

**STRENGTHENING LEGAL AWARENESS: THE NIGERIAN BAR
ASSOCIATION'S ROLE IN COMBATTING HUMAN
TRAFFICKING IN NIGERIA*******

ABSTRACT

Human trafficking is a complex global issue, which violates human rights and undermines public health and safety. Nigeria serves as a source, transit, and destination country, with internal trafficking accounting for 61% and external trafficking for 39% of cases. This concurrent mixed-method study examined the perceptions of 700 lawyers, including members of FIDA, using a structured questionnaire. The response rate was 99%, and the data were analyzed separately and integrated. The findings revealed that while 80% of the respondents were aware of government measures, only 40% believed they were effective. Although Nigeria has enacted laws to combat human trafficking, their implementation has been hindered by political will, corruption, inadequate funding, and limited collaboration. This study recommends increasing funding, enhancing collaboration, providing support services for victims, and strengthening law enforcement efforts. The NBA can provide ICLE programmes and training sessions that are especially geared towards preventing human trafficking. These courses ought to give lawyers a thorough understanding of the nature of human trafficking, the effects it has on victims, pertinent laws and regulations, investigative methods, and potential legal remedies.

Keywords: Human trafficking, Nigeria, Lawyers, Government measures, Implementation.

1. Introduction

Millions of people around the world are impacted by the serious human rights violation known as human trafficking. Women and children are the most vulnerable groups in human trafficking, which is one of the worst problems in Nigeria. The Nigerian government has made some attempts to curb human trafficking, but it is still unclear how effective its legal response has been. Human trafficking is a crime. It is also seen as an organized crime. It is perceived as a modern form of slavery that has been on for quite some time.¹

***Toluwalase Toyosi Ajibade** Lecturer, School of Law and Security Studies, Babcock University, Member, NBA Ibadan Branch, ajibadet@babcock.edu.ng

Human trafficking seems to be thriving in Nigeria due to the laxity of the security agencies and other units who should usually be alive to their responsibilities.² Human trafficking is a menace that has contributed to the bad image portrayed by many potentially great countries in Africa.³ Human trafficking further creates a weak economy and is a big threat to security globally.⁴

Human trafficking has been in existence in different nations in one form or the other from slave trade to sex trafficking.⁵ It has not been an easy task to measure it due to the change in its definition over the years as well as its sensitive nature.⁶ In Nigeria for instance, human trafficking has taken various forms and shape over the years and has seen the country in a battle with it. This has been done with the creation of dedicated agencies in the fight against the prevention of human trafficking.⁷

Therefore, trafficking in persons is majorly seen as the violation of human rights and dignity of the victims involved as it is a high factor to the

** **Josephine Adebayo** Lecturer, School of Law and Security Studies, Babcock University, Member, NBA Ibadan Branch, adebayoj@babcock.edu.ng

*** **Promise Aaron** Lecturer, School of Law and Security Studies, Babcock University, Member, NBA Ikeja Branch, aaronp@babcock.edu.ng

**** **Deborah Ikonne** Lecturer, School of Law and Security Studies, Babcock University, Member, NBA Ikeja Branch, ikonned@babcock.edu.ng

***** **Chinaka Emmanuel** Lecturer, School of Law and Security Studies, Babcock University, Member, NBA Ahoada Branch, emmanuelch@babcock.edu.ng

¹ Folashade B Okeshola and Adebimpe A. Adenugba, 'Human Trafficking: A Modern Day Slavery in Nigeria' (2018) 8(2) *American International Journal of Contemporary Research* 40, 40.

² *ibid.*

³ Oladapo J Elugbadebo and Femi Temitope Johnson, 'A Multi-Criteria Perceptual Analysis Towards Integrating ICT for the Control of Child Abuse and Trafficking' (2020) 4(9) *International Journal of Academic Multidisciplinary Research* 1, 7.

⁴ Nkechi L Iwuoha, 'Organized Crime of Human Trafficking and COVID: Policy Response' [2020] <<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350055405>> accessed 4 August 2022.

⁵ Wesley Schrock, 'Internet-Era Human Trafficking and the Need for a Better International Legal Instrument' (2022) 22(1) *U Md LJ Race Religion Gender and Class* 120, 120 <<https://digitalcommons.law.umaryland.edu/rgrc/vol22/iss1/5>> accessed 4 August 2022.

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ Bolanle O Eniola and Benson O Omoleye, 'Baby Making Factories and the Reproductive Health Rights of Women in Nigeria' (2018) 72 *JL Pol'y & Globalization* 22, 22; see also, Kehinde Samuel Omoniyi, 'Evaluation of Transborder Crimes in Nigeria' (2023) 2(1) <<https://doi.org/10.54536/ajsl.v2i1.1137>> accessed 19 April 2023.

exploitation of human beings for business and commercial purposes.⁸ It knows no borders and affects persons of all ages and nationalities around the world.⁹ Although it differs slightly from human slavery, human trafficking nonetheless includes some 'structural behaviors' that are similar to slavery.¹⁰

2. Empirical Survey of the NBA's Role in Combatting Human Trafficking in Nigeria

This study gathered firsthand information from lawyers who are FIDA members as well as other practicing lawyers. This was done in order to fill the gap in existing literature as to this type of study. The different survey (questionnaires) comprised of different set of questions for FIDA members and other lawyers. The questionnaires were sent via WhatsApp to the respondents as a google form. These questionnaires were used as a method of collecting the necessary data and information needed for this study.

2.1. Analysis of Data obtained from FIDA members on the effectiveness of the activities of FIDA in curbing trafficking in persons in Nigeria

⁸Yunana T Wuyah and Ishaya J Mailamba, 'The Role of Poverty in the Prevalence of Human Trafficking in Nigeria' (2022) 9(1) International Journal of Contemporary Applied Researches 1, 2; see also, Luqman Saka, Adebola Rafiu Bakare, Humphrey Chinedu Nwaorgu and Sherifdeen Adeoye Oladejo, 'Transborder Crimes and the Challenges of Regional Integration in West Africa: Insights from the Nigeria-Benin Republic Borders' (2023) 12(1) Bulletin of 'Carol I' National Defence University <<https://doi.org/10.53477/2284-9378-23-06>> accessed 19 April 2023.

⁹ Interpol, 'World Day against Trafficking in Persons' (29 July 2022) <<https://www.interpol.int/en/News-and-Events/News/2022/World-Day-against-Trafficking-in-Persons-INTERPOL-highlights-coordinated-efforts>> accessed 19 September 2022.

