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## “Baby Factories” in Rivers State: A New Form of Crime, 2006-2019

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**Abstract:** *Until recently, Rivers State, which was created on 27<sup>th</sup> May, 1967, is beginning to witness an entirely novel and prevalent form of crime couched in what is euphemistically and variously termed “Baby factories”, “child harvesting and “baby farms”. Irrespective of these nomenclatures, baby factor is an emerging illicit human industry where new borns are illegally sold to prospective buyers for financial gains. The phenomenal of “Baby factories” which masqueraded as hospitals, clinics, maternity homes, and so forth in the State has become widespread crime and notorious crime. Against the backdrop of this development, this paper attempted to explore and examine the root causes, and effect of this hideous and illegal business on the status of women and the development of the entire State. Using the narrative and analytical historical methods as well as multi-disciplinary approach, the study pointed out that the social menace in the State is propelled and sustained by acute and deepening poverty, barrenness, greed, socio-cultural influences and pervasive corruption in the State among others potent factors. The work uncovered that the main victims of the baby factories operated by the baby producing syndicates are pregnant young girls and desperate childless couples who wanted to avoid social stigmatization associated with pre-marital pregnancy and barrenness. The research maintained that the remarkable development of “baby factories” in the State had resulted in physical, and psychological trauma, sexual exploitation and violence to the victims. The paper called for multi-faceted approaches such as placing more premium on human capacity building and creating more employment opportunities, establishing centres for counselling, and the education of citizens on their basic and inalienable rights to tackle the scourge of “baby factories” headlong.*

**Keywords:** *Baby Factories, Human Trafficking, Baby Harvesting, Women Exploitation, Rivers State.*

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### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

There was no Rivers State before 27<sup>th</sup> May, 1967. The area designated Rivers State was part of the Oil Rivers Protectorate from 1885 till 1993, when it was enlarged and christened the Niger cast Protectorate. The Rivers State territory became part of the Colony of southern Nigeria in 1900 and merged with the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria (Burns, 1972, Crowder, 1973; Pandem, 2013).

In January 1914, Lord F.D. Lugard amalgamated the Protectorate of Northern and southern Nigeria, thus forming the country known as Nigeria. This was followed by a political restructuring which gave birth to sub-divisions like the Northern, Western and Eastern Regions in 1951. To further enhance the effective running of the colonial government activities, Districts,

Divisions, Provinces and Regions were established. In the Eastern region of Southern Nigeria, Rivers Province was created in 1947 out of the defunct Owerri and Calabar Provinces (Amini Philips; 2009, Pandem, 2013). The new Province had Divisions like Ahoada, Brass, Degema, Ogoni and Port Harcourt.

Rivers State was created along with other eleven States on 27<sup>th</sup> May, 1967 out of the four regions which constituted the Federal Republic of Nigeria through the instrumentality of Decree No 14 and No 19, “State Creation and Transitional Provisions Amendment Decree 1967”. The State had five (5) administrative divisions and seventeen (17) County Councils. Although Naanem (2002) and Awortu and N-ue (2017) argue that the creation of a dozen State was to nip the Biafra successionist bid in the bud, the Federal Military government profusely contend that the action was aimed at allaying the fears of domination and marginalization by the minorities in the country. In a nation-wide broadcast, the then Lieutenant-Colonel Yakubu Gowon gives the *raison d’etre* of the political restructuring thus:

Fellow citizens, I recognize, however, that the problem of Nigeria extends beyond the present misguided actions of the Eastern Region government. My duty is to all citizens. I propose to treat all sections of the country with equality. The main obstacle to future stability in this country is the present structural imbalance in the Nigerian Federation.... This is why the item in the political and administrative programme adopted by the Supreme Military Council... is the creation of States as a basis for stability. This must be done first as to remove the fear of domination. I am satisfied that the creation of new States as the only basis for stability and equality is the overwhelming desire of vast majority of Nigerians (as quoted by Darah, 2017 P. 11; Awortu & N-ue, 2017, P.183).

