

# A Comparative Study of Child Trafficking Causes between China and Uganda

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## Abstract

Child trafficking has been associated with various negative protection outcomes for children as well as causing huge social and economic burdens for countries. With thousands of children being exploited and abused at varying levels in all countries of the world, child protection lacks extensive information coverage. Government's are often challenged to gather vast information on the exploitation and abuse of children and yet globally, they are urged to implement more sounding intervention child protection programs. Although a number of intervention strategies are in place to combat child trafficking and to improve on the protection of children, these interventions have not been widely adopted by countries, making child trafficking a growing concern. The causes of the phenomenon in China and Uganda are discussed in this review paper, along with an exploration of possible common causes of the phenomenon out of a complex background, for a successful global campaign against the problem. The study on child trafficking is an important issue because it cuts across a range of development dimensions and therefore, it has relevance for practitioners throughout the development community. It was meaningful for the researchers to explore this phenomenon because given that children are the future of tomorrow's society, the problem of trafficking them cannot be taken lightly because it is the quality of life that is at risk.

**Key words:** Children, Child Trafficking, China, Uganda

## 1. Introduction

Child trafficking is one of the fastest growing global crimes against children, placing children more and more in danger (Walker-Rodriguez and Hill, 2011; Rahman, 2011; Bassiouni, 2010). It is a violation of their rights, their well-being and denies them the opportunity to reach their full potential (Ssekiwanuka, 2010). The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons defines child trafficking as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation (Kasirye, 2007). It is estimated that 1.2 million children are trafficked each year (ILO, 2002). This statistical evidence of trafficked children confronts us with a stark reality; millions of children are at risk of being exploited and abused. The factors that make children vulnerable to trafficking are equally diverse (Dottridge, 2008), ranging from not only the individual level, but also at the household, community, regional, institutional and systematic levels (Clert et al., 2005). Child trafficking has been underlined as a development issue because it cuts across a range of development dimensions. There have been however few substantive global efforts to address the problem and find a solution (Le, 2007). The causes of trafficking are complex and, at the same time, varied (Huda, 2006). There is no uniform answer to "what causes trafficking?" (Bales, 2007). This explains why trafficking in human beings exists in greater proportions even in the 21st century (Kiss et al., 2015). It is worrisome to see that the estimates of the number of people trafficked each year are increasing (Huda, 2006). This is partly attributed to the numerous difficulties in collecting information on the issue due to its complex nature (Huda, 2006). There have been few studies done among countries to explore possible common causes out of a complex background and yet of recent, no country seems invulnerable to this brutal trade against human beings (Xin, 2004). The need to develop more effective global responses (Touzenis, 2010), can only be matched with the availability of vast information about the vice. This article seeks to understand the factors fueling child trafficking in China and Uganda so as to explore possible common causes out of a complex background for a global campaign against trafficking of children.

## 2. A Glimpse of the general trafficking situation in China and Uganda

The recently released 2015 Trafficking in Persons report places China at Tier 2 Watch List and Uganda at Tier 2 of the Trafficking in Persons rankings where both countries have remained for most of the years (US Department of State, 2015). The Tier rankings are meant to give a clear and honest assessment of whether

countries are making progress on their commitments to end the phenomenon of trafficking or are standing still or even sliding backwards. The tier rank for China and Uganda indicates a slow progress in the elimination of trafficking in human beings for both countries (see figure 1 and figure 2 below) despite both governments making significant efforts to combat the vice of which some efforts have been recognized. "The Chinese government reported convicting at least 35 traffickers during the year 2015 through its publicly available data, and reported cooperating with neighboring countries to repatriate foreign trafficking victims" (US Department of State, 2015). In 2013, the People's Republic of China's National People's Congress ratified a decision to abolish Re-education Through Labour (RTL) which was a systematic form of forced labour that had existed in China for decades. The government closed several RTL facilities by the beginning of April 2014 (US Department of State, 2015). The Chinese Public Security Ministry is also actively trying to gather and publicize information on the absolute number of victims of trafficking. "Instances of trafficking estimated to exceed 236 million people are reported among China's internal migrant population" (US Department of State, 2015). The government of Uganda has also maintained strong efforts to identify trafficking victims. Research undertaken in 2014 by the Coordination Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons (COCTIP) in Uganda revealed that, a total of 837 victims of trafficking (including suspected victims) were registered for the year 2013, out of which 429 were victims of transnational trafficking while 408 were trafficked internally. The government of Uganda investigated 293 trafficking cases in 2014, an increase from 159 cases reported in the previous year. It reported 23 prosecutions and four convictions in 2014, in comparison with two convictions in the previous year (US Department of State, 2015). There is also continued support by the government of Uganda to allocate resources to the Counter-Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) office established 5 years ago to raise public awareness on trafficking, the Ministry of Gender, Labor, and Social Development (MGLSD), and its External Employment Unit (EEU) (US Department of State, 2015).

