

SOCIOLOGICAL GENDER AND REPRESSION OF TRAFFIC IN CHILDREN IN THE CITY OF COTONOU (BENIN)

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Abstract: This study aimed to contribute to the reduction of child trafficking in the city of Cotonou through good repression. Specifically, it has sought on the one hand, identify the causes and consequences of the activities of the kids on their well-being physical, moral and social psychological and sociological factors that do not favor a good suppression of child trafficking in the city of Cotonou and on the other, to strengthen the mechanism of suppression of trafficking of children in the city of Cotonou. The theoretical framework used for this study is the SWOT analysis model to Learned, Christensen, Andrews and Guth (1960). It is qualitative and quantitative study that involved 120 subjects of different categories. Following our results, we concluded that the sociological factors do not promote proper application of law against child trafficking, due to a lack of social consensus on the economic exploitation Children and influence on the communities involved in the repressive chain.

For good suppression of the phenomenon, we suggested that the involvement of communities have a legal basis, likely remedies to modern institutions and the focus is more on fines than prison sentences.

Key Words: Sociological weights - repression - bill - children.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The issue of trafficking in human beings (adults and children) has received much more attention in the past five years. Trafficking in children is a violation of the rights of children. It is a phenomenon that calls for the intervention of all actors in international life. Specialists in the question are trying to find solutions to the phenomenon. Every year, however, statistics show that trafficking in children is not declining. It seems to defy all the solutions recommended for its reduction, even its eradication.

According to Keita (1988), "the child is life. He alone stops death. It is the only and most effective remedy. Thanks to him, life on earth is perpetuated. It is the link between it and the hereafter, between those below and those above and from everywhere. God's gift, he is also the ancestor, the lost parent reincarnated ". It therefore ensures the continuity of the line. This means that the child is a valuable member of the family. Its education is provided by the community, the extended family. The social values of the group are transmitted to the boys by the father and the uncles, while the mother and the aunts ensure the education of the girls. But today, poverty, especially absolute poverty, reflects the inability of a population or an individual to satisfy basic needs, ie, food, clothing, education, housing and health care. A large part of the world's population (Kanhonou, 2010). Thus, this situation leads children still vulnerable to street, trafficking or sale, to early work and even to prostitution. This explains the abuse, the violations of all kinds of which the children are victims and which compromise their survival and their development.

Very often, "these are children who do not do light work but instead work for longer periods by performing tasks that endanger their safety and harm their physical or mental health or development" (UNICEF 2007). They are seen very often, goods on the head selling various products and this, under an overwhelming sun. They are also used in households serving their employers. Chastened, overexploited, malnourished, these children with worried looks are desperate. They are mostly delivered to adults who seem to ignore their rights. Although they are deprived of leisure and have only the working world as their only way of life, they benefit very little from the benevolence of the populations who tend to consider this situation as involving many of these children as normal.

According to the 3rd RGPH of 2002, Benin had 480,245 working children under the age of 15 and the majority of these Beninese at work are in agriculture (60%), trade (19%) ... (INSAE Benin, RGPH3, 2002). There are also non-farm workers (9%) and 4% in services, including helpers. Faced with this disastrous situation of children in the world and in Benin in particular, each state, in its own way, strives to fight against the phenomenon. Many have realized that the fight against trafficking in children is no longer the responsibility of a single State. Thus, the actors of the international life, (States, International Institutions, international NGOs ...) combine their forces against this "crime" that the children undergo.

By ratifying international conventions (the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ILO Conventions, in particular Convention 138 and Convention 182, the Convention against Torture, the African Charter on the Rights of the Child ...), Benin is committed to guaranteeing children the protection and full enjoyment of their rights. This political commitment has resulted in a myriad of laws, including Act No. 2006-04 of 10 April 2006 on Conditions for the Movement of Minors and the Suppression of Child Trafficking in the Republic of Benin (Plan-Benin, 2012).

Despite well-established legislation to combat trafficking in children, the national context is still marked by massive violations of the rights of the child. This leads us to ask ourselves certain questions. Are the laws that are not good? Are the men responsible for their application not doing their job? Or is it the sociological constraints that make it difficult to suppress child trafficking?