It has to be noted that “the birth of Rivers State was not an act of benevolence. Rather, it was a product of combination of more than two decades of political and constitutional struggle” (Naanen, 2002, P. 339) from the Igbo domination, discrimination and “internal colonialism”. The Rivers State people known for their centuries old sovereignty resisted the Igbo dominance of the politics of the Eastern Region, agitating for self-determination and recognition. Reflecting on the crave for State creation, Naanen (2002, P.342) opines:

Rivers people felt their subordinate position in the existing political and constitutional order had been translated into economic and social neglect of the Rivers area. They argued that neither the federal nor Eastern regional government (controlled by the NCNC) could sufficiently appreciate the peculiar development needs of the Niger Delta cases of discrimination against Rivers people in political appointments, award of scholarships, provision of amenities and the siting of development projects, were cited. Rivers people complained also of the indignities and prejudice to which they were subjected by their more numerous ethnic neighbours. The Igbo were accused of practising internal colonialism through massive migration and domination of their host communities.

Okorobia (1999; P.224) further strengthens the point of internal colonialism of the Rivers People in this manner:

If there was any single policy which was so effectively used to internally colonize and under-develop the erstwhile virile and progressive City States of the Eastern Delta, it was the regionalisation policy that brought them under the social, political and economic domination of the larger, aggressive and self-conscious Igbo ethnic nationality. A number of political, economic and social policies and programmes were initiated and executed by the Eastern Regional Government, and these had more negative than positive impact on the land and people of Eastern Delta.

Following “the ensuring boundary adjustments, more areas were ceded to Rivers State. These were Egbema, Ndoki (Lower Imo River), Ndoni, Opobo Town, Andoni and Nkoro and parts of Western Ijaw”. Rivers state was further split into two on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1996 by the then Head of State Major General Sani Abacha. They were Bayelsa and Rivers States. Administratively, Rivers State is structured into a total of a twenty three Local Government Areas. (Mfiangh & Ndimele, 2013). Interestingly, Rivers State and the city of Port Harcourt had since their establishment witnessed the unprecedented influx of people from other ethnic groups, especially the Igbo who literarily dominated all critical sectors of the economy of the State.

### **CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION**

It is difficult to precisely arrive at a universally and scholarly acceptable definition and meaning of “baby factories” euphemistically called ‘child harvesting’ or ‘baby farms’. Attempt will be made to explore some of them. According to *Reproductive Biomedicine Online* (available @ [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com) accessed on 25/02/2020) “baby factories are institutions where young people give birth to children who are then placed for sale on the illegal adoption market”. It posits that the term refers” to any place where pregnant women and young teenage girls are voluntarily or forcefully impregnated and kept illegally until their babies are born and then sold for monetary gains”.

To Wikipedia ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/child-harvesting\\_accused\\_on\\_25/02/2020](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/child-harvesting_accused_on_25/02/2020)) “child harvesting” “baby factories” or “baby farms” means “the systematic sale of human children, typically for adoption by families in the developed world, but sometimes for other purposes, including trafficking. The farm covers a wide variety of situations and degrees of economic, social and physical coercion”. The *Premium Times* (available at [http://premiumtimesng.com/accessed\\_25/02/2020](http://premiumtimesng.com/accessed_25/02/2020)) sees a baby factory as an “illegal maternity centre where newly delivered babies are bought off their mothers by the operators of the centre” specifically a network of baby factories, which disguised as orphanages, clinic, maternity homes and small scale factories, provide newly born babies for prospective buyers in return for monetary rewards. Most of the illegal baby trade centres masquerade as Nongovernmental Organization or charitable homes for marginalized Baby factories are the ready made source for wealthy childless couple in urgent need of babies rather than seeking approved methods like in vitro Fertilization (IVF), assisted reproductive technology or government approved adoption through Social welfare Ministry. Another major patrons of these baby factories are the ritualists.

Infants who are tortured or sacrificed in black magic or witchcraft rituals are believed to bring luck.