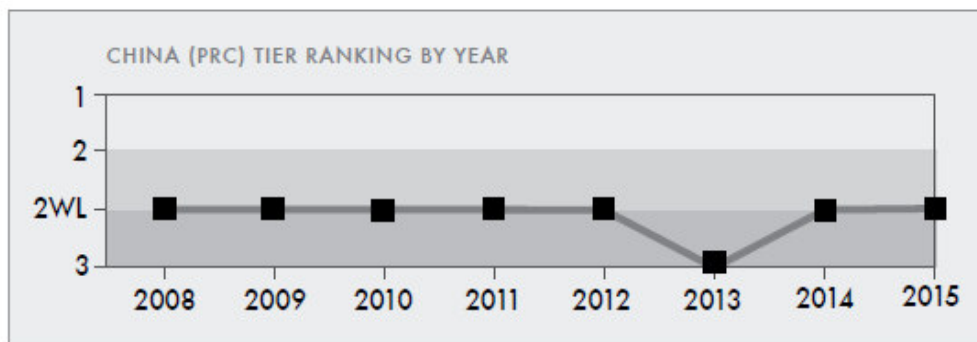


Figure 1. China Tier Ranking by year (US Department of Statement, 2015)

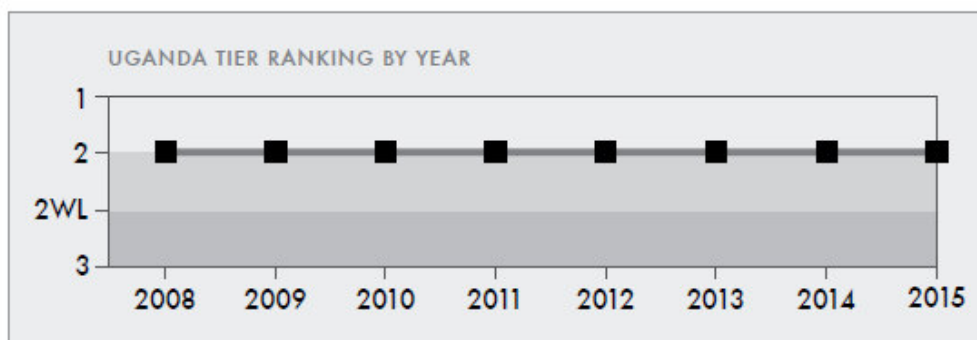


Figure 2. Uganda Tier Ranking by year (US Department of Statement, 2015)

The victims of trafficking for both China and Uganda include women, men and children (US Department of State, 2015; Dullum, 2011; Dottridge, 2008; Kasirye, 2007; ILO/IPEC, 2007). These are usually enticed, persuaded, forced or convinced to migrate (UYDEL, 2011; Kasirye, 2007). For a country like China were children are often referred to as "little emperors" (The Guardian, 2015; Kluger, 2013) and where children

constitute a much smaller share of the population (Banister, Bloom and Rosenberg, 2010), with population ages 0-14 year making up only 19.8 % of the total population (1.32 billion people) (Children’s Rights Portal, 2011), one would assume utmost protection of children by the general population. For a country like Uganda were the population is largely youthful with children below 18 years constituting 56.7% of the population (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2014), one would assume greater responsibility towards the protection of children by the state. But surprisingly, trafficking in children remains one of the serious social problems affecting both China and Uganda creating a staggering child rights record for both countries. China and Uganda are two different countries, the reason why the researcher chose to compare the two countries.

