the sex trade, or harbouring, transportation, or obtaining of a person for labour service or organ removal (UN, 2000; article 3). Perhaps, for a better enlightened discourse, it is quite conceivable to briefly put into context here, the *modus operandi* or scheme by which the traffickers carry out their act of human trafficking: they usually create transnational routes for the conveyance of migrants who are experiencing poor living conditions in their countries of origin. The common countries of origin may include the poor nations of South East Asia, Eastern Europe, and Sub-Saharan Africa. The recruiters seek vulnerable migrants via various channels like the internet, employment intermediaries, the media and local networks. Although, trafficking mode of operation is both illegal and risky, migrants due to the harsh poor socio-economic conditions in their countries of origin, see the services of the traffickers as opportunity to improve their poor

socio-economic status. Being an illegal scheme, the human traffickers usually provide their migrant victims with illegal travel documents (e.g. fake passports, fake visas, etc.) and caution their victims to avoid the surveillance of boarder control agents. These migrant-victims may leave from their countries of origin voluntarily, yet majority of them are oblivious of the fact that they are being recruited for an illegal trafficking scheme. At the country of destination, where the smugglers would hand over the migrant-victims to the actual employers and receive their agreed payment, the traffickers would seize the immigration documents of the victims and subject them to physical and sexual abuse.

The causal drivers of this loathsome human trafficking are not farfetched. It includes (but not limited) to the antinomies of underdevelopment in the poor countries of origin plagued by abject poor socio-economic conditions, wars, climate change anomalies, insecurities and political instabilities. Besides, another key causal factor is globalization and its immanent contradictions: it has driven the poor Global South nations not only into the global capitalist market but also influenced the global transportation of illegal migrant-victims via its features like ICT (creating easy communication channels to reach and recruit victims), hence affording the organized crime syndicates of trafficking a leverage to expand their criminal networks, including creation of transnational routes (deserts, water channels, etc.) that aid the transport of victims. Thus, the underlying causal trigger of all these factors is, 'global capitalism': nations, peoples, and corporations of the world are trapped in the web of capitalist tendencies of profit maximization, and can grab any slightest cheap labour opportunity for private gain; therefore, migrant-victims could serve

their selfish purposes.

2.2. Modern Slavery-- An Overview.

As Bales (2004) noted, modern or contemporary slavery is a social and economic relationship in which a person is controlled through violence or paid nothing and is economically exploited. According to the United Nations (UN, 2 December 2024), modern slavery refers to the situation of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, coercion, deception, and/or abuse of power. It is a global phenomenon and cuts across all cultures and nationalities. Its manifestations with its anti-human conditions occur in various forms. A few of its forms include as follow:

First, **human trafficking**: this entails the use of violence, threats, or coercion to transport, recruit, or harbour people in order to exploit them for selfish purposes which may include, forced prostitution, labour, criminality, forced marriage and organ removal. Second, **forced labour**: this includes any work or services people are forced to do against their will. It goes with threat of punishment. Third, **debt bondage or bonded labour**: It includes people whom their abject poverty induces them to borrow money; and due to their inability to pay their debts; they are forced to work to pay off their debts. In this case, they have no control over the employment conditions and the debts. Fourth, **descent-based slavery**: it is synonymous to 'caste slavery' -- An old form of slavery where people are born into slavery or become slaves due to their birth or lineage which they have no control over. Such ascribed status is passed down to them through ancestral lineage. Fifth, **child slavery**: this involves a child being exploited for selfish gain. This embraces child trafficking, child soldiers, child marriage,

and child domestic slavery. Sixth, **forced and early marriage**: in simple terms, this entails someone being married against their will, usually involving minors who are not yet of marital age. Child marriages are slavery. And, seventh; **vulnerable domestic servitude**: that is, when normal domestic service rendered by a domestic employee turns into exploitation, abuse and lack of access to legal protection, it is tantamount to slavery. Perhaps, the blow-by-blow global account of the International Labour Organization (ILO) on modern slavery (ILO et al, 2022), could help us appreciate the urgency required to tackle the menace of modern slavery:

- i. 49.6 million people live in modern slavery -- that is, in forced labour and forced marriage.
- ii. Roughly a quarter of all victims of modern slavery are children.
- iii. 22 million persons are in forced marriages -- two out of five were children.
- iv. Of the 27.6 million persons trapped in forced labour, 17.3 million are in forced labour in the private economy; while 6.3 million are in commercial sexual exploitation; and nearly 4 million are in forced labour imposed by state authorities.
- v. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the conditions that lead to modern slavery.
- vi. Migrant workers are particularly vulnerable to forced labour.

With the above disheartening accounts, one may falter to ask, why are people in slavery in modern times given the much hyped pursuits of democratic ethos, peace, security and rights of the individual among global nations? Several reasons could be adduced to that. However, the topmost reasons could be as a result of being tricked into the situation where the victims become eventually

trapped and exploited. Poverty, lack of legal protection and exclusions are inclusive. Besides, people can also come into modern slavery due to external circumstances that may force them to take harsh decisions aimed at improving their critical state. For instance, circumstances of war, conflicts in fragile areas, insecurities, displacements by climate change crisis (floods, tsunamis, earthquakes, wildfires, etc.) can influence victims to take drastic decisions and enter into slavery to better their human condition. Supporting this, Anti-Slavery International (2024) affirmed that, crises like the Covid-19 pandemic and climate change can make people vulnerable to modern slavery exploitation.

2.3. The Globalization of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery--An Overview.

According to Peterson Institute For International Economics (PIIE, 16 August 2024), globalization describes the growing interdependence of the world's economies, cultures, and populations brought about by cross-border trade in goods and services, technology and flow of investments, people, and information technology. Besides, globalization also connotes the spread of the flow of financial products, goods, technologies, information and jobs across national borders and cultures (Fernando, 2024). To be sure, two striking expressions in the foregoing descriptions of globalization are "cross-border trade" and the "spread of..." the expressions pointedly describes the operational scheme of globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery. Globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery often involves the cross-border or transnational transportation or trafficking of persons for financial exploitation. It equally embraces how this

modern form of slavery has spread globally to different nations of the world due to the existence of ICT (e.g. internet communication systems that ease both sourcing and recruitment of victims) and transportation systems that make this inhuman activity possible. According to Jones et al (2007), human trafficking represents the worst form of labour exploitation and can be regarded as one of the dark sides of globalization. Certainly, human trafficking is not a novel phenomenon-- it has historically existed as slave trade-- however, the dynamics of globalization are fueling its growth (Jones et al., 2007). As an ancillary to that, Hoque (2010) affirmed that, human trafficking (especially in the sex industry) is a global crisis that is inextricably linked to the current move of globalization. Rahman (2011, p.58) in his market situation analysis of the global spread of human trafficking vividly captured the operational scheme or processes involved in the globalization of human trafficking. According to him, first; it involves migrant-victims who are transported; second, are those whose jobs are to recruit the victims for transport. Third, are buyers who claim ownership or possession of the victims. Next in the process, are the 'enablers', who work behind the scenes (knowingly or unknowingly) in facilitating the movement of victims from one destination to another. Furthermore, the next layer of participants are the consumers and the NGOs: the consumers may include buyers of sex workers from the pimps who offer clientele services on hourly basis at the expense of the victims; while the NGOs are the Non-Governmental Organizations who play significant roles in rehabilitating the rescued victims from their trauma. Although, human trafficking is a form of modern slavery, the latter is more generic