Through the theme: "**sociological burdens and the repression of child trafficking in the city of Cotonou (Benin)**", this article aims to open a scientific debate on the reasons that prevent good law enforcement and thus contribute to the Reduction of child trafficking in Benin in general and in Cotonou in particular by good repression. Specifically, the study aims to identify the causes and consequences of children's activities on their physical, psychological, moral and social well-being in order to strengthen the mechanism of repression of child trafficking. Three (03) hypotheses are formulated in the framework of this study:

- child trafficking severely mortgage the future of children;
- sociological constraints prevent the repression of child trafficking in the city of Cotonou;
- the weakness of the repressive system of child trafficking encourages the perpetuation of the phenomenon of trafficking.

2. ANALYTICAL MODEL:

The model of analysis used in this research is the SWOT model. The term SWOT is an acronym from English: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. It is a tool for strategic analysis. It combines the study of the strengths and weaknesses of an organization, a territory, a sector (etc.) with that of the opportunities and threats of its environment, in order to help define a strategy of development. The term SWOT has other equivalent names in French such as:

- SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
- FFOR (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Risks)
- SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
- AFOM (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats).

This model was developed in the 1960s by four professors from the Harvard Business School (Learned, Christensen, Andrews and Guth). In fact, it is sometimes found under the name "Harvard model". However, the name "SWOT" remains the most frequent. The SWOT analysis (or matrix) is one of the tools that contribute to the study of the relevance and coherence of future action (whether it is a one- together).

The SWOT analysis model is used in this study to highlight the sociological constraints that prevent the successful suppression of child trafficking in the sphere of research. The latter was based on documentary sources, questions and interviews that promoted the aggregation, conceptualization of ideas and information produced by respondents.

At this level, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the phenomenon have been gathered and synthesized.

From this synthesis, the major problems related to the repression of child trafficking in the Republic of Benin, in general and in Cotonou in particular, have emerged, as well as the strategic axes which can not only reorient the debates on repression of the phenomenon, but also to address effectively the challenges that constitute bottlenecks to the effective enforcement of laws on the suppression of child trafficking. This last synthesis made possible the realization of the SWOT in connection with the subject of the present research. It is therefore as follows:

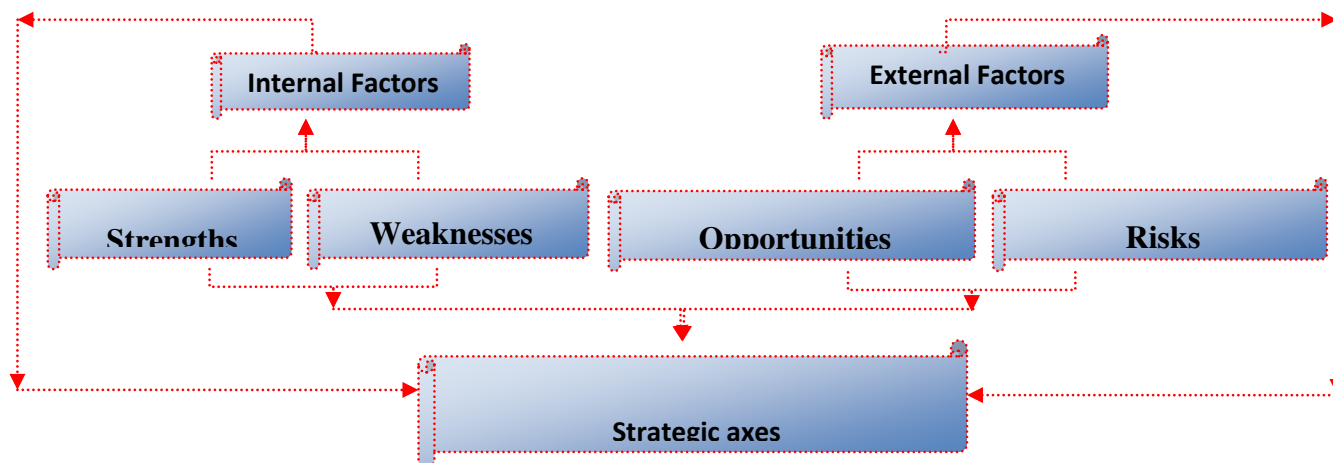


Figure 1: SWOT Analysis Model

SOURCE: LEARNED, CHRISTENSEN, ANDREWS, AND GUTH; 1960

3. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH:

This part contains the methodological elements used in this work. These are the type of study, the description of the survey population, the sample size, the technique and the sampling method, and the data collection and processing tools.

3.1 Nature of the study

Our study is oriented towards child trafficking and aims to contribute to a good repression of the phenomenon. This is a descriptive study that addresses the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the situation of the repression of child trafficking in Benin and in particular in Cotonou.