### **“BABY FACTORIES” IN RIVERS NATURE AND DIMENSIONS**

In Nigeria, the first publicly reported case of a baby factory was published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2006. The report identified the illegal child harvesting, a subset of human trafficking business as Nigeria’s third-most common crime behind financial fraud and drug trafficking. It posits that at least ten children are allegedly sold to black marketers nation-wide. Since the discovery in 2006, there are high incidence of baby factories and babies selling which are ceaselessly pumping out infants for sale on the hideous, horrible and illegal adoption trade. So far proven cases of prevalent booming baby farms have been discovered in states like, Oyo, Ondo, Ogun, Imo, Akwa-Ibom, Abia, Anambra, Enugu, Rivers among others. Obaji (2017, P.6) discloses:

Every year, the Nigerian security operatives discover several new baby factories. Young girls are held captives to give birth to babies who are then sold illegally either to adoptive parents, into slavery, or it is said, for traditional rituals. There are rumours and fears that new borns are being sold to traditional communities that a powder made of infants brings luck. But, such sensational claims notwithstanding, the vast majority of buyers almost certainly are married couples struggling to conceive.

The business of infant trafficking is well organized by criminal syndicates who posed differently. They took many dimensions. Most pregnant women or teenagers facing economic hardship or social tension like going back to school are tempted to sell out off their babies to mitigate these problems. These categories of girls who did not want to keep their babies but does not want an abortion (D & C)) either, were meant to understand that the baby factory was a safe haven for them so that at the end they would give their babies up for a formal adoption. Also, some women, especially teenagers who are not yet pregnant are being lured or forced to take refuge/custody in tiny and unkempt hidden places where they are conditioned to produce children for sale. Able bodied men were recruited or lured to get the girls pregnant. To get them conceived in these hidden rooms often on bare floor, girls or teenagers were lined up and forced to have sex in full view of other teenage girls. The “baby mamas” are given food and shelter.

Both parties (i.e. the boy and girl) were paid for these jobs by the owner of the factory. The contract terminates after they have given birth. The operator of the baby factory illegally charges between 400,000 naira for a girl and 500,000 naira for a boy. Many foreigners from Europe and the United States continue to patronage baby factories in Rivers State. This type of child trafficking and baby factory could find expression in the alleged baby farms and selling of babies in Rumuolumeni community, Rivers State operated by one Kelechi Okamgba from Abia State. Upon her arrest on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2018, she led the police to her “Baby Factory” where four pregnant teenagers were held captives They were Obianuju Nze, 22 years, Chinemerum Orji, 18 years, Josephine Chimena 33 years and Chidinma Ndukwe, 17 years. The then Commissioner of Police, Mr Zaki M. Ahmed maintains that “the pregnant girls discovered at the baby factory were said to have gone there to mortgage their pregnancies and for possible sale to their identified customers” (Amadi, 2018, p. 1)

Similarly, the Rivers State Police Command uncovered a “baby factory” in Port Harcourt in October, 2018, one, Pastor Glory Raphael along with sixteen pregnant women were arrested, for allegedly operating baby factory and selling of babies at the Rukpokwu axis of the State. According to the State Commission of Police, Zaki Ahmed, “men of the Criminal Intelligence and Investigation Department (CID) in a sting operation... stormed the premises of one Gloria Raphael, who is the General Overseer of Mount Sinai Ministry at Rukpokwu. She is into the business of child trafficking, sixteen pregnant women awaiting delivery and onward sale of the children to the waiting buyers were arrested. One of them by name Chinyere Nweke had labour yesterday (Friday) and was rushed to the Police Clinic where she gave birth to a baby girl” (Amadi, 2018, p. 1).

