



Reflection on the Impact of Child Trafficking in Africa: A Case Study of Efia in Amma Darko's *the Housemaid*

Mamane Dan Tangam Abdourahamane ^{a++*}
and Labo Bouché Abdou ^{a#}

^a English Department, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University Abdou Moumouni of Niamey, Niger.

Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Article Information

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajl2c/2024/v7i3209>

Open Peer Review History:

This journal follows the Advanced Open Peer Review policy. Identity of the Reviewers, Editor(s) and additional Reviewers, peer review comments, different versions of the manuscript, comments of the editors, etc. are available here: <https://www.sdiarticle5.com/review-history/127961>

Short Communication

Received: 07/10/2024
Accepted: 10/12/2024
Published: 21/12/2024

ABSTRACT

African women writers are committed to defend women perspectives in their writings. They have been trying to defend African women bad conditions due to their different social subjugation. This article explores the representation of child trafficking in Amma Darko's *The Housemaid*, revealing its roots in poverty and cultural complicity and its devastating consequences, including psychological trauma and social marginalization. Under a textual and interpretative analysis, this work wants to use social theory as the theoretical framework. The purpose of this article is to highlight the impact of child trafficking in Africa: a case of Efia in Amma Darko's *the Housemaid*. Despite the

⁺⁺ Doctorate Student;

[#] (M.C - Associates Professor) Full-Time Lecturer;

^{*}Corresponding author: E-mail: dantagam84@gmail.com;

contribution of this work in literary domain by highlighting the social hindrance, this article examines a given social matter in link with trafficking human beings that the author condemns. In this novel, many little girls who have been trafficked via the channel of one of their citizens for house chores, hawking, prostitution and other hard activities.

The result of this research reveals that poverty and the search for easy gain by certain parents are the principal causes of child trafficking in this novel. The study also shows that child trafficking has plenty of bitter impacts on Ghanaian societies like living in the streets, prostitution and unwanted pregnancy. The study suggests that many social beds must be interested to the matter in order to solve it definitely.

Keywords: Impact; human trafficking; prostitution; Africa; Housemaid; hawking.

1. INTRODUCTION

Literature seeks to disclose the social problems. The role of a writer is to disclose and criticize in his or her writing a social problem in order to bring a positive changing in this same society. Many African writers are committed in their writing. Their commitment is to defend their community in divers' aspects. Amma Darko is among these writers. She is a Ghanaian woman writer. Her style of writing, her mastery of the language of writing, and her commitment to defending African women's rights made her become a great and famous writer in African literature. Her writings constitute numerous moral messages that go to the profit of women in general and African ones in particular. It is in the goal of literature to highlight the social problem to the benefit of masses. Amma Darko uses literature as a tool to depict women problems in the social.

Her novel *The Housemaid* is one of her writing productions that highlighted through a critical tone the situation of African girls. In the book, she explains African girls' bad situations, in case of poverty they leave their families to join the town to work for their survival. In the novel, she demonstrates how certain parents flee their responsibility by letting their children be trafficked by certain traffickers who go with them to the town on behalf of work but in reality, they exploit them. Child trafficking or human trafficking is a universal disease that affects the five continents.

Human trafficking is the fact of taking children or adults from a given country or town to another one for a remunerative goal. Nowadays human trafficking has become a pandemic across the world because of its quick proliferation so it is an international preoccupation. In Africa, many people choose this odd activity to achieve their

hidden goal. Human trafficking is very dangerous to humanity because of its gravity.

Many international organizations have substantiated that human trafficking is a world problem and is considered a crime. In a report made by TeachUNICEF in 2012 [1]. they showed that "the crime of trafficking in persons affects virtually every country in every region of the world" (TeachUNICEF, 2012: p1). Indeed, this bad and odd activity of human trafficking most of the time concerns people with a low position in society mostly the children and the youth as it is reported by TeachUNICEF in 2012 that "Human trafficking exists in the United States and around the world today, and it particularly affects children and youth. This is a human rights violation, it is unacceptable (TeachUNICEF 2012 :3). Another report was made by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in 2007 by classifying human trafficking as "one of the most egregious violations of human rights in the world today" (UNODC [2], p1). A work conducted by Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT) in 2024 shows that Child trafficking is one of the worst forms of violence against children and a grave global concern that requires urgent and comprehensive action (ICAT [3], p3).