¹⁰Paul O Bello and Adewale AOlutola, 'Effective Response to Human Trafficking in South Africa: Law as a Toothless Bulldog' <<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epub/10.1177/21582440211069379>> accessed 4 October 2022.

Table 1: Respondents’ Knowledge of the effectiveness of the collaboration between FIDA and other agencies in curbing trafficking in persons in Nigeria

	Not Effective at all		Not Very Effective		Somewhat Effective		Effective		Very Effective		Total	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Mean
How effective do you think FIDA's collaboration with law enforcement agencies, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders is in combating human trafficking in Nigeria?	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	18	33.3 %	18	33.3 %	18	33.3 %	54	4.00

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 1 shows the responses of some FIDA members to the question about the effectiveness of FIDA’s collaboration with law enforcement agencies, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders in combating human trafficking in Nigeria. None of the respondents rated the collaboration as ‘not effective at all’ or ‘not very effective.’ 33.3% of the respondents, 33.3% rated the collaboration as ‘Somewhat Effective, while another 33.3% rated it as ‘Effective.’ The remaining respondents rated the collaboration as ‘Very Effective’.

The respondents seemed to have a positive view of FIDA's collaboration with law enforcement agencies, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders in combating human trafficking in Nigeria. While there were no ratings for 'Not Effective at all' or 'Not Very Effective', a small percentage of the respondents rated the collaboration as 'Somewhat Effective'. The above findings therefore indicates that majority of the respondents understood that the collaboration between FIDA and other agencies has a significant impact in the fight against curing human trafficking in Nigeria.

Table 2: Respondents' Knowledge of the level of difficulty that FIDA has faced in addressing challenges related to trafficking in persons in Nigeria

	Not Difficult at all		Not Very Difficult		Somewhat Difficult		Difficult		Very Difficult		Total	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Mean
Please rate the level of difficulty that FIDA has faced in addressing challenges related to human trafficking in Nigeria.	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	18	33.3 %	28	50.0 %	10	16.7 %	56	3.83

Source: Field Survey, 2023

By the findings from table 2 above, of all respondents that rated the level of difficulty that FIDA has faced in addressing challenges related to human trafficking in Nigeria, there was none of them that found it 'Not Difficult at all' or 'Not Very Difficult'. 33.3% rated the above question as 'Somewhat

Difficult’, whereas 50.0% rated it as ‘Difficult’. A total of 16.7% respondents found the level of difficulty to be ‘Very Difficult’, while the average rating for the level of difficulty was 3.83, this suggests that FIDA is faced with a moderate level of difficulty in addressing issues relating to human trafficking in Nigeria. The above responses further indicate that there are indeed challenges in combating human trafficking in Nigeria, and that there is a need for FIDA to explore different ways to solve them.

Table 3: Respondents’ Knowledge of the challenge FIDA faces in addressing some issues related to trafficking in persons in Nigeria

	Not Challenging at all		Not very challenging		Somewhat Challenging		Challenging		Very Challenging		Total	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Mean
How much of a challenge do you think FIDA faces in addressing the following issues related to human trafficking in Nigeria? *Lack of adequate funding for programs and activities *Limited resources and capacity to handle cases *Limited collaboration with other agencies	0	0.0 %	10	16.7 %	0	0.0 %	28	50.0 %	18	33.3 %	56	4.00

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From the responses in table 3 above, 50%, the majority of the respondents (50%) rated the challenges faced by FIDA in addressing human trafficking in Nigeria as 'Challenging' with regards to the lack of adequate funding for programs and activities, while 33.3% rated it as 'Very Challenging' with regards to limited collaboration with other agencies and limited resources and capacity to handle cases.

Only 16.7% of the respondents rated the challenges as 'Not very challenging' with regard to limited resources and capacity to handle cases. Overall, the respondents' ratings suggest that FIDA faces significant challenges in addressing human trafficking in Nigeria, particularly in terms of funding and collaborating with other agencies. These challenges could potentially hinder FIDA's efforts to combat human trafficking, and may require additional support and resources from relevant stakeholders to effectively address the issue

Table 4: Respondents' Knowledge of how well FIDA is equipped to handle some types of cases and victims in Nigeria

	Not well at all		Not Very Well		Somewhat Well		Well		Very Well		Total	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Mean
How well do you think FIDA is equipped to handle the following types of cases and victims in Nigeria? * Women and Girls who are victims of gender-based violence * Children who are victims of sexual abuse * Victims of human trafficking, particularly women	0	0.0 %	9	16.7 %	9	16.7%	28	50.0 %	9	16.7%	55	3.67

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Based on the responses of the respondents in table 4, it appears that they have varying levels of confidence in FIDA’s ability to handle different types of cases and victims related to gender-based violence, sexual abuse of children, and human trafficking in Nigeria. For victims of human trafficking, particularly women, 50% of the respondents rated FIDA as ‘well equipped,’ indicating a high level of confidence in FIDA’s ability to handle such cases. For victims of gender-based violence and children who are victims of sexual abuse, the ratings were more mixed, with 33.3% and 16.7% of respondents rating FIDA as ‘well equipped,’ respectively.

The overall mean rating for all three types of cases and victims was 3.67, which suggests that respondents generally had a moderate level of confidence in FIDA’s ability to handle these cases. This may indicate a need for FIDA to continue to build its capacity and resources to better handle cases of gender-based violence, sexual abuse of children, and human trafficking in Nigeria.

Table 5: Respondents’ Knowledge of FIDA’s achievements in the fight against human trafficking in Nigeria

	Not Impactful at all		Not Very Impactful		Somewhat Impactful		Impact		Very Impactful		Total	
	Coun t	Row N %	Coun t	Row N %	Coun t	Row N %	Coun t	Row N %	Coun t	Row N %	Coun t	Mea n
How impactful do you think FIDA's achievements have been in the fight against human trafficking in Nigeria?	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	10	16.7 %	28	50.0 %	17	33.3 %	55	4.17

Source: Field Survey, 2023

According to the respondents in table 5, FIDA’s achievements have been rated as somewhat impactful (16.7%), impact (50%), and very impactful (33.3%). None of the respondents rated FIDA’s achievements as either not impactful at

all or not very impactful. More than 80% of the respondents rated FIDA's achievements as impactful, with half of the respondents rating their achievements as having impact and above. This suggests that FIDA made significant strides in the fight against human trafficking in Nigeria. However, there is still room for improvement to make even greater impact.