Table 1: Comparison of China and Uganda with Country specific features

FEATURES	DIFFERENCES	
	CHINA	UGANDA
Population	-1.32 billion people (Banister, Bloom and Rosenberg, 2010).	-34.9 million people (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2014) making Uganda just a province in China.
Economic development (GDP percapita)	-The GDP percapita of China is \$ 8,387 (IMF, 2012)	-The GDP percapita of Uganda is \$ 1,385 (IMF, 2012). Uganda’s GDP is almost 8 times lower than that of China.
Poverty rate	-13.1% of the population (172 million people) live on less than \$1.25 a day (World Bank, 2008)	-24.5% of the population live on less than \$1.25 a day, below the poverty line as of the 2009 estimate (World Bank, 2010). The poverty rate in Uganda is higher than that in China.
Fertility rate	-The fertility rate in China is at 1.6 total births per woman according to the World Bank (2012).	-The fertility rate, total births per woman in Uganda was last reported at 6.15 in 2010, according to the World Bank report published in 2012. This far outweighs that of China at 1.6 total births per woman.
Area coverage	-China is the third largest country in the world with a total area coverage of 9.6 million square kilometers.	-The total area coverage of Uganda is 236,040 square kilometers making Uganda just a plot of land in China
Politics	-The Chinese government has been variously described as socialist, but also as authoritarian, with heavy restrictions remaining in many areas, most notably on the Internet, the press, freedom of assembly and reproductive rights to mention but a few	-Uganda is purely capitalist, and a democratic country with no heavy restrictions on people as the situation is in China

### 3. Method

A desk research method was used to review literature and search for data for the study. The desk research revolved around detailed Internet searches, library searches and contacting academicians (in universities/colleges), government officials and NGOs (for example UNICEF China and UYDEL Uganda) via e-mail or short visits to their offices, for reports, articles, published research studies and any other materials they possessed on child trafficking. The researcher looked for published studies done by various UN agencies, government departments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), law enforcement agents, universities, companies (business entities), and individual scholars/authors on child trafficking in China and in Uganda. Works written by trafficked persons themselves were important for

understanding the situation in both countries. The researcher also looked at press articles published by the national and international media, mainly newspapers and internet periodicals for example journals. Publications from the year 2000 to date were considered, in order for the researcher to have recent information about the vice and to understand the phenomenon of child trafficking in depth for both countries. The justification for relying on published studies and press articles (from newspapers/journals) was that they pass through a review process, where by several readers must examine and approve content before they are published, a confirmation that they are empirically based. The researcher complemented the data from the different sources and singled out the key findings for both countries. The researcher thought and thought about the evidence and then explained how the phenomenon could be understood in both countries. During the comparison, the researcher tried to relate issues of both countries to other aspects.

#### **4. Child Trafficking: Definition, Scale, Trends, Patterns and Causes in China**

China is a source, transit and destination country for children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking (US Department of State, 2015). The event of trafficking in children was first noticed in the 1980's and it has been on the rise since then in the country (Monte, 2009). A much narrower definition of child trafficking is offered by Article 240 of the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China (1979, revised 1997). The Article outlaws the abduction, kidnapping, purchase, sale or transfer of children for the purpose of selling. The Article does not include deception or abduction of children with no intention to sell them but for direct services like forced labour or sexual exploitation (China Development Brief, 2007). This narrow definition helps to explain the surprisingly low figures for trafficked children that Chinese officials give.

The domestic trafficking of children (within China's own borders) is a much bigger problem although cross - border trafficking of children is believed to be growing (US Department of State, 2012). It is estimated that approximately 10,000 to 20,000 children are trafficked among Chinese provinces each year (Dullum, 2011). Internal trafficking occurs within the context of large-scale internal migration within the country (US Department of State, 2008). China's internal migrant population is estimated to exceed 221 million people in future (US Department of State, 2012), the reason why some Chinese nationals think the problem of child trafficking is likely to increase in future (Dullum, 2011). According to a research report by the All-China Women's Federation, of children affected by migration and possibly trafficking, stay-at-home children make up the second largest number (UNIAP, 2008). There are more than 20 million rural children left behind at home by full-time working parents in cities (Children's Rights Portal, 2011). Most child victims of trafficking are from poor and rural areas in the western part of the country (Children's Rights Portal, 2011; UNIAP, 2008). Yunnan and Guizhou provinces are the main source provinces, while Fujian, Guangdong, and Shangdong are the main destination provinces (UNIAP, 2008). Yunnan and Guizhou provinces are amongst the provinces with the lowest GDP per capita in China, while Fujian, Guangdong and Shangdong have some of the highest GDP per capita (UNIAP, 2008). Trafficked children range in age from babies and toddlers to grown teenagers (Hucul, 2010). The majority of these are young boys who are sold to the highest bidder, in China itself, or sometimes in other Asian countries (Children's Rights Portal, 2011).