However, it is all recognized that Human trafficking is a universal phenomenon which many scholars and organizations have given different definitions. For instance, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in 2018 has defined human trafficking as 'Trafficking in persons' shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of persons, by utilizing of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power, or a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the

consent of a person having control over another person, exploitation (OSCE [4], p10).

According to the International Labour Office (ILO):

Human trafficking or trafficking person is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, using the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, for exploitation for forced labour, slavery, servitude, sexual exploitation or removal of organs (ILO,[5]:10).

In referring to the above definitions, we can say that human trafficking is a phenomenon that consists of bringing children, adults, men, women, girls, or boys in some areas that are not theirs to look for money through hardship works which results in the prostitution and many other negative activities. Moreover, besides its different definitions, this human trafficking has numerous causes. Many researchers; and national and international organizations have made a lot of anthropological investigations to situate the causes of human trafficking in society. For example, HM Government (2010) stated that the principal causes of human trafficking are poverty, lack of education, discrimination, cultural attitudes, grooming, dysfunctional families, political conflict and economic transition, and inadequate local laws and regulations (HMG, [6]: 15). According to the United Nations (2014) many factors increase human trafficking which includes poverty, violence, and discrimination (UN [7]; 1). However, regarding these various previous overviews on the cause of human trafficking, we can conclude that the principal causes of human trafficking are: poverty and the lack of applying rigorously the laws and regulations on the traffickers. A poor family is very liable and very exposed to the risk of letting their children be trafficked. UNODC states that Human traffickers' prey on people who are poor, isolated and weak (UNODC,[2]: p 3).

Meanwhile, this phenomenon is very increased in Africa. In Ghana for instance, there was a study conducted by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP) in 2017 that is called National plan of action for the elimination of human trafficking in Ghana, in this study they reveal that

"Ghanaian boys and girls are subjected to being trafficked into forced labour, such as in fishing, domestic service, street hawking, begging,

portering, artisanal gold mining, quarrying, herding, and agriculture. Ghanaian girls, and to a lesser extent boy, are also subjected to sex trafficking "(MGCSP [8], p.1).

In the same study, they argue that

"Ghanaian women and children are recruited and sent to the Middle East, West Africa, and Europe for forced labour and sex trafficking. Licensed and unlicensed recruitment agencies recruit young Ghanaian women for domestic service or hospitality industry jobs in Gulf countries "(MGCSP, [8] p2) [8].

The above study gives a hint in the existence of human trafficking in Africa, namely in Ghana.

This article examines through a social approach Amma Darko's novel the *Housemaid*. This work intends to clarify the impact of Child trafficking in Africa: A Case Study of Efi in Amma Darko's the *Housemaid*. The general purpose of this article is to analyse the contribution of African women writers in their fighting against all form of child trafficking in African continent. The specific purposes are to discuss the reasons behind Efi's trafficking in the book under study, to highlight the impact of her trafficking and to suggest the possible solutions in order to stop and eradicate child trafficking in Africa. This work contributes to the literature in human trafficking in Africa in the point its highlights one of the issues which disturb African continent and the world in general.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study opts social theory as its theoretical framework which unable the examination of Amma Darko's The *Housemaid*. According to Joas and Knobl ([9], p 1,) "social theory is the theoretical core of the social sciences, clearly distinguishable from political theory and cultural analysis ". It treats social problems, it looks for social positive changes in power, explains social behavior, social structure and all social order about, gender, class, civilization, ethnicity, politics and modernity. This shows that a writer tends to reflect and interpret his society, his community, his surrounding world and gives a good inspiration and a better guidance to the benefit of his society or community that he depicted.

Social theory as an independent theory aims at social change and development. Its aims at social boosting and social transformation. A social theorist searches to implement this theory in his or her given society. However, Amma Darko engagement of social transformation, she uses literature canal to challenge many social hindrances in her writings in order to defend and protect African children in the yoke of trafficking.