Table 6: Respondents' Knowledge of how well FIDA provides legal support to victims of human trafficking in Nigeria

	Not well at all		Not Very Well		Somewhat Well		Well		Very Well		Total	
	Coun t	Row N %	Coun t	Row N %	Coun t	Row N %	Coun t	Row N %	Coun t	Row N %	Coun t	Mea n
Please rate how well FIDA provides legal support to victims of human trafficking in Nigeria:	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	18	33.3 %	28	50.0 %	10	16.7 %	66	3.83

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Based on the responses in table 6, the majority of the respondents (50%) think that FIDA provides legal support to victims of human trafficking in Nigeria well. Of the respondents, 33.3% believed that FIDA's legal support was somewhat well, while 16.7% thought that FIDA's legal support was not very well. None of the respondents rated FIDA's legal support as not well at all. Overall, the responses suggest that FIDA's legal support for victims of human trafficking in Nigeria was perceived positively by the majority of the respondents. However, there is still room for improvement, as some respondents rated FIDA's legal support only somewhat well. There is a need for FIDA to identify areas for improvement and to work to address them to further enhance their legal support services to victims of human trafficking in Nigeria.

Table 7: Respondents’ Knowledge of how effective FIDA’s collaboration with the Nigerian government is in promoting and enforcing laws against human trafficking in Nigeria

	Not Effective at all		Not Very Effective		Somewhat Effective		Effective		Very Effective		Total	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Mean
How effective do you think FIDA's collaboration with the Nigerian government is in promoting and enforcing laws against human trafficking in Nigeria?	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	28	50.0 %	28	50.0 %	0	0.0 %	56	3.50

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Based on the responses of the respondents in table 7, the majority of them rated FIDA’s collaboration with the Nigerian government as either ‘Somewhat Effective’ or ‘Effective’ in promoting and enforcing laws against human trafficking in Nigeria, with a mean score of 3.50. None of the respondents rated it as ‘not effective at all’ or ‘very effective.’

Collaboration between FIDA and the Nigerian government is crucial in the fight against human trafficking, as the government plays a significant role in creating policies and laws that prevent trafficking and protect victims. The rating suggests that while FIDA’s collaboration with the government is not perfect, it still has a positive impact on combating human trafficking in Nigeria. However, there is still room for improvement in this area to make the collaboration more effective in achieving its goals.

Table 8: Respondents' Knowledge of the effectiveness of FIDA's awareness-raising and prevention measures in local communities in Nigeria

	Not Effective at all		Not Very Effective		Somewhat Effective		Effective		Very Effective		Total	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Mean
Please rate the effectiveness of FIDA's awareness-raising and prevention measures in local communities in Nigeria:	0	0.0 %	10	16.7 %	18	33.3 %	28	50.0 %	0	0.0 %	56	3.33

Source: Field Survey, 2023

According to the responses in table 8, 50% of the respondents believed that FIDA's awareness-raising and prevention measures in local communities in Nigeria are effective, while 33.3% believe they are somewhat effective. Only 16.7% of respondents believed that the measures were ineffective. None of the participants rated the measures as not effective at all' or very effective. Overall, the respondents seemed to have a relatively positive view of FIDA's awareness-raising and prevention measures, with the majority rating them as effective or somewhat effective. However, there is still room for improvement, as a significant minority of respondents rated the measures ineffective.

Table 9: Respondents’ Knowledge of how well FIDA ensures the safety and security of its staff and partners who work in the field of human trafficking in Nigeria

	Not well at all		Not Very Well		Somewhat Well		Well		Very Well		Total	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Mean
How well do you think FIDA ensures the safety and security of its staff and partners who work in the field of human trafficking in Nigeria?	0	0.0 %	18	33.3 %	18	33.3 %	9	16.7 %	9	16.7 %	54	3.17

Source: Field Survey, 2023

According to the responses of the respondents in table 9, the majority (66.7%) believe that FIDA does not ensure the safety and security of its staff and partners who work in the field of human trafficking in Nigeria very well or not well at all. This indicates that there is room for improvement in FIDA’s security measures to ensure the safety of its staff and partners working on the ground to combat human trafficking in Nigeria.

On the other hand, a minority of the respondents (33.3%) believed that FIDA ensured the safety and security of its staff and partners somewhat well or well, indicating that some respondents believed that FIDA has taken measures to ensure the safety of its staff and partners, but more needs to be done to improve this aspect. The average rating for this question was 3.17, which is relatively low, suggesting that there is a need for FIDA to prioritize the safety

and security of its staff and partners to effectively combat human trafficking in Nigeria.

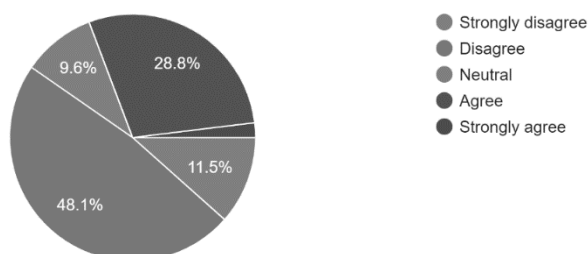
3. Empirical Survey of the Level of Awareness on Human Trafficking among Lawyers in Nigeria

Table 10: Lawyers' Responses on the Adequacy of the Legal System in Nigeria to Combat Human Trafficking

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
The legal system in Nigeria is adequately equipped to combat human trafficking.	Row N %	11.5%	48.1%	9.6%	28.8%	1.9%	100%
	Mean						2.63

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Figure 1: Lawyers' Responses on the Adequacy of the Legal System in Nigeria to Combat Human Trafficking



Source: Field survey, 2023

It is shown in table 10 and figure 1 that majority of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed (59.6%) with the statement that 'the legal system in Nigeria is adequately equipped to combat human trafficking'. About 28.8% of the respondents agreed with the statement, while a small percentage (1.9%) strongly agreed. The remaining 9.6% of the respondents were neutral. These findings suggest that there is significant concern about the effectiveness of the legal system in Nigeria in combating human trafficking. The majority of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. This

implies that there are challenges and limitations to the legal framework and institutional mechanisms to combat human trafficking in Nigeria. These findings underscore the need for urgent action to address the gaps and limitations in Nigeria's legal response to human trafficking.

Overall, the responses suggest that there is a need for further research to identify gaps and limitations in the legal framework and institutional mechanisms in place to combat human trafficking in Nigeria. Policymakers and stakeholders should prioritize efforts to improve the legal system's capacity to effectively address human trafficking. Failure to do so may result in continued vulnerability and exploitation of individuals, particularly women and children, who are at a high risk of being trafficked for various purposes.