3.2 Target populations and sampling

3.2.1 Target populations

In view of the diversity of the information to be collected, the survey population, all children trafficked in Cotonou, parents traffickers and persons who exploit children for economic purposes, judicial police officers, The general population, resource persons and magistrates. Given the fact that the numbers of the different study populations are not too large the investigations have focused on all of our populations. There were 25 child victims of trafficking, including 05 boys and 20 girls, 20 trafficked parents, 20 trafficked child survivors, 20 randomly selected population including some traditional custodians, 30 Police and 5 magistrates. Child victims of trafficking were targeted in the different markets of Cotonou, notably Dantokpa, St Michel, in the mechanical and welding workshops, at the OCPM children's welcome and transit center. Six target groups are identified in this survey population:

- child victims of trafficking;
- parent trafficking;
- operators of child victims of trafficking;
- judicial police officers;
- the magistrates;
- populations.

3.2.2 Sampling

In the present study, the sample was determined on the basis of a non-probabilistic technique based on "reasoned choice according to the orientation the researcher wants to give to his investigations. (...). It is a technique mostly used by proponents of qualitative survey methods, which seek rather the qualitative representativeness of their sample ". It is thus the sample by reasoned choice. The choice of the sample by reasoned choice is justified by the intentional nature of the choice of the sample.

From the above, it can be retained that the non-probabilistic technique based on reasoned choice is the one used for sampling.

3.2.3 Sample size

This is the number of people in the sample. In this study, it varies according to the six target groups mentioned above: child victims of trafficking, trafficking parents, trafficked child victims, judicial police officers, magistrates and populations.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents

Order number	Respondent profiles	Number	Percentages %
1.	Victims Children	25	20.83
2.	Parents Traffickers	20	16.66
3.	Operators	20	16.66
4.	Judicial Police Officers	30	25
5.	Magistrates	05	4.17
6.	Populations	20	16.66
7.	Total	120	100

3.3 Data collection instruments

In view of the nature of the research, which is both quantitative and qualitative, recourse has been had to the documentary compilation, the interview and the written survey questionnaire.

- Documentary research

Document compilation is the first of the data collection approaches we have used. It enabled the collection of information in the documentation centers of INJEPS, FLASH, ENAM, the Ministry in charge of the Family and the OCPM. These were works and submissions related to the study. Moreover, it is useful to emphasize that the internet has been of definite use to us in the collection of information.

- Interview guide

It presents itself as a speech-event in which a person A (the researcher) extracts information from a person B (the respondent), which was contained in the biography (private and / or professional life) of B. Maintenance guide has the advantage of allowing a certain linearity to be followed without undermining the chronology or the strict formulation of maintenance questions (Caplow, 1996). The guide elaborated in the framework of this study was sent to the actors according to the criteria of reasoned choice while respecting the different target groups of the research. Thus, on behalf of this research, the issues that compose it were classified by thematic / research interests.

- The questionnaire

For the Encarta digital dictionary (2009), the questionnaire is a series of written questions on a given topic that is submitted to one or more people. For Gravel (1994), the questionnaire remains the preferred tool for conducting a survey of a given target group. It is designed to address the concerns raised by the research hypotheses. Thus, on behalf of this research, the questions that compose it were classified by research objectives.

3.4 Investigation procedure

The various members of the target groups were contacted thanks to the collaboration of the leaders of the OCPM, the First Instance Court of Cotonou and certain populations. The questionnaire was given to child victims of trafficking at OCPM-CATE. It is translated into the local language for those who have difficulty reading. The

children were questioned individually and we filled out the questionnaires ourselves. The interview was individual and took place by appointment according to the days that were appropriate to the subjects concerned and to the officials of the OCPM and the TPI of Cotonou.

3.5 Data processing

This phase of the work took place on a bipartite basis. As a first step, it was a question of dealing with the data of the interviews with the subjects. This treatment consisted mainly of the transcription of the information in order to highlight the main subjects addressed by the subjects through their answers to the questions. Following this, a grid of analysis is made based on the hypothesis of the subject of study. Indeed, this grid made it possible to produce the results relating to our investigation. Once the themes and the grid are constructed, a thematic grouping, that is to say, a ranking of the answers by theme, then an analysis of the content by theme are made.

In a second step, after processing the questionnaire, the information collected is processed. This operation was done manually and with the computer thanks to the Excel software. The data are presented in tables and graphs to make the information received more visible.

