



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Vol.6.Issue.2.2019 (Apr-June)

ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

2395-2628(Print):2349-9451(online)

LANGUAGE, GENDER AND ENSNARED-MIGRANCY: ADIMORA-EZEIGBO'S TRAFFICKED, AND OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

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doi: <https://doi.org/10.33329/ijelr.6219.182>



ABSTRACT

Trans-Sahara Migration has become a serious global concern in sub-Saharan Africa due to potential for loss of human capital for the departure countries. What is not generally appreciated is the role of language as a major instrument for ensnaring young female victims across the continental borders in the elusive search for the proverbial “milk and honey”. This study explores the dynamics of the use of language and its effect in promoting the Trans Saharan Migration of African women, particularly Nigerians. The vivid representation of ensnared migration, and the subsequent trafficking of women across the Sahara, provides a source for detailed investigation of the language of trafficking in Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Trafficked* and other representations. This study attempts a close reading and detailed analysis of this and similar representations in order to establish how deliberately structured languages of conviction, deception, enticement and persuasion act as catalyst for the illusory and frequently fatal female migration across African borders. Language in this context has negative “perlocutionary effect” in activating the forced migration of African women across borders. Hence, the study establishes how language is implicitly used to lure African women into prostitution, servitude, neo-slavery and sundry dehumanization in foreign lands.

Key Words: Trans Saharan migration, Migration, African women, Adimora-Ezeigbo, Trafficked, language of enticement, Speech Act Theory.

Introduction

Trans-Saharan migration has become a serious global concern due the potential loss of human capital for the departure countries and the burden of human management and threat to security placed on the transit countries. Migration entails the movement of people within localised areas of a country or across the country's borders. It could be legal/regular or illegal/irregular. In Ogu's (2017) submission, migration is legal or regular “when the migrant fulfills the necessary immigration regulation or has the authorization required to enter, stay or work in a country” (p51). On the other hand, migration becomes irregular or illegal when migrants force themselves into receiving or transit countries without proper documentation or in a manner that contravenes

stipulated migration laws. Mobilities of this nature constitute issues of wide discussion in the current global economic realities.

Irregular migration is a thorn in the flesh of the world today particularly African and European continents. Literature has shown that Africa is witnessing massive illegal migration of youths across the continental borders leading to a corollary loss of human capital while Europe on the other hand, is battling with a reciprocal surge in population and its attendant human management and security challenges. Most of the youths undauntedly volunteer to migrate despite the cost and/or means of such migration in the hope of achieving personal economic aspirations. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2016) reports that over hundreds of thousands of migrants and refugees arrived Europe from Africa, the Middle East and Asia through the Mediterranean in 2015 and 2016 respectively. With this outrageous influx and upsurge, Europe is said to have reached a critical point in its ability to cope with the European Union (EU) standard for receiving immigrants (Banulescu-Bogdan and Fratzke, 2015).

Literature has proffered some of the drivers and determinants of illegal migration. Some of these drivers which include bad governance, poverty, political instability, escalating ethnic conflicts and persistent economic decline (Adepogu, 2017) have not only shaped the trends of migration in Africa particularly in Nigeria but have also created a lot of criminal activities associated with the act. Other widely discussed determinants include unemployment, lack of decent wages, underemployment, deteriorating infrastructure and insecurity.

In most African countries especially in Nigeria where this paper is domiciled, unemployment has engulfed the ever-teeming youths produced by different higher-educational institutions in the country. Those who are privileged to be employed are paid pittance which cannot take care of them and their aged parents and relations who coughed out money to train them with the hope of getting a reciprocal care in a society where extended family system is practised and revered. These employed few are further beclouded and besieged with epileptic and irregular payment of wages by the employers. The level of insecurity emanating from political crises, insurgency, ethnic cleansing and herders-farmers' clashes are uncertainties which are not just glaring at these promising youths but are also scaring away investors thereby deepening their loss of hope for the future in their own country.