A study that discussed the above findings was conducted by Umejiaku.¹¹ The study examined the legal framework and institutional mechanisms in place to combat human trafficking in Nigeria, and identified the challenges and limitations in the response to human trafficking.

This study found that although Nigeria has enacted laws and policies to combat human trafficking, there are significant gaps in the implementation and enforcement of these laws. The author identifies weak institutional mechanisms, corruption, inadequate funding, and a lack of political will as factors hindering the effectiveness of the legal response to human trafficking in Nigeria. The study concludes that addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts from the government, civil society, and international partners to improve the legal framework and institutional mechanisms to combat human trafficking in Nigeria. This study aligns with the findings from the data provided in the question, which suggests that there are significant challenges and limitations in the legal framework and institutional mechanisms in place to combat human trafficking in Nigeria. This highlights the urgent need for policymakers and stakeholders to take action to improve the legal system's capacity to effectively address human trafficking.

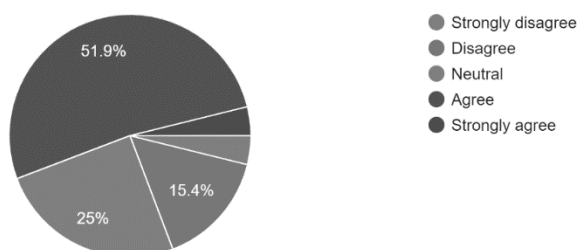
¹¹ Nneka O Umejiaku, 'An Appraisal of Existing Legal Framework Aimed at Combating Human Trafficking in Nigeria' (2019) 1(3) IRLJ.

Table 11: Lawyers' Responses on their awareness on the provisions of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act 2015

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
I am familiar with the provisions of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act 2015.	Row N %	3.8%	15.4%	25%	51.9%	3.8%	100%
	Mean						3.32

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Figure 2: Lawyers' Responses on their awareness on the provisions of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act 2015



Source: Field Survey, 2023

Based on table 11 and figure 2 above, the majority of the respondents (51.9%) agreed with the statement that 'I am familiar with the provisions of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act 2015'. A quarter of the respondents (25%) were neutral, whereas 15.4% and 3.8% disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively. Only a small percentage of respondents (3.8%) agreed strongly with this statement.

These findings suggest that a significant proportion of the respondents are familiar with the provisions of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition)

Enforcement and Administration Act of 2015. However, a considerable number of respondents are still either neutral or unfamiliar with the Act. This highlights the need for increased awareness and education regarding the provisions of the Act, particularly among vulnerable populations and those involved in anti-trafficking efforts. The mean score for the responses to this statement is 3.32, which indicates that the overall opinion of the respondents leans towards the agreement that they are familiar with the provisions of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act 2015.

One relevant study that discussed familiarity with the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act 2015 in Nigeria is Imosemi's study.¹² The study highlighted the importance of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act 2015 as a critical tool for addressing human trafficking in Nigeria. It also found that the majority of respondents in the study were aware of the provisions of the act, but there were still gaps in implementation and enforcement. The study recommended the need for continued awareness-raising efforts and capacity-building for law enforcement agencies to effectively implement the provisions of the Act.

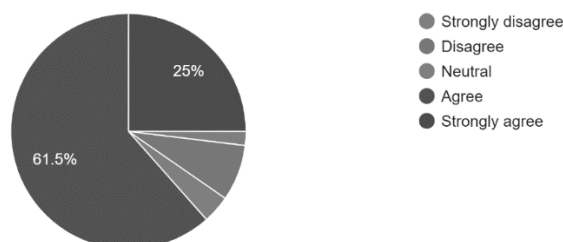
Table 12: Lawyers' Responses on their familiarity with the agency charged with the responsibility of fighting human trafficking in Nigeria

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
I am familiar with the agency charged with the responsibility of fighting human trafficking in Nigeria.	Row N	1.9%	7.7%	3.8%	61.5%	25%	100%
	Mean %						4.08

Source: Field Survey, 2023

¹² Adekunbi Imosemi, 'Stemming the Persistent Waves of Human Trafficking in Nigeria: The Legal Responses' in JAM Agbonika and others, *Topical Issues in the Nigerian Law: A Book of Readings* (Faculty of Law Kogi State University 2016) <<https://ssrn.com/abstract=3271126>> accessed 28 April 2023.

Figure 3: Lawyers' Responses on their familiarity with the agency charged with the responsibility of fighting human trafficking in Nigeria



Source: Field Survey, 2023

Based on table 12 and figure 3, 61.5% of the respondents agree that they are familiar with the agency charged with the responsibility of fighting human trafficking in Nigeria, while 25% strongly agree. On the other hand, 7.7% of the respondents disagree, and 1.9% strongly disagree with the statement, and 3.8% of the respondents were neutral. The mean score for the responses to this statement is 4.08, which indicates that the overall opinion of the respondents leans towards agreement that they are familiar with the agency charged with fighting human trafficking in Nigeria.

A relevant study that aligns with this question was carried out by Usman, Ariffin and Othman.¹³ The article highlights the challenges and limitations in the legal framework and institutional mechanisms in place to combat human trafficking in Nigeria, including the lack of awareness and education about the provisions of the law and the agency charged with enforcing it. The findings from the above data align with the concerns raised in the article and underscore the need for urgent action to address the gaps and limitations in the legal response to human trafficking in Nigeria.

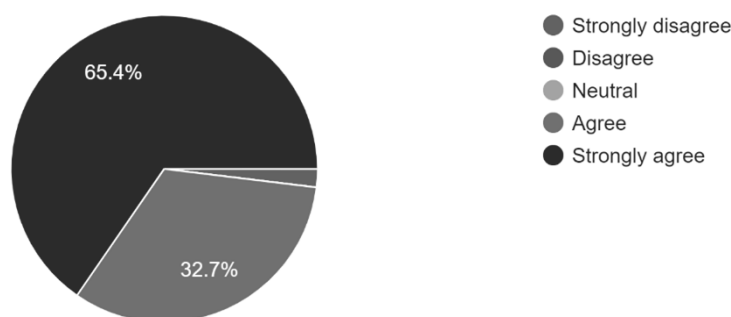
¹³ Mikail Usman and others, 'Implementing the Anti-Human Trafficking Policy in Nigeria: Trials and Tribulations' (2021) 27(1) Journal of Contemporary Issues in Business and Government <https://cibgp.com/article_8026_a795d2381c501ae301896882cfc90eb6.pdf> accessed 30 April 2023.