Trafficked children especially young boys are subjected to forced labor in brick kilns, coal mines, and factories within the Chinese provinces (US Department of State, 2015). Forced begging by children is also reported throughout China (US Department of State, 2015). Chinese girls are usually subjected to sex trafficking in form of forced marriage, domestic servitude and commercial sexual exploitation (working as prostitutes in the entertainment industry, hairdressing or massage parlours) within the country and across borders (Tiefenbrun and Edwards, 2008; UNIAP, 2008), and they are typically recruited from rural areas and taken to urban centers by well - organized criminal syndicates and local gangs (US Department of State of State, 2015; US Department of State, 2012). The main means of trafficking are: fraud and deception, kidnapping, abuse of power or a position of vulnerability and physical violence (UNIAP, 2008).

There are several identified common patterns of recruiting child victims of trafficking in China. These include but are not limited to: 1) a promise of a good job, education or a better life; 2) a false marriage proposal turned into a bondage situation; 3) being sold into the sex industry by parents, girlfriends or boyfriends, and 4) being abducted or kidnapped by traffickers (US Department of State, 2015). Traffickers of children include parents, neighbors, friends, a friend of a friend, boyfriend/girl friend, former victims of trafficking, acquaintance, family friend, organized criminal gangs, among other people who may or may not be familiar to the child although in most cases, traffickers are often very familiar persons to the victims (UNICEF, 2009). Generally speaking, it is difficult to tell that child trafficking is taking place because it involves so many informal networks and thus hidden in nature. Following evidence from the police on a past crack down in China, Kung (2012)

revealed that two gangs employed a "third ground" method to put children on the black market. The first gang bought children illegally from Yunnan and Guangxi province and sold them in Shandong province. The second gang then received the children in Shandong province and resold them on the spot to a third party, making the transaction more difficult to trace.

The causes of child trafficking in China are equally diverse. The one child policy which is one of the distinct government policies in China has been critiqued as one of the potential contributors to the phenomenon of trafficking in children in the country (Monte, 2009; US Department of State, 2010). What appears to be just of a coincidence is that the year 1980 when the event of child trafficking was first noticed, the one child policy had just been introduced the previous year 1979. While the one child policy has been greeted with approval by many Chinese people, with an approval rating of over 76% in 2008 (Monte, 2009), it is against the old age tradition where Chinese families used to have many children. Its implementation since 1979 has left many Chinese families especially in the rural areas with no enough labour force to work on the farms (Hall, 2010). Even if in the rural areas, couples are allowed up to two children without having to request special permission from the government, many still hold on to the old age tradition of wanting many children (Monte, 2009). They believe having more children gives one more status and labour power and this as a result has led to the increase in the demand for children either legally or illegally (Monte, 2009). According to the BBC News Report (2011), families buy trafficked children to use as extra labour and household servants. The report indicated that there have been several high profile cases of abducted children being rescued from mines and brick kilns - prompting a Chinese government campaign against slavery.

The cultural tradition of male child preference which is deeply rooted in patriarchal values places boys at risk of being trafficked in China. Research undertaken in 2009 by Monte revealed that boys are still very much valued over girls where couples are allowed only one child. Su Qingcai, a tea farmer from the mountainous coast of Fujian Province, explained why he spent \$3,500 last year on a 5-year-old boy. *'A girl is just not as good as a son,'* said Su, 38, who has a 14-year-old daughter but whose biological son died at 3 months. *'It doesn't matter how much money you have. If you don't have a son, you are not as good as other people who have one,'* Su added (Jacobs, 2009, p.1). Tiefenbrun and Edwards (2008) noted that couples seeking a male child will sell, drown or even murder their girl child in order to make room for the purchase of a trafficked baby boy. Hall (2010) also noted that some babies are clearly being trafficked to meet demand from childless couples. Talking about the issue of adoption in China, Wei Zhongmin, a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) on CCTV News, March, 11th 2012 said that some childless people don't know the normal channel of adoption. She noted that especially those living in the outlying rural mountainous areas, they usually buy children from human traffickers.

In order to comply with the One-Child Policy and to ensure that the family has a coveted boy child who can carry on the family name, girls are disappearing in China (Dullum, 2011). By 2005, there was a ratio of 118 boys born to every 100 girls and as high as 130 boys to every 100 girls in some rural provinces of China (Monte, 2009). Research undertaken in 2008 by Tiefenbrun and Edwards revealed that men, primarily in rural China, are desperately seeking for brides because of the short supply of girls. Criminal syndicates and local gangs are working in an organized chain to kidnap and sell girls in China (Dullum, 2011; Hall, 2010; Tiefenbrun and Edwards, 2008). Hall (2010) noted that some parents have resorted to buying girl children for their sons to marry when the time comes. These girls are often raised more or less as daughters of the purchasing family, but are then forced to marry the family's son, often at a remarkably young age (Hall, 2010). Dullum (2011) also noted that the great demand for wives has increased the number of young girls being trafficked from other nations into China. While bride trafficking is by no means the norm, Hall (2010) found out that in rural areas of China, it does tend to be morally tolerated due to patriarchal notions of gender the reason why Chinese citizens anticipate that the problem of child trafficking is likely to expand further in future.

