

**GENDER, PRINT MEDIA REPORTAGE AND CULTURAL
ATTITUDE TO BABY FACTORY IN SOUTHEASTERN NIGERIA**

BY

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CERTIFICATION

I certify that this research was carried out by Patience Egajanya OGBO under my supervision at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan Nigeria.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to God almighty and my son, Miracle Oche Agbegbe.

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ABSTRACT

In many African societies, a premium is placed on having biological children as proof of fertility. Couples unable to reproduce sometimes “harvest” babies from ‘baby factory’ a term coined by the Nigerian media as a subset of child trafficking. Existing literature have examined baby factory practices and its causes with little attention paid to the gender context of the media reportage. This study, therefore, investigated the gender nuances in the print media reportage of baby factory in southeastern Nigeria, the cultural attitude towards it and the responses of actors, journalists and security operatives toward the phenomenon.

The Agenda Setting theory and Motherism provided the framework, while descriptive design was adopted. Reports on baby factory were generated from *The Sun*, *The Punch* and *Nigerian Tribune* newspapers from January to June, 2014 when reportage on baby factory expanded. The cities of Umuahia and Owerri in Abia and Imo states, respectively being the hotbeds of baby factory phenomenon, were purposively selected. Key informant interviews were conducted with the three newspapers editors and nine reporters (non-crime) journalists. Four Focus Group Discussions were conducted with newspaper editors, correspondents from a crime security association, Igbo males and Igbo females. In-depth interviews were held with eight baby merchants, seven baby clients, five rescued pregnant women in Owerri; six police officers, two officials of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons, four baby factory owners, 10 baby factory operators and eight community leaders in Umuahia. Data were thematically and content-analysed.

Although journalists observed that they gave considerable coverage to the baby factory phenomenon, their views were not confirmed by the number of reports in the newspapers. There were 35 reports on baby factory in the period under review, of which only 14 focused on the issue in southeastern Nigeria. *The Sun* newspaper, which allotted more pages to crime and the South-East, had most publications (11), while publications were fewer in *The Punch* (2) and *Nigerian Tribune* (1). The police set the agenda for the media as journalists relied on press releases and parade of arrested suspects rather than on investigative reporting, a situation the journalists blamed on the secretive nature of the phenomenon. Abia State, with a higher rate of unmarried teenage pregnancy, had more reports on baby factory. The media also placed more emphasis on baby factory as a female crime than on men who abandoned their ‘barren’ wives and pregnant girlfriends. The Igbo adults condemned baby factory as un-cultural, although the female respondents showed empathy towards those arrested for baby factory crime. They, along with security agents and actors in baby factory, blamed the Igbo culture of male heir preference, dispositions towards childlessness, child adoption and unmarried teenage pregnancy as facilitators of the baby factory reality, but the Igbo male disagreed.

The Nigerian print media underreported the issues of baby factory and cultural attitude towards the phenomenon is divided along gender lines. The media should report more on baby factory menace as a national crisis instead of projecting the phenomenon as a female crime.

Keywords: Baby factory, Nigerian newspaper print reportage, Igbo cultural practices

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TABLE OF CONTENT

Title page	i
Certification	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgement	iv
Abstract	v
Table of contents	vi
Lists of table	viii
List of Figure	ix
List of Pictures	x
Chapter One: Introduction	
1.1 Background to the study	1
1.2 Statement of the problem	4
1.3 Research questions	5
1.4 Aim and objectives of the study	5
1.5 Significance of the study	5
1.6 Scope of the study	6
1.7 Study location	6
1.8 Limitation of study	6
1.9 Definition of terms	6
Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework	
2.1 Conceptualizing trafficking in humans: a global phenomenon	8
2.2 Baby factory in Nigeria	9
2.3 Culture, society and media	12
2.4 Media in Nigeria	18
2.5 Nigeria media and baby factory	20
2.6 The Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria	22
2.6.1 Umuahia and Owerri Cities in Igboland	28
2.7 Review of related studies	30
2.8 Theoretical framework	36
2.8.1 Agenda-setting theory	36
2.8.2 Motherism	37

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

3.1	Research design	41
3.2	Population of the study	41
3.3	Sampling techniques /Sampling sizes	41
3.4	Instrumentation	43
3.5	Methods of Data Collection	43
3.6	Data analysis	44

Chapter Four: Analyses of Data

4.1	Introduction	46
4.1.1	Research Question 1	46
4.1.2	Journalists' Responses towards Baby Factory in Southeastern Nigeria	50
4.2	The State in Southeastern Nigeria with the highest number of baby factory as reported by the newspapers	64
4.2.1	Newspaper Reportage on Baby Factory in Abia State in 2014	69
4.2.2	Responses towards baby factory in Abia State	70
4.3	The newspaper portrayal of male and female involvement in the baby factory phenomenon in southeastern Nigeria	90
4.3.1	Categorisation of female involved in baby factory	92
4.3.2	Analysis of reportage on the Involvement of male and female in baby factory in southeastern Nigeria In 2014	99
4.4	The cultural attitude of the Igbo male and female toward the baby factory phenomenon along gender line	113

Chapter Five: Summary and Recommendation

5.1	Summary	150
5.2	Contribution to knowledge	154
5.3	Conclusion	155
5.4	Suggestion for further studies	157
	References	158
	Appendix	164

LIST OF TABLE

Table 4.1:	Newspapers and their contents	47
Table 4.2:	South Eastern States with the highest newspaper reports on baby factory	66

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1:	Map of Nigeria showing regional reflection of baby factory	68
Figure 4.2:	Newspapers reports on the involvement of male and female	91

LIST OF PLATES

Plate 4.1:	Teenage girls in different stages of pregnancies	73
Plate 4.2:	Pregnant teenagers being escorted from a baby factory	77
Plate 4.3:	Paraded baby merchants and a client	85
Plate 4.4:	Paraded pregnant women	89
Plate 4.5:	Rescued pregnant teens with a male	102
Plate 4.6:	Baby factory operators	108
Plate 4.7:	Husband and wife arrested for trafficking babies	109
Plate 4.8:	Male and female baby traffickers	110
Plate 4.9:	Husband and wife suspects	111
Plate 4.10:	A rescued boy sold by his father	149

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Children are valued in Africa (Okonofua, 2002). Having one's own biological offspring is cherished since children are not just the future of a family, but also of society. Any man or woman who has children is referred to as the father and mother to underline their proof of fertility. There is a strong emphasis on having children and, as a result when children are not born soon after marriage, religious leaders are contacted to perform prayer and deliverance sessions for the couple.

Some of these women fall prey to unscrupulous spiritualists who defraud them of their hard-earned cash. Some may even pay the ultimate price by being murdered by rapists or extortionists who are scared of the transaction being revealed. Many others have tried unsuccessfully to find medical and natural treatments. Faced with the aforementioned obstacles, the "infertile" couple is clearly keen to start a family. There is evidence that some people would resort to desperate tactics at this point, such as kidnapping newborns, buying and "harvesting" babies, which had vivaciously given rise to the baby factory phenomena (Huntley, 2013).

The term "baby factory" refers to an intentional conduct of individuals or organized syndicates seeking pregnant girls and women to house them in a home and sell their babies to a third party. It also entails housing women and girls who have been impregnated by a paid guy in order to sell their offspring to a third party (Huntley, 2013; Agbo, 2014). With multiple syndicates seeking for undesired pregnancies, married couples, and relatives prepared to sell their babies to balance personal costs or break out of poverty, the 'baby factory' issue has taken on a worldwide, deadly, and sophisticated dimension.

. The United Nations Organization for Education, Science, and Culture (UNESCO) first revealed examples of "baby harvesting," "baby trade," or "baby factory" in 2006 in a policy paper titled "Human Trafficking in Nigeria: Root Causes and Recommendations." Some of the key issues stated that support the baby factory phenomenon include the emphasis placed on having one's own biological children, the

government's incapacity to police foster homes, the failure to properly apply criminal laws, and a lack of adequate rules and legislation. According to media sources, at least ten children are trafficked every day in Nigeria (BBC News of 01 June, 2011).

After financial fraud and drug trafficking, child trafficking is Nigeria's third most significant crime (Yvonne 2013:1; Vanguard, July 30, 2011; UNICEF 2005:7). Nigeria is not the only country that has a baby factory. According to reports, African countries such as Ethiopia, Ghana, Namibia, Benin, and Gabon engage in "baby factory" or "harvest" activities. Through adoption processes in Europe and America, trafficking children wind up in the hands of criminal groups. According to reports in the media, the Taliban in Afghanistan purchase children to train as suicide bombers and juvenile soldiers. Baby factory also exist in China, Vietnam.

Baby factory, described as a shadow economy, is found in many countries raking in \$33 billion yearly for the traffickers (Ebbe and Dilip, 2008:7). Baby factory phenomenon has continued to gain media attention thus bringing to the public the crime, modus operandi of perpetrators, police arrests and prosecution of suspects. According to (Huntley 2013), the Nigerian media coined the word "baby factory" following the frequent arrests of the perpetrators and rescuing of victims by security operatives.

The media is defined as the Fourth Estate, which includes Publishers, Publicists, Newsmen, Newspapermen, Journalists, Journalistic Writers, Editors, and Correspondents, according to Webster's New World Thesaurus' New Revised Edition, and the duty of a journalist is to inform, educate, and serve as the society's watchdog. The newspapers like other types of media, exposes, informs, enlightens, educates, and affects both negative and positive change. According to Ologunju (2011), newspapers are a marketplace of ideas rather than lies and half-truths.

They are intended to provide more information to the reading public (Irabor 2015). Nigeria presently has over 50 tabloid and broadsheet publications, and Lagos alone has several newspapers and news magazines, the most of which are privately owned and maintain editorial independence despite occasional repression (Ifedayo, 2015). Nigerian media is unquestionably dynamic, and despite significant financial and other challenges, it has persevered in carrying out its duties and bringing to the fore issues afflicting the country.

The Nigerian media has educated and enlightened the public on a variety of issues, including the baby factory. The newspapers in Nigeria is undeniably vibrant,

and despite enormous financial and other problems, it has persisted to fulfill its tasks and has brought to the forefront concerns plaguing the country as well as "baby factory" which described as a location where women are pressured or forced to become pregnant and then sell their newborns. According to (Madike, 2013), baby factories are controlled by organized crime syndicates and disguised as maternity centers, orphanages, social welfare homes, clinics, and informal water bottling businesses.

The horrific infant situation in Nigeria is depicted in the Nigerian media as a widespread, systematic crime in which girls and women are imprisoned in "baby factories." Human traffickers seize custody of women and hold them captive until they give birth to children who are then sold to other parties in Huntley (2013). Those who are not pregnant when they arrive at the "baby factory" are forcibly impregnated, with some being imprisoned for long periods of time and impregnated multiple times; despite this, the majority of the infants are adopted (Agbo, 2013).

The offenders, according to Madike (2013), are usually the owners of these institutions, some of whom are medical doctors, who manage the 'business' with the help of staff, some of whom may be men hired specifically to impregnate women and girls, and some of the operators are allegedly serial killers and are involved in human trafficking networks. According to media reports, infants in Eastern Nigeria are sold and purchased in the same way as candy is purchased from a confectioner's store. What remains to be seen is a scenario in which a shop or structure explicitly advertises "babies for sale."

The majority of women who agree to take part in this illicit trade but are not yet pregnant are compelled to sleep with males recruited by baby factory owners in order to become pregnant. From the moment they are conceived, these children are bought and sold, and a price is paid for them during the first few days of their birth (Ossai2013:76). According to The Guardian (2011), several of the rescued females told Nigerian police that the operators of the baby factories paid them to make women pregnant during a raid in Aba, Nigeria's Abia state. The security agent razed six baby factories in Abia state after the discovery, and young pregnant girls were liberated.

In a typical scenario, the biological mothers of the neonates signed agreements relinquishing their claims to the children in exchange for monetary compensation, which was supposed to be a joyous moment. As a result, human trafficking is

extremely uncommon under these circumstances. At the absolute least, these would constitute felonies, such as the illegal adoption or sale of children. As a result, human trafficking is exceedingly rare in these conditions.

These would be felonies at the very least, such as the illegal adoption or sale of children.(Cheld 2021). Between January and March of 2010, 77 young females were rescued in Abia state. Between May and June 2011, thirty-two pregnant girls were rescued from a facility in Abia State. Pregnant girls were purportedly freed from an Anambra state sachet water manufacturing business that had been exploited for unlawful baby harvesting. (Makinde et al 2015).

1.2 Statement of the problem

The UNESCO 2006 report explicitly mentions three Nigerian states as hotbeds for baby factory operators: Abia, Ebonyi, and Lagos. However, since 2006, “baby harvesting” in Nigeria has moved beyond these initial areas to Ogun, Imo, Anambra, Enugu, and Rivers States. Baby factories are so common in Southeastern Nigeria, according to Agbo (2014), that he wondered if there was something wrong or peculiar with the Igbos in Eastern Nigeria (Ossai 2013).

Given media reports of new tricks being used, and how the phenomenon has taken a dangerous turn, with married couples following suit and selling their own children to pay off debt and meet personal needs, the phenomenon appears to be growing into a major social problem, a criminal act, and a stain on the country's image. Existing research has focused on baby factory practices and their causes, with little attention given to the gender context of media reporting.

As a result, this study looked into the gender nuances in the print media coverage of baby factory in southerneastern Nigeria, as well as the cultural attitudes regarding it and the reactions of actors, journalists, and security personnel, Igbo male and female towards the phenomenon. What newspaper, specifically, covers the phenomenon the most in southeastern Nigeria ? Which state has the most news coverage? In their coverage of the baby factory issue, how does the press portray male and female involvement? , What are the cultural attitudes in states where this occurrence is common along gender line?

1.3 Research questions

1. What Nigerian newspapers reports more on “baby factory phenomenon in southeastern Nigeria?
2. What is the State in southeastern Nigeria with the highest number of baby factory as reported by the newspapers?
3. Is there a gender bias in the newspaper reportage of male and female involvement in the sales and purchase of babies?
4. What are the cultural attitudes of the Igbos to baby factory phenomenon along gender line?

1.4 Aim and Objectives

The study’s aim is to examine the gender nuances in the selected Nigerian newspapers reportage of baby factory phenomenon in southeastern Nigeria, the cultural attitude towards it and responses of actors, journalists, security operatives to the phenomenon. The following objectives are pertinent:

1. Documents / profiles newspaper reportage of the baby factory phenomenon in southeastern Nigeria.
2. Identifies gender bias in the publications of the involvement of male and female in the purchase and sale of the babies.
3. Investigates Igbo cultural attitudes towards the phenomenon of baby factory along gender line.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study is significant in a number of ways.

1. It underscores the disconnect between the government, media and people in the general organisation of the society.
2. It shows the features of the covert criminal activities and brings it to the fore for necessary all stakeholders’ interventions.
3. It uncovers the less obvious manifestation of the gender exploitation suffered by the girls/women in the patriarchal society which is regrettably sustained by the gender bias reportage by the media.

1.6 Scope of the study

The study covered reportage of the baby factory phenomenon in three Nigerian national newspapers. These newspapers are *The Punch*, *Daily Sun* and *Nigerian Tribune*. The three selected newspapers have their reportage on the baby factory phenomenon in the southeastern states. The study covered the newspapers' reportage for the duration of six months from January to June, 2014. It also covers responses of actors, journalists, security operatives and Igbo male and female in the cities of Aba and Owerri in Abia and Imo states respectively considered as the hotbeds of the phenomenon

1.7 Study Location: The study was carried out in Umuahia and Owerri in Abia and Imo states respectively. According to the UNESCO 2006 report, these locations are considered as the hotbeds of baby factory operations in southeastern.

1.8 Limitation of the study.

The study investigated selected newspapers' reportage on the baby factory phenomenon in southeastern Nigeria.

1.9 Operational definition of terms

Trafficking: This is the illegal movement of people from one place to the other.

Gender: This involves male or female with regards to what roles are given to them socially and culturally. It is broadly seen as the norm, roles and relations socially constructed for male and female

Media: This involves the use of radio, television, newspaper, online and others for communication which involves sending message(s) from a source, through a medium to a receiver(s).

Socio-Economic: This refers to the relationship between income, lifestyle and behavior which is a person exhibit or is perceived and seen among a group of people

Well-Being: This is a situation of psychosocial and emotional satisfaction, of being happy, feeling healthy and at peace with one self with life and society.

Ethnicity: This refers to a condition or a fact of being or of belonging to a particular race or tribe within a given nation state.

Baby factory: Baby factory, as a sub-set of trafficking in person, is a deliberate act or an organised illegal ring involving syndicates ranging from doctors, nurses and scouts

who hunt for pregnant girls and women and house them in a home so that their babies can be sold to a third party. Its scope also involves deliberately hunting for teenage girls and women, housing them in a building where a paid male has intercourse with them with the aim of having children to be sold to a third party.

Hotbed: This refers to a place where a situation like crime is considered to be rife or common place. It is seen as a notorious place or venue for a particular unacceptable act.

Actors: These are persons in the baby factory promoting the phenomenon. They include the baby factory owners, baby factory clients, baby factory operators, rescued pregnant women, male impregnators, baby thieves, baby traffickers.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Conceptualising trafficking in humans: a global phenomenon

The United Nations defines human trafficking as "the recruitment and supported transit of a person inside or across national borders for the purpose of exploitation through coercion, threats, or deception." 'Exploitation' is described as forced labor or services, slavery, servitude, or organ harvesting, in addition to prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation. According to research, trafficking harms can include significant threats to personal safety, loss of all legal rights and personal dignity, physical abuse, and, in the case of sexual abuse, exposure to sexually transmitted diseases Kelly and Reagan (2004).

According to the UN Smuggling Protocol, migrant smuggling is defined as the illegal movement of individuals across international borders for financial gain (2000). Smugglers' services are assumed to have ended when migrants arrive at their destinations, but human trafficking involves continual exploitation of victims. Furthermore, while the presence of a victim whose individual rights have been violated is a key distinguishing criterion of trafficking under the UN Protocols, smuggling is seen as a violation of the State's political interest as well as an international border violation (Experts Group on Trafficking in Human Beings 2004:5).

Despite the fact that the UN definitions represent an important international agreement on the definition of human trafficking, many commentators have noted the difficulty in drawing clear and consistent lines between human trafficking and migrant smuggling, or between criminal accomplice and victim, on the basis of consent (Gallagher 2001:2, Lee 2005: 14 Morrison 1998: 17, Munro 2001). Baby factory, or what is referred to as 'baby factory' in Nigerian slang, is a newly identified sub-category of the phenomena of human trafficking.

It has become a security issue in various parts of Nigeria, particularly in the country's eastern region. The phenomena involves the trafficking of newborns and

human parts for a variety of reasons, some of which are nefarious. In a typical situation, young girls are recruited, held somewhere, and impregnated, sometimes under duress and threats.

The infants born from these pregnancies are subsequently sold to childless couples, ritualists, organ harvesters, and anybody else willing to pay the high fees required. The young girls utilized for this act are frequently kidnapped or duped into making themselves available with the promise of a large sum of money in exchange for their services. The girls are sometimes brainwashed and held captive until they give birth. The babies are sometimes transported across borders, and other times they are slain and their body parts sold to ritualists.

According to the UNESCO 2006 report, "Baby factory" is an intentional act or an organized illicit ring including syndicates ranging from doctors, nurses, and scouts who look for pregnant girls and women and put them in a home so that their babes can be sold to a third party, according to Huntley(2013:5) It also includes the intentional housing of women and girls who have been impregnated by a paid male in order to sell their infants to a third party. Many victims and perpetrators of this crime are currently in police custody, while some of the victims are being rehabilitated by NAPTIP (Huntley, 2013).

2.2 Baby factory in Nigeria

The United Nations Organization for Education, Science, and Culture (UNESCO) was the first to bring the baby factory phenomena to the public's attention (UNESCO). According to UNESCO's policy document "Human trafficking in Nigeria: Root Causes and Recommendations," published in 2006, the first incidents of "baby harvesting," "baby trade," or "baby factory" were reported in 2006. Three Nigerian states were identified as hotbeds for baby factory operators in the survey: Abia, Ebonyi, and Lagos (Huntley, 2013:6).

Since 2006, the practice of "baby harvesting" in Nigeria has spread beyond these first states, with reports of baby factories in Ogun, Imo, Anambra, Enugu, and Port Harcourt (Eseadis, Amaka, Ikechukwu-Ilomuanya, Ogbuabor 2015:14). Under the guise of social welfare institutions, maternity homes, orphanages, clinics, and even water bottling plants, "baby factories" function as alternative dubious child adoption homes until the offenders are apprehended by the public or victims.

The 'baby factory' phenomena has taken on a deadly and complex dimension in recent years, having expanded beyond a syndicate looking for undesired pregnancies to include married couples, relatives selling their offspring to cover costs, or desperation to escape poverty Agbo (2014:39). Police in Aba, Abia State, freed 32 teenage girls from a "baby factory" in June 2011. In October 2011, 17 pregnant girls were rescued from an orphanage in Lagos. In July 2013, the owner of the "Moonlight Maternity Home" and a nurse who worked for him were arrested for selling children born of unwanted pregnancies.

In June 2013, authorities stormed a clinic in Aba City, Abia State, and rescued 16 pregnant young females. In May 2013, six pregnant teenage girls were rescued from a "baby factory" in Enugu, while another 17 pregnant teenage females were rescued in Anambra State. The Nigerian press is full of stories like the one above. They run their "business" with the help of employees, some of whom may be men hired specifically to impregnate women and girls. Given the recurrent finding of commercial mass baby manufacture factories in Nigeria, their liquidation, and the reappearance of other comparable commercial mass baby manufacturing factories.

A conflict and security worry has lately developed in south-eastern Nigeria, according to Alfred, Francis; Andeshi, Ale (2014), which is linked to what has been nicknamed "the baby factory phenomenon" in the local press. The babies born from such pregnancies are then sold to childless families, according to the report, which claims that this practice is common in the country's south-eastern regions.

Several press sources indicate that the Nigeria Police Force, Civil Defense, and officers of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons had made arrests in baby factories. Many victims and perpetrators of this crime are currently in police custody, and some of them are being rehabilitated by NAPTIP.

Given the regular discovery of commercial mass baby manufacturing factories in Nigeria, their liquidation, and the rapid reappearance of several such commercial mass baby production factories in different parts of the country, the question here is whether commercial mass baby manufacturing factories in Nigeria are run by mafia-style organizations. Nwaoga (2013). In April 2012, Nigerian officers discovered a community (Ihiala) in Anambra state that has a baby factory. Ahaoma (2014), Madike (2013).

In May 2013, police in Umuaka, Imo State Njoku, rescued approximately 26 teenage girls from a woman who ran a baby factory disguised as a maternity care and

drinking water facility (2013). The Imo State Police Command rescued 17 pregnant teenagers from a syndicate in the state's Njaba Local Government Area in the same month of May 2013. When the cops arrived, eleven infants were about to be sold. During the procedure, a young man admitted to being the father of the girls' children.

Police in Akwa Ibom State discovered two baby factories, each harboring seven pregnant teenagers and eight pregnant mothers, and the victims were rescued. One of those detained was a 16-year-old girl who had been promised money in exchange for abandoning her child after delivery. Her infant was to be auctioned off for N300,000 (about \$1,621). According to the Department of State Security Service, over sixty infants have been sold in Nigeria's Akwa Ibom State, but the alleged baby trader said he couldn't recall the exact number. Approximately twenty (20) youngsters were rescued during the special operation.

In May 2008, police in Imo State rescued roughly 25 young females from a hospital. In the months of August and September 2013, authorities in the states of Imo and Enugu discovered two baby factories. Police in Imo state arrested the owner of the "Moonlight Maternity Home" and a nurse who worked for him in July 2013 for selling kids from undesired pregnancies. In Aba City, Abia State, police raided a clinic in June 2013 and rescued 16 pregnant young ladies. In May 2013, police rescued six adolescent females from a "baby factory" in Enugu, as well as 17 pregnant adolescent girls from Anambra State.

Police in Aba, Abia State, freed 32 teenage girls from a "baby factory" in June 2011. In October 2011, 17 pregnant girls were rescued from an orphanage in Lagos. There were 11 infants and approximately twenty-six teenage girls in Umuaka village, Imo State. One of the mockeries of the baby factory frenzy is that some of the locations where this heinous and illegal enterprise thrives are genuinely established as non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The owners utilize the government's support to cover up their heinous activities. The Imo State police command recovered Sixteen expectant girls aged Fourteen to Nineteen from the Ezuma private hospital, according to Ndidi (2013). The facility's owner, a doctor, was apprehended and paraded alongside his victims. The entrepreneur is also in charge of the Ezuma Women and Children Rights Protection Initiative, a non-profit organization (EWCRIPI).

2.3 Culture, society and the media

The link between culture, society, and the media is the focus of a book edited by Michael Gurevitch, Tony Benneth, James Curran, and Janet Woollacott with the same title. Nearly all of the essays in the book acknowledge that the sociology of mass communications has expanded greatly in recent decades as a result of the advent of new theoretical ideas in the subject, in their articulation of the intricate interactions between culture, society, and the media. In his foreword to the book

According to Tony Benneth (1983), assumptions about the nature of such media, the processes of which they are a part, and the manner in which these are linked to broader social and political processes and interactions are typically included in the language of "mass," "media," and "communications." We can realize the consequences of Benneth's discovery if we understand the classicist understanding of the term "mass."

The term "mass" was first used to describe a socially undifferentiated audience created by the news media (television, press, radio, cinema, and the record industry), with no evident class, sex, or race divisions. However, this isn't always the case. Many academics have looked into how the media interacts with and influences society in various ways. These researchers were interested in a variety of topics, including how media, for example, disseminates and shapes cultural values in a specific culture.

How do they contribute to the formation of social bonds and identities? What effect do you think they'll have on people's sense of space, time, and location? What role do they play in the establishment of communities ranging from subcultures to nation-states, as well as processes of global socioeconomic and cultural change? Because these questions can be answered by researchers from a variety of disciplines and are frequently posed, responses have tended to come from a variety of sources.

It may be worthwhile to check a few of these websites to identify some of the significant trends and opinions on how the media has shaped society as it stands. But first, a quick definition of "media." All means of communication that are typically referred to as "mass media" are referred to as "media." A country's mass media can be divided into two categories based on two basic criteria, regardless of its size: (i) a mechanical device or mechanism; and (ii) the assumed quantity or degree of social impact (Uyo, 1987). Blanke and Harolsen (1975) classified all mass media into two categories based on the first criterion:

Print media includes newspapers, news magazines, pamphlets, direct mail, circulars, billboards, skywriting, and any other technical device that uses the sense of sight to deliver a message to the "masses." Print media disseminates information through publishing printed materials. The progress of the media throughout history is intrinsically related to societal achievements.

These advancements in technology, science, and society took place in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There is no need to delve into depth on the social and economic history of the media during these centuries because it has been adequately documented (Thompson, 1995: chapter 1). From the many studies on the media that have been conducted, one important aspect has remained critical, and that is what is usually referred to as "media power."

This is linked to another concept: the media's position as cultural and social change agents. Several schools of media studies, for example, have looked at the media as forces that provide audiences with ways of experiencing and understanding the world, methods that shape their very existence and participation in a society. The contributions of British Cultural Studies (Fiske, 1987; Hall, 1992) eloquently express this stance, as formulated by Kellner: The media... are also the arena in which societal control battles are waged.

Not only through news and information, but also through entertainment, feminists and antifeminists, liberals and conservatives, radicals and status quo defenders strive for cultural influence... The media is intrinsically linked to power, and culture research is subjected to the whims of politics and the abattoir of history. They have an important role in moulding our worldviews, public opinion, beliefs, and conduct, and hence serve as a platform for social power and struggle. (1995:35).

. The British Cultural Studies group's work was always aimed toward the critical political concerns of their period and environment, with a focus on culture politics. Richard Hoggart's *The Use of Literacy* (1958) was one of the first works to create British cultural studies, demonstrating "how individuals built their identities and lives using their cultural resources"

(Kellner, 1995). Hoggart's book begins by describing how working-class communities in Britain have historically created opposing cultures to the mainstream, and how these cultures have been eroded by the establishment of a strong culture and cultural homogenization processes directed by the state, schooling, and the media.

Raymond Williams (1958 and 1962) and E.P. Thompson, two early influences on British Cultural Studies, both used the preceding as a topic (1963).

As social groups and classes live... increasingly fragmented and sectionally differentiated lives, the mass media are more and more responsible for (a) providing the basis on which groups construct an 'image' of the lives, meanings, practices, and values of other groups and classes; (b) for providing the images, representation and ideas around which the social totality composed of all these separate and fragmented pieces, can be coherently grasped as a 'whole'. From the 1960s onwards,

British Cultural Studies began to show how mass media produced identities, ways of thinking and acting that incorporated people into mainstream culture Hall and Whannel (1964). When Hall (1982) states that the Mass Media) have gradually conquered the cultural and intellectual world, he is referring to this.

Hall's argument has a piercing vitality that may pique the interest of anthropologists, particularly in how it strongly echoes Anderson's (1983) idea of the imagined community as a mass mediated collectivity in which individual members may not all know each other but share the idea of a common belonging. However, as Debra Spitulnik (1993:295) points out, this understanding of the media as cultural vehicles and forms of picturing and imaging communities has had little impact and little practical application.

It was also argued that media products require multi-dimensional close textual readings to analyze their various forms of discourses, ideological positions, narrative strategies, image construction, and effects. This type of textual analysis is important for establishing the possibility that the media are sites of collective representations (and collective mediations) in modern society, but an increasing number of scholars have argued that this approach is inadequate if it fails to analyze the culture of media production (Ballew 1991, 1992 : 23; Micheals, 1991), the political economy and social history of media institutions (Ang 1991 ; Dening 1987 ; Edwards and Gatton 1992) and the various practices of media consumption that exist in any given society.

In this regard, Kellner (1995) contends that focusing on texts and audiences to the exclusion of analysis of the social relations and institutions through which texts are produced and consumed truncates cultural studies, as does reception analysis that fails to indicate how audiences are produced through their social relations and how, to some extent, culture itself helps produce audiences and their receivables.

In this theoretical reformulation of media power, a critical dilemma has emerged regarding where to situate meaning and ideology generation in the mass communication process, as well as how to characterize processes of agency and interpretation.

Since the 1980s, the most prevalent paradigm of the mass communication process has been the linear model, which consists of three discrete stages: message production, message transmission, and message reception. In this formulation, “the message” is often regarded as the locus of cultural meaning, as well as a forceful refraction or reproduction of society's prevailing beliefs by certain theorists.