Table 13: Lawyers’ Responses on whether human trafficking is a serious problem in Nigeria

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Human trafficking is a serious problem in Nigeria.	Row N %	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	32.7%	65.4%	100%
	Mean						4.59

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Figure 4: Lawyers’ Responses on whether human trafficking is a serious problem in Nigeria



Source: Field Survey, 2023

Regarding the interpretation of table 13 and figure 4, it seems that only a small percentage (1.9%) of the respondents strongly disagree that human trafficking is a serious problem in Nigeria, while the majority (98.1%) strongly agree and agree with this statement respectively. Human trafficking can be said to be a serious issue in Nigeria, with numerous reports and studies highlighting the prevalence and severity of the problem in the country. For example, a 2021 report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)¹⁴ found that Nigeria was the top country of origin for trafficking victims in Europe and the Middle East, with women and girls making up the majority of victims.

¹⁴ UNODC, ‘Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020’ <https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tip/2021/GLOTiP_2020_15jan_web.pdf> accessed 28 April 2023.

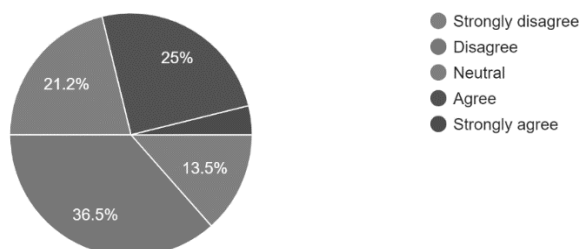
While the given data suggests that a majority of the respondents agree that human trafficking is a serious problem in Nigeria, it is important to continue researching and addressing the issue in order to combat it effectively.

Table 14: Lawyers' Responses on the effectiveness of the current legal framework for addressing human trafficking in Nigeria

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
The current legal framework for addressing human trafficking in Nigeria is effective.	Row N %	13.5%	36.5%	21.2%	25%	3.8%	100%
	Mean						2.78

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Figure 5: Lawyers' Responses on the effectiveness of the current legal framework for addressing human trafficking in Nigeria



Source: Field Survey, 2023

Based on the survey results from figure 5.15 and table 5.5, 13.5% of the respondents strongly disagree, 36.5% disagree, 21.2% are neutral, 25% agree, and 3.8% strongly agree with the statement 'The current legal framework for addressing human trafficking in Nigeria is effective'. Therefore, the mean is 2.78. The mean response to the statement is closer to 'Disagree' than 'Neutral'.

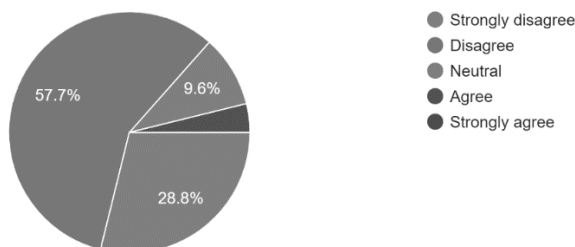
A previous study by Orié¹⁵ examined the Nigerian legal framework for addressing human trafficking and found that although there have been legislative and policy developments in recent years, there are still significant gaps and challenges in implementation and enforcement. The author recommended several strategies for improving the effectiveness of the legal framework, including increased collaboration and coordination among relevant government agencies, enhanced training for law enforcement officials and prosecutors, and improved victim identification and protection measures.

Table 15: Lawyers’ Responses on whether there is sufficient support for victims of human trafficking in Nigeria

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
There is sufficient support for victims of human trafficking in Nigeria	Row N %	28.8%	57.7%	9.6%	3.8%	0.0%	100%
	Mean						2.03

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Figure 6: Lawyers’ Responses on whether there is sufficient support for victims of human trafficking in Nigeria



Source: Field Survey, 2023

¹⁵Erimma Gloria Orié, ‘An Examination of the Legal Framework on Trafficking in Persons in Nigeria’ in *Human Rights: Trafficking of Women and Children, Legal and Policy Framework* (2023)

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368883616_AN_EXAMINATION_OF_THE_LEGAL_FRAMEWORK_ON_TRAFFICKING_IN_PERSONS_IN_NIGERIA> accessed 27 April 2023.

From table 15 and figure 6, majority of the respondents do not believe there is sufficient support for victims of human trafficking in Nigeria. Specifically, 86.5% of the respondents either strongly disagree or disagree with the statement. 3.8% agree with the statement while none of the respondents strongly agree. The mean of the respondents is approximately 2.03.

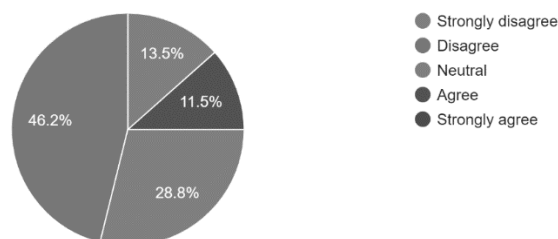
A previous study by Idemudia and others¹⁶ discussed the challenges faced by victims of human trafficking in Nigeria and the inadequacies of the current support system. The study found that despite efforts to combat human trafficking in Nigeria, there are still significant challenges in providing adequate support and protection for victims, including lack of funding and resources, corruption, and limited public awareness.

Table 16: Lawyers' Responses on whether the government has taken adequate measures to combat human trafficking in Nigeria

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
The government has taken adequate measures to combat human trafficking in Nigeria	Row N %	28.8%	46.2%	13.5%	11.5%	0.0%	100%
	Mean						2.12

Source: Field Study, 2023

Figure 7: Lawyers' Responses on whether the government has taken adequate measures to combat human trafficking in Nigeria



Source: (Field Study, 2023)

¹⁶ Uwafiokun Idemudia and others, 'Life after Trafficking: Reintegration Experiences of Human Trafficking Survivors in Nigeria' (2021) 17(4) International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care <<https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMHS-03-2021-0023>> accessed 22 April 2023.

According to the survey contained in table 16 and figure 7, 28.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed and 46.2% disagreed with the statement that the government has taken adequate measures to combat human trafficking in Nigeria. 13.5% were neutral, while only 11.5% agreed with the statement and 0.0% strongly agreed. The mean score of 2.12 indicates that, on average, respondents disagreed with the statement that the government has taken adequate measures to combat human trafficking in Nigeria. A previous study by Kigbu and Hassan¹⁷ discussed the issue of human trafficking in Nigeria and the inadequacies of the government’s response to the problem. The study found that corruption, lack of political will, and ineffective law enforcement have hindered efforts to combat human trafficking in Nigeria.

