

Effect of Drug and Human Trafficking on Child Development and National Security in Accra Metropolis, Ghana

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Abstract:- The study examined how drug and human trafficking affect children's development and national security in Ghana's Accra Metropolitan Assembly. The study said crime is ubiquitous. The consequence is that the surge in drug and human trafficking in the Accra Metropolitan Assembly threatens national security and development and harms children in the metropolis. The study used rational choice and routine activity theories to examine how drug and human trafficking affect child development and national security. 15 security officials were stratified and selected for the interpretive qualitative study. The study findings were analyzed and presented using thematic analysis to draw appropriate conclusions. The results demonstrated high drug and human trafficking throughout the metropolis, especially in fishing areas. Human trafficking leads to child labor and street children, which lead to armed organizations. The study found that drug and human trafficking lead to an infusion of weaponry into the country, which could create militant groups that destabilize the country. Security agencies should increase human and drug trafficking education through radio and social media. Social media would instantly share drug and human trafficking information so individuals could help fix it.

I. INTRODUCTION

Drug trade income has been high for decades, driving high drug market demand and attracting many international criminal groups (Possi, 2018). With more criminal groups entering the drug trade, the market is saturated, requiring gangs to diversify. Due to high demand from source and recipient nations, drug trafficking groups can diversify into human trafficking (Aronowitz and Veldhuizen, 2021). The increase in illicit drugs and prescription drug use costs billions of dollars and thousands of lives, according to the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) (2017). The DEA argues drug use and trafficking endanger the American people and legal and medical institutions. Drug overdoses killed 174 people daily in 2016. That's 63,500 people every year—about the same as suicides and homicides combined—and the trend is worsening (DEA, 2018). A lot of people fall victim to human trafficking because of false promises of wealth and independence. Those people must tend marijuana and poppy fields. Physical, verbal, or

transnational human trafficking forces others to smuggle drugs. (Bartsch, 2020) Drug users may be victims. Habitual people indulge. Victims collaborate because they dread withdrawal syndrome (Roberson, 2017). Rejection endangers their family (Richmond, 2017). UNODC (2016a) reports that traffickers and victims commonly share a territory. Traffickers build trust and commit trafficking crimes. Organized criminal groups have sexually exploited women and children in human trafficking. Male trafficking for labor, prostitution, military service, and organ harvesting is rising (UNODC, 2016). Illegal drugs, violence, and drug usage are linked. Manufacturing, distribution, and the desperate efforts users and dealers will take to get "high" or make tons of money creating this. US drug and people trafficking regulations are strong, but traffickers adapt (Atak and Simeon, 2014). African criminal groups link drug and human trafficking. North African criminals trade people and drugs to Europe, often forcing them to become drug mules (Shelly, 2012). In human and drug trafficking to Scandinavia, Italy, and other European countries, organized crime gangs in Nigeria play a substantial role. Edo has human trafficking. The drug trade and 80% of Nigeria's trafficking victims begin in this state (Temitope, 2018). Owiso (2019) describes East African incidents of Kenyan trucks delivering khat to Somalia and returning with 50 children. Forced labor or sex trafficking affects these children. The US military's long history of child labor shows this. War-torn juvenile warriors are violently drugged. Nations and experts studying modern international relations have thought a lot about national security. Due to the government's responsibilities to maintain and safeguard human security, the ultimate purpose of national security, and geographical limits, security refers to a condition of protection that politicians try to obtain or maintain to protect their territory from external or internal dangers (Bonsu, 2016). Trafficking encompasses diverse underlying factors that often differ from one country to another. It is a complex phenomenon influenced by socioeconomic, cultural, and various other factors. Many of these elements are specific to particular trafficking patterns and the respective countries in which they occur. Nevertheless, several common elements tend to characterize trafficking in general and are observed across a wide range of distinct locations, patterns, or cases (Ukwayi et al., 2018). According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2016), drug

trafficking is a worldwide illegal trade that encompasses the cultivation, production, distribution, and sale of substances that are prohibited by drug laws. On the other hand, human trafficking continues to pose a significant challenge in West Africa. Like other countries in the region, Ghana serves as a source, transit, and destination country for the trafficking of women and children, primarily for forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation (Global Organized Crime Index, 2021). The connection between the drug trade and human trafficking is highly complex. The attention given to the intersection of drug and human trafficking routes has been insufficient in fully understanding the multifaceted relationship between these two illicit activities. Different types of drugs have played significant roles in the recruitment, control, and exploitation of victims involved in human trafficking, particularly sexual exploitation. In some cases, individuals being smuggled pay for their transportation by serving as drug couriers, either by transporting drugs or by ingesting them. Furthermore, drug trafficking is intertwined with various forms of trafficking, including labor trafficking in sectors such as agriculture, begging, and other physically demanding forms of work (Judge, 2018). According to Leslie (2018), human trafficking in the United States is commonly associated with illegal immigration across the southern border, although it can occur anywhere and affect anyone. Women and young girls are the primary targets of human trafficking worldwide. Many of them are coerced into the sex trade as a means to repay their debt to the traffickers who brought them into the country. Investigations into human trafficking reveal the horrifying nature of this crime, with its victims often being impoverished and lacking education. The impact of human trafficking extends beyond those directly enslaved by it, affecting all members of society in both direct and indirect ways (Bartsch, 2020).

The results are terrible when illicit drug trafficking and human trafficking are combined. People are trafficked throughout the world, a practice that is regarded as modern-day slavery. Second, according to a report from United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime (UNDOC), annual revenue generation due to illegal drug trafficking and human trafficking produces more than \$30 billion a year. The amount of resources involved which makes it lucrative to the traffickers is making government spend more than double the revenue to protect children (Adedeji, 2022).

The two epidemics of human and drug trafficking have been made worse by the growing use of Cryptomarkets and The Dark Web. These have come together to create a complex criminal enterprise. Social media's and the internet's widespread use has only fueled the growth of a network of covert websites that deal in illegal commodities like drugs, weapons, and child pornography. These websites are also often used for identity theft and even hired murder (Barnett, 2016). The welfare of society is implicitly harmed by human and drug trafficking because these illicit activities result in victims making huge sums of money for the offenders. Uncontrolled crime undermines the rule of law, creating a situation where the government is powerless to defend its citizens. In its June 2014 report, Not Just for Transit, the West African Drugs Commission (WACD) reiterated

its belief that restrictive measures to address the global drug problem have been ineffective and urged specific reforms in how the international community and individual West African states respond to drug development, smuggling, and usage (Gberie, 2016). In recent years, several gangs operating in northern Mali have engaged in drug-related activity. Drug trafficking disputes appear to have been the main cause of this violence, which is thought to have caused the disarray that prompted the UN-sponsored French intervention in January 2013. (Aning and Pokoo, 2014). There is little information describing how traffickers work, their motivations, and how they recruit and control victims. Specifically, little past research has focused on how drug traffickers use drugs. The few studies that looked into this possibility found narcotics as instruments used by traffickers to recruit, control, or further enmesh victims (Veldhuizen-Ochodničanová, 2020). Despite the numerous connections between human trafficking and drug trafficking, there has been a lack of literature discussing their interrelationships in Ghana. There is a tendency to study human trafficking and the drug trade as separate issues, disregarding their numerous connections. Consequently, to the researcher's knowledge, no previous research has been conducted on the relationship between drugs and human trafficking and its detrimental effects on the national security of Ghana.

This research aims to explore the effects of drug and human trafficking on child development in the Accra Metropolitan Assembly.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

➤ *Theoretical Review*

The overall aim or goal of dealing with drug and human trafficking in any country is to ensure the stability and security of the country (Adedeji, 2022). The concept of security and human protection is not only inscribed in international laws but it is also grounded in theory. A theory is said to be a statement of a hypothesised relationship between variables (Bryman, 2015). The theoretical review examines how drug and human trafficking violates the basic principles of human rights and affront to human dignity. It also discusses how drug and human trafficking undermines child's development and invariably affect national security.

➤ *Rational Choice Theory*

The rational choice theory arose from Cesare Beccaria's work, which was published in the late 18th century. Since then, the concept has evolved and widened to include various perspectives, such as deterrence, situational crime prevention, and routine activity theory. The term "theory" is used to describe a wide range of models that see social processes as the results of rationally motivated individual behavior. "Rational behavior" is behavior that is appropriate for achieving particular goals given the constraints imposed by the circumstances (Loughran et al., 2016). According to the rational choice theory, people consider the risks and benefits before determining whether to commit an offense. That is, people assess the likelihood of committing a crime against the potential rewards it could bring about using the information at their disposal (Shon and

Barton- Bellessa, (2015). Consequently, a crime is more likely to happen when the benefits outweigh the risks. This theory's claims have been thoroughly examined and, to some extent, supported by empirical data. Offending tends to become less likely as risks rise. For rewards and offending, the reverse relationship is anticipated. Prior studies suggest that perceptions of arrest certainty and psychic rewards are the most important rational choice indicators for criminal behavior, while the severity of a crime's punishment may only have a marginal impact on criminal behavior (Loughran et al., 2016). In this study, the rational choice theory, as discussed by Liu (2017), is deemed relevant. This theory suggests that offenders assess their own financial needs, personal values, learning opportunities, and the level of target protection before deciding to engage in criminal behavior. When it comes to the trafficking of women and children, it is an organized crime that involves a group of individuals rather than an individual act. Perpetrators of this crime have made a deliberate decision to engage in it, and to them, this choice is rational. Furthermore, the knowledge and skills acquired by these individuals contribute to their confidence in making this logical choice, as they are motivated by financial gain and social advancement in acquiring the necessary skills and tactics for the crime. Considering the amount of research on this topic, some academics argue that the risk-oriented, deterrence side of rational choice is more of a mid-range theory than one that seeks to explain offending in general (Webb, 2016). Webb (2016) recommends that academics continue testing the rational choice theory by analyzing how its premises are influenced by individual characteristics to determine whom deterrence works for. Deterrence researchers have previously put forth this idea. Deterrence theorists have frequently postulated disparities in the strength of deterrent effects across persons, implying that different characteristics of people modulate the influence of punishment threats on criminal behavior, as indicated by Kleck et al., (2016). Recent studies have highlighted the significance of individual differences in rational decision-making and deterrence (Loughran et al., 2016). Likewise, some researchers have suggested that people who are predisposed to crime see risks and benefits in the same ways across the board, whereas others have stated that how one perceives risk and reward depends on their motive to commit a crime (Greenberg, 2017). The rational choice theory is built upon several assumptions regarding the decision-making process and the motivations behind behavior. According to this theory, individuals make choices to engage in criminal activities after carefully evaluating the potential benefits and drawbacks of different options. This decision-making process involves considering individual factors, such as the desire for financial gain, revenge, or entertainment, as well as environmental factors, such as the vulnerability of the target or victim, and the presence of witnesses, guardians, or law enforcement. The rational choice theory emphasizes the role of situational and social factors in shaping criminal decisions, focusing on the opportunities and influences that contribute to the likelihood of committing a crime. In this view, it is anticipated that the crime rate should decrease by increasing the number of guardians, making targets less attractive, or reducing the number of offenders.