4. RESULTS:

The results are presented according to the objectives.

4.1 Child trafficking in Cotonou: an overview

The notion of gender is strongly considered in relation to trafficking in children. For each aspect, the field data source presented is 2014. The graph below shows the field data.

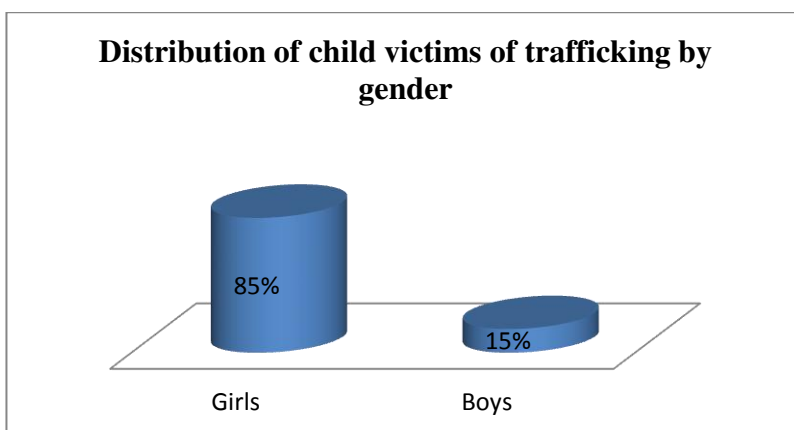


Figure 2: Distribution of child victims of trafficking by gender

The figure above shows that 85% of trafficked children are girls while 15% are boys.

- Respondents' perceptions of child trafficking

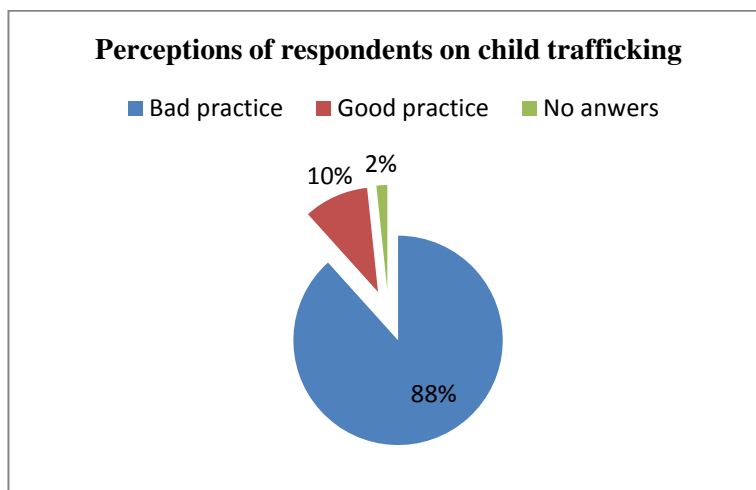


Figure 3: Distribution of respondents according to perceptions of child trafficking
Source: Field data 2014

According to this figure, 88% of the respondents said that child trafficking is a bad practice and deserves to be repressed with the utmost rigor. On the other hand (10%) said it was good practice while 2% refrained from commenting on the matter.

Trafficking in children is a bad practice and deserves to be repressed with the utmost rigor. On the other hand (10%) said it was good practice while 1.67% refrained from commenting on the matter.

4.2 The causes and consequences of activities carried out by children on their physical, psychological, moral and social well-being

4.2.1 The causes of placement and recruitment of child victims of trafficking

The figure below shows the causes of placement or recruitment of children in Cotonou.

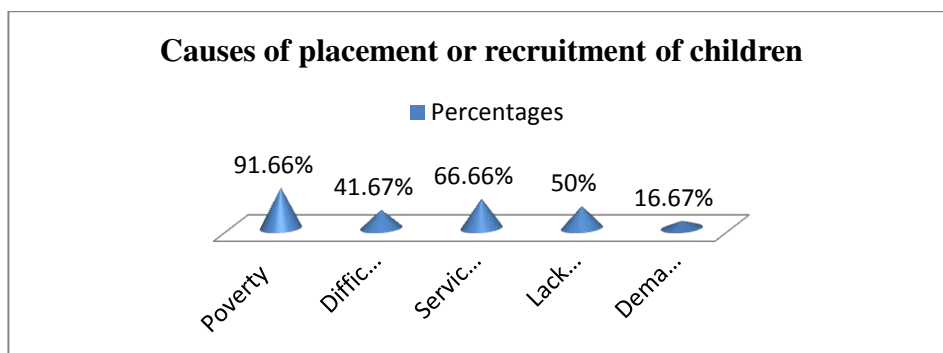


Figure 4: Distribution of respondents according to their opinion on the causes of placement or recruitment of children in Cotonou.