The large scale rural to urban internal migration in China has created opportunities for traffickers (US Department of State, 2010). Unlike during Mao's regime where migration was strictly controlled and the people's communes responsible for welfare provision, today, it is up to the individuals to work hard to climb up the social ladder by taking on any available opportunities that come their way (Zhang, 2007). This has led to many parents' leaving behind their children in search for jobs for their families' wellbeing, which has created a loophole in the provision of adequate supervision, care and protection for the migrants children and thus, making migrants children susceptible to trafficking (Hall, 2010). Trafficked children typically share a handful of traits in common and one major feature is that they are typically in poverty, often extreme poverty, which limits their agency and life choices severely (Hall, 2010).



Last but not least, the complicity of corrupt local officials make it difficult to combat the trafficking industry on a national level. Tiefenbrun and Edwards (2008) noted that this is one of the big issues facing the Chinese government's efforts to curb the vice. The authors revealed that many of the Chinese local officials do not view trafficking as a serious crime and do not take steps to prevent it. At times, they even accept bribes in order to overlook trafficking (Tiefenbrun and Edwards, 2008, p.29). Moreover, the police in China's authoritarian bureaucracy are rarely rewarded for responding to crimes affecting people who do not have much political clout (Jacobs, 2009).

## 5. Child Trafficking: Definition, Scale, Trends, Patterns and Causes in Uganda

Uganda is a source, transit and destination country for children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking (US Department of State, 2015; UYDEL, 2011; Kasirye, 2007). Uganda has no specific definition on trafficking. Many trafficking cases are however prosecuted under the Penal code Act. However, in terms of enforcement, the Penal code Act is limited to punishing traffickers committing offences of trafficking within its borders (ILO/IPEC, 2007). The practice of trafficking children in Uganda has been growing considerably in the last 16 years having gained prominence due to Lord Resistance Army (LRA) insurgency in northern Uganda for the last 20 years (ILO/IPEC, 2007).

Domestic trafficking of children is a much bigger problem in the country (US Department, 2012). The movement of boys and girls from rural areas to urban areas is of such large proportion that it has taken on a life of its own and is almost considered the norm among the rural populace (ILO/IPEC, 2007). Cross-border trafficking of children over international borders is also believed to be growing in Uganda (US Department of State, 2012). In Uganda, empirical researches have shown that boys are usually trafficked at an early age mainly falling in the age bracket 10-14 years, while girls are moved slightly at a higher age between 15-19 years (Kasirye 2007). The information about the actual number of child victims of trafficking in Uganda remains unclear. This has been a major setback in the efforts to comprehensively address the problem.

Ugandan children are often exploited in forced labour within the country in agriculture, fishing, forestry, cattle herding, mining, stone quarrying, brick making, car washing, scrap metal collection, street vending, bars, restaurants, and the domestic service sector (US Department of State, 2015). Ugandan children are also taken to other countries for similar purposes and forced to engage in criminal activities. For example, until August 2006, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) abducted children in northern Uganda to serve as soldiers, sex slaves and porters and some remain captive with LRA elements in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, and South Sudan (US Department of State, 2015). The traffickers of children in Uganda vary but may include among others, Individual women and men from the same village living in urban centres; Churches and religious people; Transport agents (taxis, boda bodas, lorries of agricultural products among others); Pimps, bars, brothels and karaoke owners; Employment bureaus and recruitment agencies; Farms, fishermen and landing sites; Activities of NGOs which move children to other places such as orphanages; Peers and friends known to children; Formerly trafficked children (ILO/IPEC, 2007). It is important to note that some traffickers operate covertly either as individuals and are part of a loose network. Others are organized in small trafficking groups, operate in phases that is, recruitment, transportation, harbouring, receipt and exploitation (ILO/IPEC, 2007). The majority operates covertly and have local and cross border contacts with intermediaries known to the community and while others operate in large criminal groups (ILO/IPEC, 2007).

The methods of recruitment of children include; Kidnap/abduction (both in war and non war zones), forced movement of the child by the parent/guardian, intoxicating children and thereafter take them away, sold by parents, false promises like employment/good paying job, better life in the new place, opportunities to make more money, school fees paid, marriage/ good clothing, remitting money to parents and accommodation (ILO/IPEC, 2007). Findings from the 2007 ILO/IPEC study showed that children do not in most cases move straight to their final destinations, but the whole journey is done in phases.