than the former. Modern slavery includes nuanced forms of enslavement and exploitation spanning human trafficking, forced labour, debt bondage, child slavery, forced marriage to vulnerable domestic servitude, etc. Nevertheless, the globalization of modern slavery and its nuanced forms are prevalent worldwide, some forms of modern slavery are more pronounced than the others. For instance, human trafficking (one of the forms of modern slavery) is more trending this days as it is the source from where the victims are recruited into other forms of modern slavery (like prostitution, forced labour, etc.). Modern slavery has constituted global crisis and its prevalence is on the rise. Its prevalence has reached all nationalities and regions of the world. Additionally, as Lamas (2023) observed, the global slavery index (GSI) developed by the Walk Free Foundation showed a growing prevalence of modern slavery in years with estimated existence of 29.8 million slaves in 2013; in 2014, 35.8 million; in 2016, 45.8 million; in 2018, 43 million. The globalization of modern slavery (including human trafficking) indeed constitutes a global crisis and requires urgent attention. Its global prevalence can better be captured with the Statista (2025) global prevalence reports spanning the regions of Africa, Europe and the Americas, hereunder tabulated:

TABLE 2.3: Number of Persons living in Modern Slavery by Country per 1000 Population in the Global Regions.

S N	Afri can Reg ion	N u m . P er 10 00	Cent ral Euro pe & Asia	P er 1 0 0.	Am eric as	P e r 1 0 0
--------	---------------------------	---	-------------------------------------	-------------------------	------------------	----------------------------

1	Nigeria	7.8	Turkiye	15.6	Venezuela	9.5
2	Ethiopia	6.3	Tajikistan	14	Haiti	8.2
3	Eritrea	90.3	Russia	13	El Salvador	8.1
4	Kenya	5	Ukraine	12.8	Guatemala	7.8
5	South Sudan	10.3	North Macedonia	12.6	Colombia	7.8
6	South Africa	2.7	Turkmenistan	11.9	Ecuador	7.6
7	Equatorial Guinea	7.8	Albania	11.8	Nicaragua	7.3
8	Cameroon	5.8	Belarus	11.3	Jamaica	7.3
9	Malawi	32	Kazakhstan	11.1	Bolivia	7.2
10	Mauritania	7.3	Azerbaijan	10.6	Peru	7.1
	Cote d'Ivoire					

SOURCE: Adapted from Statista.com (2025). Showing prevalence of modern slavery in the Global Regions (by Country) in 2021.

The original Statista report (2025) actually covered all nations of the world to demonstrate that the menace of modern slavery is a global crisis; but due to spatial constraints only fewer countries are displayed above. With a cursory glance at the above statistics, it is quite discernible that the number of persons per 1000 population is consistently higher in the

European and the Americas regions than in the African region (barring Mauritania, Sudan, and Eritrea), signifying that the Europe and the Americas are usually the destination (the 'demand') countries where the victims are shipped into from the African region (the supply source). Indeed, with the growing globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery, it awakens our curiosities as regards the key causal trigger(s)? First, is the capitalist orientation in both advanced and developing nations (global capitalism), with its neoliberal free market economy fixated on profit maximization at all cost! Thus, the current era of global capitalism has ignited a tendency for shrewd capitalist nations and/or private individuals to engage in cheap labour sourced from migrant-victims of human trafficking to maximize profit. For instance, in Asian capitalist country like Japan, Bales (2005), observed that sex business through 'trafficked in persons' in Japan has a huge financial implications. According to him, the sex business in Japan (in 2001 alone) generated an outrageous \$20 billion USD in revenue, which is four times more than what Japanese Toyota company would generate. Hence, the sex business in Japan is part of Japan's entertainment industry which employs a large number of young foreign women from developing countries like Thailand and Nepal (Rahman, 2011), etc. Similarly, in developing nations of Africa like Ghana, and Nigeria, etc.; the capitalist orientation tendencies of unbridled pursuit of profits via human trafficking and modern slavery are equally evident. In Ghana, for instance, Rahman (2011) noted that the fishing industry has witnessed the recruitment of minors (child labour) for cheap labour in order to maximize profit. In Nigeria, especially in Northern Nigeria, pawning or debts-bond slavery is