➤ *The Routine Activities Theory*

Crime opportunity theory, which concentrates on criminal scenarios, is a subset of routine activity theory (Poggi, 2018). This theory, which was created by Marcus Felson and Lawrence E. Cohen, is based on the idea that societal factors like poverty, inequality, and unemployment have little impact on crime (Magesa, and Kitula, 2020). According to the notion, “socializing daily activities in society provides an opportunity for crime” (Joshua, 2022). Simply put, this suggests that people’s daily routine activities and socializing, including but not limited to their places of employment, occupations, and residences, have a significant impact on the commission of crimes. The idea goes on to claim that everyday actions brought on by opportunities among people through time and space can either make crime easy and low risk to manage or eliminate, or difficult and risky (Monteiro and Rocha, 2017). The theory of routine activities highlights various factors that intersect in time and space, creating opportunities for criminal activities. These opportunities, in turn, contribute to the occurrence of criminal events. However, the theory does not address the underlying reasons why certain individuals choose to commit crimes while others do not (Tolla & Singh, 2018; Ali & Muhammad, 2014). This primarily focuses on the situational aspects that facilitate criminal opportunities, rather than delving into individual motivations or predispositions for engaging in criminal behavior. However, it goes on to say that crime can both rise and fall without changing the number of persons who commit crimes (Wanjiru, 2012). The theory identifies additional factors that, in addition to the conventional ones of social, economic, and political drive and ambitions, motivate individuals or groups of individuals to engage in crime. These additional factors include market availability, an enabling environment, and the prevalence of bias in the justice system. The implication of the theory in the current study is that when the activities of drug and human trafficking are unchecked, the success of these illegal activities would increase. When illegality of this caliber is increased in society, it does not affect only the victims but the entire society as a whole (Tolla, and Singh, 2018). For instance, with the prevalence of child trafficking, apart from the trauma, pain, and psychological effects that it brings to children, parents of these children also experience the same level of psychological trauma. In effect, all parents who identify themselves as potential victims of child or human trafficking would live in fear and this affects the social cohesion of the society (Joshua, 2022). The assumptions of the routine activity theory also mean that if stringent laws and enforcement mechanisms are not implemented, drug and human traffickers would feel more determined to ply their illicit trade because of the conducive environment. Additionally, if there is a slow and poor justice system the level of crime increases from the perspectives of the theory (Tolla, and Singh, 2018; Awudu, 2016). It is therefore incumbent on the justice administration and law enforcement agencies to make sure that through proper punishment mechanisms for offenders, trade in human and drug trafficking would be highly unattractive to people. While each case of human trafficking is distinct and impacted by various causes in different nations, the study's assumptions

emphasize that there are similar features shared by all trafficking cases (McDonald, 2018). Government corruption, economic possibilities, a lack of work alternatives, economic well-being, and demographic profiles are all common in virtually all nations and contribute to the aggravation of human trafficking (Osei Bonsu, 2021). Given that one of the study's aims is to investigate the amount of human trafficking, its nature and features, as well as existing preventive and management solutions, the adoption of the routine activity theory is regarded as appropriate. This hypothesis can serve to shed light on the existing opportunity structures that support the illegal trade of people trafficking.

➤ *Conceptual Framework of Securitization*

This section discusses key variables of drug and human trafficking from global, African, and Ghanaian perspectives. The discussion would help understand the extent of the menace and the devastating consequence it has on child development and national security. Security issues often arise from leaders' endeavors to comprehend and transform the world, which necessitate a community's capacity to adapt its principles and desirable way of life (Balzacq et al., 2016). The objective of securitization theory is to comprehend the reasons and mechanisms behind this process, as well as the consequences it has on a community's politics and way of life (Barthwal-Datta and Basu, 2017). This theory aims to shed light on the dynamics of securitization, which involves framing certain issues as existential threats and justifying extraordinary measures to address them, ultimately influencing the political discourse and policies of a society. The definition of securitization frequently cited is as follows: When a securitizing actor employs rhetoric that portrays a particular issue as an existential threat, thereby removing it from the realm of normal politics, we can identify a case of securitization (Balzacq et al., 2016). However, it is important to note that alternative approaches to securitization do not necessarily adhere to the dichotomy between 'normal' and 'exceptional' politics that underlies this definition. These alternative perspectives may offer different conceptualizations of securitization that do not rely on the strict separation between normal and exceptional politics, providing alternative insights into the securitization process. According to Balzacq (2019), securitization is "an articulated set of behaviors whereby heuristic artifacts are used to guide decisions." (Analogies, stereotypes, policy instruments, image repertoires, metaphors, etc.) are contextual a securitizing actor who attempts to get the audience to create a coherent network of implications (thoughts, sentiments, sensations, and intuitions) regarding a referent's critical vulnerability object that, by investing the referent, agrees with the securitizing actor's justifications for decisions and acts issue possessing such a level of unprecedented danger that a special policy must be instantly started preventing it. Securitization's core tenet is that a problem is made salient enough to win the audience's approval, which frees those with the authority to manage the problem to employ whatever tactics they think are most effective. Securitization, in other words, blends threat management with the politics of threat design (Szulecki, K. (2020). It is noteworthy that securitization theory has been

influenced by various academic subfields, and different scholars within the field have taken different positions regarding these influences. Firstly, securitization theory exhibits similarities with social constructivism, particularly in works that explore the role of language, the practice of states, and the persuasive power of arguments in international politics (Jervis, 2017). Additionally, securitization theory intersects with speech act theory, Schmitt's political realism, Bourdieu's sociology, and Foucault's theory of governmentality (Balzacq et al., 2016). These intersections with diverse theoretical frameworks contribute to the richness and multidimensionality of securitization theory, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the securitization process.

The development of securitization theory has been steadily influenced by Bourdieu and Foucault, particularly during the past ten years (Bueger and Gadinger, 2018). According to researchers using the Foucault framework specifically, the literature on governmentality offers securitization theory an "analytics of government," or "an analysis of the specific conditions under which particular entities emerge, exist, and change," which enables researchers to understand how security practices function (Bueger and Gadinger, 2018). According to Balzacq et al. (2016), securitization theory explicitly encompasses four distinct dimensions:

- **Characteristic forms of visibility, ways of seeing, and perceiving:** This dimension refers to the specific ways in which security issues are brought into focus, made visible, and perceived by different actors. It explores how certain issues are framed as existential threats that require extraordinary measures.
- **Distinctive ways of thinking and questioning:** This dimension involves the unique approaches, vocabularies, and procedures employed in the analysis and understanding of security issues. It encompasses the use of specific disciplines and methodologies, such as those derived from the social, human, and behavioral sciences, to produce knowledge and truth about security.
- **Specific ways of acting, intervening, and directing:** This dimension pertains to the particular forms of practical rationality, expertise, and know-how that guide actions and interventions in response to securitized issues. It involves the utilization of specific mechanisms, techniques, and technologies to address perceived security threats.
- **Distinctive ways of forming subjects, selves, persons, actors, or agents:** This dimension focuses on how securitization processes shape and construct the identities and roles of individuals and collective actors. It explores how individuals and groups are positioned and positioned themselves to security, and how they become subjects or agents in the securitization process.

These four dimensions collectively contribute to the understanding of securitization as a complex process involving multiple aspects of visibility, thinking, acting, and subject formation.

According to Balzacq et al. (2016), securitization theory has demonstrated its effectiveness and presents several advantages. Initially focused on the speech act, the theory has evolved and expanded through empirical studies. Its uniqueness lies in its ability to identify a distinct security strategy that is influenced by the speech act, while also incorporating an "analytics of government" approach that highlights practices and processes. This integration allows for a more comprehensive understanding of securitization as a complex phenomenon. Importantly, the article does not argue that the issues raised and the proposed solutions are mutually exclusive, implying that multiple perspectives and approaches can coexist within securitization theory. It is also understood that there are many moving parts in the intricate link between government analytics and securitization theory. The analysis of government, however, may be one effective tactic for reconciling approaches to securitization that are frequently considered significant divides in the literature. According to Balzacq et al. (2016), securitization theory offers insights and explanations for understanding the development and management of various security challenges, such as wars, ethnic conflicts, security communities, and threat balances. Contrary to a common misconception, securitization theory is not limited to replacing physical threats with institutional or societal risks. It is capable of shedding light on the security implications of emerging transnational or global issues like environmental degradation, epidemics, and migration. Furthermore, it aids in understanding the political consequences, such as social commitments and accountability practices, resulting from the categorization of certain phenomena as threats. However, securitization theory faces three key challenges related to theory, approach, and methodology. Overcoming these obstacles will be crucial for the theory to make significant contributions to the discussions within Security Studies and International Relations in the future. In conclusion, the ability of securitization theory to advance the field will depend on researchers' capacity to address these challenges and refine the theory, approach, and methodology in their future work.

➤ *Conceptualizing the Dimensions of National Security*

The government must still protect the nation and its people. The Cold War ended and reshaped the world. A more complex and unpredictable set of ties has replaced the power bloc conflict. Economic movements, such as more open global markets, and technology trends, especially in communications, have strengthened links between people, organizations, societies, and economies. Snow (2016) defines security as what makes someone feel safe. Thus, physical and psychological security have different values. The threat to what people cherish is variety. Physical dangers, like Russia's actual ability to destroy the US with nuclear weapons during the Cold War, are the most obvious and objective. Psychological threat, or what makes people feel safe or unsafe, is sometimes less clear and vulnerable to human interpretation. Different people may feel safer or more unsafe in the same situation. Persons and situations determine security. Protecting a nation's people, territory, and way of life is what the term "national security" means. It encompasses many hobbies and values, including physical

defense. The importance of physical security, which comprises securing a nation's land and people to ensure their survival while preserving fundamental ideals and institutions, is emphasized in one widely recognized definition of national security. The following is a list of the many ways that the United States of America can be used to safeguard the environment. Analysts' views of national security may differ, and prioritizing national interests may be problematic. National security protects the fundamental values and interests needed for a state's survival (Snow, 2016). According to Hoang and Reich (2017), screening and deporting non-citizens has made immigration and criminal control major risks to state national security in the modern era. The author asserts that most governments nowadays use national security to justify expelling foreigners who may not threaten the state or its residents. The author claims that this strategy undermines one of national security's main goals—civil liberties—and does little to enhance it. The author claims that examining immigration policy purely through the prism of national security can result in unproductive legislation that fails to meet its goals and other essential immigration policy objectives. This restricted focus on national security may complicate monitoring, detecting, and managing transnational problems like drug and human trafficking. National security concerns in immigration policy may override human rights, economic contributions, and social integration. The author advocates a more comprehensive immigration policy that balances national security and other immigration policy goals. Ghana, like most countries, coordinates, monitors, and evaluates security and intelligence through skilled human resources and modern technology for stakeholders to improve security, citizen freedom, and national development. Security framework institutions implement policy and manage the national security agenda. Brauch (2019) claims that threats and their definitions are crucial to national security. Threats are actual risks. The world defines it. Present and future tensions occur. The term "protocol" refers to a set of rules that govern how something is done.

➤ *Global Drug Production and Trafficking*

Cannabis production is still a worldwide phenomenon, with the majority of it taking place in the country where it is consumed. Other drug manufacturers, on the other hand, are typically geographically specialized and concentrated in a small number of countries. Over the last five years, only three countries—Afghanistan, Myanmar, and Mexico—accounted for more than 95% of global opium poppy cultivation, while another three countries—Colombia, Peru, and the Plurinational State of Bolivia—accounted for nearly all of global coca bush cultivation (UNODC and the Plurinational State of Bolivia, 2021).

➤ *Cocaine Manufacture Reaches a New High, Opium Production up Slightly*

Over the past 20 years, the production of opium has been steadily increasing, and this trend has continued into 2021 when output increased by 7 percent from the previous year to reach an estimated 7,930 tons. Due to greater yields, Afghanistan's opium output grew, more than compensating for a drop in the country's opium poppy growing area

(UNODC, Drug Situation in Afghanistan 2021). Additionally, Myanmar's opium production slightly increased in 2021, reversing the previous decreasing trend (UNODC, 2021). The production of pure cocaine reached a record high in 2020, with an estimated 1,982 tons, marking an 11% increase compared to the previous year. This rise in production is primarily attributed to Colombia, where cultivation is concentrated in regions known for high coca yields and advanced knowledge of cocaine manufacturing.

Despite a decrease in the total area under coca bush cultivation, the efficiency of cocaine laboratories in Colombia has contributed to the high production levels. This indicates that despite efforts to reduce coca cultivation, the cocaine production process has become more streamlined and efficient in the country. The statistics highlight the ongoing challenges in combating cocaine production and trafficking.