One of the important of fiction, it reflects the social real problems in an imaginative world in order to disclose and illustrate the aspects of social way of life. It is from this angle that social theory is chosen in the analyse of this work about the child trafficking in African society in general and Ghana's one in particular. This is the mission of Amma Darko in the *Housemaid* to depict women in their daily social constraints.

Notwithstanding, the methodology used in this study is the qualitative one and it is used in two ways of having data. The first is the primary source which is the *Housemaid*. And the second one is the critical documents like books, journals, unpublished works, internet, and thesis.

3. ANALYZE OF THE *HOUSEMAID*

The analyse of this book will give a clearance of how Efia is trafficked, why she is trafficked, and who is or are behind her trafficking.

3.1 How Efia is trafficked in the *Housemaid*?

In the *Housemaid*, Efia is among the main characters who have suffered from human trafficking. Efia's narrative was chosen because her experiences encapsulate the intersection of poverty, gender-based exploitation, and cultural complicity, making her an illustrative case for examining the impact of trafficking in the novel.

Amma Darko's *The Housemaid* highlights many social issues including economic and cultural beliefs. In the *Housemaid* Efia's family is very poor, they live a day-by- day life. Even if they want to eat, they have to go to the farm immediately to look for food (cassava).

Mother, we don't have enough cassava for this evening's fufu. I have to go and uproot some more, she told her (Darko, [10] p 44).

In light of their plight and hardship in life, that The Teacher and Tika take advantage to recruit Efia

for *Housemaid* in Tika's home in the town. She suffers from a team plot including her biological parent.

3.2 Efia Victims of a Team Plot

In the novel, the *Housemaid*, Efia is the victim of a family plot. The plot is organized under the complicity of a teacher (Child traffickers in the novel). A child trafficker According to ILO (2015) is anyone who contributes to an element of the trafficking process with the intent to exploit the child. This includes those who play only a part in the entire process, such as recruiters, intermediaries, document providers, transporters, corrupt officials, service providers and unscrupulous employers (ILO [5]:13). The above quotation defines who is a child trafficker and his or her collaborators. In the *Housemaid* Teacher is a child trafficker and her collaborators are Tika, and Efia's family.

In this *Housemaid* Amma Darko uses the character Teacher to show the images of the traffickers. Teacher's attitudes toward the girls translate typically to what the human traffics are doing. Human trafficking consists of transporting people or recruiting them illegally for a specific profit based on the purpose of having money or other services (ICAT [11], IJM [12], OJJDP [13], Megbowon and Uwah, [14]). In the *Housemaid*, the Teacher is one of the Kataso native women who live in the town. The Teacher in the first round was also a maid, but her boss enrolled her in a school and progressively she succeeded and became a school teacher. Teacher is an attribute that the author gives her due to her job. Moreover, both Teacher and Tika originated from Kataso and they live together in the town. When Tika had a complication during her deliverance which generated the cutting of her womb, she asked Teach a maid who could help her at home for housing chores and this maid must be one from her village. In the story, the Teacher promised Tika to find her a maid soon, which is why they made an appointment to go to the village together for this purpose. In the novel Amma Darko relates how Teacher and Tika go to Kataso looking for a maid. In Kataso, they encountered Efia's family. They gave them a present which can help them to have their confidence easily. That is the strategy of the traffickers. They use all the strategies to convince the families of the victims before taking their children. Rafferty (2007) states that traffickers use psychological manipulations and coercive methods to maintain control over their

victims and to make their escape virtually impossible by destroying their physical and psychological defences (Rafferty [15]: 2).

In this book, the Teacher uses this method of corrupting Efiya's family by bringing them something from the town to make them weak psychologically to accept her offer. Teacher as a native and respected and intellectual woman originating from Kataso, is assigned the role of recruiting girls from this village to the city to fulfil the house chorus:

Among the few Katasoans in Accra with formal jobs and the comfort of a home, one of whom had been Tika's father, was a lady called Teacher by virtue of her profession (Darko,34) [10].

In the above quotation, Darko shows Teacher's profile and her recognition of her dirty jobs against Kataso's girls, that is why Amma Darko explains Teacher's dirty jobs in the following lines:

Because of her position, Teacher was often given the task of getting young girls from Kataso position as *Housemaids* with families in Accra. Usually, a guarantee was given that, after the girl had served for four years, her training as a dressmaker or hairdresser would be sponsored. As a result, Teacher was very well known among the Accra Katasoans, Tika included (35) [10].