This is particularly the case with Marxist and Critical Theory, where the question of media power has been formulated and articulated in terms of how mass media serve the interests of a ruling class e.g. in legitimizing the authority of state institutions, building political and cultural consensus, and impeding the development of working class consciousness (Curran, *et al* 1982; Hall, 1977; 1982, Lazere 1987).

These Marxist and Critical Theory approaches were informed by earlier theories of “Mass Society” such as the Frankfurt School theorists, which argue that mass media are responsible for the emergence of a homogenized mass culture, the fragmentation of communities, and the erosion of cultural values and standards of artistic expression (Bennett 1982, Horkheimer and Adorno 1947; Benjamin 1936).

There is also the functionalist approach, which is sometimes referred to as the “positivist” and “liberal-pluralist” traditions and which stresses the role of media power in reinforcing or changing the attitudes, values, and behaviours of media audiences (Gerbner 1983, Holz and Wright 1970, Klappe.1990). Rather, media scholars, such as Carragee (1991), Evans (1990) Fiske (1987) Hobson (1982) Lembo and Tucker (1990) Seiter et al. (1989) Allor (1988) Liebes and Katz (1990) Radwan (1988) Baudrillard (1981; 1983) Buckingham (1987) Fiske (1989) and a few others, have turned attention to areas like the interpretive practices of media audiences and media uses, and the multivocality and indeterminacy of media texts.

More recently, a number of British Cultural Studies researchers, as well as some responding to changes in Critical Theory, have explored the media as “dynamic places of struggle over representation, and complicated spaces in which subjectivities are produced and identifies are contested” (Spitulnik 1993).

Many scholars theorizing about the media and society today acknowledge and emphasize the inseparability of the study of the media from the study of popular

culture and modern consumer culture (See, for example, Ewen and Ewen 1982, Jhally 1991, and Leiss et al 1986), and many argued that these phenomena cannot be understood apart from the broader historical developments of capitalism and modern consumer culture (see Baudrillard 1981, 1983, Harvey 1989, Jameson 1984).

Gordon and McArthur 1989, Hooks 1984), as well as in redefining communal and household space (Gordon and McArthur 1989, Meyrowitz 1985; 1989, Morley and Silverstone 1990). Others have documented the integration of media use into everyday life rhythms, the mass mediation of time ideas, and the more general, but more elusive, experiential components of media reception (Spitulnik 1993, for a comprehensive overview of these).

If the form-substance duality is absolute, the encoding-decoding paradigm overlooks a key finding of current linguistics (and semiotics): linguistic forms both assume and produce the contexts for their interpretation, as well as the relationships of participants to the event of communication (Silverstein 1979).

The application of this functional linguistic method to mass communication would shed light not only on the propositional level of encoding and decoding ideologically loaded information, but also on the semiotic creation of sender-receiver interactions and evaluative frameworks for reception (Bakhtin 1934; Goffman 1981, Suleiman et al 1980).

This approach, particularly in light of recent debates about context and contextualization (Bauman and Briggs 1992; Goodwin et al 1991), would also extend analysis beyond the individual communication event and the sender-receiver dyad to take into account how media forms are situated within broader social processes and in relation to specific understandings of the communication genres that exist.

Later revisions to the encoding-decoding paradigm by Morley (1981) and Hall (1982) point in this direction. They both draw on Volosinov's (1986) insights into the sociohistoric elements of textual production and reception to claim that cultural abilities to read specific media genres are distributed differently, but they mostly ignore issues of linguistic form and usage. Since the early 1980s, one noteworthy aspect of this shift toward a "interpretive" audience has been the acceptance of anthropology and the ethnographic method as empirical antidotes to the prevalent theoretical excess (Ang 1981; Buckingham 1987; Carbaugh 1991; Hobson 1982; Lembo 1989; Radway 1984).

The majority of this work is based on interviewing audiences in their homes, and some have suggested that the term "ethnography" is misleading because comprehensive participant-observation is minimal, and genuine immersion in the people studied's daily activities and social worlds is essentially nonexistent (Evans 1990; Lave et al 1992). Furthermore, with a few exceptions (Carbaugh 1991; Fiske 1991), this ethnographic turn appears to be taking place with little of the reflexivity that modern anthropologists (Clifford and Marcus 1986) have infused into our understanding of ethnographic practice.

However, none of these approaches is interested in evaluation as such – apart from some studies within CDA and appraisal theory. Neither are there many *systematic* synchronic analyses of the linguistic differences between British tabloids and broadsheets – most research compares only a few different broadsheet and tabloid newspapers, sometimes not even distinguishing between different national varieties of English, or it analyses only a limited number of aspects of newspaper discourse (e.g. noun phrase structure in Jucker 1992, Ni 2003, Biber 2003, sports stories in Knobbe 1997, headlines in Lindemann 1990, allusions in Lennon 2004).

In general, we may even speak of the popular press itself as ‘an underdeveloped area of journalism for examination’ (Conboy 2002: ix). The concepts of language and meaning are relevant to any endeavor connected with the analysis of popular literary texts like newspapers from a linguistic perspective. Language is a very important concept in linguistics, literary and cultural studies. As a medium of literary expression, language is “an enabling factor, indeed the main pillar of the literary edifice, a vital affective tool which aids the status of literature as a transitive enterprise” (Osundare 2003:11).

Thus the study of literary language can be quite rewarding as it is capable of illuminating a given literary text. As Roger Fowler (1977) has most persuasively put it. A writer's approach is, first and foremost, a craft in language: as Lodge puts it, "everything he accomplishes as a novelist, he does in and through language." The novel's structure and whatever it communicates are directly controlled by the novelist's manipulation of language, as well as his desire and capacity to realize and release the technique from linguistic hints deposited by the author. A thorough comprehension of how language works is likely to result in a more enjoyable understanding of literature.

The study of how language works is the domain of the linguist, while the appreciation of literature, that is, the imaginative or creative use of language, is the concern of literary aesthetes.

2.4 Media in Nigeria

In Nigeria, the 19th century saw the beginning of the evolution of printing. In 1846, two missionaries, Hope Waddel and his assistant Samuel Edgerly, founded the first printing press in Calabar, South Eastern Nigeria. The Hope Waddel Press, as it was afterwards known, was used to mass produce religious tracts and booklets. When the Missionary Rev. Henry Townsend founded another press in the Western section of the country in 1854, he upped the bar. He also established a printing school in Abeokuta, where he instructed students. Five years later, Townsend launched Iwe Irohin, Nigeria's first newspaper.

The involvement of corporate persons and organizations who realized the immense potential in Nigeria's growing and burgeoning printing sector propelled the industry to new heights. In 1910, Adeshigbin, a merchant, established the Tika-Tore Press. This was followed in 1913 by the founding of the CMS Press in Lagos. Samuel Pearce, who founded Awoboh Press in 1920, deserves special notice. Ajibade's Hope Rising Press, Washington Osilaja's Ife Olu Press, P.C. Thomas' Ekabo Press, and Babamuboni's Tanimola Press were among many that followed suit in 1923.

All of the above-mentioned presses offered low-cost, competitive printing services to newspaper proprietors. The establishment of the Nigerian Printing and Publishing Company in 1925 to publish the Nigerian Daily Times was a watershed moment in Nigerian printing history.

However, by the 1970s, Nigerians' print needs had outstripped what letterpress could provide. This ushered in the era of lithography and offset printing equipment. From the late 1970s until the late 1990s, printing companies steadily abandoned letterpress in favor of offset machines. Instead of employing metal types, printing might be done with photosensitive plates. Graphic designers who cut and paste had a field day.

Production was more rapid. Printed information could reach the public more quickly. As the watchdog of the society, information was flowing, shaping the thoughts, outlook, and perceptions of Nigerians. Traditional forms of communication were the first sort of media utilized in Nigeria, according to data from national archives. Oral media refers to the media utilized by indigenous Nigerians prior to the

arrival of colonial adventurers on Nigeria's shores. Nigeria had thirty-one (31) dailies and non-dailies with a combined circulation of 600,000, according to African countries (Ugboajah 1985).

The Nigerian Press's historical foundation and development began with the printing media on December 3, 1859, by a Christian Missionary named Reverend Henry Townsend, who launched the first newspaper in Nigeria called "IweIroyin fun awon Egbaati Yoruba" which literary means "A Newspaper for the Egba and Yoruba 2 Nations.(Ese Malemi, 1999).

When *Iwe Iroyin* could not continue publishing, this later resulted to the emergence of other Newspapers like *Anglo-African,Lagos Times* and *Gold Coast Advertiser, Lagos Observer, The Eagle* and *Lagos Critic, The Mirror, The Nigerian Chronicle, The Lagos Standard, Lagos Weekly Record, African Messenger, The West African Pilot, Nigerian Tribune*(Reuben Abati (1998).

The *Lagos Times* was first published in 1880, beginning a tradition of active and diverse debate in the mass media. Today, Nigeria has more than 50 different newspapers, both tabloid and broadsheet, and greater Lagos alone is home to numerous newspapers and news magazines, most privately owned and retaining their editorial independence despite the odds. The Lagos Daily News became the first daily in 1920 and ran until 1936, providing an urban viewpoint on Nigeria's independence fight alongside the West African Pilot (Imhonopi 2015).

The Fourth Estate, as defined by Webster's New World Thesaurus in its New Revised Edition, includes Publishers, Publicists, Newsmen, Newspapermen, Journalists, Journalistic Writers, Editors, and Correspondents. A journalist's duty is to inform, educate, and serve as a watchdog for society. Newspapers, according to Ologunju (2011), are a marketplace for ideas rather than lies and half-truths. They are intended to further inform the readership (Irabor ,2015).

Some post independence newspapers in Nigeria include -New Nigerian, The Punch, National Concord, The Guardian, Vanguard Newspaper, The Champion, Thisday, The Comet, National Guide, National Mirror , The news newspaper,The Sun Newspaper, The Diet, The Daily Independence Newspaper, Nigerian Compass, Daily Trust, The Nation, The NEXT Newspaper, New Telegraph newspaper, Leadership Newspaper, Blueprint Newspaper, Oriwu Sun (Ifedayo, 2015).

When it comes to interacting in society and fulfilling the tasks that come with democracy, the media is crucial in the production and sharing of knowledge about

society. In recognition of this importance, the press has received special protection, and Western democracies have guaranteed press freedom. Western countries not only take pride in having a democratic system that provides an independent and free press, but they also see the existence of a free press as a sine qua non for democracy. Historically, the press has played a critical role in the creation of democracy in Western countries.

According to (Ifedayo 2015), one of the key mechanisms through which democratic impulses were ignited and subsequently spread among the people was through media. It is apparent that the press is only a small portion of today's "mediasphere," and that rapid advances in new technology leave many questions regarding the press's future. Traditional media, on the other hand, is becoming a part of cyberspace. The fact that all of the newspapers under consideration here have a news website shows that their content and opinions will continue to have an impact. The purpose of establishing press freedom was to allow for the creation of a free forum for the exchange of ideas.

While media professionals now defend free speech as a pillar of democracy, questions have been raised regarding how well the principle is reflected in Western media systems. According to many experts, the media has failed to provide the type of idea-sharing arena essential to ensure informed citizenship (Murdock and Golding 1989; Golding 1994; McKnight 1997; Brune 1997). It has been said that news has become a product, and that newspapers have been recast primarily as business concerns, with the management and coordination of media activities now in the hands of a managerial class (Underwood 1993)

Of course, this has an impact on how newspapers are run and the editorial procedures that are involved (Baldasty 1992; Underwood 1993). At the same time, the number of media conglomerates has been and continues to be limited. Several scholars have looked into the implications of these changes on news content.

2.5 Nigeria media and baby factory

The Nigerian media coined the phrase "baby factory" to depict this horrible scenario in Nigeria as a widespread, systematic crime, because some of the operators are supposedly serial murders and are involved in human trafficking networks. (Huntley 2013). In Nigerian media, the term "baby factory" has been used to describe a location where women are pressured or forced to become pregnant and then sell their

newborns. According to (Madike, 2013), baby factories are controlled by organized crime syndicates and disguised as maternity centers, orphanages, social welfare homes, clinics, and informal water bottling businesses.

According to Madike (2013), the offenders are usually the owners of these institutions, some of whom are medical doctors, who manage the 'business' with the support of staff, some of whom may be men hired particularly to impregnate women and girls. Baby factories are now common in Nigerian society, acting as a conduit for human trafficking, abuse, and sexual violence. Among the applicants are Oguiche Emmanuel, Nnanyelugo Okoro, Michael Onyekachi Ukonu (2021), Oluseyi Adegbola, and Sherice Gearhart (2019). Infants in Eastern Nigeria are sold and bought in the same way that candy is acquired from a confectioner's store, according to (Ossai2013:76). What remains to be seen is a scenario where a shop or building expressly proclaims "babies for sale."

The majority of women who agree to participate in this illegal commerce but are not yet pregnant are forced to sleep with males recruited by baby factory operators in order to become pregnant. These children are purchased and sold from the moment they are conceived, and a price is paid for them within the first few days of their birth (Madike, 2014).

According to The Guardian (2011), some of the rescued girls during a raid in Aba, Nigeria's Abia state, informed Nigerian police that the operators of the baby factories paid them \$192 for newborn boys and \$161 for newborn girls. Six baby factories in Abia state have been demolished, and hundreds of young pregnant girls have been released.

Between January and March of 2010, 77 young females were rescued in Abia state. Between May and June 2011, thirty-two pregnant girls were rescued from an unlawful facility in Abia state, seventeen pregnant girls were purportedly freed from an Anambra state sachet water manufacturing business that had been exploited for unlawful baby harvesting.

The biological mothers of the neonates signed documents giving up their claims on the babies in exchange for monetary compensation, which was supposed to be a happy occasion. There was no indication of pregnant women, young females, or their children being exploited after being sold to a third party, according to Cheld (2021). As a result, human trafficking is exceedingly rare in these conditions.

These would be felonies at the very least, such as the illegal adoption or sale of children. Girls and women are “imprisoned” in “baby factories,” where human traffickers grab control and hold them prisoner until they give birth to children who are then sold to third parties. Those who are not pregnant when they arrive to the “baby factory” are forcibly impregnated, with some being imprisoned for extended periods of time and being impregnated repeatedly; despite this, the majority of the infants are placed for adoption (Agbo, 2013).

2.6 Igbo of southeastern Nigeria

(Agbo 2014 and Onyemaechi 2012) stated Abia, Imo, Enugu, Anambra, and Ebonyi are the states in Igbo territory. Okenwa (2012) describes the Igbo as a great people with a beautiful culture and customs. Because of their republican way of life, the Igbos have become a powerful people that value personal autonomy and choices. The Igbos are fiercely autonomous and economically invincible, as detractors describe them as “generally impossible to manage or control” based on this concept of imbedded republicanism.

The Igbos are naturally endowed with strong beliefs and a conquering spirit, and they are extremely proud of their centuries-old heritage. Child adoption was not a part of Igbo practice prior to the colonial era. Okenwa (2012) praises the Igbo as a wonderful people with a lovely culture and traditions. The Igbos have grown to be a powerful people that appreciate personal autonomy and choices as a result of their republican way of life.

According to this definition of embedded republicanism, the Igbos are fiercely autonomous and economically invincible, while detractors describe them as “generally impossible to manage or control.” The Igbos are naturally endowed with strong convictions and a daring, conquering spirit, and they are enormously proud of their centuries-old heritage. Prior to the colonial era, Igbo practice did not include child adoption.

According to Handwerker (1989), childbearing was the single most important way for women to gain access to the resources that dictated their financial well-being. As a result, childlessness has diverse effects on different people, families, cultures, and ethnic groups. In the Igbo culture, people rarely marry for friendship because marriage is primarily about procreation; hence, a childless woman will go to any length to have a child.

. According to the Igbo, Effik, and Ibibio tribes of Eastern Nigeria, a married woman without a child has no honor in her husband's family because it is considered her obligation, according to the Igbo, Effik, and Ibibio tribes of Eastern Nigeria (Agbo, 2014). A household in Igboland like other tribes in Nigeria and Africa at large without a male child is thought to be doomed. Igboland, in particular, defiles gender lines because, despite the fact that marriage is legal, both husband and wife want male children for their marriage.

As a result, a woman who reaches cognition and position by having at least one son is regarded as happy and so highly appreciated. This is because, according to custom, only a son is allowed to dwell in the house, inherit the family property, and bear the family name for the rest of his life. Worse, women are held responsible for a couple's inability to have male children. For the same reasons, some men beat up their wives.

Adopted children not allowed to inherit the family's administrative employees (a position and honour given to the eldest man in a village or community). Because of this attitude toward adoptees, it is difficult for childless couples to adopt children who will inherit their belongings when they (the adoptive parents) pass away (Oppong and Abu, 2013).

In Eastern Nigeria, an adopted child is considered as not being a real son or daughter of the land, despite the fact that everyone wants a child who is recognized by society as a biological son or daughter. Adoption, he believes, is still stigmatized. A bastard is a child born to a couple who are not married. Adoption is discouraged when people have this attitude toward the adopted.

This is because no one wants to adopt a child who would be discriminated against and find it difficult to join in activities owing to a fear of being overwhelmed. Unfortunately, because child adoption is not common in Eastern Nigerian society, many infertile couples put off making the decision to adopt for a long time. Because biological children are preferred, most couples exhaust all other options before choosing adoption.

As a result, some couples would resort to baby factories to fake pregnancies, and due to the great demand for babies produced through this illegal manner, teenage females have been recruited into the infamous trade by monetary incentives, while others have been pushed into it by poverty and illiteracy.

Both of these changes are concerning, as is the criminality of child adoption legislation. Many people believe that all adopted children come from baby mills, which is a prevalent misconception. When it comes to child adoption, different people and cultures have varied reactions. Child adoption serves as an insurance policy for the adopted parents' old age in a country like Nigeria, where there is no social security support for the elderly and unemployed.

It also gives adoptive parents a sense of accomplishment, enthusiasm, and pride, especially if they are infertile (Ojelabi, Osamor, Owumi 2015). Adopted children also helps infertile couples to maintain their family names, which is extremely significant to Igbos and Africans in general (Isiguzo-Abanihe 2003). In some sections of the Igbo nation, some traditional titles are only held by wealthy men with progeny, notably sons.

In Igbo culture, other motives for child adoption include the desire to end a childless marriage, legitimize an unlawful child, preserve a kid from irreversible abandonment, or relieve parents who are unable to care for their children. The Igbo people place a high value on their children (Eke et al., 2014). They believe that having children is the main reason for getting married. According to the Igbo country, a woman's position in marriage is precarious until she bears a child, preferably a boy (Ojelabi, Osamor, Owumi2015).

A woman must express her womanhood through childbirth, and a man must demonstrate his manhood through parenting, according to Igbo tradition and the names given to these children indicate the Igbo's strong concern for children. According to Ubahakwe (1982), Nigerian indigenous names are more than just labels for identification; they personify the bearer, transmit stories about the bearer's parents and/or relatives, and, in a broader sense, allude to the society into which the individual is born.

Africans, particularly the Igbo, are cautious when it comes to names, (Ebuka 2014). Some Igbo personal names highlight the value of children, such as Nwabundu (child is life), Nwakaego (child is bigger than money), Nwabueze (child is king), Ohuabunwa (slave is not a child), and Nwabuihe (child is light/something amazing) (Obioma, Iheriohanma, Agnes and Uche 2015). Many Igbo clans have infertile couplings, despite the Igbo people's strong desire for children. Some of these couples may have tried medical, spiritual, or traditional therapy and failed. Sterility in a

marriage, according to reports, causes marital tension and eventually divorce (Amato, 2000).

However, according to some studies, the majority of infertile women in Igbo country and Nigeria are opposed to adopting children. This is ironic in a society that prioritizes children. According to Igbo culture, adopting an unknown child is often considered undesirable (Nwaoga 2013). As a result, it appears that a number of socio-cultural factors are inhibiting Igboland residents from adopting.

According to Nwaoga (2013), a child adopted into an Igbo environment may be perceived as an outsider, and the youngster may find it difficult to express himself freely for fear of being intimidated. According to a Nigerian tradition that has emerged in recent years, unmarried pregnant teenagers are secluded in a specific location until they give birth. The adolescent women are paid a pittance and then fired after giving birth, while their children are stolen and sold by the business owners who hired them at exorbitant costs.

The "baby factory" industry arose as a result of this problem (Mba 2014). The emergence of baby factories in Igbo land, as well as the considerable quantity of patronage they receive, create hurdles to child adoption or have a negative impact on it in two ways. To begin with, orphanages do not have enough newborns available for adoption.

This is partially because most teenagers who have unintended pregnancies now opt to profit from their mistake by selling their children to baby factory operators rather than putting them in orphanages or dumping them where they would be discovered and taken to motherless babies' homes (Ojelabi, Osamor, Owumi, 2015).

Second, instead of officially adopting children from orphanages, women who stage pregnancies will prefer to purchase infants from baby factories and claim them as their own. The goal of this deceptive strategy is to give the appearance that the lady is capable of becoming pregnant and not barren.

The second reason is to ensure that the new baby is culturally acceptable and to remove the stigma associated with adopted children from the child. This is based on the widely held belief that the Igbo do not fully embrace child adoption because it is the outcome of colonization and globalization, not autochthony (Nwaoga 2013).

In some cases, they may prefer foreign cultures to their own way of life. This is demonstrated by the English language's domination over the Igbo language as the mother tongue of the majority of Igbo households (Ugo-Ochulo 2014). In addition, the

majority of Igbo people prefer foreign apparel to their traditional attire. As a result, it's puzzling why the Igbo, who have xenocentric tendencies, are wary of fully embracing child adoption. This irony is reinforced by the fact that in Igbo culture, children are highly cherished (Ojelabi, Osamor, Owumi, 2015).

In some ways, the refusal of many parts of Igboland to recognize child adoption may be interpreted as strangling the legitimate means by which infertile couples and others in need of children could achieve the socially sanctioned aim. Since deviants usually take the shape of unconventional, improper, and sometimes unlawful means of obtaining socially sanctioned goals, illicit adoption is an illegitimate means of pursuing the socially sanctioned goal of couples having children after marriage.

Customers' willingness to buy things from the baby factory pushes the enterprise to "bloom." The majority of respondents believed that child adoption required acquiring a motherless infant, according to (Omosun and Kofoworola 2011), and the majority were uninformed of the conditions, who may be adopted, or who could adopt. Despite this misperception, it is heartening to find that an increasing number of Nigerians are aware of the idea of adopting a child. It's unclear whether this had anything to do with the Child's Right Act's passage in 2003; regardless, the Child's Right Act's passage in 2003 was a significant step forward in Nigeria's child adoption procedure.

Furthermore, as an alternative to infertility treatment, child adoption has taken on a new dimension in terms of concept and practice (Adewunmi et al.2012). This solution for infertile couples has recently gained more recognition, success, and cost-effectiveness when compared to ART. It provides people with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to become parents without the financial and emotional risks associated with assisted reproduction.

Unfortunately, child adoption is not widely accepted or practiced among infertile couples (Omosun & Kofoworola 2011). Nigerian society has been labeled as one of the most demeaning forms of child abuse, sexual assault on women, and human trafficking due to the rising number of young, pregnant, and vulnerable adolescent girls, as well as poor pregnant mothers tempted to give up their children after delivery for monetary gain (Charles, Akwara, and Andeshi 2014).

They also revealed that one of the primary motivations for the existence of baby factories in Nigeria is greed, and that only a few people buy babies from them for rituals; some of the buyers resell the babies for profit to individuals in the Diaspora,

and the majority of the buyers are barren women facing marriage difficulties. Poverty drives some people to set up phony adoption agencies and orphanages, as well as baby factories where adolescent girls are persuaded to give birth and sell their babies for similar reasons. Handwerker (1989).

Women in Abuja, Lagos, and the south-south region of Nigeria appear to be the key customers of the country's baby factories in the country's south-eastern region, according to (Charles, Akwara, and Andeshi 2015). Poverty, cultural perversion, religious ritual manipulation, and harmful cultural and socioeconomic realities have all been identified as contributory reasons to Nigeria's baby factories (UNESCO 2006: 12).

According to the report, factors that permit other forms of human trafficking, such as a lack of education, illiteracy, and information, may be among the reasons of the Nigerian baby factory problem (Huntley, 2013). According to media accounts, Nigeria's "baby factory" industry thrives, as evidenced by police raids on such establishments.

In May 2008, for example, police rescued approximately 25 young females from an Enugu hospital, while in June 2011, police rescued 32 teenage girls from an Aba "baby factory." On March 15, 2013, Enugu City police officers discovered six pregnant young females and arrested three people who were attempting to sell the girls' infants. According to the source, the girls were enticed into the premises by the promise of money following delivery.

In October 2011, another case of a baby factory was reported. Seventeen pregnant adolescent girls were rescued from a Lagos orphanage. Authorities rescued six adolescent girls from an Enugu "baby factory," 17 pregnant adolescent girls and 11 newborns from Southern Imo province, and roughly 26 teenage girls from Umuaka village in Imo State in May 2013. 54 In June 2013, police in Aba City, Abia State, freed 16 pregnant young females from a clinic. 55 The owner of the unlawful "Moonlight Maternity Home" and a nurse who worked for him were arrested in July 2013 for selling children from undesired pregnancies.

She employs scouts and medical doctors, according to the media. Doctors refer pregnant women to Madam's maternity home, while scouts contact vulnerable females, promising them jobs or safe abortions. Her team is made up of both males and women who are capable of impregnating both girls and women. To prevent victims from fleeing, they were imprisoned in this facility, which was enclosed by high walls topped

with jagged glass shards and iron wires. The women expressed dissatisfaction with their living and eating arrangements, and some were even compelled to work while pregnant.

“Madam One Thousand” had been detained at least twice before the previous police raid in May 2013, but had never been charged. She is currently on the run, and officials are on the lookout for her. The girls and women who are recruited into Nigeria's "baby factories," according to media accounts, are mostly from small towns and villages. There is, however, no evidence on the countries where the auctioned children end up.

Since "baby factories" may be operated by well-organized criminal syndicates and human trafficking networks exist all over the world, human trafficking for the purpose of "baby harvesting" may be considered a transnational organized crime under the Palermo Protocol. Though the Trafficking Act of 2003 primarily targets human trafficking for sexual exploitation, certain of its provisions could be linked to human trafficking for the goal of "baby harvesting," such as prostitution and pornography.

Involuntary reproductive servitude, for example, is one of the aims of human trafficking, according to the definition of the crime. Accepting, receiving, or retaining a person as a slave against their will, holding or having any person as a slave, and procuring a kid to have sexual intercourse with a male, including by threats, intimidation, deception, or drug administration, are all illegal.

These charges carry sentences ranging from ten years to life in prison, with or without the possibility of a fine. The National Agency for the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) is in charge of executing and administering the Trafficking Act of 2003, as well as coordinating all Nigerian human trafficking statutes. It has the power to conduct investigations into human trafficking violations and to create or improve specific training programs for law enforcement officers. However, whether NAPTIP can effectively attack the newborn in its current form is disputed. Furthermore, according to the UNODC, “Nigeria has only modestly succeeded in protecting women and children from violence and reintegrating victims.”

2.6.1 Umuahia and Owerri Cities in Igboland

Umuahia, the state capital of Abia, is home to the Abia Tower, Umuahia Clock Tower, Federal High Court, and BCA Radio Tower. Umuahia has a population of 359,230 people and is primarily Igbo, according to 2006 Nigerian census. Umuahia is

derived from the Igbo word AmaAhia, which means "market location" or "market center". The word "Umuahia" was mispronounced and spelled by the British when they came in the region and acquired it sometime in the mid-to-late nineteenth century.

Other stories about the beginnings of Umuahia abound, but the previous account appears to be the most likely by consensus. It was one of the region's primary commercial marketplaces before to colonization. Due to its serenity and proximity to other towns such as Ohafia, Obowo, Ngwa, Okigwi, Uzuakoli, Bende, Nnewi, Akwa Akpa (Old Calabar), and Kalabar, dealers of products, pottery, traditional medicine, palm wine, and tools travelled from afar to trade at the busy market center with many roads.

The settlement was not called Ama Ahia; rather, it was located near Olokoro Town in a place called Afor Ibeji. With the rise of British administrative and economic development in the area and beyond, the capital of Umuahia was relocated to Ibeku Town for greater administrative oversight and the convergence of routes. The new location became one of the most important trading ports along the United African Company (UAC) rail line, which was built to convey food, raw materials, and minerals from Sub-Sahara to the Atlantic Ocean for export to Europe.

The trade post was renamed Umuahia-Ibeku Station to reflect the expanded market square and domain. Over time, the region was named Umuahia, and the ancient market town of Afor Ibeji was dubbed Old Umuahia. Because neighboring towns like Ohuhu, Umuopara, Afugiri, Ofeme, and others were incorporated into the Umuahia administrative area, entitling them to be under Umuahia rather than Umuahia - Ibeku, because Ibeku is on the same level as the constituent parts of Umuahia, the hyphenated Umuahia-Ibeku became a source of contention.

Umuahia is divided into five sister clans, each of which is socially and phonologically identical and has its own form of autonomy and social evolution. Owerri, in the heart of Igboland, is the capital of Nigeria's Imo State. It is also the largest city in the state, with Orlu and Okigwe ranking second and third, respectively. Owerri Municipal, Owerri North, and Owerri West are the three LGAs that make up Owerri. As of 2016, it has a population of around 1,401,873 people and a land area of about 100 square kilometers (40 square miles). The Otamiri River runs through Owerri on the east, and the Nworie River runs through it on the south.

2.7 Review of related studies

Similar research to the current study are analyzed and summarized here.

This is intended to provide emphasis and direction to the current investigation (Chaudhary, A.G. 2001). “International News Selection: A Comparative Analysis of Negative News in the Washington Post and Nigeria's Daily Times.” (Chaudhary 2001) investigates the slant of a week's worth of news pieces from two newspapers: The Washington Post and the Daily Times of Nigeria. We used two coders who were given definitions of negative, good, and neutral news. Based on its findings, the study determined that the newspapers, the Washington Times and the Daily Times of Nigeria, both published content that was roughly 30% positive and 30% negative.