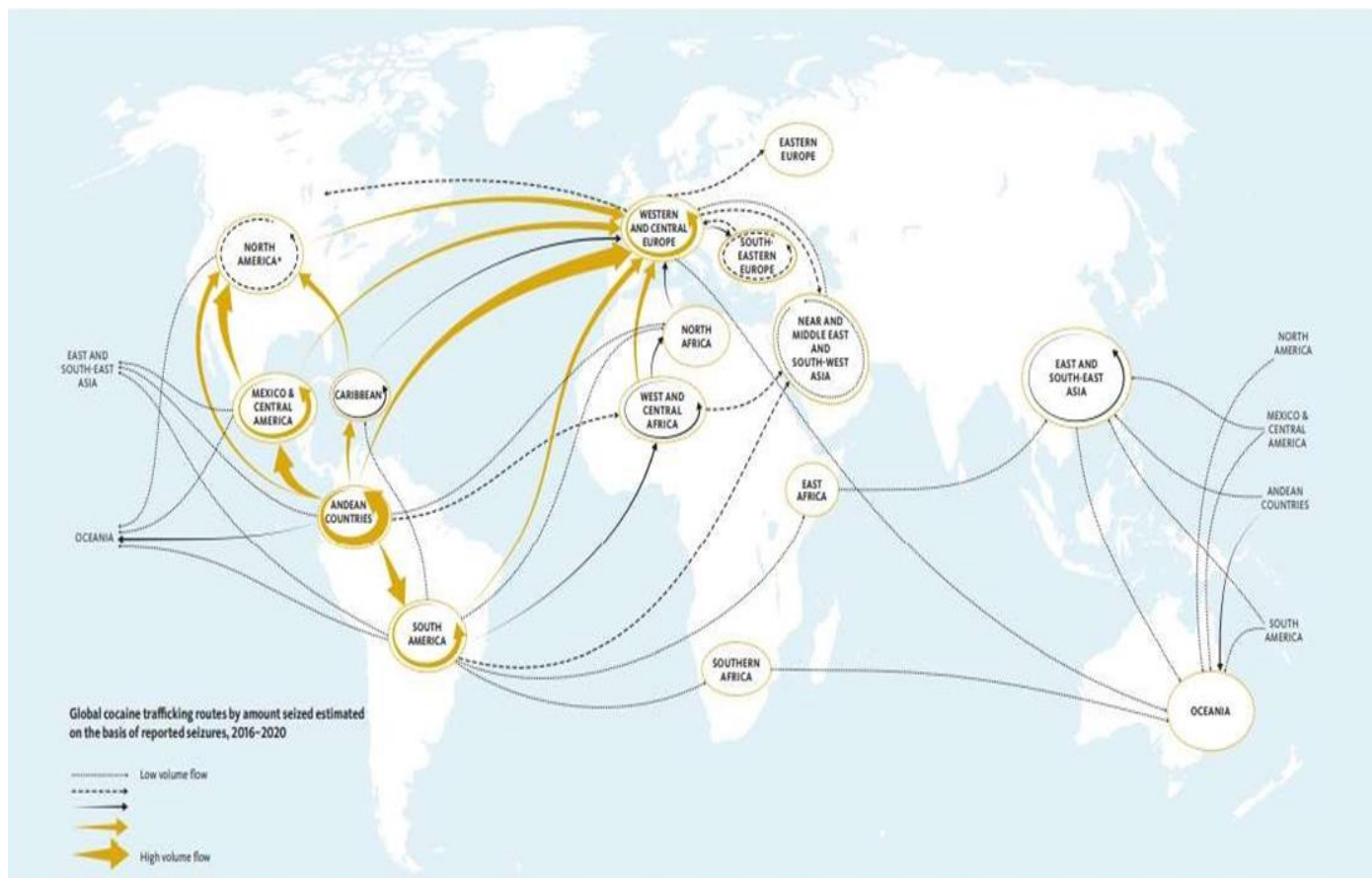


Fig 1 Main Global Cocaine Trafficking Flows (Seizures 2016–2020)

Source: UNODC (2022), World Drug Report.

➤ *Global Seizures are Topped by Plant-based Substances; Synthetic Drugs Show the Most Growth*

More than 70% of seizures during the 2019–2020 era still involved plant-based compounds, most notably cannabis, while just 5% of seizures involved synthetic medications. However, throughout the long period of 1998 to 2020, synthetic pharmaceuticals including ATS, synthetic opioids, and synthetic NPS have greatly exceeded the growth in amounts seized. Plant-based chemicals are the most commonly seized substance globally, while synthetic drug use is growing. More than 70% of seizures during the

2019–2020 era still involved plant-based compounds, most notably cannabis, while just 5% of seizures involved synthetic medications. However, throughout the long period of 1998 to 2020, synthetic pharmaceuticals including ATS, synthetic opioids, and synthetic NPS have greatly exceeded the growth in amounts seized. Except for NPS and opioids, total global seizures (measured in amounts) increased in 2020 compared to 2019. In 2020, seizures of synthetic opioids decreased while those of opiates climbed (World DrugReport, 2022).

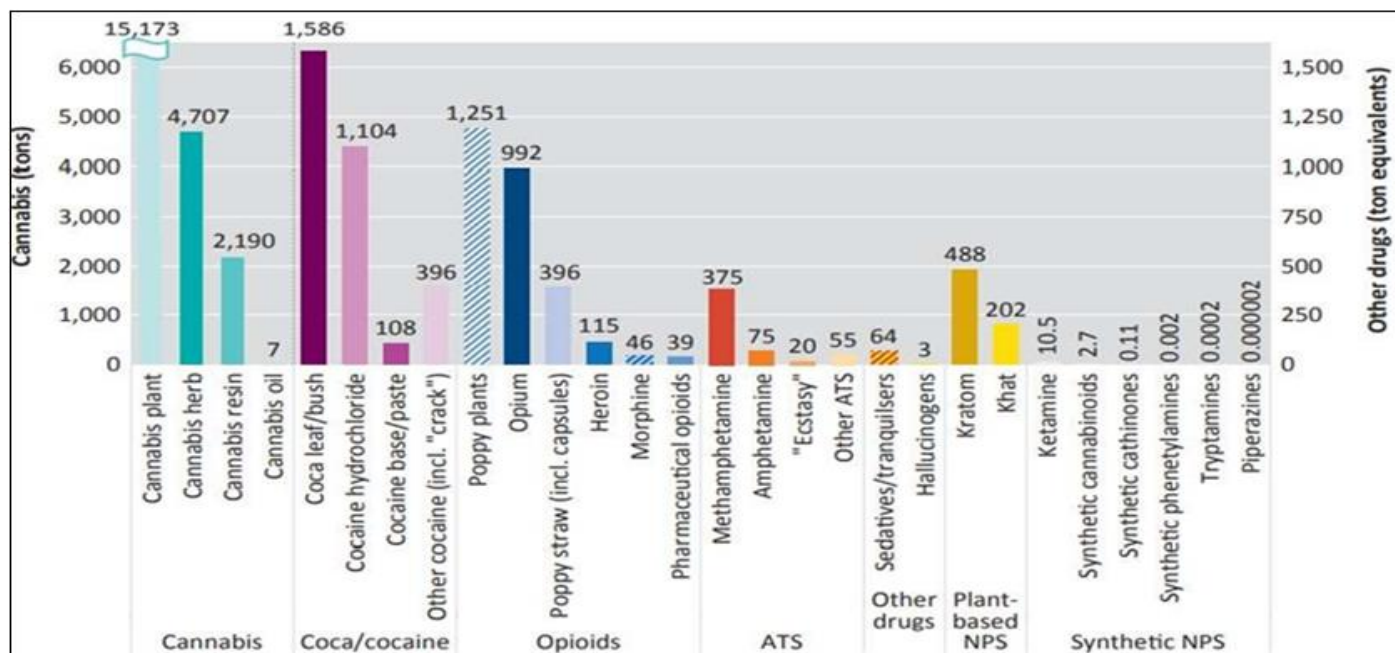


Fig 2 Global Quantities of Drugs Seized, in 2020
 Source: UNODC (2022), Responses to the Annual Report Questionnaire.

➤ *Internet-based Drug Trafficking*

Growing interconnection and the emergence of online platforms have provided various advantages for both drug traffickers and consumers. Due to greater levels of anonymity and reduced chances of discovery, the Internet is becoming an attractive option to the street and may even be a more practical and secure means of delivering narcotics for illicit drug markets. Despite these benefits, the Internet has not yet significantly altered medication supply chains. The increasing use of encrypted messaging platforms points to a fragmented online market for illegal goods and services (Demant and Bakken, 2019). Social media is increasingly providing platforms for drug transactions. Drug sales and trading are occurring increasingly regularly on social media, instant messaging, dating apps, and other secure communication platforms such as encrypted messaging programs (Moyle et al., 2019; Bakken and Demant, 2019; Robin van der Sanden et al., 2021). Drug users change platforms in response to alleged hazards and issues coping with rapidly evolving technologies (Europol, 2021).

➤ *Drug Trade in Africa*

Drug trafficking continues to be a major issue for African countries. Based on the record amounts of cocaine that have been discovered along the trafficking route from South America, the area is still a crucial transshipment hub for bringing it to Europe. All of the countries that submitted figures reported seizures of cannabis or cannabis resin, indicating that the illicit production and export of cannabis to Europe has continued at the same pace as in previous years. Major seizures were reported in North African countries. The trafficking of synthetic stimulants appears to be expanding in Southern Africa, with more countries reporting seizures of methamphetamine and other synthetic stimulants than in prior years (UNODC, 2022). Cocaine trafficking from South America to Europe continues to use Africa as a transit zone, with West and North Africa being

the main routes. The Gambia recovered a record amount of cocaine in January 2021. In February 2021, law enforcement officials in Côte d'Ivoire confiscated more than one ton of cocaine. Authorities in South Africa detained 10 people and confiscated 973 bricks of cocaine from a fishing boat as part of Operation Lionfish (UNODC, 2022). In June 2021, the Algerian coastguard found over 500 kg of cocaine drifting in its territorial seas north of the Port of Oran, making it the country's biggest capture in several years. In July 2021, South Africa reported capturing a combined total of around 1.7 tons in two separate interdictions. According to the INCB report from 2021, reports of seizures in Africa in 2020 came from Algeria, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, and Tunisia.



Fig 3 Cocaine Major Transshipment Routes
 Source: INTERPOL; Overview of Serious and Organized Crime in Africa (2018)

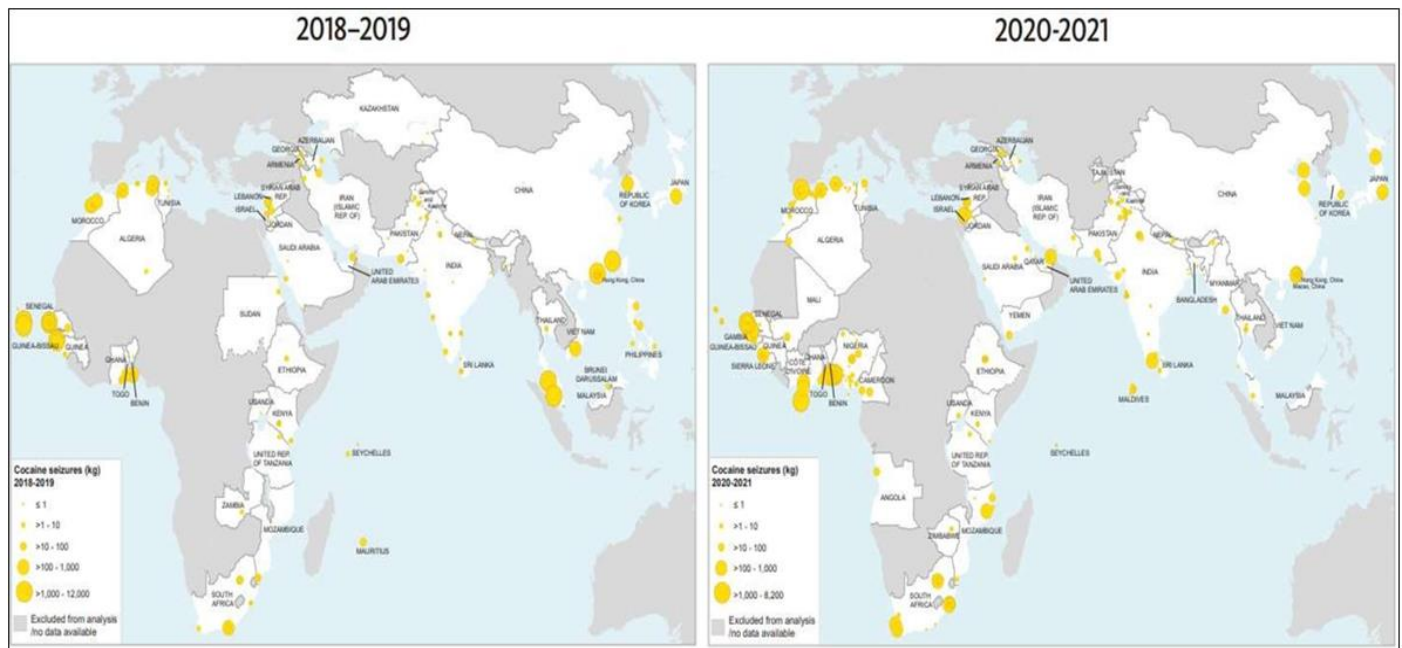


Fig 4 Cocaine Seizures in Transit Regions Africa and Asia, 2018–2021
 Source: UNODC, Drugs Monitoring Platform

Cannabis continues to be the narcotic that is most commonly trafficked inside Africa; it is also brought into Europe. Over 8.3 tons of cannabis resin were reportedly taken from a cargo ship off the coast of Dakar in June 2021, according to the Senegalese Navy. In March 2021, as part of Operation Lionfish, Niger's government made the largest-ever seizure of cannabis resin: 17 tonnes. The medicine, which was intended for Libya, was found in storage facilities in the nation's capital, Niamey. INTERPOL reports a noticeable surge in drug traffickers using Libya as a drug transit hub. Morocco reported cannabis seizures of more than 450 tons in 2020, indicating that North Africa continues to witness the highest levels of cannabis trafficking, particularly cannabis resin. In Benin, Burkina Faso, Madagascar, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, and the n, reports of cannabis herb trafficking have been made. While some nations only seized a few hundred kilograms, others seized hundreds of tons, and the amounts seized in 2020 varied widely between nations. Namibia reported seizing 843 tons of cannabis herb in 2020, which is a very large amount (INCB Report, 2021).