still in practice (Rahman, 2011). In this case, the debtor is enslaved by the creditor and forced to work in various forms until the debt is paid. Children are often used as collateral. In other cases, some men from the Northern part of Nigeria who see human trafficking as lucrative business can transport some groups of children (handicapped or faked) from the North to other parts of the country as roadside beggars; of which they have to bring returns to their masters from their daily collections. Additionally, poor living conditions, conflicts, insecurities, etc. at the countries of origin (supply countries) can also be contributory. Nevertheless, there have been certain initiatives or responses of global leaders and/or state actors to curbing the menace. Typically, there was the launch of 'Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons' by the United Nations in year 2000 (Ruth, 26th February 2010). It was endorsed by 177 countries. Similarly, the Council of Europe launched its 'Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings' in 2005 (Ruth, 26th February 2010). Furthermore, there was the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) launched in March 2007 (UN News, 31st August 2010). And by 2015, the UN intensified its commitment to combating human trafficking and modern slavery by including it in the Global Goals (SDGs No 8, target 8.7). Other state actors, ILO, and local initiatives from governments of nations have equally contributed. But the pertinent question still remains: why has the scourge of the globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery persisted in spite of these global responses from global leaders? The answer is not farfetched: it resides within the sphere of the influence of the immanent contradictions of global capitalism as

demonstrated above!

2.4. The Psycho-Politico-Economic Implications of the Globalization of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery. In concrete terms, with the revealing drifts of the foregoing utterances so far in the discourse; at this point, we begin to come to terms with the glaring reality, that in the dynamics of the globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery therein lie a global crisis, with its hidden or latent implications at multifarious levels. These implications are germane as they give insights into how the menace affects the individual victims at the personal level (psychological), how it affects government processes (political level), and how it affects the economic process of nations (economic level). In what follows, we shall attend to the tripartite implications, *et seriatim*. To that we now proceed.

2.4.1. The Psychological Implications of the Globalization of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery.

To be sure, human trafficking and modern slavery are crimes against the individual, and the consequences are most directly felt by the individuals who are the victims. Its psychological, mental or emotional implications are far-reaching unlike other violent crimes. The implications involve prolonged and repeated trauma. The psychological implications are numerous. A few are hereunder enunciated:

First, according to PYRAMID Health Inc (13 May 2024), victims of human trafficking and modern slavery would struggle with complicated emotions like shock, shame, guilt, depression, despair, and anxiety. Supporting this, Oram et al (2016) found that, symptoms of depression, anxiety and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) were reported by 78% of women and 40% of men,

survivors of the menace in England. Those most likely to suffer these are the victims, who in the event of their being smuggled or trafficked, they were unaware of the inhuman activities their traffickers would subject them to. Second, victims can become addicted to substance abuse. Their traffickers usually force them into substance abuse as a means of coping with their emotional stress and desperate situation. Some have become mentally deranged in the process and lost their lives. Supporting this, Sukran et al (1 February 2017: 21 - 23) affirmed that, research shows that mental health problems are prevalent among trafficked people.

Besides, the psychological implications of human trafficking and modern slavery can trigger critical psychological trauma in victims like phobia, memory loss, and panic attacks. Supporting this, Sukran et al (2017) affirmed that, evidence of severe mental illness including schizophrenia and psychotic disorders has been detected among trafficked persons. More so, victims may suffer difficulties of building trust in relationships as a result of the frequent emotional abuse. Most times, the victims experience constant threats to their lives which caused them emotional stress; forced into sex services without their permission, hence suffering emotional abuse that further develop into trust issues in their relationship with other people.

Moreover, even when rescued from their traffickers or slavery, victims usually suffer isolation in trying to re-enter society and social relations with others. They may self-isolate themselves as a way of managing their shame, stigma and guilt sustained in their trafficking experience. Supporting this, UNODC (2008) affirmed that, the stigma attached to the victims has been shown to have a

significant and ongoing impact on their lives, including the trauma experienced by the individual as well as the possibility of family and community rejection. Furthermore, according to American Psychological Association study (APA, 24 April 2023), there are evidences that victims could experience "Stockholm Syndrome". Stockholm syndrome is an emotional attachment (or trauma bonding) to their abuser; including substance use, abuse and addiction.