Just like in China, the causes of child trafficking in Uganda are equally diverse. The orphanhood crisis in Uganda is considered as one of the contributing factors for the large scale internal migration of children within the country, giving an opportunity for traffickers to operate (ILO/IPEC, 2007). HIV/AIDS has left many children orphaned in Uganda (National Development Plan 2010/11 – 2014/15; UNAIDS, 2010), with an estimated number of 2.3 million orphans at present (National Development Plan 2010/11 – 2014/15). The traditional extended family system that had absorbed the brunt of this HIV/AIDS impact is slowly losing meaning, given the fact that majority of people who care for orphans are old and live below the poverty line making children far worse off and more vulnerable to trafficking by exploiters. There is also a high dependency on the surviving

parents, who may also be sick and unemployed, with inadequate social assistance thus increasing the economic burden in homes. Findings of the 2011 study conducted by UYDEL on commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) in Uganda indicated that as a result of their circumstances, many orphaned girls and boys are forced to migrate to urban areas and landing sites in search of work opportunities and end up in prostitution and other illicit activities.

The need to supplement family income, to be self-reliant, to pay school fees and homelessness have contributed to the trafficking of children (UYDEL, 2011). Trafficking of children in the cities to work as domestic servants partly stems from the long standing African tradition of parents from poor rural families sending their children to go live and work with wealthier families often in urban centres. This was considered a form of fostering arrangement, but the practice has been exploited by traffickers leading to an increase in the number of children engaging in child domestic work (GTZ, 2003 cited in ILO/IPEC, 2007). It is the normalization of this cultural tradition of child domestic work that is a barrier to ending this form of trafficking in girls (ILO/IPEC, 2007).

Increased conflicts and wars in Uganda have led to a sizable number of children trafficked and involved in combat. Studies have shown that large numbers of children have been abducted (forcefully), trafficked and conscripted into the ranks of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) as child soldiers, porters /slaves and as wives of commanders (ILO/IPEC, 2007). It is reported that boys are targeted because unlike older men, boys are submissive and take instructions without questions unlike the older men, while girls are desirable to the LRA since it is felt that they are less likely to have HIV (ILO/IPEC, 2007).

There is laxity of police and immigration control officers and this has been cited as one of the enabling factors for trafficking of girls to thrive in Uganda and East Africa. Luyima (2003 cited in ILO/IPEC, 2007) noted inadequate expertise in the area of child labour inspection and weaknesses of the measures and interventions to address trafficking in Uganda may have facilitated the problem of child labour. Law reform has also been very slow to include all-purpose, needs and support programmes for trafficked children (ILO/IPEC, 2007).

Parents, children and local leaders in Uganda are almost ignorant about child trafficking and its risks. In Karamoja for instance, children have been sold in open cattle markets, where people know the traffickers, but sometimes they are considered by the public as philanthropists so the perpetrators have not been prosecuted (ILO/IPEC, 2007).

The Uganda borders are also so porous, complicated by ethnic groups living across borders of more than one country thus impinging on the traditional migration patterns of the local people especially in the events of famines and droughts. Many times trafficking of children is confused with migration patterns and quite often children are taken advantage of by exploiters (ILO/IPEC, 2007).

## 6. Discussion

The data reveals that for both countries, there is no officially accepted definition of trafficking, and little progress has been made in the development of a common understanding of child trafficking. This little progress could be due to the lack of effective ways to collect helpful data. From the review of the published studies for both countries, the researcher has noted that culture has a way it shapes society and powerfully influences the way children are imagined. For instance, in China, the review findings have revealed that a child is an important honor to a family. That is why the demand for trafficked children by childless couples as Hall (2010) noted cannot take us by surprise. The issue of family continuity is also greatly emphasized in Uganda but the reviewed literature shows that the gender roles not forgetting that they are culturally constructed make children vulnerable to trafficking. Research undertaken by ILO/IPEC (2007) affirmed that the normalization of the cultural tradition of child domestic work in Uganda is a barrier to ending this form of trafficking in girls. It is true that cultural values are usually unchangeable and each culture is entitled to its own beliefs. Therefore, what does this imply? we have to acknowledge the uniqueness's in human beings. The fact that human beings are the targeted change agents for most of the anti-trafficking campaigns, the respect of individual worth could be vital for the success of any intervention. There is need to explore critically culture in many re-aspects in order to come up with a generally agreed definition of child trafficking that can guide the global campaigns against child trafficking. Radio and TV talk shows, internet chats, public dialogues among other informal educational approaches can be very helpful if they target the ordinary people to voice their different opinions of what they call and do not call child trafficking. Formal educational approaches like introducing child rights clubs in primary and secondary schools to encourage children participation in their own protection, introducing a course on child protection in universities and encouraging students to undertake academic research in this area could as well be an effective

way of collecting helpful data. This in turn will help countries to come up with well suited laws and policies on trafficking.