Fig 5 Heroin Major Transshipment Routes
 Source: INTERPOL (2018); Overview of Serious and Organized Crime in Africa

Statistics from countries in 2021 show that heroin trafficking is still a major issue for African countries in the Indian Ocean area. Mauritius occasionally reports discovering many kilos of heroin being transported through its airports and seaports. In addition, it appears that heroin is being smuggled across the Red Sea to East Africa, where drug trafficking is on the rise. While Egypt and Sudan each reported seizing roughly a ton of heroin via smuggling operations, Benin, Madagascar, Morocco, Mozambique, and Zambia reported heroin seizures ranging from a few grams to several hundred kilograms in 2020 (UNODC, 2022).

In 2020, more African countries reported seizures of captagon and other synthetic stimulants. Both Nigeria and Sudan reported drug seizures in 2020 and 2021. Namibia reported more methamphetamine seizures than in previous years and Mozambique reported several hundred kilograms seized in 2020. Methamphetamine trafficking looks to be on the rise in Southern Africa. Tramadol is a synthetic opioid that is not regulated worldwide, and the creation of illicit non-pharmaceutical goods containing it remains a concern in the region. In May 2021, tapentadol was discovered in Africa (INCB Operation New Horizons, 2021).

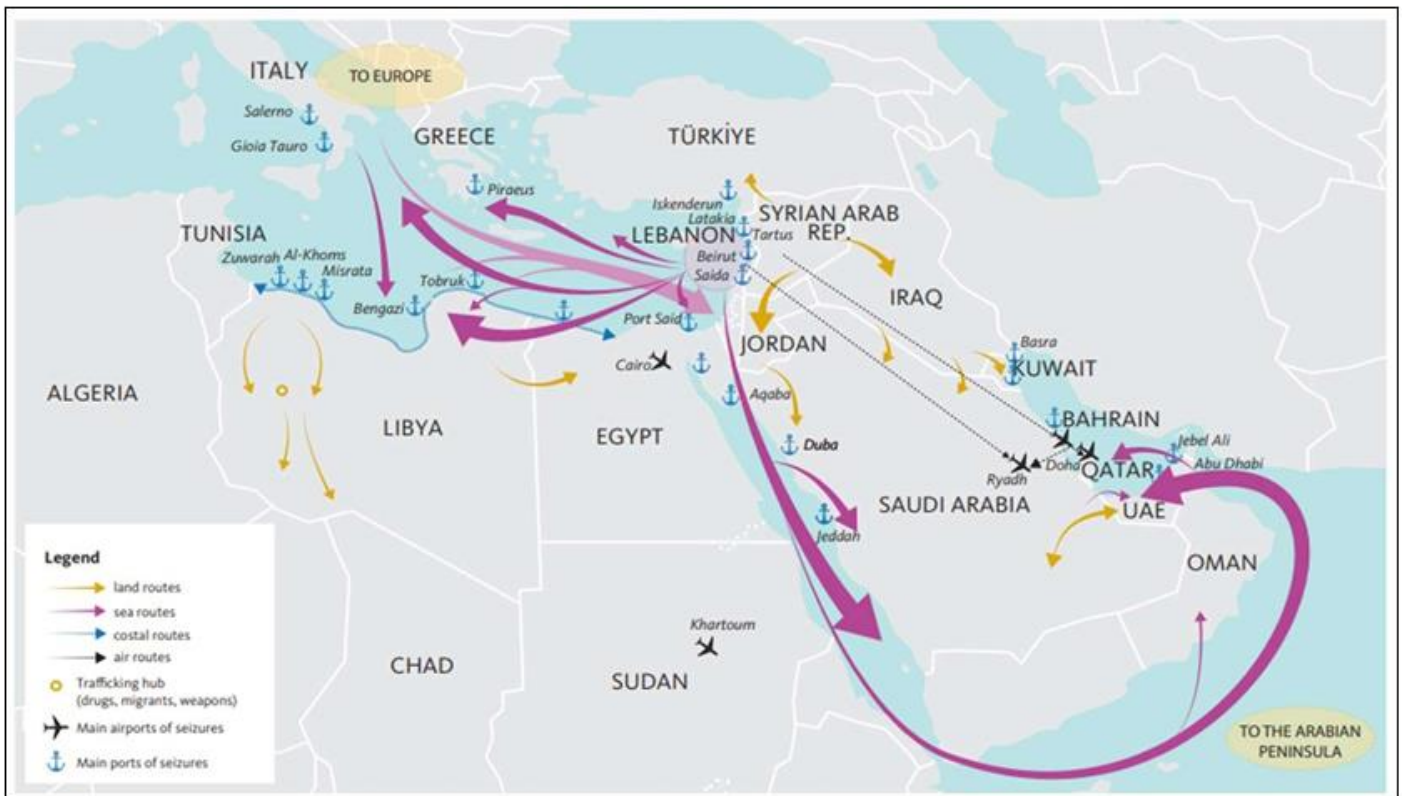


Fig 6 Main Trafficking Routes of “Captagon” in the Middle East and North Africa, 2016–2021
 Sources: UNODC and the Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime (2022).

➤ *Drug Trafficking Ghana*

Ghana has become a prominent role in the international drug trade, especially with the growth of the black market for drugs in West Africa. With an emphasis on heroin from Afghanistan, Ghanaian drug trafficking groups have been instrumental in enabling the international flow of narcotics. The ease of heroin trafficking in Ghana has been facilitated by corruption at its airports and seaports, which has turned the nation into both a transit point and a market for the drug. Ghana is a significant transit country for cocaine trafficking, both within Africa and internationally, in addition to heroin. The heroin market in the nation has expanded, a sign that local use has increased. Ghana is regarded as one of Africa's principal cannabis-growing hubs as well. Younger people are more likely to consume cannabis than older people because they see it as an "indigenous" substance that is less dangerous in their neighborhoods. Ghana approved the use of cannabis in March 2020 for both therapeutic and commercial uses. Rumors say that the nation is considering decriminalizing all drugs, including the cultivation, possession, and use of cannabis. These changes indicate Ghana's changing position on drug policy and might lead to changes in the country's drug regulatory structure (Awudu, 2016). The market for synthetic pharmaceuticals is growing swiftly in Ghana. Since 2016, tramadol abuse has been a significant issue, with the drug mostly coming from India through smuggling. Tramadol use in Ghana has grown along with the level of violence. Fentanyl and other synthetic narcotics are increasingly entering the country. Additionally, according to the Global Organized Crime Index (2021), a sizable number of precursor chemicals are allegedly diverted to criminal networks in Ghana.

➤ *Human Trafficking*

People trafficking, weapon trafficking, non-renewable resource theft, and wildlife crimes are the most common crimes in Africa. Human trafficking has several causes. Criminals can enter the market easily, making it easy for them to commit crimes. Human trafficking is harmful because it includes the exploitation of defenseless people. The term "human trafficking" refers to a variety of unlawful behaviors, including sex and organ trafficking, forced labor, and child soldiers. This shows that human trafficking can occur in a variety of contexts and scenarios, regardless of a nation's socioeconomic or political climate. The influence of the trafficking of human beings on the world's economies is well documented, with the majority of the world's countries participating in the program. Eritrea is one of Africa's top refugee generators due to people smuggling. Regional economic communities in Africa, like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), promote free movement across borders, which may reduce people smuggling. These findings emphasize the importance of coordinating efforts to combat this unlawful trade and protect vulnerable people from exploitation (ENACT, Africa Organized Crime Index, 2021). They illuminated African human trafficking. Human trafficking and human smuggling, two types of organized crime, are sometimes confused. This is partly due to the blurry lines between them. Strong evidence suggests that people who cross international borders illegally with the help of smuggling networks are extremely vulnerable to trafficking along the way, or that human smuggling often turns into other types of trafficking (Malakooti, 2020). These two crime types have become more intertwined, for example, in Libya, one of

Africa's main hubs for human smuggling, as armed organizations and militias have shifted their attention to the exploitation of individuals confined in migrant detention centers. Kidnapping for ransom, extortion, and forced labor are among the forms of this trafficking (Micallef et al., 2019). Smuggling and trafficking are nonetheless two separate forms of organized crime, despite the fact that many of the fundamental causes of the two markets are identical. Many places have one but not the other. Guinea, where forced begging, child labor, sexual exploitation, and other types of trafficking are common, has a moderately increasing human smuggling sector (ENACT, Africa Organized Crime Index, 2021). As a result of the pandemic's impact on the country's economy, the United States is now a global powerhouse. A new human trafficking route taking Kenyans to India for exploitation also garnered attention. Uganda's rising youth population has restricted employment possibilities, which the pandemic has made worse, making them more susceptible to unscrupulous commercial practices. Thus, people trafficking and human smuggling in East Africa had the biggest gains (Offia, 2020). COVID-19 policies have reduced migration but not human trafficking and smuggling in Southern Africa. The virus and economic

crises may have made people across the continent more susceptible to human trafficking (UNODC, 2021). Instability, forced migration, and economic collapse allow the exploitation of helpless people. Human trafficking is more common in armed conflicts due to the breakdown of the state and the degradation of the rule of law. Wartime human trafficking can include forced recruitment and other forms of modern slavery. The two-way relationship between the two companies is what makes the market for human trafficking so interesting. Human Trafficking Global Report (2018) The Americas, a few sections of Asia, and Europe account for the majority of victims. Children made up nearly 55% of sub-Saharan African victims in 2016. 59% of South and Central Asians were forced labor trafficking victims. Central and South America, Western, Central, and Eastern Europe have also documented cases. Sexual and forced labor are the most common forms of exploitation (Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, 2020). According to the UN, 6% of sexual exploitation victims are women. Women make up half of trafficking offenders in East Asia and the Pacific. UNODC (2018) lists forced labor and sexual exploitation as the most common forms of human trafficking.