2.4.2. The Political Implications of the Globalization of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery.

The globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery has huge political implications. First, it is a violation of the fundamental human rights of the individual. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights endorses that every individual has the inalienable right to human dignity and freedom. Essentially, article 4 of the Universal Human Rights (UDHR) stated that, "no one person should be held in slavery or servitude" (United Nations, 2023). Besides, human trafficking threatens legal immigration procedures. The government personnel, that is, immigration officials are often bribed by the traffickers to compromise on the immigration policies and legal requirements, thereby encouraging illegal immigration and violation of constituted procedures. Moreover, it is a gender-based violence against the female gender that constitutes the majority of the victims (Anoforum, 2014). Supporting this, United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (UN-ICAT, 2017) affirmed that, human trafficking and modern slavery affect the lives of millions of women and girl victims who account for 71% of all trafficked victims globally.

More so, the growing globalization of human trafficking both within and across national borders is a pointer to the porosity of government's security structures. For the menace to be pervasive with great celerity globally, it is either security architecture of nations are lax in detecting and preventing the crime or there is complicity of the security officials with the traffickers. Supporting this, for instance; according to Hugot (2024), South and Central Asian countries in 2022 reported the highest prevalence with 50 million victims, and this prevalence was attributed to porous/weak government security structures like, weak law enforcement, corruption of officials, and limited support for victims. Additionally, globalization of human trafficking increases crime rates in the countries of destination. Many of the trafficked persons at the country of destination are usually recruited and subjected into illegal jobs (drugs trafficking, prostitution, substance abuse, etc.) hence abetting crime rate in country of destination.

Furthermore, it is a threat to global peace and security. Human trafficking and modern slavery can encourage the supply of terrorists to diverse nations of the world. Non-state actors like terrorists master-minders can leverage on the opportunity to get supply of persons they can train to carry out their terrorists' attacks and other heinous crimes against governments and humanity. Again, human trafficking and modern slavery violate the rule of law with a threat to national jurisdictions and international law (UNODC, 2008). The rule of law stipulates that, all are equal before the law. To treat others as slaves and subject them to conditions that deny them their human dignity, is a contradiction of the provisions of the rule of law.

Ultimately, it places enormous burden on the governments (both at the countries of origin and of destination). Governments are faced with the burdens of rescuing and rehabilitating the victims, etc. For instance, in the United Kingdom, the government in July 2016 announced a huge sum of £33.5 million pounds sterling as Modern Slavery Funds (MSF) mapped out for reducing the prevalence of modern slavery globally (Gov.UK, 20 May 2022). Thus, such funds drain state resources that should have been channeled into infrastructural development.

2.4.3. The Economic Implications of the Globalization of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery.

The economic implications of the globalization of human trafficking and modern are quite enormous; they have deleterious effects both on the economic life of the individual, at national and global level. For instance, at the level of the individual, victims are held in financial debt bondage which they keep working for under unfavorable conditions until the debts are paid off. Besides, victims are often subjected into forced labour, coerced to work for low wages to satisfy their traffickers. Supporting this, the International Labour Organization reports on number of persons involved in modern slavery (ILO et al, 2022) affirmed that, about 27.6 million persons are trapped in forced labour globally. Additionally, at the national level; human trafficking and modern slavery diminish workforce productivity at the country of origin. Migrant-victims from the countries of origin are shipped to the advanced capitalist nations where they are needed for cheap labour; at the long run, these supply countries suffer diminished human capital resources as most of their able workforce have been

trafficked to other nations. This has a systemic effect on the nation's productivity, especially in the agricultural sector and other productive sectors like industries and services. Thus, to a large extent, this contributes to the persistent underdevelopment of the poor developing nations that are usually the supply sources of the migrant-victims. Supporting this, U.S Department of State (UN DOS, 2006) affirmed that, the loss of human potential can inhibit national development. More so, it constitutes an economic burden or stress to the economic structure of receiving nations. With the migrant-victims trafficked into the countries of destination, the economic resources of these countries will be depleted and overburdened as the migrant-victims would add to their population with limited resources to cater for them.