As a survival strategy, most of these youths who do not want to be swallowed up by the anomalies in their countries of residence seek to migrate across borders with the hope of getting better jobs and living decent lives. In line with this survival strategy, Gomez, Walle, and Zergawu, (2017) estimated the broader determinants of South-North migration from a human security point of view. According to them such human security includes freedom from fear, freedom from want, and freedom to live in dignity. The search for these three levels of freedom and the effort to evade the strict entry and immigration laws of European countries have pushed Africans, particularly Nigerian youths to opt for irregular migration through the Mediterranean routes despite the gory and deadly harrowing consequences associated with it. Most of these youths die along the Mediterranean route, some at sea while some who eventually succeed in getting to their destination get deported along the line. Africa by this not only witnesses a loss of human capital but also that of economy.

Similarly, a lot of naive migrants who are in search of the three levels of freedom and human security unfortunately fall prey to smugglers and traffickers who subject them to all kinds of dehumanization. The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and other related matters NAPTIP (2017) contextualizes human trafficking within the ambits of act, means and purpose. It thus conceptualizes it as the act of recruiting, transporting, transferring, harboring and receiving people by means of threat, force, coercion, abduction, deception or fraud for the purpose of exploitation whether sexual or labour. Trafficking therefore connotes the movement of people within and across borders through coercion or deception for the purpose of economic and sexual exploitation.

Trafficking seems to thrive so buoyantly and robustly in a country like Nigeria engulfed in corruption and bad governance culminating to poverty for a greater majority of its teeming population who are in dire need of human security and survival. Miscreants who are also in dire need of financial freedom and survival

perceive this criminal trade as a lucrative means of livelihood. Hence, they lure vulnerable women who are also in search of better conditions of life with fake promises and offers of lucrative work, education and better living conditions in Europe into sex trade and other forms of sexual exploitation. Research shows that cases of trafficked person increased by 203.8% between 2015 and 2016 in Nigeria (NAPTIP, 2017). This shows that this heinous crime has been/is still on the increase. Hence, aside other determinants of trafficking, this study examines the role of language in promoting/engineering irregular migration/human trafficking as exemplified in the context of literature using Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Trafficked* and other representations outside the context of literary text.

Language as a means of communication is a lubricant to effective social interaction. It mediates between humans in daily transactions and directly or indirectly leads to social, economic and political globalization and productivity. Both the spoken and written symbols are language signposts used in facilitating and fulfilling man's daily activities. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (2007) submits that verbal signposts reflect and aid the relations established between human beings in the production of their means of life. Language therefore engineers and facilitates man's production of his means of livelihood. In business language is used to facilitate the buying and selling of goods and services. Likewise, language is used in politics to convince the electorate to vote for the candidates of their choice. Advertisement, electioneering campaigns, educational activities, government policies are all carried out through the vehicle of language whether spoken or written to express the intentions and purposes of users. Thus, language is a fundamental means of conveying meaning and performing actions arising from human interactions. Since creativity is in-built in man, humans manipulate language at different levels of linguistic, non-linguistic and sociolinguistic contexts to both achieve the necessities of life and maintain sustainability of such means of life.

Language as a vital instrument of human communication promotes man's achievement in different spheres of life and aids the fulfillment of his purposes in life whether legal or illegal. In the quest for survival, language acts as a catalyst in the movement of people especially young women across continental borders. Traffickers contrive deliberately structured languages of conviction, deception, enticement in form of advertisements, offers of employment and pictures to persuade, lure and ensnare vulnerable and unsuspecting African women particularly Nigerians into migration across the continental borders in search of the promised greener pastures which often land them into all forms of dehumanization and exploitation. It is against this backdrop that this study explores the dynamics of the use of language and its role in promoting trans Saharan migration of African women particularly Nigerians. The vivid representation of ensnared migration and the subsequent trafficking of women across the Saharan presented in Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Trafficked* and other representations provide the source for a detailed investigation of the language of trafficking in this study. Language is thus seen as an immediate key driver to migration across borders.