Another unique form of baby factories have been revealed in Port Harcourt, southern Nigeria. Under the disguise of In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF) treatment, Dr. Chinyere Emeka Precious usually induced fake pregnancies. Nwisi (2013, P.2) describes her as “a baby factory syndicate, (who) specialises in selling of day-old babies at Elenwo, in Port Harcourt.” This illicit business has reportedly been going at God’s Gift Clinic and Maternity home located at number 16 School Road, Elenwo area of Port Harcourt, Rivers State. Desperate infertile and childless couples are normally injected or given some special concoction that made them have a false sense of pregnancy. Their stomachs looked protruding like pregnant women and feel some sensation in their wombs. They are strictly debarred from seeking medication or medical attention, else they would have miscarriage. They were to come back to the clinic to deliver of their babies during the due date. She would then arranged new born babies for them for between ₦2.5 million and ₦6 million.

Nwisi (2013, P.1) writes that Dr. Chinyere Emeka Precious “was said to inject desperate barren women with substances to make them appear pregnant. She would then arrange a stolen baby for the women... we found a day-old baby boy, who was concealed behind the theatre. There was also a woman there who was reported to have been delivered of a baby. When we confronted the woman, she claimed to have undergone fertility treatment with the doctor”. But in actual fact, she was not pregnant, and was never pregnant. Rather what they do is hypnotise these women, who believe that they are pregnant. They were injected with substances which make their stomach swell. They will be placed on treatment for nine months. Before delivery, this syndicate makes arrangements to procure the babies, and once the arrangement clicks, they will take the women to theatre or labour room. At this point now, they will inject her with drugs that will make her unconscious; when that is done, she will now be laced with blood all over the body, including her private parts. The same blood will also be used on the child, so when she regains consciousness they will now handover the baby to her, claiming that she has delivered. Then they will start the second round of treatment to deflate her stomach.

The account of Usman (2014, P. 1) is also worth noting:

Her (Emeka Precious Chinyere) *modus operandi* as gathered, included giving desperate women concoction which would make their stomachs to start protruding, until the day of delivery. However, the delivery process is said to be shrouded in mystery which the Police is trying to unravel. It was gathered that most of the beneficiaries were women who had waited for years without bearing children. The amount paid for each pregnancy is gathered, varied according to the age of the individual and the period of waiting.

On the basis of the last straw that broke the camel's back, she chronicles that:

This illicit business has reportedly been going on ... for years until the bubble burst, following a petition to the Commission of Police in charge of the Police Special Fraud Unit, by the United States of America consulate, to investigate an America-based-Nigerian woman who applied for American passport for her little baby. The US-based Nigerian Identified as Christiana Ogeyi Omagu... appeared at the Consulate in pursuance of a US passport for a male child she claimed to have delivered at God's Gift Clinic and Maternity, Port Harcourt, Rivers State. However, when a DNA paternity and maternity test was conducted, the result according to the embassy, indicated that the applicant and her husband, Donald Omagu, were not the biological parents of the baby.

Mr and Mrs Donald Omagu were not the only victims of the fake "miracle babies". Other like a US based Esther Soyebó paid ₦2.5 million while Victoria Acholonu paid ₦2.9 for the "pregnancy". In spite of their evident bulging stomachs, several medical tests carried out indicated that neither the "pregnant" women nor their husbands were fertile for such pregnancy. The proprietor of the Baby factory in Port Harcourt had successfully evaded Police arrest and justice in spite of the numerous evidences against her due to her high connection.

### **Causes of the Prevalence of Baby Factory and Baby Markets in Rivers State**

It is difficult to believe that despite of a 2003 Law against human trafficking, including selling children and agency like the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), there are the prevalence of "baby factories", "baby scouters" "baby harvesters" and "baby selling centres" in Rivers State. Certainly, there are socio-economic and cultural conditions that serve as breeding grounds for the country's third-most common crime behind financial fraud and drug trafficking. Below are some of the prominent ones.