Moreover, with the availability of cheap labour provided by the migrant-victims there could be discouragement of minimum wage improvement for the citizenry of the receiving nations. The government of the nations receiving the trafficked persons may not be motivated to improve minimum wage for its own citizens. Supporting this, Jones et al (2007) affirmed that, with the large pools of illegal workers willing to take the low-end jobs in an economy, human trafficking may block efforts of government to improve wages and working conditions. This, to some extent is the cause of xenophobic attacks on migrants in their countries of destination. Again, at the global level, the globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery can generate illegal profits and revenues for global nations' GDP. As Devin (2008) noted, the menace is not just only a socio-cultural consequence of globalization, but an economic implication of the globalization

process that involves a functional integration of the outcomes of any economic activities. For instance, a person trafficked into another country for forced labour, in his or her labour activities (be it sexual services or cheap labour in agriculture, etc.) generates money which is in turn integrated into the global GDP. According to Georgia-Tech (29 April, 2019), human trafficking generates more than \$150 billion USD annually, globally. Corroborating this, Bales (2005) revealed that, sex business in Japan, in 2001 alone, generated an outrageous \$20 billion USD in revenue, which is four times more than what Japanese Toyota company would generate. As a result, sex business in Japan has been allowed to operate as part of Japan's entertainment industry. Perhaps, the revenue some nations receive from the services of migrant-victims could be the reason for lax commitment of most nations towards curbing the menace. Thus, to a large extent, that confirms our earlier position that 'global capitalism' (a dark underbelly of globalization) is the chief factor that aids the globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery. No shrewd capitalist nations receiving such whopping amount of revenues (like Japan) annually from indecent and forced labour of migrant-victims would be in a hurry to end the menace!

3.0 Findings.

In line with the accomplishment of the stated objectives of the paper, our investigation uncovered the following findings:

1. The globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery are interlinked with certain psychological implications which affect the individual victim with certain emotional and mental health issues (e.g., drug addictions, trauma, stress disorders,

phobia, memory loss, etc.);

2. The globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery have political implications (e.g., violation of the rights of the individual; contravenes equality principle of the rule of law; a threat to global peace and security; threatens immigration procedures, etc.);

3. It is interlaced with huge economic consequences at multiple levels: the individual victim's economic life, the national level and global level (e.g., puts the victims in debt bondage; diminishes workforce of nations; encourages illegal revenue generation for global nations, etc.);

4. The unbridled nature of global capitalism fixated on profit maximization is the chief factor that has aided the globalization of human trafficking and modern slavery among nations of the world.

4.0. Summary and Conclusion.

From the onset, we were informed that human trafficking is a specific form of modern slavery, and both in recent times have demonstrated to be a resurgence of the defunct slave trade. The menace is a global crisis involving all nations of the world, both advanced and developing nations. The rate of its pervasiveness is very alarming and has attracted responses from both global leaders and state actors both at the national and international levels towards curbing the menace. In spite of their efforts, the prevalence has persisted. This was attributed to global capitalism (the dark side of globalization) whose orientation is forever pursuit of profits at all cost as a chief factor, among other causal drivers. Thus, the investigation revealed in its findings that, the menace have some immanent implications: psychological, political and economic implications which are deleterious at multiple levels of the

individual victims, the nations, and global level; inter alia. In view of the findings therefore, the paper recommends as follows for a way forward:

5. 0. Recommendations.

1. There should be stricter anti-human trafficking policies, and sincere commitment of global leaders towards curbing the menace. This would help to curbing the negative psychological, political and economic implications of human trafficking and modern slavery.