A lot of studies have been conducted using Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Trafficked* to explore the migration/trafficking of Nigeria women across borders in the illusory search for greener pastures. Nadaswaran (2011) analysed sex trafficking in neo-liberal Nigeria through the writings of Nigerian women. The study specifically highlighted how Nigeria's descent into a neo-liberal economic structure left its women vulnerable to transnational crimes of human trafficking. Using a close qualitative analysis of literary texts such as Chika Unigwe's *On Black Sister's Street*, Akachi Ezeigbo's *Trafficked* and Abidemi Sanusi's *Eyo* the study explores the alarming, systematic, highly regulated movement and exploitation of Nigerian women into modern day slavery. Mathias (2013) further examined Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's Artistic response to the experiences of Nigerian ladies in the international sex-trade and prostitution using *Trafficked*. Through characterization and other literary devices, the study explores the nature, form and effect of sex trade in Nigeria. Similarly, Urama and Nwachukwu (2017) examined how Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Trafficked* portrayed materialism as a key factor that led traffickers into criminal acts that impede other people's progress through exploitation and sex-trade. The paper also examined how the exploited and trafficked girls can regain their self-esteem and live fulfilled lives through the assistance of government agencies and non-governmental organizations. Odinye (2018) finally explored the psychological impacts of sex slavery and human trafficking on the girl child in Akachi

Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Trafficked*. The paper exposed the after-effects and negative consequences of trafficking and sexual exploitation and tried to create awareness on the consequences of such evil acts.

From the ongoing it could be observed that the major stimulants for irregular migration and human trafficking on the part of trafficked persons are poverty, the quest for better means of livelihood, education, desire for change in social status, and for the traffickers, greed and materialism. In the face of all these motives, the use of language as a tool to manipulate the conscience of desperate, timid, naive and vulnerable African women particularly Nigerians to migrate in order to better the lots of their families resulting in being trafficked for sex slavery and other forms of exploitation is yet to be explored. This creates a gap to be filled by the present study which examines the role of language as a major instrument for ensnaring young female victims across continental borders in the elusive search for the proverbial "milk and honey". The study explores the dynamics of language use and its effect in promoting the Trans Saharan Migration of African women, particularly Nigerians.

Theoretical Framework

Speech act theory is used as a basis for the analysis of the language of trafficking used in Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Trafficked* and other representations in this study. Speech acts theory propounded by Austin (1962) describes how language is used to get things done or to perform actions. Based on the theory, language is not merely used to express meaning or communicate but has the force to produce an effect on the listener/hearer. Austin identified three aspects or levels of speech act, locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts.

A locutionary act is the act of uttering a sentence with a particular sense and particular referents (Amadi, 2012). According to Austin, it is an utterance used by humans to communicate their needs and wants, and persuade others to accept their view points. An illocutionary act is the force of an utterance. It is an utterance used to give instructions, warn, make a promise, or give an information. Searle (1975) further developed five aspects of the illocutionary act which include, the assertive, commissive, directive, declarative and expressive. These illocutionary points are used to indicate the levels of illocutionary acts the speaker can engage in.

The perlocutionary act is the effect of an utterance on the listener. It could be used to influence the listener's thoughts, emotions or physical response and actions. According to Nordquist (2008) it is an action or state of mind produced as a consequence of saying something. It is also referred to as perlocutionary effect. Perlocutionary acts are used to persuade, deceive, encourage, incite, anger, frighten, inspire, amuse, comfort, lure the audience/listener/hearer. It is capable of producing and engendering behavioral changes in the physio-psycho social states of the listener. Hence, a perlocutionary act is performed by the speaker while the effect impacts on the listener/hearer.