- 1. Poverty of People:** The rising and worsening poverty is one of the foremost certain causative factors of "baby factory" and baby selling in Rivers State. Like other States that constituted the Niger Delta, Rivers State indigenes and settlers live in abject and deepening poverty in spite of the rich resources, and affluence surrounding. As many citizens struggle to make both ends meet in these precarious and vulnerable conditions, they can easily become prey to syndicates of baby harvesters or baby farms. People in poverty are targeted by baby sellers and buyers. Most of them who don't have the means to survive, are deceived by the proprietors of "baby factories" to sell their children. They are promised a way to earn money and have some food. In actual fact, it turned out to be exploitation and slavery. *Centre for Global Impact* (<http://http://centerforglobalimpact>, accessed on 25/02/2020) points out that "the practice of entrusting poor children to more affluent friends or relatives may create vulnerability. Some parents sell their children, not just for money, but in the hope that their children may escape poverty and have a better life with more opportunities." Poverty is also responsible for high youth unemployment social exclusion, inequality, hunger and lack of quality education.

- 2. High rate of unemployment: The finding of the papers has** shown that in Rivers State unemployment has become a very serious problem reaching a crisis situation. In 2004, the ex-president of World Bank, James Wolfensohn, had revealed that almost two billion out of six billion world population who are teenagers between 15 and 19 years were celebrating idleness without future hope. Currently, the phenomenon of youth unemployment had infected not only the school dropouts but also school leavers and graduate unemployed. As a matter of fact, the increasing incidence of young, pregnant and helpless teenage girls in the unemployment market are tempted to sell out their babies to potential customers after delivery for financial remuneration. The unsatiable urge has been fuelled with the increasing demand for adoption by prospective customer from the United States and Europe. Their patronage also inspired, sustained and maintained baby factories in the State.
- 3. Human Greed:** it is obvious that the endless search for wealth drives people to get more money through illegal means. Media reports indicated that the prevalence of baby factories in Rivers State is due to greed and lack of ethical behaviour of some medical professionals. The operators of these factories sometimes medical doctors, nurses, and others. However, they want to get rich as quickly as possible without passing through legitimate means. They went out of their ways to commit crimes to satisfy this goal. The classic example of Emeka Precious Chinyere is necessary here. Mrs Precious, who operated a baby factory in Elelenwo part of Port Harcourt, is said to be a qualified and licensed doctor with the number 348 from the Nigeria Medical Council, Abuja. Her illicit business attracted desperate women from all parts of the world with different prices for each pregnancy. It ranged between N2.5 million and N6 million, depending largely on “the age of the individual and the period of waiting” (Usma, 2014, P.1). The greed of the baby producers and the lucrative nature of the buying and selling lured a good number of people into the illegal “baby harvesting”.
- 4. Illiteracy and The Lack of knowledge about Human Rights:** Illiteracy and the lack of education are responsible for the upsurge of baby selling in Rivers State. Most of the baby sellers in Rivers State are ignorant of their rights and those of their children. Most of the babies sold out are those whose births were officially never registered due to lack of knowledge. This is clearly a sheer violation of the right to identity. They considered their babies as articles of trade or other illegal activity in black market. Often, the criminals, who are the operators of the “baby factories,” cashed in on their ignorance about their institutionalized human rights and make them potential victims of trafficking. Little surprise, that most of the teenagers are held captives in hidden places to generate more babies.
- 5. Social factors and cultural practices:** In Rivers State social factors and cultural practices are contributing reasons for the unending scourge and popularity of baby factories. The traditions of the people placed a high premium on male child bearing and social stigmas around infertility and teenage pregnancy. Almost all the ethnic groups in Rivers State place huge socio-political importance on male children believed to bear the family name and increase the lineage. On the other hand, female children are regarded as “another man’s property” who may be prevented by the customs of the people from inheriting family’s wealth. Male children trafficking became intensified to have heirs and

inheritors of the family's inheritance. Christianity and modern education are making frantic effort for the people to treat all children as equal.