Based on the findings above, it appeared that there is a general sentiment among the respondents that the current legal framework and government measures to combat human trafficking in Nigeria are not effective and that there is insufficient support for victims of human trafficking. The majority of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with statements related to the effectiveness of the legal framework and government measures, while only a small percentage agreed or strongly agreed. This suggests that there may be room for improvement in the legal response to human trafficking in Nigeria and the support provided to victims of human trafficking.

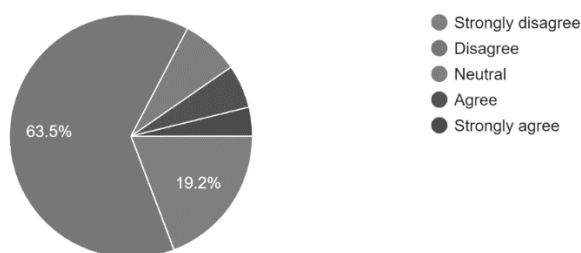
Table 17: Lawyers’ Responses on whether there is adequate awareness among the general public about the dangers of human trafficking in Nigeria

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
There is adequate awareness among the general public about the dangers of human trafficking.	Row N %	19.2%	63.5%	7.7%	5.8%	3.8%	100%
	Mean						2.14

Source: Field Survey, 2023

¹⁷ SK Kigbu and YB Hassan, ‘Legal Framework for Combating Human Trafficking in Nigeria: The Journey so Far’ (2015) 38 *Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization* <<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/234650198.pdf>> accessed 20 November 2022.

Figure 7: Lawyers' Responses on whether there is adequate awareness among the general public about the dangers of human trafficking in Nigeria



Source: Field Survey, 2023

Majority of respondents in table 17 and figure 8, about (82.7%) indicated some level of disagreement with the statement ‘There is adequate awareness among the general public about the dangers of human trafficking’. Specifically, 19.2% of respondents strongly disagree and 63.5% disagree, while only 5.8% agree and 3.8% strongly agree. The remaining 7.7% remained neutral. Based on these findings, it appears that the general public may not have adequate awareness of the dangers of human trafficking in Nigeria. This could indicate a need for increased education and awareness campaigns to address this issue.

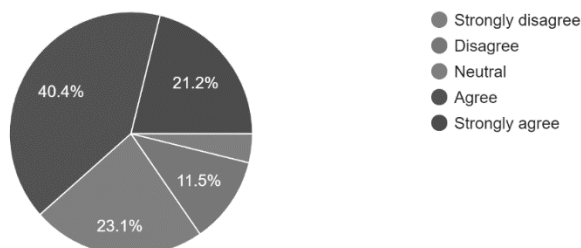
Furthermore, the results indicated a need for increased efforts to raise awareness about the dangers of human trafficking among the general public in Nigeria. In line with the legal response to human trafficking in Nigeria, this suggests that more resources should be allocated to prevention efforts such as awareness campaigns and education programs. Additionally, it highlights the need for improved law enforcement and legal frameworks to combat human trafficking in the country.

Table 18: Lawyers' Responses on the importance of the role of lawyers in the fight against human trafficking in Nigeria

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Lawyers in Nigeria play an important role in the fight against human trafficking.	Row N	3.8%	11.5%	23.1%	40.4%	21.2%	100%
	Mean %						3.64

Source: Field Survey, 2023)

Figure 9: Lawyers’ Responses on the importance of the role of lawyers in the fight against human trafficking in Nigeria



Source: Field Survey, 2023

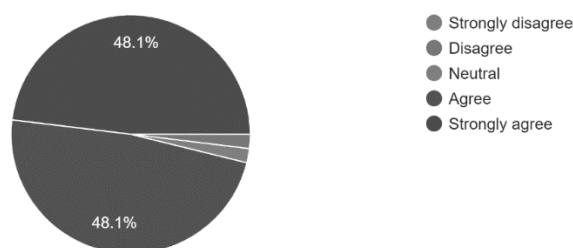
According to the data presented in table 18 and figure 9, 3.8% of the respondents strongly disagree, 11.5% disagree, 23.1% are neutral, 40.4% agree, and 21.2% strongly agree that lawyers in Nigeria play an important role in the fight against human trafficking. Dividing this by the total number of respondents (100) gives a mean score of 3.64, which indicates a moderately positive perception overall. In line with the legal response to human trafficking in Nigeria, these findings suggest that lawyers have a role to play in combating human trafficking, though the extent of this role may be subject to varying perceptions among the general public. This underscores the importance of collaboration between legal professionals, law enforcement agencies, and the public in addressing the problem of human trafficking in Nigeria.

Table 19: Lawyers’ Responses on the need for the government to prioritize the allocation of resources towards combating human trafficking

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
The government should prioritize the allocation of resources towards combating human trafficking.	Row N %	0.0%	1.9%	1.9%	48.1%	48.1%	100%
	Mean						4.43

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Figure 10: Lawyers' Responses on the need for the government to prioritize the allocation of resources towards combating human trafficking



Source: Field Survey, 2023

Based on table 19 and figure10, it appears that a large majority of the respondents agree or strongly agree (96.2%) that the government should prioritize the allocation of resources towards combating human trafficking in Nigeria. Only a very small percentage of the respondents (3.8%) either disagreed or were neutral on the issue.

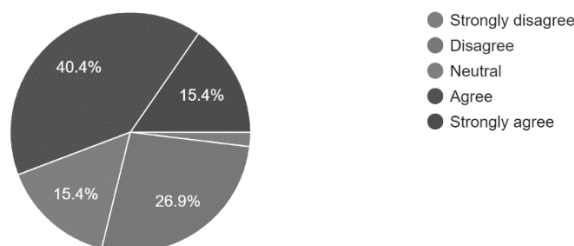
This indicates that there is a high level of recognition among the respondents about the need for the government to take concrete action towards addressing human trafficking. In line with the legal response to human trafficking in Nigeria, this suggests that there is a need for the government to increase its commitment and investment towards combating human trafficking. This may include allocating more resources towards the prevention of trafficking, strengthening the legal framework to better prosecute traffickers, and providing better support and protection for trafficking victims.