(ii) In (Kiousis& McCombs2004) “Agenda-Setting Effects and Attitude Strength: Political Figures During the 1996 Presidential Election”, they, (2004) used a simple yet revealing model to focus on political figures during the 1996 presidential election .The study counted news stories that focused on eleven (11)politicians over the course of five months and then compared the level of coverage with public opinion polls aimed at each politician. The study found correlations between polled approval ratings for politicians and the amount of coverage major newspapers allotted such politicians.



iii. D.H. Weaver, D.A. Graber, M.E. McCombs, and C.H. Eyal (1981). "Media Agenda-setting in a Presidential Election: Issues, Images, and Interest." Weaver, Graber, McCombs, and (Eyal1981) undertook a year-long study that was regarded at the time as one of the most extensive agenda setting studies. The methodology of the study was hybridized, including approaches in audience reception and content analysis research relevant to various mass media. A crucial conclusion of the study was that the media-agenda effect, or the transfer of problem salience from media to their audience, did exist. The findings revealed that the more exposure an object received in a newspaper, the more it resonated in voters' daily discussions and thought-processes.

iv (Enoh Tanjong and Gary D. Gaddy1981). "The Agenda Setting Function of International Mass Media: The Case of Newsweek in Nigeria." The study investigates the agenda-setting function of the media in an international context by investigating the relationship between educated urban Nigerians' exposure to Newsweek and the emphasis they place on various world crises.

A secondary analysis of 1213 "better educated" adults in three urban areas of Nigeria in November 1981, commissioned by the United States Information Agency (USIA), and a content analysis of the International edition of Newsweek for October and November 1981, seven weeks before and during the survey, were used.

The investigation's comparison of the Newsweek agenda to the magnitude of the association between reading Newsweek and identifying each of the same problems as important provided equivocal results. When comparing Newsweek's coverage of 12 international problems to the agenda of Newsweek readers as measured by the estimated effects of Newsweek readership and reliance on the selection of each of these problems, a modest positive but non-significant rank-order correlation ($r=0.475$) was discovered.

This result showed that Newsweek had little, if any, influence on the "better educated" Nigerian readership's agenda of foreign issues. N.T. Ekeanyanwu, N.T. Ekeanyanwu, N.T. Ekeanyanwu, N. "The Coverage of Political Conflicts in Nigerian Newspapers in a Pluralistic Society." During President Obasanjo's second term, (Ekeanyanwu, (2005) assessed Nigeria's coverage of political crises and conflict. The major focus of was the role of the Nigerian press in the struggle for political positions, which breed crises especially in a pluralistic society.

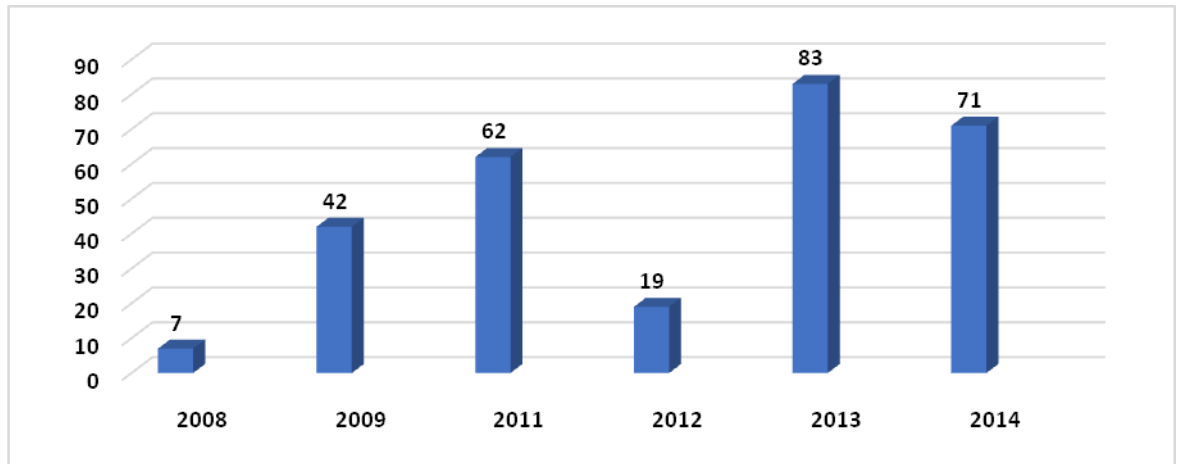
The researcher analyzed three Nigerian national daily newspapers, the Guardian, Tribune, and Vanguard, using the textual analytical research method as the major instrument of data creation. These three newspapers will be subjected to a textual analysis to see how they reported and handled political issues over the course of the study period. The Nigerian press, according to the findings of the researcher, has acted as active participants in political crises and conflicts rather than objective judges of such crises and conflicts. The crisis management was harmed as a result of this.

The study concluded that the Nigerian press should aim for greater professional and ethical procedures in the sector, ensuring that they only report on conflict and concerns in a constructive and balanced manner. (2001, D. Galadima and J. Enighe). "A Historical Analysis of Issues and News Coverage Patterns in Nigerian Politics." The study (Galadima and Enighe 2001) focused on the role of the press in Nigerian politics, with a focus on historical examination of topics and news coverage trends.

Since independence, the study looked at the role of the press in Nigeria's quest for political power. During elections and transition to civil rule programs, there is recklessness and partisanship on the part of the press, rather than restraint and responsible reporting of events. When promoting the causes of their employers' political fights, the notion of objectivity is constantly abandoned.

Manipulation of the press to announce fake elections that result in violence has been a prevalent occurrence since independence, especially in the western area. Another repeating pattern since the first republic has been the prohibition, banning, and closure of media houses due to poor funding while those still operating are grasping for breath. According to Makinde et. al (2015) reports on baby factory were gotten from the media reportage of police arrests and parade of the suspects and victims.

This is due to the poor financial situation of the journalists as conducting investigation reports and follow-ups are not only time consuming but also capital intensive, Ifedayo (2015)



Source: Makinde et al., (2015)

Number of Nursing Mothers/ Pregnant women in Baby Factories between 2008 and 2014

Pregnant Women or Nursing Mothers, Found in Baby Factories Between 2008 and 2014.

STATES	2008	2009	2011	2012	2013	2014
Abia	0	42	32	19	48	23
Akwa Ibom	0	0	0	7	0	18
Anambra	7	0	30	0	0	0
Delta	0	0	0	3	0	0
Enugu	0	0	0	0	6	0
Imo	0	0	0	0	29	4
Ondo	0	0	0	0	0	8
Ogun	0	0	0	0	0	15
Rivers	0	0	0	0	0	3
Total	7	42	62	29	83	71

Source: Makinde et al. (2015:100)

2.8 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

2.8.1 Agenda setting theory

The agenda setting theory served as the theoretical foundation for this research. McCombs and Shaw (1972, 1993) established the term agenda-setting to characterize a phenomenon that had long been observed and studied in the context of election campaigns. The core notion is that the news media inform the public about the day's major topics, which is reflected in popular perceptions of those issues. The research that developed the hypothesis was conducted in 1968, utilizing the same year's US presidential election to determine the relationship between what people considered to be major election topics and what the media presented as important. (1972, McCombs and Shaw). According to McComb and Shaw (1974), the media's focus on a topic effects the audience's perception of that topic's importance.

The media gives news articles a specific amount of weight based on their placement, size, and frequency of presentation. According to agenda setting theory, viewers learn about important problems via the news media, and then incorporate a similar weighting and importance into their own personal agenda. "The audience strongly suggests that individuals think about what they are told, but at no level do they ponder what they are taught," Treneman and McQuail (1961:178) write. Shaw (1983:132) reiterated this viewpoint when he claimed that the media can turn an event or series of connected events into an issue by putting recurrent and considerable emphasis on them.

The mass media, according to Umechukwu (2001, p.148) and Folarin (2002), has an impact on agenda setting since they have the ability to choose or emphasize specific topics, causing the public to consider the issues or topic as significant. This indicates that the media shape what topics are considered essential in a given society at any given time.

In addition to giving knowledge on the political process, the print media can impose prestige and legitimacy on political leaders and issues through its agenda-setting function, making them appear significant and "correct." (Okunna1999:121-122) further on this topic by observing that the print media can increase or boost the standing of a political candidate in a number of ways: The media can give larger headlines to the favoured candidate;

- The media can feature more lead stories on the candidate;

- Through placement, the media can give more prominent positions to articles on the candidate;
- The media can print more quotations from the candidate's speech;
- Photographs and other prominence-enhancing strategies can accompany stories on the candidate; and
- The media can print more remarks praising the candidate.

2.8.2 Motherism

Another theory employed for this study is Motherist theory, and the data will be framed and discursively analysed using the constellation of insights derived from a feminist and an Afrocentric construction of Motherism. A motherist is a person who is concerned about Mother Earth's survival and upkeep, as well as the human struggle. On the other hand, Acholonu makes it clear that a motherist can be a woman or man. There are no sex barriers in motherism because partnership, cooperation, tolerance, love, understanding, and patience are at its core. Motherism can only function in a healthy ecosystem if there is a male-female complementarity that ensures the completeness of human existence.

In *Feminism: The Quest for an African Variant*, Ebunoluwa stated that the continent in question necessitates either a fusion of existing ideas to fit the apparent idiosyncrasies or the formation of a new set of theories to cater specifically to the African woman in Africa. In this light, we might look at attempts to establish an indigenously African theory in gender discourse that is anchored in the unique experiences of African women in Africa.

In her book *Motherism* (1995), Acholonu posits the concept of Motherism as an African alternative to feminism focused on the centrality of motherhood in the African female experience; and secondly, (Omolara Oqundipe-Leslie 1994:1) proposes Stiwanism, which she defines as 'social transformation including women of Africa,' and says she: "... wanted to emphasize the fact that what we want in Africa is social transformation." It is not about fighting with men, reversing roles, or doing to men what women believe men have been doing for ages, but about attempting to construct a harmonious community.

The transformation of African society is the responsibility of both men and women and it is also in their interest. The new word describes what similarly minded women would like to see in Africa. The word “feminism” itself seems to be a kind of red rag to the bull of African men. Failure to conceive and have children is not only socially and culturally unacceptable, it is also the basis for the development and proliferation of the ‘Baby factory’ phenomenon.

In African scholarly establishment, there has been movement from feminism, as we said, to women’s studies and now to gender theory and studies, and the three differ in significant ways. Feminism, as (Boyce 1995) maintains, is not the hatred of men or seeking to have a sex change or behave as men did or felt empowered to do in a male-dominated society: Feminism is a body of social philosophy that advocates and actively seeks the liberation and humanisation of women in society. (Boyce, 1995:18).

As it was noted earlier, from the terror of anti-feminists, some African women pursued self-naming, by seeking nomenclatures, names that did not identify them with mainstream Western Feminism. Thus, in 1994; (MolaraOgundipe-Leslie 1994:229-230) suggested STIWANISM, an acronym from SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS INCLUDING WOMEN IN AFRICA says (Ogundipe2007:9): my intention was to take our focus from debating the imitation of Western women or not, the desire to become men or not, or the hatred of men (the eating of men for breakfast, Lunch and dinner, of which we are often accused), to the actual visions and desires of women and what needs to be done for them.

In the positive transformations that are undeniably needed on our beloved continent. Some African women also embraced the concept of womanism (not entirely as propounded by Alice Walker), perhaps because it situates them obviously in the etiology of being women and because it sounds softer while it differentiates their project from other feminisms (Kolawole, 1998). It is, however, difficult to see that the aims of womanism, as stated by their most eloquent theorists, differ from those of feminism.

Moreover, the ideology of womanism is still fully located in the ideology of patriarchy and the status quo for women in Africa (Ogundipe, 2007). Another concept relates to the experience of motherhood. This concept, that was mentioned earlier and which is deeply relevant to our purpose in this study, is motherism. Motherhood is a

relatively new concept in gender studies and women studies (at least in comparison to womanism and feminism) and its discursive universe is predicated on two notions: experience and institution.

This means that motherhood can be seen as both an experience and an institution. Motherhood, first and foremost, is an afro-centric alternative to the radical orientation of feminism. “Africa's alternative to Western feminism is motherism, which denotes motherhood, nature, and nurture,” writes Catherine Achonolu in her work, *Motherism an Afro-centric Alternative to Feminism*. Whereas feminism and womanism are steeped in sexual and sexuality politics, motherism’s concern is the centralization of mother, as an ontological category, in the discursive formulation of women experience.

It is what accounts for why many African women will go to any length to have children in order to be counted as mothers. Since the debates and theorisation of the eighties, some women critics, notably ‘Molara Ogundipe, have proposed, in the 1990, that women need to speak of “feminisms” rather than “feminism” due to the various forms that feminism takes world-wide to express the differing cultural and national objectives and needs of women. Women activisms and theories and scholars of women and activists led to the establishment of women’s studies firstly in the west.

This, according to (Ogundipe 2007), was a discipline to study women, their history, sociology and anthropology, their rights, psychology, bodies and their contributions to human society and knowledge – everything about women. As Ogundipe maintains: “one did not have to be a feminist to engage in Women Studies; therefore, feminist studies existed alongside women’s studies which could be studied through other disciplines.

Providing an exhilarating and enriching interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary experience in academia that was innovative and path breaking at the timely engaged in women studies through the study of literatures while having therefore to read widely in other disciplines such as history, sociology, anthropology, psychology, economics etc. The interdisciplinary and cross-cultural intellectual joys provided by women studies were and still are some of the attractions of the now well established discipline (2007:11).”

After wide-ranging studies of women worldwide, it became obvious to women scholars that the next move should be the study of men and women and the gender politics

that link them since women do not exist in a vacuum in society, and women and men are more complex than sexual identification. The study of roles, rights then to awareness of evident issues of gender as opposed to the study of women only. This was how gender studies, as separate field of enquiry, began. Moving from the concept of womanhood to gender studies required some re-thinking.

It is not difficult to understand Ogunjide-Leslie's point if we consider that, as Simone de Beauvoir put it succinctly, "we are born female but we become women". Women and men are born as biological females and males but are constructed by their societies into what the specific society thinks constitutes a woman or a man.

Gender theory clarifies this complexity for us, for we can then look at the roles ascribed to women outside their physical body or the so-called "somacentricity", a term put forward much later to express already existing theories (Oyewumi, 1997).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

As a study in gender, media and culture, the descriptive research design was chosen because it is more holistic and generally entails a comprehensive gathering of data from multiple sources to acquire a deeper knowledge of individual participants, including their ideas, perceptions, and attitudes. Descriptive research provides for the use of multiple data collection methods (qualitative and quantitative data gathering techniques), allowing for the determination of dependability and the generalization of study findings. (Owens, 2002).

Descriptive research was used for this study since baby factories are not "open" public structures, they are something that deviates from recognized norms and values, and those participating are treated as criminals by the state and as a risk to the traffickers' operations. As a result, the majority of this work was conducted through interviews in order to obtain responses and attitudes toward the baby factory along gender line.

3.2 Population of the study

The target populations are people involved in baby factory activities arrested or rescued by security operatives in the course of the research in Umuahia and Owerri cities in Abia and Imo states respectively considered as the hotbeds of baby factory in southeastern Nigeria. The populations also include journalists, security operatives, and officials of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), Igbo male and Igbo female.

3.3 Sampling techniques /Sampling sizes

Two methods for sampling were adopted for this study- the Purposive sampling and Convenient sampling techniques. The Purposive sampling technique was used to select 102 respondents from Owerri and Umuahia cities in Imo and Abia states respectively. This method was used as these cities are considered as having high prevalence of the phenomenon in southeastern Nigeria. The Purposive sampling techniques was also used to proportionately select from each of the nine subgroups which include security personnel, NAPTIP officials, baby factory clients, baby factory merchants, rescued pregnant women, baby factory operators, baby factory owners , journalists, Igbo male and female as well as community leaders.

The convenient method was used to conduct four sessions of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with 10 Igbo male, 10 Igbo female, from a Igbo Indigenes Progressive Forum , 10 crime reporters, and 10 crime editors, from a crime reporters' association . The Convenient method was employed to conduct 50 In-depth- interviews (IDI) with seven baby merchants, eight baby clients, five rescued pregnant women, four baby factory operators , six police officers, 10 baby factory owners, two NAPTIP officials, eight Igbo community leaders who are members of a Community/Traditional Elders' forum in Owerri.¹² Key informant interviews (KII) were conducted with the three newspaper's editors and nine reporters who are non-crime journalists using the Convenient method. These data gathering methods were employed as baby factories are not open places anyone can walk in and conduct research. Data were thematically and content- analysed.

Secondary data for this study were generated from three Nigeria newspapers (*The Punch, The Sun and Nigerian Tribune*). The three newspapers' publications, 540 in number were between January- June 2014. 35 news items on baby factory phenomenon were obtained from a first round analysis of the 540 newspaper publications after they were categorised according to the respective newspaper, their dates of publication, the offender, the location of the crime and the title of the stories by the selected newspapers .

However, because the research is focused on reportage on baby factory in southeastern Nigeria, a second level (thirty-five news items) on baby factory were purposively selected to identify news articles that reported the phenomenon in

southeastern Nigeria and out of this 35 news items on baby factory, 14 news items were obtained as reporting on baby factory in southeastern Nigeria with Abia state having the highest reports. A third round of data sorting was content analysing the 14 news items on baby factory in southeastern Nigeria which identified *The Sun* newspaper with the highest reports 11, on baby factory in southeastern Nigeria , *The Punch* newspaper has 2 and *Nigerian Tribune* 1 report on baby factory in southeastern Nigeria.

3.4 Instrumentation

Tape recorder was used to capture on magnetic tapes, the conversations and interviews that took place during the fieldwork. A digital camera was used to record the significant moments of encounter and activities in the field and to preserve everyday life of the research process. Notepads were used to write down important events and alongside the recorder, to record and preserve information. In addition, the researcher made use of the Interview Guide for the informal interview that stirred conversation with informants and ensured that informants who preferred anonymous names, titles are used and their confidentiality protected by blurring their faces in pictures taken.

3.5 Methods of Data Collection

Two sources of data were employed in this study. They include the Primary source and the Secondary source. The primary source of data includes journalists, security operatives, and officials of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) and Igbo male and female, security personnel, baby factory clients, baby factory merchants, rescued pregnant women, baby factory operators, baby factory owners, journalists, Igbo male and female as well as community leaders. The secondary source of data was generated from *The Sun, The Punch and Nigeria Tribune* newspapers from January to June 2014. Also, two methods of data collections were employed. They are the Field method and Document Analysis method

3.5.1 The Field method

The Field method which involves the use of interview was used to collect data from primary sources. Interview was used during sessions of Focused Group Discussion (FGD) with crime editors, correspondents who are members of a crime reporter's association, Igbo male and 1 female. In-depth interviews (IDI) were held with baby merchants, baby clients, rescued pregnant women in Owerri; police officers, officials of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons, baby factory owners, baby factory operators and eight community leaders randomly/conveniently selected in Umuahia. Key Informant Interviews (KII) were conducted with non crime editors and correspondents from the selected newspapers - three editors -one each and nine reporters- three each from the selected newspapers were conveniently selected.

3.5.2 The Document Analysis method

Document analysis method was used to collect data from secondary sources which are the newspapers using content analysis.

3.6 Data analysis

The data gotten from interviews recordings of the Igbo male, female, journalists, actors and security operatives including NAPTIP officials on their responses and attitude to baby factory were thematically analysed along gender line. The parameters for collecting data from the selected newspapers included news, cartoons, features articles, editorials, special reports and news sources. They underwent content analysis/ narration techniques.

Content Analysis was used in this study to extract data from the content of the selected newspapers and interview recordings. This was done by analyzing the frequency and prominence of important themes and concepts. The aim of analysis is to treat the evidence fairly and produce compelling conclusions (Creswell; 1997).

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The following ethical guidelines were observed in the course of the study.

- i. The respondents were not subjected to any forced interview and photo sessions and their dignity was protected at all times
- ii. The respondents were asked if they want to partake in the interview and in cases where they do not want their identities revealed, their confidentiality was maintained while analyzing their responses.
- iii. The researcher duly introduced herself and sorted clearance from the authorities where applicable and until permission was granted before the interviews were conducted.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.0 Chapter Overview

The study obtained results from the examination of print media reportage on baby factory phenomenon in South-eastern Nigeria. Content analysis of selected newspapers (*The Sun*, *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Punch*) from January to June 2014 was carried out. Further results were obtained via thematic analysis of transcripts from Focus Group Discussion (FGD), In-depth Interview (IDI) and Key Informant Interviews (KII) among actors in baby factory, journalists, Igbo male and female and security operatives including officials of the National Agency For the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons(NAPTIP).

4.1.1 Research Question 1

Which Nigeria newspaper reports more on the baby factory phenomenon in Southeastern Nigeria?

The objective of this question is to interrogate the content of Nigeria newspapers on baby factory in Southeastern Nigeria in order to identify which newspaper reports it more.

To achieve this, the researcher analysed 540 publications of *The Punch*, *The Sun* and *Nigerian Tribune newspapers* from January to June 2014 using the method of Content Analysis. From the analysis highlighted in Table 1 below, *The Sun* Newspaper has 11 publications on baby factory in southeastern Nigeria. *The Punch* newspaper has 2 stories on baby factory published from southeastern Nigeria states while *Nigerian Tribune* newspaper has 1 report on baby factory in southeastern Nigeria. Therefore, *The Sun* newspaper published more stories on baby factory phenomenon in southeastern Nigeria. Table 1 below shows the newspapers, their dates of publication, the gender issues in the reportage of the phenomenon, the location of the crime and the title of the stories published by the selected newspapers.

Table 4. 1: The newspapers and their contents

NEWSPAPER	DATE OF REPORT	OFFENDER	LOCATION OF OFFENCE	OFFENCE/TITLE OF STORY
<i>Daily Sun</i>	20/02/2014	Female	Abia	Man arrested for abduction and unlawful sale of a child for N200,000 pg 6
<i>Daily Sun</i>	27/02/2014	2 Females	AkwaIbom	Abduction of children from Cross-river and sale in Onitsha pg 6
<i>Daily Sun</i>	22/03/2014	1 male 1 female	Ogun	Running of baby making factory (N300,000 per baby) pg 4
<i>Daily Sun</i>	01/04/2014	Male	Anambra	Anambra Chieftain who aids in getting buyers for stolen children or unwanted children arrested pg 3
<i>Daily Sun</i>	03/04/2014	Female	Abia	Gang arrested for kidnapping 2 pupils for child trafficking and running of baby making factory pg 5
<i>Daily Sun</i>	25/05/2014	Female	Enugu	Sale of her own baby for N430,000 pg 6
<i>Daily Sun</i>	02/04/2014	3 males	AkwaIbom	Stealing and sale of babies pg 6
<i>Daily Sun</i>	04/05/2014	2 males	Imo	Forcefully snatched baby from mother and sold to another couple pg 14
<i>Daily Sun</i>	12/06/2014	2 Females	Imo	Child abduction and sale pg 12
<i>Daily Sun</i>	25/04/2014	3 Females 1 Male	Anambra	Child trafficking on the rise pg 6
<i>Daily Sun</i>	14/05/2014	Male	Abia	Medical doctor arrested for operating baby factory pg 4

<i>Daily Sun</i>	20/04/2014	Male	Imo	Man arrested for Running baby making factory for sale of babies and child trafficking pg 5
<i>Daily Sun</i>	18/04/2014	1 Male 3 Female	Abia	Gang arrested for Kidnapping and Child trafficking pg 5
<i>Daily Sun</i>	19/04/2014	Male	Abia	Teenage girls for baby making rescued pg 6
<i>Daily Sun</i>	06/04/2014	Female	Delta	Couple arrested for running Baby making factory pg 5
<i>Nigerian Tribune</i>	06/04/2014	Female	Delta	How we recruit girls in Baby making factory pg3
<i>Nigerian Tribune</i>	02/05/2014	3 Females	Anambra	Baby factory uncovered, pregnant girls, baby rescued pg 4
<i>Nigerian Tribune</i>	31/01/2014	Male	Ondo	Baby factory uncovered in Ondo pg 4
<i>The Punch</i>	3/06/2014	1 Male 2 Females	Ogun	Parents and Nurse collude to sell newborn baby pg 4.
<i>The Punch</i>	31/1/2014	Male/females	Ondo	Immigration clamp down on baby factory –It’s a herbal clinic-suspect pg. 4
<i>The Punch</i>	8/3/2014	Male /females	Ogun	Ogun to rehabilitate baby factory victims --- pg 8
<i>The Punch</i>	8/3/2014	Female	Oyo	Woman in court over baby kidnap allegation, pg 8
<i>The Punch</i>	21/1/2014	1 male, 1 female	Lagos	Police arrest couple for human trafficking pg 5.

<i>The Punch</i>	31/1/2014	1 Male 14 Female	Ondo	Police clamp down on baby factory in Ondo pg 4 and 5
<i>The Punch</i>	26/2/2014	1 female	Akwa-Ibom	Police nab prophetess for operating baby factory.pg 4/5
<i>The Punch</i>	25/6/2014	1 female	Ondo	38 years old in court for abducting employer's child pg 5
<i>The Punch</i>	11/3/2014	1 female	Akwa-Ibom	Mother sells three day old baby for N260,000 pg 4
<i>The Punch</i>	4/4/2014		Ogun	Youths uncover baby factory , set building ablaze pg 5
<i>The Punch</i>	30/4/2014			Ending the baby factory menace (view point) pg 22.
<i>The Punch</i>	29/3/4014	9 females	Ogun	I bless babies before selling them 'baby factory operator'
<i>The Punch</i>	22/3/2014	1 female	Ogun	Police discover baby –making factory in Ogun pg8.
<i>The Punch</i>	29/3/2014			baby factories have deprieved us of abandoned babies— orphanage operators pg 16/17
<i>The Punch</i>	24/3/2014	1 female	Ogun	Baby merchant use vulnerable girls for business ' pg 4
<i>The Punch</i>	27/6/2011	male	Abia	Father sells baby for N650, 000pg 5.
<i>The Punch</i>		2 male	Abia	Two in court for selling children pg 4

Number of newspaper publications on baby factory in Nigeria

The Punch==== 17

Daily Sun===== 15

Nigerian Tribune===== 3

Total :35

Number of newspaper publications on baby factory in Southeastern Nigeria

Daily Sun=====11

The Punch=====2

Nigerian Tribune ===1

Total : 14

Number of Male and Female in the reports on baby factory .

Female 56

Male 20

The investigation focused on the newspapers, their titles, pages, publication dates/days (daily and weekend), crimes, gender involved, and criminal location. The researcher also looked at the gender of the suspects, victims, and operators of the baby factory, as well as the placement of the story, whether it was news, feature, editorial, interviews, opinions, special reports, and gender of the suspects, victims, and operators of the baby factory. As shown in Table 1, there are 35 publications on baby factories, 14 of which are from southeastern Nigeria, with a breakdown revealing

The Sun published 11 articles about a baby factory in southeastern Nigeria. According to the analysis and interview transcripts, the Sun newspaper's high coverage of the baby factory is due to the fact that it devotes more pages to crime reporting on its News page, Crime Watch Page, Oriental News, National News, Top Stories, Saturday and Sunday editions. The South East page, as well as the Niger Delta Column, featured crime stories and details on baby factories. Such items were also published on the website's Daily News, Feature, and Interview pages.

4.1.2 Journalists' Responses towards Baby Factory in Southeastern Nigeria

According to some of the journalists contacted, they covered the baby factory phenomena extensively. However, though the journalists contacted for their report on the baby factory expressed interest in stories about the issue, its reasons, and how to handle it, they have differing perspectives on the phenomenon, its causes, and how to approach it.

While some journalists applaud newspapers for doing an excellent job of reporting on baby factories in Nigeria, particularly in southeastern Nigeria, which they claim increased public awareness and enlightenment about the situation, others criticize which they attributed to the secretive nature of the baby factory.

Other reasons given for *The Sun* newspaper's high coverage of the phenomenon southeastern Nigeria and the phenomenon's overall low coverage include ownership influence, editorial judgment, agenda setting role, reliance on police press releases and parades of suspects, finance, the print media's dwindling fortunes, and the phenomenon's secretive nature, which prevent journalists from conducting investigative reporting. Journalists expressed their opinions;

‘‘The print media has done a very good job reporting the baby factory phenomenon in southeastern Nigeria, the print media has brought to the fore the menace of the baby factory phenomenon in southeastern Nigeria’’.
Field work 2018

Huntley (2013) stated that the interest in the baby factory in Nigerian media led to the coining of the term "baby factory," which is a term used to denote a site where women are pressured or forced to become pregnant and their newborns are sold to a third party. Baby factories are run by organized crime syndicates and camouflaged as maternity centers, orphanages, social welfare homes, clinics, and informal water bottling companies, according to Madike (2013), and such reports can be found in newspapers. According to some of the journalists interviewed, the print media helped to raise awareness about the baby factory phenomenon.

‘‘Newspapers have done a lot reporting baby factory in southeastern Nigeria. The media can only create awareness but they cannot arrest perpetrators or stop the menace without the help of the government and the law enforcement agents. Baby factory is a peculiar crime

associated with the southeastern Nigeria Media has created the necessary awareness of all these crimes. Fieldwork 2018.

Baby factories are now common in Nigerian society, acting as a conduit for human trafficking, abuse, and sexual violence. Ukonu (2021), Oluseyi Adegbola, and Sherice Gearhart (2019) Madike (2013); this the journalists affirm they have risen to the occasion in their reportage.

‘I feel the newspapers have done a good job reporting the issue of baby factory in southeastern Nigeria. I am from Abia State and I feel bad because I know that it is a dent on the image of the state. Few people are making indigenes of Abia State look bad and I am not happy about this. Anytime I introduced myself to be from Abia State, some people will just ask me why do your people like selling your children in baby factory? Some may joke and say ‘please o I hope our children are safe. I feel very bad when I hear such comments because it is not presenting a good image on us Abians’- Fieldwork 2018.

From various reports, it has been established that the Nigerian media coined the word baby factory which in Nigeria , is a widespread, systematic crime, because some of the operators are supposedly serial murders and are involved in human trafficking networks. Huntley (2013).

‘From reporting it, it is obvious that the newspapers have done well and although both men and women are involved, the women bear the brunt. They are the ones who carry the pregnancy for nine months and when they are arrested, the law enforcement agents hardly go after the men who get them pregnant and abandoned them.’ Fieldwork 2018.

According to McComb and Shaw (1984), one of the most important channels for igniting democratic impulses and spreading them among the people was through the media. It is clear that the press is only a small part of today's "mediasphere," and that rapid technological advancements have raised numerous concerns about the press's future. On the other hand, traditional media is becoming a part of cyberspace. The fact that each of the newspapers under consideration has a news website demonstrates that their content and viewpoints will continue to be influential.