The theory of speech act is relevant to the present study as it is used to explore the use of language as a catalyst to illegal migration and trafficking of women across the Saharan. The theory is used to expose how miscreants manipulate language to produce negative perlocutionary effects on naive victims who succumb to their deceptive illocutionary acts and intents in the belief that there is a greener pasture in the transit countries.

Method

This study attempts a close reading and detailed analysis of Adimora- Ezeigbo's *Trafficked* and excerpts of real-life confessions of trafficked persons to establish how deliberately structured languages of conviction, deception, enticement and persuasion act as a catalyst for the illusory and frequent fatal female migration across African continental borders.

Discussion

Language-ensnared migrancy in *Trafficked* and other representations

Trafficked persons are lured out of their countries of residence through powerfully encoded languages of deception. The traffickers work on their psyche using languages that appeal to their socio-economic conditions. Through the vehicle of language, trafficked persons are convinced and deceived to believe that there are better employment opportunities in the destination countries. Out of desperation to wriggle out of their poverty-stricken states, they yield voluptuously and gullibly without hesitation, to the baits of the traffickers. In Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Trafficked*, language is so intricately woven and packaged to express this condition of reality in a fictional context. Thus, Nneoma the main character of the Novel who was trafficked to Europe narrates and reports the conditions that precipitated her being cut by the net of the traffickers.

The author uses Ogukwe (Nneoma's father)'s family to foreshadow a number of Nigerian families living in abject poverty. Ogukwe was frustrated by an uncaring government who deprived him of his retirement gratuity and pension and drove him into depression. He lost hope in the government of the day but shifted his hope of achieving his aspirations to his daughter, Nneoma. He sees Nneoma as the light of the family and thus persuades her to marry Ofomata because of the benefits such a union will attract to the family. Ofomata's father had promised to give them a large plot of land if the union is cemented. Ogukwe thus pleads with his daughter, "My little mother, think of what this will mean to us, land-starved as we are in this family...I can build a house on the land" (p.71). With this, Ogukwe uses the language of conviction to persuade his daughter to marry a man she does not really want to marry for fear of being permanently domiciled in the village with a man chosen to replace the traditional titled position of his father. This agitated Nneoma's mind.

Ogukwe did not just stop at this but went a step further to assign a liberating role to his daughter when she willy-nilly accepted Ofomata's hand in marriage. He implores:

"My daughter, my little mother, I have always known you reincarnated to bale me out of my predicament." "Nneoma, you have done well, my child," Adaeze put in, her voice bursting with contented pride (p.20).

In the above speech, Nneoma's father performs an illocutionary act of declaring his daughter a liberator of his family or rather the expected messiah of his family. He directly or indirectly entrusted her with the responsibility of changing the socio-economic tone of the family. Ogwukwe's utterance had tremendous perlocutionary effect on Nneoma. It acted on her thoughts, emotions and physical action (Biener, 2013). Consequently, Nneoma sees herself as the only hope of her family. She reflected as the author mirrors her, "As things had stood, she was the only source of relief and hope for a better life for them" (p. 20).

Ogukwe's utterance ignited and fueled the urge to make a better living and influence the family positively in Nneoma. She sees herself as one entrusted with the messianic mission of 'bailing' her family from their predicament. 'To bale' presupposes that one is under bondage and needs to be liberated. Thus, in the context of the novel, Nneoma's family was under the bondage of poverty and needs to be liberated. Ogukwe's speech had the perlocutionary effect of placing the mandate on his daughter. The impact of this misconstrued mandate which psychologically affected Nneoma pushed her into yielding to the baits of human traffickers who offered her a better employment in Europe. Through Nneoma's confession, the author exposes how language has been manipulated to conform to the unquenchable desire of unsuspecting victims of illegal migration and trafficking in Africa, to better the socio-economic malaise of their families. Nneoma thus confesses:

"...I went to Europe with a woman (Madam Dollar) who promised to help me and some other girls to get jobs. She said it was easy to get good jobs there and that we could migrate to Britain after a while if we wanted." (p. 15)

Based on Searle's (1975) speech act, Madam Dollar performed an illocutionary act of promising a good job to her unsuspecting and vulnerable victims which produced a perlocutionary effect/force of persuading, convincing, luring and deceiving the young women into accepting to migrate across borders with a view to getting the supposed good jobs. Nneoma's joblessness and her father's predicament were unwritten and unspoken signposts which spoke loud in her memory and subconscious mind and added up as a force that pushed her into accepting the offer given to her.