It has also been established that infertile women rather than ritualists are the major patrons of these baby harvesters in Rivers State. childless women and couples are involved in the widespread inhumane act and crime due to lack of access to infertility care, lack of reproductive health education assisted reproductive technology and unavailability of In Vitro Fertilization (I.V.F) which is often very expensive, scarce and most reliable. What is more, official adoption through the state government is overly bureaucratic laced with a public record accessible to every citizen. Most worrisome is the high rate of infertility among the number of couples in the State. Nwaka and Odoemene (2019, pp.6-7) provides an interesting perspective on this score:

The phenomenon of "baby factories" is equally explicable from the inaccessibility of approved institutions where adoption can be legally procured. The legal adoption process has a lot of encumbrances that make it less accessible to adaptive parents. Stringent demands and requirements for adopting a child keep away some adoptive parents who may not meet those requirements. For example, prospective single adopters face more challenges than couples in the process of adoption in Nigeria. In the same way, a low-income earner may not be able to meet all the needed requirements for adopting a baby through an orphanage. Arguably, formal adoption in Nigeria is not for the poor. In addition to these procedural challenges is the long period of waiting for babies. Since most of these formally established institutions depend on abandoned babies and orphans, couples waiting babies for adoption often spend months and years waiting.

To avoid such long waiting and public stigmas, most hopeless desperate couples in the State resorted to quick and clandestine alternative method of "baby factory" in place of legal adoption through the government social welfare services.

Unwanted teenage pregnancy is one of the most significant factors responsible for the emergence and spread of "baby factories". It may be recalled that the majority of the women, whose babies are sold are young unmarried teenagers from lower-income families, who are scared of social stigmatization as a result of an unwanted teenage pregnancy. The society seriously ridiculed, and frowned at a teenage girl who gets pregnant without the payment of bride wealth. They are usually disowned by the parents especially the father for dragging the noble name of the family in the mud. while this customary practise is well pronounced among the Ikwerre, Ogoni, Abua/Odua, and Ogba, it is not common among the Kalabari and Okrika peoples. Apart from this, the unmarried pregnant daughter mars automatically lost the chance of getting married to a young promising man. The suitors that came their ways as single mothers are widower, aged men, and men below their target of a husband.

Most teenagers who are pregnant contemplated abortion (technically called dilatation and curettage), known popularly as D & C which is unsafe and dear to come by, or ran to Port Harcourt where they stayed in door until she delivers and resorts to dumping of the babies into a dust bin. Where the above methods failed, teenagers involved in pre-marital sex, went to the "baby factories" where they are taken care of to avoid social stigmatization. They resume their normal lives with profound confidence and assurance of getting married to a successful man of



their dream. This is the point stressed by Nwaka and Odoemene (2019, P.5) when they articulate that “one major advantage of compassionate homes (now turned baby factories) is that in most cases pregnant girls were not only protected from hunger, harsh weather, and unsafe abortion, they were equally shielded from the shame and stigma of their status. Consequently, a pregnant girl can be integrated into her society which may or may not be privy to her previous status”. Makinde, Makinde, Olaloye, Huntley and Brown (2015, P.6) sternly argue that social factors and cultural practices are the basic reasons for ‘baby factories’ to thrive. In their own words:

Baby factories are thought to have arisen to meet two needs. First, the social stigma attached to desperate teenagers with unwanted pregnancies, who are convinced to give up their babies for a financial benefit. Second, the high demand for babies infertile couples with a desire to complete their family and thereby fulfil a crucial social obligation. Thus, the high burden and stigmatization of infertility in Nigeria and the unwillingness of infertile couples to associate publicly with adoption or surrogacy, contributes to the increased patronage of baby factories.

The phenomenon of baby factory is further facilitated by corruption among law enforcement agents and judges who make the operators and experts to evade arrest and pervert justice, misplacement of our value system and being pregnant out of wedlock, to mention but a few.

### **Consequences of “Baby Factories” on Rivers State**

The emergence and proliferation of baby-selling centres in Rivers State has a lot of implications for the development of the State, prominent among them are:

1. **Depopulation of the State:** Pregnant girls, who are not properly attended to, may give up the ghost during the process of child delivery. New born children are also not exempted due to quack and indecent medical attention. Although not too pronounced, there are indications that devotees of cult and shrine use baby, foetus or other vital parts/organs to perform their routine ritualistic activities to boost their spiritual powers.