In both countries, traffickers typically victimize impoverished children. For instance, in China, trafficked children usually come from poor provinces (UNIAP, 2008). In Uganda, the most vulnerable child victims of trafficking come from rural areas which are characterized by poverty. Impoverished children fall prey of traffickers because they find themselves always on the move in search for better livelihoods. Impoverished children can easily be convinced and enticed by traffickers because they are dissatisfied with their quality of life. The obligation for governments' would be to tackle the root causes of child poverty in order to reduce on the vulnerabilities of children.

The data also revealed the problem of corruption in combating child trafficking, for example, acceptance of bribes by the police/local officials. This could have something to do with moral degeneration. Moral degeneration is associated with all kind of evils. Child trafficking is as a result of moral degeneration. It is because people do not have morals that they encourage the selling of children or sell children. And moral regeneration requires so many systems at work that is, the government, business, foundations, community, academia, church among other entities. Therefore, the interplay of all actors to help instill discipline or morals in people could be important. For instance, the church can include sermons on children or teachings about protecting and loving children. The academia can write books, hold seminars or workshops on child protection issues. The government can train police officers in child protection plus putting strict laws on non adherence and observance of children rights among other things of the like. Currently, these changes are taking place in Uganda which is a credit in combating child trafficking but we should not forget that for complete elimination of child trafficking, all systems in place have to be at work. In the contemporary China as well, it is important to note that there are some changes in the police policy as well unlike the previous years. In the past for instance, the police would tell people to wait for 24 hours, when their child does not come back, then the police would take action. But in contemporary China, when you report, the police acts immediately. So, that is one change in the policy by the police. Secondly, there is the establishment of the DNA bank in China. After many years, you can still identify your child.

Boy child preference cuts across both countries. In China, the cultural tradition of male child preference dates way back in the past and it is still strong up to date. For example, in the 1960's when people used to produce many children in China due to the high mortality rates and instabilities in the country, having a surviving male child was considered a priority. Even when there was a shift to fewer children with the one child policy in place up to today, male children are valued over the female children. In Uganda, the situation is not different. No matter how many children families have, the presence of a boy child is usually considered crucial. Both China and Uganda are patriarchy societies where a male is supposed to head a family and a male is supposed to be a heir. Therefore, the preference of boy children in both countries could be properly understood from this perspective. It could be hard to easily wash away or bury this belief but in order for a country to realize development, gender equality is important. Gender sensitive programmes could be established in both countries to equip people with knowledge about the importance of offering equal opportunities to both children. It is very true that ignoring girls for example could make them more susceptible to being trafficked.

The actual data for China and Uganda tells us that there are no exact figures on the numbers of children trafficked in both countries. In China, statistics provided are just based on probable estimates with no clear methodology and in Uganda, even the probable figures were hard to find. A number of reasons could apply. The first reason that is also revealed in the data reviewed for both countries is that they lack a precise definition of child trafficking. This will always make the statistics hard to collect. Another reason could be the low priority given to the combating of child trafficking by authorities in both countries. We have seen an example of the reluctance of the police in both countries. The reason for low prioritization appears to be linked to two main factors: first, legislation is often lacking, inadequate, or not implemented, making the prosecution of traffickers very difficult and often impossible; second, trafficking convictions are often based on witness and/or victim testimony. Such testimony is hard to obtain as trafficking victims are either deported as illegal migrants or, if identified as trafficked persons, are often too frightened to testify. Inadequate legislation, for both prosecution and for victim and witness protection, means that the police authorities often prefer not to prosecute traffickers at all, with the knowledge that much effort only seldom results in a conviction. Another reason for lack of exact figures on the numbers of children trafficked in China and in Uganda is that, for both countries, there is a wide range of incompatible data sources. Thus, statistics are often based on the various trafficking definitions used by each individual agency and probably only cover those who have received certain types of assistance or those accommodated in shelters for victims of trafficking. Each agency gathers data according to its own needs, and,