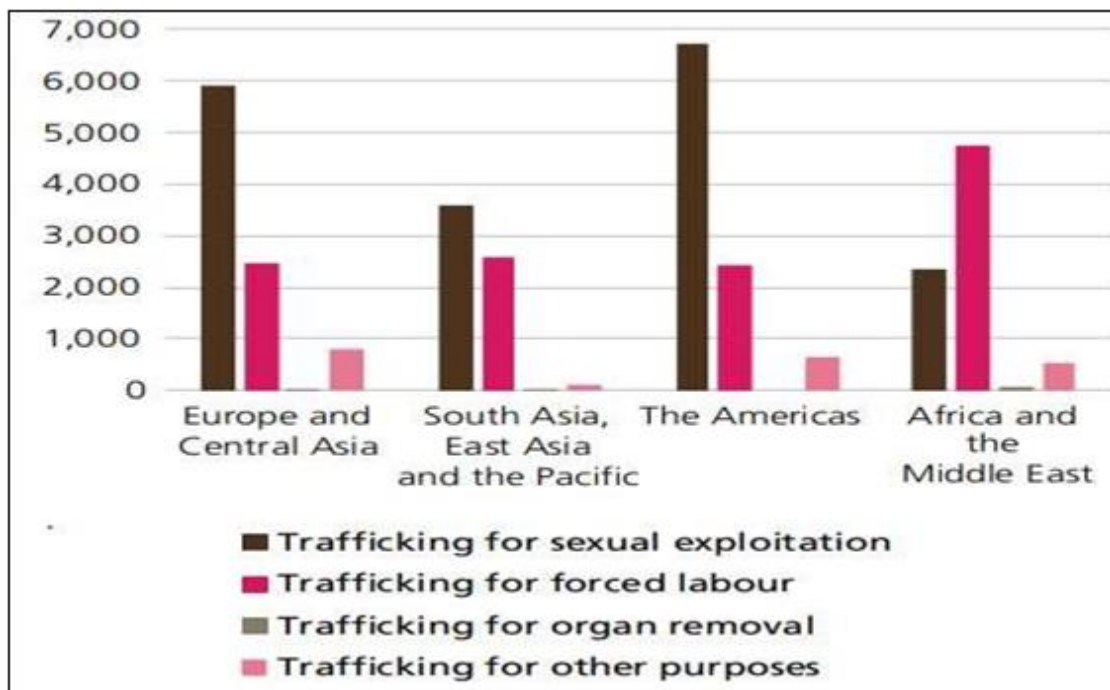


Fig 7 Detected Trafficking Victims, by the form of Exploitation (Most Recent)
 Source: UNODC elaboration of national data (2018).

➤ *Human Trafficking Flows*

More than half of the victims in 2016 whose citizenship was revealed were found in their home nations. The same subregion is where a significant portion of the victims that were found were trafficked (for example, within North American countries, or sub-Saharan Africa). In 2016, less than a victim in ten were found to have been trafficked outside of their region. Significant levels of incoming trafficking from other regions are directed toward Western and Southern Europe, the Middle Eastern wealthy

nations, as well as North America. Aside from North Africa and the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africans are also trafficked to and returned from other sub-Saharan African nations. Some trafficking movements from far-off sources end up in wealthy nations in other regions, such as Eastern Europe and East Asia. Numerous short-range transregional flows appear to be important, including those between Central and South America, Central, and Eastern Europe, and sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa (Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, 2020).



Fig 8 Main Detected Trans-Regional Trafficking Flows, 2014-2017
Source: UNODC Elaboration of National Data (2018).

➤ 11 Human Trafficking in Ghana

Child trafficking, forced labour, and other forms of human trafficking are serious problems in Ghana. While child trafficking is a problem in the nation's fishing, farming, and mining sectors, traffickers also use the promise of better economic possibilities to entice girls, who are then either sexually exploited or forced to work as porters. Adult Ghanaians are frequently the victims of human trafficking carried out by foreign employment organizations. It was discovered that a wave of Ghanaian women migrating for work to the Middle East, assisted by both authorized and illegal labour recruitment firms, had connections to forced labour, sexual exploitation, and high levels of physical abuse. Smugglers from Ghana have been instrumental in the growth of the human smuggling trade in West Africa in recent years. Human traffickers are accepted and respected in Ghanaian society and are seen as facilitating migration rather than as criminals. Due to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) free movement treaty, there is a high amount of mobility throughout West Africa. Ghana has an important transit and destination role in the area as one of the most politically and economically stable nations. After arriving in Ghana, a large number of people are then trafficked outside the ECOWAS region, mostly to Europe and the Middle East. Ghana is also a recognized regional hub for the fabrication of forged passports, as well as visas for the United States and Europe. Although this has been declining in recent years, persons looking for transit to the US or Europe still make up the majority of Ghana's human smuggling industry (Global Organized Crime Index, 2021).

➤ The Drug Trade and Human Trafficking Industry

Human trafficking is distinct from the drug trade. Since commodities may only be sold once in the drug trade, dealers must continually refresh their stock. Dealers create new drugs. However, most human traffickers have a product they can sell over and over, such as a person sold for labor exploitation, a woman sold into sex slavery, or a youngster whose trauma produces pornography. Organs and children who were trafficked for adoption can only be bought and sold once. Unlike those involved in the drug trade, people traffickers just need suppliers and are unaffected by new products (Shelly, 2012). Both types of criminal groups have different structures and leaders. Numerous well-known organizations smuggled drugs, including the Cali and Medellin Cartels. Although the Yakuza and triads sold people, a major, global criminal organization that specialized in human trafficking cannot be found. The process of getting a driver's license is known as "human trafficking." Guys run drug cartels. The lowest-level drug trade personnel are couriers and money launderers. Sister Ping, who was in charge of a multi-million-dollar smuggling operation from Southern China to the US and Europe, is an example of a woman who plays a larger part in human trafficking as a recruiter and occasionally director of important human trafficking operations (Fabiani and Behlendorf, 2021). Traffickers behave differently. Large-scale drug traffickers penetrate markets, punish informants, and kill investigative journalists with excessive violence. Unlike their criminal adversaries, human traffickers only use violence against victims and their families. Drug traffickers attack rivals. In Central Asia, Colombia, Mexico, and much

of Europe. Human traffickers rarely attack rivals this brutally. Rare Balkan human trafficking organizations Not often. They ravaged European markets. Since the market for trafficked people is growing rapidly and the sector is so interconnected, national trafficking organizations are less likely to clash than in the drug trade. The perpetrators of this crime are the victims of human trafficking. The drug cartels' activities include human trafficking, which is a part of their criminal activity. North African and Mexican transit deaths are the focus. The violence is aimed at the people who make up the transportation mechanism, not the transportation itself. Drug and human traffickers target others. Journalists who cover crime and corruption have been murdered in great numbers. Journalists involved in drug trafficking and official corruption are attacked less than those who report on human trafficking. Journalists investigating human trafficking have been attacked and killed in Mexico and the Far East of Russia. The dangers of drug and human trafficking are well acknowledged. Protect victims, avoid violence, and prosecute criminals to combat these criminal businesses (Shelley, 2012). Drug traffickers and human smugglers have many similarities. Criminals and facilitators are involved in drug and human trafficking. Although criminal organizations operate differently around the world, both people and drugs must be transported vast distances from their place of origin to their destination; hence, both types of criminal actors depend on their participants' logistical skills. Middlemen who provide bogus papers, safe havens, and revenue disposal are used by numerous criminal organizations. These facilitators include lawyers, accountants, and real estate brokers who work in the transportation industry. Before drug cartels extended into human trafficking, various people worked in these industries. Many drug traffickers hail from low-income or dangerous triad or mafia families. They may profit from the drug trade. Unscrupulous government officials enable drug cartels. High-ranking law enforcement officials play a significant role in drug trafficking organizations in Mexico and Central Asia (Kara, 2018). Unlike drug traffickers, some human traffickers are wealthy and educated. Former and current security professionals, law enforcement, and military personnel are crucial to many trafficking networks in communist countries. Many cultures have police. 25% of Balkan trafficking organizations had ex-security officers. In March 2007, a large trafficking network was identified in Russia (Aronowitz and Veldhuizen, 2021). It was in charge of law enforcement and security agents. Lower-ranking military personnel, who previously relied on drug trafficking to supplement their meager incomes, are now involved in illicit people trafficking along the Tajik-Afghan border. Drug and human trafficking are linked. A 2006 case involved the arrest of two military members and a military policeman for conducting brothels and human trafficking in Cambodia. This suggests military members may commit trafficking offenses. Concerns regarding corruption and power abuse arise when the military is involved.

➤ *Regional Variations of Drugs and Human Trafficking (Asia, South America, Europe, and North America)*

The link between these two trades as it is currently recognized is significantly influenced by culture, history, political, and economic influences. According to the criminal organizations engaged, the risks faced by the traffickers, and the level of demand for the commodities, the relationship between the drug trade and human trafficking varies. As a result, it is inappropriate to draw too many conclusions regarding how narcotics and human trafficking are related. Major criminal groups have been engaged in both the trafficking of people and drugs for many years, but exclusively in Asia where large criminal organizations, like those in Japan, engage in the multifaceted trade in both drugs and human beings in Asia where human trafficking is so prevalent (Smithberg, 2016). Due to the lower risk and existing market, cocaine cartels in Latin America have recently entered the people trafficking industry. Since the Cold War, organized criminal organizations in Europe have started working more closely with their Eastern European counterparts. Criminal organizations are multifaceted and represent the expanding regional interconnection and the globalization of transnational crime. Western Europe and Eastern Europe play a significant role in facilitating narcotics and human trafficking. Turkish and Balkan organizations are involved in the trafficking of drugs, women for sexual prostitution, and men. Along the Balkan corridor that links Western Europe and Asia, both gangs transport both drugs and people. Prostitutes are frequently given drugs to ensure their subservience. Eastern organized crime exhibits a similar overlap (Hughes and Denisova, 2017). Drug trafficking gangs are expanding into human trafficking in Latin America and the United States. Mexico City and Tijuana, places where organized crime is concentrated, are hotspots for infant trafficking. Midwives convince poor moms to sell their newborns or trick them by falsely informing them that their infants are sick or have passed away (Lyneham and Fachini, 2019). Due to the growth of gangs and organizations involved in smuggling illicit narcotics into the US from Latin America, there is a significant connection between drugs and human trafficking in both the United States and Canada, even though the problems in the US are more serious. Other than Latin American drug organizations, other drug groups have been observed engaging in both criminal activities, including Post-Soviet crime syndicates, American pimps, and US biker gangs. Both labor and sex trafficking are connected to the drug trade. To produce marijuana, a Mexican woman was transported to Oregon in 2006. The forced labour in the drug trade included being beaten, stabbed, and subjected to sexual assault in addition to other physical and mental abuse. People who profit from the drug trade might also actively patronize the sex market. Along the main route connecting the United States and Mexico, truckers who transport money and illegal substances have more extra cash and frequently use child trafficking victims. For instance, in the Stormy Nights case, federal authorities uncovered a loose network of 48 pimps who lured over 100 women from Oklahoma City and transported them hundreds of miles from their homes via trucking routes to Denver, Miami, Houston, and Dallas

(Houston, 2017).

➤ *Drug and Human Trafficking in Africa*

Drug trafficking and human trafficking are closely related in certain parts of Africa, where various criminal organizations are active. Criminals from North Africa transport both drugs and persons to Europe and the trafficked persons are occasionally made to serve as drug mules to pay for their trips (Geldenhuis, 2022). People who are moved by human traffickers and smugglers are either from North Africa or are passing through on their way to that region. The largest network of organized criminals in West Africa is headquartered in Nigeria. They have gained a reputation for their human trafficking to Italy, Scandinavia, and other countries in Europe, but they are also recognized as significant actors in the narcotics trade (Campana, 2016). The Edo state, a major hub for the drug trade and the origin of 80% of Nigeria's trafficking victims, is home to many human trafficking networks (Temitope, 2018). Children from Burundi, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda are coerced into prostitution and forced labour in Kenya before being transported out of Kenya. In the Dadaab security situation, hundreds of thousands of refugees and asylum seekers are housed at the largest refugee camp complex in Kenya. Full humanitarian access, support, or protective services are not provided to children in refugee camps. Al-Shabab recruiters have reportedly been spotted among the Somali refugees living in the Dadaab complex. Some of the mostly Somali youngsters living in refugee camps in Kenya are used for prostitution, while others are transported outside the camps and made to work on tobacco and flower plantations. Vehicles returning from Somalia with khat bring Somali girls and women, who frequently end up in brothels in Garissa, Nakuru, Nairobi, or Mombasa (Owiso, 2019). This human trafficking brings to mind older international commerce in which rum was traded in a triangle with slaves. As in the past, transnational criminals' use of transportation resources is rational in the present. Africa stands out for using so many children as combatants in its many conflicts. In many combat zones, narcotics are used to coerce juvenile soldiers into killing or engaging in horrific deeds including the murder of family members (Steinl, 2017). Moreover, when children join armed forces and groups, they are frequently offered a monetary reward. These are classified as pecuniary and non-pecuniary rewards, with pecuniary rewards comprising mostly of wages, one-time monetary awards (typically connected with loot), and other tangible benefits such as drugs and alcohol (Gounden, 2016). The scholarly works mentioned above have given thorough information on some drug and human trafficking trends and the concerns they pose to regional and international security. However, a more thorough study is required into the threats it poses to Ghana's national security and the difficulties law enforcement agencies face in tackling this problem.