“Newspapers created the awareness. I wrote stories on baby factory based on the parade of the suspects. I feel we can do more on it if we have access to carry out undercover investigation. We have been reporting it from the angle the police present it. I am happy that they are allowing us to speak to the suspects but if there is no parade, there will be no access to the suspects, victims and their modus operandi. Fieldwork 2018.

Despite the fact that the journalists believe they paid close attention to the baby factory in southeastern Nigeria, it is clear that Nigerian publications underreported the occurrence in the southeast, despite the fact that it was during this time that the problem grew. They attributed this to the baby factory's secrecy, as well as their reliance on police press releases and parade of suspects.

“ We have not done enough to expose the baby factory phenomenon. We report police arrest but baby factory is existing in our communities, the operators are not in the sky so if we are serious about exposing them, we should not wait for police to arrest them and present them to us, we should actually carry out undercover investigations and follows up on parade of the suspects, ensure we report till they are prosecuted. We should put the reports in the front burners by reporting it all the time. When journalists take the issue of baby factory seriously, government too will have no choice but to take the menace seriously and stop it “Fieldwork 2018.

According to Treneman and McQuail (1961:178), Shaw (1983:132) agreed that the media can make an event or a set of related events into an issue by emphasizing them repeatedly and heavily. According to Umechukwu (2001, p.148) and Folarin (2002), the mass media has an impact on agenda setting because they have the ability to choose or emphasize specific topics, causing the public and, by extension, the government to consider the issues or topic as significant. However, the police set the agenda for the media in this case, as the journalists relied on arrest.

“Newspapers have over the years. continued to shrink pages in order to accommodate more news items due to rising cost of production. Also, the emergence of the internet and subsequent social media interactions which can easily reach a lot of reading public, the use of the newspapers have continued to suffer decline and this has made a lot of news items to fight for the few pages. Faced with this challenge, the editorial team may not be

able to give the desired attention to baby factory since so many news items need to be accommodated in the few pages. This in a way might be responsible for the underreportage of the phenomenon.” Field interview 2018

According to the security operators, not all baby factory arrests are given to journalists and then published in the media. The reports were those that the police judged fit to publish, implying that there are more baby factory incidents than were published in the newspapers. It points to issues of corruption among security officials politics and lack of centralisation of data from the divisions to the command headquarters.

“ It might be quite difficult for the journalists to report the issue without reliance on the security operatives who arrest the suspects. Also, when you look at the financial implication of investigation, journalists would need special funding which the newspaper may not afford. In the quest for advert, some news items may not be published, just like the security operatives too may not want to offend the state government if they constantly dish out bad reports in their state to the journalists. There was a particular incident the security agent felt will embarrass the state if such reaches the reading public so the security agents too are mindful of what they dish out to the media so as not to offend the state government” Field interview 2018

This could have played out and influenced the lack of adequate coverage of the baby factory. Also, The journalists discovered that the parents of females, particularly teenage girls, are aware of their involvement, but unwilling to speak out against it owing to financial advantage. These children are usually the bread winners for the family. The lack of moral values in the society attributed to due the quick rich mentality among some youth have continued to erode good moral and the upbringing of the children.

When there is nobody or social support to ameliorate poverty, people will resort to various means to survive and looking at the growing need to have biological children among couples, the baby factory offers a window for some to make quick gain.

“Some of the pregnant girls’ mother and their fathers are aware that they are selling the babies. The boyfriends who got them pregnant are usually in the

know but some of the girls claim that the men who got them pregnant rejected the pregnancy and they have nobody to cater for them and the unborn baby which made them to resort to baby factory but the media play down on this. The media can write about it to bring the crime to the public domain ” . Fieldwork work 2018.

The baby factory's newspaper investigation highlighted what (Ossai 2013) described as the indiscriminate merchandising of newborn newborns in southeastern Nigeria, which he claimed are purchased in the same way as candy is purchased from a confectioner's store. “ What remains to be seen is a scenario in which a shop or structure explicitly advertises "babies for sale."

“ Poverty can push some to take desperate measures especially in a society where the poor are scorned and the rich are hailed even if their means of wealth are not legal. The lack of recognition for honesty contribute to increasing dubious ways to earn a living. Also , the demand for children has increased the demands of baby factory so there is the need to look at better options to help infertile couples to have children. The media can focus on this as a way of curbing the menace” Field interview 2018.

The majority of women who agree to participate in this illicit trade but are not yet pregnant are compelled to sleep with males recruited by baby factory owners in order to become pregnant, according to media reports. From the minute they are born, these children are bought and sold, and a price is paid for them within seconds of their birth (Madike, 2014).

“In those days, baby factory was not an issue, but in the last decade, baby factory has become a well known issue because of the attention given to it by the media. Journalists have done well in reporting baby factory and this has created awareness. The security operatives have also done well in arresting the perpetrators and rescuing the victims. They invite journalists to report on the arrests they made and the media hypes it. It is not for the media to effect the change and stop baby factory but they have done their job by creating the awareness it is now left to the government to stop the ugly tend” . Fieldwork 2018.

What this means is that the cops set the agenda for media coverage of the baby factory because it is what and how they churn out baby factory news items to the media. If the

police do not want anything to be published, does that mean the information will remain buried and the journalists will be powerless to act? However, McComb and Shaw (1974) pointed out that the media has the potential to establish the agenda when they focus on a topic continually, and that this function should not be neglected because it has a significant impact on the audience's opinion of a topic. According to agenda setting theory, people learn about important issues via the news media and then apply the same weighting and importance to them.

“ A lot of Igbos are traders and they are not aware of what is happening in the country. They are busy eking a living so they do not have time to listen to news or know what is going on around them. They are not also opened to correction. They feel they know even when they know nothing. *Fieldwork 2018*.

The Sun Newspaper's increased focus on the baby factory phenomena could show that ownership of the newspaper has an impact on whether or not a piece is covered and published. This is because news has been recast as a product, and newspapers have been recast as primarily business concerns, with the management and coordination of media activities now in the hands of a managerial class (Underwood 1993), which has an impact on how newspapers are run and the editorial procedures involved (Baldasty 1992; Underwood 1993).

“The press has done well making the public to know about baby factory but there is more to it because the victims are illiterates. They do not know what they are being convinced to do with their children. Some who know are still trapped because of poverty. There is need to create more awareness on the baby factory phenomenon.” *Fieldwork 2018*

One significant area has remained critical and this is what is commonly referred to as “the power” of the media which functions as a cultural and social change vehicles. For example, several schools of media studies have examined the media as forces that supply audiences with ways of perceiving and interpreting the world, ways that influence their very existence and involvement in a given society. (Fiske, 1987; Hall 1986) describe this position, as contained in Kellner's formulation: Media... are also the site where fights for societal control are fought.

“Newspapers are not doing enough to expose baby factory phenomenon. After reporting the initial story, we hardly carry out follow -up story to ensure that those arrested are prosecuted. Some of those arrested still find their way back into the business but journalists hardly go back to look at the stories they have written and check if the perpetrators are back in the business and bring the crime to a conclusion. Baby factory is booming in the southeastern part of the country and spreading and even taking dangerous dimensions” Fieldwork 2018.

It's no surprise that public and private organizations have begun to recognize the importance of communicating their narratives to the public from their own point of view, and as a result, have begun to hire media personnel who are journalists or ex-journalists to lead and manage their public relations departments. In other circumstances, they make sure that their in-house public relations officers are well-versed in media relations since they understand the media's influence and role in shaping the agenda.

Others' efforts to influence the media agenda stem from a desire to maintain a favourable public image. This is because "people think about what they're told," implying that the media influence what issues are discussed. This is because "people believe what they are taught," implying that the media affect what themes are considered important in a given society at any given moment. The Nigerian press should strive for higher levels of professionalism and ethics in the industry, ensuring that they only report on issues and problems in a constructive and balanced manner (D. Galadima and J. Enighe, 2001).

. “Journalists need to do more because even states like Delta is now harbouring baby factory operators. Churches disguised to be offering deliverance for barren women but police found out that it was fake miracle. A herb medicine is administered to the women to get their stomach to become swollen then after nine months, the church in connivance with baby factory operators will bring babies from the baby factory and give to these women then the women will come out to give wonderful testimonies that they gave birth through the man of God’s prayers whereas, it is all fake, these women come from all parts of the country. The church even has branches but they were exposed”. Fieldwork 2018;

Also, editorial discretion in selecting what stories can be published or not can be ascribed to high and low journalism. In the same way, the media can give an issue bigger headlines and feature more lead stories on it. The media can use placement to give articles on a topic more importance, print more quotations and display images, and use other prominence-enhancing methods to accompany stories on the topic, as well as print more marks praising or denouncing the topic. McCombs (McCombs, 1974).

What a specific media organization can publish is also determined by ownership affiliations and the need for advertising. This is what the journalists have to say about it.

“ This is a crime that has been going on for a long time but nobody cares about how it was operating until the media brought it to the fore and the reportage have helped to create awareness and arrest of the perpetrators. Newspapers have helped to reduce the phenomenon”. Fieldwork 2018.

The Sun daily has more pages dedicated to what the editorial board judges fit to captivate the readership public, indicating that the publisher's influence can also decide editorial judgment. The Sun House style, which focuses on crime as an aspect and on sensational subjects editorial judgment, attracts readers to the newspaper. This, on the other hand, defies the goal of establishing press freedom, which is to create an open forum for the exchange of ideas, leading experts to claim that the media has failed to provide the type of idea-sharing arena required to assure informed citizenship.

Worse yet, the growing scarcity of media outlets and the resulting impacts. The journalists admitted that they relied on press releases and police parade of the suspects and victims of baby factory but did not conduct investigation on the phenomenon which they blamed on the secretive nature of the baby factory.

” The newspapers hardly publish why women are more in the baby factory operation. This is due to the society and cultural attitude towards women yet to give birth. No doubt, there is pressure on women to show that they are fertile and this is one reason women patronise baby factory but has this been reported in the media? Many homes have been destroyed and women sent out of their matrimonial homes because of childlessness. The

journalists need to focus on these challenges women face and report accordingly” Fieldwork 2018.

Newspaper reports indicate that, in addition to the traditional setting up of the baby factory in a place, other suspects include male child thieves or kidnappers, but that, due to the feminized nature of the phenomenon, women are more involved in the business than men. Furthermore, when the girls are rescued, the police or, to put it another way, our laws do not prosecute the male who makes the girls pregnant and abandons them.

Because of this desertion, many young pregnancies were obliged to seek help from a baby factory. Furthermore, the number of young girls who are enticed to give birth is high; in a single arrest, the police can save 17 pregnant women and girls, as well as male impregnator, gate man and there will be a male owner. There are uncles, husbands selling the babies. Sadly, all these intricacies and factors are not reported in the newspapers and the journalists attested to this fact. Madike (2013).

“There was a particular report of a young girl who got pregnant and her boyfriend abandoned her. She ended up in the hospital to give birth but her family also abandoned her. Right there at the hospital, a female nurse asked her if she would give up her child what do you think she would do. Of course, she tempted to sell her baby so she can move on with her life as well as remove public shame” Fieldwork 2018

Without a question, the media's function as keeper of what, how, and where an incident or incidents can be promoted gives them control over what viewers learn about key issues. Using police press releases and parades of suspects on baby factories without a commensurate requirement to perform investigations removes the media's agenda-setting function and turns it into a tool in the hands of the police to dictate baby factory reporting. As a result, the newspapers reported on baby factory incidents from the perspective of the police. Shaw and McComb (1974).

“The media reports on the operation of the factory, indicated that the perpetrators live in mansion and they own property. The reports have shown that baby factory is a booming business due to the demands for babies and the newspapers are not reporting it well to ensure that they are out of business” Mr., Atanma . Fieldwork 2018

According to media accounts, a baby factory has existed for a long time, although it has taken on several forms. The perpetrators are employing a variety of strategies in order to stay in business, and it has evolved into a business that is not limited to the eastern portion of the country. The factory's owners are coming up with innovative tactics to avoid being apprehended by the cops.

The reports of the baby factory phenomena were discovered to be those that the police churn out to the press, and when they were reported, they were from the police's point of view and did not receive the requisite media coverage. The print journalists did not look into the various ruses and methods that were being employed.

“The newspapers did not report to the extent that selling a child is a taboo in many Nigerian culture and no matter the level of hunger ,selling a child to offset bills or get out of poverty or shame is not an option but in south eastern Nigeria, their love for money can see them do anything which include selling their children. The newspaper report on the arrest. Saying that they engage in baby factory due to poverty may not be the case because those involved are very wealthy due to the fact that keeping and watching over pregnant girls in a home and feeding them day and night is obviously capital intensive. Fieldwork 2018

Some journalists believe that by raising awareness about the phenomenon, the media can help to arrest or stop the threat. This may cause one to wonder how free the Nigerian media is in fulfilling its inherent function as the uncompromising, professional watchdog and fourth estate of the country. Is the media financially and strategically positioned to provide a certain degree of weight to news pieces depending on their location, size, and frequency of presentation?

An editor bemoaned the declining fortunes of Nigeria's print industry and predicted a bleak future, which he attributed to social media. He went on to say that print media is gasping for air as production and sales decline. He went on to say that the print media is gasping for air, as production, sales, and subscriptions have all dropped in recent years. Without a doubt, journalists in the print media are among the lowest paid, with some not receiving a salary for two years.

This has an impact on their production because they are unable to go out and hunt for reports, as well as perform investigative and undercover reporting. It's no surprise that most of the reporting in many media is based on press releases and a

parade of suspects. Murdock and Golding (1989); Golding (1994); McKnight (1997); Brune (1997; Brune 1997).

“The journalists are helpless if there are no financial support to conduct investigations. Poverty creates a pool of girls with unwanted pregnancies and would be buyers of these children therefore, there is a need to look into how to help couples to have children but how often can I conduct investigation on this phenomenon when I am not paid salaries for months and this is the plight of many print journalists. Fieldwork 2018.

According to reports, the print media has suffered a collapse, with several publications, including the Comet, Concord, National Mirror, Compass daily, and Next newspaper, among others, ceasing publication due to financial difficulties. This has an impact on productivity, such as doing investigative articles, following up on stories, and relying on their sources for funding, all of which have an impact on the stories they produce.

Due to financial constraints, some print journalists are only interested in articles that will pay them, forcing them to rely on press releases and public relations tales. A journalist's responsibility, on the other hand, is to inform, educate, and serve as a watchdog. A journalist's duty however is to inform, educate, and serve as a watchdog for society. Newspapers, according to Ologunju (2011), are a marketplace for ideas rather than lies and half-truths. They are intended to further inform the readership (Irabor ,2015).

Some post independence newspapers in Nigeria include -New Nigerian, The Punch, National Concord, Champion newspaper, The Guardian, Vanguard Newspaper, The Champion, Thisday, The Comet, National Guide, National Mirror , The news newspaper, The Sun Newspaper, The Diet, The Daily Independence Newspaper, Nigerian Compass, Daily Trust, The Nation, The NEXT Newspaper, New Telegraph newspaper, Leadership Newspaper, Blueprint Newspaper, Oriwu Sun (Ifedayo, 2015).

It is interesting to note that from the late 60's to the late 90's, Nigeria had thirty-one (31) dailies and non-dailies with a combined circulation of 600,000 but this has suffered great decline .(Ugboajah 1985).

“ If you see a woman that is past child bearing age and she suddenly has a baby, one would want to know how

she got the baby. So the awareness has been created by the print media but conducting follow up reports and undercover reportage are capital intensive which unfortunately is lacking. This has made bright and hardworking journalists to abandon the profession and seek greener pastures in other professions ”. Fieldwork 2018.

The ownership and interest of the publishers in the reportage is one of the criteria that determines whether the reportage is high or low. It has been stated that news has become a product, and newspapers have been recast essentially as business concerns, with media administration and coordination now in the hands of a managerial class (Underwood 1993). Naturally, this has an impact on how newspapers are run and the editorial methods involved (Baldasty 1992; Underwood 1993).

The number of media conglomerates, on the other hand, has been and continues to be limited. Several academics have investigated the effects of these changes on news content. McKnight et al., 1997; Brune et al., 1997).

“The media is lackadaisical in reporting baby factory. We are not reporting it well. Journalists need to carry out undercover reporting because these people operating the baby factory live among people. From my investigations of the suspects and victims, childlessness is the major reason that makes people to go into buying babies. Mr. Titus . Fieldwork 2018.

Overall, it is ironic that the results obtained show that in 2014, when crimes from baby factories expanded beyond the usual housing of women in a home where they give birth and their children are sold to the highest bidder to include relatives selling children, parents selling their children, and snatching, stealing of babies, the results show a significant low reportage of the phenomenon because the reportage relied on police parades of suspects.

Without a doubt, baby factories are a security issue in some parts of Nigeria, particularly in the country's east. The phenomenon is related to the trafficking of infants. (UNESCO) 2006 report. They are intended to further inform the readership (Irabor 2015). According to Webster's New World Thesaurus' New Revised Edition, the media is defined as the Fourth Estate, which includes Publishers, Publicists, Newsmen, Newspapermen, According to media reports, the Taliban in Afghanistan

acquire youngsters who they train as suicide bombers and juvenile soldiers. (Ebbe and Dilip, 2008:7) depict baby factories as a shadow economy widespread in many nations that generates \$33 billion annually for traffickers.

Baby factories can also be found in China, Vietnam, and other Asian countries. The Guardian in the United Kingdom (2007) Human trafficking, including baby factories, makes about \$10 billion per year (UNICEF, 2005:7).

The newspaper, like other types of media, exposes, informs, enlightens, educates, and affects both negative and positive change, as it did in the case of the Nigerian baby factory. According Journalists, Journalistic Writers, Editors, Correspondents, and the duty of a journalist is to inform, educate, and serve as the society's watchdog.

Lagos alone is home to numerous newspapers and news magazines, most privately-owned and retaining their editorial independence against the odd (Ifedayo, 2015).The reports exposes new tricks being adopted, and how the phenomenon has taken a dangerous dimension, whereby married couples are taking a cue and selling their own children to offset debt and cater for private needs, the phenomenon is a huge social problem, criminal act and a dent on the image of the country.

4.2 The State in Southeastern Nigeria with the highest number of baby factory as reported by the newspapers

The goal of this topic is to determine which state in the southeast is most involved in the baby factory phenomena by analyzing the content of chosen newspapers during the course of the study period. According to the results of Tables 1 and 2, Abia State has the largest coverage of the baby factory in southeastern Nigeria.

The majority of the reports in the selected newspapers throughout the period were from Abia, according to the frequency method (26.7 percent). Anambra State (10.0 percent) and Imo State (10.0 percent) are the two most populous states in Nigeria (10.0 percent). Nigeria's states of Akwa-Ibom (13.3 percent) and Delta (6.7 percent) were also heavily represented as infant manufacturing locations. Other states that were taken were Ogun (13.3%) and Ondo (1%).

The percentage distribution of the baby factory phenomenon across the southern region as highlighted by selected newspapers during the study period shows that the majority of the baby factory phenomenon was reported in the southeastern region (51.1%), with fewer reports in the South-South zone (20.0%) and South-West

zone (29.9%), with Abia state accounting for the lion's share of the reports (26.7 percent)

The results of a thematic analysis of field interview transcripts backed up this result from the newspapers. The study detailed a number of variables that led to Abia state being named the state with the most baby factories, which are listed below:

Table 4. 2: Showing percentage distribution of Southeastern states with the newspaper report on baby factory

Location	Frequency	Percent
Abia	8	26.7
Akwa-Ibom	4	13.3
Anambra	3	10.0
Delta	2	6.7
Enugu	1	3.3
Imo	3	10.0
Lagos	1	3.3
Ogun	4	13.3
Ondo	4	13.3
Total	30	100.0

As previously noted, the findings were derived from a review of media reports on the crime scene, as shown in Table 1 and tabulated in Table 2. The findings also reveal a considerable presence of the baby factory phenomena in Nigeria's southern region, with no recorded cases in the northern region.

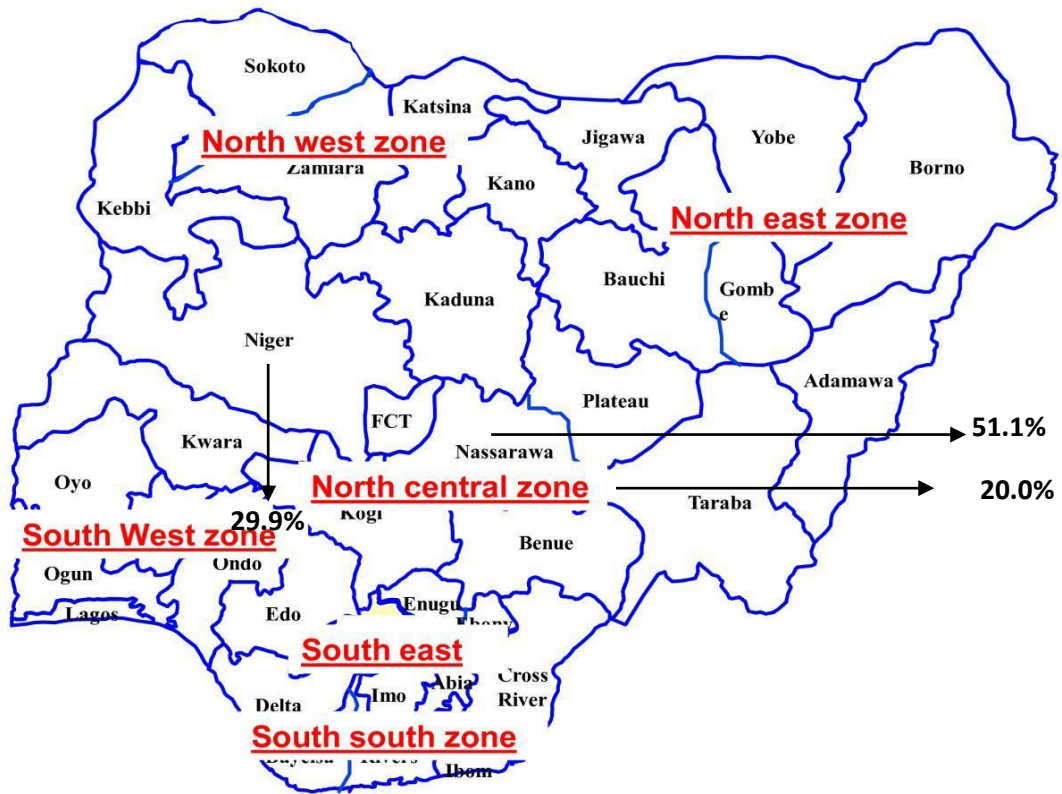


Figure 1: Map of Nigeria showing regional reflection of baby factory

4.2.1 Newspaper Reportage on Baby Factory in Abia State in 2014

In Abia state, newspapers have reported on police arrests and parades of suspected baby factory operators and victims. Other incidents have been reported in selected publications, alleging that baby factories and various modes of operation of perpetrators abound in Abia state. For example, on May 27th, 2014, the Punch published an item headed "Father sells kid for N650,000" on page 5. For example, the case of Dr. Ezuma was reported on page 32 of the Daily Sun (May, 14, 2014).

Another piece appeared in the Punch on May 6th, 2014, titled "Two in Court for Selling Children" pg 4. On May 5th, 2014, the Daily Sun published an article titled "Medical doctor arrested for operating on infant." Dr. James Ezuma, who claimed to have studied at the University of Jos, was the poster child of successful medical practice, according to one legendary story of a medical doctor named. His vast empire, which encompassed real estate, high-end automobiles, and women, portrayed him as a guy who built his fortune through hard work and dedication to his craft.

A large number of political and economic clients and associates added to his tangible fortune. Before the officers put their detective klieg lights on him, that is. What they saw, on the other hand, goes against the medical guild's entire spirit. Dr. Ezuma's five-story hospital in Aba was the heart of child trafficking, with a baby-production system running like a factory. Adaku Okpechi, a 17-year-old mentally challenged girl, was also said to have gone to the market with her mother on April 4, 2014. with her one-and-a-half-year-old baby girl named Favour. She returned home, but without the child.

When her parents were unable to locate their child, they reported the event to the authorities. Similarly, there are claims that the Aba-Umuahia area is home to a well-established baby-selling mafia that includes doctors and nurses. In 2014, officials in Aba discovered an alleged "baby farm" where adolescent mothers were compelled to give up their children for human trafficking. The landlord was detained, and at least 32 pregnant girls were rescued.

A 26-year-old man was arrested in Abia State for selling his infant son for N260, 000 to pay for his father's burial expenses. Kinsley Ubani, from Umunkpeyi, Isiala Ngwa South Local Government Area, was arrested for selling the child given to him by his live-in lover, Chioma Onu. In Umuahia, he was one of dozens of suspected child traffickers displayed by the police. Chimere Sunday alias Boyoyo, a suspected child trafficker from Umuojima Ogbu in the Osisioma Ngwa Local Government Area,

was also apprehended and paraded for allegedly selling his two children in collusion with two female suspects, Mrs. Uloaku Chinweuba and Mrs. Ugochi Alozie.

19 pregnant girls rescued from a baby factory in Umuobia Olokoro were also paraded. The pregnant girls, aged 15 to 23, were rescued from Nma Charity Home, where they were being kept and nourished until they had their babies to be sold to potential purchasers. The state task force on the environment and related issues demolished the building.

On December 7, Ezuma Hospital in Aba was similarly demolished for being exploited as a baby factory. Mrs. Elizabeth Ojukwu was also accused of converting her home into a baby factory and relocating to Olokoro four months ago, where she had been working quietly before a raid on her facility on December 12. The proprietress escaped when the police team stormed the illegal charity home at 5 a.m. on a tip-off, but her son, Uche Ohuabunwa, and his wife Tina, who were in charge of caring for the pregnant girls, were arrested, according to the police.

In an interview, Ubani said that he was compelled to sell his child, who was about four years old at the time, for N260, 000 last November to collect funds to bury his father. He claimed that his father's body had been in the mortuary for 18 months and that his siblings were uninterested in the funeral plans, so he resorted to selling his baby to generate funds for the burial ceremony. Field interviews transcripts also buttressed the high number of baby factories in Abia State.

4.2.2 Responses towards baby factory in Abia State

The baby dumping attitude of unmarried pregnant girls is one of the causes for the state's high involvement in the baby factory, according to responses from security operatives, actors, journalists, and indigenes on Abia State's high involvement in the baby factory. This attitude of abandoning newborn newborns began in the middle of the 1980s and has since grown into one of the state's most serious human rights concerns.

Babies were abandoned at Onitsha's Okpoko and Obodoukwu Roads, Enugu's Uwani and Coal Camp, and Abia's Ohanku and Ngwa neighborhoods. According to authorities, at least two to three abandoned newborns are rescued every week, and there are motherless babies facilities in the state benefit from selling the babies.

I was on the scene when the police recovered a baby girl who had been abandoned in a gutter near the Abia State Central Police Station. This was noticed by

this researcher during one of my study visits to the Central Police Station, while waiting to speak with the Divisional Police Officer. One of the officers appeared to be fed up with the constant dumping of babies. According to the authorities, the act of abandoning babies is a common occurrence that they see on a regular basis.

“Babies are abandoned in the gutter. This is the third child this week. We rescue such babies all the time. That is why our DPO always want us to be at alert because in a week, girls abandon their babies. We rescue at least three every week and we take them to the government orphanages” police Inspector. Fieldwork 2018.

They were placed in these homes and rehabilitated until their children were born after being rejected by their family due to their pregnancy. By the end of the 1980s, teen pregnancy had spread throughout most of the southern states. Girls in such conditions were often spotted in substantial numbers a month or two after Christmas. These rural females were often tempted into sexual activities by attractive proposals from city lads and men who visited home for the holidays.

The majority of their sexual activities culminated in teenage pregnancy since they were not used to having safe sex. These pregnant girls were placed in these homes and rehabilitated after being rejected by their families due to their pregnancy. They were frequently rejected in their homes due to the social stigma connected with such situations in many Southern Nigerian states. The high rate of adolescent pregnancy during this time period was also due to poor parental upbringing.

According to the 2006 UNESCO report by the United Nations, human trafficking is the third most common crime in Nigeria, after financial fraud and drugs trafficking. At least ten children are illegally trafficked every day across the country, and the traffickers are rarely captured. The huge number of baby factories in Abia state was ascribed to security collusion with the operators. Osioma Lo is an orphanage in Umuozuo, Osioma Local Government Area was transformed into a camp where young girls are gathered and impregnated. It accommodated 32 pregnant women, whose infants are sold after they are born.

The proprietor of the orphanage one Mrs. Nnenna, is said to be married to a police officer. If this is the case, might he be the one who has been keeping her safe? According to a young lady familiar with the center's activities, visitors are not permitted in save for clients who come for business or adolescent girls who wish to sell

their babies. It's probable that not all of the center's newborns are adopted by childless families; some may have been victims of ritual murder.

Why would ostensibly childless parents choose an orphanage that sells kids over a plethora of other orphanages brimming with children awaiting legal adoption? One of the reasons for the rise in the number of baby factories in Abia State is greed for immediate financial gain. A widely circulated photograph of the occasion also depicted two male collaborators and a female.

“Our madam has been detained in Umuahia. She is not guilty because she is merely supporting childless couples in Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt by selling male and female babies for a predetermined amount. As a result, she settles with the baby's mother and collects the remaining funds. A male child is sold for N450, 000, while a female child is sold for N400, 000. A teenage woman is paid N100,000 if her child is a boy, while a mother whose child is a girl is paid N80, 000.” One of her workers said.

Indictment of security agencies and other state entities with supervisory authority over such institutions is rampant especially after the parade of suspects.



Plate 4. 1: Teenage girls in different stages of pregnancy rescued by the police

Source: The Sun Newspaper March 22, 2014.

“We have handled a lot of cases on baby factory. Just this morning, we went to rescue a baby that was abandoned by the road side in a gutter. This kind of incident is common. It is like we have three to four children in a week abandoned in different locations in the metropolis of Abia State. I am surprised at the numbers of abandoned babies. On the other hand, there are women we are arresting for buying babies and selling their babies. It is an irony. What we discovered is that when we take the abandoned babies to motherless babies home, they end up selling the children so we are raiding the many illegal motherless homes.” Fieldwork 2018.