Ogukwe's language import and family's predicament further affected Nneoma's psychological concept of her original training as a teacher. She became disenchanted and discontented with her career as a teacher since it cannot 'bale' her family out of poverty. Even after being trafficked, rehabilitated and trained as a tailor the fear of uncertainty and survival in a country where resources are unequally distributed, where the rich get richer and the poor get poorer still gripped her mind. The messianic mission of 'baling' her family still stared her on the face. Nneoma thus bemoans:

"You know I've been wandering if tailoring is the best thing for me; I mean, would I survive as a tailor The only people who make money are politicians, bankers... and there's the sex trade and oil bunkering..."(p. 67).

Efe, another character in the novel had a similar experience. Efe corroborates Nneoma's story and experience:

"One day I saw an advertisement in a newspaper while I was on a visit to my cousin in Lagos. It asked young men and women who wished to work abroad to come to a certain address to be interviewed" (pp.98-99).

The call/invitation for interview expressed in the advertisement as reported by Efe is an indication of the use of Language to ensnare African youths especially young women to migrate across borders for a purported greener pasture. Such an invitation connotes an illocutionary act used to promise and lure them out of the country into sex trade and prostitution. It also produced the perlocutionary effect of persuading and convincing the victims to believe that means of living are better in Europe, the presupposed land of "milk and honey". The written language encoded in the advertisement can be seen as the immediate tool used to pull the young women away from their countries of residence into slavery while the unwritten and spoken languages residing in their psyche and sub-conscious serve as the remote tool that pushed them into responding to the written and unspoken linguistic force. Efe further bemoans the condition of her family:

"My family was poor; it was a struggle to put meals on the table. Only my elder sister and I went to college. My three brothers dropped out before they finished primary school" (p.98).

In the case of Efe, poverty was the unspoken and non-verbal signposts written boldly in her mind. The situation placed on her the desire to salvage her family from their predicament though she was not literally given the mandate by her parents like Nneoma. The advertisement on the other hand foregrounds an illocutionary act which could be false or true. The intention here was false as the traffickers packaged their motives in a whitewashed sepulchre in order to deceive their prey. The invitation for interview expressed in the advertisement produced a response which is the perlocutionary effect on the victims. Efe continued:

"I responded to the advertisement without my cousin's knowledge. The office seemed perfectly normal. Quite a number of people were interviewed the same day. Some were rejected, but I was selected. None of the men who were interviewed was taken" (p.99).

This response portrays the effective use of well structured language of deception and enticement to elicit positive response. The whole saga was coded and presented in an unsuspecting linguistic aura and

environment. So, without a tinge of knowledge of the advertiser's intent, the young women responded, attended the interview, and were deceptively selected and appointed for onward travel to assume duties in Europe. Unfortunately, they never assumed the purported duties but rather were deployed to sex trade and other forms of servitude. The perpetrators of this heinous crime of ferrying women across borders capitalize on the naivety of the young women and artistically contrive and use sweet coated words capable of brainwashing them into consenting to the illusory offers of better means of livelihood across continental borders to achieve their heinous aberrant intentions.

Nneoma further expatiates on how she embarked on the mission of 'baling' her family and redeeming herself from the cultural entanglement of marrying her betrothed Ofofata.