Source: field data, 2014

According to our investigations, the reasons why parents opt for placement and operators to recruit children in Cotonou indicate that poverty, family difficulties, service constraints, lack of economic opportunities, The demand for child labor and less costly, and certain social norms are fundamental causes of trafficking in children in Cotonou.

4.2.2 The consequences of economic exploitation on child victims of trafficking

Trafficking in children is not without consequences on their lives as well as on their future. The figure below shows the consequences for our respondents.

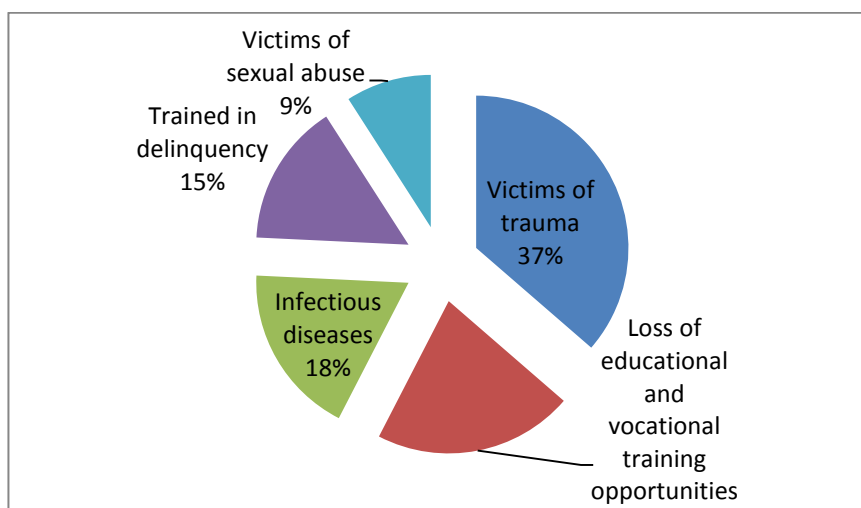


Figure 5: Distribution of respondents according to their perception of the consequences of trafficking on children in Cotonou.

Source: field data, 2014

Our field research has revealed that child trafficking has many consequences on children's lives as well as on their future. The figure above shows that 100% of our survey population claimed that children are victims of trauma, 58.33% pointed out that this phenomenon leads to a loss of educational and vocational training opportunities, while 50% Stated that children are exposed to infectious diseases, 41.67% have opined that children are also trained in delinquency and 25% said that children are victims of sexual abuse.

4.2.3 The consequences of economic exploitation on child victims of trafficking

Trafficking in children is not without consequences for their lives as well as for their future. The figure below shows the consequences for our respondents.

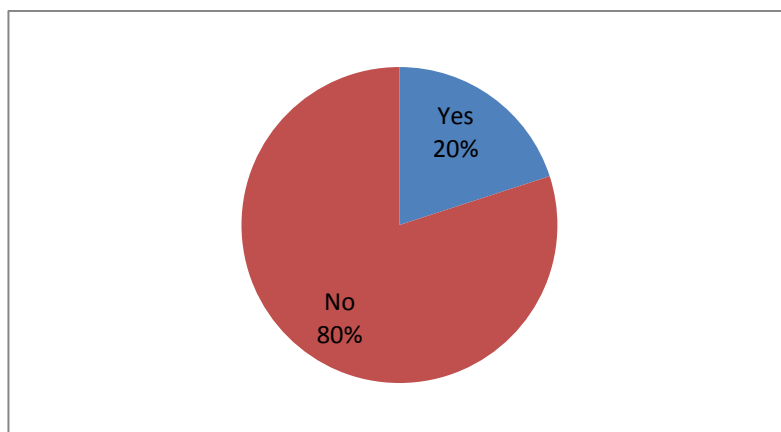


Figure 6: Percentages of children that denounce their employers

Source: field data, 2014.

80% of child victims of trafficking in our survey population do not denounce their employers, while 20% denounce them.