A few weeks before I started my field work, I was told that the majority of police arrests are of women who have been pursuing fruit of the womb for years, while some are of those who are doing it for financial benefit. The crime has become so widespread that the Inspector General of Police had to dispatch a special team of officers to Abia State to apprehend some of the culprits and set up bogus maternity centers to hold pregnant women. According to reports, roughly 36 girls and their babies were caught in one fell swoop, and the state authorities retaliated by demolishing the criminals' homes.

“Baby factory incidents are high in Abia State unfortunately, government has not seen baby factory as a big national embarrassment. Federal government sees it as southeastern problem, but it is a dent on the image of the country and should be tackled holistically”- Mr. Nathaniel. Fieldwork 2018

A resident blames the high rate of baby factory in Abia state on financial gains and the quest for quick money among the people especially the youth.

“It has become a common knowledge to see girls deliberately getting pregnant with the aim of selling their babies to the highest bidders. Married couples are catching in the ugly trend where they sell babies as if they are selling commodities. The financial reward is a lot for those trending this evil path which trend we see among communities, families selling children with their aim to get out of poverty. They see it as their ticket out of poverty” Fieldwork 2018.

A community leader, also attributes the quest for a male heir and the societal disregard for unwanted teenage pregnancy for the high involvement in baby factory in the state. He stated that

’’The patriarchal nature of Africans which the Igbos are also practicing is reason why the male heir is sought by all means. Women give birth to girls are still searching for a male child to become the family head if the husband should eventually die so when this woman has no male child she can go look for one. On the other hand, we frown at teenage and unwanted pregnancies so the girls with such pregnancies will not want to abort but sell to earn some money for herself’’ Fieldwork 2018

In other cases, pregnant girls are not only threatened by famine, bad weather, and risky abortions, but they are also shielded from the shame and stigma associated with their predicament thanks to sympathetic households.

’’Lack of babies in a family has brought so much pain to the couple especially the women who feel the brunt of childlessness more as they are being threatened with divorce or a second wife. I feel I am fulfilling a need’’. Arrested Baby factory owner. Fieldwork 2018

According to interviews with the baby factory's owners, more than half of the adolescent girls who gave birth at home fled because of the shame. One of the women jailed for running a baby factory, Mrs. Loveth Ezenwa, declared that she would rather keep a pregnant girl and sell her child than encourage abortion. (MCH, 2003). A police officer said

’’Government is raiding illegal homes in the state. In the last count, they raided 55 fake motherless babies’ homes and they arrested over fifty of them. Some of the girls were brought into the state to give birth so that their children are sold. It is a huge business for the people in the state. Aba is an economic vibrant town, and Owerri is close to Abia State where we have a lot of higher institutions’’. Fieldwork 2018



Plate 4.2: Pregnant teenagers being escorted from a baby factory

Source: Nigeria Police / Sun newspaper, April 25th 2014

Infertility in Nigeria, which fostered the establishment and spread of "baby factories," is linked to the high rate of baby factories in Abia state and, by extension, southeastern Nigeria. Despite the fact that infertility affects an estimated 580 million individuals worldwide, more than half of those afflicted (about 372 million people—180 million couples) live in low and middle-income countries, with the exception of China (WHO, 2000). Africa is said to have the highest rate of infertility, with 10 to 32 percent of couples unable to conceive.

Women attributed their involvement in obtaining children from baby factories on culture and custom, according to the study, which disrespects "barren" women who have no children and in which an adopted child is not recognized as part of the family and is not entitled to inheritance. A woman who was arrested for buying a baby said her quest for a biological child led her to the baby factory.

“I did not want to die without having a child. I spent all my money visiting hospitals in Nigeria and abroad for a fruit of the womb but to no avail. I have been married for more than twenty years and my husband’s family did everything to get me out of my marriage. When someone told me how to get a baby from baby factory, I saw an opportunity to prove to the world that I could be a mother so that my shame will be removed.” Fieldwork 2018.

Infertility is a major burden on the country's clinical care system, accounting for more than half of gynecological caseloads and more than 80% of laparoscopic procedures. The above statistic was confirmed by data from the Nordica Clinic in Lagos, which found that infertility affects 20 to 25 percent of married couples in Nigeria, with 40 to 50 percent of consultations in gynecological clinics being for infertility (Fertility World, 2006).

As a result, as the country's infertility rate rose, so did the number of couples seeking a way to escape the social stigma that comes with being childless. An officer from the National Agency for the Prohibition of trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) has this to say.

“Many wealthy couples often consider artificial insemination procedures which have increased in recent times. However, the high financial implication of undergoing such medical procedures still leaves open

the room for baby buying from baby factories among average couples” Fieldwork 2018.

Others, despite their willingness to pay the cost of infertility treatment, were unable to conceive despite their efforts and were left with no other options; they sought help from a baby factory.

“ I do not see anything wrong with baby factory. To me your research should focus on something else. Why should there be a problem if the woman selling is willing to sell and the buyer is willing to buy? In my case, I had several IVF done and spent a lot of money yet, I did not get pregnant. My first husband left me and I was devastated. If I have opportunity to buy a baby, I will and I will even thank the person that sold the child to me” Fieldwork 2018

The lack of access to accredited institutions where adoption can be lawfully procured also explains the existence of "baby factories." The legal adoption process has a number of roadblocks that make it less accessible to adoptive parents. Because of the high expectations and procedures for adopting a child, some adoptive parents are turned down. In the adoption process in the country, single adopters, for example, face more challenges than couples. Even worse, certain governments, such as Lagos, have imposed a ban on child adoption.

“I have been on the long list of potential adopters in Lagos State but the government has placed an embargo on adoption in the state. My friends told me to look to the southeast for a baby but I am afraid so that the baby will not be brought to me from a baby factory” Fieldwork 2018.

A low-income person may also be unable to meet all of the standards for orphanage adoption. It may be argued that official adoption is not for the impoverished in Nigeria. In addition to the administrative challenges, there is a considerable period of waiting for newborns. Because the majority of these technologically built organizations rely on abandoned newborns and orphans, couples looking for babies for adoption frequently have to wait months or years. To avoid the long wait and other challenges that come with adoption, childless couples look for alternatives, such as "baby factories."

‘‘I have been handling baby factory cases for five years. I have handled more than ten cases. Suspects we arrested told us that there are lots of unwanted pregnancies and there are people looking for children. The legal adoption homes are not making it easy for people who are looking for children. Some of these women come from Lagos and other big cities. They said that in Lagos state, the government has placed embargo on child adoption in the legal orphanages. So what happens to women looking for children to adopt legally? The suspects said fertility clinics are expensive and not in the reach of the common man who are looking for children’’ Fieldwork 2018

Baby factories are claimed to be on the rise in Abia and southern Nigeria as a result of occultic practice and ritual. The desire to become wealthy by any means possible indicates a willingness to comply with the ritual performer's demands. In this situation, their first point of contact is "baby factories." (Huntley 2013)

Respondents who live in or near "baby factories" revealed the types of people who are commonly observed entering the walled structures where this illegal operation is conducted. Babies placed for sale risk being bought by ritualists who will use them for money-making rituals. Babies are commonly murdered in Nigeria for money-making rituals.

A group of five men suspected of being ritualists assaulted a government hospital and required new born babies. Likewise, babies can be endangered to unlawful trafficking in order for their buyers to sexually and/or domestically exploit them. Human trafficking, comprising the selling of children, is the third greatest communal criminal act in the country.

‘‘Some of the motivations behind buying day old babies are some for religious and ritual purposes. There are still very many native doctors and herbalists who still perform rituals and juju for people to get rich or to win contracts or for something specific. Even yahoo-yahoo (internet fraudsters) boys are now involved in juju for their successful activities. Sometimes, the blood or body parts of babies are requested to be used which leads to buying of babies from baby factories in the East’’ Mrs. Ann. Fieldwork 2018

Due to dishonesty among law enforcement agents and judges, arresting and prosecuting operators of baby-selling centers is inefficient. Some of the arrested operators were not charged and were released, according to evidence. In 2006 and 2008, for example, the owner of Enugu's Uzoma Maternity Clinic was arrested twice and freed after a few days each time.

According to available information, the accused was granted bail and the case was postponed indefinitely for the decision of the State Attorney General, which never came. Similarly, officials in Imo State seized a "baby factory" operating as the "Cross Foundation Clinic," and the owner was arrested, detained, then freed.

While some of the operators relocate after being released, others choose to stay in their original operating hubs in the hopes of enticing their way out. Failure to penalize individuals found selling children has aided the unlawful trade's growth in Abia State. A police corporal said

‘‘It lies with the government to stop crime by ensuring that they take the issue of baby factory seriously. Even some police officers have been implicated in such activities. Aside arresting and prosecuting the offenders, what is government doing to ensure that persons looking for children get the necessary support in terms of affordable fertility hospitals, creating awareness to stop stigmatization of girls who get pregnant outside wedlock . Also, we do not prosecute the pregnant girls. We usually alert the ministry of Women Affairs and they take up the responsibility of looking after the girls until they give birth. The government also gives them money and provide for them so as to take care of themselves and their babies.’’ Fieldwork 2018

The problem of "baby harvesting" stems in part from Nigeria's socioeconomic distress and ensuing poverty. The majority of those rescued from baby-selling facilities had failed in their small businesses or had dropped out of high school. Offers of a job, money, and, in some cases, suitors enticed them into the company, they said. One of the eight pregnant women rescued by the Abia state police command in 2014 described how poverty drove her into the hands of a baby factory owner.

Charles, Akwara, and Andeshi (2014) argued that extreme poverty is the primary reason for young women to give up their newborns for financial gain.

“ I sold my son so as to have money to settle my debt. I and my husband are owing people and they have threatened our lives so when we gave birth to a second son, we decided to give him up for N400, 000 so that we can use the money to get out of poverty”.Mrs. C. Fieldwork 2018.

The humanitarian component of the baby factory problem was also stressed by some respondents. Many compassionate homes have been established to provide shelter and care for pregnant girls whose parents have abandoned them. Unmarried ladies with teenage pregnancies were willingly given to the needy homes by their parents, family, and friends for protection and psychological healing.

This trend began in the southeastern states and has now expanded throughout the country. While newborn harvesting and sale has financial ramifications for all parties involved, many criminals hide behind the guise of humanitarianism. This is accomplished by adopting rationalizations that aid in the resolution of women's childlessness concerns.

They also expound on their opposition to abortion, so saving the lives of both adolescent females and unborn newborns. She claims to give them substances that cause their stomachs to bulge. The goal is to make her appear "pregnant," and she did go to the hospital on a regular basis.

When it's time to give birth, she'll have a new kid and hand it over to the women who are faking the pregnancy after she's cut her and she bleeds. Her husband is generally invited to be present to witness the "birth" of his child, but this is all a farce, on their opposition to abortion, so saving the lives of both adolescent females and unborn newborns. She claims she gives them herbs that make their stomachs protrude as if they are pregnant.

“ My only aim is to help the young girls and those who want children. I feel I am solving a humanity problem by helping the teenage girls with unwanted pregnancies and the women looking for fruit of the womb. .Some come to my house begging and pleading with me to help them deceive their husbands to believe that they actually got pregnant” – Baby factory owner .Fieldwork 2018.

Some Igbos have faced criticism and have experienced sneer remarks from other tribes as a result of the baby factory phenomenon in their part of the country. This negative perception has made these Igbos to call on the government to take the issue more seriously.

‘I am from Abia State and anytime I hear about Abia state and baby factory, I feel bad because I know that it is a dent on the image of the state. Few people are making indigenes of Abia state look bad and I am not happy about this. Anytime I introduced myself to be from Abia state, some people will just ask me why do your people like selling their children in baby factory? Some may joke and say ‘please o I hope our children are safe . I feel very bad when I hear such comments because it is not presenting a good image on us Abians’’ Field interview 2018.



Plate 4.3: Paraded man for allegedly selling his two year old son, and clients

Source – field work

2018

Rape has reached worrisome proportions in the country, with toddlers, adolescent girls, and elderly women becoming common victims of rape, incest, and other forms of sexual harassment (Kumolu, 2012). Similarly, the rising prevalence of premarital sex in Nigeria is fueling the growth of baby factories in Abia State.

“Some of the female victims were raped and they do not want anything to do with the children, others are students who deliberately got pregnant so they can sell their babies to raise money for school fees and other school needs. Some have sold one or two of children before they were arrested. They said their friends sold their babies and since their friends were not arrested, they were emboldened to sell theirs too. Imagine if at the end of the nefarious sale of the child, the student get N500, 000. Generally, from my interrogation of the suspects, some are victims who want to cover shame of unwanted pregnancy, while others are greedy for quick money” Police Inspector. Fieldwork 2018

Pregnant teenagers and young women voluntarily give up their children to baby factory operators who often portray themselves as "God-sent helpers" who are only interested in getting them out of the difficult situations they have found themselves in order to avoid the stigma and ostracism that often accompany unwanted pregnancy. Discrimination and societal shame, according to Link and Phelan (2001), are two of the main reasons for the formation of baby factories in Nigeria. Many of the young adolescent mothers who are about to hand over their babies to baby factory workers have been sexually abused:

“My brother brought me to a woman selling pepper soup and beer in Abia State. I and other girls used to stay back to tidy up the shop at night. There are some young men who come to drink in the shop and one of them wanted me to date him but I refused because my brother had warned me to be careful of such men. One night, the other sales girl did not come to work so I was left alone to tidy up and lock the shop . That was how this young man and his two friends came into the shop and they forced themselves on me. They beat me up and took turns to sleep with me. I did not tell anyone because of fear they put in me. Months later, I found out that I was pregnant and I had to tell my brother. He said we will give up the child and that was how I ended up in a baby factory” . Baby factory victim Fieldwork 2018.

Another factor contributing to the baby factory problem is the government's failure to recognize the issue as a national one. Unfortunately, it is being treated as a southeastern and feminine crime that does not warrant the same level of concern as Boko Haram, kidnapping, and banditry, among other horrible crimes. Unwanted pregnancy is one of the reasons why women abandon their children, contributing to the baby factory's expansion.

As a result, "compassion homes" or "needy homes" were established, where pregnant adolescent girls who had been rejected by their families owing to their pregnancy were safeguarded and reformed until their kids were born.

Poverty and occultic rituals are also factors in the purchase of children. Another factor suggested is the country's high rate of infertility. Baby factories are claimed to be prevalent in Abia State and the South Eastern region due to cultural practices such as pursuing one's biological children and divorce due to bareness.

“My boyfriend denied the pregnancy and my parents said they do not want me to stay in the house with unwanted pregnancy because of our culture. I don't have a means of livelihood so when a friend I told of my plight advised me to sell the child I said it would be better for the child to be with someone that can take care of him than for me to abandon him on the street for a total stranger to pick him up”. Rescued pregnant lady. Fieldwork 2018.

On why she bought the baby, the woman said she needed the child as she has been married for years without a fruit of the womb.

“ She came to me and said she was ashamed of getting pregnant outside wedlock and her boyfriend and family did not accept her and the pregnancy. She told me to give her N50, 000 for the child and she wanted to settle a debt. I gave her and after she gave birth, I paid for the hospital bill and her treatment and she gave me the child. I collected her child because I am married for ten years without a child and I wanted to help her and her baby to be alive. “ Baby factory client Fieldwork 2018.



Plate 4. 4: Paraded pregnant teens rescued from a baby factory

Source: Nigeria police 2018

4.3 The newspaper portrayal of male and female involvement in the baby factory phenomenon in southeastern Nigeria

The gender dynamics of offenders in the baby factory phenomenon were investigated using print media reports on cases from selected newspapers. Table 1 demonstrates that females (52) outnumber males (20). This was accomplished by categorizing offenders according to their gender as published in newspapers during the study period (See figure 2). Figure 2 shows that more than half of the baby factory masterminds (72.23 percent) were female, with a significant number of males (27.77 percent). The findings show that there are more female baby factory masterminds.

Figure 2 shows that more than half of the baby factory masterminds (72.23 percent) were female, with a significant number of males (27.77 percent). The findings reveal that in southeastern Nigeria, there are more female masterminds of baby factory operations, which can be related to the feminine aspect of the baby factory phenomena, which frequently needs infant harvesting from pregnant women. As a result, another lady might be ideally suited to run a baby factory.

The news demonstrates bias against women by criminalizing women working in a baby factory in southeastern Nigeria, depicting baby factory as a female crime, was attributed to the journalists relying on the parade of arrest of the suspects and victims. Instead of journalists to undertake investigations, they relied on police parade and these parades contain more women than males. The media blame their reliance on police parades on the secret nature of baby factory.

Despite the fact that male suspects were detained, there were few accounts of males getting women pregnant and then abandoning them, or husbands abandoning their "barren" wives. More female suspects were discovered in the field interviews, along with a host of accomplices in the form of coworkers and clients. The feminine aspect of the baby factory phenomena, which typically requires females to give birth, act as midwives, and care providers, was also a plausible reason for female high involvement in the baby factory, according to the thematic analysis of the transcripts of interviews. As a result, another lady might be ideally suited to run a baby factory.

Furthermore, most of the reported baby factories demonstrate that professional nurses and midwives were frequently involved in the delivery of newborns from expectant mothers. The male participation in baby factory operations, on the other hand, could be in financing the operations, which are subsequently run by a variety of female collaborators. Men are paid as sex contractors, gatemen and traffickers,

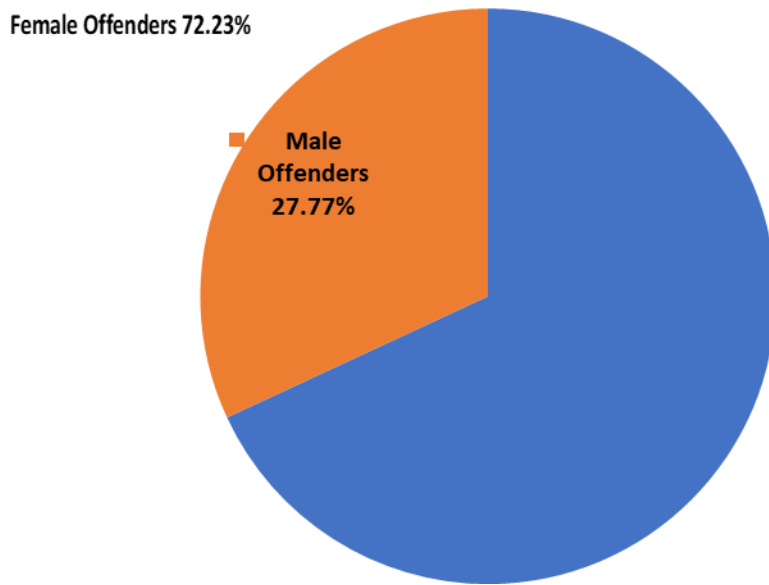


Figure 4.2: The newspapers reports on the involvement of male and female in baby factory phenomenon.

52 female suspects and victims

20 male suspects

The following reasons were obtained from thematic analysis of the interviews as responsible for the high number of female involvement in baby factory in southeastern Nigeria.

Unwanted pregnancy

Poverty

Rape

Reluctant mother otherwise known as trafficked female

Cultural practice of seeking ones biological children

Divorce due to bareness.

Scorn on adopted children not eligible to inherit

Cultural practice of having biological male.

4.3.1 Categorisation of female involved in baby factory

From the result obtained from content analysis of the newspapers and from interviews transcripts of journalists and policemen show that there is a wide range of female in the baby factory phenomenon. Also, there are male and female masterminds working together and they can be husband and wife. The male can work alone as well as the female. The female are categorized into these nine groups.

1. Women and teenage girls kept in homes (factories) and impregnated by paid men.
2. Unmarried women and girls with unwanted pregnancies whom their lovers have abandoned but do not want to abort the children go to baby factories to give birth and their children are sold.
3. Women and girls who do not have the means to go for abortion would agree to sell their children because they see such children as burden so they sell to middle men and women who later resell such children.
4. Female and male syndicates, who can be husband and wife who steal children by luring them with biscuits and other food. They take these children from their homes in one state and sell to traffickers and buyers in far away states.
5. Women and teenage girls who deliberately get pregnant and contact middle men and women to help them get buyers or they go to baby factories to give birth and collect money in return to foot bills and take care of personal needs.
6. Female and male who hunt (also known as traffickers) and lure pregnant girls to baby factories and help them get buyers for the babies. Among women in

this category are widows who in one way or the other got pregnant, some have four children while still in their late husband's houses and because they cannot give any reasonable explanation how they got pregnant would want to stay in a home and give birth so the children are sold.

7. Married female who connive would deliberately get pregnant and go to baby factory to sell or look for baby traffickers to sell their children in order for them to cater for needs of other children, pay bills, and take care of other needs.
8. Elderly women who have passed menopause or women whose menstrual flow has stopped/those who are unable to conceive due to infection would visit a woman who claims to be knowledgeable about fertility herbs, and would give them such herbs.
9. Female child abductors who kill mothers and take children away for sale to a third party.

The high feminine involvement in baby factory is also reflected in the female clientele of the baby factory, where some married women in need of babies, fake pregnancy to their husbands and in-laws, or what is known as crystic pregnancy, which they achieved through the use of hormone-altering medications.

“Baby factories are owned and managed by male and female partners possibly spouses. Media reportage of the baby factory shows that the women are many in the baby factory due to their nature of being nurturers . They are the ones the society easily point fingers to when there is no child in the marriage. Therefore these women faced with this societal complaints about their productivity will resort to the baby factory for help as she will see it as opportunity to prove to the world that she can give birth so as to wipe her shame away” Mr. John. Fieldwork 2018

Journalists that rely on police news releases and parades of suspects, which in most cases feature more female than male suspects, have tended to emphasize on the women in their coverage more than the men. This is because more women are being detained by the police, yet nothing happens to men who abandon their pregnant partners and "barren" wives. The police officers attributed this to the women's failure to disclose

such desertion to government authorities and the police, which may have resulted in the men's detention.

The women, for their part, attribute their silence to a concern that law enforcement officers will dismiss and ignore their allegations; some women claim they are unaware that they can report such incidents to the police and receive justice. Men and women are both participants in the practice, however women and girls are typically the majority of those displayed by the cops. Journalists backed up this claim.

‘‘Women and girls usually get involved through the connection of men as they are lured by these men who go about the villages to assure them of a good place to give birth to unwanted pregnancies. Men are the ones in the factory getting women pregnant for a fee’’.
Fieldwork 2018.

Police parading women and girls with their pregnancies and newborns, which journalists feast on, abound in the media; these journalists broadcast their images and films without regard for the fact that these women and girls are victims or survivors of society's poor cultural and traditional system. Cultural and traditional behaviors, according to Ogun-dipe-Leslie (1984, 1985), have a harmful impact on women. This, she claims, is what African feminism aims to ‘‘eradicate, not only women, but families, men, children, and the nation, without which most women feel their emancipation is incomplete.’’

This emancipation asserts, among other things, that women should not be mocked for not having children, and that any traditional and cultural behaviors that are damaging to women who are unable to bear children should be abandoned. It's also paradoxical that a society that claims to appreciate children despises and stigmatizes adolescent pregnancies, their offspring, and adopted children.

Persecuting women for their "inability" to conceive and have children, as well as teenage girls who give birth outside of marriage, is not acceptable, but it has been identified as one of the facilitators and bases for the development and spread of the "baby factory" phenomenon in southeastern Nigeria. African women writers have moved from feminism to women's studies in order to uphold the rights and dignity of women in Africa, prompting Boyce (1995) to argue that their goal is to advocate and actively seek the liberation and humanization of women, not to hate men or to seek a sex change or to behave like men.

Furthermore, journalists rarely explore and broadcast the situations that forced some of these pregnant girls and women to sell their infants, as if she got herself pregnant, in their reporting on the females arrested for baby factory crime. The reportage also downplay the stress and social stigma that come with teenage pregnancy, as well as the obstacles that 'barren' women who sought help from the factory encountered before turning to the factory for help. This necessitates the hiring of female reporters and editors who are sensitive to gender issues. As a result, the newspapers portray the guys as passive or nonexistent participants in the crime.

“Churches disguised to be offering deliverance for barren women but police found out that it was fake miracle. A herb medicine is administered to the women to get their stomach to become swollen then after nine months, the church in connivance with baby factory operators will bring babies from the baby factory and give to these women then the women will come out to give wonderful testimonies that they gave birth through the man of God’s prayers whereas, it is all fake”. A journalist. Fieldwork 2018

As a result, the media is also silent on this heinous male crime, as no arrest or prosecution of any male suspect for abandoning their partners or children was reported in any of the newspapers analyzed or interview transcripts.

To summarize, field interviews revealed that women are more involved in the baby factory operation as a result of society's and culture's attitudes regarding women who have not yet given child. They are under pressure to demonstrate that they are fertile, but it is also a psychological and biological urge to feel fulfilled as an adult female. Many homes have been demolished, and women have been forced to flee their homes. Therefore, the burden to prove fertility is on the women.

“In our society when couples do not have fruit of the womb, people point fingers to the women, they hardly blame the men so the burden of having a child, rests with the woman. She would therefore do all in her powers to get a child and that is why you see that majority of those arrested are women. You also know that in Africa adoption is not recognized, so they go to the baby factory to hid from the reality of childlessness due to societal pressure to get children but strangely do

not want adopted children, they are looking for biological children to inherit property and carry on with the family name and lineage that is why they go to traditional healers to fake pregnancy and go to baby factory to buy babies. Baby factory is a booming business due to the demands for babies and there is a pool of these babies from unmarried teenage girls' pregnancies'' Community leader. Fieldwork 2018

This is one of the reasons feminist writers have concluded that, despite being on the receiving end of both society and nature, women have nowhere else to turn for emancipation but themselves. Feminism, according to Boyce (1995:18), is a body of social theory that advocates and actively seeks the freedom and humanisation of women in society.

The media should project in their reporting on the proliferation of baby factories the need for women's emancipation through advocacy and enlightenment as tools for checking the excesses of cultural and societal attitudes against women's reproduction, which the media should project in their reporting on the proliferation of baby factories but sadly has yet to catch on to and exemplify .

This is one of the reasons that feminists writers have opined women, though being at the receiving end of both culture and nature have nowhere else but themselves to rely on for their emancipation. This emancipation of women by women is what made Boyce, (1995:18) to view Feminism as a body of social philosophy that advocates and actively seeks the liberation and humanisation of women in society.

The need for the emancipation of women by advocacy and enlightenment as tools for checking the excesses of cultural and societal attitude against women's reproduction which the media should project in their reportage on baby factory proliferation but sadly is yet to catch on to and exemplify in terms of being gender and women sensitive in their reportage of concerns that affect women and men.

This lack of media sensitivity to women's plights orchestrated by nature which pegs woman's child bearing age and especially culture promoted by patriarchy was what Ogundipe-Leslie (1994) condemned as she reveals that the concept of womanhood was a complex one in Africa and Nigeria in particular adding that "We tend to think that womanhood refers to the biological being; but womanhood is constructed".

“This abandonment forced a lot of the girls with teenage pregnancies to resort to baby factory for succour”.Except for the girls they use to breed the babies which can be poor but poverty is not an excuse. From reporting it, it is obvious that although both men and women are involved, the women bear the brunt. They are the ones who carry the pregnancy for nine months and when they are arrested, the law enforcement agents hardly go after the men who get them pregnant and abandoned them.” A journalist Fieldwork 2018

To summarize, the media puts all of the information they receive about the baby factory together rather than assessing it through the prism of gender. Without a doubt, media executives have a responsibility to develop gender sensitivity and reflect it in their reports on the baby factory; failure to do so results in a clear prejudice against women in their reporting. Similarly, while arguing for an enlightenment program on gender sensitivity.

Simone de Beauvoir puts it clearly, "We are born female but we become women," while supporting the reconstruction of gender roles and understanding it as a social construct. Women and men are born as biological females and males but are constructed by their societies into what the specific society thinks constitutes a woman or a man.

“ The Igbos like other Africans are looking for biological children especially a male child to inherit property and carry on with the family name and lineage. A woman is targeted when her marriage does not produce a child and when she has only female children” Mr. Ben. Fieldwork 2018.

Rather than judging the information received about the baby factory through the lens of gender, the media combines it all. Media executives, without a doubt, have a responsibility to develop gender sensitivity and reflect it in their stories on the baby factory; failing to do so leads in blatant bias against women in their reportage. Similarly, while advocating for an enlightenment program on gender sensitivity, Simone de Beauvoir states emphatically, "We are born female, but we become women," while advocating for the reconstruction of gender roles and an appreciation of gender as a social construct.

Biologically, women and men are females and males, but their communities are not. In all, the newspapers have largely portrayed baby factory in southeastern Nigeria as a female crime as the reports criminalized them.

‘I was introduced to one prophetess Chinwe and she said she combines prayers and traditional medicine which she claims she inherited from her mother. For the period of nine months that I was with her, she treated me but she said her herbs cannot make me ovulate so she told me about baby factory. I was desperate because I have been looking for a child for more than ten years. Baby factory client. Fieldwork 2018

Catherine Achonolu, in her work in sexual and sexuality politics, deconstructs this criminalization and asserts that there is no need to shame women. She claims that motherism's focus is the concentration of mother as an ontological category in the discursive formulation of women's experience. She believes this is why many African women will go to great lengths to have children in order to be considered moms.

To this purpose, she developed and articulated a discipline to study women in connection to their many cultural and national aspirations and demands, their history, sociology, and anthropology, their rights, psychology, bodies, and contributions, as well as their history, sociology, and anthropology. national objectives and needs of women, their history, sociology and anthropology, their rights, psychology, bodies and their contributions to human society and knowledge – everything about women.

"One did not have to be a feminist to engage in Women Studies," says Ogundipe, who goes on to say that the next step should be the study of men and women and the gender politics that connect them, because women do not exist in a vacuum in society and women and men are more complex than sexual identification. The study of roles and rights leads to an understanding of obvious gender issues, as opposed to the study of women alone leading to gender studies.

4.3.2 Analysis of reportage on the Involvement of male and female in baby factory in southeastern Nigeria In 2014

From the reports obtained from table 1 show the newspapers' bias towards the women arrested. The Punch newspaper report of May 6th 2014 titled ‘ Two in court for selling children’ Pg 4. Table 1 contains more of such reports .In one of the reports

shows two women arrested for the crime. One of them is the mother of the child who said she had to sell her child as she cannot fend for the baby. Also, the Punch of March 24th 2014 pg 4 reportage titled “ Baby merchant uses vulnerable girls for business”.