2. National governments should commence awareness campaigns for their citizenry to enlighten them on the strategies and tricks of the traffickers to prevent citizens from becoming victims. Besides, there should be severe sanctions against corrupt immigration officials who are caught colluding with the traffickers; including adequate security beefed up at likely routes and borders used by the traffickers;

3. There should be societal re-orientation with regard to reducing societal stigma against victims of human trafficking and modern slavery. This will help facilitate smooth reintegration of the rescued victims to the normal society; hence reducing victim's psychological trauma;

4. There should be public and private partnership where the global leaders (governments) should partner with private organizations (NGOs, private security outfits) and map out joint actions in combating the menace. Example, government can partner with NGOs who are into entrepreneurial skills development programme to train victims on skills acquisition as part of the victim's societal re-integration, thereby improving the socio-economic well-being of victims.

References.

- Alese, C. W & Leonard, A. S (1January, 2025). Human trafficking: Crime. www.britannica.com/human-trafficking/
- APA (April 24, 2023). 7 in 10 human trafficking victims are women and girls - What are the psychological effects? www.apa.org/topics/women-and-girls
- Anoforum, E. I (2014). The social and economic implications of human trafficking in Nigeria: NAPTIP IN FOCUS. 6th Annual Interdisciplinary Conference on Human Trafficking; Lincoln, Nebraska, U.S.A, October 9 - 11, 2014.
- Anti-Slavery International (2024). What is modern slavery? London: Anti-Slavery International Publication. www.anti-slavery.org/slavery-today/modern-slavery/
- Bales, K. (2004). New slavery: A reference handbook. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO
- Bales, K. (2005). Understanding Global Slavery: A Reader. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Devin, B. (2008). Globalization and Human Trafficking. University of Denver: Topical Research Digest.
- Fage, T. D & McCaskie, T. C (11 January 2025). The abolition of slavery in Western Africa in the Guinea Coastlands and the Europeans (1807 - 79). www.britannica.com
- Fernando, J. (March 4, 2024). Globalization in business with history and pros and cons. www.investopedia.com
- Georgia-Tech (April 29, 2019). Giving value of a statistical life: A firmer foundation and a new name. www.iac.gatech.edu/news/items/621067/giving-value-statistical-life-firmer-foundation/
- Gov.UK (20 May, 2022). Modern Slavery Funds (MSF) review (2019 - 2021): Findings, lessons & recommendations. www.gov.uk/msf
- Guterres, A. (December 7th, 2023). Secretary-General's remarks to the Security Council on Transnational Organized Crime, Growing Challenges and New Threats. New York: United Nations publication.
- www.un.org/sg/en/contents/sg/statement/2023-12-07/secretary-generals-remarks/
- Hickel, J; Doring, C; Wieland, H & Suwandi, I (2022). "Imperialist appropriation in the world economy: Drain from the global south through unequal exchange, 1990-2015". *Global Environmental Change*. 73. Doi:10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2022.102467.
- Hoque, M.S (2010). "Female Child Trafficking from Bangladesh: A new form of slavery" In: *Canadian Social Science Journal*, vol. c.1: 45 - 58
- Hugot, L. (2024). Human Trafficking in Asia: A hidden scourge. Policy Briefs of Growth Think Tank. [www.growththinktank.org/human-trafficking-in-asia/..](http://www.growththinktank.org/human-trafficking-in-asia/)
- ILO, Walk Free Foundation & IOM (2022). Global Estimates of modern 423

slavery: Forced

labour and forced marriage.
ILO, Walk Free Foundation and
International

Organization for Migration
(IOM) publication. Geneva, Switzerland.

www.cdn.walkfree.org/content/uploads/2022/09/12142341/GEMS2022

Report En_v8.pdf
IMF (June 2015). "A Chain Unbroken --
Finance and Development". *IMF Finance*
&

Development (F&D) Journal.
Vol. 52, No. 2.

www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2015/06/ruotanan.htm

Jones, L; Engstrom, D.W; Hilliard, T; &
Diaz, M (2007). "Globalization and
Human

Trafficking". *The Journal of
Sociology and Social Welfare*. Vol. 34,
Issue 2,

article 18, pp 107 - 121.