In the novel, Amma Darko explains to us how Teacher and Tika proceeded to recruit Efiya to go to the town. In the following quotation, Amma Darko shows us how they come to Kataso's village and how the villagers welcome them. Darko argues:

When they were seated, the villagers welcomed the city dwellers, and the city dwellers thanked them and presented their loaves and bread. The teacher set the ball rolling, going over their mission again. Efiya's people went to one side and put their heads together as if they were hearing everything for the first time. When they re-joined the others, Papa Kaawire spoke, his eyes fixed on Tika (41) [10].

The above quotation explains how Teacher and Tika gather Efiya's family to explain their bad mission. Once with Efiya's family, the conversations start with the Teacher and Efiya's

family regarding the procedure to follow to traffic Efiya. The following discussions will explain the process:

Tika: I travel a lot, so I need her to be honest and reliable, because the whole house will be in her complete care on many occasions. It is important for me to be able to trust her enough not to have to worry about my home when I 'm away.

Efiya's mother: And chores? Efiya's mother asked

Teacher: The basics. If she can clean, wash, sweep and cook well, that's it, Teacher replied.

Grandmother: So now can we also know how you intend to reward our child for her services? (4) [10].

The above short discussions show how these people bargain Efiya as a product to sell in the market. The traffickers with the plot of their plotters want by all the price to traffic Efiya. In light of this conversation, we can understand that these women are ready to do bad things against Efiya, which is why they even put away Efiya's father from their discussion of sending Efiya to the town, and the father is shocked with Efiya's mother. The following quotation shows their hot discussion:

Efiya's father:" What are we getting out of our daughter's going away to the city to serve somebody "Didn't we take care of her up to this stage? And if we hadn't fed her up now, would she have grown strong enough to be able to serve her?

Efiya's mother: that was our responsibility, or? We did no one a favour feeding our child, or?

Efiya's father: You prepared well for a confirmation? Eh Silence. And she leaves tomorrow, you said? Efiya's mother: Yes. The ensuing atmosphere was tense, and heavy with suspicion and suspense (43-44) [10].

The above hot conversation between Efiya's parents shows that the father does not agree about her departure but unfortunately the mother does. Through the again above conversation again, the dialogue between Efiya's parents reveals a tension between economic desperation and moral ambiguity, illustrating how poverty drives families to rationalize trafficking.

As we know in the society, a mother has a high influence on her children namely girls. Efiya's

mother comes to convince Efia to go to serve another woman just for their hiding black interest which consists of exploiting her. It is under the strategies of the tackifiers to target the poor people for their misdeeds.

As it is showed in the novel, Efia's father is against her traffic, that why the family tries to explain to him that it is by luck that Efia is chosen to be trafficked. They show him that many girls in the village are waiting for this type of occasion to leave the village. The family tries to convince him that in this chance, there are even some divinity events that intervene in their family. The following quotation will explain this fact:

Of all the extended family members, why did Teacher settle on us? She could have gone to the family house, or? Look at all the girls cramped in there just waiting for an opportunity like this. Yet the Teacher took just one look at our Efia and decided she was the one. Why? Because the ghost chose someone who could hear and understand his distant voice (45) [10].

According to the above quotation, Efia's family is a blessing. But unfortunately, Efia suffers more in this situation, the following point will highlight the impact of this trafficking.

4. DISCUSSION

The analyze of the *Housemaid* highlights that Efia is trafficked under a team plot. She is the victim of her parental economic weakness that why she finds herself in the hands of traffickers. She lacks education, and all remaining social advantages like marriage. This discussion will clarify the negative of her trafficking that Amma Darko examines.