On the 3rd of March 2014, Tribune reported the arrest of a young couple who specialized in stealing babies. The couple, Friday Chibueze and Amauche Chibueze, was paraded in front of newsmen and the State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Hassan Karma, disclosed the couple's strategy. CP . Hassan disclosed to reporters that other robbery, murder, forgery, and kidnap suspects were arrested alongside with the couple. The CP further revealed that during interrogation, the suspects admitted to stealing ten children from various hospitals around the state. A nurse, Ogechi Okoye of Reigns Hospital, Ebubechukwu Okpalu of Health Care Centre, Nnobi, and Eberechukwu Okala of Chidera Specialist Hospital were also listed as conspirators. The State Commissioner of Police told newsmen.

“We have been recording incidents of child stealing for some time now, where children of mothers who gave birth in hospitals are stolen. The command's Special Anti-Robbery Squad apprehended one female who specialized in kidnapping newborn babies from hospitals throughout the state and its environs. They disguise themselves as a couple, enter hospitals, and pretend to be happy for the arrival of newborns to unsuspecting moms, only to summon their gang members with guns, who forcefully kidnap the babies,”

In a similar vein, the Daily Sun (05/06/2014) reported on the arrest of Mrs. Esther Akunmade, a 52-year-old lady, for reportedly running a baby factory in Imo State by men from the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corp. Deputy Commandant Ade Michael told reporters in Imo State that the suspected baby factory operator was apprehended after police received a tip from members of the Umutueke Community, where the accused baby factory was operating.

The suspect in jail, on the other hand, refuted the accusations, stating that she had been operating an unlicensed maternity home for about a year. Four women and two one-week-old newborns were discovered at the alleged maternity residence after a search by NSCDC men, according to Mr. Ade Michael. The woman allegedly bribed his

men with N100,000, which they collected but delivered to newsmen, according to the NSCDC boss.

Police nabbed a 54-year-old man named Nkem Nwokocha and his wife, who were believed to own a baby factory, in one of the reported arrests. The suspect in arrest, on the other hand, rejected the claims, stating that she was the owner of an unlicensed maternity facility.. Chidinma Ifeanyi Chukwu, 29, from Isiala Mbano in Imo State, Kelechi Sampson, 20, from Mboko Umuanunu Village in Obingwa and Happiness Godwin, 29, from Mboko Umuanunu Village in Obingwa, were among the pregnant ladies rescued. The police responded to a tip that the suspects were running a child trafficking home, according to the report.

“ Reports on baby factory are the ones the police churns out to the media. When they arrest a suspect and rescue the victims, they call on the media to showcase their achievements and we found out that the women are more in the arrest and as victims. We report it accordingly since there are no other ways we can get the information” Journalist – Fieldwork 2018

Some respondents ascribed the engagement of more females than men in the baby factory to the luring of young girls to become breadwinners and early pregnancy.

“Some of the pregnant girls’ mothers and their fathers are aware that they are selling the babies. The boyfriends who get them pregnant are usually in the know but some of the girls claim that the men who got them pregnant rejected the pregnancy and they have nobody to cater for them and the unborn baby which made them to resort to baby factory to sell the child so they can move on with their lives”. Police Inspector. Fieldwork 2018



Plate 4.5: Rescued pregnant female teenagers with a male.

Source: The Punch newspaper / March 8th 2014

Some of the female and male masterminds of the baby factory phenomenon were nurses, midwives, or doctors, often adept in gynaecology and obstetrics, according to newspaper sources.

'' When it becomes obvious that these women cannot get pregnant, the herbal woman would resort to desperate measures by giving these women herbs and concoction that would make their stomach bulge Some of these women are aware that they have fake pregnancy but others claimed they do not know the pregnancy was faked. This category of women attributes their involvement in the fake pregnancy scam to years of childlessness, and failure to adopt and get orthodox medical help to conceive. Some of them say they get involved in the scam to save their marriage'' Journalist .Fieldwork 2018.

The press also said that the police command rescued 17 pregnant teenagers aged 14 to 25 from the Ahamefula Motherless Babies home in Umuaka, Njaba Local Government. The proprietor of the so-called motherless kids home known as "Madam One Thousand" imprisoned these clearly exhausted girls against their will, claiming that their parents were unaware of their existence there. According to a 17-year-old girl's story, when she found out she was pregnant, the doctor who performed the test enticed her to keep the pregnancy by promising to send her to a facility where she would receive free maternal care.

One pregnant 21-year-old lady told reporters that her mother drove her there, unaware of her mother's interactions with the operator. Such incidents were captured during suspect parades in various interrogation facilities.

''My brother brought me to the baby factory. He told me that I am coming to work as a sales girl but ended up here. I was pregnant for my boyfriend so he told me that instead of staying at home for the shame to be too much for my parents, I should come with him for the sales girl job. I believed him but look at my life now --- Rescued lady . Fieldwork 2018

Looking at newspaper reportage of the phenomenon shows a bias for the female suspects and victims' involvement as they are not the same negative sentiments towards the male. Religion was used to cover baby factory crime and this was reported by the newspapers. For example, authorities in Abia State arrested two prophetesses for stealing and selling a day-old baby girl the child of one Miss Grace, 23, from Abiriba in the state's Ohafia Local Government Area. Loreta Emmanuel and Sylva, were the masterminds and they identified themselves as prophetesses; a disguise they used in luring vulnerable women and girls.

According to the Daily Sun, she considered hauling the man to the Aba welfare department so that he would be forced to look after her till she was put to bed because she had no one to aid her through the pregnancy but the women discouraged her. When looking at newspaper coverage of the phenomena, it is clear that there is a prejudice in favor of female suspects and victims, as there aren't the same unfavorable feelings toward males.

Newspapers reported on how religion was used to cover up baby factory criminality. Authorities in Abia State, for example, detained two prophetesses for snatching and selling a day-old baby girl from Abiriba in the state's Ohafia Local Government Area, the child of Miss Grace, 23.

The masterminds were Loreta Emmanuel and Sylva, who disguised themselves as prophetesses in order to entice vulnerable women and girls. She pondered transporting the man to the Aba welfare center, according to the Daily Sun. Loreta, a mother of seven who lived in the same neighborhood as Grace, was said to have been informed of her plans. Loreta, on the other hand, advised her against it, telling her that she would take her to a prayer ministry and pray for her boyfriend to change his mind.

Loreta accompanied the girl to Prophetess Sylva's prayer home in Umuocho village, Osusuamaukwa in the state's Obingwa Local Government Area in August last year. Grace waited in the prayer house for months without receiving an answer to her prayers. They used false prophecies to fool her. Grace decided to stay with them since she was afraid of dying.

When Grace's due date approached, Sylva escorted her to their home and introduced her to an Apostolic Church in Ekeakpara, Osisioma Ngwa Local Government Area in Abia State, which she went on occasion. Grace gave birth to a baby girl at the Apostolic Church on January 2, and she and the baby were brought back to Sylva's house hours later. However, as Grace went to take her bath the next

day, something unexpected happened. Another woman later identified as Ijeoma, a nurse, had already paid them a visit.

As she exited the bathroom, Grace noticed the two prophetesses and the nurse moving the baby into a waiting car and when she questioned where they were taking her kid, they told her that the baby was very unwell and that they wanted to send her to a hospital where she could be treated. Grace said she wanted the National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons and Other Related Matters (NAPTIP) to intervene even though she had no one to take a stand for her.

The two women became evasive when the matter was reported to the police. They couldn't be arrested since they had both packed up their belongings and relocated their missions. Loreta's ministry moved from No. 42 Amos Street to Okohia Street, then to Umuode in the Osisioma Ngwa Local Government, where she was detained, while Sylva's ministry moved from Ekeakpara to Abala. They were accused of admitting to selling the child for N300,000 to a woman in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, with the assistance of Ijeoma, the nurse, who remained at large. In this narrative, there was no mention of the police detaining or inviting the man who got Grace pregnant and abandoned her.

She would have informed the detectives what brought her to the prophetess, but because her partner was not charged with child desertion, the journalists covering the story focused only on the women, the prophetesses, and Grace, leaving out the man who is at the foundation of the problem. Buyers and sellers from Lagos, Rivers, and Ogun states have been drawn to the lucrative nature of infant transactions.

According to the account, almost every procession of suspects featured ladies from the baby factory. According to the Daily Sun newspaper, Obinna Obu was detained while negotiating the sale of his six-year-old daughter, Adaobi, for N500,000 with his accomplices. Southeastern Nigeria is battling with a human trafficking problem, as evidenced by the discovery of a number of black market maternity homes following the UNESCO investigation. In general, young women have sought refuge in such homes to avoid the stigma associated with pregnancies conceived outside of marriage.

They are paid a share of the proceeds from the sale of the baby. Male offspring normally demand a higher price than infant females, and infertile couples are common buyers. The baby factory phenomenon has elicited a wide range of responses in Nigerian media, including news, features, editorials, and reportage, which has elicited

a wide range of replies in phone-in sessions and television special attention. The public has an equal opportunity to comment on the reports about the baby factory that have been published online, and researchers have also written about what they have seen or heard.

On the other hand, Debra Spitulnik (1993:295) claims that this view of the media as cultural vehicles and ways of picturing and imaging communities has had little impact and application. It was also stated that understanding the various discourses, ideological orientations, narrative tactics, image production, and impacts of media products demands multi-dimensional close textual readings

.This type of textual analysis is important for establishing the possibility that the media are sites of collective representations (and collective mediations) in modern society, but an increasing number of scholars have argued that this approach is insufficient if it fails to analyze the culture of media production (Ballew 1991, 1992: 23; Micheals, 1991), the political economy and social history of media institutions (Ang 1991; Dening 1987; Edwards and Gatton 1992), and the linguistic culture of media institutions (Ang 1991; Dening

According to Kellner (1995), focusing on texts and audiences to the exclusion of analysis of the social relations and institutions through which texts are produced and consumed truncates cultural studies, just as reception analysis that fails to show how audiences are produced through their social relations and how, to some extent, culture itself helps produce audiences and their receivables trumps cultural studies.

The question of where to situate meaning and ideology development in the mass communication process, as well as how to characterize agency and interpretation processes, has become a fundamental difficulty in this theoretical reformulation of media power. The linear model, which consists of three discrete stages: message production, message transmission, and message receipt, has been the most frequent form of paradigm of the mass communication process since the 1980s.

In this formulation, “the message” is often regarded as the locus of cultural meaning, as well as a forceful refraction or reproduction of society's prevailing beliefs by certain theorists.



Plate 4.6: Baby factory operators arrested by the police

Source: Nigeria Police 2018



Plate 4. 7: Husband and wife arrested for selling their baby.

Source: Nigeria Police 2018



Plate 4.8: Suspected male and female arrested for operating baby factory

Source: Nigeria Police/ Sun newspaper, April 20th 2014

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Plate 4.9: Husband and wife arrested for trafficking babies
Source—Nigeria police 2018

More young girls are being raped and impregnated out of wedlock, while others are pushed to become breadwinners, and when married women buy or sell babies, the newspapers rarely name their husbands, who may have frustrated the women to the point of purchasing or selling babies due to a need.

“ It is not my wish to be a baby factory operator. I see the girls in need and I tried to help them because they have been abandoned. I only serve as a link between the girls with unwanted pregnancies and the women in need of children. They are mature people so I see it as helping society and solving problems for the two parties” Baby factory operator . Fieldwork 2018.

Other trafficked women, dubbed "the Willing Mothers," refuse to retain the babies because they remind them of their rape and human trafficking experiences outside the Nigerian beach. They blame rape and human trafficking for their role in the baby factory. According to reports in the media, some of these needy women have been cheated out of their hard-earned money by dubious men or spiritualists, with some of them paying the ultimate price of being murdered by those seeking to rape them or extortionists afraid of being discovered.

Many other people have tried and failed to find medical and natural solutions. When faced with an issue, "infertile" women will seek assistance from a baby factory. There is evidence that some people would go to extremes at this point, such as snatching newborns, buying and "harvesting" babies, which created the baby factory phenomena (Huntley,2013).

According to media accounts, the 'baby factory' phenomena has evolved into a global, fatal, and sophisticated phenomenon, with various syndicates hunting for undesired pregnancies, married couples, and relatives prepared to sell their children to pay off personal debts or escape poverty.

Nigeria isn't the only country to consider. African countries such as Ethiopia, Ghana, Namibia, Benin, and Gabon, according to reports, engage in baby factory or "harvest" activities. Trafficking youngsters get up in the hands of criminal organizations through adoption processes in Europe and America. Migrant smuggling is defined by the UN Smuggling Protocol as the illegal passage of persons across international borders for monetary gain (2000).

Despite the fact that the UN definitions represent a significant international agreement on the definition of human trafficking, many commentators have noted the difficulty in drawing clear and consistent lines on the basis of consent between human trafficking and migrant smuggling, or between criminal accomplice and victim (Gallagher 2001:2, Lee 2005: 14 Morrison 1998: 17, Munro 2001).

The United Nations Organization for Education, Science, and Culture (UNESCO) first disclosed evidence of "baby harvesting," "baby trade," or "baby factory" in a policy document titled "Human Trafficking in Nigeria: Root Causes and Recommendations" in 2006. After financial fraud and drug trafficking, child trafficking is Nigeria's third most significant crime (Yvonne 2013:1;UNICEF 2005:7).

“The “Willing Mothers” are women trafficked outside the country that in one way or the other have fallen victim of rape or were used as sex slaves. When they fall pregnant and have children for their abusers, these women are willing to give up their children without collecting any money as they want to move on with their lives. These women usually find themselves in baby factory to give up such children for little or nothing”. NAPTIP Officer .Fieldwork 2018

4.4 The cultural attitude of the Igbo male and female toward the baby factory phenomenon along gender line

The Igbos' cultural viewpoint demonstrates that they view baby factories as un-cultural. The Igbo male and female respondents agreed that the conduct of buying and selling kids is frowned upon in their culture in southeastern Nigeria. The reaction of Igbo males and females to the occurrence of the baby factory, on the other hand, differs. While the Igbo female claimed that cultural practices that prioritize a male heir and biological children encourage baby factory realities, the Igbo male disagreed, claiming that women who do not have children are cared for by the culture since the culture does not permit the men to divorce their wives on the ground of infertility.

The females, on the other hand, blame society and nature for their participation in and patronage of baby factory on cultural dispositions upheld by patriarchy. The Igbo male and female agree that there is the need for government to see the issue of baby factory as a national problem instead of engaging it as a female and southeastern crime. Cultural attitudes toward associated concerns among the Igbos, such as

barrenness, child adoption, male-child syndrome, and teen pregnancy outside of wedlock, were recognized as emerging themes in offering a deeper understanding of cultural attitudes toward the baby factory phenomenon within the region.

Women who do not have children, according to the Igbo male, are looked after by the culture since they cannot be thrown out of their husband's house when he dies, but are simply entitled to a roof over her head and care judged appropriate by the male successor. Obviously, in Igbo land, the male heir wields so much power and carries the authority of the one in charge of the home after the father and husband have passed away, as he is recognized by the culture and society as the most "befitting" bloodline to take over the helms of affairs, and this cultural practice is a push factor for some "barren" women to seek their own heir from baby factory.

As a result, the female respondents acknowledge that as long as culture prioritizes biological children, particularly males, as heirs, women without biological children have the right to remain in their husband's home, but culture can prohibit her from inheriting his possessions. As a result, it is a fallacy to argue that culture frowns on the baby factory issue. The reason for this is that patriarchy predominates in Nigerian society, with the Igbos emphasizing this attribute the most.

The Igbo men and women also want the government to recognize the issue of baby factories as a national problem and address it from the core causes of poverty, culture, and a high prevalence of rape and adolescent pregnancy by providing inexpensive and accessible fertility choices, as well as adoption.

Some media stories and interviews with paraded women blame their involvement in the baby factory on rape, teenage pregnancy, and bareness, among other things. For example, in Umuaka, Imo State, police raided a home and rescued roughly 26 young girls from a woman who ran a baby factory masquerading as a maternity care and drinking water facility. 17 pregnant teenagers were rescued by the Imo State Police Command from a syndicate in the state's Njaba Local Government Area in the same month. When the cops arrived, eleven infants were about to be sold.

During the procedure, a young man admitted to being the father of the girls' children. In addition, police discovered two baby factories, each with seven pregnant minors and eight pregnant mothers, and the victims were rescued. One of those seized was a 16-year-old girl who claimed she was promised money in exchange for abandoning her child after delivery by her boyfriend and family. Her child was to be auctioned for N300, 000 (about \$1,621). Over sixty infants have been sold, according

to security sources. The following thematic analysis of the transcripts demonstrates these differences and how they influence Igbo male and female attitudes regarding the baby factory.

“The Igbos belong to an ethnic group in the Southeastern part of Nigeria with a strong penchant for patriarchy. In the eyes of the Igbo man, if you do not have at least a son, you do not have anything in this life. Thus, in typical Igbo culture, having a child is not as important as having a male child. A son means having an extra voice to defend the family and extend the family lineage. Women who give birth to a girl-child in Igbo land are unhappy at their first delivery because of the fear of rejection and disappointment by the husband”. Fieldwork 2018.

In addition, two baby factories were uncovered, each with seven pregnant minors and eight pregnant mothers, and the victims were rescued. One of those apprehended was a 16-year-old girl who claimed she was promised money in exchange for her boyfriend and family abandoning her kid after delivery. Her infant was to be auctioned for N300, 000 (\$1,621) at the end of the month. According to security sources, around sixty infants have been sold. These disparities are demonstrated in the following thematic analysis of the transcripts, as well as how they influence Igbo male and female perspectives toward the baby factory.

“The male factor in our culture is serious and some barren women can be pushed into buying babies especially baby boys. Men are supposed to be the only inheritor as daughters cannot inherit their father’s property. So in a case where I don’t have a male child, I would have to provide one so if it means buying baby boy is the option I have, I will buy and train the child to be mine”.- Miss Juliet. Fieldwork 2018.

The Nigeria Police Force, Civil Defence, and agents of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons have arrested suspects involved in baby factory according to several news reports. Many of the victims and perpetrators of this crime are currently in police custody and NAPTIP is working with some of them to rehabilitate them. The question here is whether commercial mass baby manufacturing factories in Nigeria are run by mafia-style organizations, given the regular discovery of

commercial mass baby manufacturing factories in Nigeria, their liquidation, and the rapid reappearance of several such commercial mass baby manufacturing factories in different parts of the country.

The male child pricing structure within the baby factory is higher than the female child. This is attributed to the premium placed on male children as heirs and for bloodline procreation. As a result, the Igbos place a higher priority on male offspring in the household Nwaoga (2013), Ahaoma (2014), Madike (2013 (Ojedokun and Atoi, 2012).

“A male child costs N600, 000, while a female is pegged at N300, 000. The teenage mother that delivers a baby boy earns N100, 000, while N40, 000 is the reward for a mother whose newborn baby is a female. Twins can be bought for N1.3million and only the affluent can afford the luxury to have them” Baby factory owner .
Fieldwork 2018

Although, the male child is important for lineage propagation, the Igbo males disagreed with the women on the topic of traveling to a baby factory to buy baby boys. The culture of male heir, disposition toward adoption, teenage pregnancy outside of wedlock, greed, poverty, get rich syndrome, ritual, bareness, and others were blamed by Igbo women, journalists, and security agents for the baby factory phenomenon in southeastern Nigeria as facilitators of the baby factory realities.

“The culture of the Igbos is strict against anyone that is not a male bloodline. The bloodline is the future so if a man does not have a bloodline, it is difficult to bring a stranger or an adopted son to be his heir .Yes he can do that but there is what is called ‘iche’ such a person cannot become a title chief or head of the village. That position is for the Igbo male bloodline. In a way, this can promote baby factory but the promoters of the culture do not see it that way. They see it from the angle of upholding the culture and preserving it and also ensuring that the Igbo tribe continues to exist- Mr. Gabriel. Fieldwork 2018

Similarly, in southeastern Nigeria, an upsurge in charges of kidnapping and the selling of male infants has been blamed on the Igbo culture's insistence on a male heir. This plays out in the constant arrest of syndicates who specialized in abducting baby boys and selling them due to their high demand . Several such arrest were made by the

police but one which stood out is that of Prince Oriaku, a 12-month-old boy, who was abducted in Umuezeala Umuozu village in Imo State on June 1, 2014.

The mother of the boy, Peace Oriaku gave him to her younger sister so she could bathe, only for her sister to hand him over to an unknown person who offered to help her with the boy but took him with him. The Abia State Police Command also nabbed a young man for selling his new baby boy for two hundred thousand Naira (N200, 000).

Aside stealing baby boys, there were reported arrest of parents selling their boys due to the high demand for them. One of such parents arrested gave reasons for his action.

Various cases of both male and female masterminds were reported in the pages of the selected dailies within the period under study. According to the report the raid brings to about 125 the number of girls the police have rescued since 2011 in ‘baby factories’, most of which were located in southeastern states of the country.

“ My plan to sell my baby boy is because I need money to pay my school fees. My girlfriend said she cannot take care of our new child unless I marry her. I don’t want to marry her because of my education. I got a buyer since she had abandoned the baby to me so I felt let me give him to someone who needs a child and I can get money from it to pay my school fees. That was why I decided to give the child away instead of dumping him to die”.Father arrested for selling his baby.
Fieldwork 2018

Southeast Nigeria is grappling with a human trafficking epidemic, with a series of black market maternity homes discovered in the last two years. In most cases, young women have run to such homes to avoid the stigma attached to pregnancies conceived outside marriage. They take a portion of the money earned from selling the baby

“Apart from the men who snatch babies at gun-points, the mode of operation of the ladies among the baby thieves is that they will pretend to be very friendly even in your own house. They will pretend to care for your baby and any step away from them, the baby will no longer be your own. Most times, the baby thieves go to where events like marriages, burials, etc are taking place and participate in house chores behaving as if they are members of one of the families that visited. So if you are

not careful, you will be accommodating a baby thief in your house’’

The United Nations Organization for Education, Science, and Culture (UNESCO) was the first to bring the baby factory phenomena to the public's attention. According to UNESCO's policy document "Human trafficking in Nigeria: Root Causes and Recommendations," published in 2006, the first incidents of "baby harvesting," "baby trade," or "baby factory" were reported in 2006. Three Nigerian states were identified as hotbeds for baby factory operators in the survey: Abia, Ebonyi, and Lagos (Huntley, 2013:6). The woman who purchased the infant boy explained that she had been looking for a male heir to carry on her husband's heritage. The woman who bought the baby boy said she has been in need of a male heir to continue her husband's lineage

‘‘ I have four daughters but no male child of my own. I decided to buy the boy so he can become my heir and continue with my family's lineage. I see this as the way out as all my efforts to give birth to a male child were not successful. I do not want a situation whereby after my husband had died, my brother in-laws will take over his property including his houses because they will say I do not have a male child for my husband’’. Fieldwork 2018

Following the cultural practice of placing premium on male child as the heir , baby factory operators are taking a cue as they have seen it as a money making venture due to the high demand for male children and the high prices attached to their purchase. Therefore, they became inventive and started exploiting the system for quick gain by employing men to get teenagers pregnant. Twenty six pregnant girls between 14 and 17 years of age in various stages of pregnancy were rescued from a baby factory disguised as a skill acquisition centre in Abia state .One of the girls, narrated her experience.

‘‘ My elder sister brought me to the home to learn a skill. One of the boys in the home called James started hanging out with me. I got pregnant and told him but he denied it. I found out that other young girls my age were also pregnant by other boys in the home. My sister came and told me that having a child out of wedlock is a taboo in our place so we should sell the boy as soon as I

give birth but police came and arrested me and the other girls” Fieldwork 2018.

The relationship between culture, society and the media is, in large part, the subject of a book of the same title edited by Michael Gurevitch, Tony Benneth, James Curran and Janet Woollacott. In their articulation of the complex interactions of culture, society and the media, nearly all of the essays contained in the book recognize the fact that the sociology of mass communications has expanded significantly in recent decades following the rise of new theoretical insights in the field.

In his contribution to the book, Tony Benneth (1983) points out that the vocabulary of "mass," "media," and "communications" frequently includes assumptions about the nature of such media, the processes of which they are a part, and the ways in which these are linked to broader social and political processes and relationships. One of the mockeries of the baby factory frenzy is that some of the locations where this heinous and illegal enterprise thrives are genuinely established as non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

“I decided to go into this business because I can’t stand teenagers aborting their babies. So what I do is to link them up with infertile women who pay for these babies. One of the children was born by a mentally challenged woman. I did not commit any crime by giving the babies to people who would take care of them. I am doing this business for humanitarian reasons and not for monetary gain” Baby factory Owner. Fieldwork 2018

The owners utilize the government's support to cover up their heinous activities. The Imo State police command recovered Sixteen expectant girls aged Fourteen to Nineteen from the Ezuma private hospital, according to Ndidi (2013). The facility's owner, a doctor, was apprehended and paraded alongside his victims. The entrepreneur is also in charge of the Ezuma Women and Children Rights Protection Initiative, a non-profit organization (EWCRPI).

“Families want children. In my case I have been married for eight years without a child. I tried to adopt but each time I correct the girl I adopted, my mother-in-law would scold me for that. I have received several calls to come take new born babies so that I can pretend to be a mother. I have tried IVF but my husband is not

supportive. Last year, he moved out of the house and his family too. It has been very difficult. My marriage has hit the rock but I will not go to baby factory no matter the pressure”.Fieldwork 2018.

In this regard, Kellner (1995) contends that focusing on texts and audiences to the exclusion of analysis of the social relations and institutions through which texts are produced and consumed truncates cultural studies, as does reception analysis that fails to indicate how audiences are produced through their social relations and how, to some extent, culture itself helps produce audiences and their receivables.

“There is need for reorientation within cultures that see male children as superior to female children and childless women as scum. By taking the right steps to provide affordable fertility centres all over the country, women can have access to conception methods instead of them going to herbal treatment doctors who are fraudsters promoting baby factory for quick financial gains. Also, teenage pregnancy issue of condemning and abandoning teenage pregnant girls fuel baby factory ”. Mr. Nathaniel Fieldwork 2018.

Adoption should be the first choice but this is not the case due to the nature of Igbo culture as it has not has not been generally accepted. Child adoption, on the other hand, is a tough social process in Nigeria in general and even more so in Igboland, where a "bastards" mentality prevails. Among the issues are individual, family, and community sociocultural habits, as well as inheritance.

According to media sources, approximately 77 adolescent pregnant girls were rescued from baby factories where their infants were sold for between N25, 000.00 and N30, 000.00. In Abia State, fourteen pregnant girls were rescued from a daycare center, and forty-two more from a charity center. (Huntley 2013).

The Nigeria media has reported on numbers of issues and contexts of the baby factory phenomenon. These reports have not only created awareness of the phenomenon, it has also stimulated interest in arresting the perpetrators and exposing the tricks involved in luring the victims. Baby factory has been described by the media as a subset of child trafficking, and is a security risk in Nigeria especially in Southeastern Nigeria where the phenomenon is widespread.

A situation where babies are being sold provokes thoughts of slavery since no one knows where these babies may eventually find themselves. They may fall into the hands of ritualists or any other criminally-minded persons who may use them for sinister purposes; child sex trade or pornography, child labour and child soldiers in war-torn countries. They may also become pawns in the hands of terrorist organisations.

Also, the operations of legal adoption centres are affected when these girls with unwanted pregnancies prefer going to the baby factories to make gains from the sale of their babies. Little wonder then that the phenomenon has become an illegal invention of a new adoption technique. The baby factory issue is a societal problem that violates the rights of children and vulnerable girls who may die while being compelled to give birth to several children for harvesting.

Women in the South-South area's cities, Abuja and Lagos, are the primary consumers of the babies produced by the country's baby factories in the country's south-eastern region (Olaniyi,2001; Onyemelukwe-Onuobia,2013). Selling and buying these new born babies is a national embarrassment and efforts to curtail it so far seems futile (Moore, 2001; Okey, 2013; Olaniyi, 2001; Onyemelukwe Onuobia, 2013; Nielson, 2008;Taiwo,2013).

“The law against bigamy is hardly enforced and such women are left to look for solutions alone while their married husband freely get women pregnant outside without any consequence. What do you expect a desperate woman to do to remain in her husband’s house? The woman bears the brunt of a childless marriage .The trauma can be so unbearable that they seek help from baby factories. The laws, culture and tradition work hard against women who are forced to seek illegal ways of staying in their marriages”. Mr. Godfrey Fieldwork 2018

Cultural disposition to barrenness and infertility has been discovered as contributing to the baby factory phenomenon in southeastern Nigeria . Many married couples have become desperate as a result of infertility, and they have tried everything humanly imaginable to have children .Invitro fertilization, zygote intra fallopian transfer, gamete intra fallopian transfer, sperm injection or surrogacy, and the use of gestational carriers are just a few of the assisted

reproduction methods available today to help childless couples. This male child syndrome follows closely behind the terrible and horrible problem of barrenness in Igbo marriages.

Cultural disposition towards teenage pregnancy outside of marriage is contributing to the baby factory phenomenon in southeastern Nigeria as these pregnancies are sacrileges that bring shame to her family and the community; the girl's parents will be disappointed and ashamed of her. People will sneer at them for not properly educating their daughter (Uzuegbu, 2012 : 23).

Some parents will even send their daughters away so as to escape public scorn. She will be made to remain indoors throughout her pregnancy. (Uzuegbu, 2012). When she does find a husband, it may be as a second wife to a man whose first wife had no children or sons, to a widower, to a man her father's age, or to a man who falls short of her marriage expectations.

To avoid ridicule, she may never return to school, and her dreams of becoming a doctor or lawyer are destroyed. Most teen moms are married off by their families to prevent the disgrace of bearing a child out of wedlock, according to (Mkpa 2011).

“Well, they may say culture is not against female but there is emphasis on male children so as long as there is emphasis on male children and having children in general coupled with the fact that the fertility treatment, adoption processes are strenuous; the fact that adopted children are not accepted, then we may continue to have this baby factory which is issue of demand and supply.
Fieldwork 2018

According to media sources, a typical baby factory syndicate in Nigeria consists of a well-established network of persons that includes corrupt medical professionals, nurses, matrons, intermediaries, clients, and victims (pregnant teenagers). The syndicates are often made up of a network of middlemen tasked with fostering first interactions between prospective purchasers and baby factory owners around the country (Falayi, 2013 : 333; Daily Sun, 26 May, 2014 : 4).