Table 20: Lawyers' Responses on the difficulty in prosecuting human trafficking cases in Nigeria

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Human trafficking cases are difficult to prosecute in Nigeria	Row N %	1.9%	26.9%	15.4%	40.4%	15.4%	100%
	Mean						3.28

Source: Field Study, 2023

Figure 11: Lawyers' Responses on the difficulty in prosecuting human trafficking cases in Nigeria



Source: Field Study, 2023

Based on the responses in table 20 and figure 11, it seems that a majority of the respondents (55.8%) either agree or strongly agree that human trafficking cases are difficult to prosecute in Nigeria. This suggests that there may be challenges in the legal system when it comes to prosecuting human trafficking cases in the country. The responses indicate that more attention and resources may be needed to address these challenges and improve the legal response to human trafficking in Nigeria. Therefore, the mean of the respondents is 3.28. Citing a previous study on the difficulty of prosecuting human trafficking cases in Nigeria, a 2018 report by the United States Department of State¹⁸ noted that 'Nigeria continued to face significant challenges in its efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers' and that 'the government did not demonstrate overall increasing efforts to address human trafficking compared to the previous reporting period'. This suggests that the difficulty of prosecuting human trafficking cases in Nigeria is a longstanding issue that requires continued attention and action.

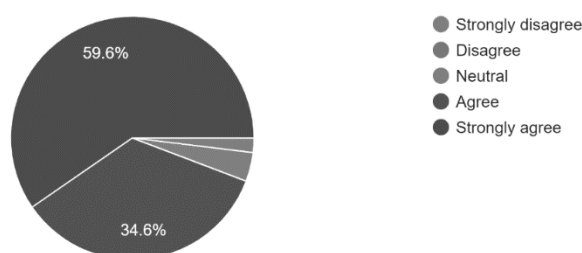
¹⁸ United States Department of State, 'Nigeria 2018 Trafficking in Persons Report' <<https://www.state.gov/reports/2018-trafficking-in-persons-report/nigeria/>> accessed 16 September 2022.

Table 21: Lawyers' Responses on how crucial international cooperation is in combatting human trafficking in Nigeria

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
International cooperation is crucial in combatting human trafficking in Nigeria.	Row N %	1.9%	0.0%	3.8%	34.6%	59.6%	100%
	Mean						4.52

Source: Field Study, 2023

Figure 12: Lawyers' Responses on how crucial international cooperation is in combatting human trafficking in Nigeria



Source: Field Survey, 2023

The findings in table 21 and figure 12 suggest that a majority of the respondents strongly agree that international cooperation is crucial in combatting human trafficking in Nigeria, with 59.6% of the respondents indicating such. Additionally, 34.6% of the respondents agree with the statement. Only a small percentage of the respondents disagree or are neutral about the statement. The mean of the respondents is 4.52, indicating that on average, the respondents agree with the statement.

A relevant study previously done is by Ogunniyi and Idowu,¹⁹ which highlights the importance of international cooperation in combating human trafficking in the West African region, including Nigeria. The study

¹⁹ Daniel Ogunniyi and Oladimeji I Idowu, 'Human Trafficking in West Africa: An Assessment of the Implementation of International and Regional Normative Standard' [2022] The Age of Human Rights Journal <<https://revistaselectronicas.ujaen.es/index.php/TAHRJ/article/view/6851/7339>> accessed 29 April 2023.

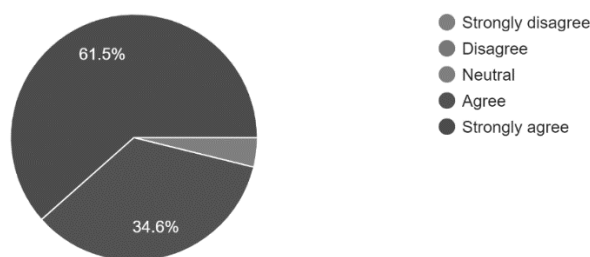
emphasizes the need for coordinated efforts among governments, law enforcement agencies, and other stakeholders across different countries to effectively combat human trafficking.

Table 22: Lawyers’ Responses on need to put in place more measures to protect the human rights of victims of human trafficking in Nigeria

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
More needs to be done to protect the human rights of victims of human trafficking in Nigeria.	Row N %	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	34.6%	61.5%	100%
	Mean						4.52

Source: Field Study, 2023

Figure 13: Lawyers’ Responses on need to put in place more measures to protect the human rights of victims of human trafficking in Nigeria



Source: Field Study, 2023

The findings in table 22 and figure13 suggest that a majority of the respondents (96.1%) either agree or strongly agree that more needs to be done to protect the human rights of victims of human trafficking in Nigeria. This highlights the importance of enhancing efforts to protect the rights of victims, which includes providing adequate support and rehabilitation services, and ensuring their access to justice. The mean of the respondents for this question is 4.52, which indicates a strong agreement with the statement.

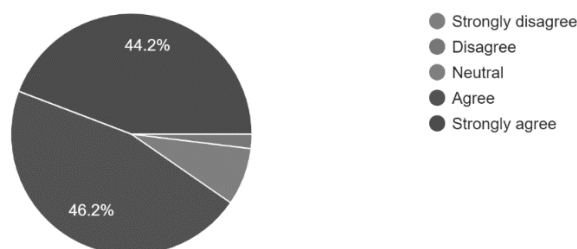
A relevant study previously done is by Okoli and Idemudia.²⁰ The study emphasizes the need to protect the human rights of victims of human trafficking, particularly women and children, and highlights the importance of enhancing measures to prevent trafficking, protect victims, and prosecute perpetrators.

Table 23: Lawyers' Responses on Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are effective partners in the fight against human trafficking in Nigeria

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are effective partners in the fight against human trafficking in Nigeria.	Row N %	0.0%	1.9%	7.7%	46.2%	44.2%	100%
	Mean						4.33

Source: Field Study, 2023

Figure 14: Lawyers' Responses on Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are effective partners in the fight against human trafficking in Nigeria



Source: Field Study, 2023

²⁰ Nnenna Okoli and Uwafiokun Idemudia, 'Survivor's Perceptions of Human Trafficking Rehabilitation Programs in Nigeria: Empowerment or Disempowerment?' (2022) 8(2) Journal of Human Trafficking <<https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2020.1777382>> accessed 28 April 2023.

The findings in table 23 and figure 14 suggest that the majority of the respondents (90.4%) agree that NGOs are effective partners in the fight against human trafficking in Nigeria, with 44.2% strongly agreeing and 46.2% agreeing. Only 1.9% of the respondents disagreed with this statement. A relevant study previously done is by Uduji, Okolo-Abasi and Asongu.²¹ The study evaluated the effectiveness of anti-human trafficking NGOs in Nigeria and found that the NGOs were perceived to be effective in their efforts to combat human trafficking in the country. This is in line with the findings of the current survey.