4.1 The Negative Impact of Efia's Trafficking

Human trafficking has numerous negative impacts on the better function of human beings. Many researches show that human trafficking has many impacts on the trafficked. In a report made by UNODC in 2007 [2], they have showed that:

Human trafficking has an impact on the individuals it victimizes in all areas of their lives. Every stage of the trafficking process can involve physical, sexual and psychological abuse and violence, deprivation and torture, the forced use

of substances, manipulation, economic exploitation and abusive working and living conditions. Unlike most other violent, crimes trafficking usually involves prolonged and repeated trauma. Documentation and research describe how men, women and children are abused in specific exploitative conditions and the short- and long-term physical injuries, disabilities and deaths that may result. For many specified reasons, trafficked persons are at great risk of HIV infection (UNODC, [2] :9).

In the *Housemaid*, Efia is trafficked to work for Tika as a *Housemaid* and housekeeper. The Teacher with the complicity of Efia's family, obliges Efia to be with Tika for house chores and other hardship activities. The reason why Efia's family wants her, by all means, to be with Tika is because they hide something in their heart. This thing is a plan that they organize which consists of pushing Efia to become very important to Tika to gain her confidence up to the point that Tika will not do anything without Efia. Efia's parents know that Tika is very rich. Her wealth derived from her mother who sponsored her in business. She is a great business woman whom her mother sponsors and she does not have any children and even her womb was cut due to a complication that she had during her deliverance. In the following passage, Darko exposes how Efia's family discusses Tika's situation and their intention about her:

The old lady seemed to be proving how mad she was she turned to Efia, listen! The woman you are going to live with is a rich but wasted. Mother!

A very wasted woman.

Mother please!

An unproductive womb is bad enough. But no womb at all? And that is what she is. A walking woman with no womb inside her (Darko,46) [10].

They plan several strategies to make Efia dominate Tika to have a child who in the future will inherit her since she has not gotten a child. The discussion continues:

'So, hear me! Be subservient, humble and very dependable...

Good advice, mother! «then get yourself pregnant.

W-h-a-a-t?

You both heard me right. Efia, you will live with her, win her affection, and become indispensable to her. So that when you innocently become pregnant...

Innocently?

How does she become pregnant innocently?

Efia's mother asked. By pretending she was forced into the sexual act, the old lady replied.

By whom? The mother again.

It doesn't matter. Hers is just to get pregnant. How? asked Efia innocently.

"fool! By sleeping with a man. How else? Her mother yelled, warming to the old lady's plan, whatever it was.

Don't tell me you don't already know about that. The old lady cast her daughter a curious look and smiled a little.

Then she turned back to her granddaughter. 'on second thoughts, she began, when you get pregnant, refuse to name the father (Darko, 46-47) [10].

In this above discussion, Darko explains the objective of this plan in which Efia's family wants all costs to be with Tika. However, once Efia is with Tika, she tries to implement the plan that their family assigned her. Efia receives total confidence in Tika, which is why Tika says: Oh, Efia what would I do without you? And she told Teacher, I would be lost without her (Efia) (51) [10]. One day, when Tika was absent, she met a man with whom they planned to have sexual intercourse. On the same day; Tika forgets something at home and she has to come back to take it, she tries to open the doors but unfortunately all the doors are locked by Efia. After Tika has insisted that Efia unlocked after hiding her guy in the chamber. Tika wonders about the situation, and Darko relates their discussion as follows:

Tika: "Can you tell me what was going on in here? Tika demanded angrily".

Efia: "Nothing, madam, 'Efia answered, like an angel". Tika was beside herself with rage.

Tika: Don't you dare madam me so monkey-politely! Do I look like a fool to you? Who were you? Mumbling to inside just now?

Efia: No one madam. She spoke so impassively, that Tika fumed even more.

Tika: You were in here with somebody doing God knows what, and you made whoever it was leave by the back door before you let me in. Isn't that it?

Efia: No, madam. A helpless and defeated Tika was raging a fever pitch.

Tika: 'How do I handle this? She thought. What am I to do? And how long has this thing been going on? God! The girl sometimes has this house to herself for a whole week. What goes on then? And yet, how can I get on without her? I have no option but to report this to your people. I must let them know that I cannot tolerate situations like this (Darko, 54) [10].

After this conversation with Tika, Efia is hiding her guy under the bed. When she is sure that Tika will go out, she returns to her man to continue their affairs. Efia argues: Let's do it again, when your milk is coming don't remove your thing" (Darko, 55) [10].