“I have female friends who have been subjected to all form of ritual bathing to free them from so called spiritual husbands all because they are looking for

children. Some of them drank concoctions made with all sorts of herbs and animals skins just because they want children. So I feel sad when any woman is arrested for buying babies, the situation is pathetic as many women had lost their marriages because they couldn't bear children for their husbands, so there is the cultural and social attitude fuelling baby factory". Fieldwork 2018

The newspaper publication reported on the buyers' preferences for the sex and number of infants (single or twins). A middleman, for example, could connect a prospective buyer in Lagos State with the proprietor of a baby factory in River State or Imo State. A 46 mother of three adult daughters purchased a baby boy in order to inherit her husband's property and keep her husband's name alive.

" I have three girls but I did not give birth to a son. When a friend of mine introduced me to the baby factory, I was reluctant. Later I felt the need to buy a baby boy so as to keep our family's name alive. I paid 300,000 for the boy and the midwife who assisted me collected N150, 000. Unknown to me, it was the father of the boy that took him to the baby factory to sell him but his wife got suspicious and reported him to the police. That was how I was arrested." Baby factory client. Fieldwork 2018.

On the reason why he sold his son, He said he he needed the money to reestablish his business and to get out of poverty. He added that he saw this as the only way he can live a better life.). Since the UNESCO 2006 report, the practice of "baby harvesting" in Nigeria has grown beyond Abia, Ebonyi, States with incidents of baby factories being documented in Ogun, Imo, Anambra, Enugu, and Port Harcourt (Eseadi,Amaka, Ikechukwu-Ilomuanya,Ogbuabor, 2015:14).

Baby factories" operate under the pretence of social welfare institutions, maternity homes, orphanages, clinics, and even water bottling plants, and can serve as alternative dubious child adoption homes until the offenders are apprehended by the public or victims.

These days, the 'baby factory' phenomenon has taken a dangerous and complex dimension as it has gone beyond a syndicate hunting for unwanted pregnancies to include married couples, relatives, parents selling their babies to offset bills or desperation to get out of poverty Agbo, (2014:39). The illicit business transaction begins after the initial contact is made.

“ I sold my son because I need money to restart my business. I felt that I will use him as a collateral then after I have built my business, I will go back and collect him but my plans backfired” Fieldwork 2018.

In certain cases, the buyer would travel to the state where the baby factory is located to pay the mutually agreed-upon transaction fee and collect a specially prepared herb or concoction that causes the client's (woman's) abdomen to protrude and/or her legs to swell as if she is pregnant. This is usually done in order to enhance the physical look of the woman in question. After nine months, the lady would return to the baby factory center and be given a newborn baby who then became her "natural" child.

Explaining how the fake pregnancies and deliveries are done , a female herbal practitioner said concoctions are administered to the women which made their stomach to protrude as if they are pregnant .

“I work as a practitioner in herbal medicine and I have clients from all over the country and abroad coming to me for herbal treatment for them to get pregnant. Some of them respond to treatment and they get pregnant after the treatment but some do not get pregnant despite all the efforts. Some of them usually become desperate and I will assist them by giving them herbs to bulge their stomach. We have a pool of pregnant girls so we take their babies and give to these infertile women in need of a child after nine months. Fieldwork 2018.

The preceding study has clearly proven that the occurrence of baby factories is a clear illustration of systemic corruption that has long characterized Nigerian society. Criminals are taking advantage of the haphazard nature of the Nigerian child adoption procedure in order to generate illicit profits by exploiting the most vulnerable. One of the reasons they said for starting a baby factory was the inheritance of a widow. While the women believed that having a kid was required before inheriting their husband's fortunes, the men disagreed.

“Well, culturally, a woman cannot inherit from her father and her husband in Igbo land. It is what her male son gets that she is entitled to have. I found

myself in that situation as a first son after my father died. My father had three wives but the second wife did not have any child for him. When he died, we held a meeting and relocated our step mother to another apartment we built for her in the family compound. I ensured that she has food and medicine and we met her other needs. She cannot lay claims to any of her husband's property. It is what we give her that she can have but we ensure she is not suffering. Mr. Itouye Fieldwork 2018.

If a pregnant adolescent miscarries, aborts the pregnancy, or loses her baby during or shortly after birth, she regains her "good girl" status and can walk around with more confidence, even if some may continue to sneer at her in secret for a year or two. Because any possible suitor who learns she is a single mother will change his mind, her chances of marriage are considerably reduced. Another cultural perspective that contributes to the existence of baby factories in eastern Nigeria is this. A woman arrested by security operatives, narrating her involvement in the baby factory phenomenon, she said

“I am a retired midwife and I have a maternity home but I am yet to register my maternity home with the Corporate Affairs Commission that is why my maternity home does not have a CAC certificate. The maternity home is in my house. I just started operating the home for a year. I am a traditional birth attendant and I know how to take care of pregnant women and giving them safe delivery with herbs. I use my home as my maternity centre but the police raided my home and called it a baby factory ” Field interview 2018

Reports obtained from security operatives, some of the operator rape their victims. This was the case of a man who was arrested by policemen for allegedly running a baby factory.

“He raped us one after another, while we were all locked up in different rooms in the clinic. He was coming to rape us one after the other. It was while he was raping one of us, that the girl fought him and wounded him with a broken glass. The girl escaped through the window and alerted the Police.” Rescued lady Fieldwork 2018

He however said he was only providing shelter for the girls. In a way he said he was playing his part in helping the girls and their unborn babies to survive after they have been deserted by their families and the men who got them pregnant.

“I only assisted the girls to get a roof over their heads after their boyfriends and family members deserted them. I am a nurse by training and some persons brought them to me to assist them until they put to bed. I did not rape the girls and I do not have any arrangement to sell their babies after birth” Fieldwork 2018

Police arrested a baby factory owner and three others. Though the owner of the alleged baby factory said the home is not a baby factory but a motherless baby home. She said those girls found with pregnancy came for ante-natal because they have cheap ante-natal services for them. But the girls alleged that she paid a man who frequently rape them.

“ I am six months pregnant. My boyfriend got me pregnant but he said he does not have the means of taking care of me and the baby. I was feeling ashamed so one aunty in my village said she can help me to get someone to buy the baby. She brought me to the baby factory and the owner of the home promised to give me N100, 000 if I deliver a baby girl and N200, 000 for a boy. I felt if the Baby is taken away from me, I can use the money to start a new life and go back to school. The others girls use to complain that a man raped them. Rescued girl. Fieldwork 2018.

The Igbo, according to Okenwa (2012), are a fantastic people with a beautiful culture and customs. The Igbos have grown to be a powerful people that appreciate personal autonomy and choices as a result of their republican way of life. Based on this concept of ingrained republicanism, adversaries describe the Igbos as fiercely autonomous and economically invincible, describing them as "usually impossible to manage or control." The Igbos have strong beliefs and a conquering spirit by nature, and they are tremendously proud of their centuries-old heritage.

A 19 year old girl said her lover abandoned her after she got pregnant

“ I came to the home to work but there was a man called Sunny. He said he loves me and we started a relationship. When I found out that I was pregnant, I told him but he said we can sell the child. It was when the police arrested us that I found out that Sunny was employed to get women and girls pregnant so that their babies can be sold” Fieldwork 2018.

Fostering an unknown infant is frowned upon in Igboland due to the traditional attitude toward adoptive children. As a result, the baby factory phenomena provides a unique option for women to obtain children in an unethical manner, avoiding the public stigma of barrenness and the cultural clutch around heredity.

“ I was employed as a gate man. But I found out that the owner wanted me to do more than that. She told me that if I can get the girls pregnant, she will give me N100,000 for my efforts. I have gotten two girls pregnant but she said it was when the children are born and sold that I will get my money” A paid contractor. Fieldwork 2018.

Police attached to the Area command Abia state police command arrested a man with three pregnant women he was taking to a clinic to give birth. On interrogation, the police discovered that he was operating a baby factory.

“The women came to my prayer home and they said their lovers abandoned them with the pregnancy and they need people to adopt the children. I took pity on them since they said they have nowhere to go and give up the children immediately they are born as the women had said they cannot cater for them” Fieldwork 2018.

Unknown gunmen abducted a five-month-old newborn girl from her mother in front of their home in March 2014, further perplexing residents of the Umuzike Autonomous Community in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State. Mr. Kingsley and Mrs. Ugochi Igwegbe welcomed a son named Chidiogo into their family. At 7 p.m., the mother was returning from a neighborhood where she had gone to obtain kerosene when three bandits attacked her and kidnapped her child.

While carrying her baby, the mother of the infant was alleged to have shouted to call the attention of her neighbors, but the gunman shot her twice in the laps. The

media also reported a similar incidence at Durukwu Umuebele in Okporo, also in Orlu LGA, when a little baby was kidnapped from its father, Mr. EbereChikodi, who was shot by the abductors before fleeing with the baby.

The mother of the infant was said to have tried to attract the attention of her neighbors while carrying her baby, but the gunman shot her twice in the laps. A similar incident occurred at Durukwu Umuebele in Okporo, also in Orlu LGA, when a little child was taken from its father, Mr. EbereChikodi, who was shot by the abductors before fleeing with the child.

Several other cases of child theft had occurred around the state, prompting the closure of some schools in various parts of the state. Police arrested Mr. Maduabuchi of Owerrinta in Isialagwa South Council, Abia state, for selling his 14-month-old baby for N300,000 after the baby was stolen from him. Unknown to his family, he was the one who connived with the baby thieves and made it look like an abduction.

“My son was ill. He is my fourth child. I have been spending a lot of money on him. I could not cope with his treatment and my wife and I needed money to cater for the other three children. My wife is pregnant with our fifth child so I did what I felt was necessary to provide money for my family. I lied to my wife that the boy was stolen. My wife did not believe me and she reported to the police”

Following the many raids on baby factories in the southeast, the operators evolved a new strategy: they married young females and pregnant adolescent girls for the purpose of producing babies to sell to interested customers. One woman who married and had her four children sold by her husband was a victim of these practices.

She said “ I am a married woman and I had four children. Three boys and a girl. My husband is into baby factory. Each time I want to give birth, he would relocate me to another village in far away state but as soon as I have put to bed, he would sell off the child and give me N50,000 as my share. He told me that I am only his wife to give birth . As I am talking with you, I don’t know where all my children are. My husband too is nowhere to be found. I was apprehended when the passengers in the vehicle I was travelling in noticed that

I was not breastfeeding the baby and they alerted the police'' Fieldwork 2018

Infants in Eastern Nigeria are sold and bought in the same way that candy is acquired from a confectioner's store, according to (Ossai2013:76). What remains to be seen is a scenario where a shop or building expressly proclaims "babies for sale." The majority of women who agree to participate in this illegal commerce but are not yet pregnant are forced to sleep with males recruited by baby factory operators in order to become pregnant. These children are purchased and sold from the moment they are conceived, and a price is paid for them within the first few days of their birth (Madike, 2014).

According to The Guardian (2011), some of the rescued girls told Nigerian police that the proprietors of the baby factories paid them \$192 for newborn boys and \$161 for newborn girls during a raid in Aba, Nigeria's Abia state. Hundreds of young pregnant girls have been released after six baby factories in Abia state were razed. In Abia State, 77 young females were rescued between January and March 2010.

Another victim of these tactics was a 19-year-old woman who was expecting a child but was turned down by her partner. She married a young man during her pregnancy, believing he loved her, but he was only interested in selling her kid.

She said '' When I found out that I was pregnant, I told my boyfriend but he rejected the pregnancy. My aunt whom I was staying with was very angry and said I cannot have a child outside wedlock. She quickly made arrangement that I should get married After our marriage, he relocated me to Aba. He started becoming suspicious in his behavior when he told me that he cannot father a child he can't explain whom the father is. He suggested we sold the baby after delivery but I refused. He went ahead with his plan after I gave birth to a boy as he sold him. He lied to me that the bay was dead but I did not believe him and reported to the police. He was arrested but we are yet to rescue my baby ''. Fieldwork 2018

Also, the police arrested a couple for selling their 3 year old girl for N300,000. Following investigation, it was discovered that they had sold two other children and have collected N200, 000 as initial deposit for the baby she was pregnant with. The Investigative Police officer stated that the couple are habitual baby factory machines who got married with the sole intention of selling their children.

“There is need for reorientation within cultures that see male children as superior to female children and childless women as scum. By taking the right steps to provide affordable fertility centres all over the country, women can have access to conception methods instead of them going to herbal treatment doctors who are fraudsters promoting baby factory for quick financial gains. Also, abandoning teenage pregnant girls to their fate will continue to facilitate baby factory.” Fieldwork 2018

According to the anecdotes and studies presented in this study, social stigmas against teenage pregnancies, pregnancies out of wedlock, couples' infertility, and legal adoptions contribute to the formation of "baby factories" in Nigeria (Onyemelukwe-Onuobia, 2013).

The first two help to ensure that "baby factories" have a consistent supply of pregnant women, adolescent females, and their babies. Because "adoptive" parents pass these kids off as their own children to avoid cultural and societal disapproval, the last two causes contribute to rising demand for such births (Kalu, 2011). The dispositions and attitudes about the baby factory phenomenon in south eastern Nigeria are presented in the following paragraphs.

“The law against bigamy is hardly enforced and such women are left to look for solutions alone while their married husband freely get women pregnant outside without any consequence. what do you expect a desperate woman to do to remain in her husband's house? No doubt, the woman bears the brunt of a childless marriage: The community calls her a witch, she is told she is being punished for having aborted all her children while she was young. The trauma can be so unbearable that they seek help from baby factories. The laws, culture and tradition work hard against women who are forced to seek illegal ways of staying in their marriages”. Fieldwork 2018

A 59 year old woman said she has been looking for a boy to adopt to no avail which made her approach the baby factory.

Since my only male child died a long time. I have five girls but they are all married and left to their husbands' houses. I needed a male child to stay in the family compound and carry on with the family name since my

husband and I do not have any male child. I paid N300,000 for the boy thinking it was genuine since it was the father that was selling the boy” Fieldwork 2018.

As a result, for individuals, families, societies, and ethnic groups, childlessness is a cause of substantial and personal anxiety. Few people marry for the express goal of companionship in Igboland because marriage is primarily for the purpose of procreation.

“In my case I have been married for eight years without a child. I tried to adopt but each time I correct the girl, my mother-in-law would scold me for that. I have received several calls to come take new born babies so that I can pretend to be a mother. I have tried IVF but my husband is not supportive. Last year he moved out of the house and his family too. It has been very difficult. My marriage has hit the rock but I will not go to baby factory no matter the pressure.”- Fieldwork 2018.

Some childless women will go to any length to have a kid. Most Nigerian and Igboland women will go to any length to have a child since having a child gives her 90 percent of her rights in her husband's home. In Igboland, no woman wants to be called barren.

“ I don't see anything wrong if the person selling and buying the baby do not have issues. I have been looking for a child. I did IVF and it was not successful so you telling me now that I am wrong if I got a child is not the issue but is the child solving a problem? I will gladly buy and thank the person that sold to me because you do not know the trauma of not having a child when you are married. They shouldn't be called buyers and sellers what so you mean by that? It should be known as patronage” Mrs. Nkechi Fieldwork 2018.

During the investigation, police officers from the Force headquarters in Abuja raided multiple baby factories in Abia State, rescuing pregnant girls and women at varying stages of pregnancy. Three children were also rescued. The individuals involved, according to the authorities, were members of syndicates that entice girls to give birth and then sell their infants.

“My brother brought me from Benue state to work. I was told that if I can get pregnant I will earn N 100,000 if my baby is given up for adoption. I said this was not right but the owner of the baby factory convinced my brother Michael to allow me work with her as a sales girl in her shop. One of the sales boys started asking me out. When I got pregnant for he denied it and my brother said he cannot allow me bring shame to the family so he negotiated to give my child up for adoption for a fee”

Following police raids on baby factory centers and state administrations' enthusiasm to stop the scourge in the region, baby kidnapping became prevalent as operators targeted women with toddlers. The operators invented this option in order to stay in business because they believed it would provide them with another way to gain illegal money from selling youngsters.

“Our target are couples with more than three children. We move into the community and start living among the residents and scout for the children. The children are usually allowed to roam about in the compound and once we have gained the trust of the parents and the children, we will use biscuits and candies to lure the children. Our target are usually children who are below two years of age or about two years old. Once we have noticed that their parents have trusted us enough, we will lure the children away with us and take them out of that vicinity. We have stolen more than ten children before we were arrested” Fieldwork 2018

The arrest and parade were covered by the media, but there was no news, feature, or special report on the cultural disposition aiding the baby factory. One of the stories, for example, stated that the temperature inside the crowded church made one young Emmanuel rather uncomfortable. His mother handed him over to his older sister to take outside for some fresh air because he was wailing incessantly.

“I have read and heard various points about the baby factory but one point that one seems to have taken time to look out especially journalists is that fact that this can lead to siblings sleeping with one another or even getting married and getting themselves pregnant to the point of having children. This is a taboo that buying babies from baby factory can cause. If case is not taken,

this can lead to a big disaster for the children involved in this and for the society. There is no level of frustration that should compel women to seek children from baby factory. I have given a valid reason for no one to engage in it. The culture is against it as well as it can destroy humanity . Also future pain can be avoided if the couple avoid going to seek children from baby factory. The immediate pain is better to be handled than the future anguish if one happened to find out that she or he are married to their siblings. The media should emphasize on this dangerous dimension as a cultural malaise in the future so that those who want to venture into it can see the implication of their actions” Field interview 2018.

A woman is accused of promising to help a little girl embracing her younger brother, then duping her into going to the church hall, where members were distributing lunch to the youngsters, to collect rice for her brother. When the little girl returned from the hall, she was heartbroken to discover that the woman had abducted the baby.

Also, a woman in Abia State had pretended to be pregnant so that she can deceive her in-laws and her family that she can give birth. She had consulted the herbal woman for some concoction that when administered to her ,made her stomach to protrude. She went about with this cystic pregnancy for nine months and when it was ‘time’ for ‘delivery’. She went back to the herbal woman in a far away town.

The herbal woman had contacted her syndicate in the baby factory for a new born baby and after the fake process of delivery, the baby was handed over to her as if she was the one who gave birth, she was subsequently arrested after the mother of the baby , a teenage girl escaped from the baby factory to report to the police .The girl had been lied to that her baby had died shortly after delivery but she sensed a foul play which made her to escape and expose the baby factory disguised as a maternity centre.

Speaking on her arrest, the woman said

“I pretended to be pregnant just to hide my shame of barrenness and to remain in my matrimonial home. My husband has already married another woman and she gave birth to a girl. My husband started mocking me that he was fertile and I was the infertile one. I was pained by his word and went to pay N600, 000 to the baby factory. I pretended to be pregnant and after nine months

I got a newborn boy but things did not go down as planned because the real mother of the boy reported the matter to the police. That was how I was arrested ‘’.
Field interview 2018

Mrs. ChikodiNzerem of Umuakaje Umuseke, Okwudor village in Njaba Local Government Area of the State was killed in her home on April 4, 2014 by a baby snatching gang, according to the Daily Sun. Her infant child, who was only three months old, had been kidnapped.

Until her death, the deceased worked as a vendor at Okwudor Junction, selling bananas and cashew nuts. Mr. Chidi (alias Gwobia), a suspect, was accused of murdering Nzerem, a widow and mother of three children, because she refused to give up the child. He was suspected of selling the baby to a Yoruba woman right away.

Still in Eastern Nigeria, an 18-month-old boy named Abdullah Abdulazeez was stolen as a result of a plot hatched by Joy Esu and her partner, Sidney Onwuka, as reported in the Daily Sun on March 09, 2014. He was kidnapped in Osogbo, Osun State, and sold in Onitsha, Anambra State, and was found three weeks later. Their plan is to disguise themselves as a husband and wife. Onwuka took Esu to the baby's mother under the pretence of wanting to learn tailoring. After a week, she left with the toddler.

So, from Osogbo, Onwuka and Esu transported the baby to Onitsha and sold him to a man named Maxwell, who handed the boy to a widow named Elizabeth Eze, who desperately wanted to adopt a male child. Chike Oguejiofor, a 60-year-old reverend father, was also arrested in connection with the kidnapping and is suspected of facilitating the 'adoption' process.

In a separate case, police in the eastern region of the country arrested a couple and two others for allegedly abducting infants between the ages of one and four years and selling them to "barren" mothers and motherless families. About ten children have reportedly been abducted from their parents' houses by Joyce and Kelvin Udok of Mbatolu Local Government Area in Imo State.

“ I was talked into it by my husband. He asked me to get children for him that he would pay me N400, 000. When I asked what he wanted to do with the children, he assured me it was not for ritual purpose that his boss, she takes them to motherless babies home. Our targets are usually couples with more than three children. What we do is to move into an area, stay for about two to three

months to get close with the people and immediately we got any child, we would leave the vicinity for another area where we are not known. We usually rent single room apartments without furnishing them”

Igbo territory includes the states of Abia, Imo, Enugu, Anambra, and Ebonyi. The Igbo, according to Okenwa (2012), are a fantastic people with a beautiful culture and customs. The Igbos have grown to be a powerful people that appreciate personal autonomy and choices as a result of their republican way of life. Based on this concept of ingrained republicanism, adversaries describe the Igbos as fiercely autonomous and economically invincible, describing them as "usually impossible to manage or control." The Igbos have strong beliefs and a conquering spirit by nature, and they are tremendously proud of their centuries-old heritage.

Child adoption was not a part of Igbo practice prior to the colonial era. Okenwa (2012) praises the Igbo as a wonderful people with a lovely culture and traditions. The Igbos have grown to be a powerful people that appreciate personal autonomy and choices as a result of their republican way of life.

The biological mothers of the neonates signed agreements relinquishing their claims to the children in exchange for monetary compensation, which was supposed to be a joyous moment. According to (Cheld 2021), human trafficking is extremely uncommon under these circumstances. At the absolute least, these would constitute felonies, such as the illegal adoption or sale of children.

He, on the other hand, claimed that he and his wife had been snatching and selling newborns for over five years. He went on to say that he got into this company after I told a friend that he needed money. ‘

“We traveled to Imo State and sold him for N400, 000, after which we migrated to Calabar. I am seven months pregnant, and my husband has already sold our unborn child for N200, 000 as I speak to you. I opposed his move, but he persuaded me to comply by saying he had already collected the money. The male child was sold for N400, 000, while the female child was sold for N300, 000”

According to Handwerker (1989), childbearing was the single most important way for women to gain access to the resources that dictated their financial well-being. As a result, childlessness has diverse effects on different people, families, cultures, and

ethnic groups. In the Igbo culture, people rarely marry for friendship because marriage is primarily about procreation; hence, a childless woman will go to any length to have a child.

According to the Igbo, Effik, and Ibibio tribes of Eastern Nigeria, a married woman without a child has no honor in her husband's family because it is considered her obligation, according to the Igbo, Effik, and Ibibio tribes of Eastern Nigeria (Agbo, 2014).

A household without a male kid is thought to be doomed. Igboland, in particular, defiles gender lines because, despite the fact that marriage is legal, both husband and wife want male children for their marriage. As a result, a woman who reaches cognition and position by having at least one son is regarded as happy and so highly appreciated. This is due to the fact that only a son is permitted to dwell in the house and inherit it. Aman has been charged with running a baby factory. This is according to a young woman who was brought to the factory disguised as a maternity center,

“My boyfriend got me pregnant and asked me to abort the baby. A woman in my community took me to the owner of the facility. He claimed he is a doctor. He agreed to help me with free antenatal care and food and in exchange, I agreed to sell my baby after delivery but I ran away after the matron told me that she can help me get a richer buyer. I told my friend I wanted to take the baby to the parents of the boy who impregnated me but I took the baby to the matron and she gave me N20,000. The matron later confessed that it was the doctor that sold the child for N400,000 . I went to confront him and he told me that the money was used for feeding me and for birth of the child. I felt cheated and went to report to the police “.

In certain traditional groups in Eastern Nigeria, adopted children are not permitted to share common land. They're also not allowed to inherit the family's administrative employees (a position and honour given to the eldest man in a village or community). Because of this attitude toward adoptees, it is difficult for childless couples to adopt children who will inherit their belongings when they (the adoptive parents) pass away (Oppong and Abu, 2013). Handwerker, (1989).

In Eastern Nigeria, an adopted child is considered as not being a real son or daughter of the land, despite the fact that everyone wants a child who is recognized by society as a biological son or daughter. Adoption, he believes, is still stigmatized. A bastard is a child born to a couple who are not married. Adoption is discouraged when people have this attitude toward the adopted. (Oppong and Abu, 2013). Handwerker, (1989). A woman was arrested by the police for selling her 2 weeks old baby boy for N100, 000 which she blamed on poverty.

“ I sold my child to one who initially gave me a part payment of N10, 000 naira.. I later gave back the N10, 000 after I was advised not sell my own child . I wanted to sell my child because I needed money to treat herself. My boyfriend abandoned me after I told him I was pregnant and my parents sent me out of the house. Its lack of money that made me to sell her in the first place but I was feeling bad about it and told another friend who advised me to return the money and get my child back but the woman that bought him refused and I had to go report to the police” Field interview 2018

One of the enablers of the baby factory in southeastern Nigeria has been recognized as the attitude of buying children under the pretence of presenting them as biological heirs. When couples who are unable to procreate adopt children, they face the dilemma of childlessness and rejection. Nature and cultural attitude have imposed this load, but the media has tragically failed to report on it. Children are not just for procreation; they' are also for companionship.

It is so impossible for a couple who has exhausted all legal options for having biological children to resist the temptation to seek children from a baby factory. When confronted with this problem, baby factory owners become solution providers who take advantage of the situation for personal gain. Their response to this problem is the region's numerous baby factories, and why, despite all efforts to eradicate the crime, it will instead take on new dimensions as the core causes of childlessness and incapacity to adopt children are not simply biological, but psychological as well.

No amount of arrests or prosecutions, according to Igbo women, security agents, and journalists, will be enough to put an end to the threat until cultural attitudes toward adopted children are changed. No doubt, the Igbo culture, like other African cultures, allows men to be polygamous, they can have multiple wives and children, but

women are left with no choice but to live unhappy lives without their own children, which has pushed more women than men to seek solutions from baby factories, and because men are not affected by childlessness, they find it difficult to empathise with women in this situation.

This explains why there are so many women working in the baby factory. Four women were arrested for selling days-old newborns, according to reports. According to the proprietor of the baby factory, she conspired with fraudulent trade-medical practitioners to provide them with day-old newborns for the fake pregnancies.

“I run a baby factory to supply babies to maternity homes. These homes fake pregnancies for women and they are into treatments. My job is to house the girls who give birth. Some of them come to us with pregnancy, while others are impregnated while with us. I went to sell a new baby for N400, 000I don't see it as a crime selling children as long as they are going to good homes” Field interview 2018

Aside from the classic baby factory problem, in which pregnant women willingly give up their kids or have their babies taken from them without their knowledge, another mode of the baby factory phenomenon includes the forced abduction/theft of newborn newborns from their unaware parents.

According to the reports under examination, the majority of kidnappings were carried out under duress, while some were secretly stolen during events.

A newborn girl was stolen from a night vigil, according to the Daily Sun on May 4, 2014, but was luckily retrieved. Two armed men on motorcycles stormed the church during the vigil and violently removed the infant. They sold the baby to a couple who had presented the child as theirs. The couple had taken the child for dedication in a church to be named but the police got a tip off and stormed the church.

The couple abandoned the baby and fled the chapel as soon as the police arrived according to reports. Mrs. Precious Egwuchukwu, the child's mother, had gone to a church vigil with newborn girl in the state's NnempiOru West Local Government Area. Child theft, according to several associated remarks to such incidents, may not be the result of a frantic search for a child, but rather of ritual killings, which flourished most during election periods, wars, or major conflicts such as Ezeship.

Competitors must employ mystical or spiritual powers to outperform one another in competitions.

According to reports, one Vincent Amafule, a well-known herbalist from Ozara village in Mbutu, Aboh Mbaise Council Area fell victim to child thieves who had disguised to steal his six-month-old infant.

”I decided to scout for pregnant girls and for abandoned children so I can sell to barren couple. I have four children of my own and I bought three children. I'm in this profession for the sake of helping people, not for the money. I'm 35 years old and have four kids. I never sell my own children. I brought the boy because I was told his mother was a prostitute, and she sold him to me for N400,000. I subsequently sold the boy for N700, 000. I charge N700, 000 for boys and N300,000 for girls. I spend the money on my family and invest it as well.”
Baby factory operator .

Someone pretended to be a patient in order to gain access to their home and receive herbal treatment in order to conceive. According to accounts, after claiming to have traveled from Bayelsa State for treatment, the anonymous patient and his wife vanished into thin air with the native doctor's six-month-old child. They pretended to be in need of fibroid treatment and were given a room, but they took the child with them. Following their arrest, the couple blamed greed for their involvement.

“ I was to help people get children and also make money from it myself. My mother was a baby trafficker but she was arrested. When I got married, I told myself that I will involve my wife in it. We would go outside our state to steal children and take them to other states for sale. I see it as a business. I had it going for more than five years. There was this herbalist who had deceived us and collected our money as we are looking for solution to our financial issue but he duped us. I decided to pay him back by stealing his child and we succeeded “

As a result, childlessness has diverse effects on different people, families, cultures, and ethnic groups. In the Igbo culture, people rarely marry for friendship because marriage is primarily about procreation; hence, a childless woman will go to any length to have a child. According to the Igbo, Effik, and Ibibio tribes of Eastern Nigeria, a married woman without a child has no honor in her husband's family because it is considered her obligation, according to the Igbo, Effik, and Ibibio tribes of Eastern Nigeria (Agbo, 2014).

“ I got pregnant the first time and my boyfriend denied me. After I gave birth to the child, my sister encouraged me to sell the child for N300,000 but the man who brought the buyer gave me N120,000. I later got married and each time I gave birth, my husband would take the child away from me and I would never see the baby again. He had taken two of my children away and he would tell me that his first wife who is in another village is looking after the baby but when I pestered him, he told me he had sold the child” Fieldwork 2018

A lady known only as Madam, the owner of a baby factory in Abia state, was arrested for selling infants. She claimed that her actions had aided numerous women in staying in their husbands' homes. She went on to say that young girls come to her with pregnancies, hoping she might help them abort them, but she discouraged them and encouraged them to give birth to children, which she later sold to desperate women so they could stay in their husbands' homes.

“ I went for adoption and did not know that the child was a stolen child .I been married for ten years without the fruit of the womb and all my efforts medically to get a child has been abortive. I faced a lot of pressure from mine family and my in-laws that I have to give them a child or ,husband will get another wife. Although I trust my husband whom I have been married to for long but one cannot tell what can happen when pressure is to much. My husband encourages me to be patient and he cautions those disturbing me to have a child to desist from it. However, due to this issue that I do not have a child of my own, I have to attend religious centres for solutions. There is no prayer session I do not attend. In same manner. Mine husband and I have been spending a lot on fertility treatment to no avail/ So when a friend of mine suggested this option to me, I decided to give it a trail. But unknown to me, it is not a proper adoption process ” Field interview 2018.