- **Relationship between child victims of trafficking and their employers.**

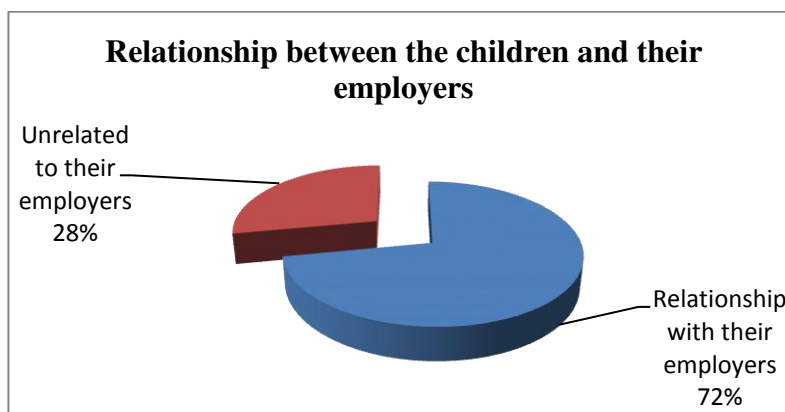


Figure 7: Percentages of children on their relationship with their employers

Source: field data, 2014

72% of the children reported being related to their employers, while 28% were unrelated to their users.

- **Place of settlement of cases of child trafficking preferred by children**

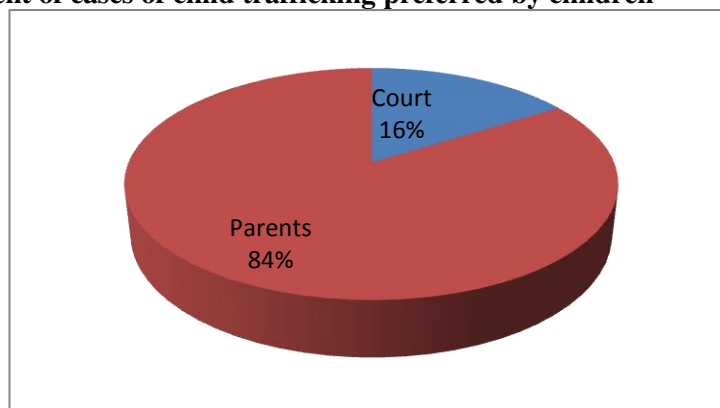


Figure 8: Percentages of children at the place of settlement of cases of trafficking

84% of the children preferred to have their users summoned to their parents, whereas 16% of the children found the best place.

4.2.2 At the level of parents responsible for trafficking in children

- **Lack of knowledge of laws**

The figure below shows that parents who perpetrate trafficking in children do not know the law that punishes child trafficking.

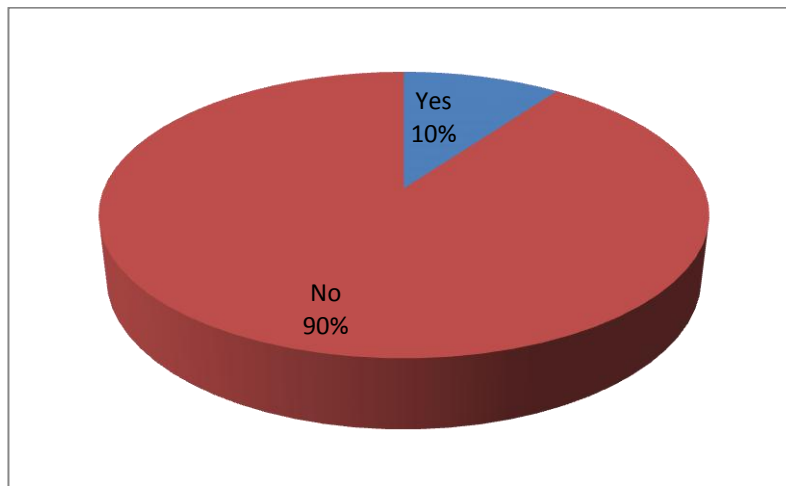


Figure 9: Percentages of parent trafficking in relation to the knowledge or not of the texts that represent the phenomenon.

Source: field data, 2014.

90 percent of child trafficking parents reported that they were unaware of the legal dispositions that punish the phenomenon, while 10 percent said they were familiar with the dispositions.

This section presents the causes and consequences of the economic exploitation of child victims of trafficking in the city of Cotonou.