This above short quotation shows that Efia is ready to be in pregnant to accomplish the mission that her family consigned her.

Efia had sexual intercourse with one of Tika's men willingly and finally fell pregnant. After her pregnancy, Tika informs the Teacher that she will send Efia to her family. Behind many confrontations and numerous settings for negotiations, the family bears Tika to keep Efia up to her Deliverance:

Madam Tika, please, in the name of the great Almighty God, and for the sake of our ancestors, please don't abandon our daughter. Have mercy on us. Pity on us. What can we do for her? Look at us. Look at her father. You saw everything for yourself, didn't you? Oh God! And still she sniffed, sniffed, sniffed. Madam Tika, Efia's mother proceeded, please don't send Efia back to us. Please! And when she delivers, too please, the baby is yours. We are donating it to you. Please!

Yes, Madam Tika, listen to the voice of an old woman. My grandchild is yours too. Keep her.

And when she delivers, my great-grandchild is yours too. It was God-sent, believe me. The gods and ancestors also willed it. It is your child (Darko,66) [10].

Despite many interventions in the negotiation to convince Tika to keep Efia up to her deliverance, Tika declines their wish and finally she sends Efia to her family. After Efia has been sent to her family she finds herself in terrible situations. The situations through which she has already become accustomed to the town and its luxury principal Tika's house where she is free to eat whatever she wants, but unfortunately, she has to leave it and join her mates in their way of living. These girls suffer more in the town. They are exposed to many dangers from health to morals. They are not psychologically free. When Efia joins them, she requests Akua to stay with them but she advises her as follows "Whatever happens, and however bad it seems, you will still be safer there than here. Look at the way we live here (Darko, 96) [10].

Regarding the conditions in which these girls live, each one relates her inner anger to Efia:

Akua: As for me, fortunately work has been suspended in my building. I hear the owner has travelled to some country to get work and make more money to come back and complete it. So, for the next year at least, neither Atinga nor any of them will see my pants (Darko, 95) [10].

One girl said "I have my problems. The owner of my base has returned from abroad and wants to resume work on his building, so I had to bribe Atinga yesterday with a couple of quick rounds behind the blue kiosk to get him to find me a new place (Darko, 95) [10].

However, in Efia's situation, Amma Darko explains how Efia is trafficked by the Teacher under her mother's complicity and grandmother's yoke. They use her infancy and her naivety to exploit her. Their plot is not achieved in any way apart from losing and total deception. Efia becomes a prostitute cause of her family's instruction to become so. Amma Darko shows the lust for having something easily and will not willingly force you to have it. If Efia's family let Efia work well in Tika's family without any intention of earning her wealth easily, she would gain Tika's confidence and Tika would give her all, but unfortunately, they failed in their odd plan. That is why Efia joins her friends in their way of living and looks for their help with her pregnancy.

She gets pregnant with the man that she slept with when Tika was absent. Efia delivers her son in a very difficult situation without any medical supervision. She delivers a stillborn baby and through it in a bush near Braha village. This is how Efia ended. She suffered from trafficking, doing a hard work, prostitution, being abandoned, risk of contracting a disease, being pregnant, unhealthy deliverance etc....

Through this article, the direct impact of Efia's trafficking is her hard work in Tika's house, freedom of having sexual intercourse with somebody without any protection, unwanted pregnancy, the dirty conditions of her deliverance, the social and psychological frustration ; the lack of education, and the losing of what they intended to have which consist of inheriting Tika's wealthy. Efia's case in Amma Darko's novel must be an interpellation for all parent and other social layer about the danger of child trafficking. The case of Efia in Darko's book as *Terhemba* (2019) argues exemplifies the way whole generations are being ruined in African societies as a result of social neglect and scorn for single parents (*Terhemba* [16], p156).

Indeed, Ghana is well known in term of human trafficking. According to Ghana's Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (MOFAD) (2016) Ghana is a source, transit and destination country for men, women and children who are subjected to force or sex trafficking and the exploitation occurs more within Ghana than across countries (MOFAD, [17] p 1). Amma Darko uses her skills as a social writer to condemn this activity for the better life of African children in general and Ghana's one in particular.