According to Handwerker (1989), childbearing was the single most important way for women to gain access to the resources that dictated their financial well-being. The desire for a biological child has continued to remain one of the facilitators of baby factory and the media being the fourth estate of the realm has given little attention to this factor

“ I do not see any link between going for a dubious child adoption and blaming it on the culture. What has cutlure got to do with it? Children are gift from god and if a man or woman cannot have their own biological children, they can assist others in the community to train their own. There are relatives with more than one child and they can oblige to give their child to couple who are yet to have children, this to me is a better way to honestly have a child to help around the house but when we begin to justify the wrong with culture then such a person is a criminally minded person. Culture and tradition are the way of life of the people and its aims to keep posterity of the race” Filed interview 2018

The link between baby factory and cultural attitude towards baby factory hardly get any mention in the newspapers’ reportage of the phenomenon. root causes and drivers sustaining baby factory in southeastern Nigeria deserve to be in the front burners of media reportage of the issue and this can be achieved if the newspapers’ owners, editors and other practitioners give this connection the proper placement , weight and continuous reportage of the phenomenon.

A child trafficker disclosed that he inherited trafficking from his repentant mother, adding that he calls buyers when babies are available. She said:

” I bought four children within a year . I am a mother of four. It is over a year since I joined this business. A traditional birth attendant, introduced me into this business.The woman we sold the little baby to has taken him and travelled to Lagos. I sold the baby for N750, 000. I have sold about four children within the last one year “
Field interview 2018

Police in Imo state arrested them and two others who allegedly specialized in abducting children between ages one and four years and selling them to barren women and motherless homes in the eastern part of the country. Children reportedly stolen were rescued and handed over to the government officials.

“ I was arrested by the police because I sold my day-old baby. I sold him for N250, 000 . I sold the child because of our poor condition. I have given birth to four children. One died because of our poor situation. We are left with two children now. I never wanted to give birth

to another child after two children but this one happened by mistake. When I gave birth to this one, I told my husband that we should sell him. My intention was for us to use the money to settle our debt and then relocate to Umuahia in Abia State. All these happened because my husband is not working; we have been living in my village. When I got pregnant again, I was involved in an accident so I borrowed money to treat myself and meet other needs. When they took the baby, I cried, but I had no alternative”. Field Interview 2018

The cultural attitude of the Igbos towards the baby from the content analysis of the newspapers and from the interviews, show that culture plays huge role in the baby factory phenomenon. Their responses also show that the men and women’s response to the baby factory phenomenon differs. Though they agreed that the culture in the south eastern Nigeria condemned the act of buying and selling babies, they also said cultural practice of having a male as heir and the desire to have children especially male child contribute to baby factory

“We don’t get babies every time; it is not something you get every time. My husband does not know much about the business because he is a tailor. What I do is to tell him to drive me sometimes when I want to go and deliver a baby. It is only twice he drove me. I was a nurse before I joined the business and I used my position to lure women and girls . It is greed for quick gain that made me to join the business. Initially, I was doing it to help women who are in need of babies ”.Field work 2018.

The greed for illegal wealth is a motivation that some couples sell their own children, and also sell their neighbours’. A couple received N300,000 from the sale of their child and have become baby merchants confessing to selling children belonging to their neighbours

“I decided to go into this business because I can’t stand teenagers aborting their babies. So what I do is to link them up with infertile women who pay for these babies. She said that one of the children was born by a mentally challenged woman, so she hadn’t committed any crime by selling the child to people who would take care of her. “I am doing this business for humanitarian reasons and not for

monetary gain. I am 35 years old and I have four children. I can never sell my own children.”

Huntley (2013) attributes the development in baby factories in southern Nigeria to a shift in societal attitudes toward barren women and teenage pregnancy. Similarly, actors, journalists, security agents, and women blame the rise of baby factories in southeastern Nigeria on the culture of male heirs, biological children, but Igbo men disagreed.



Plate 4. 10 : A rescued 4 year old boy sold by his father

Source: Patience Ogbo 2018

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

Gender, print media reporting, and the Igbos' cultural attitude toward the baby factory phenomena were all investigated in this study. The first chapter establishes the backdrop and difficulties that need the research, poses research questions, specifies the goal and objectives, and defines the study's scope and importance. The literature review and theoretical foundation for the study are both found in Chapter 2. The literature review's subhead lines address subjects such as human trafficking as a global phenomena, the baby factory in Nigerian culture, society, and the media, Nigerian media and the baby factory, and Igbos and their culture in south eastern Nigeria. The study's theoretical framework was based on motherist and agenda-setting theories..

The researcher used the statistical method of Content Analysis to examine 504 publications of The Punch, The Sun, and the Nigerian Tribune newspapers from January to June 2014. According to the findings, the three selected newspapers published a total of 35 articles about baby factories in Nigeria during the study period. A breakdown of newspaper publications in southeastern Nigeria shows that the Daily Sun published 11, The Punch published 2, and the Nigerian Tribune published 1, for a total of 14 publications in the region; the Sun Newspaper has more articles on the baby factory in southeastern Nigeria.

The content study focused on the newspapers' titles, pages, publication dates/days (daily or weekend), crimes, gender involved, and crime location. The researcher also looked at the gender of the suspects, victims, and operators of the baby factory, as well as the placement of the story, whether it was news, feature, editorial, interviews, opinions, special reports, and gender of the suspects, victims, and operators of the baby factory. The total number of publications on baby factory is 35, as shown in table 1. The Sun published 11 articles about a baby factory in south-eastern Nigeria. In its Sunday edition, the Sun newspaper includes a News page, a Crime Watch page, Oriental News, National News, and Top Stories.

The reports on baby factory were also included in South East News and Niger Delta Column, as well as their daily news, feature, and interview sections. Furthermore, the journalists believed that they had written several reports on the baby factory, but this was not represented in the report, implying that the phenomena had

been underreported. Instead of investigative reporting, they relied on a police procession of suspects.

To determine which state is most involved in the baby factory phenomena, the analysis revealed that Abia (26.7 percent), Anambra (10.0 percent), During the study period, Abia State produced the majority of the stories in the selected medium (10.0 percent). Nigeria's states of Akwa-Ibom (13.3 percent) and Delta (6.7 percent) were also heavily represented as infant manufacturing locations. Ogun (13.3%) and Ondo (13.3%) were among the other states that were captured.

The data show that the baby factory phenomenon is prevalent in Nigeria's southeastern region, with no recorded cases in the country's northern region. Figure 1 shows the percentage distribution of the baby factory phenomenon in the southern United States as reported in selected newspapers over the course of the study. The Southeastern region (51.1%) had the most reports of the baby factory phenomena, with the South-South zone (20.0%) and the South-West zone (20.0%) having the least (29.9 percent). The findings imply that Nigeria's baby factory problems are more of a south-eastern phenomena.

Baby dumping by adolescent moms is blamed for the increasing number of cases in Abia state. Infant dumping, or the abandonment of babies, has been one of Nigeria's most serious human rights concerns since the middle of the 1980s. Okpoko and Obodoukwu Streets in Onitsha, Uwani and Coal Camp in Enugu, and Ohanku and Ngwa Road in Abia State were new borns were abandoned . The percentage distribution of the baby factory phenomenon across the southern area during the study period, as highlighted by selected articles, shows that

It was feasible to show how the newspapers represent men and women in the baby factory in southeastern Nigeria by categorizing offenders based on their gender as reported in the media during the study period. Field interviews capture more criminals, who are often the masterminds of the operations, in the same way as newspaper reflections show female perpetrators to be 72.23 percent. Apart from giving birth, women operate as collaborators in the form of workers and clients, as reported in the press. That is, there are more stories about the baby factory than are published in the newspapers. A total of 52 female suspects/victims and 20 male suspects have been identified.

The findings imply that in south-eastern Nigeria, there are more female masterminds of baby factory activities. This conclusion could be explained by the

feminine nature of the baby factory phenomena, which frequently necessitates infant harvesting from pregnant women. As a result, another lady might be ideally suited to run a baby factory. Furthermore, professional nurses and midwives were frequently involved in the delivery of newborns from pregnant women in the majority of the identified baby factories in various investigations.

The male participation in baby factory operations, on the other hand, could be in financing the operations, which are subsequently run by a variety of female collaborators. Impregnators, gatekeepers, human traffickers, and child thieves are all guys. They are, however, insignificant in comparison to women. Furthermore, the police parade more ladies than men, allowing journalists to view more women than men. This has given journalists reporting on these arrests to report in a biased manner towards the women.

Men who forsake their pregnant girlfriends and barren wives are rarely paraded by the police. Despite the fact that the newspapers covered both men and women's involvement, they rarely mentioned partners or husbands. The media also concentrated on the "crime," depending on police stories fed to the press rather than investigative pieces and follow-ups to learn more about why more women are engaging in the problem. Newspapers portray the occurrence of baby factories as a female crime.

The findings also reveal that newspapers regard women as the gender most implicated in the baby factory phenomena, most likely as a result of police parades with their pregnancies and newspapers releasing their photographs without any recourse that they are victims or survivors of a bad system. The police churn out reports on the baby factory to the media. When they apprehend a suspect and save the victims, they use the media to publicize their accomplishments, and we discovered that women are more likely to be arrested and to be victims.

The baby factory phenomena comprises male and female masterminds working together as well as men and women operating alone, according to security personnel that were interviewed. These women are divided into nine categories. In general, publications in southeastern Nigeria characterized the baby factory as a female crime.

Security operatives, actors in the baby factory, and women identified poverty, rape, reluctant mothers, also known as trafficked women, cultural practice of seeking one's biological children, divorce due to bareness, scorn on adopted children not eligible to inherit, and cultural practice of having biological male as reasons for

women's high involvement in the baby factory. The Igbo male and female cultural attitudes about the baby factory phenomena show that they regard the phenomenon as un-cultural. Their comments also reveal that men and women have different reactions to the baby factory issue.

While women claim that the cultural practice of having a male heir and the desire to have children, particularly male children, contribute to the baby factory, men claim that women who do not have children are protected by the culture because they cannot be thrown out of their husband's home if they choose to stay.

The cultural dispositions toward related issues such as barrenness, child adoption, male-child syndrome, and teen pregnancy outside wedlock among the Igbos were identified as emergent themes in providing a better understanding of cultural attitudes toward baby factory phenomenon within the region in order to better understand the prevalence of baby factory phenomenon in southeastern Nigeria.

5.2 Conclusion

The findings revealed that these cultural dispositions played varying roles in the attitudinal variances in the baby factory phenomenon within the region, as many of the respondents were quick to condemn the act of baby buying or baby harvesting, but also understood the plight of those involved in the phenomenon. Social stigmas against teenage pregnancies out of wedlock, child abandonment, couples' infertility, and legal adoptions, according to the tales and studies featured in this study, contribute to the presence of "baby factories" in Nigeria.

The first two assure that a regular supply of women, especially teenage girls, is available. Because "adoptive" parents pass off these newborns as their biological infants to avoid cultural and societal rejection, the last two factors help to boost demand for such babies.

As long as the culture of having children, particularly boys, is valued, the female respondents affirm that there is no place in the community for barren women and families without children, who may have the right to remain in their husband's home, but women with children have more children to inherit. As a result, it is a fallacy to suggest that culture is opposed to the baby factory phenomena.

. The respondents also want the government to recognize the issue of baby factories as a national problem and address it from the root causes of poverty, culture, a high rate of rape, and teen pregnancy, as well as providing cheap and affordable

fertility options, as well as adoption being available and accepted in the community. The Igbos' cultural attitudes on babies, as shown by content analysis of newspapers and interviews, show that culture plays a significant part in the baby factory phenomena.

The Igbos have a stringent culture that forbids anyone who is not of their family. Because a man's bloodline determines his destiny, it is difficult for him to accept a stranger or an adopted son as his home. Yes, he can do that, but because to the concept of 'iche,' such a person cannot hold the title of chief or village head.

To summarize, a woman's status in Igboland is decided by her ability to reproduce. The number of children a woman has determines how long she stays in her husband's residence in Igboland. In today's society, a childless lady is frequently cajoled and made to suffer severely. She only obtains a small portion of her husband's assets. Children earn a woman's esteem and help her rise in society. According to Handwerker (1989), childbirth was a crucial tactic used by women to gain access to the resources that were essential to their material well-being.

To combat the threat, extra attention should be paid to the southeastern region, particularly Abia state. Women's empowerment and the education of the girl child should receive special attention. It is necessary to eliminate harmful cultural practices that favor the production of babies in factories. The baby factory phenomena, particularly in the southeastern states, should be viewed as a national issue that requires national attention, rather than being treated with child gloves by focusing on it as a local issue.

5.3 Recommendation

The research looked at three Nigerian major newspapers' coverage of the baby factory phenomena. The Punch, The Sun, and the Nigerian Tribune are these publications. These newspapers were picked for their distribution in the country's three geographic zones, including Lagos, the north, west, and east. Although other newspapers and news outlets might be employed for this study, the researcher believes that the analysis of the three newspapers chosen represents the perspectives of those who were not.

. In the south-eastern states of Imo, Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Anambra, the three selected publications have reported on the baby factory phenomena. From January to June 2014, the study covered the selected newspaper reports for a period of six

months. The study found that newspapers are effective vehicles for sharing knowledge about a topic, and that there is a pressing need to publicize the vexing issue of the baby factory, which is a national shame, a violation of children's rights, and a security danger.

The Sun newspaper published more stories on baby factories in the south eastern region, with Abia State having the most. The transcripts of the interviews backed up the newspaper's findings, which they blamed on a variety of causes, including the current high rate of rape and widespread premarital sex among youngsters. Another reason is because the government does not consider the baby factory issue in eastern Nigeria to be a national issue.

Another factor is dumping due to unwanted pregnancy, which contributes to the growth of baby factories and led to the establishment of "compassionate homes" or "needy homes," where pregnant teenage girls who had been rejected by their families due to their pregnancy were sheltered and rehabilitated until they delivered their babies. Occultic rituals are also one of the reasons for buying newborns, as occultic people use baby fetuses and other parts in the mistaken notion that they may make money using "blood money," as it is known in popular vernacular. Another reason given is the high rate of infertility in the country.

Baby factory is claimed to be high in Abia state's southeastern region because to cultural practices such as seeking one's biological children and divorce due to bareness. Social stigmas against teenage pregnancies, pregnancies out of wedlock, couples' infertility, and legal adoptions, according to the narratives and studies featured in this study, contribute to the establishment of "baby factories" in Nigeria.

The first two help ensure that "baby factories" have a steady supply of women, adolescent girls, and their newborns. The last two factors contribute to increased demand for such newborns, as "adoptive" parents pass these babies off as their own children to avoid cultural and societal rejection. The findings also revealed that in southeastern Nigeria, there are more female than male masterminds of baby factory activities.

The female nature of the baby factory phenomena may contribute to this outcome's plausibility. According to field interviews, women are more involved in the baby factory operation as a result of society's and culture's attitudes on women who have not yet given birth. They are under pressure to demonstrate that they are fertile, but it is also a psychological and biological urge to feel fulfilled as an adult female.

Because of childlessness, many homes have been destroyed and women have been forced to leave their matrimonial homes. As a result, the responsibility of proving marriage production falls disproportionately on women. More young girls are being raped and impregnated outside of marriage, while others are forced to work. The findings also reveal that newspapers regard women as the gender most implicated in the baby factory phenomena, most likely as a result of police parades with their pregnancies and newspapers releasing their photographs without any recourse that they are victims or survivors of a bad system.

In addition, the guys or partners who get these females pregnant were rarely mentioned in the newspapers. Furthermore, in cases where married women are buying or selling infants, the newspapers rarely mention their husbands, who may have frustrated the women to the point of buying or selling babies owing to neglect in some way. The Igbos' cultural view regarding baby factories regards baby purchasing and selling as un-cultural.

Baby factory, according to the ladies, actors, and security operatives, is a direct result of cultural attitudes about teenage pregnancy, infertility, adoption, and biological offspring, particularly male heirs. While Igbo women blame cultural tendencies and sympathize with women who have been victims of baby factory crime, Igbo men claim that culture's goal is to preserve the bloodline. As a result, these points of view are separated along gender lines.

5.4 Contributions to knowledge

The study contributed to filling a knowledge vacuum in the area of the role of the media in reporting child trafficking, and so provides as a window into a deeper understanding of the phenomena of the baby factory. In this way, it has added to the body of knowledge in the fields of media and gender studies. Second, the research helped with social work. In particular, in drawing attention to the need for economic and social planning to decrease the phenomena of baby factories.

In addition, the research bolstered the media's function as society's watchdog and a veritable tool for charting developmental processes and the role of the media in fostering its social responsibility. The study provides a blueprint for policymakers to better understand how to combat the threat of the baby factory, as well as media managers to better report on the problem in order to diminish or eliminate the crime.

While they acknowledged that the culture of south eastern Nigeria condemned the act of buying and selling infants, they also claimed that the cultural practice of having a male heir and the desire to have children, particularly male children, contribute to the baby factory.

The government should treat the baby factory as a national issue rather than a problem in the southeast, and give it the attention it deserves. The media should also play a role in reporting the issue more extensively and drawing government attention to it through editorials, opinions, and interviews, in order to prick the conscience of the relevant government agencies to address the threat. The issue of the baby factory in south-eastern Nigeria can be brought to the forefront of the media's attention in order to decrease or eliminate the crime. Given the high involvement of women in the baby factory phenomena, new regulations to protect women in their married homes must be developed and implemented.

Pregnant girls should be able to seek government assistance rather than turning to baby factory operators as a result of the policies. Newspapers and the media in general should do more in-depth reporting on the baby factory scandal rather than relying solely on the police parade of suspects. The media should also set an agenda for promoting girls' and women's empowerment, which should include education to help them avoid becoming victims of or being tricked into giving birth to infants that they would sell to make a living.

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APPENDIX I

Questions for reporters /editors

What is your reaction to the baby factory phenomenon in south eastern Nigeria?

Do you think there are cultural factors fueling the sales and purchase of babies in south eastern Nigeria?

What are those cultural factors?

How do you perceive the newspapers' reportage of baby factory in south eastern Nigeria?

How did you learn about baby factory?

What do you understand by baby factory?

In your encounter with the victims and suspects, what did you learn from them as the reason behind their involvement in baby factory?

As a crime correspondent/ reporter, where is your stories on baby factory in south eastern Nigeria usually published. i.e. what page or pages are baby factory stories published?

As a crime editor, what pages of the newspapers do you publish baby factory stories?

Are baby factory stories given prominence in the newspapers?

What type of language do you use in reporting baby factory stories?

Averagely, how many baby factory stories have you covered and worked on ?

Do you write them as news, features editorial or opinions?

Is government action or inaction fueling baby factory phenomenon in south eastern Nigeria?

Is society fueling baby factory in south eastern Nigeria?

Questions for arrested suspects/ victims?

What led you to join a baby factory?

What led you to sell your baby?

What led you to buy a baby?

How did you get the contact of the baby factory you got involved in?

How much did you pay for the baby?

How much did you sell the baby?

Is your husband/ boy friend aware that you are involved in buying / selling babies?

How much did you pay for the baby?

How much were you paid for your baby?

Did you make any attempt to adopt a baby ?

Did you make any attempt to give up your baby for adoption?

Are you aware of adoption of babies?

How were you treated in the baby factory?

APPENDIX II



Researcher with Mr. Daniel Atokolo, Zonal Coordinator National Agency For the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons NAPITIP Zonal Office during a visit to interview suspects and victims of baby factory from south- eastern Nigeria



Imo State Police Command



Abia State Police Command



Abia State Police Public Relations officer



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11 October, 2018

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

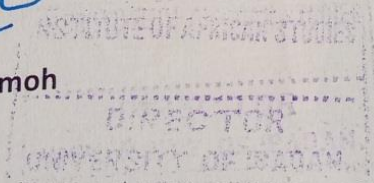
Letter of Introduction: OGBO, Egajanya Patience.

This letter introduces OGBO, Egajanya Patience (Matric. No. 105138), an Mphil/Ph.D student in the Gender Studies Unit of the Institute of African Studies, who is seeking to conduct her interviews and record on **“Gender in Print Media Reportage on Baby Factory Phenomenon in South Eastern Nigeria”**.

We would be most appreciative if you could assist her to accomplish this task.

Thank you.

Dr. I. A. Jimoh
Director





A crowd in the front of the auditorium of Holy Family Primary School, Rajadam, Photo:Kunle Falagbe

Woman who stole co-tenant's child is a prayer warrior



Chidozie insisted that she was sure none of her patrons bought the babies for ritual purposes.

Asked how she was sure of that, she said, "I study those who come to buy babies from me. When I am sure that they actually want to buy because they are looking for the fruits of the womb, I sell the babies to them."

"It is my job now. I know how to test the women to see if they actually cannot have children. When I see people who come to me for children, I know if they want the babies for ritual purposes or not. I ensure the women come with their husbands. I don't sell children to them if they don't come with their spouses."

"It is not about the money. My concern is just to help the young girls and to help those who want children. This is why I pray on the babies before I hand them over to the buyers. I make sure the babies are okay."

Saturday FUNCH asked how she ensured that the babies were okay as she claimed after she had sold them off. Chidozie said, "I just know. Some buyers come back to thank me and even buy cartons of soft drinks for me in

"When I see people who come to me for children, I know if they want the babies for ritual purposes or not. I ensure the women come with their husbands"

who impregnated them. If the girls didn't give me any good response, I sent them back to where they came from. Even last week I still sent three of them away."

Asked if she actually asked any of the eight girls who impregnated them, Chidozie struck a thoughtful pose and said, "I can't remember."

"But in the past, I have called the boyfriends of pregnant girls in my custody to confirm that they want their babies sold," she said.

Chidozie became evasive when asked the highest amount she had ever sold a baby.

"I don't collect much, you know fingers are not equal. Some come to my house begging that they don't have much. I collect N200,000 from some, even N100,000 from some others. I don't really know where those who approach me for babies come from."

Saturday FUNCH asked why she did not direct the girls to proper orphanages if she was not doing it for the money, she said "I don't know why they prefer me."

She had told the police upon her arrest that she gave the pregnant girls between N70,000 and N80,000 after their babies were sold off at

investigation to the girls' respective families. At the moment, we have been able to contact three of the families.

Investigation has been widened in this case to include potential baby buyers and men buyers who have patronised the woman (Chidozie).

He said the baby factory was discovered as a result of the persistence of a resident of the area who gave a tip-off on the activities in the house.

The police spokesperson urged the public to give information to the police without fear.

He said, "The man who gave the tip-off actually reported twice. The first time, the police went there and saw nothing. The man reported again and it was discovered that the woman (Chidozie) hid the girls in the wardrobe. One of them actually fainted as a result of that and had to be taken to the hospital."

"We are living in the past. That is why people think that when they give information to the police, it may bounce back on them."

But members of the public should know who to give information to. They should approach an officer who builds a formation on any information because such officers can distinguish between rumours and intelligence."

the voice in to discover tomorrow

Nigerian
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... City, Crime, Courts

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Apata and a friend. Photo: DailyIndependent, UK

Nigerian lesbian battles UK deportation

A Nigerian lady, Adesoke Apata, felt she had tried everything to persuade the Home Office that she was gay. She had sent letters from former girlfriends - both in Britain and Nigeria - and supporting statements from friends. *The Daily Independent, UK, reports.* But once her claim that she could be killed because of her sexuality if sent back to Nigeria was rejected, she felt there was only one way of proving a judge with irrefutable evidence that she was gay - by sending a very personal home video. Apata will hand in a petition to Theresa May, the Home Secretary, demanding that the deportation of an LGBT asylum-seeker be halted until a review of their treatment is concluded. Sitting with her girlfriend, Hepthens Agboru, in a bar on Manchester's Canal Street, Apata, 47, reveals the traumatic ordeal she has experienced: "I was asked to bring my supporting documents for my judicial review for the court to look at. What

documents for my judicial review for the court to look at. What evidence do we have to couple apart from letters from people? I knew we had a home video of ourselves, so I thought why not just put it in? I cannot afford to go back to my country where I will be tortured, so if I have to prove it with a sexual video, then I have to do it."

Her experience is echoed by many LGBT asylum-seekers in Britain who have to go to extreme lengths to persuade immigration officers of their sexuality. She still feels distraught at having shared such an intimate record of her personal life. "I feel so bad it's got to this stage. It's such a desperate and precarious situation to be in because anything could happen to those pictures, those videos."

The Home Secretary ordered a review of how border officials handled gay asylum claims in March after leaked documents revealed that inappropriate interrogation techniques were being used to make people "prove" they were homosexual.

Apata will present her petition at a meeting with the independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration, attended by asylum-seekers and activists in Manchester. When she came to Britain from Nigeria in 2004, her asylum claim was on religious grounds. She came from a Christian family, but had married a Muslim man in what she says was a sham arrangement to cover up her long-term relationship with another woman.

According to Apata, her husband's family turned against her as they suspected she was gay. They took her to Sharia Court, where she was sentenced to death for adultery. She says her brother and three-year-old son were killed in related vigilante incidents.

Apata went into hiding after two appeals for asylum were rejected, living on the streets in Manchester to make sure she would not be deported.

In 2004, after being caught, Apata tried again to apply for asylum - saying she feared returning to Nigeria and being persecuted for her sexuality.

This latest asylum claim was also rejected, despite the fact that Apata gave testimony that her ex-girlfriends in Nigeria was killed in a vigilante attack in 2003 and the country's law now punishes homosexuality with up to 14 years' imprisonment.

Apata's story has rapidly garnered mass support, attracting more than 200,000 signatures.

A judicial review has now been granted in her case and she is hopeful she will finally have the right to live freely in Britain with her girlfriend.

A Home Office spokeswoman said, "We do not remove anyone at risk of persecution because of their sexuality. All applications are carefully considered in line with our international obligations."

Fares: Angry passengers stations

THERE was a pandemonium at the Nigerian Railway Corporation stations in the Agbado and Ibeji areas of Oshodi on Tuesday as some passengers and hoodlums set fire on the offices after vandalising them and carrying away some amount of money.

PUNCH Metro gathered that the uproar, which began at about 7am when passengers were boarding trains, was over a hike in the fares.

Our correspondent learnt that the fare to Oshodi for the economic class shot up from N150 to N230, while the executive class went from N500 to N750.

The Vice President, Alhaji Namadi Sambo, had come to Lagos on Monday to inaugurate two new air-conditioned coaches at the Ibeji Terminus. The new trains were expected to increase the daily train passengers in the state from 15,000 to 22,000.

However, on Tuesday, being the first day after the inauguration, it was learnt that the NRC officials effected an increase in the fares which got the passengers angry and led to the vandalism.

By 10.30am at the

Agbado Railway Station, our correspondent observed that doors and windows of the offices were destroyed, while the sliding glasses were broken into pieces.

Also, several tyres were burnt along the rail line, while the smoke of the fire was still billowing as of the time of visit.

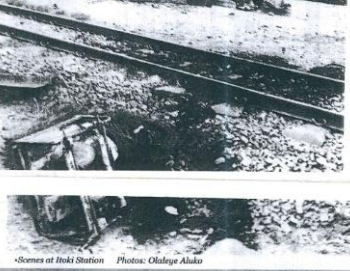
One of the NRC officials, who craved anonymity because he was not authorised

to speak, explained that some hoodlums took over the protest of passengers, while the police could not curtail them.

He said, "The cause of this destruction is over the fares. Unfortunately, instead of lodging their complaints to the authorities, some

passengers, who were assisted by thugs, started breaking into one office. They further destroyed property, carried away tickets and cash in the process.

"The sad thing is that it prevented passengers as those who usually hang at the coaches. They do not



Remains at Ibeji Station. Photos: Okalaye Akilo

Fire guts war

Two of the warehouses were identified as Karina International Company and Star Paint Nigeria Limited.

A security officer, Samuel Okwale, said the fire began around 8am.

He said an electrical spark from a junction box started the explosion which gutted the buildings and goods.

He said, "This fire began around 8am, and some of the warehouses here were affected. It started from the junction box and quickly spread to the warehouses because of their proximity to each other. The

loss is in billions. *PUNCH Metro* spoke with an Indian worker, Navish Kumar, who said all the factory goods were destroyed.

"We cannot even enter into the place because of the heat. Everything we have there is lost. I can't figure out the amount, but it is very huge," Kumar said.

Another worker, Okudusolu Elupe, said his company could not be saved because they sold out the fire.

The unit head of the Isoko Service, Oluwasegun Taiwo, said six 1,000 litres of water had been exhausted and more being deployed.

"When we arrived a few minutes past 8am, fire was raging. We had to for the support of other stations at Ibeji, Ibeja, Ikeja and Ibadan."

"The fire was aggravated by gas from some split conditioners in one of the warehouses. But we will clean up on it."

A man from Chd Comp said the firm had seven water trucks from Ibeji for fire attack.

A senior police officer attached to the Mushin P

38-year-old in court for abducting employer's child

A 38-year-old domestic worker, Olu Onoloye, was arraigned on Tuesday in Okitipupa arraigned on two counts of abduction and assault.

The accused, of no fixed abode, is standing trial in an Okitipupa Magistrate's Court in Ondo State.

The prosecutor, Sergeant Zedekiah Orogbeni, told the court that the accused and two others at large abducted 20-year-old Grace Okusika.

The victim, who was said to be the child of Onoloye's employer, was allegedly abducted over unpaid salaries.

Orogbeni said the accused, who had been sacked, abducted Okusika to frighten her parents into paying his salaries.

The prosecutor said Okusika was deprived of her liberty and was also assaulted as she sustained injuries while being taken through the bush.

He said the accused committed the offences on March 10 at about 11am on the Okitipupa-Igboho road.

Orogbeni said the offences contravened sections 355 and 365 of the Criminal Code, Cap.37, Vol. 1, Laws of Ondo

State, 2006.

The accused, however, pleaded not guilty to the charges against him.

The Magistrate, Mr Funso Akintoye, granted the accused bail in the sum of N200, 000 and two sureties in the sum.

He also said one of the sureties must be a civil servant on grade level 14 while the other must be a renowned trader.

Akintoye said both must reside within the court's jurisdiction. He adjourned the case till June 24 for further hearing.