➤ *Empirical Review*

In 2016, Awudu examined the human security effects of drug trafficking. Interviews and literature reviews were used for data gathering and analysis in the qualitative study. Drug trafficking affects Ghanaians' economic, health, food, political, environmental, and communal security, according

to the study. It was revealed that the country's national security and crime and violence rates are affected. The study also demonstrates that NACOB is the main government organization responsible for addressing and battling the pervasiveness and threat of drug trafficking in the country. Awudu (2016) noted that NACOB and the Ghanaian government have challenges in tackling the country's growing drug trafficking problem. NACOB's main challenges are financial constraints and a lack of coordination with its supporting entities. Based on the data, the study indicates that drug trafficking in Ghana has a significant impact on national security, particularly citizen safety. Awudu (2016) encouraged the government to improve NACOB's people, finances, and logistics to meet its obligations. It also proposes that NACOB and its supporting institutions—particularly the Ghana Navy, NACOB, and National Security—must work together to control the threat. The Awudu (2016) study focused on drug trafficking and national security. Thus, child and female human trafficking were ignored. The impact of human trafficking is investigated in the current study. In this study, drug trafficking in West Africa and Ghana is linked to human trafficking (Aning and Pokoo, 2014). Therefore, an analysis of human trafficking is necessary to fully understand the impact of drug trafficking. According to McDonald (2018), the global crime of human trafficking allows traffickers to torture victims and deny them their rights. McDonald (2018) investigated human trafficking victims' harm using Mendelsohn's victimology theory and the UN's human security concept. The study explained how human trafficking threatens individual and communal safety. The Department of State's Office of Research and Development (IRD) has released a report on the effectiveness of its methods for preventing trafficking in the United States. Non-governmental organizations, the media, and government agencies provided current event data. After coding themes and patterns, Braun and Clarke's 6-step thematic analysis was utilized to evaluate the data. The study found that human trafficking victims endanger the community. Many victims also die unreported. Because of their exploitation, these people are constantly in danger. The study suggested local stakeholder collaboration, especially in disadvantaged communities where traffickers operate, to address this issue. It stressed the need to train local police and healthcare workers to identify and help victims. Raising awareness through community-based programs was also recognized as essential to promoting positive change and lowering crime rates, which boosted national security (McDonald, 2018). Tolla (2017) found in an analysis of modern human trafficking that armies and rulers trafficked people for things in the early nineteenth century. Unfortunately, human trafficking, or modern slavery, has continued this horrible trade. People trafficking worries most nations. Human trafficking is a pervasive problem in Ethiopia that affects people of all ages, genders, and nationalities, according to Tolla (2017). The trafficking of children is one of Ethiopia's largest social challenges. Tolla conducted a study on Ethiopia's child trafficking problem and community-related variables. General Strain's and Karl Marx's theories clashed to clarify the study's goals and challenges. To address the research questions, this study used quantitative research

methods, descriptive and explorative designs, and document data review reports from governmental and non-governmental strategies, policies, and results from existing documents. For the quantitative survey, 636 households were randomly selected. The study used SPSS 24.0 statistical software. Cross-tabulation, multivariate analysis, and logistic regression were used to analyze data on child trafficking factors. Ethiopia has a high rate of human and child trafficking. Misinformation, communication, domestic violence, poor prosecution rates, poverty, and parental breakdown were also found to foster human trafficking. Abiodun et al. (2019) found that child poverty was higher in the north of Nigeria, which had dire effects. Children in the North, where poverty is three times as high as in the South, grew up in poor homes. This affected mortality, income, education, and health, according to Abiodun et al. Nigeria's corruption, poor leadership, and high child poverty rate are to blame. They investigated national security threats and northern Nigerian child poverty. The research assessed Nigeria's government's attempts to combat the problem. The study found that the failing economy, high poverty, government failure, and corruption impair threat containment. In a separate study, Osei Bonsu (2021) examined NGOs' ability to detect child labor in Ghana's fishing business. Osei Bonsu (2021) used Ecological Systems Theory and Qualitative Research (NGOs). The study also examined NGOs' views on child trafficking to understand how they balance international law with local Ghanaian sentiments. The study concludes that NGOs' identification strategies are generally comprehensive because they include initiatives to combat poverty that target some structural causes of child trafficking and broaden the types of exploitation considered child trafficking to distinguish the phenomenon from cultural practices. To improve identification, NGOs must give trafficked children greater agency and support local government development. Poverty reduction programs must be linked with other programs to target all vulnerable communities. International funding and protocols must promote community-based viewpoints.

➤ *Theoretical Framework*

Many theories relate to drug and human trafficking and its effects on national security; nevertheless, the theories used for the current study were based on the concept of Rational Choice Theory and the Routine Activity Theory (Awudu, 2016). These theories demonstrated that man is a rational actor who considers means and ends, costs and advantages, and makes a logical choice. According to Shon and Barton-Bellessa, (2015), criminal activity takes place when a perpetrator decides to take a chance on breaking the law after taking into account his or her own need for money, values, or learning opportunities. These opportunities are made possible through socio-economic factors like the absence of punitive laws or failure to enforce laws and biases in the judicial system. Through the examination of the theories and empirical literature, it was discovered that the prevalence of drug and human trafficking within the West African sub-region and for that matter Ghana is based on several factors. Some of the factors of human trafficking were poor parental child care, domestic and gender-based violence, parental disintegration, poverty, and geographical

exposure. Drug trafficking, it was discovered that misinformation, poor governance systems, inability to implement policies, limited drug trafficking policies, and weak security systems contributes to the occurrence of drug trafficking.

III. METHODOLOGY

➤ *Research Design*

According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), a research design serves as the basis and framework of a study and aids in determining the answers to the questions that are addressed. This study employed the phenomenological study technique of qualitative research to gather data from counselors. The main goal of a phenomenological investigation, according to Christensen, Johnson, and Turner (2010), is to determine the significance, structure, and substance of a person's or a group of people's lived experiences about a certain occurrence. A phenomenological research design, according to Davidson (2014), is a study that aims to comprehend people's views, viewpoints, and knowledge of a certain occurrence. He writes, "The emphasis on participants' experiences and interpretations is the distinctive feature of phenomenological study." According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), a research design serves as a study's structure and foundation and aids in determining the answers to its research questions. Based on its adaptability and ability to provide interviewees greater freedom to delve into the substance of other people's experiences, this form of design was chosen (Jacobs & Furgerson, 2012; Miles et al., 2014). This sort of design was chosen because of its adaptability, which gave interviewees greater leeway to delve into the core of counselors' viewpoints and experiences (Jacobs & Furgerson, 2012; Miles et al., 2014). According to Rudestam and Newton (2015), the researcher can learn firsthand about what participants perceive through wide and open-ended inquiry by using subjective-direct replies.

➤ *Population*

According to Babbie (2010), population refers to the features of an item, person, human, object, group, organization, case, or element from which generalizations may be drawn. Every person with the same traits has the same probability of being chosen for the sample since the study population is a reflection of the elements from which the sample is drawn (Mukhari 2016). He claims that the population is referred to as the "target population" and that it is this group of factors that the investigator pays attention to. For this study, the population constitutes all key stakeholders in the national security architecture. This includes the military, immigration officials, customs services, the police, officers of the Narcotic Control Authority as well as informants of these security institutions.

➤ *Sampling Procedure and Sample Size*

The literature has a variety of definitions for example. The definition of De Vos et al. (2011) is one of the definitions. They define a sample as a portion of the population that is taken into account for a study. Reaching out to people who are willing to offer their thoughts on the topics being

studied is necessary to grasp the subjective reality of the research population (Bhatnagar 2012). The majority of sample frames are informal and depend on the researcher's professional opinion (Gentles et al. 2015). Therefore, the study grouped the security agencies into three strata. The first group was the police and military whose joint action leads to the arrest of people involved in drug and human trafficking. The police receive more information on these activities and have records and therefore could speak to the issue and offer reliable information. The second group of people was the members of the Narcotic Control Authority. All information relating to drug trafficking and measures to combat the menace lies within the operational objectives of the Narcotic Control Authority. The last group was the immigration and customs officers which liaise with the Narcotic Control Authority and the Ghana Police through the provision of information about drug and human trafficking. Because of the qualitative nature of this study, 5 persons from these three groups were selected for the study. In all, a total of 15 people were sampled.

➤ *Data Collection Instruments*

The interview was the primary method of gathering data. A custom interview guide was used. According to Davidson (2014), the majority of phenomenologists employ semi-structured or open interviews. A phenomenologist frequently uses in-depth interviews to obtain access to people's inner lives. The researcher probed the interviewee to get further detail. Before the interview, a rapport is built with potential responders to ensure the greatest level of participation and accurate data. Interview templates are adaptable and provide high response rates. However, they need greater interpersonal and communication skills from the researcher and necessitate more travel, which increases the cost and time involved. Teacher counselors were questioned as part of the current study using an interviewing guide (Jacobs & Furgerson, 2012). The researcher was able to explain any ambiguity or obscurity in the questions by using an interview guide.

➤ *Data Analysis*

Counselors were the subjects of interviews from which qualitative data were obtained. The replies that were recorded were typed out. Emerging patterns were coded after many readings of the transcribed material. The correctness, value, and completeness of the raw data were determined via examination and analysis. Analyzing qualitative data entails doing systematic searches, grouping data into digestible chunks, organizing, synthesizing, and searching for patterns among variables. The researcher employed thematic analysis through talks to group the material into categories and presented it as narratives, direct quotations, and extracts. According to Maxwell (2013), thematic analysis is a technique for interpreting qualitative data that is typically used with a collection of texts, such as interviews or transcripts. He concludes that the researcher carefully studies the data to find common themes—topics, notions, and patterns of meaning that recur. When attempting to glean information from a set of qualitative data concerning people's perspectives, opinions, knowledge, experiences, or values, Caulfield (2019) asserts that theme analysis is a useful

method. According to Caulfield (2019), the process of thematic analysis includes familiarization, coding, topic generation, theme review, theme definition and naming, and writing up. These procedures were used by the researcher in her theme analysis.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

➤ *Findings of Research Question One*

- *What is the Level of Drug and Human Trafficking in the Accra Metropolitan Assembly?*

The first research question investigated the level of drug and human trafficking within the Accra Metropolitan Assembly. The overall objective of this research question was to investigate the extent of proliferation of the menace. According to Bakken and Demant, (2019), the extent of the proliferation of the menace determines how devastating it is to development and national security. The responses from the participants revealed that due to the sensitivity of drug and human trafficking, media reportage on it is low because the security institutions normally do not give out all the information. Concerning human trafficking one of the participants indicated as follows:

“There occurrence of human trafficking in the metropolis is high. Every month we deal with an attempted trafficking issue. The problem normally occurs within the fishing communities of the metropolis. Sometimes, we are not informed early and by the time we get wind of it, the act might have occurred. The problem is that parents of these kids are sometimes complicit in the act of human trafficking, hence making it difficult to detect”. [Participant #14]

The information by Participant #14 was corroborated by Participant #8 who indicated that the act of human trafficking within the metropolis is usually directed to children. The respondent indicated that the operations are conducted by a well-coordinated cartel which sometimes makes it difficult to foil their operations. He stated that:

“The victims involved in human trafficking are mostly children.... most of these children would not be aware that they have been sold. Normally, upon arrest, the children will say they were told that they were going to live with an uncle in another country and this thought of traveling abroad serve as bait which lures them into becoming victims of human trafficking”. [Participant #8]

Reacting to the extent of human trafficking in the metropolis, one of the participants indicated that the parents of the children deliberately sell the children to traffickers some of whom also either sell the children to some of the countries in Gulf states or secrete gangs who indulge sale of human organs. This information which was confirmed by participants #3, #7, #9, and #13 revealed that sometimes, an entire community would be complicit in the act and this makes it very difficult to tackle the issue. One of the participants indicated that

“The extent of human trafficking in the metropolis is high and this affects the educational development of children. The reason is that most of these children who are later sold out to human traffickers are first put into child labour, especially around the fishing communities. Due to the financial gain that caretakers and parents of these children get, you can only get to know of it if other members in the community report the matter to the security agencies”. [Participant #3]

The respondents were further about the level of drug trafficking in the metropolis. The responses revealed that the metropolis is the hub of drug trafficking in the country. It was revealed that in terms of drugs like marijuana, offenders usually transport them from various countryside and other towns to the metropolis. It is therefore not unusual to see so many people indulging in the sale of drugs (marijuana) in the metropolis. One of the participants indicated that

“Since Accra is the capital city of the country, the level of drug trafficking and most especially marijuana is very high here. People bring them from the villages and towns and mostly we can intercept and arrest some of them. However, due to the high level of influx, it is increasingly becoming difficult to deal with the situation”. [Participant #1]

It was revealed by the Narcotic Control Authority and the Customs Division that the level of drug trafficking is not limited to the influx of marijuana to the metropolis but also the trafficking of other drugs like cocaine and heroin to other nations. It was revealed that drug trafficking was on the rise due to changes in the modus operandi of the perpetrators. These changes make it very difficult to track and arrest the offenders for possible prosecution. One of the participants indicated by stating that

‘Sometimes, some of these drug cartels would want to use our country as a transit point for the circulation of the drugs. Given this, there are seasons when we would get so many reports or alerts of containers and shipping goods in which these drugs are concealed. Within such seasons, which I am not going to reveal, we can arrest at least five different materials containing drugs in a week’ [Participant #12]

Confirming the information on the rise of drug trafficking in the metropolis as the transit point of the perpetrators, Participant #11 indicated that the situation is not limited to only the ports. She stressed that the proliferation of drugs also occurs at the airport and also along the borders of the country.