as a result, the same individual may appear in data produced by more than one organization. Data will also vary according to the resources of any given organization. Some are better financed and accord greater priority to data collection than others. Some agencies compile data over a one-year period, while others produce statistics covering the duration of a specific project. Another reason worth noting for lack of reliable statistics on child trafficking, a problem that seems to cut across all countries in the world is the reluctance to share data and this could be on the part of agencies within countries and or between countries. In order to combat cross border trafficking, the sharing of information between countries is essential. One problem is, however, that at the international level, the sharing of information on trafficking tends to occur on an ad hoc basis, especially between countries of origin and destination. Some countries regard data on trafficking as classified and, therefore, refrain from sharing such information. In addition, some countries have data protection laws prohibiting the dissemination of personal information, while some ministries simply adopt a policy of restricted distribution. Also, some agencies could be reluctant to release data because their data is so poor. For NGOs, the reluctance to share data could be due to for example, to protect the confidentiality of the trafficked persons they are assisting. Given all the above factors discussed that hinder access to reliable statistics on trafficking, the researcher thought of a few measures that could be taken by China and Uganda to improve their child trafficking data. Ultimately, data on child trafficking will improve only when greater actions are taken to combat the problem. Unless both governments and their law enforcement agencies are prepared to combat trafficking with increased vigor and, at the same time, prepared to provide adequate protection to the victims of trafficking, the majority of trafficking cases will continue to go undiscovered. There is also the potential for data to improve when the necessary anti-trafficking legislations are enacted and implemented. Though this is likely to be a slow process, it is possible that data on trafficking will improve as a result of it.

## 7. Implications

In order to address the complexities associated with the child trafficking phenomenon, policy recommendations to aid both countries in the struggle to end child trafficking need to be deduced. Initially, due to the absence of the exact numbers of child victims of trafficking in both countries, it is plausible that both China and Uganda are in need of a centralized approach to undertake more comprehensive research to assess the situation of child trafficking to generate actual data on the scale, patterns and causes of the vice and thus undertake more public education. Therefore, undertaking measures to address the problem of data shortage on trafficking can be valuable.

Given that child trafficking is a trans-national organized crime involving a network of perpetrators, who are well informed about the loopholes in many governments around the world and therefore exploit this opportunity with their trickery tactics to flourish the trafficking business, there is need for interagency and regional cooperation because this vice cannot be fought by one agency or country alone. This pursuits mobilizing countries in order to encourage shared responsibility and create sustainable inter - country support structures with minimum professional monitoring. This condition is considered facilitative for the resilience of countries on combating the vice and therefore beneficial for the successful staging of global campaigns against the trafficking of human beings. Also, anti - trafficking efforts should address poor governance and improve the socio - economic conditions of a country as well as capacity building of key stakeholders and awareness raising to the public. Good governance can include Resolution of conflicts, fighting and combating corruption. Improvement of socio-economic conditions could be through creation and provision of employment opportunities, education and other social and welfare services. Capacity building of key stakeholders and awareness raising to the public is supported as a matter of urgency to stem the vice at the same time as awareness is created among the general public which is still very low.

Developing national frameworks entailing such policy recommendations as well as effectively and efficiently enforcing them or taking action, offers a comprehensive approach for addressing the complex ways in which child trafficking manifests itself and therefore curbing down the vice.

## 8. Limitations

The research limitations mostly relate to the data collection procedure. Information on child trafficking for both countries was limited. There were no available statistics for both countries on the exact number of children trafficked which made it hard to determine the degree of trafficking in both countries. The identification of existing literature and data search was limited to publications in the English language for easy understanding on

the part of the researcher. Many publications however in China could not be accessed as they were written in the Chinese characters which left some important information unknown to the researcher.

What the researcher observed however that we could also classify under data limitation is that, there is scanty mention of cross-border trafficking in children for both countries. The literature for both countries is however very candid on the countries involved in cross border trafficking with China and Uganda.

Important to note also is that less is written about the supply areas for both countries. Focus is mainly placed at the destination places but the researcher believes that understanding more about the supply areas would be important because these tend to be the ones causing the problem of child trafficking than actually the consumers at the places of destination. Because if there is no supplier, then where would the consumer come from? The researcher was left hanging especially on understanding more about the supply areas for both countries.

## 9. Future Research Directions

There is need to undertake more comprehensive research to assess the situation of child trafficking to generate data on the scale, patterns and causes of child trafficking and thus undertake more public education. Child trafficking being also a trans-national organized crime, it cannot be fought by one agency or country alone. Thus, there is the need for studies on how to strengthen interagency and regional cooperation.

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