2. **Trauma, violence and Abuse:** As noted above, recruited women, especially teenagers are treated to several indescribable trauma, violence and abuse. To get quick and better results, expectant mothers and young girls of child-bearing age, who are forcefully recruited against their wish, repeatedly made love in the full glare of other inmates. Such sex gratification and exploitation are done by the hired men or the operators of the factory. There are abundant evidence that girls that are yet to conceive are forcefully used by these employed agents for several times until they are pregnant. The process continued unabated during her gestation period.

3. **Financial exploitation:** Besides, sexual exploitation, these victims of “baby factories” who are stocked in unhygienic and crowded apartments with dirty mattresses, are further exploited during child delivery and selling of the babies. The owners of the illegal factories often deny the real mothers of seeing their babies. As soon as she delivered of the baby, the new babies are immediately kidnapped and taken to another “mother” in an entirely separate room. In the “cash and carry” business, the real mothers are also tricked into selling their babies before delivery at giveaway prices while the notorious commercial baby sellers later sold them out at an exorbitant prices. It has been established that Mrs Precious sold out babies at different prices to

her customers. It ranged between two and half million to six million naira. Indeed, this is a new form of criminality raking in millions into the coffer of the operators. In some cases, the teenagers are out rightly denied any share of the proceeds for the sale of the baby, claiming that the babies died in the course of delivery at other times she get a small about raging from ₦50,000 to ₦80,000.

4. **Human Rights Abuses:** Human rights are essentially fundamental inalienable rights which all human beings have by virtue of the fact that you are a human being. some of the rights typically violated during the production of babies in the State include the right to life, the right to health, the right of freedom from discrimination, the right to freedom of movement, the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly, the right to equal protection of the law, right to the dignity of human person, and the right to development among others. Human right abuse took place when the teenagers and the new borns are practically denied their fundamental rights. Our findings revealed that these baby producers are housed in isolated and unkempt building with high fence, ostensibly to prevent their escape.

5. Teenagers and young girls who find themselves in these baby-producing centres, usually develop low self-esteem. They may not achieve their lofty dreams of being lawyers, lecturers, doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers and etc. Most of whom were dropouts from colleges and schools could not find decent means of livelihood or complete their secondary school education after their release

6. ‘Baby factory’ as a new trend today may lead to many cases of family problem like paternal disputes, broken marriages, divorce, gender abuse and exploitation., all these portray a bleak future for the State.

7. The girls used as baby producers may be exposed to the risk of contacting sexually transmitted Diseases (STDs) and HIV/Aid virus. Also, some of them may become commercial sex workers when they grow up as a means of survival in the absence of any other legitimate means.

## **CONCLUSION**

We have explored the fact that “baby factory”, which is widespread in Rivers State, is apparently a new form of crime and an extremely lucrative illegal business. The fastest growing business marauded in the State as maternity/Hospital, In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) treatment centre, and orphanage homes. The work discovered that there are potent socio-economic and cultural condition that veneered the emergency and prevalent of the inhuman baby production and selling. These include but not limited to poverty of people, greed, unemployment, social factors and cultural practices, corruption, among others. It was also established that the proliferation of baby-selling centres has a lot of negative implications for the development of the State. The study revealed the torture, trauma and abuses women went through in the hands of the operators of “baby farms”, “baby factory” or “child harvesting” in Rivers State.

The work submitted that, to tackling the phenomenon of “baby factory” in the state with certain measure of success, several possible means, both individually and collectively, should be adopted. Some include the following:

- The State Government and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) should place more premium on human capacity building, skill acquisition and create employment opportunities for the teeming unemployed youths

- Adequate awareness and educational/enlightenment campaigns are required to expose the various dimensions of this emerging social menace.
- The Rivers State Government should establish centre for counselling and adequately funded for effective intervention and training.
- Culture, customs and traditions that discriminate against women should be discarded
- Ethical infertility care, family planning, and surrogacy should be provided
- Educating citizens on their rights and sanctioning human right abusers would strengthen the fight against the prevalent of “baby factory” in the State.

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