Lamas, B. (2023). Modern Slavery in the
Global Economy. In: D. A. Pargas & J.
Shield

(eds). The Palgrave
Handbook of Global Slavery throughout
history. Cham,

Palgrave Macmillan. [www.
doi.org/10 .1007/978-3-031-132 60 -
5_37](http://www.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-13260-5_37)

OCI (2023). Human trafficking in the
U.S. Ukraine: Organized Crime Index
report. [www.](http://www.ocindex.net)

[ocindex.net](http://www.ocindex.net).

Oram, S; Abas, M; & Bick, D (2016).
Human trafficking and health: A cross
sectional

journey of male and female
survivors in contact with service in
England.

*American Journal of Public
Health*. No. 106, pp. 1073 - 1078.

PIIE (August 16, 2024). What is

Globalization? Peterson Institute For
International

Economics
(PIIE)publication. [www.piie.com/-what-
is-globalization?/](http://www.piie.com/-what-is-globalization?/)

PYRAMID Health Inc (13 May 20 24).
The mental and physical health effects of
human

trafficking. [www.pyramid-
healthcare.com](http://www.pyramid-healthcare.com)

Rahman, M.A (2011). Human trafficking
in the era of globalization: The case of
trafficking in the global
market economy. *Transcience Journal*,
Vol. 2, No. 1,

pp 54 - 71.

Ruth, D. (26 February, 2010). Prevention,
Prosecution, and Protection-- Human

Trafficking. UN Chronicle.
www.un.org/en/chronicle

Statista (2025). Prevalence of modern
slavery in Europe and Central Asia 2021
by

Country. www.statista.com
Sukran, A; Abas, M; Zimmerman, C;
Howard, L. M & Oram, S (2017).
"Mental health and

human trafficking: responding
to survivors needs". *BJPyson
International*

Journal. No. 14 (1): 21 - 23.
doi.: 10.1192/s 205647400000010x

Todd, L & Bernard, W. S (2019).
"Globalization and modern slavery".
University of

*Nottingham Journal of Politics
and Governance*. Vol. 7, Issue 4, pp 275 -
290.

UNICEF (29 January 2 016).
Sustainable Development Goals that aim
to end human

trafficking.
www.unicef.usa.org/stories

UNODC (2011). United Nations office
on Drugs and Crimes on human
trafficking and

migrant smuggling. UNODC
424

publication. Retrieved March 2011. www.unodc.org

United Nations (2000, article 3). Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish trafficking in persons especially women and children -- Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

www.uncjin.org/documents/conventions/deatoc/final/

U.S Department of State (2024). 2024 trafficking in persons report. www.state.gov/reports/2024/trafficking-in-persons/

U.S DOS (2006). Trafficking in persons report. Washington, D.C: U.S government printing office.

www.state.gov/reports/2006/

U.N (2 December 2024). International Day for the abolition of slavery. www.un.org/international-for-abolition-of-slavery/

U.N (2023). Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) turns 75. www.un.org/udhr/

U.N News (August 31 2020). UN launches global action plan to combat scourge of trafficking. Retrieved September 26, 2021. www.news.un.org

U.N- ICAT (2017). The Gender Dimensions of Human Trafficking. United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons. Issue brief #4; 09/2017/. www.icat.un.org

Williamson, S. H (26th May, 2022). Global neoliberalism is allowing human trafficking to flourish. Transforming Society Press. A publication of Bristol University

press (Policy press). www.transformingsociety.co.uk/2022/05/26/global-neoliberalism-is-allowing-human-trafficking-to-flourish

Zimmerman, C. & Ligia, K (2017). "Human trafficking and exploitation: A global health concern". *PLOS Medicine Journal* 14 (11): e1002437. Doi: 10.1371/journal.pmed.100 2437.