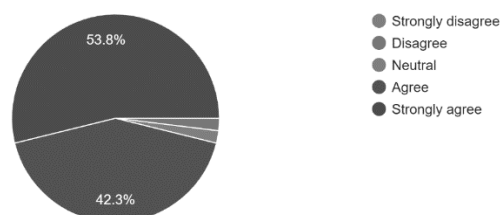
Table 24: Lawyers’ Responses on the need for more training and education on human trafficking laws and policies in the legal profession in Nigeria

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
The legal profession in Nigeria needs more training and education on human trafficking laws and policies.	Row %	0.0%	1.9%	1.9%	42.3%	53.8%	100%
	Mean						4.67

Source: Field Study, 2023

²¹ Joseph Ikechukwu Uduji, Elda Nduka Okolo-Obasi and Simplice A Asongu, *Corporate Social Responsibility in Nigeria and Multinational Corporations in the Fight against Human Trafficking in Oil-Producing Communities* (European Xtramile Centre of African Studies (EXCAS) Working Paper, WP/19/056, 2019) 24 Local Environment <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335638971_Corporate_social_responsibility_in_Nigeria_and_multinational_corporations_in_the_fight_against_human_trafficking_in_oil-producing_communities> accessed 22 April 2023.

Figure 15: Lawyers' Responses on the need for more training and education on human trafficking laws and policies in the legal profession in Nigeria



Source: Field Study, 2023

Based on the responses in table 24 and figure 15, no one strongly disagreed with the statement, 1.9% disagreed, 1.9% were neutral, 42.3% agreed, and 53.8% strongly agreed that the legal profession in Nigeria needs more training and education on human trafficking laws and policies. The mean of the respondents for this question is 4.67, indicating that on average, respondents agreed that the legal profession in Nigeria needs more training and education on human trafficking laws and policies. There is therefore the need for training and capacity building for law enforcement agencies, lawyers, and judges to effectively combat human trafficking in Nigeria.

4. Findings from the Survey

This study highlights the significance of FIDA's continued efforts in battling human trafficking in Nigeria and summarises the main findings of the survey. While recognising the current difficulties, this study emphasises how well thought FIDA's cooperation, accomplishments, and legal support services are. This study emphasises even more the necessity for teamwork and ongoing progress to combat human trafficking more effectively. This study emphasises the importance of FIDA's role in advancing and upholding laws, increasing awareness, and offering victims legal assistance.

These findings also indicate that in Nigeria, lawyers are seen as key players in the fight against human trafficking. These have been recognised for their assistance with cases, support of victims' rights, and assistance in enforcing anti-trafficking laws. The results highlight the necessity of legal experts in resolving the intricate problems surrounding human trafficking and the significance of their active participation in anti-trafficking initiatives.

This is consistent with existing literature that highlights the crucial role played by lawyers in the fight against human trafficking. Lawyers can help make the legal system stronger, support victims, spread knowledge, and ensure that perpetrators are held accountable. Their knowledge and dedication are crucial in ensuring that victims of human trafficking receive justice and protection. These results highlight the importance of continuing to assist and empower lawyers as they strive to stop human trafficking in Nigeria. To help lawyers better meet the problems posed by human trafficking, this includes offering them specialised training, resources, and chances for collaboration.

5. Recommendations

The Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) can adopt several proactive measures that will increase lawyer awareness of human trafficking such as the following:

Training and NBA Institute of Continuing Legal Education (NBA – ICLE) Programmes

The NBA can arrange ICLE workshops and training sessions that are especially geared at preventing human trafficking. In-depth understanding of the nature of human trafficking, its effects on victims, pertinent laws and regulations, investigative methods, and legal remedies should be provided to lawyers through these seminars. NBA can work with professionals, NGOs, and law enforcement organisations to efficiently provide these training initiatives.

Dissemination of Information

The NBA should actively communicate using its official communication channels against human trafficking. Regular bulletins, publications, online tools, and certain areas of their website might all fall under this category. The NBA may keep lawyers informed and educated on the most recent developments in the battle against human trafficking by disseminating pertinent news, case studies, and updates on legislative changes.

Collaboration with Organisations

The NBA should establish partnerships and collaborations with organisations working on combating human trafficking, such as the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as FIDA. Through these collaborations, NBA can

participate in joint initiatives, awareness campaigns, and advocacy efforts. The NBA can also facilitate the exchange of information and best practises among legal professionals and these organizations.

Creating Practice Guidelines

NBA can develop practice guidelines or manuals specifically addressing human trafficking issues. These guidelines can provide lawyers with practical advice, procedural guidance, and ethical considerations when dealing with human trafficking cases. By setting professional standards and expectations, the NBA can ensure that lawyers are equipped to handle such cases effectively and sensitively.

Establishing Support Networks

The NBA can establish support networks or committees dedicated to addressing human trafficking. These networks can serve as platforms for lawyers to share experiences, seek guidance, and collaborate on cases. The NBA can also organise awareness events, conferences, and workshops to foster dialogue and knowledge-sharing among legal professionals.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the NBA plays a pivotal role in combating human trafficking through increased awareness among lawyers. By implementing the measures discussed above, the NBA can effectively equip its members with the necessary knowledge and tools to identify, report, and address cases of human trafficking. By organising seminars, workshops, and training sessions, the NBA can promote a culture of vigilance and responsibility within the legal community, fostering a collaborative effort against this heinous crime.

Furthermore, NBA can strengthen partnerships with law enforcement agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders involved in the fight against human trafficking. By actively engaging in advocacy campaigns and outreach programs, the association can raise public awareness and mobilise support for victims. By doing so, the NBA can contribute significantly to the overall efforts to eradicate human trafficking in Nigeria.

It is important to recognise that addressing human trafficking requires a comprehensive approach involving various sectors of society. Lawyers, with their legal expertise and ethical responsibilities, have a unique opportunity to make a substantial impact. By taking a proactive stance, the NBA can

demonstrate its commitment to uphold justice, protecting human rights, and safeguarding the most vulnerable members of society.

By harnessing the collective power of its members, the NBA can be at the forefront of the fight against human trafficking, setting an example for legal associations worldwide. Through collaborative efforts, advocacy, and education, the NBA can create a lasting impact in the fight against human trafficking, ultimately contributing to a safer and more just society for all.