The participants were asked what in their opinion accounted for the hikes in the level of human and drug trafficking. It was revealed that socio-economic factors are the foundation for these activities. Most of the participants cited poverty and socio-cultural breakdown in society as the causes of the rise in human trafficking. Participants #2, #3, #5, and #10 related that the rate of poverty among the people is high. Therefore, in an attempt to escape the harsh burden

that poverty brings, they decide to sell their children for money. Participant #10 for instance, stated specifically that

“We once had a case of human trafficking involving a child. Through the interrogation, we realised that the parents deliberately wanted to have sold him into child labour. Sometimes some of these children might be victims of broken homes and hence become street children. Being on the streets makes them vulnerable to unsuspecting criminals who pose as helpers to these children. The innocent children, in an effort to get a better life end up in the hands of these supposed helpers who eventually sell them out”. [Participant #10]

Besides the high level of poverty which was identified as a fueling factor for the increased level of human trafficking, the findings revealed that illiteracy also plays a major role. It was revealed that the literacy rate among most of the people in the fishing communities in the metropolis and other slum communities is low. In view of these, they easily fall victim to the perpetrators of human trafficking.

On drug trafficking, the respondents again cited poverty and the desire to get rich early as the major cause of it. The respondents indicated that many of the youth are mostly enlisted by drug traffickers. Since most of these youth are unemployed either due to poor education or non-existing job opportunities, they easily fall prey to drug traffickers. One of the participants in his narration indicated that

“Job opportunities in this metropolis are few and need highly skilled labour. However, most of these youth are not educated and hence are unemployed or do not have the skills to match existing jobs. Meanwhile, a critical assessment of illicit drug deals pays a lot of money. Therefore, the youth are more prepared to indulge in such illegal activity for money”. [Participant #14]

The empirical data from the level of drug and human trafficking in the metropolis has revealed that the menace is high and occurs frequently within the metropolis. The public does not get to know more about it in the various news items and news portals because of its sensitivity. However, the act, especially human trafficking is rampant along the fishing communities in the metropolis. Additionally, it has been revealed that drug trafficking also occurs within the metropolis to the extent that the country’s sea and airports as well as along the borders are usually used as transit points for drug trafficking.

➤ Findings of Research Question Two

- *What is the Impact of Drug and Human Trafficking Relationships on Child Development in the Accra Metropolitan Assembly?*

The second research objective examined the impact of drug and human trafficking on the development of children in the Accra metropolis. It further sought to understand how the menace of human and drug trafficking affects the stability of the state in terms of security. The findings revealed that human trafficking leads to untoward hardship

for children. For instance, one of the participants indicated some of the children who become victims of human trafficking end up in hard labour.

“Most of these children you see on the Volta Lake and also in the fishing business are all victims of human trafficking. When it happens like that, they are denied access to good education. The lack of education leads to the situation where these children grow and indulge in drug trafficking and armed robbery as well as smugglers” [Participant #5]

The implication of the foregoing information by Participant #5 is that human trafficking activities which hamper the development of children are invariably related to the security of the country. Confirming how human trafficking affects security, Participant #15 noted that when the victims of human trafficking who are mostly children, grow up, they are easy to be drafted into armed militants like the case of Boko Haram in Nigeria and Al-Shabab in Somalia. These militant causes a lot of problem to the stability of the state. Participants # 8 and #13 indicated that human trafficking in the Accra metropolis also causes the large number of street children that are seen walking on the street daily. Participants # 8 and #13 described the situation where people who have gone to take these children do not take proper care of them and hence, the children run away from their captors and end up on the streets.

“A conversation with some of these children on the streets of Accra would let you understand that many of them were brought in here under the pretext of living with relatives. However, they have been trafficked from their villages. Most often, some of them are unable to bear the harsh conditions meted out to them by their captors and hence they run away onto the streets” [Participant #13]

When these children get to the streets, they engage in all sorts of social vices including prostitution, burglary, and petty theft activities which undermine the security of the metropolis. Although the practice of human trafficking undermines the development and growth of children, a critical assessment of the menace reveals that the ultimate consequential effect lies within the spectrum of the general security of the state.

On the effect of drug trafficking, the data or responses from the participants revealed that it affects the security fabric of the state. It was revealed that the rate of armed proliferation in the country.

Which is on the rise is a consequential effect of drug trafficking. The implication is that drug tracking is an antecedent of the influx of arms into the country. The findings revealed that the proliferation of drug trafficking is related to extreme violence. One of the participants stated that

“The drug trade usually involves violence and so many of the people involved have highly sophisticated weapons that they use for the illicit drug activities. Normally the purpose of the weapons is to fight off national security personnel like the police. Other times too, the weapons are used to fight among themselves. Because of the high demand for these drugs and the amount of financial benefits that the perpetrators get, it is easier to afford the sophisticated weapons”. [Participant #10]

The situation where individuals in the metropolis have access to weapons due to the level of drug trafficking is disingenuous to the security of the state. When citizens realise that people have weapons in their hands, it put fear in them. In any country, if the citizens do not feel safe, it is a cause of national security concern (Abiodun, et al 2019; McDonald, 2018; Tolla, and Singh, 2018). One of the participants noted that drug trafficking is highly lined with human trafficking and if care is not taken metropolis and Ghana in general would be nursing militant groups. He stated that

“You may never know the intent and motives of drug traffickers. They are sometimes the same people who indulge in human trafficking. Their method of operation is pure violence and so when they try to recruit people into their trade and the victims refuse, they mostly subject these victims to maltreatment” [Participant #12]

The responses further revealed that drug traffickers do not spare informants like journalists and other members of society. given this, even if journalists find out about the operations of the drug traffickers, they are afraid to deeply investigate the activities of traffickers for fear that the journalist would be harmed or even get killed.

“The drug traffickers always tend to harm innocent members of society and most especially journalists that try to report or investigate the operations of the traffickers. The fact that journalists are scared to investigate a drug cartel is in itself an affront to national security. This is why the activities of drug traffickers should be fought with all available resources of the state to curb its effect on the security of the country” [Participants#7]

The findings on the effect of human and drug trafficking on national security have revealed that both menace has the high potential to destabilize the peace and security of the state. It has also been revealed that human and drug trafficking are mostly interlinked and perpetrators engage in violent acts. In some jurisdictions like Nigeria, Sudan, and Somalia, the activities of these drug traffickers have led o the formation of violent extremists who continue to disturb the peace and security of these countries. Respondents, therefore, indicated that pragmatic measures (discussed in section 4.5) should be implemented to curb the growing increase in drug and human trafficking in the metropolis.

➤ *Findings of Research Question Three*

- *What are the Challenges Encountered by Law Enforcement Agencies in Effectively Tackling Drug and Human Trafficking in Accra Metropolitan Assembly?*

The third research question sought to identify the challenges faced by law enforcement and security agencies in dealing with human and drug trafficking. This research question aimed to know these challenges to propose mechanisms for addressing the challenges. The findings revealed that one of the main challenges was information from informants and coordinated communication among the security agencies. The participants revealed that residents within the metropolis where perpetrators of drug and human trafficking operate are mostly not willing to provide information (Participants #4, #6, #7, #9, and #15). The reason for residents' unwillingness as discussed in Section 4.4 is primarily due to fear of victimization from the offenders. One of the participants specifically stated that

“Our major challenge is getting information from responsible informants within the communities where these people operate. People living in these areas mostly fear for their lives and therefore are unwilling to provide reliable information which would help us [sic the security agencies] to deal with the menace”. [Participant #9]

On the problem of coordinated communication, it was revealed that due to changes in the operational methods of drug and human traffickers, it does not lie within the power of one security agency to handle it. It needs coordinated efforts. However, such coordination could only be smooth and successful if there is effective communication. A breakdown of communication or absence of communication always provides the perpetrators a haven to fully undertake their illegal activities.

“The work is very difficult and since the methods of the drug and human traffickers keep changing, we also have to be changing our approach to tackling them. However, sometimes we may need support from other security agencies, but since there is no proper coordination among the agencies, by the time we gather to undertake any operations on the traffickers, they might have had a hint and dispersed. This makes it extremely difficult to arrest the perpetrators”. [Participant #4]

Another challenge found to be undermining the ability of security agencies to tackle the problem of human trafficking is the involvement of parents and guardians of these children. Once the parents are benefiting financially from the illegal acts, these parent team up with perpetrators whose sole activity is human trafficking. The parents and guardians do not see the practice of human trafficking as illegal but perceive it as means of survival and to make some financial gains. When this occurs, it is difficult to fully combat the crime.

Some of the participants also cited the security agencies and the judicial system in the country as complicit in the act of human and drug trafficking. The respondents indicated that some members of the security agencies allow themselves to be compromised through financial inducement from human and drug traffickers. These members of the security agencies are sometimes part of the drug cartel that aids in the transportation and circulation of drugs. Additionally, the respondents indicated that the judicial system mostly takes a long time to complete the prosecution processes of drug and human traffickers. This makes offenders feel bolstered to continue the acts because even when arrested, the prosecution would be slow and some eventually end up being set free. About complicity from the judicial system and the security agency, Participant #6 stated that

“The situation becomes worse when some of our members are involved in the act of drug trafficking. These members of the security agencies either provide a conducive atmosphere to the drug and human traffickers or give information as to how the security agencies are strategizing to cause their arrest. In this manner, all efforts to tackle the crime do not yield the desired results” [Participant #6].

Corruption among security officials and other members of the communities was also cited as one of the challenges that make it difficult to control drug and human trafficking. Participants #1, #2, #5, and #11 highlighted a concerning issue regarding the erosion of moral values within Ghanaian society, particularly within government institutions. They pointed out that officials and personnel working for government organizations like the Bureau of National Investigations (BNI), the Police Narcotic Unit, the Ghana Narcotic Board (NACOB), and the Interior Ministry often face financial hardships due to inadequate salaries and benefits. This vulnerability makes it easier for them to be influenced and compromised by individuals known as "Drug Lords." These drug traffickers possess significant wealth and connections, which they exploit to manipulate and corrupt officials in these institutions that are supposed to combat drug-related issues in the city.

- *In the Case of the Judicial System, a Participant Commented:*

“The judicial process in this country is very slow. Sometimes prosecutors handling human or drug trafficking cases get transferred or even die. This is because of the slow pace of the judicial procedures in the country. While the process takes longer, perpetrators are not given the proper deserving punishment. This emboldens other members to continue the illegality without fear of prosecution”. [Participant #10]

Participants #8, #11, and #14 also highlighted the issue of inadequate policies addressing human trafficking, specifically child trafficking, as a significant challenge. They noted that the lack of coherent policies often leads to confusion regarding the roles and responsibilities of different entities involved in combating the problem. This lack of clarity hinders effective coordination and

collaboration among relevant stakeholders. It was revealed that even when policies do exist, they are often not aligned with the national plan, which should have clear objectives, goals, and strategies with defined timeframes. This creates difficulties, especially for the judicial system, in determining appropriate punishments and contributes to delays in the prosecution process.