4.2.3 At the level of the Judicial Police Officers

The Judicial Police Officers interviewed during the research indicated that the number of cases of trafficking of children they have received is not proportional to the number of cases referred. 100% of the Judicial Police Officers interviewed said that the number of cases of child trafficking they received was not proportional to the number of cases referred.

4.2.4 At the level of magistrates

60% of investigated magistrates said that the perpetrators of child trafficking were not always rigorously enforced, but 40% said they were still under the law.

4.2.5 At the population level

- **Overview of children's economic environments in Cotonou**

In Cotonou, economic exploitation of children is manifested in various environments. 50% of trafficked children are found in markets, 33% in households and 17% in workshops and garages.

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS:

Child trafficking is a reality in the city of Cotonou. While repressive measures are taken, societal constraints seriously hamper the fight against this phenomenon, which seriously undermines the well-being and future of children. Given this sad reality, we will implement the SWOT analysis model to highlight sociological constraints that disrupt the effective application of the legal framework in this area.

5.1 Overview of Child Trafficking

The general overview of the trafficking circuit revealed in this study that child victims of trafficking are predominantly girls while a crippled part of boys is affected by the phenomenon. It is apparent that girls are often diverted from the path to school for domestic tasks, and trade activities are not without consequences on the latter. They are generally exploited in markets, training workshops and within households. As proof one of the respondents said: "I do not take boys for my activities because they cannot cook me like girls. I do not have time to leave the market and go and prepare. ", what confirmed the result of a study of UNCEF in 1998.

At the same time, the overwhelming majority of people have found that child trafficking is a bad practice that must be dealt with the utmost rigor in order to safeguard the rights of children against any kind of abuse affecting their lives and their future. But another fringe thinks that child trafficking is good practice because it allows children to struggle to earn a living, while another party has refrained from expressing concern because it is made up of Real users of children for economic purposes.

In view of the above, two contradictory positions on child trafficking emerge. The first is that the economic exploitation of children is to be condemned because the child is a precious, fragile, vulnerable and innocent being who must be protected, educated and trained in order to ensure a better future. The other position that the child passes through the circuit of the slave trade to earn his living is that which does not find any consequence in the practice of the slave trade which not only deprives the child of his freedom but also taints and especially the future of children. The latter have no notion of the rights of children.

5.2 Causes, manifestations and consequences of trafficking in children

At the end of the results, several causes of child trafficking are identified: poverty, family difficulties, lack of economic opportunities, service constraints, traditional considerations and increased demand for Labor force.

Poverty is the fundamental cause of the economic exploitation of children because in the villages, making many children is a source of wealth because they help their parents in rural work, what confirms the work of Fouedjio in 2008. But the effect of climate change, which has an impact on agriculture and other activities, has resulted in low economic power for parents who are unable to meet the needs of their children. Traditional considerations also strongly favor trafficking in children because they stipulate that girls must not go to school and have to work themselves to prepare for their marriage and the extended family with whom these children are often placed and where they are victims of trafficking.

These children are often subjected to heavy work day and night. They are abused, abused, sexually abused and are often deprived of care, food, and schooling. These children work a lot and have no rest. In markets, they are seen carrying heavy goods on their heads and are forced to sell all sales items before returning home. Within the households they are the first to wake up and the last to sleep. They are often not at the same table to eat with the children of their users. They are marginalized and subject to corporal punishment at the slightest fault. They are poorly maintained, malnourished, and are not given the same attention as other children. Girls are often victims of sexual abuse, rape followed by pregnancy, voluntary assault and inhuman and degrading treatment.

These various violations of children's rights have dramatic consequences on their lives, their physical and psychological integrity and deprive them of all opportunities for education and vocational training. These trafficked children experience, at all times, a sense of despair and humiliation because they are disappointed by the difficult conditions in which they find themselves and the suffering they endure, which is contrary to what they were told to induce, force, and constrain their transportation and placement. These children, under pressure and suffering, are obliged to run away to find themselves in the street or in places where they commit delinquency because of lack of follow-up and education. As a result, their vulnerability is much more pronounced.

In light of all the above, the first hypothesis that child trafficking seriously mortgage the future of children is confirmed.