"A friend and a classmate has told me some weeks before that some people helped her secure a teaching appointment in the United Kingdom and she would introduce me to them and I could come with her." (p.126)

This depicts the manipulative use of language as a vehicle of conviction, this time, not from a total stranger but from a known and perhaps trusted friend and classmate to lure one into migration without any trace of the hidden semantic import of the offer being made. Nneoma responded to her friend's invitation and traveled to Lagos with her to meet her supposed sponsors who took them to the next level of deception. Nneoma narrates: "They show us pictures of the schools where we'll be teaching and give us appointment letters signed by people with English names. (127).

Using deliberately structured language of enticement, both spoken and written, in form of appointment letters and job advertisement, Nigerian women exemplified in Nneoma, Efe and other girls in the novel, were convinced and persuaded to migrate in search of assumed better life across African borders. The pictures of schools shown to them further strengthens the seeming sincerity associated with the job opportunities offered to them though clothed in falsehood not explicitly expressed in speech and intention.

The migrants were also made to believe that a lot of money had been spent to procure visa, travel tickets and passport for them. Hence, they were lured into taking an oath of allegiance. The implicitly contrived language coded in the oath was used as a spiritual force to psychologically bind the migrants to servitude. It was used to ensnare them to abide to the terms of agreement of paying back the supposed expenditure incurred on their behalf.

"We took an Oath to work for the agency until we had paid our debts. They had spent a lot of money getting our passports and ticket." (p 99).

The actual and/or hidden intention of making the migrants take an oath was to instill fear in them. Note that the bible and an image of an 'arusi' were used for the oath taking. Both the bible and the image of 'arusi' were symbols of a spiritual force. An average African and Nigerian in particular believes so much in the existence of a supernatural force that should not be disobeyed if one is not prepared to face the wrath of such disobedience. So, the linguistic force encoded in the oath taking was deliberately packaged to threaten and instill fear in the migrants. This in the first instance forced them to conceal their mission and intention to travel abroad from people around them who would have investigated the truth of the offer given them and counsel them appropriately. The spiritual language also acted as a perlocutionary force that prevented them from escaping early enough from their captors (the traffickers) when they realised they were in for a different mission other than what was originally intended. Nneoma laments:

"... the only thing that worries me is that we have to take an oath and they told us the consequences will be severe. If we disregard the terms of the agreement, disobey them or cut links without settling our debts..."
"... they used the bible and an image of an arusi." (pp.127-128)

From the above lamentation, it can be inferred that the migrants were cowed, over powered, threatened and intimidated through the artistic use of religious language encoded in the verbal signpost of the oath and non-verbal signposts symbolized in the bible and the image of an 'arusi'. Hence, they were told that the consequences of flouting the oath would be 'severe.' Since an average African will rather prefer to be punished by man than by God or any spiritual deity they yielded. So, the language of intimidation enshrouded in the bible and the image of an 'arusi' was used to keep the trafficked persons in mental aberration and imprisonment. It acted as a catalyst that precipitated their migration across borders where they were subsequently forced to engage in sex trade, harassment, prostitution and different forms of servitude. Nneoma narrates their ordeal in Europe:

"In Europe, I discovered I am trafficked. I have no say in the matter. There's a woman called Madam Dollar – nothing comes between her and money. She owns us and the man, whom we learn to call Captain, is her bodyguard. She keeps us prisoner in her flat. Life is hell in Rome – we are always walking the night, selling sex to Italian men and foreigners." (pp.128-129)

The fictional representation of the use of language in coercing, luring and ensnaring vulnerable women across borders as depicted in *Trafficked* by Adimora-Ezeigbo is also corroborated by the real life confessions of the migrants. A similar representation of the experience of Nneoma, Efe and other trafficked persons in *Trafficked* is further shown in this excerpt of real life confession:

"I was deceived by my pastor who promised to assist me and my mother out of our poverty situation. He told my mother that I was hard working and could serve effectively as a sales girl in some shops abroad. He prepared a passport and brought to my mother. We were happy believing that God has remembered us. The pastor laid hands on me and prayed for me before the onward journey. Instead of going to the airport, we boarded a bus to Maiduguri. There, the pastor handed me over to another man who took me and other girls through the desert while promising to get us a visa when we get to the border country. Along the way we were sexually exploited by different men until we got to Libya...." (NAPTIP, n. d.)