➤ *Findings of Research Question Four*

- *What Measures have the Appropriate Institutions Put in Place to Mitigate the Adverse Effects of Drug and Human Trafficking on Child Development in the Accra Metropolitan Assembly?*

The last research question sought to find out the mechanisms that appropriate agencies like the Narcotic Control Authority, police council, the military, and the Customs and immigration commissions have put in place to control drug and human trafficking. The findings revealed that these authorities use the services of informants to gather intelligence. One of the participants commented.

“With regards to drug trafficking, we usually employ the services of informants like undercover journalists who disguise and provide us with reliable information for necessary actions. Although it is always difficult to get these informants, it is usually one of the best solutions” [Participant #2]

On the issue of child trafficking, it was revealed that the agencies sometimes liaise with local authorities and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) like child right and women empowerment organizations to educate the communities where the act appears rampant. The security agencies also develop a partnership with local media organisations to develop educational programmes which are frequently aired on these media radio stations. This according to the participants raises awareness of the menace and through awareness the general public sometimes provides information

“The media in the country is a vibrant one. Therefore, whenever we partner with them to develop strategic programmes aimed at curbing human trafficking, especially in the fishing communities, we see positive results” [Participant #12]

It was also revealed that the security agencies are trying to develop a common technological platform which the necessary technical security feature for effective communication. This security system is expected to facilitate communication and information sharing among all the security apparatus in the metropolis. One of the participants who is also a management member commented:

“The expected funds to complete the development of high-speed technological systems which could enhance communication among the security agencies have not been received from the government. Therefore, it is slowing our determination to use information sharing as a combative tool. However, I believe when it is finally done drug trafficking

would be reduced to its barest minimum” [Participant # 6]

The findings from the study have made several revelations that are consistent with existing literature. It is therefore important to discuss these findings about existing empirical literature to make informed conclusions.

➤ *Discussions of the Findings of the Study*

The term "human trafficking" refers to the process of obtaining a license to drive. Tolla (2017) identified high levels of child trafficking in Ethiopia in a study. Tolla (2017) used cross-tabulation, multivariate analysis, and logistic regression to analyze the data. The findings revealed that Ethiopia had a high rate of human trafficking and child trafficking. Misinformation, communication, domestic violence, poor prosecution rates, poverty, and parental breakdown were also found to foster human trafficking. The qualitative analysis yielded the current study's findings, unlike Tolla (2017)'s quantitative analysis. Results are similar despite methodological variances. The implication is that human trafficking has been identified as high in Africa (Bartsch, 2020; Brauch, 2019). The study's findings suggested that drug traffickers use numerous methods in their operations, according to participants #3, #6, #7, and #8. This finding matches McDonald (2018)'s US study. The study's findings show that drug traffickers' tactics have changed and that they are now more effective than ever. McDonald (2018) advised collaboration at the local level among all stakeholders, especially in vulnerable neighborhoods where traffickers operate. McDonald also stressed the significance of training local police and healthcare workers to identify victims. The study recommended the development of awareness activities to address the issue. The empirical data showing that drug and human traffickers use the Accra Metropolis as a center is consistent with Temitope's (2018) study in Nigeria. Temitope (2018) found that Nigeria's Edo State was a major drug trade hub and the origin of 80% of Nigeria's trafficking victims. It also had several human trafficking networks. (Owiso, 2019) supports this. Owiso (2019) found that children from Burundi, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda are forced into prostitution and labor in Kenya before being deported. Kenya's largest refugee camp houses hundreds of thousands of refugees and asylum seekers amid Dadaab's security situation. Geldenhuys (2022) found that children in refugee camps do not receive full humanitarian access, support, or protective services and that Al-Shabab recruiters have been seen among Somali refugees in Dadaab. The current study found that youth unemployment makes trade trafficking recruitment simpler. Owiso (2019), who found that some Somali children in Kenyan refugee camps are used for prostitution while others are taken outside the camps and forced to work in tobacco and flower fields, supports this. Somali girls and women who return from Somalia with khat often wind up in brothels in Garissa, Nakuru, Nairobi, or Mombasa. INCB Report 2021 supports the seaport seizure number per week finding. The investigation found cannabis herb trafficking in Benin, Burkina Faso, Madagascar, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, and the In 2020, some nations captured a few hundred kilograms, while others seized hundreds of tons.

Namibia seized 843 tons of cannabis herb in 2020, which is a lot (INCB Report, 2021). The findings revealed that literacy and poverty were contributing factors to the surge in human trafficking. Abiodun et al.'s information is consistent. The level of education of a person is determined by their level of education, which is why the term "assignment" is so popular. Accordingly, Abiodun et al. (2019) Observed that Northern Nigeria was far behind mankind in child education. North-West Nigeria has 25% literacy, whereas North-East Nigeria has 20%. Northern Nigeria still has the highest proportion of child poverty and children who do not attend school. Thus, the authors found high levels of human trafficking in North-west and North-Eastern Nigeria. Children are victims of Boko Haram, a threat to the country's national security. The implication is that if Ghana's literacy level increases, human trafficking will likely continue to climb. Existing literature supports the findings on how drug and human trafficking affect national security. Joshua (2022) found that drug and human traffickers utilize distinct methods. In his study, Joshua (2022) found that large-scale drug traffickers can utilize severe violence to enter markets, punish informants, and assassinate investigative journalists. Journalists' inability to investigate drug trafficking owing to fear for their lives is consistent with the current study's findings. Human traffickers exclusively utilize violence against victims and their families, unlike their criminal opponents. Drug traffickers have a history of violence towards rivals (Ondieki, 2017). The findings revealed that drug traffickers operate with several methods (Participants #3, #6, #7, and #8). This finding is consistent with a McDonald (2018) study. McDonald's study revealed that drug traffickers' behaviors fluctuate, making it hard to trace them down and arrest them. Thus, victims put adjacent citizens in danger, lost their lives, operated in plain sight without being identified as victims, and lived in terror. (Arsovska, 2021) supports the current study's findings. Arsovska (2021) found that drug traffickers in Central Asia, Colombia, Mexico, and Europe commit violence. Human traffickers rarely use such savagery against rivals. Balkan human trafficking organizations are rare. Ondieki (2017) said this is rare. They entered European markets with unprecedented savagery. National trafficking organizations are less likely to clash than in the drug trade since the market for trafficked people is growing so swiftly and the sector is so interconnected. Instead, human traffickers mutilate, burn, or kill their victims. The implications of these earlier findings and the actual findings from the current study demonstrate that drug traffickers and people smugglers share some similarities despite these distinctions. Drug trafficking and people trafficking have revealed a range of criminal actors and facilitators (Joshua, 2022; Arsovska, 2021; Ondieki, 2017; Ali and Muhammad, 2014; Wanjiru, 2012). Even though there are significant regional differences in how criminal drug organizations operate around the world, both types of criminal actors rely on their country's logistical expertise because both people and drugs must be transported long distances from their country of origin to their final destination. The finding shows that many drug traffickers originate from low-income households, hazardous backgrounds like triad or mafia families, and minority

communities in their own countries. Due to their involvement in the drug trade, they may profit financially. Unscrupulous government bureaucrats aid drug cartels. In Mexico and Central Asia, high-level law enforcement officials are important players in drug trafficking groups, not just facilitators (Kara, 2018). It was revealed that parents and guardians were complicit in the act, making it difficult to collect credible information for action. This is one of the challenges facing security services in battling human and drug traffickers. Because parents and guardians view human trafficking as a business. This finding is consistent with Osei Bonsu's previous studies. He found that strangers can only access children through the family network. Osei Bonsu's 2021 research When strangers and, to a lesser extent, relatives and friends are involved, participants believe people view human trafficking as purely commercial. Children labor here to repay family loans. This discovery is like the previous child labor trafficking case. The findings of the drug trafficking study revealed that security professionals and personnel are involved in human and drug trafficking, which is consistent with the research done by Aronowitz and Veldhuizen (2021). Their study found that professionals, law enforcement, and military employees play major roles in trafficking rings, even in communist nations. As evidenced by the high level of current police involvement in trafficking activities, this pattern is not limited to specific cultures. The results of the study show that the participants were able to complete the task. Abiodun et al. (2019) and Aning and Pokoo (2014) found that criminal gangs use facilitators in many businesses who supply bogus paperwork and safe havens before disposing of the proceeds. According to Aning and Pokoo (2014), many of these facilitators operate as attorneys, accountants, and real estate agents. Before the drug cartels entered the human trafficking market, these companies' employees were different. The findings reinforce the routine activity theory. The theory states that everyday actions caused by opportunities among people across time and location can make crime easy and low-risk to control or eliminate, or difficult and risky (Monteiro and Rocha, 2017). As found in the current study, this is indeed the case. It was revealed that security officials help with drug and human trafficking in the metropolis. The theory of routine activities focuses on multiple variables that interact over time and location to create criminal opportunities, which lead to criminal events, but it does not address why some people commit crimes and others do not (Tolla and Singh, 2018; Ali and Muhammad, 2014). Crime can rise and fall without increasing the number of people who commit it (Wanjiru, 2012). The idea offers extra motivations for crime beyond social, economic, and political drives and objectives.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the study was to examine the effect of drug and human trafficking on the development of children and national security in the Accra Metropolitan Assembly in Ghana. The study conceived that crime anywhere is crime everywhere. The implication is that the increase in drug and human trafficking within the Accra Metropolitan Assembly not only affects the development of children in the

metropolis but poses a threat to national security and development. To achieve the overall objective of the study, the aim of the study was operationalized into four specific objectives. The first was to investigate the level of drug and human trafficking and the second was to identify the effect of drug and human trafficking relationships on Child development in Accra Metropolitan Assembly. The third research objective was to identify the challenges encountered by law enforcement agencies in effectively tackling drug and human trafficking and the fourth objective was to identify measures to mitigate the adverse effects of drug and human trafficking on child development in the Accra Metropolitan Assembly. To understand how drug and human trafficking influence or affect child's development and national security, the study was grounded on rational choice and routine activity theories. The study employed an interpretive qualitative approach where 15 security officials were selected through a stratified sampling procedure. Thematic analysis was used in analyzing and presenting the study findings to draw valid conclusions. From the first research objective which sought to investigate the level of drug and human trafficking in the metropolis, the study concluded that there is a relatively high level of drug and human trafficking in the metropolis. The study further concluded that the menace of human trafficking is rampant along the fishing communities of the metropolis. It was also revealed through the findings that the airport and the harbor which are all in the metropolis often serve as a transit point for drug trafficking activities. The second research objective examined the effect of drug and human trafficking on the development of children in the Accra metropolis and overall national security, the study concluded that human trafficking leads to untoward hardship on children. It was also concluded that human trafficking results in child labour and street children which eventually leads to an armed group. On national security, the study concluded that drug and human trafficking leads to an influx of armed weapons into the country which has the potential of producing militant groups which could destabilize the country. On the challenges encountered by law enforcement agencies in effectively tackling drug and human trafficking, the study concluded that complicity on the part of parents was one of the inhibiting factors. The study further concluded that poverty, corruption, involvement of security officials, and the slow pace of judicial processes were some of the factors that make it difficult to deal with drug and human trafficking in the metropolis. From the fourth objective which sought to measure the appropriate institutions put in place to mitigate the adverse effects of drug and human trafficking on child development in the metropolis, the study concluded that informants were used. It was also concluded that the security officers collaborate with NGOs and media houses to educate the people on the dangers of human and drug trafficking.

- It is recommended that security agencies intensify public education and awareness of human and drug trafficking not only through radio education but also through the use of modern social media platforms. The use of social media would quickly spread any information on drug and human trafficking so that the citizens can be part of the

corrective processes.

- Security institutions should establish a reporting platform where people can send information relating to drug and human trafficking without giving out their identities. This would prevent the fear of victimization that informants like journalists suffer. This means that the Whistleblower Act should be effectively operationalized so that informants would be fully protected.
- The judicial system should migrate its operations into digital processes that would facilitate the procedures of prosecution. This would eliminate the slow pace of prosecution processes which emboldens drug and human traffickers.
- Government should invest heavily in the development of robust communication systems that would foster collaboration among all the security agencies. This would enhance security surveillance in combating drug trafficking.
- The problem of poverty and low infrastructural development which affects the fishing communities should be addressed by instituting economic schemes that would empower the citizenry. One such economic scheme would be soft loans for the fisher folks.

National security and child development is a national concern. It is suggested that future studies should investigate the effect of human trafficking on child development in Ghana

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