5.3 Sociological burdens and the repression of child trafficking in the town of Cotonou

According to empirical research data it should be noted that the suppression of trafficking of lead children in the wing of the fact that child victims of trafficking do not denounce their users because they have in their immense majority, of the relationship. In addition to the fact that children prefer to complain to their parents instead of complaining to the courts, there is a lack of awareness of the texts that punish child trafficking. This

implies that all parents do not complain at first because they are accomplices and then because they are related to the operators or the users of the children. They act in this way because they are only interested in the remuneration that these operators owe to the children. This is the reason why the parents of the child victims of trafficking and the farmers opted or preferred the friendly settlements to the penalties they incur. In addition, all complaints of child trafficking cases are not referred because there are cases in which the trafficking offense is not committed. At the level of justice, a relative majority of magistrates have stated that not all perpetrators of child trafficking are punished. At this level it should be noted that the Prosecutor of the Republic in relation to the criminal proceedings established by the Judicial Police Officers judges the timeliness or inappropriateness of prosecution. There is also the judge's intimate conviction of the affairs of which he is responsible. And as such, it can decide for insufficiency of charges and according to its intimate conviction to file files without follow-up. Thus, the actors of the criminal chain are under pressure from the political-administrative authorities in cases of proven trafficking by their relatives, relatives or friends. It should not be forgotten that the actors of the criminal chain are members of Beninese society and are anchored in its traditional values. They are the ones who enforce these laws against the members of that same society. These factors weaken the mechanism of repression because the Judicial Police Officer, the State Prosecutor and the judge cannot manage with rigor the files of trafficking of children for which they are in charge.

It is clear that the populations for the most part live in fear of "mystical powers" and do not dare to denounce cases of abuse or exploitation of children around them. Moreover, it is noted that the city of Cotonou has recorded a large number of cases of abuse or economic exploitation of children which result in no convictions due to out-of-court settlements, what confirms the result of the study of the work of Najat Malla M'Jid in 2013. Fears and threats play a non-negligible role in the failure of effective enforcement of the law on the phenomenon. For example, the resignation of authorities who do not pursue proceedings against withdrawals of complaints due to the fear of "mystical powers" and other threats from the victim's family for reasons of Preeminence of family honor and the adage that "dirty linen is washed as a family". The traditional values considered in Benin as wealth do not favor the repression of the cases of trafficking observed in the convents and other sacred places whose access is conditioned by an initiation. This state of affairs stems from the fact that some notables, traditional chiefs and community leaders prefer to settle these disputes at their level. There is also this tendency of the population to revert to divine justice and therefore to the righteousness of God because, according to it, nothing is created, nothing is lost, everything is transformed. In the same way, it is customary that instead of letting public action move, recourse to practices with punitive ends, such as a practice whereby an individual who commits immodest and unnatural acts (incest), is naked in the public square, to undergo corporal punishment, pledge of his purification and acceptance in the family and in the lineage because in the meantime rejected.

6. CONCLUSION:

Trafficking in children, in addition to being a violation of human rights, is a breach of the commitments made by States through national conventions, treaties, agreements and texts. Indeed, the States signatories to the international conventions have made it their duty to take the necessary measures to ensure the protection of children. They have also taken on the responsibility of fighting trafficking. Given the state of child trafficking in West Africa, and particularly in Benin, particularly in the city of Cotonou, it can be concluded that it is important that Benin multiplies its efforts in order to curb to the phenomenon which has grown considerably. Trafficking in children is sometimes understood as greed rather than as a matter of poverty. Under these conditions, the populations are the first to be questioned. They are therefore called upon to engage in the struggle rather than to promote trafficking in children. All actions undertaken by States will only be really effective if people show a change in behavior and mentality. Sociological constraints constitute real bottlenecks to the actual application of the texts on the repression of child trafficking because communities are not associated with the elaboration of laws that are inadequate to the context. The actors in the criminal chain are members of the community, and even though the laws are good, because they are under pressure from the community, it is not easy to beat these realities. This state of affairs prompts them to do their work badly by departing from the texts. It is therefore not to be ignored that within the community there is an organization; and this is what justifies the withdrawal of complaints and settlement agreements. Moreover, traditional leaders, notables, crowned heads and leaders demand that these cases are not handled by justice, therefore by positive law, and take responsibility for resolving these disputes at their level. This highlights the pre-eminence of family honor and community.

It would be much more adaptable to rely on the different modes of repression of the community that are based on expiatory ceremonies, resulting in fines. Modern laws and endogenous values must follow a logic of complementarity, so that, for cases of trafficking, and because of sociological constraints, we can dwell on fines that have both an endogenous coloration And modern, instead of preferring prison sentences, given the context of

Benin. This will certainly contribute to a positive change in the behavior of perpetrators and accomplices in child trafficking.

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