This scenario displays a vivid use of language of deception to lure young women out of their countries of residence into sexual exploitation, slavery and dehumanization. The pastor in the story performs an illocutionary act of making a promise which produced the perlocutionary effect that precipitated the woman in the story to entrust her child to his care. It also ensnared the victim to yield to the offer. The 'prayer and laying of hands' was another linguistic sign post that enhanced his evil agenda. In this context, it replaced the oath taking language as it was artistically structured to penetrate through the innocence of victim and her mother. Another victim also narrates:

"A woman from my village who appeared to be doing well in business abroad, approached me and other girls, showing us pictures of boutiques supposedly owned by her. She told us we will be working for her in the boutiques when we get abroad. She took us to a shrine to take an oath not to escape or tell anybody. In the shrine we were made to wear white robes carrying coffins with cutlasses placed on them on our head. They also cut parts of our body and made us to proclaim; 'I will never tell anybody about this trip. I will forever remain loyal and honest to my madam. If am not, let the shrine kill me that I may be buried in this coffin'. We left with her to Lagos without informing anybody, when we got to Lagos, she took us to an Alhaji who administered another oath referred to as 'Lahila' to bind us to be faithful to our madam. Unfortunately, instead of going to the airport, we travelled through the desert to Mali. When we got to Mali, we boarded a bike that rode for five hours to an interior village where gold was mined. We were made to sleep with the gold miners for as many as thirty men per day while our madam collects money on our head." (NAPTIP, n. d.)

The above representation further discloses how the language of deception, conviction, threat and intimidation was used to propagate the migration and movement of desperate victims. All the oaths administered on them were language signposts used to manipulate their mental reasoning and force them into dehumanizing practices. The pictures of boutiques shown to them were nonverbal signposts used to convince and entice them into accepting the fake offers of the miscreants. Language has not only been used to force migration but has also been used to enforce sexism under duress and the coercion of victims into all kinds of uncultured and amoral sexual practices. It is important to note that pictures, job advertisements and offers of employment are language motifs used to manipulate the sensibility of illegal migrants and lure them into sex slavery and all kinds of dehumanization. These motifs occurred both in the fictional representation and in the real life confessions of victims.

Conclusion

The study explored the role of language as a major instrument for ensnaring young female victims across continental borders in the elusive search for the proverbial 'milk and honey'. It establishes how deliberately structured languages of conviction, deception, enticement and persuasion engender the trafficking and economic merchandise of humans particularly African women across the sub Saharan as represented in Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Trafficked* and some real life confessions of victims. The study thus concludes that language has a negative perlocutionary effect in activating the forced migration of African women across borders. It also concludes that language is implicitly used as a catalyst in luring vulnerable African women into prostitution, servitude, neo-slavery and sundry dehumanization in foreign lands.

In the light of the foregoing, it is therefore suggested that (1) a viral sensitization programme should be repeatedly organized and conducted in both rural and urban communities of different parts African continent. (2) The government in this part of the world should institute centres for migration studies in different institutions of higher learning in their countries. Interestingly, in the course of this research, one was recently being commissioned in one of the universities in South East, Nigeria by the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) and the Civil Society Organizations Network (CSOnetMADE) in collaboration with the university. This will help create global awareness on the dangers of illegal migration. It will also give youths insight into the languages used in trafficking. (3) The languages of trafficking should also be incorporated in the secondary and primary schools' curricula for sustainable sensitization to be achieved.

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the organisers of Nordic African Days 2018 conference where this paper was presented in the first instance. I also use this medium to seek permission by way of acknowledgement of all the researchers and organisations whose work I cited in this paper. I appreciate you all.

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