5. CONCLUSION

Child Trafficking is a phenomenon that infects many African children and it is an obstacle for their better living condition in the society. As this work used social theory as its theoretical framework, African women writers engage in searching always to bring solutions in social problems in their writings, this work has highlighted the contributions of one of African women writers on the impact of child trafficking in her novel the *Housemaid*. The work dealt with the impact of human trafficking in Africa: A study of Efia in the *Housemaid* by Amma Darko. In her text, Amma Darko advocated and discussed the issue of child trafficking in Ghana not in the purpose of doing *it* but to avoid and admonish

this practice. In her narration, she uses the character Teacher to show the images of human traffickers. The Teacher takes advantage of Efia's family poverty with the complicity of Tika to traffic Efia. Under the plot of her family, Efia was exploited in Tika's house hardworking and being a volunteer prostitute. Finally, Efia found herself with several negative impacts like prostitution, unwanted pregnancy and psychological trauma, sanitation risks and so on.

In this work, Darko recommend all the social layers like civil societies, trade unions, media, and NGOs to invest in sensitizing through social media, radio, television, and other channels about the negative impacts of human trafficking. The government on their side must apply the law rigourously against the traffickers by amending them or putting them into jail. Regarding her social concerns on many domains in Africa, Amma Darko contributed more to fight against child trafficking in Africa and suggesting some solutions in order to protect African children ad beyond Africa in general. This work examined Amma Darko's fiction, the analysed helps more on the taking awareness on the impact of child trafficking, and it helps more to fight against this phenomenon by following the above suggestions.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc) and text-to-image generators have been used during writing or editing of this manuscript.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

REFERENCES

1. TeachUNICEF. Child trafficking, U.S. Fund for UNICEF's Education Department. 2012, 2016, UNICEF/NYHQ2006-1040/Brooks
2. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). An introduction to human trafficking: vulnerability, impact and action, background paper, United Nations New York, 2008, Vienna. 2008 Available:www.unodc.org.
3. Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT). Call for Accelerated Action by 2025 to Prevent and End Child Trafficking; November 2023. Edited January 2024.
4. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Child trafficking and child protection: Ensuring that child protection mechanisms protect the rights and meet the needs of child victims of human trafficking, occasional paper NO. 9 Wallnerstr. 6, 1010 Vienna; 2018.
5. International Labour Office (ILO). Commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking of children "in a nutshell": A Resource for Pacific Island Countries. Geneva: ILO. 2014;40.
6. HM Government. Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; 2010.
7. United Nations. Human rights and human trafficking, office of the high commissioner, New York and Geneva, Fact Sheet No. 36;2014.
8. Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Human Trafficking in Ghana 2017-2021.1-30; 2017.
9. Joas H, Knobl W. Social Theory: Twenty Introductory Lectures. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 2009.
10. Darko Amma. *The Housemaid*. London: Heinemann; 1998.
11. Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT). Trafficking in Children, Issue Brief 06. 2018;1-8.
12. International Justice Mission. Child Trafficking into Forced Labor on Lake Volta, Ghana: A Mixed-Methods Assessment. 2016;1-93.
13. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Child Labor Trafficking: Literature Review. Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; 2016. Available:https://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/litreviews/child-labor-trafficking.pdf
14. Megbowon FK, Uwah. Society, African literature and sustainable development: An examination of Darko's *The Housemaid*. International Journal of Development and Sustainability. 2022;11(10):311-26.
15. Rafferty Y. Child Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation: A Review

- of Promising Prevention Policies and Programs. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry. 2013;83(4):559-75.
16. Terhemba TR. Social commitment in Amma Darko's the *Housemaid* and faceless. Language, Discourse & Society. 2019;71(13).
17. Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (MOFAD). Strategy on Anti-Child Labour and Trafficking in Fisheries: Toward the Eradication of Child Labour and Trafficking in Ghanaian Fishing Communities. Fisheries Commission. 2016;1-50.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of the publisher and/or the editor(s). This publisher and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.

© Copyright (2024): Author(s). The licensee is the journal publisher. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Peer-review history:

The peer review history for this paper can be accessed here:

<https://www.sdiarticle5.com/review-history/127961>